

ground on which we, of this day, stand, because we know all that can be said on the subject, and nothing new can be brought forward. There have been giants on both sides of the controversy between us and Rome—giants of learning, reason and eloquence. All Scripture, all antiquity, have been thoroughly ransacked for arguments.

The great Cardinal Bellarmine, at the end of the sixteenth century, produced out of the Scriptures nineteen texts in support of Purgatory. Seventeen of these, however, he confesses to be only *probable* arguments, and certainly they are very strange proofs to our ears, as for example this text from the 38th psalm, “O Lord rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chastise me in thy hot displeasure”—by *wrath* is meant hell, by *hot displeasure* Purgatory! Or this, again, Ps. lxxi. 12: “We went through *fire* and through *water*, but thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.” *Water* is baptism, *fire* is Purgatory.

Alex. Natalis, another eminent Romish doctor, who wrote a few years after Bellarmine, rejects utterly seventeen out of these nineteen texts, thus venturing to allege only two. Most Romish writers, however, claim a third. Three texts then remain for us to examine; two of which only are from the Holy Scriptures, the third being from the Apocryphal second book of Maccabees. Is not this, brethren, remarkable? Out of the whole Bible—and it is not a small book—many of the greatest Romish writers venture to allege only *two*, and some of the most eminent of them only *one single text* of Scripture, to support this most extraordinary doctrine!

Let us lool first at the passage from the Apocrypha; and let me tell you in passing why we do not acknowledge the Apocrypha to be inspired Scripture. Not, as was lately said here,* ‘simply because it praises a suicide;’ but, first, because the Jews, to whom God committed and from whom the Christ-

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