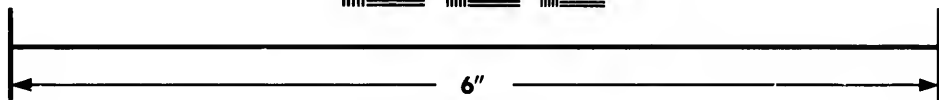
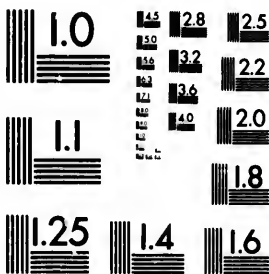


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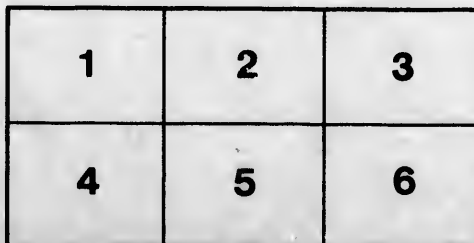
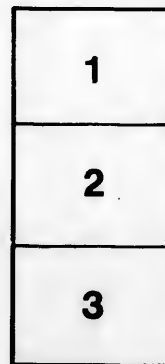
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THE
POOR MAN'S PRESERVATIVE

AGAINST

POPERY. 4

PART I.

CONTAINING AN INTRODUCTION ON THE
Character and Genius
OF THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIGION,
AND THE
SUBSTANCE OF A LETTER TO THE
Congregation of St. James' Church, Toronto, U. C.

OCCASIONED BY

THE HON. J. ELMSLEY'S PUBLICATION

OF THE

BISHOP OF STRASBOURG'S OBSERVATIONS
ON THE 6TH CHAPTER OF ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL.
BY JOHN STRACHAN, D. D. L. L. D.

ARCHDEACON OF YORK, &c. &c.

ALSO

Additional Observations on the Sacrament of the Lord's
Supper and Transubstantiation.

"Take heed to yourselves, that your heart be not deceived, and ye turn
aside and serve other Gods, and worship them." MOSES.

"STAND FAST therefore in the LIBERTY wherewith Christ has made us FREE,
and be not entangled again with the YOKE OF BONDAGE." ST. PAUL.

Toronto:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY G. P. BULL,
COURIER OFFICE, MARKET HOUSE.

1834.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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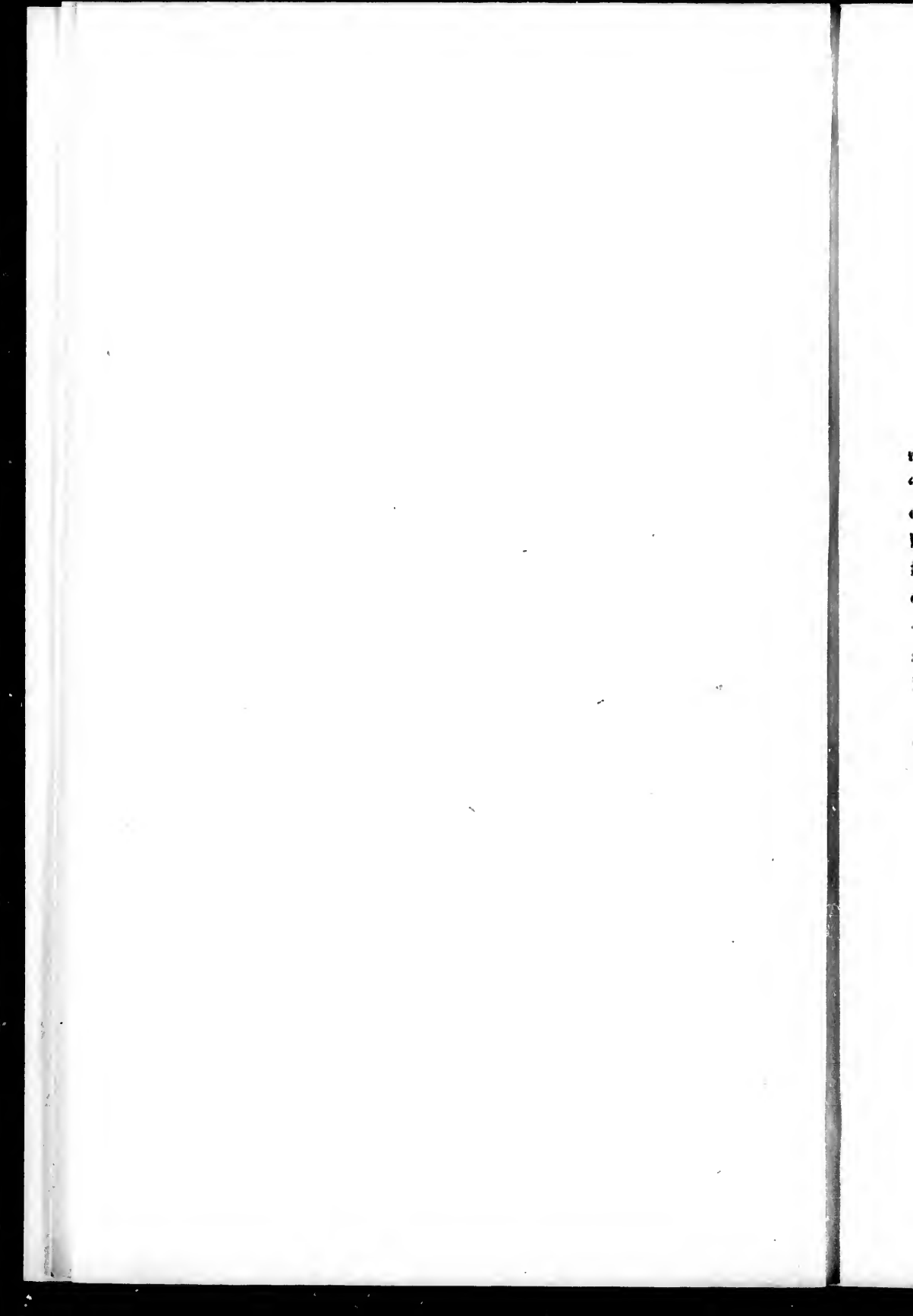
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ON THE CHARACTER AND GENIUS
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ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIGION.

MUCH ingenuity has been displayed, and much learning mis-employed, in discovering and defending the dogmas of the "*True Church*:" tomes of controversial theology have been exhausted upon the subject, and the enquirer, whose soul's health was interested in the question, has been either deterred from enquiry, by its magnitude, and compelled to swallow the opiate of implicit faith, or else, perplexed and doubting, to trust, without examination, to guides who surpassed him only in the substitution of blind assurance for honest hesitation; and in having acquired learning—useless and misused. If not more learned than our fathers, we seem to know the value of time a little better; common sense has broken the cobwebs in which learned sophistry had involved the religious interests of Man; and we trust that the time is not far distant, when all those dogmas that have so degraded the human understanding, and the Christian religion, will be substituted for a *conscientious adherence to scriptural truth*.

At that time—a time which assuredly will come, though its arrival may be delayed—at that time when the *idols of a corrupted Christianity*, like those of paganism, will "be given to the moles and to the bats;" when the Baal and Nebo of a spurious faith, however the professors may term it, will bow down and stoop, and the Dagon of this world's devices will fall before the ark of the revealed word—at that time, men will look back with astonishment upon the devices which they invented, and the systems to which they enslaved themselves; they will look with the intenseness of the shipwrecked mariner upon the

rocks and shoals which had well nigh proved their destruction; and will regard with amazement and humiliation, the human-erected edifices, under whose roofs they had sheltered themselves from the piercing light of God's word. Among those edifices *that* founded on the seven hills has not been the *best* distinguished—its walls have been consolidated by time, and its front adorned with the *spoils of reason*; its portentous shadow has darkened long past ages, and its deep recesses have witnessed and concealed the artifices of human cunning, and the heavings of human ambition, mingled with the tears of real penitence, and the bursts of agonized contrition.

It is not enough to account for the thralldom with which the See of Rome has so long pressed down even powerful and struggling minds, to ring with sceptical flippancy, the *changes* upon ignorance, and priestcraft, and remorse. It has been said, by divine authority, that "offences must come," occasions of stumbling must be presented, while the frailty of man is environed with temptations; but the same divine teacher adds, "woe to those by whom the offences do come."—It is indeed true, that iniquity will abound, but the judgment awarded against its workers is not the less just; it is true that temptations will arise—but they who drug the envenomed chalice will find no excuse in this sad moral necessity. There has been ignorance, and Popery has used it; *there is* priestcraft, and Popery employs it; even the profligate will be visited with remorse, and Popery has purchased temporal aggrandizement by trafficking with the tears and sighs of its votaries. This is all conceded—but in this, Popery does not differ from other false or corrupted systems; besides, to account for the phenomenon, it must be shewn that there is something in the system of Rome which enables it to wield with peculiar power the weapons of ignorance, priestcraft, and remorse; it must be shewn that this same system was equally calculated to meet the blaze of science, and to work in the darkness of ignorance; to overpower or silence the researches of the eighteenth, as well as the turbulence of the sixteenth century; to turn to its use the learning of Mabillon, the piety of Fenelon, the accu-

ness of Pascal, as well as the fanaticism of Francis, and the brutality of Bonner. Considering it merely in a psychological point of view, the question is not without interest, and is connected with many of the most remarkable phenomena of the human mind; in a religious point of view, it is of indefinite importance; for, if we can discuss the secret power which this tremendous system has possessed, we may be enabled to discover the relative weakness in our nature; and if Popery be indeed the religion of unregenerate man, even Protestants, the most anxious, may dread lest there may lurk in themselves more inherent tendencies to it than they were at first aware of.

When we survey the system of the church of Rome and its progress; in the extent of its triumphs, and the consolidation of its powers; in the decline of its dominion and its *many recent attempts at resuscitation*, we must be struck by one of its characteristics, to which, perhaps, more than any other, that progress has been owing, and by which those triumphs have been prolonged. It is impossible that a set of opinions and practices could have had votaries through so many ages, and from such various quarters; it is impossible that the prince and the peasant, the warrior and the monk, the philosopher, in the full blaze of science, and the ferocious barbarian; it is impossible that all these could have confessed its sway and received its fetters, were there not very much in the system, which was congenial with human nature in the abstract, and very much which shifted and varied with the persons to whom it was applied—like the magic garment in the nursery tale, it must have relaxed or contracted its folds, according to the moral dimensions of the recipient; and were we to name the peculiarity of Romanism, as a religious system, we would express it in one word—*APPLICABILITY*. Other systems have been invented to suit the characters and genius of individuals, or times, or nations. The creed of Manes was the monstrous product of orientalized Christianity; the visions of Hindopism subdued the weak and imaginative professors of the

creed of Brahma ; ferocity in public, and indulgence in private life, find shelter under the relaxed robes of Islamism, and each has reckoned its converts by thousands, but they are still confined and local—the one was indigenous in Asia, and never flourished in Europe ; the absurdities of Hindoo superstition offend the taste *even of those who patronize under another name, its processions or penances*, and the deserts of Arabia are the birth-place and limit of Mahomedanism. Not so with Popery—it not only finds in human nature a powerful and effective ally, but when that human nature has been varied and transmuted, this system has changed with it—retaining the same name, and aiming at the same power, it has Proteus-like altered its shape and its dimensions, and on the coast of Coromandel, at the court of Peking, under the mildness of an Italian or the rigors of a British sky, it presents far different features and characters, while its identity is preserved by the same compromising applicability to human nature, and the same insatiable thirst for domination.

Look at this system as it pervades Spain and Italy, revelling in the uncontrolled power which has been conferred on it; look at it in Great Britain assuming the decorum of moderation, and professing to be the advocate for the rights of man; look at it in Ireland since the time of the reformation, actuating and inciting her deluded followers to acts of violence and rebellion, when she can do it with safety, and stretching the broad shield of her infallibility to cover crimes that are shocking to humanity; see it in this country, through the instrumentality of a miserable apostacy, striving to erect its head, coalescing alternately with the *infidel* who denies the sacred scriptures, and the politician who abuses those of its professors who make them their rule of faith, and guide unto salvation. Compare her in these different situations and say if the power she has obtained is more remarkable than the *pliability* which she has manifested. In the dark ages she had her miracles and wonders to amaze and terrify the credulous; in enlightened periods she has learning and sophistry to confound; for the devout she has solitude and meditation;

for the timid purgatory and penance; for the profligate indulgences and absolution; the inquisitive she baffles or satisfies with her scholastic distinctions and divisions; and to the indolent or the ignorant she extends her *dogma* of implicit faith. Is her penitent fearful of a sin, yet desirous of its enjoyment? she propounds to him by the mouth of her casuists that the opinion of one Doctor may render an opinion probable,—and what opinion, however erroneous, has not been defended by some one Doctor? Is her penitent addicted to a course of incorrect living? she compensates for such by other acts, weighing against each other good deeds and evil. Is he imperfect in his repentance? she has her doctrines of attrition to soothe him. Does he die in terror? she consoles him with the temporary sufferings of Purgatory. Does he shrink from the fear of eternal punishment? she presents her pastors to the trembling wretch, who offer to take his salvation on themselves, and to submit to the wrath of God in his place. For the gloomy, she provides fastings, and macerations, and scourges,—to the gay, she presents processions, and festivals, and jubilees,—the serious she sets to work in the learned labours of her mysteries; and the fanatical she employs in forming a new, or reforming a worn-out order—cheering them with the distant prospect of beatification. A system so admirably adapted to human nature, which can thus vary with the varying character of its subject, and can confer on every change the stamp of infallibility, must have succeeded. The magnitude of its claims confounded the enquirer into their foundation; the compromising morality of the system enlisted on its side the advocate, and the slave of the world; the deep tone of piety which marks many of its services, gratified the feelings of the devout: the ambitious found it a useful ally—the profligate a gentle censor—the enthusiast an incentive to his visions—and the learned an approver of his labours.

