

ON PURGATORY.

Protestants deny the existence of a Purgatory, or a middle state after death, in which the just expiate by sufferings their venial transgressions; for, according to scripture, *the just man falleth seven times a day, and still is called just*—Prov. xxiv, 16—a state in which *they shall render an account for every idle word*,—Matt. xii, 36—should they have neglected to render that full account during their life in this world; and pay up to Divine Justice whatever remains of the debt of temporal punishment due for sins, the eternal punishment of which has, in consideration of their timely repentance, been mercifully remitted to them. For, as in the case of David, 2 Kings, 12, 13, 14, it does not necessarily follow, when God remits the sin, and consequently the eternal, that he also remits the temporal punishment due for it.

But, to what other state, or place does the Saviour allude, when he exhorts us “to be reconciled with the adversary, while we are in the way; lest he deliver us over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and we be cast into that prison, out of which, [he assures us,] we shall not come, till we have paid the last farthing?”—Matt. v, 25, 26. He cannot here allude to any pecuniary debt, or earthly prison, as is evident from the context.

Besides, if, as Scripture affirms, *the just man falls seven times a day, and as our Lord declares, we shall render an account for every idle word*, how few die so perfect as not to have at least some slight fall, or so much as an *idle word* to account for? Where, then, is this account to be rendered? Not in heaven, for all accounts must be rendered, before one enters there. Not in hell, for the accounts of the damned can never be cancelled, or if for an *idle word*, one may be eternally damned; who of all the human race could expect to be saved?—son, then, shews us, as well as Revelation, the necessity of a middle state, such as that affirmed by the Catholic church.

When our Saviour also tells us, Matt. xii, 31, that certain sins *against the Holy Ghost, shall not be forgiven in this world, would he so superfluously add, nor in the world to come*, if no sins whatever remained to be forgiven in the world to come? Would it be like a wise man's speech, in saying; you shall not see the sun during the day, to add, nor during “the night?”

Protestants generally allow that none of the human race could be admitted into heaven, till Christ with his precious blood, poured out for their ransom, *had blotted out the hand writing that stood against them*.—Coloss. ii, 14. This is what the Saviour himself declares: *No man, says he, hath ascended into heaven, but he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven*.—John iii, 13. Where then were the souls of the just detained from the beginning of the world, till the death, resurrection, and ascension of the Redeemer? Not in the hell of the damned, for *out of that hell, there is no redemption*. Not in heaven for no one had ascended up thither, before him, *who led*

captivity captive, and gave gifts to men.—Ephes. iv, 8.—Then necessarily in a middle state, in that hell or prison, into which the Saviour after his death descended and preached, as Saint Peter informs us, *to the spirits of those detained there, who had been some time incredulous, when they waited for the patience of God, in the days of Noah, when the ark was building*.—1 Pet. iii, 19. To those prisoners of hope the Prophet Zacharias alludes, when addressing thus their deliverer: “Thou hast by the blood of thy Testament sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, in which there is no water.—Return to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope,” &c.—Zach. ix, 11, 12.

Now, though our Lord at his descent into that prison, may have set all free, who were then detained in it, does it follow that none henceforth should ever be detained in such a place for their slighter offences? Let Protestants then show us scripture that such a place, which they own to have once existed, no longer exists.

The Saviour, they will say, having now laid open to us the gates of heaven, there is no further necessity for our detention in such a place. None, surely, for such as leave this world, without having so much as an *idle word* to account for. But, as mortal sin excludes forever from heaven all those who die guilty of it, so venial sin excludes from heaven those who die in it, till it is purged away; for *into heaven nothing unclean can enter*.—Apoc. xxi, 27.

The belief in such a middle state was always that of the true believers—of the Jews before, and of the Christians since the coming of the Saviour. The belief of the Jews on this head, which in nothing differs from that of the Catholics, is clearly exposed in the second book of Maccabees. And, though Protestants deny these books to be canonical scripture, they must admit them, as indubitable historical evidence of the doctrine and practice of the Jewish people on the subject in question.—The passage alluded to, is as follows:

“Judas Maccabæus, having made a collection, sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem, that sacrifice might be offered up for the sins of those who had fallen in battle: thinking well and religiously of the resurrection: for unless he hoped that they, who had fallen, would rise again, it must seem vain and superfluous to pray for the dead: and because he considered that they who had fallen asleep in godliness, had great cause laid up for hope. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins.”—2 Maccab. xii, 45.

This doctrine and practice of the Jews, the Saviour never found fault with. We would wish therefore to know upon what authority, *scriptural or unscriptural*, Protestants venture to condemn this article of the ancient faith, still held by the Jews as well as by the Catholics.

