

together with their peculiar doctrines, were immediately condemned, either by the particular judgment of their bishop, or by the voice of a general council. Were there those continued cries of distress, which now so fearfully sound upon our ears in every direction? Were the poor, whom our Saviour himself calls "blessed," reviled, despised, and trampled upon as they are now? No, for the gates of the monasteries, convents, and colleges, were then daily thrown open to the afflicted and the broken-hearted; then those wondrous churches and cathedrals were erected—relics of noblest days—whose very stones are dear unto us, for they were raised by men whose names ought to be held in veneration by us—such as William of Wickham, Bishop Wainfleet, Walter Skirlaw, John Alcock, Richard Beauchamp, &c. Learning too, was promoted by holy monks, like a St. Edmund, a venerable Bede, an Alcuin, an Alexander of Hales—"men," says an illustrious writer, "in whose writings we find vast and original views; questions solved in their profoundest depths, and from which a light of philosophy and of literary beauty shines out each instant."* Then the church formed a society, which passed all that the heart of man could wish for upon earth. Was it truth? Where was it to be found, if not in that church which could satisfy the genius of a Racoon? Was it happiness? There it was found by millions who had vainly sought for it in glory, in pleasures, in friendship, in solitude. Was it nobility or grandeur? All who have been illustrious in the annals of our ancient history were Catholics.†

Now if England were such before she fell away from the faith of her fathers, assuredly she would again become the same if once more she became Catholic. She would even be more glorious than she was in her ancient days, because as her sway is now far more extended than it was before the Reformation; as she possesses important settlements in almost every part of the world; as her very name is held in reverence, her power, therefore, is beyond all dispute, and her resources still almost boundless. If then England were Catholic, these resources would be still more increased, and, consequently, how wonderfully would her power tend to advance the kingdom of Christ throughout the remotest regions of the earth. Thus it was that God gave such power and greatness to pagan Rome, in order that afterwards the Gospel might be more easily preached throughout the world. Who can gainsay but that Providence may have acted in this manner towards England, that one day she, too, may be wonderfully instrumental in promoting throughout the world his holy re-

* Guizot. "Cours d'Histoire Abbe," vol. 1. p. 220.

† To be convinced what England was before the Reformation, we need only consult Dr. Lingard's "Anglo-Saxon Church," Turner's "England during the Middle Ages," Warham's Preface to the "Monast. Anglicanum." Hurter, Dr. Hoek, and Voight in the Lives of the respective Pontiffs, written by them, have clearly shown the beneficial influence these illustrious men then exercised over the whole of Europe.

ligion? Again: no one can deny but that there is in this country, with all its numerous and contradictory sects, a beautiful religious spirit, by which enormous sums* are yearly expended in building churches and chapels, and endeavouring to convert pagan nations. Now if this spirit were only directed into the proper channel; if all the missionaries were working together in the same glorious cause which led, in former days, so many of our countrymen into distant climes to be instruments in bringing whole kingdoms to the Catholic faith; then what blessed fruits would be reaped by this nation, now so harrassed and distracted both at home and abroad! Yes! "Let the same principle return again as a general principle to our country; let the mantle of the Bonifaces and the Willibrods, with their two-fold spirit of Catholic faith and Catholic love, be caught up by the nation, and it shall divide the rivers and open the seas before its ministers, and make them the inheritors of their grace, and render this island once more—what it formerly was—a gushing well-spring of Catholicity and salvation to the nations of the earth."†

(To be continued.)

From the Catholic Telegraph.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH A DIVINE WITNESS.

When the student of Ecclesiastical history has perused the wondrous testimony with which its pages abound, he may confidently propose the question to mankind, whether revelation could have survived the wreck of time and nations, had there been no living witness, like the Catholic church, to guard from profanation the deposit of truth? We believe whatever our senses in the ordinary ways of life propose for our adoption: we assent to those facts which the historian of a people records to instruct the world: whatever is related by those with whom we hold daily intercourse and whose word is unimpeached, finds ready access to the mind: but the testimony of the Catholic church has a strength and efficacy so vast, so consistent and lucid, that a dispassionate mind is overwhelmed by its integrity. We judge of the power of a government by its capacity to rule; we acknowledge its adaptation to the peculiarities of a people, when it preserves through centuries their respect and secures for all the enjoyment of every civic blessing. A national character undergoes many vicissitudes through the long lapse of ages, and the wisest code must yield to the new currents into which the mind is settling in force; but in the Catholic church we have a constitution so divinely guarded, so conservative and yet so free, so able to resist and yet so gentle to the governed, that we contemplate with wonder the perfection of its institutes. She is not fashioned by men, but men yield to its pressure and are accommodated to its di-

* Thus, for the year 1850, the following are the details of the missions;—

Wesleyan Missions	£ 55,565
Church Missionary	47,323
London Independent Mission	48,226
Baptists	17,185
Society for the Propagation of the Gospel	29,487
	£109,151

† Dr. Wiseman. Lect. vi.

vine legislation. It matters not into what new phase the ever restless spirit of humanity may enter, she loses not her place in the spiritual firmament, nor the attractive force which binds, preserves and regulates the harmony of life. There may be revolutions in opinion, and from its wild excesses many calamities may ensue, but reason, the little star of life, grows darker as it recedes from the church, and gladly returns to the centre on which it depends for enjoyment and light.

