

all she had satisfactorily and superabundantly proved her character unstained, and her conduct unimpeachable.

When their just claims are granted; and the sectarian monopoly of all the good things on earth is finally broken up, as it is likely soon to be, when equal rights are allowed to all good citizens; and the doors of preferment thrown open to merit of every religious denomination: then, and not till then, (the cause of contention being withdrawn) will all religious rancour and animosity cease; and social love and harmony be restored.

The Catholic Church requires no particular laws or penal statutes to support her. She is firmly based and built upon the rock of Truth. If other Churches are, as they pretend to be, established on the same immovable foundation; why seek so, as they have always done, the arm of flesh to prop them up, and prevent their downfall? And with that arm so long stretched out in their defence, have they routed all their foes, and secured the final victory? It has hitherto only wrought their reproach and shame; and proved their lasting scandal. Let them drop then at last its unhallowed interference: and like the Church, which they all oppose, shew, if they can, their superior worth by calm rational argument, and fair elucidating disquisition.

Let them also, for sheer shame's sake, give up that mock holy-day of the *Gun-Powder Treason*; with all its execrating and hate-inspiring prayers; worse by far, Oh! a thousand times worse, than that of the proud and condemned Pharisee in the gospel. The Jew's prayer glanced but slightly at the humble Publican's presumed worthlessness: but the Englishman fearlessly advances to God, what is proved to be a political persecuting lie: when affecting to thank his Maker for his pre-disposed, and narrow-shammed escape from the dangerous effects of a plot of his own contrivance; he charges his innocent Catholic brethren in general with the whole black villainy of his own murderous invention: assuring the Deity, lest man should ever doubt the fact, that the mischief, harmless as it was to himself the machinator; and hurtful only to the unconscious Catholic, had originated, in the *hellish malice and traitorous conspiracies of the cruel and blood-thirsty Papists?* Match me that, if you can! O, for shame sake, as I said, if not for the sake of justice and charity, let them fling back that unchristian prayer to its first unhallowed inspirer.

Let them also, for they have no time to lose; the torrent of public opinion is fast setting in against them: let them hasten straight to chisel out from their London monument the *conflagration untruth*. But ah! in this their toil were vain. The notorious falsehood is doomed to live. It has been transcribed on a monument more durable than stone. In the immortal lines of Twickenham's Bard it is read, and will be read recorded down to our latest posterity.

Where you huge Pillar, pointing to the skies,
Like a tall Bully, lifts its head and lies.

ON PURGATORY.

THE benefit of an indulgence obtained, is supposed communicable, in virtue of the *Communion of Saints*, to any one of our brethren: and even to the souls of the just in a middle state: so that such may obtain relief on account of the prayers put up, or the good works done for their sake by the faithful here on earth; who are as yet in the way of meriting, through Jesus Christ, for themselves and others.

This doctrine of a middle state, was certainly of very ancient date among the Jews, as appears from the second book of the Maccabees, *Ch. xii. 45*, till the end: which, though not admitted by Protestants as canonical scripture, has still that historical authority, which entitles it to credit. Nor did our Saviour, in any instance, find fault with this doctrine, which they held; as he most certainly would have done, had it been false. On the contrary, he seems to authorize it, on more than one occasion; as when he desires us to *make our peace with our adversary, while we are yet in the way: lest he deliver us over to the judge, and the judge to the executioner, and we be cast into prison; out of which we shall not get till we have paid the last farthing*, Matt. v. 25, &c. By this *prison* can hardly be meant any place of confinement here on earth. Also, when he declares that sins committed against the Holy Ghost *shall be forgiven neither in this world, nor in the world to come*, (Matt. xii. 32.) he seems thereby to indicate, that other sins may be forgiven in the world to come, which are not forgiven in this life. Otherwise the clause: *nor in the world to come*, were just as superfluous, as if one were to say: *You shall not see the river Thames neither in England nor elsewhere. Or you shall not behold the sun, either by day or by night*.

Reason itself, from the idea we have of the justice of God, seems nowise unfavourable to this persuasion. For as our Saviour tells us, *we shall render an account for every idle word*, (Matt. xii. 36.) and we are assured in Holy Writ, (Prov. xv. 16.) *that the just man falls seven times a day*. If then the just man, as may happen, be called suddenly out of this world, having some idle words, or small faults, to account for, will he be condemned to hell for it? If this were the case, who of all the human race could hope to be saved? But into heaven there can be no admission till all our accounts are cleared: and *nothing unclean can enter there*. Revelation xxi. 27.—I should think it then neither unreasonable, nor unscriptural to infer, from all this, that there exists some middle place of expiation, which Roman Catholics call *Purgatory*.