Wide spread as has been the dominion which the Church of Rome has exercised on the minds of men, it has been, we conceive, the result of this adaptation to their characters, their circumstances, their virtues and their vices. And while the un-

bending nature of Protestantism disclaims an alliance with the principles to which Romanism owes its triumphs—a compliance with these principles decorates in India the Roman priest with the insignia of the Brahmin, and in Rome confers the majesty and assumption of empire on “the servant of the servants of God.” Many have wondered that in a system so apparently at variance with the details of Scripture, so much genuine piety should be found as marks the characters of the Pascals, the Arnolds, the Fenelons, and the Quesnels. The question is not, on our principle, difficult of solution. The system would have been imperfect if it did not possess attractions for such spirits—aliments for such minds. Abstracted from the world and superior to its attractions, deeply spiritualized and devoted to the service of God, they neutralized by scriptural nourishment much of the poison of the church under which they lived; and for the grosser parts of her system found in themselves a repellent principle which prevented them dwelling on them so as to confute or desert them. Be it remembered too that such men living in communion with God, have never found favour with the See of Rome. The condemnation of Fenelon has marked the extent to which a mind like his can yield to usurped authority; the agitations produced by the *Bul Unigenitus* which condemned Quesnel have not yet subsided; and with the condemnation of the Jansenists much of the real piety of the Church of Rome was expelled from her communion. Let it be remembered too that the system which is so spiritualized by the piety of Fenelon and the deep convictions of Pascal, at that very moment was extending the sword to the ruthless dragoons of Louis XIV—breaking every tie which can bind society together in the revocation of the edict of Nantz, and fostering the pernicious practice and precepts of the morality of the Jesuits. It should be remembered that it is not the effect which such minds as these have on the system that should be regarded as the criterion, but the effect which the system has upon such minds, and upon the general mass of mankind. The slavish superstition of one man, and the slavish submission of the other, only prove the imposing weight of opinion and respect which could

enthral such minds; while in the degraded state of the peasantry of Ireland—in the patrons, stations, and holy wells, we may see the natural result of the tendencies, when uncounteracted by education or scriptural knowledge.

It may be said that Protestantism presents different aspects in different ranks, and it is partially true; but the effect of it on the poorer classes is to raise, not to degrade them—to disen-
 thrall their minds, and not to rivet their chains. The very exer-
 tion of intellect and employment of mind, which are the charac-
 teristics of Protestantism, have a tendency to produce this
 effect. The gospel preached to the poor raises their intellec-
 tual as well as moral character, and the mere bible taught
 peasant will frequently astonish the enquirer—not more by the
 correctness of his deportment than the justness of his views,
 and the sobriety of his opinions. It is thus Protestantism is
 distinguished from Popery as a system; it is, indeed, fitted for
 all classes and all situations, but it is so, because with scriptu-
 ral power, it reduces all classes to one awful level, and brings
 in all flesh guilty before God. Borrowing nothing from the
 world; it recognizes no difference in its ranks; it has no
 compromise of morality for the rich, and no commutation of
 penance with repentance, for the poor; it has no absolution
 which may smooth the pillow of the terrified sinner; and no
 purgatory interposing its temporary punishments to prevent
 guilt looking into hell. The same lesson which is read to the
 rich, is read to the poor; the same effect, if any be produced,
 must be produced on both; and the only lesson which she
 presents to both, is, *repentance toward God, and faith toward
 the Lord Jesus Christ.* Hence, Protestantism is adapted to
 all classes and circumstances, by the transmuting efficacy of
 its spirit; by the energy with which it *overcomes the world*;
 Popery adapts itself to the shifting positions of human nature;
 finds its strength in the weakness of its subjects; and instead
 of levelling the distinctions of life, provides a religion and a
 system for each.

If a Protestant of the Church of England be questioned as

to his belief, he points to the Scripture as the sole foundation of his faith, and to the articles and homilies, as the interpretation which he assigns to it. If the same question be put to a Roman Catholic who had just before been boasting of the unity of his Church, of the universality of its communion, of the sameness of its doctrine and discipline, he refers you to the Council of Trent, which frequently determines nothing, and which is received or rejected as sovereign and people please—to catechisms which, if we believe Dr. Doyle's oath, are altered at the printer's will—to divines who have no authority, and to canons which have no promulgation. Does he refer to the creed of Pope Pius? that very formulary directs you for the articles of faith to canons and rules which no Roman Catholic can enumerate or perhaps discover. Does he direct you to councils? their best divines differ on the subject of these councils, and receive or reject them as they please. Does he appeal to the note and comment which authority has affixed to *their version* of the Scriptures? you find the text has no authority, and speaks by no ecclesiastical voice, and that these notes contradict each other, and their very prelates do not venture to mediate between the contending parties. Such happy *indistinctness* does the creed of this Church possess, that if you press on them the decrees of Councils and the uniform practice of the Church, you are reminded of one distinction; if the meaning of the words in their common signification be understood, you are then reminded of another. Their very prayers cannot be said without a mental reservation. Miracles are put forward by their divines as criterions of faith, and yet are allowed to be disbelieved; and the happy ambiguity, with which Trent has invested all the obnoxious doctrines, is fully equalled by the coolness with which their most learned Prelate informs the assembled Legislature of the British Empire, that "the infallibility of the Pope is a very difficult question, but if the committee would study the folio of *Melchior Cano*, they will know what he thought about the subject."* Such is the fugitive nature of this Church, that neither in doctrine nor in discipline

* See Dr. Doyle's examination before the House of Lords, on which some valuable observations are made in "The Digest of Evidence."

can you fix its certainty; and its infallibility seems of such a happy kind, that by evading examination it escapes detection:

This diversity of character it is easy to trace to first principles; the system of the Roman Catholic church is the result of the gradual accumulation of faith and ceremony, under the influence of time and circumstance; it is not the transcript of the Divine mind exhibited in one harmonious code, but a mass which has been formed by circumstance, and fashioned by accident, according as necessity or fortune might seem to direct. Hence, governed by men, keenly alive to their own interests, the church took advantage of every occurrence, which would seem to add to its fortune or its power. The claimed infallibility — while it permitted the church to be stationary, denied the possibility of its retrograding, and every fresh assumption adding to the former, took its station beside them with all the dignity of time. The policy which accommodated itself to situation and circumstance, converted political concessions into general precedents; and the course which was pursued, in order to gain the support of the worldly-minded, or to terrify the weakness of the timid, became the incrustation of a church whose boast is to be "*semper eadem*." Like the British Constitution, it is the effect of the gradual operation of time; but that operation which has secured stability to human laws by a perpetual reference to first principles, has indeed given stability, but it is the stability of error, to the additions which man has made to the Scriptural code. Protestantism, being the mere recurrence to Scriptural principles, partakes of their uncompromising character; uninfluenced by circumstances, unaltered by situation, it upholds the one standard of the divine decrees, nor permits any thing connected with this world to add or diminish thereto. "The one resembles," to use Bacon's beautiful image, "the gradual work of man proving its mortality by its progressive formation, the *other* bearing on its uniform front the stamp of the Divine mind."

We cannot conclude these hasty observations on the peculiarities of Popery, as a system, without professing our perfect

conviction that very many of those who have lived and died under its influence have experienced and manifested the deepest piety and the warmest devotion. We are convinced that there are many who yield themselves to the dictates of an infallible church through the influence of genuine humility, and who refuse to examine for themselves, not because the truth would be distasteful or abhorrent, but because they conceive their only duty to be implicit submission. There is no one acquainted with human nature but must know how difficult it is to shake off the impressions of early life, to unlearn the opinions with which we have been once principled, and to break through those mazes of error in which years have involved us; and when to this difficulty is added the still keener blow which is felt by the affections rather than the intellect—the rending asunder of the ties which nature and society have produced, and the sad hostility which a conscientious following out of scriptural examination is calculated to produce. We confess when we consider all this, that we are not surprised at the pertinacity with which many individuals cling to the often refuted errors of Popery. We would not wish to be understood in these remarks that we have applied them to any individuals,—we speak of the system which we conceive blunts or misdirects the beneficial tendencies of the human heart—associates with itself the worst and most terrestrial substitutes—form for substance, and penance for repentance.

YORK, UPPER CANADA, 1st JANUARY, 1834.

TO THE CONGREGATION OF ST. JAMES' CHURCH.

MY DEAR BRETHREN :

After the Honorable JOHN ELMSLEY returned from England, his attendance at church, which had been usually very regular, was observed to be unfrequent; and after a little time altogether ceased. Rumours were afloat that he had deserted the faith of his fathers, and conformed to the Roman Catholic Church. As he had never spoken to me on the subject, I felt unwilling to notice such rumours, although, to external appearance, they were not without foundation; for having known no instance of such conversion in this Province, it seemed scarcely credible, that a person who had been carefully educated, to mature age, in the doctrines of the Protestant Church, should have suddenly abandoned them, and attached himself to the Roman Catholic persuasion; but yet there seemed to be grounds for apprehension. Sometimes I thought that my duty required of me to call upon him, and expostulate with him on his absence from public worship. At other times I considered that if he were sincerely in doubt, he would make his difficulties known to me; this I felt to be his duty, and what I was entitled to expect.

While thus contemplating the matter in my own mind, I received from Mr. Elmsley the following letter, with the Bishop of Strasbourg's observations on the sixth Chapter of St. John's Gospel:

YORK, OCTOBER 7th, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR :

“ In enclosing you the copy of a pamphlet, the publication of which in this country I have been at some pains and expence to effect, I trust you will pardon the liberty I take in begging for it your most attentive consideration, in order to my being favoured, at your leisure, with your opinion of the important subject of its pages, and also of the manner in which the argument is sustained.

“ It is an extract from the work of a very able and pious Catholic Prelate, a brief memoir of whose life is prefixed to the work by the London publisher. The view taken by the author in this most essential point in controversy between Catholics and Protestants, is to me quite new. I have perused, I believe, every other work to be found in the catalogue on this subject, before I fell in with this, and I met with nothing which favoured the Catholic doctrine any thing like it; and as I may safely say,

I feel myself quite unable to gainsay it, so I do not hesitate to say, that I have found nothing in any of the Protestant writers, whose controversial works I have perused, which throws the smallest difficulty upon it, or establishes a single doubt of the soundness of the argument.

“ Your reading must of course have been more, and more various than mine, and your judgment more matured ; I therefore come to you, my dear Sir, as an enlightened teacher of that sect in which I was born and educated, and as a friend of my parents, and I flatter myself of mine too, to afford me all the information you can supply on so momentous a subject. In the mean time, I will not conceal from you my determination, that, unless the subject of the Bishop’s argument can be overthrown, I must, of necessity, no longer, abstain from receiving the Communion in that Church, where alone the real presence of our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the Sacrament of the Eucharist, is acknowledged.

“ I remain,

“ My dear Sir,

“ Your’s very sincerely,

“ JOHN ELMSLEY.”

YORK, 7th OCTOBER, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR:

“ I have to acknowledge your letter of this day, enclosing a pamphlet, of which you avow yourself the publisher. With the distinguished Prelate’s works, of which this pamphlet forms a very small part, I have been for some time acquainted, and readily admit that, next to Bossuet, it is the ablest apology for the Roman Catholic Church that I have yet seen. I am, nevertheless, astonished that the Bishop’s exposition of the 6th Chapter of St. John should have made so deep an impression on your mind; for no tenet of the Roman Catholic Church appears to me so unscriptural, and so extensively pernicious, as that of transubstantiation, nor any that has been more triumphantly refuted by Protestant writers; and had I been called upon to point out the weakest portion of the Bishop’s treatise, I should have pointed to that which you have published. You must allow me to premise, that the very fact of your having printed and disseminated this pamphlet before referring to me, affords me but small encouragement to enter upon the subject of which it treats, as it evinces a strong predilection on your part in favour of the Bishop’s reasoning; and when our best Protestant writ-

ers, which you say you have read, have failed to convince, I dare not flatter myself with the hope of being able to satisfy your scruples; but since you have called upon me as the ancient friend of your parents, and as one who takes a lively interest in your eternal interest, to state my sentiments, I will do my best to convey to your mind that sincere conviction of the unsoundness of the Bishop's argument which pervades my own. I must, however, bespeak your patience, as the preparation for the opening of the Church, and other avocations press upon me at present, and will prevent me for some weeks from giving that attention to the subject which its importance confessedly merits.

" I remain,

" My dear Sir,

" Your's very sincerely,

" JOHN STRACHAN."

