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The Catholic.

Quod scilicet; quod ubique; quod ab omnibus.

VOL. I.

KINGSTON, FRIDAY, JULY 15, 1831.

NO. 39.

SELECTED.

AMICABLE DISCUSSION.

Continued.

LETTER V.

ON THE DOCTRINE TAUGHT BY THE CHURCH.

ON reading the preceding chapter, I anticipate there may probably have arisen a difficulty in your mind. How can we be certain, will you have said, that such or such a doctrine is truly of apostolic tradition, that such an article, sufficient traces of which I do not find in Scripture, has been actually taught by the apostles and faithfully transmitted from them to us? This point, I flatter myself, shall soon be cleared up for you, if you will have patience to examine what I have to lay before you, and if I succeed in expressing to you with perspicuity those ideas which I shall now attempt to develop.

If each of us were obliged to distinguish, among many articles, those which come from tradition & those which do not, we should find ourselves, in a general way, condemned to a labour above our strength. In fact, that part of the preaching of the apostles which they did not commit to writing, was at first confided solely to the memory of the faithful, fixed in particular Churches by the oral and successive instructions of the first bishops and afterwards collected partially and as occasion fell out, in the writings of the fathers, and in the acts of the synods and councils. Whence it follows, that to prove that such an article is truly of apostolic tradition, we must consult the belief of the particular Churches, examine carefully the acts of the councils and the voluminous writings of the fathers of the Greek and Latin Churches. Who does not see that this labour requires a space of time and extent of erudition, that render it in general impracticable? There are, indeed, to be found men of an extraordinary capacity and application, whose taste and inclination lead them to this kind of research: with the aid of the rules of criticism, all founded upon good sense, they balance and weigh authorities, they distinguish between what the fathers taught, as individual teachers, and what they depose as testifiers to the belief and practice of their time, and they attach with discrimination the different degrees of credibility that are due, whether to their doctrine or their disposition. The world is well aware that such a labour is calculated but for a small number: and again, after all, how successful soever it may be, it scarcely ever leads to incontestible conclusions. We therefore are in want of some other means that

may enable us altogether with certainty to arrive at the apostolic and divine tradition. The question is, what is this means?

Call to mind, Sir, what we have said upon the holy scripture: we have clearly discovered that, seeing the ignorance and incapacity of some, and the pride and infatuation of others, the authority of an interpreter, of an infallible judge, was absolutely necessary to make known and cause to be uniformly adopted the dogmas contained in scripture. We must say as much, and with still better right, for the tradition. The same judge, the same interpreter that unfolds to us the sense of the divine books, manifests to us also of that tradition. Now this judge, this interpreter, I must tell you here again, is the teaching body of the Church, the bishops united in the same opinion, at least in a great majority. It is to them that, in the person of the apostles, were made the magnificent promises: "Go teach, I am with you; he that heareth you heareth me, The Spirit of truth shall teach you all truth, &c." They alone then have the right to teach what is revealed, to declare what is in the written or unwritten word. They alone also have always been in possession of the exercise of it. No other ecclesiastics have ever pretended to it, whatever have been their rank, their dignity, and learning. They may be consulted and heard; it is even proper for they form the council of the bishops, and their erudition acquired by long study throws light upon the discussions. But as they have not the plenitude of the priesthood, they are not members of the eminent body that has succeeded to the college of the apostles, and with it received the promises. They are then without power and authority to pronounce: their duty is respectfully to await the decision, and when once it is passed, to submit to it. Before the decision, they were at liberty and permitted to discuss the question on the opposite side, to support their opinion with the weight of their erudition, the strength and warmth of their eloquence: after superiors have pronounced, all disputations are forbidden, discussion is closed: mixed up from henceforth with the simple and little ones, the most learned doctors lay down their private opinions, humbly confess that they were in error, and receive the decision of the bishops as decrees emanating from heaven. Such is the regulation of Jesus Christ, who suffers not in his Church either pride, or bloated conceit, or obstinacy, whether in the rich, the great, or the learned ones of the world. Immediately he has spoken by his ministers, he wills that all heads, those even by means of which he has made himself heard; he

wills, I say, that all heads should with equal humility and lowliness bow before his oracles.