ON THE CATHOLIC PRACTICE OF HONOURING THE SAINTS, AND OF KEEPING WITH RESPECT AND VENERATION THEIR RELICS, IMAGES, AND PICTURES.

Catholics are taught to honour the saints, and particularly the mother of God, with the idea, that they are thus honouring God himself, whose grace alone has made them saints; and who having honoured and exalted them himself, cannot be displeased at seeing them honoured and exalted by the rest of his creatures. They invoke their prayers. And why should they not? Are their prayers less worthy of being heard, than those of our fellow creatures here on earth? We are desired in scripture to *pray for one another*. St. James v. St. Paul asked the prayers of the faithful. Protestants do the same. Now I could wish to know why it should be thought more unreasonable to ask the prayers of the saints in heaven, than to ask those of poor sinful mortals here on earth? Is it, because we must suppose them removed at too great a distance from the earth, to witness what happens here below, or to hear our requests? But

do we know how immediate the perception, and how extensive, as well as minute, the knowledge may be of those who, not dead, but vanished from among us, and alive with God, enjoy in him the clear beatific vision? These are, as our Saviour testifies, *like the angels of God in heaven*. Matt. xxii. 30. And we have the same divine authority for believing, that the angels are not strangers to what is passing on our earth; not even to the innermost thoughts, and secret resolutions of the human heart; since as he declares, *there is more joy in heaven, for one sinner that repents, than for ninety-nine just*. Luke xv. 7. The prophet *Elisha*, in his mere mortal state, knew, at the very moment they were formed, and revealed to his counsellors, the measures which the king of Assyria had secretly concerted with his counsellors against Jerusalem: though the man of God was living at the time in *Dothan*, a place in Judea, many hundred miles distant from the capital where the hostile monarch resided. 4 Kings ii. 8, and vi. 12.

But, it is said, our reliance on the mediation of the saints, implies a disfluence in the all-sufficient intercession of our great Mediator Jesus Christ; and derogates from the perfection and superabundant fullness of his merits. The same objection bears equally hard against Protestants themselves, when they admit it as lawful to ask the prayers of our brethren in this world.—But how can it imply any want of confidence in the efficacy of our Redeemer's interposition in our behalf with his heavenly Father; or how can it derogate in any degree from his infinite merits, to desire his chosen friends in heaven, as well as his faithful worshippers here on earth, to join their supplications with ours, and unite them with those of our Supreme Mediator, who is our head, in order to obtain of the Father, through, with and by him alone, whatever we stand in need of for soul and body.

This is simply the Catholic's belief on this head. Nor does his Church brand as heretics, those who do not choose to recognize as saints all without exception, who may be denominated such: though none are canonized, whose lives have not been conspicuous for the practice of the most eminent virtues; and whose deaths have not been singularly edifying, and even honoured with some supernatural proof of God's own approbation of their sanctity. Yet, she does not enforce her particular decisions on this score, as undeniable articles of faith. All that she thereby claims is the privilege of giving saints to God, and models of christian perfection to her children, the faithful. And, as in the states and kingdoms of this world, trophies and monuments are reared, histories are written, and poems composed, to perpetuate the fame of their heroes and great men; and to stir up a laudable emulation in posterity, to imitate them: so the Church, the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ, has her heroes and worthies of a different kind; whose fame she spreads and perpetuates, and whose example she holds forth for our imitation through all succeeding generations.

Their images, pictures, and relics, she recommends us to keep with respect, merely for the sake of the originals, and in order to recall their memory to us in a more lively and impressive manner.—If statues are properly raised to the illustrious of this world; if their likenesses are taken, and the most remarkable actions and circumstances of their lives, traced with the artist's pencil on canvass, or engraved with his chissel on brass, wood, or marble, and thus exhibited to us in a more generally understood and striking manner, than they are in writing by the pens of the learned: why should not all that regards our Redeemer, as well as the exploits of his champions, and their heroic virtues, which by divine grace exalt our fallen nature above itself, and are more worthy of general imitation;