

CATHOLIC CATECHISM.

II.

Q. What evidence have we that our Bible contains the Holy Scriptures?

The historic record of its preservation by the Church in every quarter of the world.

The Bible was written to the Church, accepted and preserved by the Church, handed down in the Church; and can only be proved genuine by the evidence of the Church in the world's court of enquiry. It follows hence: That the Church and the Bible are indissolubly linked together; and that the Church is the only possible court of appeal in the interpretation of the Bible. Private interpretation, that is, interpretation made by individuals, in opposition to or differing from that of the whole Church, has given rise to thousands of sects, in each age, increasing in numbers as private interpreters have from time to time promulgated their views. If these sects could form courts of appeal then we should have a thousand bibles,—this would be *reductio ad absurdum*.

Q. Is there then but one Church?

There is but one Church.

Q. Are the churches of Rome, Russia, France, Armenia, England, United States, and Canada, &c., different churches?

No; they are branches of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Q. What do we mean then by the Church of England, the Church of Rome, &c., &c.?

We mean the Church of Christ or the Christian Church in England, in Rome, &c., &c.

Q. Is then the Church of Rome an integral part of the Church?

She is; God has not removed her candlestick.

Q. Why then does the Church of England refuse to communicate with the Church of Rome?

Because the Church of England believes that the Church of Rome has added private interpretations to the Word of God, as received by the universal church, in the Holy Bible.

Q. What are private interpretations?

Interpretations put upon the Bible by individuals or partial councils of the Church, alien to the interpretations accepted by the whole Church assembled in council.

Q. What then are Catholic councils?

Such as have been formed by representation of ALL the branches of the church in Christendom.

Q. How many of these have there been?

There have been six General or Ecumenical Councils or Synods, at which bishops from all parts of the Church have assembled to settle disputed points of doctrine and discipline: that is to give authoritative interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

1. The Council of Nice, ... A.D. 325.
2. The Council of Constantinople, A.D. 381.
3. The Council of Ephesus, ... A.D. 431.
4. The Council of Chalcedon, ... A.D. 451.
5. The Council of Constantinople, A.D. 553.
6. The Council of Constantinople, A.D. 680.

Q. When did the Church of Rome add her private interpretations to the Faith?

In the Council of Trent, assembled in 1545, at which the Church of Rome incurred the guilt of authoritatively sanctioning heresy or private interpretation.

Q. Do we not then hold anything in common with the Church of Rome?

We hold in common with the Church of Rome every interpretation of Holy Scripture which has received the sanction of the whole, i.e., catholic church. But the Church of England holds that nothing which was newly interpreted and added to the Faith by any part of the church is binding on the catholic church.

Q. Do we not appeal to the private interpretations of *Laud*, *Cranmer*, *Luther*, and the Reformers of the sixteenth century?

No, never.

Q. By what interpretation of the Holy Scripture does the Church of England abide?

By the interpretations of those ecumenical councils of the early catholic church at which the whole church, including Rome, was represented.

Our Blessed Lord has laid down the rules for our guidance in St. Matthew xviii. 17: "Tell it unto the church, and if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." Again: St. Luke x. 16, "He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth Him that sent me." In which cases he was speaking to the church catholic in the persons of the seventy disciples whom He sent to preach the gospel of the kingdom.

Again, in St. Matthew xvi. 18, "Thou art Peter (*petros*), and upon this rock (*petra*) I will build my church, and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it."

(To be continued.)

PLAIN REASONS AGAINST JOINING THE CHURCH OF ROME.

SUPERSTITION.

LXII. Yet again; one unchristian peculiarity of popular Romanism is that it is fast ceasing to be a Faith; and is degenerating into a mere *Superstition*. This word does not mean, as people commonly fancy, over-readiness to swallow marvels. This is *credulity*, about which we are not now concerned. But "*superstition*" means that form of religion in which *fear* is stronger than love and trust. Its leading characteristic is the belief that the Powers above man are unfriendly, jealous, and vindictive; or at best stern and relentless; and that they must be baffled by mechanical amulets and magical charms, or bought off by being gratified with the sight of those sufferings which they delight to inflict. That is the sentiment which is at the root of African Fetichism and of Hindoo Fakirism alike. And now it has got almost entire possession of Romanism. Already it has been shown how the Father and Christ are avoided and shrunk from, as stern and pitiless judges, and Mary turned to as the one hope of sinners; and also how God is supposed to pursue with hideous tortures the souls of even the holy dead. These ghastly distortions of Christianity are not to be found in the Missal at all, and scarcely a trace of them in the Breviary, but they form a very large part, often the larger part, of the popular creed in Roman Catholic countries now.

