

knowledge) by Mr. Whitbread's plan for the instruction of the poor: and the result has been a general conviction, that the ignorance, superstition, and immorality of the lower orders, are an evil of the most alarming magnitude. If the Bishop of Durham alone be ignorant of this truth, let him ask his venerable brother the Bishop of London, who will inform him that in several parts of his diocese, there are many hundreds of ignorant wretched young creatures, of both sexes, totally destitute of all education, totally unacquainted with the very first elements of religion; and who perhaps never once entered within the walls of a church.—Bishop of London's charge, 1790, page 14. Let him ask that intelligent magistrate Mr. Colquhoun, and he will inform him, that in the population of England alone, eleven hundred and seventy thousand children, it is much to be feared, grow up to an adult state, without any education at all, and also without any useful impressions of religion or morality. To these are to be added many of those who have had the advantage of some education, but in ill regulated schools, in which proper attention is not given to religious and moral instruction, so that in the present state of things, it is not too much to say that every thirty years (the period assigned for a new generation) at least four millions and a half of adults must, in case a remedy is not applied, mingle in the general population of England, without any fixed principles of rectitude, and with very little knowledge either of religion or morality.—Colquhoun's new and appropriate system of education, p. 72. Had the English clergy, like those of the Church of Rome, whose zeal the Bishop of Durham thinks highly worthy of imitation, made the diffusion of religious knowledge the great object of their labors and solicitude, we should not now have to view with fear and astonishment, the ignorance and immorality with which we are surrounded!" Remarks on the Bishop of Durham's charge.—See Coyne's edition of Lingard's controversies, p. 44, 45.

"There are among us, says Mr. Wilks, those not less in darkness and ignorance, than those that are to be found in the pagodas of China, or who amidst the deep wilds of Indian forests, sacrifice their children, or prostrate themselves before demons, at whom they tremble, but whom they adore.—Home Missionary Mag. Jan. 1820, p. 22.—Speech of J. Wilks, Esq., chairman at a home missionary meeting.

"The populace of England, are more ignorant of their religious duties than they are in any other christian country. It would make any one christians heart bleed to think, says Bishop Croft, how many thousand souls there are in this land that have no more knowledge of God than heathens.—Thousands of the mendicant condition, and thousands of the mean husbandry men, as they grow up to be men, grow mere babes in religion, so ignorant as scarce to know their heavenly Father. At this day the case is worse than Bishop Croft represented it."—Quarterly Review, Sept. 1818, p. 20.

"It appears from the official documents, which Mr. Yates has collected and compared, that within

the small circle of ten miles round London, no less than 977,000 persons are shut out from the common pastoral offices of the national religion. Shut out, says Mr. Yates, from the pale of the church, from all participation in its benefits, they are necessarily driven to join the ranks of injurious opposition, either in dissent and sectarian enthusiasm, or in the infinitely more dangerous opposition of infidelity, atheism and ignorant depravity. Well may he add, such a mine of heathenism and consequent profligacy and danger, under the very meridian of christian illumination cannot be contemplated without terror.—Quarterly Review, Oct. 1820, p. 554.

So much for the meridian of protestant illumination. Compare the state of Canada with this.—Compare with this even the nakedness of the land.

From this painful, and appalling scene let us turn to more pleasing objects. "I myself," says Dr. Fletcher, Spirit of Controversy, p. 121, "have had some opportunities of ascertaining the comparative knowledge, which the vulgar French, and the lower classes of my own countrymen possess of their respective religions. I say it without partiality after making the comparison, I do sincerely believe, that, speaking in general, the religious knowledge of the poorer French, was erudition, compared with the slender notions of the poorer English. If this assertion should, to any one appear the dictate of prejudice, I will present a single cause, which alone, may seem to account for the striking difference:—it is the method, by which the minds of the French were trained to the science and practice of religion. No sooner had a child, in France, been taught to lisp the language of reason, than its parents (who it is already supposed had taught it the usual prayers for children,) were compelled to usher it into the parish church, to learn and repeat its catechism. These repetitions were enacted every Sunday of the year, with the exception sometimes of the season for the harvest. During some parts of the year, in Advent and Lent, they were enacted more frequently. A catechism in France, was not, like our common protestant catechism in this country, the immense length of half a dozen questions, with the same formidable number of answers; it was a book, adequate from its size, to contain, and by its clearness, convey, a very comprehensive, and accurate knowledge of religion.—This was learnt, verbatim, by heart. The cure, or his vicar, explained it: and as the French possess an easiness and happiness of expression, which we in general do not, they explained it clearly, naturally and pleasingly. The series of these instructions was continued, during the space of several years; always, till the period, when the child was deemed sufficiently informed, to be admitted to the participation of the holy Eucharist. The degree of knowledge, which was required for this purpose, was not inconsiderable. It was required, that the person to be admitted, should not only understand the importance and obligation of this sacred action, and the nature of the sacred rite, but, should also be able to conceive, and give a tolerable account of all the great mysteries and precepts of religion."

Instead of the words France, and French, read Canada and Canadians, and the whole of this passage is perfectly applicable to the province.

I think that I have sufficiently proved what I advanced, both as to the relative attention of the Catholic and Protestant clergy in instructing, and the relative knowledge of religion in the bulk of the population of England and the ignorant portion of the Canadian population.

The Courant's misrepresentation of the conduct of the Canadian clergy, his desire of excluding all clergymen from education-committees, the irreligious and anarchical tendency of his code of instruction on the broad basis of civil and religious liberty, authorise me to say, that the education of the heart, the direction of the will, the enlightening of the conscience, the communicating of principles to regulate the conduct of men, as good citizens and good christians, form no part of his system of public instruction.

To be continued.

Who can deny this to be the age of reason; in which all are on every subject, sacred or profane, such magisterial reasoners: such hopeful theorists, such fertile scheming system builders, and tireless reformers? It was but one in a thousand formerly who, after long study, deep research, and practical experience, could think of offering himself as a guide in any branch of science to the less instructed portion of the public. But now knowledge flows in upon us, like a deluge from the press; though in so impure and jumbled a state; that, like kennel-water, (for every one empties his household filth into it) without passing it through a proper filtering and rectifying machine, which few possess; it were death to drink it. Such purifying process is seen aptly applied in our correspondent's strictures on the illiberal effusion against Canadian education; sent forth by the Canadian Courant; that supra sapient anticatholic reformers.

ANSWER.

To The Editor of the Catholic.

Rev. Sir,

The fact that I have been absent about three weeks and only returned on the evening of the 16th instant will, I am sure, be received by you as a sufficient apology for my not duly acknowledging, at an earlier period the receipt of your very gentlemanly reply.

I am happy that you have acceded to my proposal, and have done so in a manner worthy of a christian and a christian minister.

I have long since felt myself virtually called upon to say something in defence of some of the principles of Protestantism, in reply to your sundry strictures; but knew not how to do so in a manner least offensive to you and most beneficial to all concerned in such a discussion. The way is now opened and I sincerely hope, that our amicable discussion may proceed, as I trust it has commenced, with the best feelings on both sides.

By referring to the best authorities, I think you will find that my use of the term discover was strictly proper, even according to our own views of the subject: and I doubt not but upon farther consideration you will admit that you write to disclose truth to bring it to light to make it known to expose it to view; otherwise to discover it.

On the propriety or impropriety of your strictures upon other Editors, it is not my province to remark; as far as I am concerned your explanation is perfectly satisfactory.

The correctness of the proposition, that the doctrines of the Catholic Church are the easiest to accept-