This mysterious power of the church is still more strikingly exhibited, when we count the many nations and tongues over which her dominion has extended. Even in our own country we cannot form a constitution which will please the millions; no law can be enacted whose restrictions will be equally grateful to all; the spirit of patriotism cannot silence the complaints of those who yield reluctantly; but in the Catholic church the only difficulty we encounter, is the endeavor to enumerate the varieties of men, who age after age have rejoiced in its protection. United as we are in brotherhood, we yet rush into war with some other department of the human family; we read the notes of travellers in other climes and smile at customs & manners so unlike our own, we doubt the wisdom of their laws, we detest their literature, we cannot adopt their ideas of beauty nor the taste which makes their social circles so estranged from the habits of our own: no efforts of man, no conceptions of human prudence could give unanimity to the wishes of our race, yet the Catholic church hath a sovereign will which rules this mighty mass, and her name and her praise, her sacrifice and blessings, her lofty hopes and the sacraments by which those hopes may be realized, are known and cherished by hearts with which we have scarcely another thought in sympathy. She has spoken to them in languages long since extinct, she is watching the variations of living tongues and marking their decline, without surrendering a word which would obscure her meaning, and her creed is as pure, as distinctly defined, as permanent in the midst of revolution now, as it was when the freshness of heaven was breathing around it whis, it fell like heaven's best light, from the lips of the Saviour. Let the vain usurper of her office account for this adaptation of the church to conciliate reason and reconcile with her immutable character the changes of earth throughout all its extension! Let him account for the mystery which sustains her a sleepless and ever living witness, invincible to error and irresistible in the assertion of her prerogative. She alone of all things has not tasted the bitterness of death; she has written the epitaphs of nations, but who will live to record the fulfilment of her destiny.

If God had not established such a witness to guard his word from the conceits of men, the turbulence of infidelity and the iron tooth of Time, what relic of its primitive worth would have survived through so many ages of war, of feudal anger, of sectarian licentiousness, of royal persecutions, of reason crazy with presumption and of all the other evils which would have sacked every city, devastated every clime and committed to the flames the labors of the scholar! Who of all

who are now alive could tell us the divine origin of christianity, and separate Faith from error, if the word from on high had been thrown unprotected on the sea of life, the sport of every wave, the scorn of the voyager! What could be more ridiculous than to ask of the church of England, or Calvinism, or any other sect of modern growth, to substantiate the claims of Christianity and the integrity of its doctrines through those ages which preceded their introduction into life? Blot out the Catholic church and where is the witness for revelation? Destroy her agency in the preservation of the scriptures and to whom could we look for an authentic copy of the Bible?

It may be said that God would have devised some other means to guard the honor and purity of his word, had the Catholic church never gathered the nations into her fold. True, the Divine mind is not at a loss for expedients to meet every emergency, but *He has not* established any other medium of communication with heaven, and therefore, must we have recourse to her, to dissolve our doubts and impart conviction to our souls. She has accomplished her mysterious destiny heretofore, she fulfils it now she will be faithful to the mighty and glorious work of faith until the end of time. Protestants, do not hesitate to take the bible from her altar, but they discard her testimony to its integrity! As well may they acknowledge the statute book of our commonwealth, but despise the construction of the Judge, and the only constitutional tribunals established for its just interpretation. If we had not a witness like the church sanctioned by heaven, living through all times, with all the avenues to revelation open to her ministry, in whose sacred hands the book of God had been entrusted and preserved through all the revolutions of Empires, the change of languages and the wanderings of reason, if we had not such a witness to bear testimony to the fact she had received the scriptures and truths of the gospel, and that she guarded the celestial trust without addition, or alteration of the text; we would laugh at the man who would ask us to believe in the doctrines of christianity. For allowing that they were originally true, who is to satisfy us that they have not been corrupted? Blot out the Catholic church now, and let the confused sects of Protestantism be entrusted with their preservation, and no christian could be found in a century from this, who could prove by a satisfactory argument that the scriptures were entire, genuine and true, such as they had been written in the patriarchal and apostolic times. The Bible in their keeping would become as perplexing to men as the colour of the Camellion was to the travellers.

"He that does not hear the church, says Christ, let him be to thee as the Heathen and the Publican." We Catholics will hear no other church but the one to which the Saviour alluded. We will hear no other church but that whose ministers were gathered in prayer on the day of Pentecost, she who at Antioch was called Christian, whose people were so fervent in Rome, that the Apostle Paul determined to visit them because their "faith was spo-