* In truth, the active principle of Faith has for most practical purposes been banished from modern Romanism. The passive habit of Obedience to a visible human authority has been substituted for it, and called by its name, though Obedience and Faith are perfectly distinct qualities. Modern Romanism has this in common with atheistic Secularism, and they are both impatient of the unseen and spiritual, and crave after the visible and material. Hence Romans must have human objects of worship instead of God, and must have images of even these; must have amulets instead of belief in Providence; must have a regular tally account with Heaven instead of trust in God's love, mercy, and justice. All this not only is not Faith, but directly contradicts Faith, which is "the evidence of things not seen," Heb. xi. 1.

CULTUS OF THE SACRED HEART.

LXIII. Even the chief remaining portion, namely, the modern worship of the Sacred Heart, is sheer heresy, condemned beforehand by the two General Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, which forbade any worship being paid to a divided Christ—even the separate adoration of our Lord's Sacred Humanity apart from His Godhead being heretical—and teach that *whole Christ* alone is the object of worship. When the heart of Christ is mentioned by old writers, such as St. Bernard, before the invention of the new cult about two centuries ago, it always is a figure of speech for the

human affections and tenderness of our Blessed Lord, and thus as a cause of love and confidence on our part; but not as a separate object of worship. Now, however, what is meant by it is the physical bodily organ of our Lord's human Body; and since even the worship of that Body entire, unless as united with the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, is unlawful for Christians, of course the separate adoration of a single part of it is all the more forbidden. And there is not even the poor satisfaction that this worship, heretical though it be, is from its popularity redressing the balance a little, and giving Christ back in some fashion that amount of service which is His due, but of which He has been defrauded through the preference for other shrines than His. For the "Immaculate Heart of Mary" is already united with His in the cult, and has, besides, its own separate confraternity, offices, and indulgences. Here they are on an absolute level; "May the Divine Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary be known, praised, blessed, loved, worshipped, and glorified, always and in all places. Amen." ("Raccolta," v. 81.) They are on different levels, St. Mary's being the higher, in these two indulgenced ejaculations:—

1. Sweet Heart of my Jesus, make me love thee more and more.—("Racc.," v. 64.)

2. Sweet heart of Mary, be my salvation.—("Racc.," v. 82.)

Moreover, this second one is much more easily indulgenced. The ejaculation to our Blessed Lord cannot alone win an indulgence. It must be recited along with a Pater, Ave, and Credo, and these together gain one hundred days for each time of recitation, besides certain plenary ones twice monthly.

But the ejaculation to the Blessed Virgin Mary is valid by itself, and wins three hundred days for each repetition, with a plenary one monthly. A rapid speaker could say it more than a hundred times in a minute: thus gaining about ninety years' indulgence in that short space.

PERSECUTION IN IRELAND.

THE following is an extract of a letter from Richard Barrett (Irish Society's Inspector) Cork, to Rev. Canon Hayman.

I am just after coming back this evening from having inspected the teacher of Bandon and Courtmacsherry, and I can hardly describe the trouble and difficulties the poor men had to bring up their pupils this time. We were watched so closely and even followed by some through the fields and roads to search out our business so that we had to give up working by day, and worked late at night and very early in the morning. I remarked that many of the advanced pupils have gone to America. While in the act of inspecting one pupil for James Callaghan, in this city, a man named Bill Gogin, walked up and threatened me that I would yet get a ball through my heart; this was uttered in the presence of Mrs. Mahony and others. I mentioned this to the police, but they advised me to forgive him at present and pass it over quietly. I did so. This is a small idea of the state of things now; and I believe this is owing a great deal to the irritation about this Boycotting affair of Dr. Webster's.

I send you the *Daily Herald* paper, in which appears his letter to the Editor, also the threatening letter sent to him.

However, I will do the work of inspecting the teachers in God's name, and trust myself in His hands, that He will protect me while doing earnestly His own work—many a better man has died a martyr in His cause.

I am to be inspecting out late to night in the city and Blackrock, with the teacher John McCarthy. I was not able to take rest in sleep only a few hours during this week, having to inspect by