

commandment only a more explicit repetition of the first.

Having thus, for the aforementioned laudable purpose, made two commandments of one; our reformers, not to exceed, by the change, the original number ten; were now under the necessity of making but one of two: and the least glaringly absurd identification was of the two last, prohibiting sins in thought. But here again they have missed their mark as much as ever: and their contraction at the end of the Decalogue was as absurdly made, as their enlargement at the beginning. For sins are as distinct in thought, as they are in deed. Their respective prohibitions must therefore be equally so. For instance: *adultery* and *theft* are two distinct sins indeed: and their several prohibitions are acknowledged to be two distinct commandments. But adultery in thought is *to covet our neighbour's wife*: and theft in thought is *to covet our neighbour's goods*. Let Protestants then show how these two sins, which cannot be identified in deed; and are therefore prohibited by two distinct commandments: can be identified in thought, and prohibited by only one. Let them do this, or confess the villainy of the shifts, which their unprincipled Reformers had recourse to, in order to decry the Catholic Church, and render her odious to the deluded public: whom they taught thus to consider her as a sink of idolatry; in which were made, retained and worshipped the various objects prohibited by an express commandment.

Yet, they well knew, all along, what every sincere seeker of truth among Protestants may, by only looking at any of her Catechisms, know also; that she expressly forbids her children to worship any *graven thing, image or likeness whatever*; as having any virtue in itself, or power to see, hear or help us. That she keeps such only to remind us of their immortal and ever blest originals: to recall to our minds what the Saviour has done and suffered for us; and to hold out for our imitation the heroic virtues of the Saints, his faithful followers. These indeed she keeps respectfully; as she does whatever is connected with Religion: never for their own sake, as they are nothing but the insensible works of man: (that which the most ignorant Catholic knows; and smiles at the more than childish credulity of Protestants; who can be brought to believe that he worships them, as the Pagan did his idols.) But for the sake of the holy and dignified beings, whom they represent.

Did not God himself, after forbidding all idolatrous likenesses to be made and kept; order such religious ones to be made and placed even in his Sanctuary? What were the golden Cherubims, but such. What was the *Brazen Serpent*, but, as our Saviour tells us, a figure of himself crucified? John 3, xiv. It was the first *Crucifix*; a figure held in general abhorrence by Protestants; and not less so for certain by him, who sees in it the sign of his own defeat by the Redeemer. It was, what must still more shock the Protestant, a *wonder-working image*. For to suppose that God should ever work wonders with such instruments, is quite a *papistical* fiction; though a *scriptural* one. Witness the wonders he wrought with Moses' and Aaron's rods: with the tree thrown into the *bitter waters of Mara*, which made them sweet—Exod. 15, 25. With Gideon's fleece. Judges 6, 37. With the Mantle of Elias: 4 Kings, 2, 14. With the Salt, cast by

Elisba into the Spring, which healed the waters of their bad quality; and the soil of its barrenness.—ib. v. 20. As well as the meal, thrown by him into the pot; which rendered immediately wholesome its poisonous contents—ibid. ch. 4, 41. I say nothing of Tobias, and the Fish: that part of scripture not being considered by Protestants as canonical: But even in the new Testament we find equally stupendous wonders wrought with things in themselves inanimate and insensible: such as the pool of *Siloe* and the *Probatic Pond*. The Hem of our Saviour's Garment: his sacred Spittle, and the clay made with it: the *handkerchiefs and aprons*, which had touched the body of Saint Paul: and even the shadow of St. Peter. I mention all this merely to shew that there is nothing unscriptural, absurd or idolatrous, in the Catholic's belief that God in his church may work wonders even with such an image as the *Brazen Serpent*; and such substances as Blessed Salt, Holy Oil or Water; every thing, which, according to Saint Paul, is sanctified by the word of God and with prayer—1 Tim. 4, 5—and that he may still, if he pleases, honour his Saints, by imparting to their relics, as he did to those of Saint Paul, a miraculous and wonder-working efficacy. Did he not himself with a tree, (the cross) repair the mischief caused us with a tree? And can he not, with any thing he chooses, do whatever he chooses? This is then the sum of what Catholics believe regarding things solemnly blessed by the Church, for the instruction and edification of her children: and through which her Benedictions (all derived from the infinite power, sanctity and superabundant merits of the Saviour) in sensible signs, like grace in the Sacraments, to their ultimate objects, the faithful.

