

with the laudable view of self-promotion, to add wings to his exertions—to preach a sermon, write an essay, or publish a convincing pastoral, which shall denounce all reason or judgment, enjoin the most blind obedience, and uphold all the high doctrines! And then as to punishment, beside admonition and minor censures—in cases of plain violation of oath, or contumacious opposition to the interests of Rome—or to what it should call the interests of religion—to use a Pope's own language, he can “strike with the edge of an excommunication”—a weapon, my Lord, very sharp and cutting, and not often permitted to grow rusty in its scabbard, but drawn sometimes against the highest dignities—Thus, in the Gallican Church no less than one hundred Bishops were excommunicated at once, and in our history five Bishops at a time were smitten by a Papal legate—Now Priests and Bishops have always taught that, as Bishop Doyle says, “communion with the Pope is essential to Catholicity” and that out of Catholicity there is no salvation—such at least is the *rule*, though there may be fencing about possible exceptions—(indeed if an anathema be added, it *sentences* in express terms “to eternal fire with the Devil and his angels”)—excommunication therefore is very formidable; it would separate Priest or Bishop from absolution and Church sacraments, and what is worse, suspend their jurisdiction, and all their episcopal or priestly ministrations.

If we now look a little lower, we shall find that the order of Priests did not escape notice; for that order, indeed, direct superintendence was partly unnecessary—the Priesthood being completely *under* the Bishops, by them ordained, priested, promoted, and in various ways controuled and rewarded—however, there seemed to be no supererogation in devising for Priests also an oath, and accordingly that which they are forced to take, swears obedience to the Pope, the Lord's Vicar!—It swears too an undoubting reception of *all things* defined and declared by the canons and General Councils—a collection of which councils I have seen in several volumes folio! and that, moreover, out of *this* Catholic faith there is no salvation.

Now upon this oath and the former, a remark may not be amiss—first, that Bishops are *doubly* bound, having formerly taken the oath of Priest or Regular—next, that the exclusive interpretation of oaths as well as of the Bible belongs to the Roman Court—whatever it states to be the sense is the undoubted sense!—thus for instance, Priests are bound to maintain the important signification attached to the character of “Vicar” or visible representative.—and a third is, that if the Pope or his Cabinet wanted, which indeed they scarcely can, a better oath, all they have to do is to order it; in the twinkling of an eye 'tis done by saying merely “be it so”—while the British Government could not by its direct authority dictate an oath of allegiance to its Romish subjects, nor was it able to obtain one after endless years of negociation, until the very form and words of the oath, “which alone would be allowed,” and “which