

had to sustain the raileries of false friends who have not the courage to imitate them, and the reproaches of bigoted relatives, soon gain the respect and esteem of the public; witness among a thousand other instances, the Count of Stolberg, one of the best scholars that modern Germany can boast; the equally celebrated Mr. Haller, a member of the Supreme Council of Berne, in Switzerland; the Rev. Dr. Gallatin, once an European prince, and subsequently the devoted pastor of a small congregation in the United States; but the converts to Protestantism, after the vain and short applause of some interested persons, gain nothing but the contempt of all parties; for no one surely can forbear despising the despicable man or woman whose rule of conduct is a base passion or some petty human consideration; or the apostate priests who has trampled under foot his sacred engagements. What do, therefore, all these differences give us to understand except that Protestantism is embraced by those only who care little for the spiritual and eternal interest of their souls, and that no where but in the Catholic Church can be found true wisdom, true peace and security of salvation!

Above all, there is a certain class of conversions, upon which no misconception at all can be placed, viz. those effected at the hour of death, at that last moment when human passions and selfish motives lose much of their influence over the heart; when man can best judge of the real value of things, and when the approach of the divine judgment, dispelling the mist of error, begins to make the light of truth shine in its genuine brightness. Now it is a fact alike notorious and undeniable, and to the reality of which every one among the many Catholic missionaries could give ample testimony; that Catholics on their death-beds never wish to die in any religion but their own, whereas many Protestants, in the same situation, seek to reconcile themselves to the Church of Rome. So evident is it, so plain has it always appeared to upright minds, that the safer or rather the only safe side with regard to salvation, is to be a Catholic, provided the individual acts up to his faith, and "retains a firm confidence and the glory of hope unto the end" (Heb. iii. 6).

What else, then, must be said of those charges of corruption, superstition and idolatry so frequently urged against us, and so many times refuted, than that they are base and atrocious calumnies, which their authors surely do not believe, but which they think it necessary to spread far and wide, in order to keep up a spirit of rancor and hostility against the Catholic Church, and prevent, if possible, her further progress? How can, for instance, Catholics be accused, 1^o. of adoring bread in the Eucharist, since they admit, on the contrary, that there is no bread at all after the consecration, the whole of its substance being changed into the substance of the Body of Christ? 2^o. of worshipping the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, whereas they worship God alone, and pay no other than an inferior honour to the Blessed Virgin and to the Saints, whom Christ himself has so much honoured, the one as his holy Mother, the others as his faithful servants and friends? 3^o. also of rendering an idolatrous homage to images and pictures, whilst every one knows, or easily may know, that we venerate them, not on account of themselves and of their intrinsic merit, but merely on account of the prototypes whom they represent? As to those pretended permissions given to commit sin, those shameful and slanderous tales, which the most violent of our opponents are so industrious to circulate, the whole shame must belong to them, as there is not one man of sense and honest feelings in whatever denomination, that does not blush alike at that infamous falsehood. Various disorders may, it is true, have been committed in the course of ages by Catholic laymen, and even sometimes by clergymen and pastors of souls; but this proves nothing more than the weakness of human nature, and the infidelity of those unhappy men to their duties and vocation. The Catholic Church is entirely free from the blame; and it would be the grossest injustice to lay to their charge the faults committed by any of her members, since she never approved but always discountenanced them, always laboured in checking disorders and suppressing abuses. Far indeed from ever favoring superstition and immorality in any of her numerous decrees, she, on the contrary, never enacted any one that does not tend, in one way or other, to the repression of vice or the advancement of virtue.

Hence it has frequently happened, that the learned and moderate among our dissenting

brethren candidly confessed that there is in the Roman Church no real obstacle to salvation, and that one may, without endangering his soul, either remain or become a Catholic.* Thus an Anglican bishop (Blanford, bishop of Worcester), confessed to the Duchess of York, as she herself relates in a paper written in 1670 to state the motives of her conversion to Catholicity, that, "if he had been bred a Catholic, he would not change his religion." Thus also, the faculty of divinity of Helmstadt, being asked whether a Protestant princess, who intended to marry a Catholic prince, might, with a safe conscience, embrace the Catholic religion, and obtain salvation in it, answered without hesitation in the affirmative. The decision is dated April 28, 1707 (See *Fifty Reasons*, pp. 84, 88). The same answer was given to King Henry IV, when he seriously began to think of returning to the pale of the Roman Church; upon which this great and sagacious prince said to a Protestant minister "since you agree that I may be saved in the Catholic religion, provided I live well in it, prudence requires that I should be of that religion; and not of yours" for, being one of the Catholics, I can be saved, according both to them and to you, whilst, if I remain a Protestant, I can be saved indeed according to you, but not according to them. Now prudence certainly bids me to take the safer step in so serious a matter." He did take it, and abjuring his errors, made a solemn profession of the Catholic faith in the Church of St. Denis, A. D. 1593.