Let it then be established as a principle, that to the bishops exclusively belongs the right of declaring what has or has not been revealed, that is, what is conformable or contrary to Scripture and tradition, or simply to one of the two. This is precisely the extent of their authority. never does it go farther. They can add nothing to revelation: they can take nothing from it. they are its interpreters and judges, but not its masters. In teaching us what we have to believe, they point out to us what has always been believed: they merely render the belief more explicit and clear, there, where before it was more vague and indistinct. It is therefore always the ancient faith that they propose to us, and never a new faith that they introduce. For revelation is not a new faith which we are permitted to revise and retract. it came forth in full perfection from Jesus Christ; and his disciples, inspired by him, have faithfully transmitted it whether by word of mouth or by writing, to their successors, enjoined them at the same time to transmit it with the same fidelity to those who should succeed them.

Thus the bishops, on succeeding the apostolic ministry, find themselves specially commissioned to guard the Scriptures and tradition. They had already spent their clerical years and those of their priesthood in becoming acquainted with them, studying them and meditating upon them. Being by their episcopacy, become the guardians and interpreters of this double deposit of revelation, they have it more assiduously in their hands and under their eyes. Does any new doctrine arise that must soon require on their part a dogmatical decision, they prepare themselves for it by redoubling their application, by consulting each deposit alternately, by comparing them together, by making deeper researches into them with all the care which humanity speaking they are capable of: and, assuredly, when they shall come to the decision, He, who is always with them, and who is to instruct them all truth, will never permit them all to agree in giving an erroneous sense to the written word, or the word that is not written. Their common decision will necessarily and uniformly be conformable to them, whether they infer it from both at once, or only from one of them. You and I might not have perceived it in either one or the other of these sources, but eyes interiorly enlightened by a celestial ray discover with certainty what which escapes a merely human penetration. We can therefore no longer admit a doubt respecting any dogma, that the teaching body of the Church has

pronounce to have been revealed by Jesus Christ, that is, to be contained in Scripture, or in tradition, or in both at the same time, Learned and ignorant, the decision is for all: not that it is forbidden to those who feel so disposed, to seek for the truth of the dogma, either in scripture or in the monument of tradition: far from that, this study would merit praise and commendation: being previously directed and put in the way by the judgment of the Church, they will more easily trace in it her doctrines. But nothing obliges us in general to undertake this laborious and fatiguing examination; our masters, our fathers in faith have done it for us. They have afterwards decided that such a dogma is in scripture, that such another comes from an apostolic tradition: they are of one accord in teaching it: we know it, it is a fact, it is known by the most simple: this is sufficient for all. All are equally bound to receive with the most unshaken confidence a decision which in itself is the most impartial and the most imposing that can be found upon earth, and which, moreover, heaven has engaged to raise to infallibility.*

As this doctrine has been hitherto quite a stranger to you, and as it properly constitutes the distinctive characteristic between the Catholic church and all protestant societies, allow me to lay it open to you in a new light, in order to make you more sensible of it. In the first place, always keep in mind that, according to all our proofs, the promise of infallibility made in the apostles to their successors, does not regard any of these personally and in particular, because Jesus Christ does not remain forever with any one, none of them being immortal: but that it is addressed to all their successors collectively and in a body. Likewise it follows that, separately and individually they are susceptible of error, they cannot, by virtue of the promise we so, when united together; that whatever deference their personal opinions require from us, we nevertheless do not owe the sacrifice of our opinion or our interior submission except to their unanimous decision; that truth being always to be found in the general agreement, it is this agreement we are bound to know and follow, since by following it we cannot go astray, and by not following it, on the contrary, we do go astray, for then we go out of the way and the one that Jesus Christ has drawn for us, and we leave the guides whom he has expressly appointed to conduct us. Let us therefore be cautious how we ever close our ears to their voices, or ever depart from their uniform instructions. In whatever circumstances their consent is manifested, when once it is known, when once it becomes manifest to us, it is sufficient: our duty is to submit, and our salvation to remain firmly attached to it.

And here I beg you to observe that a dogmatical decision may be given in many ways, but that it only becomes decisive and peremptory in one way,

*"Nothing should be more venerable upon earth than the decision of a truly œcumenical council." — Leibnitz, letter to the Dutchess of Brunswich. July 2d, 1694.

that is, by the general consent, or the acceptation of the episcopal body united to its head. I will explain myself on the two parts of this proposition.