The members of the Roman and English Catholic Churches, both Clergy and Laity, have always lived on the most friendly terms in Upper Canada, and will I trust continue to do so. The former believed the field to be sufficiently large for their spiritual labours, and therefore assiduously abstained from controversy. A regard for the tranquillity of their flocks, and the variety and extent of their duties, appeared to dictate this line of conduct to the Clergy; and their situation has hitherto afforded them little leisure or convenience for polemical discussion. But new converts, anxious to spread the strange light that has burst upon them, are not easily restrained within the limits of a prudent discretion; and therefore Mr. Elmsley thought it necessary, as it would appear, even before his final conversion, to labour for the conversion of others, by publishing an English translation of the Bishop of Strasbourg's commentary on the 6th chapter of St. John. It was, I freely confess, at the first view, not a little mortifying to me to see the son of two old and valued friends, zealous and enlightened members of the Church of England, forsaking the faith of his parents, and that of his uncle, one of the brightest pillars of our ecclesiastical establishment, and one of the most eminent classical scholars in Europe. Yet so conscious was I that Mr. Elmsley's defection would have no effect as an example, that had he been content with the silent possession of his novel opinions, and not attempted to spread them among my people, I should not have undertaken their refutation. The tenets held by the Roman Catholic Church, and in which she differs from the true Catholic Church of England, have been so often and I think so clearly refuted, that Mr. Elmsley's adoption of them, when considered in all its bearings, carried with it, in my apprehension, no weight what-

ever. He might therefore have ascribed infallibility to the Pope; adopted transubstantiation, auricular confession, indulgences, invocation of the saints, the adoration of the cross, and the worship of relics, &c. &c., without any molestation from me; for I should have considered it sufficient, on proper occasions, to have marked my dissent from such opinions, and to have shewn on what grounds our Church pronounces them unscriptural, and holds them to have no foundation in truth or in the Bible. His letter and pamphlet, however, evidently assumed the nature of a challenge, and deprived me of the power of remaining silent. I must acknowledge that I was not a little astonished that he should have embraced at once the doctrine of transubstantiation, which Protestants justly consider the most incredible of any held by the Church of Rome: a doctrine, as we shall prove, unknown to the primitive Church, and without the slightest countenance from Scripture. But it was perhaps still more astonishing that Mr. Elmsley's adoption of this tenet should have been produced by the Bishop of Strasbourg's observations on the sixth chapter of St. John, when it is recollected that many able divines, both ancient and modern, are of opinion that it has no reference to the Lord's Supper, and is directly opposed to the doctrine of a real physical presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist. To me these circumstances offer some hope: for if so slight an argument as can be drawn from a disputed explanation of a passage of Scripture, whose application to the subject is doubted, has unsettled or carried conviction to his mind, when the utter weakness of that argument is shewn, he may return to the true fold. Perhaps Mr. Elmsley has been bewildered by the words "real presence," for he seems to think, from the last paragraph of his letter, that the real presence of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Eucharist is only acknowledged in the Church of Rome;—in this he is greatly mistaken, for the doctrine of the real presence in the Lord's Supper is held by all Protestant Churches, and particularly by the Church of England: not indeed as the Church of Rome holds it, a corporal or physical presence of Christ's natural flesh and blood; for that Church maintains, in contradiction to reason, Scripture, antiquity, and the evidence of our senses, that the substance of the bread and wine is changed into the very substance of Christ's personal body and blood; but the Church of England believes that the bread and wine become holy, and the spiritual body and blood of Christ, and therefore the real presence which she maintains is spiritual—not carnal; for Christ's body is in heaven, not to return till he come with his mighty angels to judge the world. How then, to adopt the language of one of the most eminent Prelates of our Church, can his body be supposed to come down to twenty thousand different churches to be divided,

chewed, swallowed and digested: the presence therefore for which we contend is the spiritual presence of Christ; a presence by which we abide in Christ and Christ abideth in us, to the obtaining of eternal life, and such presence is fitly named a "real presence," for it is not feigned, but true and faithful.

My first intention was strictly to confine myself to the Bishop of Strasbourg's commentary on our Saviour's remarkable discourse in the Synagogue of Capernaum, but finding it perverse and erroneous, I thought it better to change my plan, and to give such an account of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as should not only contain a full answer to the Bishop, but tend to instruct and edify my congregation, and all Christians who should peruse my work on one of the most important parts of our holy religion. Having little relish for controversy myself, I thought many were of the same taste, and I have therefore divided my subject into three sections:—*First*, Observations on the Eucharist. *Second*, A short History and Refutation of Transubstantiation. *Third*, Remarks on the Sixth Chapter of St. John's Gospel.* The first section I feel warranted in recommending to the perusal of all who are desirous of forming a just conception of the Lord's Supper. The second and third sections contain less of the spirit of controversy, than is usual in such publications, and are relieved by many remarks which perhaps to most readers will be new and striking.

The numerous calls upon my time have delayed the work some weeks longer than I intended, or rather the delay has been occasioned by enlarging the plan. I have consulted all the authors on the subject within my reach; nor have I scrupled to mix up their observations with my own, and even to use their words, for little absolutely new can be said upon a subject which, from its great dignity and importance, has employed the pens of the principal Christian writers since the days of the Apostles. My great aim has been lucid arrangement and perspicuous statement; and if I have succeeded, the touching beauty and value of the ordinance of which I treat, will make my performance useful to the Christian inquirer.

I remain,

My dear Brethren,

Your affectionate Pastor,

JOHN STRACHAN.

* The Publishers consider it sufficient in giving the third section of the venerable the Archdeacon's pamphlet entire, being an answer to, and complete refutation of the Bishop of Strasbourg's erroneous comments on the sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel. In the concluding remarks which it is their intention to make on this subject, portions of other sections will be made use of.

SIXTH CHAPTER OF ST. JOHN,

FROM VERSE 27 TO 71, INCLUSIVE.

“ 27. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you ; for him hath God the Father sealed.

“ 28. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God ?

“ 29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

“ 30. They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee ? what dost thou work ?

“ 31. Our fathers did eat manna in the desert ; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

“ 32. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven ; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

“ 33. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

“ 34. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

“ 35. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life : he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

“ 36. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

“ 37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

“ 38. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me :

“ 39. And this is the Father's will which has sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

“ 40. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life ; and I will raise him up at the last day

“ 41. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which cometh down from Heaven.

“ 42. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know ? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven ?

“ 43. Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

“ 44. No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him ; and I will raise him up at the last day.

“ 45. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God, Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

“ 46. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God ; he hath seen the Father.

“ 47. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

“ 48. I am that bread of life.

“ 49. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

“ 50. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.

“ 51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever : and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

“ 52. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat ?

“ 53. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

“ 54. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

“ 55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

“ 56. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

“ 57. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

“ 58. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

“ 59. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

“ 60. ¶ Many therefore of his disciples, when they heard *this*, said, this is a hard saying, who can hear it?

“ 61. When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

“ 62. *What*, and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

“ 63. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

“ 64. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

“ 65. And he said, therefore said I unto you, That no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

“ 66. ¶ From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

“ 67. Then Jesus said unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

“ 68. Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

“ 69. And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

“ 70. Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

“ 71. He spake of Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon; for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

In the history and refutation of the doctrine of transubstantiation, given in the second section, I purposely reserved for special consideration, what our Lord says in the Sixth Chapter of St. John's Gospel, because the Bishop of Strasbourg seems to think that the strongest argument for the real presence is derived from that portion of Scripture. In this opinion the learned Prelate has the misfortune to differ, as will afterwards appear, with the most ancient Fathers of the primitive Church, as well as with the most able Divines belonging to his own; and when we place St. Ignatius; Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Athanasius, Cyril, Augustine, Pope Gelasius, and Facundus, in opposition to the Bishop of Strasbourg, the latter stands, as an author, in a position by no means enviable. On reading the sixth chapter of St. John, you will find, that our Saviour, after feeding the five thousand, was under the necessity of withdrawing himself from the multitude, as they were going to take him by force to make him a King; believing,

from the supernatural power that he had displayed, that he was able to deliver them from all their enemies, and to redeem the Jews from their present slavery under the Roman yoke. Jesus having retired to the mountain alone, his disciples set sail for Capernaum, and while they were tossed by a tempest in the middle of the sea, they saw the Lord walking on the waters; and immediately they found themselves at land. Next morning the multitude sought Jesus thro' the whole neighbourhood, for they knew that he had not gone in the ship with his disciples; but not finding him, the most forward of them procured some boats and went in search of him to Capernaum. Beholding Christ on their arrival, surrounded by his disciples, teaching the people in the Synagogue, they were unable to contain their astonishment, and exclaimed—"Rabbi, when camest thou hither?" Jesus knowing their spirit and temper, rebuked them, and exhorted them to seek a better portion than the meat that perisheth, namely, the meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you, for him hath God the Father sealed, that is, authorised and commissioned to bestow this spiritual food. The mention of the meat that perisheth, connected as it was with the miracle of the loaves, afforded our Saviour an opportunity of improving, as was his usual custom, the incident for the edification of his hearers. Solemn and awakening therefore as this discourse certainly is, it was not introduced by any formal preparation. Jesus had escaped from the people when they wished to make him a King; he had passed over the sea of Tiberias to Capernaum; some of the more active and forward of the multitude had followed him, on account of the miracle of the loaves, and from carnal, not spiritual motives. This gave rise, in a way quite natural, to the remarkable conversation recorded by St John; as in his discourse with the woman of Samaria, our Lord took occasion, from her drawing the water, to pursue his conversation under the allegory of water; so, on this occasion he carries it on under the allegory of eating and drinking. He calls the doctrine of the Gospel bread and wine, because Christianity rests on the great doctrines of the incarnation and death of Christ, which are here called his flesh and blood. Therefore Jesus speaks of the belief of these things under the phrase of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, by which food they were to become immortal and partakers of his glory. The metaphor of expressing spiritual food by meat and drink, used by our Lord, through the whole of this chapter, is familiar to eastern nations, and occurs frequently in Scripture. Thus Solomon represents wisdom as inviting men, saying, "Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Isaiah exclaims, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not; hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good,

and let your soul delight in fatness." And our Lord in this chapter exhorts the Jews not to labour for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth for ever. But why, it may be asked, should this allegorical or figurative mode of instruction have been adopted by Christ, as the more natural way would have been to deliver his doctrines in express terms, as in some cases he has actually done; what need of another language to convey the same truth? To this I answer, that the more natural method to the Jews was the figurative or allegorical, such being the character of their numerous rites, and of the greater part of their Scripture, in which the Divine communications are not literal, but conveyed in types, symbols and metaphors.—For the Mosaic dispensation was not so much a revelation as a deposit of truths to be revealed: the form in which these truths are deposited being calculated rather to mould men's minds for their reception, than positively to teach them.—It was the Gospel which was to bring them to light. Hence the Christian's view of the doctrines of his religion is by this mode of expression connected with its proofs: our Lord, therefore, by conforming his plan of teaching to the spirit of the Jewish Scriptures, reminded them of the character of these Scriptures, which were so composed that the indocile and uncandid seeing might not see, and hearing might not understand.

Our Lord having reproved them for their eagerness after perishable food, they ask, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" The Saviour answered, "This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent." In this expression the Jews understood him to mean himself, and to require a belief in his divine character as the Messiah; but overlooking his miracles, and deluded with the notion of a great temporal king and deliverer, they were offended, and hastily inferring that he could not be that mighty conqueror promised in the law and the prophets. Nevertheless, as he manifestly assumed that title, they demanded new and greater proofs than those which he had yet given; for as the Messiah was higher than Moses, he ought to do much greater miracles; and having regard to the feeding of the five thousand, they suggested that Moses did much more. "What sign," said they, "showest thou, that we may see and believe thee to be the Messiah; what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert, and it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat;" as if they had said, admitting the miracle of the five barley loaves and the five thousand, it was but a single miracle, and a trifling number; but Moses fed the whole Jewish nation, being upwards of two millions, not for a day or a month, but during forty years. Our Saviour rectifies their mistake, teaching them that it was not Moses but God, who gave them the manna, and now gave them the

true bread from heaven, of which that was the type and figure, for the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Still supposing Christ to speak of the material bread which would not suffer them to die, but to live for ever, or to a very great age, they said unto him, "Lord evermore give us of this bread;" for if you can give us such bread, we are ready to acknowledge you to be greater than Moses; for our fathers, though they did eat manna, died in the wilderness. Our Lord then adds, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst; I came down from heaven to save the world, and this is the Father's will that hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should loose none, but raise it up at the last day." Our Lord's figurative manner of expressing himself through the whole of this discourse, is particularly manifested in this quotation; had he not been speaking spiritually, it would have been absurd to promise that his disciples should not hunger and thirst after eating this mysterious meat; what our Lord promised is, that they should never hunger and thirst for want of it. This answer not pleasing the Jews, they murmured, saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?—how is it then that he saith I came down from heaven?" Disappointed in their worldly expectations, and having no relish for spiritual blessings, the Jews were incensed at his arrogance in pretending to have come down from heaven, and said in bitter derision, "Is not this the son of Joseph the carpenter; how then has he the presumption to say that he descended from heaven?" On this our Lord rebukes them for their hardness of heart, and intimates that their opposition to spiritual things arose from their corrupt natures, which divine power could alone subdue: and he declares, that no man in his present degenerate state can divest himself of his blindness and enmity to God, and seriously believe in his Son, unless the Father draw him, that is, persuade him by the influence of his Spirit. The time was not yet come when the mystery of the incarnation was to be so revealed as to become an article of faith, but the discourse of our Saviour led them to his celestial origin and divine mission, and the testimony afforded by his works or miracles fully justify his insisting upon their belief on him. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." Here the Bishop of Strasbourg asks, "What is the meaning of this exordium, and of this manner of opening himself by halves, and by degrees? How comes it that he reminds them, at repeated intervals, of the necessity of the faith due to his character, his miracles and divinity? What is the tendency of these preliminary recommendations? In what are they to end or what is he thinking of proposing to them? Something very extraordinary no doubt, and very diffi-

cult to be received, otherwise he would have explained himself without making use of all these precautions." Before proceeding to notice the Bishop's solution of these solemn questions, and which we shall prove, as I believe to be, altogether erroneous, it is necessary to premise:—