Would to God that all our dissenting brethren (since the reasons are the same for all), would make the same remark, and come to the same practical conclusion, without yielding one moment to those false maxims of the wisdom of the flesh, which detain so many weak souls in the way of error and perdition, viz. that a change of religion, though his religion may be false, is something dishonourable, and that every one ought to conform to the mode of worship adopted by his country, or by his parents and family!—As if there could be any shame, and not rather a great honour, in following one's conscience, obeying the will of God, preferring eternal salvation to human concerns, retracing a wrong step taken by our misled ancestors in a time of feverish excitement, and returning to that holy, ancient and apostolic society from which they ought never to have departed!—As if Almighty God had not given us understanding, will and freedom, to make us not only find and know the truth, but also embrace and follow it, and disengage ourselves from the mazes of error in which we may have been entangled by the prejudices of birth and education!—As if we could be bound to adopt the fanciful wanderings, the false systems and endless illusions of others, so as to become with them the abettors of any sect which they please to prefer, however anti-Christian it may be; and be justifiable in running to our eternal ruin, because they choose to be ruined themselves! Had each of us two or three souls, we might perhaps be excusable in sacrificing the last of them for the sake of our friends and relations; but, since we have only one, no dictate of flesh and blood, no interest whatever, can allow us to make the sacrifice of a good which is infinitely above every other consideration.† If

* Luther himself, in one of those moments which more free than usual from the excitement of passion, left him at liberty to write and speak with more calmness, acknowledged that there was much of genuine virtue and vital piety in the Church of Rome; also, that he had no assurance whatsoever of having done right in promoting a schism, nor would he like to be asked an account for it at the tribunal of God. (*Tract. de Miss. privat.*, and vol. 1. p. 364. edit. Germ. Jen.)

† Melancthon, too, Luther's favorite disciple, being asked by his own mother, which was the better of the two, the Protestant or the Catholic religion; hesitated not to answer that the Protestant was the better during life, but that the Catholic was the safer at the hour of death; a concession which is known to have been also made by the late Protestant bishop of New York, Hobart, to the Rev. George Ironsides. Blind, however, and unfortunate men, not to perceive that a religious system devoid of sure grounds and good only for this temporal life, cannot be the true religion, and deserves not to be adopted by any one, even during his life-time; whilst on the contrary, that society must be the only true Church, to be revered, obeyed and followed by all, in which it is safer to die, and which, in the acknowledgment of her greatest enemies, has always preserved and preserves still the true spirit Christian virtue and piety.

‡ Let this important truth be particularly noticed by such persons as are afraid to embrace the Catholic faith, least that decisive step should imply a condemnation of their Protestant parents, whether dead or alive. That fear is most unreasonable in all respects. 1^o. No one, in becoming a Catholic, is commanded to believe that his father and mother, or other relations, are, or will be eternally lost: if dead they may have been during life in perfectly good faith, and in invincible ignorance of the true Church, or they may have conceived, immediately

we suffer ourselves to fall into the abyss of perdition and be lost for ever, what will it avail us to have carried our condescension for the world so far, as to become our worst enemies: and what shall be given us in exchange for our souls, after they will have been seized by the minister of Divine Justice, never to be rescued from their hands?

These are the motives which ought to induce our separated brethren of every denomination to make the most serious reflections on the insecurity of the ground upon which they stand, and the necessity of averting the danger to which they are exposed. Let them, therefore, become the living members of Christ's mystical body, which can be no other than the Catholic Church, if they wish to secure a share in his eternal inheritance. Let human respect and family considerations be overcome by the recollections of these words of our Saviour in the Gospel: "Whosoever shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven. . . . He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me" (Matth. x. 33, 37). Let the foresight and the dread of earthly losses to be undergone on the same account, be dispelled by this equality striking and serious admonition.

"What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul" (Mark viii. 36)? In fine, let every precaution be taken for the success of that paramount affair, the consequences of which are immense and irrevocable; for, no security is too great, when an eternity is at stake—"Nulla satis magna securitas, ubi periclitatur eternitas."

before dying, a sincere desire of belonging to her, united to a lively sorrow for their past sins and negligence: if still living, they have yet time to obtain instruction and become Catholics; which will more probably happen, as their children will pray more earnestly for them, and set them sooner the example of courageously embracing and following the truth. 2^o. in the contrary supposition, the misfortune of our parents will have been caused by their own fault: if we commit the same and fall into the same abyss of misery, will they be less unhappy, at seeing us in the same dreadful state with themselves? Must we attempt to repair an irremediable evil, by increasing the number of its victims? Would it not be the height of folly to waste our property, ruin our health, go through a course of iniquity and unjust dealings, drown or otherwise kill ourselves, for the sake of imitating our parents, had they done so themselves? How much more so, if we were to follow them to eternal perdition? Let, therefore, all useless reflections on the fate of persons dear to us, be set aside; let unknown things be left entirely to the Providence of God, whose judgments are truth, wisdom and equity; our only essential affair here on earth is to save our soul, *salvet unusquisque animum suum*; every thing else is deplorable illusion, deceit and vanity.

