

Fools for allowing ourselves (as our Saviour says we should,) *to be all taught of God* concerning, this inexplicable Mystery, John. 6. 45. and not rather grounding our faith on human surmise and opinion.

And now, sir, I would ask you, what end can there be to our present controversy; or to what profitable purpose can its continuance serve, if you admit nothing but scripture, as interpreted by yourself, for the sole deciding authority between us? church & Fathers you reject, & rely wholly on your own opinion, supposing as you must that your opinion may be wrong; for you do not claim infallibility, by what criterion am I or is any one to set you right, while you cling to the text, as understood but by yourself and reject it, as understood by every other? you reject it, as understood by the Church and Fathers: and why? because, you say, their interpretation is but a *human*, and *fallible* one. Is your own less so? Then where pray, is the deciding authority? In the very text itself, you say. Not surely in the dead letter of the text, without any meaning. And with a meaning, whose are we to prefer? yours or theirs? If yours, and only yours, then our discussion is at an end.—Strange and unaccountable inconsistency in protestants, to reject (in spite of all the Saviour's promises of infallibility to his church & pastors, so clearly announced in Scripture,) the directive authority of his Church and pastors, as but *human and fallible* & yet adhere, every one to his own private opinion as divinely inspired and *infallible* though acknowledged still but *human and fallible* by the very individuals so adhering to it: and surely on matters of fact, and revelation, vastly more uncertain and *fallible* than the consentient testimony in every age and nation of the numberless Catholic millions, but on this head I must refer you to those numbers of our paper, which treat of the *Protestant's rule of faith*: where you will find it pretty clearly demonstrated that whoever rejects the directive authority of the Church; Matt. 18. 17. and refuses to hear her legitimate pastors, Luke. 10. 16. though quoting the Scripture, as the Devil did, to tempt the Saviour, Matt. 4. 6. builds his faith on a very different foundation from that of the *Apostles and prophets*, *Jesus Christ himself being the Chief corner stone* Ephes. 2. 20.

I have the honour to be, Sir

Your most obed't and humble Servant
Editor of the Catholic.

The Protestant mode of interpreting the Holy Scripture.

A *Protestant interpretation*, of course, means an opposite, or contrary one to that held by the *Catholic*, or universal Church: against which the protest is made: and to protest against it is to oppose, contradict.

Luther, the father of all Protestant sectaries, has laid down for their guidance the following rule of interpretation: *Let this*, says he, *be your rule in interpreting the Scriptures: wherever they command you any good work; do you understand that they forbid it.* See his work deserv. Arbit. Tom. 3. Fol. 191. We shall shew that they have been true to his paternal injunction; and that on every

subject, on which they differ from the Catholic Church, they have faithfully interpreted the scripture by contraries; or in a sense directly contrary to its plainest and most obvious meaning.

Thus, for instance, on the subject of the *real presence* of our Saviour in the Eucharist; which the Catholic Church affirms, but which they deny: the Scripture text cited in favour of the Catholic doctrine are the words of the Saviour to his Apostles, telling them that what he gave them was his body. *This is my body*, said he to them: which protestants interpret: *this is not my body. This is my blood of the New Testament*, (not of the Old; not the blood of calves and lambs, and other figurative victims of the old Law; but the blood of the true lamb of God, our promised, final propitiatory victim) the very blood, which was then about to be shed upon Mount Calvary for the remission of sins,—Matt. 26. 27. which protestants understand, as Luther bids them do, in the very opposite sense; or as if Christ had said: *this is not by blood of the New Testament which shall be shed for many, for the remission of sins*: But only wine, a mere figure, which never was, nor even can be shed for the remission of sins. *My flesh is meat indeed*, said he on a former occasion; and *my blood is drink indeed*, he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abideth in me and I in him. The Protestants understand these words to mean: "my flesh is not meat indeed, nor is my blood drink indeed. You can neither eat my flesh, nor drink my blood." This, according to Luther, is the right way of interpreting the scripture. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you.* This, in the Protestant sense, is all negatively spoken; as well as the following solemn asseveration: *As the living father hath sent me; and as I live by the father; so he who eateth me, the same also shall live by me*, &c. John 6, 55, 56, 57, 58. In a word take all in all, which the Saviour has spoken affirmatively concerning this mystery; and you will find the Protestant ever true to his German father's rule, interpreting it in a negative and directly contrary sense.