1st. That there is a material difference and distinction between the teaching of Christ and the teaching of the apostles; a distinction which has been too much overlooked by divines, and which the Bishop of Strasbourg does not notice, although it would have furnished him with a much better exposition of our Saviour's meaning in this chapter than that which he has adopted, and explained in a far more satisfactory manner the serious questions which he proceeds to propound.—Our Saviour came rather to be the subject of Christianity than the author of it.—He did not baptize, though baptism was the rite of admission into his religion; he preached not to the Gentiles, although the most distinguishing feature of the new dispensation, was its extension to all mankind. He established no Church during his abode on earth, and left no written laws behind him, but as the subject of Christianity, he appears God manifested in the flesh, and in that character accomplished our redemption by his mysterious death and sufferings. As the teacher of mankind, he instructs them in a way by which they might attain to the Divine favour, thus made accessible to all. In the first stage of Christianity, it was impossible for our Lord to explain more clearly than he did, many things respecting his birth, his transcendent dignity, his last sufferings, his triumph over death and the grave, and his ascension up into heaven; and this enables us to account for the difficulty of explaining many of his allusions and dark sayings, without the aid of farther revelation.—There is, however, one thing which he never fails to demand, that is, faith in his words and testimony. This he requires of all those on whom he performed miracles; for as he made faith necessary to that eternal salvation which he came to offer, it seemed fitting, that temporal deliverance should in like manner be offered with the same condition, if we suppose the latter to be intended as a type of the former. Our Lord explains frequently to the multitude, and always to his disciples, every thing in as far as the progress of events would admit; and on the present occasion, his address to the people is not more dark and mysterious, than the incidents to which it alluded rendered necessary. If therefore hints and allusions were often given by our Lord, which partook more of the obscurity of prophecy than the explanation of a new truth, it was because many of the Christian doctrines could neither be as yet clearly communicated nor comprehended, as they depended upon events which had not taken place. The great doctrine of the atonement for

example, which was not fully accomplished till our Lord's ascension, his resurrection from the dead, &c. were not designed to be publicly understood till the illumination caused by the descent of the Holy Ghost. Even the twelve, though commonly allowed an explanation, were as much in the dark respecting some of the main truths of Christianity till the coming of the Holy Ghost, as the multitude around them. To speak therefore of our Lord's careful exordium, his opening himself by halves and degrees, is altogether erroneous. When our Lord says to his disciples: it is expedient to you that I go away, he plainly indicates that the office of making Christians belonged to the Comforter. God manifested himself in the flesh to redeem the world and to atone for sin; to be made the object of a new faith; the subject of a new religion. God manifested himself by the Spirit, to instruct men in what he had done, and to teach them what they were bound in consequence to do. The Holy Spirit was sent to the disciples, not only to bring all things to their remembrance, but to teach them all things: the necessity of which is manifest in a great number of instances. We trusted, said the two disciples, in their disappointment and despondency, that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel, evidently shewing that they were even at this time unacquainted with the doctrine of redemption by the death of Christ. It is not for you, or you cannot be expected to know, says Christ to his disciples, the times or seasons which the Father has put in his own power; but ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses. Even if it be admitted that our Lord's teaching embraces all the essential doctrines of Christianity, yet from the very form adopted, that of parables, symbolical miracles, and didactic prophecies, the truths so deposited by his followers were plainly not designed to be understood, until the Holy Spirit should not only have brought Christ's ministry to their remembrance, but taught them also all things implied and intended by it. Until such assistance was given, they were in possession of a revelation which they did not understand, and without this assistance, there can be no question that the Christian doctrines could never have been understood, explained and preached. From Adam until Christ, the scheme of man's redemption was prefigured. In Christ's ministry it was accomplished, by the Spirit it was explained. This great doctrine depended upon our Lord's death and sufferings, and could not be properly understood till after his crucifixion.— These remarks, which might be profitably extended, account satisfactorily for our Saviour's mode of teaching, without having recourse to any art or management, as the Bishop of Strasbourg appears to suppose. Every thing was told in such a manner, as to be understood at the time; or so plainly, that when the event to which it referred took place, it was fully com-

prehended; or if it still partook of prophetic obscurity, it was taken by the Holy Spirit and brought home to the apprehension of the Apostles and converts.

2nd. I am as ready to admit as the Bishop of Strasbourg, that our Saviour's discourse on this occasion was very remarkable, and that his strong manner of expressing himself, and his emphatically repeating the same thing in the same or different phrases, is sufficient to persuade us that some important mystery and significant lesson of instruction was intended to be communicated. Now the Bishop contends that the mystery revealed was that of transubstantiation, or his real physical presence in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and that a prior belief in this doctrine is required by Christ, as necessary to salvation. That this is a great error will be abundantly shewn (in my opinion) in the sequel; at present it may be observed, that in this chapter our Lord plainly announces himself to be the Messiah; that he had come down from heaven; that he was greater than Moses; that his kingdom was not, as the Jews vainly believed, temporal, but spiritual; that he would at length ascend into heaven, and appear no more personally among them; that eating his flesh and drinking his blood were not meant in a gross carnal sense, but of spiritually living in him, and on his fulness by faith; for as the soul of man giveth life to the body, without which the flesh is only a lifeless putrefying lump of clay, so without the life-giving spirit of God, all forms of religion are dead and worthless: he declares, that by believing his doctrine, trusting in his promises, and meditating on his instructions, they would spiritually eat his flesh and drink his blood. It is therefore not wonderful that a discourse containing such high and mysterious things should astonish our Lord's audience, since it contradicts their dearest prejudices, for though instruction had frequently been spoken of as the food of the soul, yet no prophet or servant of God from the beginning of the world, had spoken of himself as the bread of life.

This discourse at Capernaum, happened about a year before our Lord's institution of the Eucharist, and many of the most able divines, both ancient and modern, contend that it has no relation to that ordinance, but merely to spiritual feeding in general; others maintain that the connexion is intimate, and that our Saviour's expressions on this occasion appear a sort of preparation for the appointment of the last Supper. The arguments on both sides are exceedingly strong, and I am inclined to believe, that though this discourse more immediately refers to the atonement, and the benefits we derive from it by faith, yet it may be justly considered a prophetic intimation of the advantages to be derived from the participation of the Lord's

Supper. The sacrifice of Christ and the Holy Sacrament have such a relationship, that the mention of the one may naturally suggest the other. In speaking of the offering of his body, Christ, we may well suppose, spake of it with a reference to that Sacrament, in which it is typified and its benefits applied.—Those who by true faith are partakers of Christ's propitiation have eternal life; and in like manner those who rightly and worthily receive the Holy Sacrament are spiritually partakers of Christ's body and blood; they become one with Christ and Christ with them; they really partake of the benefits of his passion; they feed on him by faith; they are supported, nourished and strengthened by him, and the divine principle of life which is then confirmed in their souls, will, if not forfeited by sin, lead to eternal happiness. But though it may be right to apply the general doctrine of this Chapter to the particular case of the Lord's Supper, considered as worthily received, because the spiritual feeding here mentioned is the thing signified and effected by the Lord's Supper, yet when we come to the critical examination of words and phrases, it will be found that this admission gives no strength or countenance to the Bishop of Strasbourg's doctrine.

Having premised these things, we proceed with the examination of our Lord's discourse: and here it may be proper to remark, that there is a spiritual feeding or eating and drinking our Lord's body broken and blood shed, or participating of the atonement made by our Lord's death and sufferings, without reference to sacramental feeding, because many have doubtless been saved through the blood of Christ, who never had an opportunity of participating in the Communion. It is, however, the bounden duty of all Christians frequently to commemorate the death of Christ, and when they communicate worthily, they feed spiritually on his body and blood, for this is the substance. The actual oral manducation of the bread and the drinking of the wine, being merely the outward signs. Admitting therefore the relation between what our Saviour here says about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, with the Lord's Supper, I contend that the expressions are figurative. In this I am fully warranted by the 63rd verse, as well as by the general purport of the whole conversation, which appears upon the face of it to carry a mystical, not a literal meaning. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit; and they are life." The words are also universal and not particular in their application, whether we take them negatively or affirmatively. "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you:"—so far negatively. "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: who so eateth my flesh and drinketh my

blood, hath eternal life:’ that is, all who feed upon what is here mentioned have life, and all that do not feed thereupon have no life, or all that finally share in the death, passion and atonement of Christ, are safe; and all that have not a part therein, are lost: all that are saved, owe their salvation to the salutary passion of Christ, and their partaking thereof, which is feeding upon his flesh and blood, is their life. This is the basis of the Gospel; we must be reconciled to God, by the death of his Son, before we have a just claim or title to any thing besides. Therefore the foundation of all our spiritual privileges, is our having a part in that reconciliation, and which, according to St. John, in this Chapter, is eating and drinking his flesh and blood, or as St. Paul tells the Hebrews, eating of the altar: the result, fruit or effect of our thus eating his crucified body, is a right to be fellow heirs with his body glorified, for if we are made partakers of his death, we shall also be made partakers of his resurrection. On this is founded our mystical union with Christ’s glorified body, which neither supposes nor infers local presence; for all the members of Christ, however distant in place, are thus mystically united with Christ, and with each other. The sum of the doctrine of this Chapter is not confined to oral or spiritual manducation in the Eucharist, but also extends to spiritual manducation at large. The feeding on Christ’s death and passion, at the price of our redemption and salvation, confers a spiritual, or mystical union with Christ’s human nature, and by that with his Godhead, to which his humanity is joined in an unity of person; but as this spiritual manducation belongs also to the Eucharist, our Lord’s expressions are not foreign to the ordinance, but have such a relation to it as the inward thing signified has to the sign.

3rd. Our Lord’s conversation in the Synagogue at Capernaum was not more mysterious than that which he held with Nicodemus respecting the new birth; but when the latter was explained, as referring figuratively to baptism, or the washing of water upon the outward man, and sanctification of the spirit in the inner man, it became plain and easy of comprehension. When, therefore, our Lord says, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I shall give him is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world:” it is the same as if he had said, I am the bread of life whom God hath sent into the world, to direct and bring you into the way of everlasting life. With this bread, the manna of which you boast that your fathers eat in the wilderness, is not to be compared, for the manna preserved them not from temporal death. But whosoever eateth of this bread, by believing on me, embraceth my doctrine, and persevering in obedience to my commandments,

shall be kept and nourished unto everlasting life. For I am the word, and the word was made flesh, that by it the world might be saved. But my incarnation is not all, I must also suffer death upon the cross, and give my life a ransom for many. He therefore that believeth in my incarnation and passion, and acts accordingly, shall as certainly be nourished, as the bread he eats supports the life of his body. In all this our Lord says nothing more mysterious than when he tells the woman of Samaria, "The water which I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life:" for as the body is nourished by the food that is eaten, so he that receives me into his heart with a spiritual appetite, his soul shall live and never die. But the Jews, unable to elevate their thoughts to spiritual things, disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" This oral manducation of his very flesh, they deemed monstrous and absurd. These gross conceptions, which our Lord hastens to rectify, have been adopted by the Roman Catholic Church, and yet they loudly exclaim against those who cleave to the truth. Indeed, were not the subject so awfully serious, it would be amusing to follow the Bishop of Strasbourg in this part of his interpretation. The Prelate admits that the Jews understood our Lord, when he spoke of giving them his flesh to eat, to mean a real manducation; and although our Lord explains himself as speaking spiritually, not carnally, the Bishop adopts the condemned opinion of the Jews, and pleads also for an oral manducation of a similar kind, though covered with a veil to render it invisible to the senses. The Roman Catholic believes that the elements of bread and wine do not so much as exist in the stupendous mystery; for he believes, "That by virtue of the Divine Omnipotence, and in consequence of the solemn act of consecration, these humble substances are completely changed, being thus transubstantiated into the body and blood of our great Redeemer, in conformity to that plain and strong assurance of this Divine being—"this is my body, this is my blood." Now the plain and obvious meaning of the words of the institution, as noticed in the former section, as well as those used by our Lord at Capernaum, was never mistaken for many centuries; but in process of time, the true sense became obscured in the dark ages, and by degrees came to be almost entirely lost; and even now this misconstruction remains in the Roman Catholic Church a standing monument of human infirmity; nor was it easy to restore the true sense at the reformation, and clear off the mist with which it was surrounded. "The bread that I will give you is my flesh. Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." Such expressions now repeated cannot mean that the bread and wine became really and literally our Lord's body, in the same

broken state as it hung upon the cross, and that blood which was spilt upon the ground more than eighteen hundred years ago; neither can they mean that this bread and wine, literally and properly, are our Lord's glorified body, which is as far distant from us as heaven is distant. All sense—all reason—all Scripture—all antiquity, and sound theology, reclaim against so wild a thought. As a further confirmation of this reasoning and illustration of the subject, I observe, that there was a very prevalent tradition among the Jews, suggested by many prophetic passages of the Old Testament, that upon the coming of the Messiah, all the sacrifices of the law would cease; only the sacrifice of thanksgiving (Eucharist) should be perpetuated in bread and wine, after the example of Melchisedec. Of this person we know neither his entry into the world nor his exit from it, that he might be the more like to Christ, who is an eternal Prince and Priest: King of Righteousness; King of Peace, without beginning of days or end of life, for of his kingdom there shall be no end. Melchisedec came to meet Abraham with blessings in his mouth, and in his hands bread and wine. And our Lord, who is declared by the apostle to be a Priest, after his order, took bread and wine, and under these symbols offered himself a sacrifice well-pleasing to God, and obtained a blessing for all the seed of Abraham who in the Divine strength are conquerors of their spiritual enemies, Satan, sin and death. This application of the bread and wine which Melchisedec brought forth or offered as a type of Christ, and his oblation of himself under such symbols for a blessing to mankind, is fully acknowledged by the Church from the Apostolic age. St. Clement of Alexandria, who flourished in the second century, calls Melchisedec's bread and wine "food sanctified for a type of the Eucharist." "Our Saviour, (says Eusebius) the Christ of God, does yet celebrate by his servants the functions of his Priesthood, after the manner of Melchisedec; for as he being a Priest of the Gentiles, never appears to have offered corporeal sacrifices, but blessed Abraham in bread and wine; in like manner our Saviour first, and then all Priests from him, celebrating the spiritual ministry over all nations, according to the laws of the Church, mysteriously represent his body and salutary blood in bread and wine." St. Augustine, in his work "De Civitate Dei," mentions Melchisedec's interview with Abraham, and says, "there first appeared the sacrifice which now through the whole world is offered by Christians to God, and that is fulfilled, which was long after said by the Prophet to Christ, who was yet to come in the flesh."—"Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

Now this interpretation of Melchisedec's, so far from

favouring the Roman Catholic Church, strongly militates against their opinion; for they can neither say nor suppose that the body and blood of Christ could have been substantially received before he took flesh and blood by his incarnation, and therefore they must admit that bread and wine may be a sacrifice, pacificatory and refreshing to our souls, without believing that there is any transubstantiation in what they represent, and the virtue of which they beneficially apply. Indeed this argument, drawn from Melchisedec's typical offering of the Eucharist, is, in my opinion, decisive, were there no other against the doctrine of transubstantiation.

