

other world; because the same apostle declares, they shall pass *through fire*; and whether this fire be understood of a material elementary fire, or a metaphorical one, that is the affliction of the mind, great sufferers certainly must these souls be whilst they are passing through that fire, wherein their works will be burnt, though, at length, their persons will be saved, not without pain and difficulty; like a man, who, to save his life when his house is in flames about him, is forced to pass through the fire to make his escape. Some lesser sins, then, according to the apostle's doctrine, Christians die guilty of, not deserving eternal damnation; which, nevertheless are punished in the other world *with fire*, whatever that fire be; which is the genuine doctrine of purgatory maintained by Roman Catholics.

3. "For Christ who hath once suffered for sins the just for the unjust, (that he might bring us to God) being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit; by which also he went, and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing." 1 Pet.-iii. 18, 19, 20.

From this text it appears, that at the time of our Saviour's death there were some souls in a state of suffering (in prison) in the other world, on account of lesser sins not deserving of damnation; for certainly our Saviour would not have gone and preached to them, had they not been capable of salvation. These souls therefore were not in heaven, where all preaching is needless, nor in hell, where all preaching is unprofitable; but, in the middle state of suffering souls, they were; which is the purgatory maintained by Roman Catholics.

4. "Who will render to every man according to his deeds." Rom. ii. 6.

"And then he shall reward every man according to his works." Matthew, xvi. 27—Apocalypse xxii. 12.

That God will render to every one, according to their works, with strict justice in the other world, is plain in Scripture, even for every idle word man shall be accountable. Matt. vii. 36. Again, we know from Scripture, that no one lives without sin; for there is no man that sinneth not, and, in many things, we offend all. (1 Kings vii. 46.—James iii. 2.) But if no one lives without sin, it is not to be doubted, that great numbers, even of the better sort of Christians, die before they have sufficiently washed away all their sins in the blood of the Lamb. For, who of a thousand can say, at the time of their death, that they have by penance entirely cancelled every sin they had committed, of thought, word, or deed, from the time they came to the use of reason to the end of their lives? Now either Protestants maintain, with the ancient stoic

philosophers, that all sins are equal, at least all mortal, and, if so, whoever die in any sin before they have repented, are forever lost: (which doctrine none but a madman will maintain) or, they allow that there are lesser sins and imperfections in men which we call venial sins, and, which are incident even to the just, that do not merit eternal torments. But, if there are many, who, before they have repented, die guilty of lesser sins which do not merit eternal torments, either they immediately after death are translated into the joys of heaven, without undergoing the just punishment of their offences either in this world or the next; and then how is it true, that God renders to every one according to their works? Or, they are at first punished in the other world, in proportion as their sins deserve, and, in the end, are translated to heaven; which in other words, is what we mean by a purgatory.

5. "But the most valiant Judas exhorted the people to preserve themselves from a sin, seeing before their eyes what had happened for the sins of those who were fallen in battle. And, making a collection, he sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem, for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously of the resurrection. . . . It is, therefore, a holy and wholesome cogitation to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins." 2 Mac. xii. 42.

Whether Protestants allow the history of the Machabees a place in their canon of Scripture or not it may I hope, be of sufficient authority to inform them, that prayers and sacrifices for the dead were formerly a solemn rite of the Jewish Church, at a time when it was the true Church and taught the true worship of God. Now, if the belief of a third place, or purgatory, was a point of true faith, then revealed from God and delivered to the Jews by tradition from the saints, it is also a point of true faith now.

TENETS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH FAIRLY EXPLAINED.

CHAPTER V.

ON RELICS, PICTURES, AND IMAGES.

With regard to Relics and Images, the Council of Trent expressly forbids us to believe, that 'there is any power or divinity in them, for which they should be revered, or that any thing is to be asked of them, or any confidence to be placed in them;' and expressly declares, that "all the honour be referred to those, whom these relics or images represent," for it requires, "that honour and