

it appear strange that I changed once more? But I found no happiness in my religion; I was always haunted with the idea that all was not right; I did not like the forced celibacy of the priests, nor the denial of the cup to the laity; the prayers to the saints I disliked much; the worship of images still more; transubstantiation was also a great stumbling-block in my way. Yet here I was fast. The Church could not err; these things, therefore, must be believed, or I could not be saved. Yet I could not believe them; still worse, I was forced to say that I did believe them, or I could not obtain absolution.

I remained in this unhappy state for some time, till, by great good fortune, I happened one morning to overtake a gentleman walking towards the same place with myself. We entered into conversation, which, in consequence of some debate in Parliament on the Irish Church, turned upon our respective religions. During our conversation I happened to say to him, "Pray, sir, are you a Protestant minister?" "No," he replied, "I am a Catholic priest." "Catholic priest!" I said in astonishment: "how can that be, when you have been objecting to many of the doctrines of the Catholic Church?" "I hope not," he said; "it was not my intention to do so; I have, it is true, been finding fault with the doctrines of the Romish Church; but I have yet to learn that the Romish Church is the Catholic Church, or that the English Roman Catholics (as they are somewhat absurdly called) are any Catholics at all."

I was quite in amazement. To be denied the name of Catholic, which I thought so much of, was so new a thing to me, that I was quite startled, and did not speak. "You seem astonished at what I say," he said; "I assure you I mean no offence; but you must allow me to defend my church in my own way. We of the English Church are Catholics, English Catholics. We profess to be Catholics every time we meet for divine worship. There are many branches of the Catholic Church—the true vine. The Romish Church—a very corrupt one, at the best—is only one of those branches, and has no more right to call herself the Catholic Church than the County of Northumberland has to call itself England. That the English Church is a branch of the Catholic Church is clear from this, that all the marks of the Catholic Church are to be found in her:—the pure word of God preached, and the sacraments duly ministered by those who have been chosen and called to the work by bishops, whom we can trace up from the present time, in uninterrupted succession, to the first planting of Christianity in this island. Our ministers, since the Reformation, have been allowed to preach in the Greek and Syrian Churches, which are branches of the Catholic Church, as well as ourselves: the Doctors of the Sorbonne in Paris have recognized the validity of our orders; and so have Bossuet, Walsh, Courayer, and many other members of the Church of Rome."

This was all news to me; but my new friend (for such I must always consider him) at other times proved all this to me, and more. He proved that the Romanists in Great Britain and Ireland were not Catholics but schismatics, as they were not able to trace up their succession of bishops higher than the reign Queen Elizabeth, when they separated from the Catholic Church of this country, in obedience to the bull of Pope Pius V., who excommunicated the Queen, and released her subjects from their allegiance to her. He showed me this from one of the canons of the Catholic Church, agreed upon by a general council of the church held at Constantinople, A. D. 381. "We count those persons to be *heretics*, who, though they pretend to profess a sound faith, have separated themselves, and made *congregations contrary to our canonical bishops*." He also showed me another canon made at a general council of the Church, held at Chalcedon, A. D. 451, to this effect:—