But to proceed:—our Lord's expressions, in his divinely mysterious sermon at Capernaum, were "the bread that I will give you is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Here he speaks in the future, which he explained and fulfilled when he took bread and blessed it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "this is my body which is given for you." The words at Capernaum were "which I shall give"; but now, "this bread is my body which is given"—this body, with its drink offering, his blood, in spirit and in power. But our Lord himself, to guard us against taking those strong expressions of his in a literal sense, plainly points out their spiritual meaning in the same chapter—"it is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing;" forbidding at once the thought of his natural flesh, and condemning for ever the doctrine of the Church of Rome, that the substance of the bread and wine passed into the natural substance of the flesh and blood of Christ, that very flesh and blood which he took of the substance of the blessed Virgin, and which hung on the cross on Mount Calvary: had the primitive Church believed or suspected this, they never would have thought of praying for the sanctification of the elements of bread and wine, as is expressed in all their Liturgies; to have done so under that supposition or belief, would have been exceedingly absurd, if not blasphemous. The natural body and blood of Christ are capable of no additional sanctification, being united in one person with the divinity, and having the spirit without measure, being the fountain of it, to all who receive it. If any difficulty be felt in explaining our Lord's words at Capernaum, it is effectually removed in the institution of the Lord's Supper, when he took bread, blessed and brake it, and declared that same substantial bread to be his body; and when he took the fruit of the vine, which the cup contained, and said, "This is my blood," asserting, after the consecration and consumption of it, that what he gave, so consecrated and received by his apostles, was in substance wine, which the Jews called the fruit of the vine; the same meaning is established by St. Paul, for he repeatedly calls

what was offered and received, bread after consecration. Thus let a man examine himself, and so let him "eat of that bread, and drink of that cup: for whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." Bread therefore it is, and yet the body of the Lord; and wine it is, and yet the blood of Christ. At the same time, this bread and wine so blessed and declared to be Christ's body and blood, became more than a bare representation or figure. They are, as our Church, taught by Scripture, declares in her twenty-fifth article of religion, an effectual sign in virtue and effect, though not in substance the thing which they represent. It is the bread and wine quickened by the Spirit, who is the giver of life. That Divine person, who rendered effectual to our spiritual health and soul's salvation, all that our Redeemer had done and suffered for us, and by the means of his own appointment. The same almighty word which gave bread its natural virtue to nourish the body, by his blessing in the first institution of food, gives the sacramental bread its supernatural virtue in this divine institution for the strengthening and refreshing of our souls in the spiritual life, and for the resurrection of our bodies to life eternal; for says our gracious Lord, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." This appears to have been the doctrine of the Christian Church, for more than six centuries, and was scarcely in any degree obscured till very corrupt and ignorant ages followed; nor was it ever totally lost, even in the Western Church, though nearly choked for a time by the prevailing growth of transubstantiation; yet in the face of antiquity, and that of Scripture, sense and reason, the Bishop of Strasbourg proceeds, with amusing gravity, to rebuke the Protestants for adopting his new doctrine; and this at the very moment that he had seen our Lord telling the Jews, who understood his words as Roman Catholics now do, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Thus we have a plain and convincing intimation that Christ spoke of eating his flesh and drinking his blood in a figurative and spiritual manner, and that eating of his flesh, as the carnal Jews understood, and as modern Roman Catholics understand, would profit nothing. Here I pause from following the Bishop, till I make good my assertion made in the beginning of this section, that he stands in opposition, in his explanation of St. John, to the most celebrated Fathers of the Church.

St. Ignatius, the disciple of St. John the Evangelist, and who had lain in the bosom of that apostle, as the apostle had in the bosom of Christ, and who must have received the sense

and meaning of this chapter from the holy penman himself; speaking to the Ephesians, desires them to make haste together to one place, in one common faith, in one Jesus Christ, breaking one loaf, which is the medicine of immortality, and our antidote against death. Although this father does not quote this chapter, he had it in his eye when he says in another place, "I delight not in corruptible food, nor in the entertainments of this world. The bread of God is what I covet—heavenly bread—bread of life, namely, the flesh of Jesus Christ the Son of God; and I am athirst for the drink of God, namely, his blood, which is a feast of love that faileth not, and life everlasting." Clemens of Alexandria, who flourished about 192, speaking of the Eucharist, says, "Our Lord, in the Gospel according to St. John, has otherwise introduced it under symbols, saying, 'Eat my flesh and drink my blood,' allegorically signifying the true and clear liquor of faith and of the promise, by both which the Church, like man, compacted of many members, is watered and nourished, and is made up or compounded of both—of faith as the body, and of hope as the soul, like as our Lord of flesh and blood."

Tertullian, speaking of our Saviour's discourse at Capernaum, "Though," he says, "the flesh profiteth nothing, yet the sense is to be governed by the subject matter; for because they thought it a hard and intolerable saying, as if he had intended really to give them his flesh to eat; therefore he promised that it is the spirit that quickeneth, and then subjoined, that the flesh profiteth nothing, namely, towards quickening; therefore, as he makes the word quickener, because the word is spirit and life, he calls the same his flesh, as the word was made flesh, which consequently is to be hungered after for the sake of life, to be devoured by the ear, to be chewed by the understanding, and digested by faith."

Origin says, "Christ's flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, because he feedeth all mankind with the flesh and blood of his word, as with pure meat and drink." Athanasius says, "The words which Christ spake at Capernaum, are not carnal but spiritual, for how could his body have sufficed for meat, that it should be made the food of the whole world." Cyril, of Jerusalem, observes, "that Christ, once discoursing with the Jews said, 'except ye eat the flesh,' &c.; but they, not understanding the things that were spoken; or in a spiritual manner, but supposing that he exhorted them to eat flesh (like cannibals) were scandalised, and went back from him."

St. Augustine says, "Why preparest thou teeth and stomach? Believe, and thou hast eaten, for to believe in him is to

eat the living bread." Again in his tract on St. John, he says, "To believe in him is to eat the living bread; he that believes eats, because he is inwardly replenished."

Again he introduces Christ as saying, "Understand what I say in a spiritual manner; you are not to eat that body which you see, and you are not about to drink this identical blood which they who crucify me will pour out. I have commended to you a Sacrament which will give you life if spiritually understood; though it is necessary to be celebrated in a visible manner, yet it must be invisibly apprehended. What is the bread of the kingdom of God, but he who says, I am the living bread which came down from heaven, prepare not your mouth but your heart. This is the commendation of this Supper, see we believe in Christ; we receive this with faith in receiving, we know what is the subject of our meditation." "Certainly," says Pope Gelasius, in the fifth century, "the Sacraments of the body and blood of the Lord, which we receive, are a divine thing, because by these we are partakers of the divine nature. Nevertheless, the substance or nature of the bread and wine ceases not to exist; and assuredly the image and similitude of the body and blood of Christ are celebrated in the action of the mysteries."

"The Sacrament of adoption," says Facundus, in the sixth century, "may be called adoption, such as the Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, which in the consecrated bread and wine, we are wont to call his body and blood. Not indeed that the bread is properly his body, or the wine is properly his blood, but because they contain the mystery of his body and blood within themselves. Hence it was that the Lord denominated the consecrated bread and wine which he delivered to his disciples, his own body and blood."

It were easy to multiply extracts of a similar nature, but these are quite sufficient, (more especially when taken in connexion with the celebrated men noticed in the last section who opposed transubstantiation) to prove that such a doctrine was unknown to the primitive Church, and that the words of St. John are figurative, as well as those which our Lord used at the institution of the Eucharist.

Thus we have seen that the primitive Church, as well as all Protestant Churches, repudiate the doctrine of the real physical presence, and that the bread of God which came down from heaven, and of which the manna in the wilderness was a type or shadow, is to be received by faith; for what our heavenly Father demands of us is, to believe in him whom he hath sent.

The kingdom of Christ is not of this world, it consists not of exterior things, but of a dominion over the heart and understanding; and therefore what our Lord says of eating and drinking has far more respect to our spiritual than our carnal nature: for as the animal spirits quicken the body, so in the work of grace the Spirit of God quickens our souls to spiritual and eternal life. The elements of bread and wine, considered merely in themselves, are of no advantage to the life of the soul, but they have been selected by our Saviour as symbolical of conveying the Holy Spirit, whose influence, as the fruit of Christ's death and resurrection and ascension, is effectual to eternal life. Consequently, the shocking idea conveyed to the Jews by his words, our Saviour carefully removes and endeavours to convince them, on this as on all other occasions, that his religion is spiritual; yet notwithstanding our Lord's earnestness to convince his hearers that he was speaking of heavenly, not earthly things, the Bishop asserts that there is no figurative language in the discourse, but that it must be taken literally. Now if our Lord had not corrected the Jews for their low and grovelling conceptions, the words used, taken literally, outrage common sense, to which all Scripture is addressed: and it is not a little extraordinary, that while the Bishop contends for the literal sense of our Saviour's words, he is compelled to allow that the flesh and blood are presented under the form of bread; that under the form and appearance of bread his flesh is eaten; that they participate of the substance of his body, and are nourished by it under the appearance and usage of the ordinary aliment of man. What inconsistency!—the words are not symbolical, and yet they are symbolical. In fine, if the Bishop attaches any distinct meaning to his belief, it must be that of the Church of England; any other, even by his own shewing, betrays him into the most glaring contradictions. The fault of the Jews not only consisted in taking our Lord's words in their literal sense, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" but they also despised and opposed spiritual things, for their indignation did not reach its height till our Lord repeats what he had said before, "that no man can savingly believe in him except the Father draw him by the Spirit, and thus give him strength and grace to come unto him in a spiritual manner." His disciples were so stung and offended at this close application of his doctrine, that many departed and returned to the world. Before they went away our Lord in his wonderful benignity endeavours to recall their attention to spiritual objects. Are you surprised and disturbed at what I have now spoken, as if they were strange and unintelligible things? What if hereafter ye shall see me go up again to the same place from whence I first came? When ye see this ye will learn to understand my words, not in a gross, but in a spiritual

and rational sense. In truth, the metaphor in this discourse of food as doctrine, and eating and drinking as believing, was not difficult to be apprehended by the Jews, because found in the Scriptures and known in their schools; but eating his flesh and drinking his blood, literally understood, gave them offence because prohibited by the law of Moses, and repugnant to the customs of civilized nations.

Our Lord, on this apostacy, to try the faith of the twelve, said, in a moving and affectionate manner, "Will ye also go away?" Behold how many have forsaken me, will ye follow their example? What are your thoughts and purposes? Then Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." These words of St. Peter are of great importance to the right explication of the context: he and the other Apostles had continued with our Saviour from the first; they had been witnesses daily of his miracles; they had beheld his Divine countenance, that mild and God-like face, tempered by human limitations; they had seen his pure unspotted innocence—his heavenly deportment—his conversation, so wise, condescending and sublime, connecting the present with the future, earth with heaven, and therefore with entire conviction they exclaimed, "Yes, we believe and know that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Nor do we understand thy words in the carnal and absurd sense which these men have given them, for we perceive that thou speakest of those doctrines and revelations by which we are to be guided to eternal life. This declaration, which is fully implied in the words of St. Peter, proves beyond controversy, that the Apostles believed our Lord's conversation in a spiritual and not in a carnal sense, for their answer to our Lord's appeal is the same as if they had said: Thou art the true bread of life, the promised Messiah so long looked for—the eternal Son of the living God, who camest down from heaven. Hence the faith required by the Gospel is the submission of the heart to the reception of Divine truth, much more than any peculiar capacity for understanding abstruse doctrine; and when men are willing to receive instruction, it will always be supplied them in a sufficient degree for securing the great object of religion, the salvation of their souls. Here lay the distinction between the disciples who remained and those who forsook our Saviour: neither of them understood or could understand the full import of Christ's words, for his crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, had not yet taken place; but one part gave the Saviour their full confidence, and the other was self-sufficient and averse to spiritual things. And here it is right to observe, that we stand on the vantage ground—Christ hath risen from the

dead and ascended into heaven; the Holy Ghost has come and announced that he is the Messiah, by the most astonishing manifestations, and these proofs of his divinity must bring certain conviction to every well ordered mind. With such accumulation of proofs in favour of the sense which we give to our Saviour's discourse, the Apostles, the Fathers, &c., it is rather too much for the Bishop of Strasbourg to call upon us to give up our dearest hopes because we do not adopt his carnal interpretation. Christianity is a spiritual worship, and its object is to bring men to a nearer conformity to God; for this purpose, it elevates their views above temporal things, and qualifies them for a higher state of existence; but to maintain that the words of our Saviour in the Synagogue at Capernaum are literal, not spiritual, is so self-evident a misapprehension of the nature and design of the Gospel, as to be almost incredible; and is in fact an extravagance more difficult to reconcile to the mind, than even the apostacy of the Jews when they heard and were offended at them. One has hardly patience with the Bishop of Strasbourg when he says, "That if the Jews were shocked and scandalized when Jesus said, I will give you my flesh to eat, when he was upon earth, and before their eyes, how much more will you be scandalized when you shall see his body go up to heaven and disappear from your sight? If this manducation appears to you incredible, now that you see my body, how much more will it appear to you when you see it no more? This doctrine was therefore such, that after his resurrection it would represent more difficulties to be understood than it did before; and from this I conclude that his doctrine was not such as the reformed attribute to him."