Correspondence.

To the Editors of the Cross.

GENTLEMEN,

In passing lately from Sissiboo to Yarmouth, I stopped at Frenchtown to see the large Church of St. Mary. I was much gratified with the improved appearance of the building both within and without, especially the latter. A valuable and solid stone foundation has been built and other useful improvement made, and by all account, the Rev. Pastor has been indefatigable in his exertions to improve the House of God and the morals of his flock. The Cemetery too, which was blessed by the Bishop at the recent Visitation, has been enlarged, well fenced and improved in every respect. In strolling through the hallowed precincts I was delighted to observe a very handsome marble Tombstone erected to the memory of the late venerable Abbe Sigogne who spent nearly half a century in the laborious Missions of Nova Scotia and was universally respected both by Protestants and Catholics for his many estimable qualities. He died on the 9th of November, 1844, and as I thought it might gratify some of his many admirers in the Province to see the tribute which has been justly paid to his memory, I have copied the inscription on his monument as accurately as I could, thinking you might be induced to print it in your useful repertory. If you see any mistakes in my transcript, you will please correct them. I regret much that my ignorance of the dead languages does not permit me to send you a translation of those lines, which I was informed in Frenchtown, were sent from the City of Halifax.

I am, Gentlemen, yours, &c.

A WESTERN CATHOLIC.

D. O. M.
Hic jacent Reliquiae
Rev. P. D. Johannis Sigogne
Sacerdotis Galli
Ex Agro Turonensi.
Qui propter temporum angustias
Exul e Patria
Per XLVII Annos in
Nova Scotia.
Missionarius
Pius atque Fidelis
Religionem propagavit Catholicam.
Et tandem
Plenus dierum ac meritorum
Bonis omnibus flebilis occidit
Et in Christi Pace Quievit
Dio dX Novemb. MDCCCXLIV.
Annos Natus LXXXV.
Pie Jesu Domino
Dona Ei Requiem. Amen.

The Cross;

HALIFAX, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10.

M. POWER, PRINTER.

EUROPE.

The news by the Hibernia was too late for our last impression, an event which seldom occurs. There was, however, nothing of great importance to communicate. The Pope has not yet returned to Rome, but the difficulties of the French are multiplying every day. His Holiness is biding his time, and will not enter the Eternal City until he can do so with entire independence. The lying English Press, which hypocritically praised him in the beginning of his Pontificate, now continues its shameful misrepresentations of everything connected with the common Father of Christendom. 'Our own correspondent' in Italy knows well what will gratify his employers, and minister to the depraved taste of English bigotry. Hence every letter from Italy is filled with calumnies so glaring that every intelligent Catholic, especially those who have been in Italy, can detect their falsehood in a moment. But, the Popedom will flourish in spite of English malignity just as Catholicity in Ireland has survived her three centuries of diabolical persecution.

We were lately favoured with the perusal of a letter from a distinguished scholar and gentleman in Rome, who lived in that city during the republican regime. This letter was written little more than a month ago, and as his account of Pius IX. and Mazzini and Co. are materially different from what we read in the English journals, we are tempted to give an extract or two.

"The Pope is a most admirable man, and is full of every quality which you would wish to see in the successor of St. Peter; humble, zealous, disinterested, and at the same time, noble and dignified. He would have done great things if the times had been propitious; he would have corrected many abuses which naturally spring up in every thing human in the lapse of centuries. But, he was not supported on one side by many good men who were afraid of the consequences of change, and on the other he was assailed and betrayed by an active and powerful party, who were anxious to destroy his temporal dominion, and even to root out religion altogether from Italy. It was a most lamentable thing to see the Pope attacked by those wretches in his own Palace, and it was almost as sickening to think that those who called themselves the good class, had not the courage to say a word, or raise a hand in defence of the insulted Vicar of Christ. The Pope's flight from Rome ruined all the hopes of his enemies. They were obliged to take such violent steps that all the world looked upon them with execration. The *res gestae* of the little Roman Republic will occupy a very black page in history, indeed Mazzini and his party did every thing to ruin Rome, and to pervert the people. They calumniated priests and religious, and induced the people to plunder, or receive the plunder of Churches and Convents. The rich were also pretty well plundered in order to gain over the masses. You would be astonished to see the impudence with which the most absurd calumnies were circulated and repeated every day, and woe to the person who would have the courage to contradict them! There were several Protestant Missionaries here aiding in this unholy work,