Or, *scriptural authority* which they as readily produce, as the devil did, to tempt the Saviour; but it is always on scripture misunderstood, or misapplied,

as in their present, and sole remaining quotation. They cite against a middle state after death, the following text from the Ecclesiastes i, 3. *If the tree fall to the south, or to the north, in whatsoever place it shall fall, there it shall lie*. Their sole and constant argument against such a middle state, is: *as the tree falls, so it shall lie*. And so it surely shall, says the Catholic also: for we all acknowledge that at death is decided the eternal fate of every one: To whatever side we then fall, *to the south or the north, to the side of heaven, or of hell; on that side to which we fall, we shall lie*. Yet may those, who fall to the side of bliss, not deserve to be put at once in full possession of it; tho' it is now to them inalienably secured.

THE CARMELITE

AN INCIDENT OF THE IRISH REBELLION.

The following is an Extract:—

“There are a few distinguishing marks by which the being denominated a Swaddling preacher may be instantly known in any and every generation, since this class came into existence. Talkative beyond all endurance, and ignorant in proportion to his loquacity, he is the terror of every society into which his forwardness finds an entrance, while the marvellous dexterity with which he wields a thousand-times refuted calumnies against Catholicity, renders him an object of interest, to those, at least, who can find charity for any description of Christianity, save and except that which comprises the “deluded subjects of priestly rule.” This latter class is excluded by the self-dubbed “reverend” from all participation in the spiritual paradise to which the myriads of sectaries, under his patronizing influence, are admissible; and in accordance with the assumed spirit of his profession, it becomes a duty to abuse and convert them. The acerbity of his natural disposition is heightened by the contentious nature of his education; his countenance is wan, though a great abdominal protrusion exhibits strong evidence of his acquaintance with the good things of the world; and if you give him a broad-brimmed beaver, square-tailed coat, and milk-white cravat, with most unassuming tie, I think you may have a very tolerable portrait. We all recollect these worthies at the period of the Second Reformation, their vaunting boast of the influence of a gospel light, that only illuminated the road to a potato-pit, or to the treasury of some noble patron, and the cry of regeneration, that had an evident effect, indeed, upon the empty purse and famished homes of our poorer peasantry. That was a glorious period for drawing on the coffers of the “London Hibernian Society;” the kingdom rang with the lauded efforts of money-inspired and self-constituted ecclesiastics; the poor converts were pompously paraded as the new inheritance of Israel, and peers of the realm, in the sagacity of profound wisdom, said that soon “there would be no Papist to emancipate.” Alas! “all that's bright must fade:” the day of the Swaddling preacher passed away; and the pauper proselytes of foreign and domestic enthusiasm sunk once more into “the degraded errors of their fathers' belief.”

This is the only tribe, except the gipsies, on which the progress of information has had no visible influence. Men have changed manners and opinions, governments have been re-modelled or destroyed, empires and kingdoms have been revolutionized or improved, but your Swaddling preacher, wrapped in the changeless mail of interested bigotry, ever has remained the same. Hence the demure votary of some antiquated tea-table who in his day regales his spectacled patroness with the most newly-invented anathema against popery, is, in every respect, a fair representative of the man who, forty years since, in the plenitude of political preferences, predicted the downfall of the “Scarlet Lady.” He preaches the same intolerant doctrines, without the same support for his narrow views, and can only mourn over the degeneracy of modern innovation, as he views the liberality which the more happy policy of refined administration has produced.

“The Rev. Izac M'Kenzie, then, was one of this cast. He had a large pair of silver knee-buckles, and a pair of shoe-buckles of the same metal, which, in common justice ought to satisfy the scruples of any Papist in the world, unless he were too sceptical. Born with nothing but ambition, and bred up to no profession on which he could depend for a livelihood, he thought, (and little blame to the man) that the easiest way to a fortune was the one for him. On looking round on the world, too, he saw that men were to be led by the ears, and that the greatest stock of impudence was generally favored by the greatest stock of cash. It was not much to be expected, therefore, from a young aspirant after the happiness of a comfortable settlement, but that he would flatter the prejudices of those from whom all was to be hoped: and Izac did so.—“No Popery” was the cry; no Popery cried young Izac: and by some means he obtained a licence to preach to the faithful, and trace the resemblance between the Church of Rome and the reprobated “Whore of Babylon.” To be sure, he had been dissipated, creditless and abandoned in his native village; but what of that? If the spirit of malt had fled him through his pecuniary incapacity to woo it longer, the spirit of the gospel had entered, and the former, in due course, was again likely to follow. He was not mistaken. In the year '98, and the seventh of his mission, the Rev. Izac M'Kenzie could boast as smoothly combed a crown, and as large a claim to corpulent importance, as any corporator of five and twenty year's standing, or representative of his life and manners now existing among his brethren.”

HIS NAME IS NEVER HEARD.—The Chinese must fancy that there is much more in a name than we outside barbarians are in the habit of admitting. The real name of their Emperor is seldom or never known. Upon ascending the throne he assumes a name by which, when spoken of, he must be called; for, to pronounce or write his proper name, by accident or intention, is death to the divulger of the secret, to his family, and, if a rich man, the confiscation of his property ensues.