Now this mode of reasoning is singularly weak. The hard saying at which the Jews were offended, was the monstrous, and as they conceived, the savage doctrine of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, which, notwithstanding our Lord's explanation, they persevered in, believing in a literal sense. And yet the Roman Catholic Church, with astonishing perverseness, adopts the very belief for which the Jews were reprov'd, and without their excuse; for the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom is now most clearly revealed, and leaves not the semblance of argument from Scripture, sense or reason, for the Bishop of Strasbourg's opinion. His Lordship endeavours to fortify his opinion by giving a sense to the 63rd verse, at variance with its evident meaning; for he applies the words flesh and spirit in a manner totally unconnected with the context: "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing:—as if our Lord had said the flesh, that is, the senses or corrupt reason of man, profiteth nothing towards the discovery or belief of what he had announced; that is, the reality of the manducation on which

he has so much insisted, of which he here declares that we cannot judge by the flesh or by a carnal reason which profiteth nothing, and that it could neither be discerned nor believed, except by the quickening Spirit, that is, by the grace and light of God." Now this gloss makes the carnal man display his carnality by adopting the spiritual interpretation of our Lord's expressions; while the spiritual man displays his spirituality by preferring the carnal interpretation. Such a paraphrase appears to me a very extraordinary description of the two states of the carnal man and spiritual man, and is not sanctioned by any authority. The true meaning has already been given, that what he had said about eating his flesh was to be understood in a spiritual, not in a carnal sense. The words which I speak, says Christ, convey to men the power of the Spirit, for the flesh of itself profiteth not at all to the end that I propose, namely, giving you eternal life. Thus understood, there is a consistent and regular connexion with what goes before. Perhaps still more singular is the interpretation by the Bishop of the 65th verse: "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him by my Father," which he expounds to mean, "the need of an assistance, a particular grace from Heaven for believing the manducation contended for." Now such a sense is totally inconsistent with the text which evidently implies what our Saviour had already declared "that no man can savingly believe in me, unless my Father draw him by his Spirit, and give him strength and grace to enable him to come unto me in a spiritual manner for everlasting life."

Let us now look back and glance at our examination of this Chapter:—

1st. Jesus Christ uses in this discourse metaphorical language, as was his custom, and urges strong motives to convince his hearers of the obligations they were under to believe in his words. The depth and solemnity of the observations are very remarkable, and revelations are made in language not a little mysterious, of some of the leading doctrines of Christianity.—Why such were not at the time more clearly communicated is abundantly accounted for, by the distinction noticed between the teaching of Christ and the teaching of his Apostles.

2nd. When our Lord speaks of feeding his Church with his flesh and blood, his language was so strong that the disciples murmured, and the Jews indignantly asked, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" It appears from the tenor of the narrative, that both Jews and disciples understood him literally, but Christ hastens to correct this mistake, and teaches them to

understand him figuratively. Those who believed received his explanation, but the perverse heeded him not. Yet although our Saviour interprets his language figuratively, the Bishop of Strasbourg, like the obstinate Jews, maintains that his language is literal, thus placing himself in direct contradiction to Christ's declaration recorded in Holy Scripture.

3. The figurative exposition of our Saviour's language in this Chapter, as well as the institution of the Eucharist, is in perfect accordance with the whole Scripture, but the literal exposition is in direct contradiction. The Bishop's doctrine is, "that in the celebration of the Eucharist, the Priest offers up the literal body and blood of Christ to God, as the true and proper expiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead." Christ therefore, according to this doctrine, is repeatedly offered; but in Holy Writ, we are positively assured, that Christ was offered only once—Heb. 9 ch. & 28 v. Heb. 10 ch. & 10 v. 1 Peter 3 ch. & 18 v. The term once, is in direct opposition to the term repeatedly. According to Scripture, Christ is once offered, but according to the Bishop of Strasbourg and his Church, Christ is repeatedly offered; hence the Holy Scriptures and the Roman Catholic Church are placed in direct variance with each other.

4th. After our Lord's explanation, St. Peter clearly perceives, that he had been speaking figuratively, and says, "Thou hast the words of eternal life." Had he thought that Christ had spoken literally of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, he would naturally have said, Lord, it is a hard saying, yet because thou has said it we believe; strengthen thou our unbelief. The Apostle however speaks very differently: "Lord, to whom shall we go, thou hast the words of eternal life;" as if he had said, We are resolved to remain with thee, for thou art the true bread of life. But had our Lord left them in their mistake in believing his words literal and not figurative, it would only have been in accordance with his conduct on other occasions, when dealing with hardened and obstinate sinners. For example, he said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again;" and though the Jews did certainly misunderstand him, because he spake of the temple of his body, yet he makes no attempt to set them right.

5th. The summary of his argument, drawn up by the Bishop, displays much weakness, with not a little assurance. The first three paragraphs are taken up with shewing that the Jews understood our Lord to mean a real manducation. In the fourth paragraph he asserts, with astonishing coolness, that our Lord had also the reality in view, because he does not correct

them, totally forgetting or misapplying the 68rd verse, in which Christ expressly condemns their carnal meaning, and declares his words to be figurative. The fifth and sixth paragraphs, after noticing the offence taken by the disciples, asserts that our Lord does not soften the expressions which had alienated his hearers, although the very contrary is the fact; for Christ clearly intimates, that his flesh is his life, which he was to give for the life of the world; and eating his flesh and drinking his blood, is believing on him, Christ crucified, the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. In the remaining paragraphs, the Bishop gives a perverse interpretation to the Chapter, and makes our Lord to say the very opposite of what he did say,— that he announced the reality of the manducation, and reproached the disciples for their unbelief, because they considered the manducation impossible, and that we are in the same condemnation. The Bishop farther states, that Jesus declares that no one can receive this manducation, if he has not received grace from the Father. Now the discourse proves the reverse of all this, and most clearly shews that the Jews did understand a real manducation, and were so scandalised, that either they did not listen to or give credit to Christ's correction of their error, which clearly intimated that the manducation to which he alluded was spiritual, and therefore so must the food be spiritual, and consequently it could not be his natural flesh. But the Apostles, attending to his explanation, remained stedfast in their confidence, though not yet acquainted with the true nature of his doctrine, which was afterwards to be more fully revealed. It is impossible to follow the Bishop through what he means as his summary, without remarking the difficulties he has to encounter in so interpreting the Chapter, as to support the error of transubstantiation. Instead of the sublime truths which our Lord brings forward as far as they could then be revealed, the Bishop seeks to confine our vision to the mere belief in a carnal manducation, and to effect this purpose he is compelled to pervert and misinterpret the clearest expressions.

6th. A great part of the Pamphlet is taken up with exhorting Protestants to turn to what his Lordship deems the true faith respecting the body and blood of Christ; with what success may be anticipated, when the whole of the discourse at Capernaum is in direct opposition to transubstantiation, a doctrine which we have proved unknown in the primitive Church, and which receives no countenance from the more early fathers; nay, it has been shown that these eminent men interpret our Lord's expressions in this Chapter figuratively, and not literally, so that they stand in direct opposition to the Bishop. In truth, his Lordship's doctrine outrages our senses, and appears to those who have not had their minds prejudiced in its favour

from infancy, altogether incredible; nor is it too much to assert that no man of common understanding can ever be brought to believe the doctrine of transubstantiation, if proposed to him after he has attained the years of discretion. Thus have we gone through the Sixth Chapter of St. John, from which the Bishop of Strasbourg endeavours to draw the strongest argument for the real physical presence of the body and blood of Christ, in the consecrated elements of bread and wine; and we have, it is hoped, fully proved that our Lord speaks throughout spiritually, though the images and illustrations, as was his custom, are taken from the things immediately around him or familiar to his hearers. The discourse is indeed highly spiritual, as might have been anticipated from the very nature of the Christian religion, which is essentially spiritual, and seeks to beget in us heavenly dispositions, and to bring us nearer and nearer to the character of God. But enough has been said to justify me in concluding that the Bishop of Strasbourgh has totally failed in his argument; it therefore becomes rather ludicrous in his Lordship to exhort us to beware of the danger we are in,—the danger is certainly not with us, but with his Lordship, and all persons of his belief. We arrange ourselves with the Apostles, and his Lordship takes part with the unbelieving Jews. We listen to Jesus Christ, who is still in the midst of us, and continues to speak the same language to us—we hear him, and surrender ourselves, in deep humility, to his will; while the Bishop of Strasbourg perverts or misinterprets the words of our Saviour, and stands in the situation of those, who teach for doctrines the commandments of men.

CONCLUSION.

It is hoped that my object, in this and the preceding Sections, which has been to furnish a competent knowledge of the true nature of the Eucharist as it appears from the Scripture, and was understood by the Apostles and first Christians, and to remove the perplexing error of transubstantiation, with which it has for many ages been deformed, has been attained.

While doing this, I have satisfactorily shewn, that it is the most merciful and beautiful institution that God ever vouchsafed to man; and that it ought not to surprise us that its celebration stood forth as the most prominent part of the worship of the Primitive Church: it indeed no where appears that our Saviour himself ordained any other for his disciples, but the commemoration of his own death in this Holy Sacrament.

Prayer is a duty of natural as well as of revealed religion ; but the celebration of the Eucharist, with its attendant duties, preaching the doctrine of the Apostles, fellowship among the Saints, and the public prayers, is peculiar to Christianity, and was the known stated and constant worship of our Lord's disciples and their followers ; and with reason, for the death of Christ is the most wonderful and beneficial event that marks the annals of time, and of all others the most deserving to be the chief subject of our praise to God. Now praise, offered in a proper manner, is justly esteemed the most rational and excellent part of Divine worship, consequently, a participation of the Eucharist, in faith and sincerity, is the most acceptable service we can pay to our Creator and Redeemer.

The Eucharist has been considered by the pious of all ages a feast upon a sacrifice ; and with equal propriety may it be proclaimed a festival in honour of Divine mercy to mankind ; for where shall we find a manifestation of God's unspeakable love to our fallen race like that of sending Jesus Christ into the world to save us from destruction.

Conscious, as every reflecting man must be, of having failed in his duty, and of his need of some testimony of the forgiving grace and compassion of Him, against whose law our transgressions have been committed, the communion comes as balm to the soul. We recognise it to be a feast in honour of the promised and pledged exercise of God's forgiveness, and as the most grateful of all services which can be performed by man. There is no worship so worthy of the benevolence and condescension of God to institute, nor any that ought to be so welcomed in songs of thanksgivings by the universal voice of all the inhabitants of the earth ; for as all are guilty of sin, and bear always about them doubts and fears, the most blessed assuredly of all sounds is that announced in the Holy Eucharist, which presents God accepting our Lord's sacrifice for sin, pitying our guilt, and removing our iniquities. It is indeed the business of the Gospel to announce forgiveness of sins, peace with God, expiation by the blood of Christ, and eternal life to fallen but pardoned sinners. These are the messages which its heralds are commissioned to proclaim to the children of every kindred, language and people : and if it be true that the feet of those are beautiful who speed their way into all lands proclaiming unto the inhabitants of the earth, Behold your God, how much more ought the moral history of that greatest of all the messengers of divine mercy to be kept in remembrance, whose very appearance in our nature was the highest of all pledges that God " had indeed pitched his tabernacle with men," and that he would dwell with them upon earth.

The Eucharist, thus deemed a feast in honour of Divine mercy published and ratified to the whole human race, is a conception of the Institution particularly pleasing and lovely, and offers a most appropriate termination to this essay, on its true meaning, character and importance. In this respect it is felt to be the most attractive and delightful of all festivals; blotting out our sins, removing our doubts and fears, breathing into our souls peace and reconciliation, restoring our tarnished honour, and fortifying our minds with the most glorious hopes of soon enjoying that more intimate communion with our Saviour in his everlasting kingdom; of which the Eucharist in this life is so touching and perfect a representation.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN GUARDIAN.

The *Christian Guardian* of the 5th inst. makes the following excellent observations on the preceding subject, viz. on the 6th Chapter of St. John, which to some will appear very *touching*, and to almost all, a sensible good comment.—

II. "Our next enquiry is what is meant by the terms, 'I am the true bread which came down from heaven. My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood shall live for ever.' The (Romanists) Catholic understands them to mean, (as in their articles of faith) and the Bishop of Strasbough contends that they mean *a real manducation of the flesh, blood, soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ*, into which each sacramental wafer of bread is with unaltered form, and to the senses, unattended properties, really and substantially changed. The Bishop of Strasbough therefore contends that our Lord's discourse with the Jews is to be understood in the strictest *literal sense*. Let us try this rule of interpretation by one or two out of many examples that might be selected.

"Our Lord says, (verse 26.) '*Labour (or seek) not for the meat that perisheth*' This is unequivocal, and if the Bishop's rule is a good one, it is positively unlawful for us to seek bread or any thing that perisheth, which may perhaps include *U. E. Rights, Protestant Church Pews*, and every thing of an earthly nature, a doctrine to which we believe MR. ELMSLEY himself is not even *yet* converted !!!

"Again our Lord says, (verse 51) '*If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever.*' Have not Popes and Priests and their flocks, from age to age (according to the Roman Catholic Church) eaten of this bread? And have they not died already? Either therefore the Bishop's rule of interpretation, or his doctrine, must be false." (*This is truly unequivocal!!*)

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, AND TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

.. "Thus saith the Lord, They are vanity and the **WORK OF ERRORS**: in the time of their visitation they shall perish. Stand ye (therefore) in the ways and see, and *ask for the old paths*, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." JEREMIAH.