But the Catholic is seen, in passing before his holy images, to uncover his head, and bow towards them. Nay he often kneels and prays before them: and what greater homage could the heathen pay than this to his Idols?

The heathen pays his homage to the thing itself; which, in the catholic language, can neither see, nor hear, nor help him: or to the imaginary deity, which it represents; and which, according to St. Paul, is a mere non-entity. Now we know, says he, that an idol is nothing in the world, 1 Cor. viii. 4, nothing real and true.—Ibid. ch. x. 19, where as the Catholic's homage is referred, either as sovereign to Jesus Christ; or as inferior to his Saints, whom he honors in their images or likenesses. Nor can such homage paid to the true God in any place be blameable. Neither can it be displeasing to the deity to see those honored, for his sake whom he himself has honored and glorified in heaven.

But the Catholic prays to them. Yes, he asks them to use their influence with God in his behalf, just as we would our brethren here on earth; (that which even protestants allow, is lawful) well knowing, from what the Saviour has told us, that they are not unconscious of our state; nor unconcerned about our eternal welfare; but that they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner.—Luke xv. 9.

The sole reason then, which the Protestant has for his silly supposition that Catholics worship images as their Gods, is, that he sees them uncover, and bow, and pray before them.

But we uncover, and bow before our fellow creatures. Do we therefore worship them, as our Gods? Subjects even kneel, to kiss the King's hand. Do they then, as their God, adore him? The Lords and Commons of England never pass

the throne in the House of Peers, without uncovering and bowing before it. Yet, who ever thought, on that account, of calling them idolaters?

In kneeling any where to pray, we have always some object or other before us. Suppose a Protestant kneeling before his own image reflected in a glass would it be fair in such a case to accuse him of self adoration? If not, why should the Catholic be accused of adoring the object, before which he prays? Is it because he prefers having placed before him in his serious moments an object more corresponding with his pious reflections?

The particular antipathy which all Protestants have to holy images and pictures, is the more surprising and unaccountable, as they are remarkably fond of all such as are of an opposite description. The statues, busts, images and likenesses of their kings, warriors, statesmen, &c. are made and kept with choice attention: and even admitted by them into their churches; where those of the Saviour and his Saints would not be suffered to appear. To say nothing of their family portraits, and the carved or painted likenesses of their friends, kindred and acquaintance; of every person or thing in nature, provided such represent nothing holy and edifying. Can such a dislike to all that is sacred: and such a partiality to all that is profane; be supposed to originate in any blest, or christian principle?

But let us for a moment return to the consideration of the alteration made by the protestant reformers in the decalogue.

The alteration which they have made in it, cannot but be evident from what has been already said upon the subject; was certainly too absurd, to have escaped their own notice. But, though it fools themselves in a worldly sense, they relish much in this instance, as they did in many others on the ignorant simplicity, the careless indifference and uninvestigating disposition of their followers. Yet, bold and venturesome as they were, they must have felt some twinges of remorse, ere they could have made up their minds for so deceitful a purpose, to offer the decalogue in so deranged a shape to the whole christian public. By making of the two last commandments but one, they have sunk the dignity of the woman; confounding her with the husband's goods and earthly property; with his ox and his ass.

The decalogue in its original shape, consists of two distinct tables; the first containing exclusively our duty to God; the second exclusively our duty to man.

The twofold distinction of these tables is owing to the twofold distinction of the duties they contain. But, as is observed by all who study the scriptures, and particularly by St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Gregory the Great, and other holy fathers and doctors of the Church; there are certain numbers purposely chosen, and evidently intended by the inspiring deity to convey to our minds an important meaning, such, in particular, the *true* number, or *one and three*; which in its singular or plural, we find always applied in scripture to what regards the deity; the eternal *one* or *three*; such is also