

facts, by its blasphemous introduction into the very midst of them of its "Queen of Heaven"—the worship of the Virgin,—and by its homage done to intermediate mediators. It receives the Holy Scriptures as divinely inspired, but it mars the witness which it gives, and the doctrine of their supremacy and sufficiency by its theory of traditions, and its doctrine of church authority. It holds the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ; but it would sully the glory and sovereignty of grace by its merits of saints, and its church fund of superogatory virtue. It maintains the resurrection of the dead, and believes in the world to come; but it grievously perverts and enshrouds these verities by its monstrous theory of purgatory. It is true that some of its Jansenist Doctors have held comparatively clear ideas on the subject of original and actual sin, and on the freeness and glorious sovereignty of grace—they have denounced human merit as a ground of justification, and have made a near approach to evangelical verities,—but these have been only exceptions to its current teaching—the oasis in the desert.

The enemy has been sometimes foiled in his own strong-hold. The Lord has had a people, members of the spiritual Israel, within the bosom of this corrupt and apostate communion. Wherever his own saving truth remains, however beclouded and mystified, he will crown it with honour, and make it the instrument of awakening, enlightening, and saving souls. The names of Fenelon, Pascal, and some others, remind us of this encouraging fact. At the same time, it may not be concealed that these men did great mischief by abiding in a communion, concerning which the divine mandate is, "Come out of her, my people." For while the very terms of that command indicate that some of the Lord's people

are within her enclosure, they also imperatively require them to withdraw themselves. Douglas of Cavers happily says, concerning the men whose names have been mentioned:

"A voluntary and unscriptural humility, with a blind submission to the dictates of him who had seated himself in the temple of God as if he were God, may naturally lead us to pity them, but by no means to excuse them; their example has done much harm, and been only the more pernicious from their eminence and their virtues. It is difficult to calculate how much assistance their well-merited reputation has given them to prop the falling cause of Popery, and to lengthen out the continuance of the delusion—the most lasting and the most dangerous that has ever led mankind astray from the truth."

It is a melancholy reflection, that more than 120 millions of our race are under this strong delusion, that they believe this lie; that is, they are nominal adherents of the system, and either receive its dogmas, or dwell under its shadow in a state of scepticism. As it is received by the masses, all the grosser features of its superstition become prominent, so as totally to hide from them the path of life. Trained only amid its teaching, they have no ideas whatever of an evangelical or scriptural type: darkness envelopes them, and therein they grope their way. At the same time the system admirably suits the tastes of our degenerate nature, presenting at every turn some specious lure.

The design of these observations is not to afford a full view of Romanism—that would require a volume—but rather to produce the impression, that is not a trifle to be laughed at—a mere absurdity to be scorned. There are many among Protestants who only notice its grosser outside superstitions, and who look merely at the contradiction involved in some of its more palpable errors, and they are wont to conceive of the whole system as unworthy of notice. Now it may not be thus lightly dealt with. It is no clumsy contrivance, but the masterpiece of the enemy. It is quite wil-