THERE is no argument which the adherent to the See of Rome is so fond of urging—no weapon on whose temper he so much relies, as on the undisputed claims of his Church to spiritual sovereignty. Half ignorant himself, and half relying on the ignorance of others, he boldly asserts his absurd pretensions; and when he declares, that for every other religious denomination, a period of their first appearance can be marked out; but that the beginnings of (his) *the Church* are lost in antiquity, he fancies that he establishes the supremacy he would claim. The reasoning is false, and the facts are incorrect. In the naked abstraction of the argument the same plea would have been valid against the Law of Moses, as contradistinguished from the Patriarchal faith; against the mission of the Redeemer as superseding the Mosaic dispensation; against the early Christians as opposing the fables of Paganism, invested as they were in all the majesty of age. But nothing is more certain, than that all the peculiarities of Popery have a date assignable by a little research;—if every addition to her system which has an existence posterior to the sixth century were removed, but little would remain behind of her swollen magnitude; little that cannot be proved from Scripture, or that has not been consecrated by the voice of universal tradition. And we can not only trace to their very source those streams of error, but we can shew in each successive age the astonishment which their appearance excited. For Providence, in every age, raised up advocates for that pure faith which was once delivered to the saints, who were not afraid, amidst persecution, oppression, and even martyrdom, to declare to the world the whole council of God; and to expose the erroneous doctrinal innovations of the Church of Rome, whenever they appeared. And among all the dogmas that ever Rome introduced and forced upon mankind, none could at all compete with Transubstantiation, in its innumerable list of martyred unbelievers.

That very night in which Christ was betrayed, he instituted an ordinance which he appointed to be observed by his disciples to the end of the world. It is of the nature of a feast, and from the hour of the day in which it was first observed, it is called the "Lord's Supper." The materials of the feast were simply bread and wine, and were used to represent spiritual blessings. Hence the Apostle Paul says, 1st Cor. x. 16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" From this it is evident that the symbols which were used by the Apostles in order to represent the spiritual blessings which are derived from the breaking of the body, and the shedding of the blood of Christ, were plain bread and wine. By eating the bread and drinking the wine his people in their social capacity, according to his appointment, shew forth his death; and in the exercise of faith, over the symbols of his broken body and shed blood, they really enjoy the benefit of his death, in the assurance of pardon and the enjoyment of peace of mind and heart, imparted by the Holy Spirit as the fruit of Christ's atoning sacrifice.

"The most essential part of the Eucharist is the symbolical use of bread and wine, which Christ ordained for our instruction, and the form of words with which he taught us to accompany it. In the primitive Church the Bishop or Priest first gave thanks to God for all his mercies, especially for those of creation and redemption; then, to shew the authority by which he was acting, and his obedience to the commands of Christ, he recited the words of the institution of the Holy Sacrament which he was celebrating: in doing this he took the bread into his hands, and brake it, to represent the body of Christ; * the cup also of wine to represent the blood. Over the bread and the cup he repeated Christ's powerful words: 'This is my body,' 'this is my blood.' The elements being thus made the

* In the Syriac as well as the Hebrew and Chaldee languages, there is no word which expresses "to signify," "represent," or "denote." Hence it is that we find the expression "it is" so frequently used for "represents," "denotes," or "signifies." This is (represents) my covenant betwixt thee and me—this is (represents) the Lord's Passover—the ten horns are (denote) ten kings—the field is (denotes) the world—the good seed is (represents) the children of the Kingdom—the tares are (represents) the children of the wicked one—the enemy is (represents) the devil—the harvest is (represents) the end of the world—the reapers are (represent) the angels. Such expressions may be multiplied from the Scriptures, but these appear sufficient to shew that any man in the present day would use no other terms than those employed by our Saviour—"this is my body," "this is my blood,"—meaning, this *represents* my body, this *represents* my blood; if the language in which he was speaking had no other mode of expression, as was the case with that used by our Redeemer.—See the 2d Section, page 34, of the Archdeacon of York's Pamphlet on the Eucharist.

symbols or representations of Christ's crucified body and blood, were offered to God as the great and acceptable sacrifice of the Christian Church. The Bishop or Priest continued his prayer, and entreated the Almighty Father to send upon the bread and wine the Holy Spirit to sanctify and bless them, and to make them Christ's spiritual life-giving body in power and virtue, that to all the faithful they might be effectual to all spiritual purposes. The officiating Bishop or Priest then received the Eucharist in both kinds himself, and proceeded to deliver it in both kinds to the people. In these days the utmost simplicity prevailed; to have reserved any part of the Eucharist for the Ministers alone, or for any one privileged class of believers, would have been to manifest a violation of that great principle of equality recognized by the Gospel, that in the sight of God there is no respect of persons. The communion of the body and blood of Christ was deemed a privilege of the most precious kind, to which every convert was entitled; and so far was the Church from throwing any impediment in the way, that she earnestly and affectionately invited all her members to partake of this holy Sacrament; and it was long thought to be inconsistent with the Christian profession to be otherwise than a regular communicant.

“ Nearly fifty of the most ancient Liturgies have been collected, among which we find one which has been attributed to St. James, our Lord's brother, and which was assuredly constantly used in the very first age in the Church of Jerusalem. This Liturgy may be justly considered one of the most precious monuments of Ecclesiastical antiquity; and its strict conformity with the account given by St. Cyril of his service, is a demonstrative proof that it has come down to us in all its original purity and simplicity. Now, however much these numerous Liturgies differ in other things, they agree with that of St. James, and with each other, in their manner of consecrating the elements, and in their distribution.

“ 1st. The words of our Saviour's institution, containing the Priest's authority to celebrate the solemn office, and his setting apart the elements, as the representatives of his body and blood, broken and shed for the sins of the world, by pronouncing over them the words of Christ: ‘ This is my body,’ ‘ this is my blood.’ 2nd. A solemn oblation or offering of these instituted memorials, in sacrifice to God the Father, commemorative of his Son's death and passion. 3rd. Prayer for God's acceptance and blessing upon them by his Holy Spirit, sanctifying them through his Divine power, so as to make them the spiritual

life-giving body and blood of Christ, and the means of conveying to the well-disposed receiver all the benefits purchased by our Lord's sacrifice for mankind, pardon, grace, and eternal life.

“ In accordance with the ancient Liturgies and Eucharistic services of the Church universal in its primitive times, are the sentiments of the Christian authors of those ages, commonly called the Fathers. These form a cloud of witnesses to the commemorative sacrifice representative, and yet efficacious, and communicative of the blessings obtained for us by Christ's body and blood. This Holy Sacrament, says Irenæus, (quoting one out of many) consists of two parts, an earthly and an heavenly,—bread and wine from the earth, but the body and blood of Christ in spirit, power and heavenly efficacy. Far indeed were the Fathers from imagining any change in the bread and wine, but only in their qualities, by the sanctifying power of the Divine Spirit, for so the blessed author of the high and heavenly mystery had taught them. “ It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, are spirit, and they are life.” Thus we have seen, and it deserves our particular attention, that in all the forms of administering the Eucharist handed down from the first ages, the most harmonious concurrence prevailed, and that the three important points noticed above, were invariably introduced in the same order. Nor did the Church of Rome, then a highly respected Church, for purity as well as station, differ (nor for many ages after) from the Church of Jerusalem or other Churches in the celebration of the Eucharist; all of them arranged the service in the same order, and gave to the words the same interpretation. We have further the unanimous testimony of all the ancient Fathers and early writers of the Christian Church from the very beginning, and for many ages downward, that this is the true and real import of our Lord's command; and that their manner of administering the Eucharist is the only way in which it ought to be administered.— From all this the fullest conviction arises, that such is our Saviour's gracious will and his last and dying command. Antiquity, universality and consent, all concurring in this just interpretation of Scriptural truth, and in the administration of the Lord's Supper, in both kinds to communicants. This universal testimony of the Church cannot deceive us: that which was taught and practised in all Christian Churches, for the first four centuries, must be of apostolical authority. And indeed without this testimony of the Church, it is impossible to prove the canon of the New Testament, or to establish the authority of the books which it contains; and surely there can be no testimony so satisfactory in ascertaining the nature and design of

the Holy Eucharist, as that of the primitive Church. To her we are indebted for the authenticity of the records of the institution, and to her we must look for rightly understanding the mind and will of the Apostles, from whom she received the records of our Lord, and by whose doctrines and practice she was instructed in their true meaning."

This doctrine was too simple and too spiritual for the Church of Rome, when she began to give heed to seducing spirits, and when she became herself the great seductress of the world called Christian. "But the Spirit of God does not always contend with the spirit of man. The mental darkness, the natural progress of error, the credulity of superstition, and the artifice of designing men, multiplied corruptions in the Church, and produced a firm belief in the most incredible things. But neither the veneration for reliques, the prayers for the dead, and the invocation of saints, are to be compared, unscriptural as they are, to the victory obtained over the common understanding of man in establishing Transubstantiation."

Having lost sight of the design of *representing* the death of Christ by the elements of bread and wine, *she* directed her attention to the turning of the elements into the very body and blood (corporeally) of Christ himself. Nor did she stop here, — by degrees she rose to the climax of absurdity, and maintained that the whole substance of the bread, after the Priest had pronounced the words of consecration, was converted not only into the body and blood, but also into the soul and divinity of Jesus Christ; and the same with regard to the wine, which doctrine was confirmed by the Council of Trent in the following words:—

"If any one shall deny that in the most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist there are contained truly, and really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore the *whole Christ*, or say that he is in it only as a sign or figure, or by his influence — *He is accursed.*"

This doctrine of the Holy Council of Trent, which every Romish Priest is sworn to believe, and which every member of their communion *must* believe, or be held as *accursed*, is this, that what are seen to be bread and wine upon the altar, after the Priest, in the sacrifice of the Mass, has pronounced these words "*Hoc est corpus meum*," (This is the body, &c.) are no longer bread and wine, but the real body and blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ. The Priest is understood to possess the miraculous power, by the use of the above words; to convert a piece of bread, in the form of a wafer, into the real body of Jesus Christ, which was born of the Virgin Mary, which was cruci-

fed, was buried, rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and to convert this piece of bread, not only into the body and blood, but also into the soul and divinity of our blessed Saviour. This wonderful conversion is produced by the use of these words *Hoc est corpus meum*; and this, as Archbishop Tillotson has shewn, led certain jugglers to call their slight of hand tricks *hocus pocus*, which is nothing but a corruption of the Priest's *hoc est corpus*, by means of which he commands the whole substance of bread, &c., to be gone, and the real body of Christ, &c., to assume its place.

Among Protestants, and I may say among persons of common sense, it is not generally reckoned necessary to oppose the absurdity of Transubstantiation by serious argument; the bare statement of it is enough to refute it to the satisfaction of every person whose senses have any authority with their understandings. There are some things so plain and self-evident, that it is difficult to prove them by argument. We see the sun shining, and can we give a better proof that it is shining, than by a reference to itself? There are other things so extremely absurd and ridiculous that it is difficult to expose them, or make serious argument to bear upon them. Transubstantiation is an absurdity of this last, which doctrine, if it were true, we could not be sure of the truth of any thing else. "It is," says Dean Swift, "a doctrine the belief of which makes every thing else unbelievable." "Supposing," says Archbishop Tillotson, "this doctrine had been delivered in Scripture, in the very same words that it is decreed in the Council of Trent, by what clearer evidence could any man prove to me that such words were in the Bible, than I could prove to him that the bread and wine, after consecration, are bread and wine still? He could but appeal to my eyes to prove such words to be in the Bible, and with the same reason and justice might I appeal to several of his senses to prove to him, that the bread and wine, after consecration, are bread and wine still."

"It is a sufficient confutation," says the venerable the Archdeacon of York, "of the doctrine of transubstantiation, that it contradicts our senses; since we see and taste that the bread and wine after the consecration, and when we actually receive them, still continue to be bread and wine, without any change or alteration whatever. Moreover, it overthrows the very nature of a Sacrament, by supposing that what we eat and drink to be the thing signified, and not the sign. In fine, transubstantiation has no foundation in truth, but without reason or necessity, puts an absurd and impossible sense upon the words of our Saviour; 'This is my body,' 'this is my blood,' by which it is no more proved, than the words, 'This cup of the New Testament,'

prove that the material cup which was used in the Sacrament, was substantially changed into the New Testament. And no more than those texts which affirm God to have eyes and ears and hands, prove that he really has them. It contradicts four of the five senses, and undermines the foundation of all certainty. Had the Apostles preached transubstantiation and the renouncing of our senses, miracles would have afforded no evidence of the truth of the Gospel, for that which depends upon the certainty of sense as miracles do, cannot prove that which is contrary to sense. Now miracles, which are the best and highest external proof of Christianity, oppose transubstantiation as a part of the Christian doctrine, unless we are prepared to disbelieve our senses, upon the evidence of which all miracles rest. A man cannot believe a miracle without relying upon his senses, nor can he believe transubstantiation without renouncing them. The main evidence and confirmation of the Christian doctrines, viz miracles, is resolved into the testimony of our senses, but such evidence is against transubstantiation, for as it renounces the senses, miracles can give it no confirmation; for that which depends upon the certainty of sense, as miracles certainly do, can be no competent argument to prove that which is contrary to sense, as transubstantiation evidently is."

Again, "I can never believe transubstantiation, since it implies that our senses, employed on proper and familiar objects, are so much deceived as to destroy all dependence upon them. I never can believe that our Saviour taught his disciples, before his death, not to believe in their own senses, which he must have done if he taught them transubstantiation, and that the very first thing he did after he was risen from the dead, should be to ask them quite the contrary, by appealing to the certainty of sense for the proof of his resurrection. I never can believe a doctrine which strikes at the identity of Christ, which St. John grounds upon the evidence of the senses—that they had heard, seen, looked upon and handled, of the word of life. I never can believe a doctrine that strikes at the certainty of what St. Luke calls infallible proofs of the resurrection, which were none others than that which the senses afforded; that strikes at the ascension which took place publicly, for no other end than that the sorrowing Church might have a sensible and intelligible foundation for her trust in him, who is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. I cannot believe transubstantiation, unless I can believe that truth can contradict and destroy itself. To conclude, if any can receive a doctrine so unscriptural in itself, and so dangerous in its consequences as transubstantiation, they do right to continue Roman Catholics; but if they doubt this doctrine of the Eucharist, it is high time to lay aside dissimula-

tion and renounce the Church which maintains it. He who candidly examines the case, and is aware of its importance, will find that the doctrine of the Church of Rome holdeth to the letter which killeth—that of the Church of England, to the spirit which giveth life. Sincere minds will discover to which the preference is due, without indulging unjust suspicions or uncharitable assertions.”