But it is not on this head only, but on every other, in which they differ from the Catholic Church that Protestants interpret the holy scripture, like the witch's prayer, backwards, and by contraries. Thus, for instance, when the Saviour says, (speaking to his Apostles, & in them, to their lawful successors, the pastors of his Church;) *whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven*: they understand by it the very contrary; that God could not give such power to man; and say, with the Scribes and Pharises, the mortal enemies of our Lord, *who can forgive sins, but God?* Luke 5, 21. They understand him therefore to say: *whose sins you forgive, they are not forgiven.* When he assures us that the *gates of Hell shall not prevail against his Church*; they understand him to mean that the *gates of Hell* (which are the Heresies, that conduct mankind thither,) shall prevail against her; nay, that that very Church, the first, and therefore the only one to which all his promises were made; shall become

the very *gate of Hell*; that is, a false and even idolatrous Church, conducting men to that place of endless misery.

When he commands us to *hear that Church*, or be accounted as *Heathens* &c. Matt. 18, 17, and to *hear her pastors* as we would even himself; Luke 10, 16, they say he means that we should not hear his Church, nor her pastors; but only *read the Bible, and judge for ourselves.*

When Saint Paul reminds them that *faith comes from the hearing*, Rom. 10, 17, they maintain he means, not from the hearing but from the reading.

When our Saviour says, *he who does not believe shall be condemned!* Mark, 16, 16. (that is, *he who does not believe*, what he had commissioned his Apostles to teach: which is, *all whatsoever he had commanded them*, Matt. 28, 20,) and when Saint Paul declares to the same effect that *without faith*, (that is true faith) *it is impossible to please God*: they say, they gather from all this, (what every one of them now a days has in his mouth,) that it matters nothing what faith we hold; or what religion we profess; provided we lead, what we may think, a good moral life.

Christ's words to Simon, the son of Jonas: *thou art Peter, (CEPHAS, PETROS or the Rock)* they interpret, "thou art not Peter, or the Rock &c."—*And to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven*, &c. Matt. 16, 17. according to them signifies; "to thee will I not give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; nor any jurisdiction above the rest."

Christ says, *there shall be one fold*, (that is, one church) and *one shepherd*; John, 10. 16. and his Apostle proclaims the same truth: Eph. 4. 5. *One Lord, says he, one Faith, one Baptism.* Protestants hold that there are many *Folds* and many *Shepherds*: many different *faiths*, and many different kinds of *Baptism*; or none at all.

When the Saviour gives, as a distinctive mark of his own church, the gift of working miracles, saying: *them that believe, these signs shall follow; in my name they shall cast out devils*; &c. Mark. 16. 17, and again: *Them that believe (only the true believers) the things that I do, they shall do also: and greater than these shall they do, because I go to the father*, John, 14, 12: Protestants understand that to themselves, who say they are the *true believers*, no such gift was ever granted; nor do they pretend (for a good reason, because they cannot;) to cast out devils; or work wonders of any kind in the name of Jesus. And (though in contradiction to the text,) what illustrious distinction they dare not claim to themselves, they deny having ever been granted to others.

The Saviour said that his disciples, *the children of the Bride Groom, should fast*; when he himself, the *Bride Groom*, should be taken from them, Matt. 9, 15. Mark 2, 19. Luke 5, 34, 35, Protestants affirm that he meant: *they should not fast.* Fasting is discarded by them as a plaguy papistical practice; so are chastisements of the body of every kind; though practised by St. Paul, 1, Cor. 9, 27.

When speaking of the little children, Christ says: *THEIR ANGELS always see the face of my*