

THE CATHOLIC.

QUOD SEMPER, QUOD UBIQUE, QUOD AB OMNIBUS CREDITUM EST.—WHAT ALWAYS, AND EVERY WHERE, AND BY ALL IS BELIEVED.

VOLUME II.

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THE CATHOLIC

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EDITOR.

THE CATHOLIC PROSPECTUS.

Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditum est.—What always, and every where, and by all is believed.

In offering once more to the Public our Weekly Periodical, *THE CATHOLIC*, we wish it to be understood that it is not our intention to make it a work of polemical discussion or religious disputation; except when forced, in self defence, to repel the wanton and unmerited attacks of others—to expose the ignorant or wilful misrepresentations of the Catholic doctrine; and, when calumniated, to set ourselves right in the general estimation.

Our main purpose in this undertaking is, (besides exhibiting in her true light the Catholic Church) to adduce proofs in favour of Christianity at large, demonstrative of its divine origin and institution. This seems the more necessary, as the tendency of the present age is evidently towards downright infidelity. The time seems at length arrived, when the prophetic warning of the chief Apostle is to be verified. "In the latter days [says he] there shall come scoffers, deceitful scoffers, walking after their own concupiscences; and saying, where is His [the Lord's] promise, or where is His coming; for, since the time that our fathers slept, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the world." *2 Peter, iii. 2.* The Saviour himself had predicted that such a general apostasy would take place before his final coming to judge the world. "Do you think [said he] when the Son of Man cometh, that he will find faith upon the earth?" *Luke xviii. 8.*

To render our Publication more agreeably and usefully varied, we shall introduce into it such subjects, RELIGIOUS, MORAL, PHILOSOPHICAL and HISTORICAL, as may be instructive, edifying and entertaining.

We shall also notice the PASSING EVENTS, and give our readers whatever is most interesting in the NEWS OF THE DAY.

We are not unknown to the British and also to the foreign American public, who have welcomed and patronised our former undertaking, and generally regretted its discontinuance. We are thus encouraged to look up again to them for their generous support in our anxious endeavours to furnish them with a rational, religious and truth-propounding periodical. Protestants of every denomination are deeply interested in knowing perfectly what they seem easily persuaded too rashly to condemn.

Catholics, on the other hand, unjustly represented as idolaters; as monsters, in a moral sense, authorised to sin, by that absolving power which Christ has left to the pastors of His church—the power of forgiving the truly, and only the truly penitent, *JOHN xx. 23.* Catholics are particularly interested in supporting a publication such as this, which secures their moral and religious character from the obloquy so unsparingly thrown upon it, by those whose livings depend on the propping up of their own variously invented systems, and which they constantly do by decrying and vilifying the sole religion of the Saviour's institution.

We therefore rely on the ready support of all who are sincere in their search after truth, and who earnestly desire to see it prevail; for truth is one and always the same.

Our Paper will be of the imperial quarto size, containing eight pages, and will cost, exclusive of postage, *Three Dollars* annually, *half-yearly paid in advance*, to enable us properly to set on foot and carry on our Printing Establishment, which, whether subscriptions are forthcoming or not, will require constant and immediate outlay.

In our Weekly sheet, which we have reason to hope will be extensively circulated, room will be afforded to ADVERTISEMENTS on the same terms as in other Journals.

Sept. 15, 1841.

Original.

AGAINST PERSECUTION FOR CONSCIENCE SAKE.

AN EXTRACT.

But in the Saviour's conduct chiefly shone
Conspicuous forth that virtue all his own—
Sweet charity and universal love;
Embracing all and each of human kind
With fond fraternal feeling and unfeign'd;
Which no exclusive diff'rence e'er allows
Of country, kin, persuasion, friend or foe;
As tale of kind Samaritan must prove
To all, who ask who may their neighbour be,
By him adduc'd, and such their model show'n,
That love without reserve, till then unknown,
First taught by him which renders good for ill.

O were his law of love by all observ'd,
Who boast his law to keep! a heav'n were earth:
Now, unobserv'd that law, what misery reigns,
And wild uproar; that earth half hell might seem:
For hell is most where least of love is found.

And strange, 'tis passing strange, (as no pretence
For conduct e'er so barb'rous can be found
In all his maxims mild and precepts pure,)
That they who boast them followers of that Chief
Who stay'd th' uplifted steel, drawn in his cause,
Tho' righteous,—and forbearance meek enjoin'd:
Who to his aid had call'd th' Angelic Host,
If aid he'd wanted, though he wanted none;
That they should feign commission from such Chief
To arm in his defence; with fire and sword,
And, like Mahomet fierce, spread carnage round!
Should force the gift revolting of their creed
On minds, that unconvinced reluctant prove,
With threats, proscriptions, confiscations, urg'd;
Exclusions, and the tortures dreaded pang!
Nay more, that such should make his charity,
And love for whom they slay, the main pretence
For all this monstrous cruelty displayed;
Who could believe, what yet we all have felt?
And feel! Who does not feel as elsewhere, here?
Nay, ev'n in Britain feel the hot remains
Of unextinguish'd bigotry scorch sore—
All, but Court Christians, who can pliant trim
Their faith to modes most prevalent as their dress;
Yielding of loyalty their *perjur'd test*;
If yielded insincere! As, Cowper, thou
Of England's guilt forsworn do'st loud complain.

