

Patrick's children by Protestantism was the sweet and tender doctrine of prayer and love for the dead. That which is opposed to divine truth is always, when we analyze it, an outrage on the best instincts of man. Remembrance of those who are gone, and a desire to help them, to communicate with them, seems natural to us all; and the more tender-hearted and affectionate and loving a people are, the more deeply will they realize and appreciate the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, and prayer for the dead. How terrible is the separation of death, as seen from the Protestant point of view! In the Catholic Church this mystery of death is despoiled of its worst bitterness. It is only a removal from our bodily sight, as if the loved one were only gone on a journey for a few days, to return to us again. Our intercourse with him does not cease; nay, we can do more for him now than ever we could in life, and by our prayers obtain for him the relief and consolation that will never be forgotten during the long day of eternity in Heaven. To a people like the Irish, naturally affectionate, and strongly attached to each other, the Christian doctrine of prayer for the dead must always be grateful. Our history served to deepen this portion of our Catholic devotion, for it was a history of sorrow and of national privation: and sorrow softens and enlarges the heart. A people who had lost so much in life, turned the more eagerly and lovingly to their dead. I remember once seeing an aged woman, weeping and praying over a grave in Ireland; and when I questioned her, endeavoring to console her, she said, 'Let me cry my fill: all that I ever had in this world are here in this grave; all that ever brought me joy or sorrow is here under this sod; and my only consolation in life is to come here and speak to them, and pray for them, and weep.' We may imagine, but we cannot realize, the indignation of our fathers, when the heartless, sour-visaged, cold-blooded men of Geneva came to them to tell them, that henceforth they must be