

nothing should be added to, or taken from them; that men should never presume to give them a signification different from that, which he himself had assigned them. It tells us in fine, that he came to display to the world the light of his revelation, to substitute a uniformity of belief in place of a variety of suppositions, to unite from north to south, from east to west, in one single association, under the cloak of the same doctrine and the same spiritual government, so many nations widely differing from each other in interests, customs, climates, prejudices and language: a design too grand for any mortal legislator whatsoever; but which well became him, who was entitled to the homage of the universe.

One of your own divines\* has spoken well on this subject "Nor is the importance of Unity," says he, "much less in these latter days of christianity, for as much as all divisions in all times destroy that beauty and loveliness, which would otherwise attract all men's admiration and affection.—It is not the sublimity of Christian doctrine, nor the gloriousness of the hopes it propounds, that will so recommend it to the opinion and esteem of beholders, as when shall be said, *Eccē ut christiani amant* when they shall observe the love, concord, and unanimity amongst the professors of it. And the want of this hardens the hearts of *Jews*, and *Turks*, and *Pagans* more against it, than all the reasons and proofs we can give for it, will soften them, and instead of opening their ears and hearts to entertain it, open their mouths in contempt and blasphemy against it." On the contrary, the proofs of christianity would easily enter into the heart by the most moving and irresistible of all proofs, the perfect union of Christians amongst themselves. Where, in fact, are we to look for the cause of this unanimity? How are we to account for this union of mind and heart among the innumerable faithful, strangers to one another in language, customs, climate and government? No human institution could ever have effected so great a prodigy; *Jews*, *Turks*, idolators, all would have acknowledged and adored a supernatural and divine operation. We may then reasonably conclude, that if men's passions had not revolted against the yoke of authority; if restless spirits had not been borne away with the mania of dogmatizing; and subtilizing upon mysteries; if ambitious hypocrites and proud sectarians had not divided brethren, torn the Church and miserably dragged entire nations after them into schism and error, the plan of our divine legislator would have been gloriously accomplished, infidelity would have disappeared, all nations would have been brought over to the Christian religion: from every part of the globe the same prayers would be offered up to our only and adorable mediator, the world would be at the foot of the cross, and heaven-born unity would reign undisturbed throughout the world.

II. Reason has sufficiently proved that it is

\* Dr Goodman in his work entitled, "A Serious and Compassionate Inquiry into the Causes of the present Neglect and Contempt of the Protestant Religion and Church of England," pages 106, 107.—Part 2nd, Chap. 2nd, 3d Edition. London 1675.

not merely expedient, but necessary, that the economy of Christian revelation be inseparable from the most absolute unity. We will therefore, proceed a step further, and pass on to facts. Is it true that Jesus Christ was really desirous that unity should prevail in his church and in his doctrine? Are we certain that he actually taught it as an essential dogma of his law? Let us open the archives that contain it, and first call to mind a principle on which protestants and catholics are agreed. The principle is, that every one ought to believe and admit what is clearly expressed in the Holy Scripture. Now, therefore, let us see whether the dogma of the unity of the church, both in its government and in its faith, is found to be taught with that degree of clearness, which requires our assent, which commands and beats away our submission and our belief.

He, who would understand the plan that our divine legislator proposed to himself in coming down upon earth, should collect with care whatever the evangelists tell us concerning it in the different circumstances of his life. These different passages collected together and compared with each other, will prove to demonstration the correctness of the views, that unassisted reason has already taken of the subject. Our Saviour himself shall now open his thoughts and reveal to us that the end of his preaching and of his death, were 1st, to call to himself all the nations of the earth; 2dly, to unite them altogether in one body, in the same doctrine and sentiments.

1st, Saint Matthew relates that, being struck with the humility of the centurion and with the faith that animated his petition, our Lord turned towards those who were following him, and said to them: "Amen, I say to you, I have not found so great faith in Israel: and I say to you, that many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." On mount Olivet, after having foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and before he announced that of the world, he said to his disciples; "And this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come." We will moreover, adduce the words uttered by him in the house of Simon during his repast with Lazarus, after he had raised him from the grave. Mary came with great piety to pour precious ointment on his feet: and Judas having censured this affectionate tribute of respect and tenderness as an act of prodigality, Jesus vouchsafes to justify it, and adds; Amen, I say to you, wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, that also which she hath done, shall be told for a memory of her." Who does not discover in these as well as in the foregoing words, the intention of the legislator that his law should be announced to the world, and that all the nations of the earth should be called unto it?

So far, he had satisfied himself with insinuating it on certain occasions; it was reserved for a later period to point it out more expressly. After his re-

surrection it was that he opened himself to his apostles upon the subject, when he declared to them the greatness and the extent of the ministry he laid upon them. "Going," said he to them, "teach all nations—teaching them to observe all things what-soever I have commanded you." And at his last appearance, when on the point of returning to heaven, he again commands his apostles to execute his intentions: he addresses them with these words, the last that have ever been heard from his divine mouth: "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria; and even to the uttermost parts of the earth." Here then, are all nations, all people both those who then inhabited this globe, and those who were to inhabit it to the end of time, marked out for the apostolic ministry, and from thenceforth invited and called to Jesus Christ. 2dly, But what then would he do? Listen, while he informs you: "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold." This he said after having spoken of those, who already were following him, and evidently referring to those who had not, up to that time, heard his voice, that is to say, to all the nations of the world, to whom he ordered it should afterwards be carried "Other sheep I have, that are not of this fold," (the Gentiles, strangers at that time to the fold, into which the Jews alone had hitherto entered) "them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." We here see the unity of the Church, distinctly represented under the figure of one only fold, which contains one only flock, confided to the care of one only shepherd or pastor. But who is this single pastor? Jesus Christ was the pastor on earth, and no doubt he continues to be eminently so in heaven; but, in order that, after his ascension, the entire flock might always perceive a pastor at its head, it was necessary that Jesus Christ should substitute a visible shepherd to the end of time, and in fact, we learn again from St. John, that at the moment of his ascending to his Father, in the presence of his disciples, Jesus Christ confided to Peter and his successors the administration and government of all who were his, and with a view to make this great prerogative better understood by all and incontestably recognised in the prince of the apostles, he was pleased to confer it upon him by a commission given thrice in succession: "Feed my lambs, feed my lambs, feed my sheep." You see there is no exception: it is the whole flock, all the sheep who were one day to hear his voice and be united in one and the same fold: the whole of the faithful, therefore, are confided to the guardianship of one pastor, to the care of Peter, and after him to his successors.

Previously to this, Jesus Christ had announced the same pre-eminence to the same apostle under another figure, and always by shewing that he had but one Church in view, as he was desirous that all his sheep should be collected into one fold: and this above all it behoves us to remark: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;