The mind is all her own; and to her own
Decision sole assents. 'Tis reason clear,
Not force terrific shew'n can her persuade.
Who would the mind compel, may make her feign,
But ne'er can make believe. 'Twas but to win
By plain conviction and persuasion soft
The willing mind from error, that our Lord
Religion sent; not bale coercive rule.

Original.

ON MYSTERIES.

God has grounded his religion on Mysteries inexplicable, the most fundamental of which, as admitted by every real Christian, is the Trinity of Persons, and unity of substance in the Godhead. This, as well as the Incarnation of the second Divine Person; the general Resurrection of the dead, which all Christians believe, and the real presence of Jesus Christ God and man, in the Eucharistic sacrifice and sacrament, believed by all in the Catholic or Universal church, from the time of the Apostles; are all to man in his present state, impenetrable mysteries.

Religion necessarily supposes mysteries as being an established intercourse betwixt God and his creatures; betwixt the infinite and incomprehensible Being, and the finite one. God is the source of all knowledge, from whom the creatures derive all whatsoever they know.—Only He can teach them truth, or the true knowledge, who is himself the essential truth. But how can they be taught by him, if they disbelieve his Revelations, because these come not within their so limited comprehension? Were I to distrust even my fellow creature's ac-

count of something wonderful seen by him; and tell him that till I see it myself, I will not believe him; how unbearable an insult would this offer him! It were gratuitously treating him as a liar, owing to my own ignorance of the fact which he relates. Then think what an insult those offer to the God of truth, who deny his clearly revealed mysteries because they cannot comprehend them! Before he speaks, we can know nothing; and all we know for certain is derived from his gratuitous communications; whether in the natural way by reason, or common sense, imparted more or less to all; and the knowledge hence acquired from observation and experience; or in the supernatural, by extraordinary Revelation. His word alone is our perfect and infallible security for the truth of all that he reveals. It was the Devil in Paradise, who first taught the human creatures to argue against the word of God; and to substitute in its stead their own ignorantly formed conjectures. It is then to enable us to repair our original transgression, that of distrusting the word of God; it is in order to bring us back to our rational and righteous state of innocent simplicity; that the Deity has grounded his religion on mysteries; teaching us to rely on his word; by our total dependence upon him, and by our humble submission in all things to his will, that we can make amends for our original guilt; for our disbelief; our aspiring pride; and our disobedience to his commands.

But are they not aware, those who reject, as incomprehensible, the mysteries of religion, that there are numberless others in nature, as incomprehensible, which they believe? The truth is, we live and move in the midst of mysteries. This visible universe in all its parts, great and small, holds forth to us an endless series of mysteries inscrutable; and are we not one of such we ourselves even to ourselves? Let any one of those, who admit not in God's Revelations what they cannot understand; let him explain to me, if he can, how his soul is connected with his body; a pure spirit with its organs of clay; how she rules it in all its motions; how the tongue in all the rapidity of speech, assumes its undefined and unbidden positions, immediately adapting itself to the proper utterance of the thoughts which we wish to express; how our meat and drink is transubstantiated into our flesh and blood, and every portion of our terrestrial frame, how the substance of the common earth is also changed into all the different substances of trees and herbs, fruits and flowers; and how their numerous colours, forms and fragrance are produced. Need I speak of animated nature, were it but of the smallest insects, that fly or creep; those living mites of every size and shape and hue; or still more wonderful, of these *animacula*, which, from their minuteness, are invisible to our sight but through the microscope; who can anatomize, and explain their pigmy structures, or tell how their vital principle is linked with their earthly parts? Do not all these wonders great and small, and millions more of the prodigies of nature, mock at the infidel's unphilosophical and unchristian incredulity? Does he think with his glow-worm light of reason to explore the fearful depths of infinitude; to discover what God can do; and mark a boundary to Omnipotence? Does he think, like the child, who appeared to the contemplating sage, when lost in deep reflection on the mystery of the Trinity, that he can pour out from a shell into a small hollow made in the sand the whole immense bulk of the rolling ocean.

Yet such is the absurd pretension of our modern infidels, and free-thinking theorists. They can sneer at the account given in Scripture of the dead raised to life, as an event quite incredible; and they see nothing incredible in the far greater wonder, which they witness, of life given to millions, who never before had enjoyed it. For it is surely more to give than to restore. They call in question the miracle wrought by the Saviour in the desert of twice feeding the multitude with so few loaves and fishes; and yet they spy nothing to startle them at the same Lord's power displayed in his reproducing from the ground the seeds thrown into it to feed his hungering creatures in their present state of exile from their eternal home. They cannot believe that He, who created all things out of nothing, and cast down from his holy Heaven the proud aspiring and rebel angels, could as easily cure all diseases and cast out devils. Yet these miracles were wrought in open day, and in the face of a whole gainsaying nation.—

[See last page.]