In the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. ix. v. 23, the Apostle strikes at the very foundation of this doctrine. In the Romish sacrifice of the Mass “the bloodless sacrifice,” which they say is offered up to God as a satisfaction for the sins of “the living and the dead.” At verse 22nd St. Paul asserts that “without shedding of blood there is no remission;” hence a bloodless sacrifice, such as that of the Mass, cannot procure remission of sins, and of consequence is unavailing. Again, verse 24th, to the end, the holy Apostle reasons in the most pointed and unequivocal manner, to shew that after the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, there never was, nor ever could be, any other sacrifice whatever to make a satisfaction for sin. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor yet that he should offer himself often, but now “once,” in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto him that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” In chap. x. of the same Epistle, the Apostle saith, that Christ performed the will of God, by the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all*. He adds, “And every Priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins. But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, *for ever sat down on the right hand of God.*” Ye Priests and people of Rome, how do ye reconcile this last verse with transubstantiation? Again, “For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified, whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is *no more* offering for sin.”

Could any thing be more decisive against Popery and its essential doctrine than the foregoing texts? Not only do they cut up root and branch, the anti-christian idea, “that in the

sacrifice of the Mass, there is offered to God a true, proper and propitiatory sacrifice for the living, and for the dead in Christ, detained in Purgatory, not fully purged of their sins,"—but all their system of penance; all their mediatory offices of the Virgin Mary and other saints, are completely levelled to the ground. For the one sacrifice of Jesus, offered up ONCE ONLY upon the cross, is positively declared to be "the only" satisfaction that ever can, under the Christian dispensation, be presented to God for the sins of mankind. When St. Paul directed Christians "to present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which (as he remarks) is their reasonable service," we hear nothing of the offering of a wafer as a satisfaction for our transgressions. If such were (as Romanists assert) the sacrifice of the New Testament,—is it at all possible that St. Paul, when addressing the Church of Rome itself, should not only pass over, in silence, this most vital pretension of their clergy, but even write against the very principle of it in the passages we have quoted?

Another extraordinary unscriptural peculiarity of this dogma of Transubstantiation in the Church of Rome is, denying the cup to the laity.

In the year 1415, the Holy Council of Constance, in their 13th Session, resolved to take away the Eucharistical cup from the laity, and to establish it as an article of faith in a Canon as follows:—

"Seeing that *in divers parts of the world*, there are some who rashly presume to say, that Christian people ought to partake of the Sacrament of the Eucharist under both species of bread and wine; and do give the communion to Lay people; not only under the species of the bread, but also under the species of the wine. This present *Holy General Council of Constance*, lawfully assembled in the name of the Holy Ghost, being desirous to provide for the safety of the faithful against this ERROR, doth therefore declare, decree and determine,—that although Jesus Christ *did* administer this venerable Sacrament to his disciples under both species of bread and wine; and although, *in the Primitive Church, the faithful did receive this Sacrament under both species*, yet notwithstanding, that for avoiding certain dangers and scandals, *this custom, which was introduced, with reason, ought to be kept: (viz.) the Priests that say Mass shall communicate under both species of bread and wine; but lay persons shall communicate under the species of bread only; and they that say the contrary ought to be expelled as heretics, and grievously punished by the Bishop or their officials.*

This Canon was confirmed by succeeding Councils, and particularly by that Council of Trent held under Pope Pius the IV., July 16, 1562; as the Canons that were agreed upon, being more than ordinarily remarkable, we shall introduce them.

SESSION XXI.—CANONS 1, 2 & 3.

I.

"If any shall maintain, that by the command of God, all and every of the faithful disciples of Christ ought to receive *both* species of the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, or that it is necessary to salvation so to do, *let him be accursed.*

II.

"If any one shall say, that the Holy Catholic Church was not induced by *good reasons* to ordain that Laymen, and also Clerks not conscient, (that is, not actually saying Mass at the same time) should communicate but under one species, or that the said Church hath erred therein, *let him be accursed.*

III.

"If any one shall deny, that whole and entire Christ, the fountain and author of all graces, is not received under the one species of bread; because, as some falsely assert, it is not according to Christ's institution; *let him be accursed.*"

In the words of the institution, both as spoken by our Lord and recited by the Apostle Paul, it seems perfectly evident, that both bread and wine were to be given and received in the Lord's Supper; these were appointed to *represent* his body broken and his blood shed for the sins of his people. With respect to the bread, Christ has said, Luke xxii. 19. 20, "Take, eat, this is my body;" but concerning the cup, he says, "Drink ye *all* of this;" for as this pointed out the very essence of the institution—to wit, the *blood of atonement*, it was necessary that each should have a particular application of it; therefore he says, "DRINK YE ALL OF THIS." By this we are taught, that the cup is essential to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; so that *they* who deny the cup to the people sin against God's institution; and they who receive not the cup, *are not* partakers of the body and blood of Christ. If either could without mortal prejudice be omitted, it might be the bread; but *the cup*, as pointing out the blood poured out,—that is the life by which alone the great sacrificial act is performed and remission of sins procured, is absolutely indispensable.

On this ground it is demonstrable, that there is not a Popish Priest under heaven who denies the cup to the people, (and they all do this) that can be said to celebrate the Lord's Supper at all; nor is there *one* of their votaries that ever received the Holy Sacrament. All pretension to this is an absolute farce, so long as the cup, the emblem of the atoning blood, is denied. How strange it is, that the very men who plead so much for the bare literal meaning of "*this is my body*," in the preceding verse, should deny all meaning to "*drink ye all of this cup*" in this verse. The conclusion therefore is unavoidable—the *Sacra-*

*ment of the Lord's Supper is not celebrated in the Church of Rome.**

Having shewn, as we have, that Transubstantiation is utterly rejected by Scripture, and was unknown to the primitive Church, as the above canons do fully prove, we now come to consider it in another point of view—viz. the risk which a Roman Catholic runs of falling into the sin of idolatry by worshipping the wafer, even were transubstantiation possible, in case the various requisites stated in the "Roman Missal" were complied with. That is, we will demonstrate that those defects which render the ceremony of consecration null and void, it is impossible, or at least next to impossible, to avoid; and that, in consequence, idolatry, to a worshipper of the wafer, is, even according to the finding of the Church of Rome itself, almost inevitable. The Missal says—

"**POTEST AUTEM DEFECTUS, &c.**—Mass may be defective in the matter to be consecrated, in the form to be used, and in the officiating Minister. For if in any of these there be any defect, viz. due Matter, Form, with attention and Priestly Orders in the celebration, there is no Sacrament consecrate

"**DE DEFECTIBUS PANIS.**—Of defects in the bread. 1st, If the bread be not of wheat, or if the wheat be mixed with such quantity of grain, of any other species, that it doth not remain wheaten bread, or if it be in any way corrupted, it doth not make a Sacrament. 2nd, If it be made with rose or other distilled water, 'tis doubtful if it make a Sacrament.

"**DE DEFECTIBUS VINI.**—Of the the defects of the wine. If the wine be quite sour or putrid, or be made with bitter or unripe grapes; or if it be mixed with water so as to spoil the wine, no Sacrament is accomplished.

"If, after the consecration of the bread, even of the wine, a defect of either species be discovered, the other being already consecrated; then if the matter which should be placed cannot by any means be had, to avoid scandal he must proceed.

"**DE DEFECTIBUS FORMÆ.**—Of the defects in the form. If any one shall leave out, or change any part of the form of consecration of the body and blood, and in that change of words, such words do not signify the same thing, there is no consecration.

"**DE DEFECTIBUS MINISTRIS.**—Of the defects of the Minister. The defects on the part of the Minister may occur in those things required in him; these are first, INTENTION after that DISPOSITION of soul and body, of vestments and disposition in the service itself, as to these matters which can occur in it.

"If any one intend not to consecrate, but to counterfeit; also if any wafers remain forgotten on the altar; or if any part of the wine or any wafer lie hidden when he did not intend to consecrate but what he saw; also if he shall have before him eleven wafers, and intended to consecrate but ten only, not determining what ten he meant, in all these cases the (*hocus pocus*) consecration fails, because INTENTION is required."

To these absurdities the Hon. and pious John Elmsley is desirous that our Protestant brethren should subscribe; and he

* See Clarke on the Eucharist.

converted to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. I would now simply ask this newly made convert to the Church of Rome, has he ever read the 2nd chap. of the Acts of the Apostles, in which it is stated that Christ the Holy One should never see *corruption*? And if he has read this, and believes that the wafer, after *Hoc est corpus meum* is pronounced by the Priest, is changed to his God and Saviour, and made, by this means, the object of his worship, is he prepared to say, how this object of his worship is preserved from corruption? In summer his host will corrupt and breed worms in a few days; which induces the Priest in hot weather to consecrate every week, and in winter once a fortnight. "O what a thing is man! a constant contradiction to reason and himself!"

We would now say, Roman Catholics! we appeal to you as rational creatures, to consider the awful precipice on which, even according to the rules of your own Church, every individual who bows down and worships the wafer as the Majesty of heaven, must inevitably stand! You all acknowledge that nothing short of divine honours and adoration can be paid to the host, and that it is idolatry—a most heinous sin, to pay such worship to any being or any person but God alone; how should you tremble when you perceive the terrific risks which you every day run, according to your own admission, of incurring the imputation of idolatry! Reflect upon all the minutæ which your Church points out as requisite to be observed, before an actual consecration can be effected. Reflect, that if even one of these requisites be wanting, instead of offering up an acceptable service to God, you are bowing down to an inanimate substance. (even though we were to grant you, for argument sake, the possibility of transubstantiation, according to your own Missal.) Reflect, that a single circumstance, not controlable or even discoverable by your officiating Priest himself, might render you the grossest of sinners. And will ye persist in this dangerous career? Will ye thus venture upon so hazardous a speculation? As men of reason—read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest!

For instance, does the officiating Priest watch the whole process of the flour, from the moment it has left the ear, until it has been manufactured into bread? Can he pledge himself that no other grain whatever became mixed with it in the process of grinding? Can he pledge himself, in a word, that none of the materials for consecration have been in any way vitiated? Where is pure wine to be obtained? Or if all the materials were of the requisite purity, how is the INTENTION of the Minister, his DISPOSITION of soul, of *body*, of *vestments*, &c. &c. to be ascertained by the *worshippers*? And will ye, under such

awful chances against you,—taking the matter from your own finding, ever again be induced to bow down before a morsel of bread? Allowing you every condition that your Church demands, your “Mass” is a most hazardous business. But for what do you run all these obvious risks? Merely on the speculation that a word is to be taken literally rather than figuratively! although it is manifest, that a literal interpretation of our Saviour would overturn, not only our reason, but the very Christian religion itself!

We cannot avoid saying, that there is a cold blooded disregard of consequences in one of the above passages, which stamps the Church of Rome with a character to which no words of ours could do justice. Can we believe our eyes that any Church, after a detail of those defects which cause an absolute failure in the consecration, should notwithstanding deliberately permit a Priest to proceed with the ceremony, “after he had discovered the defect?” Monstrous! He knows that consecration, under such circumstances, is impossible; and that by continuing the *process* he only elevates an *idol* for the congregation to worship. And yet he does persist! he continues the solemn mummery to the end—“to avoid scandal.” That is to prevent the *cheat* being discovered, he converts his congregation into avowed idolators!!! Such, Roman Catholics, is the maternal affection of “Holy Mother Church” for her children. She would rather transform all of you into idolators, than have her *trick* discovered. Could such a system have come from a pure, a holy, an omniscient God? O Elmsley, Elmsley! Unenviable Elmsley, “how art thou fallen!”

In conclusion, we would just remark, that the great difference which appears to us between Romanism and Protestantism is this—that those who adhere to the Church of Rome, judge it better to submit to the authority of their Doctors, than examine the doctrines; those of the Protestant communion judge that no human authority is sufficient to work in us that faith, and confident assurance that God requires of us. In the Church of Rome, the people judge that their Priests cannot err; (although we have had late proofs here to the contrary notwithstanding,) in our Church we judge that as they are subject to the like passions, so they are liable to the same errors as other mortals. Here then the two classes of teachers, and the two parties in religion are at issue. One class of teachers disclaiming all dominion over the faith of Christians, the other usurping a despotism not only over faith but reason, conscience and common sense. One class we may describe as acting the part of Physicians, who prescribe unassumingly and modestly, the other plays the Mountebank quack bragging of infallible medicines. Let

us take, in this respect, an illustration. We will suppose a man travelling through an unknown country, and he comes to a place where several roads diverge; while he hesitates which to choose, two guides offer themselves to direct him. One lays before him an *authenticated map* of the country; shews him on that map the way he has already come; points out the place where he wishes to go, shews the different bearings of the respective roads; desires him, if he is willing to take him as his guide, still to keep the *map* in his hand, and bring his fidelity to the test. The other does not deny that the map is true, but he pulls it out of the traveller's hand; he boasts of his own great skill and knowledge, and refuses to take charge of the man until he consents to *blindfold* his eyes, and resign himself to his management and conduct. What man, having a judgment, and could exercise it, would hesitate as to which of the guides he would make use of? This is Romanism, and that is Protestantism!

END OF PART I.

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