The bishops, the successors of the apostles, like them the guardians of the faith, by the high dignity with which they are invested in the Church, possess exclusively the right of interpreting scripture and tradition, and of pronouncing after the one or the other upon points of faith.* A pernicious doctrine threatens to trouble or infect a diocese; the bishop has the power and the right to assemble his clergy, and, after having maturely deliberated with it, to pronounce a doctrinal sentence, when he becomes of opinion that this is a suitable and efficient means of stifling the error in its infancy. Arius began to spread the venom of his doctrine in Alexandria, and had already gained partisans by the subtilty of his reasoning. The holy patriarch "wishing to reclaim him by sweetness rather than compel him by authority, selected some priests from the two parties, who defended their arguments on both sides in a regular disputation, while he, surrounded with the principal of his clergy, presided as judge in this conference, to decide the difference by a solemn decision.—He terminated the dispute by pronouncing sentence in favour of those who had supported the divinity and eternity of the Son of God, and forbade Arius to teach or to hold an opinion that destroyed the foundations of the Christian religion."

With how much more reason does this same right pre-eminently belong to him, who presides over the entire episcopacy, and who, from the centre of unity where he holds his see, extends his superintendance and jurisdiction over all the churches of the world: Accordingly we find, even from the most remote periods, that the greater part of the dogmatical decisions have originated from this principal see, from which beams the ray of government, according to an expression as correct as it is brilliant. If you consider on the one hand the ever active vigilance exercised by the vicar of Jesus Christ over all the Churches; on the other, those intimations which, in great causes, every bishop thinks himself bound to forward to him; you will easily conceive that nothing essential in religion could escape his knowledge, nothing of importance occurs at the most distant extremities, without being immediately echoed to the centre, and then, without giving time to the error to increase, without waiting for the bishops to assemble in council, the chief pastor goes before the evil, drags to light the rising heresy, solemnly condemns it, and against it, produces to the eyes of the world the ever pure and indefectible tradition of the holy see.

*"Episcopum oportet judicare, interpretari, consecrare." *Pontif Rom.* in fol. p. 50.—The bishop is the only ordinary and natural judge of whatever regards religion, and it is for him to decide upon questions of faith and morality, by interpreting the sacred scripture and by faithfully relating the traditions of the fathers.* Henry, Institut, au droit eccl. t. I. ch. XIII.

We learn also from the history of the Church that the bishops of a province or an empire, frequently united together in private councils, and that there, to ward off the blows aimed against faith, they have proscribed erroneous opinions, and taught the true doctrine of revelation in their dogmatical decrees.

Here then are doctrinal decrees given in three different manners, or coming from three different tribunals. Each of these decisions has an authority proper to itself, and proportioned to the tribunal from which it emanates: yet none of them are decisive, although they may become so by acceptation. For if the decree of a private council, or of the sovereign pontiff, or even that of a private bishop is found to be received and generally approved of by the bishops dispersed throughout catholicity, and by the pope at the head of all, they then become the decrees of the universal Church; their being generally received attaches to them the seal of infallibility and ranks them thenceforward among the articles of faith.

There occur, in fact, less frequent but graver and more solemn occasions, on which the Church explains and proclaims its doctrine in the most splendid manner. For example, a pernicious doctrine, after having infested the country where it sprung up, reaches the neighbouring nations, is propagating through more distant countries, and threatens to extend its ravages still farther: a general plague requires a co-extensive remedy: from all parts of the world, at the request or with the consent of the sovereigns, the bishops are convoked by the head of the church: they anathematize the innovators and their opinions, both to fix in the faith those who have hitherto professed it, and to bring back those who have strayed from it: they proclaim to the world what Jesus Christ has revealed. I do not enter with you into the questions that are discussed among divines, on the conditions requisite to constitute these councils, called general in spite of the weak minority of the bishops who compose them compared with those who do not assist at them. What is incontestable and acknowledged is, that the acceptation of the published decrees gives to these councils the splendid proof of their being œcumenical, and thus puts out of doubt and in full evidence the infallibility of their doctrine.

I could justify the principles I have just laid down, by the testimony of a multitude of writers; of these I shall cite but one, who was the light of his own age, and will be the light of ages to come. "The last mark we can have that a council or assembly truly represents the Catholic church, is when the whole body of the episcopacy, and the whole society that makes profession of receiving instruction from it, approves and receives it: this is the last seal to the authority of this council, and of the infallibility of its decrees." "The council of Orange, of which mention is made in the Reply, was nothing less than general. It contained chapters whom the pope had sent. There hardly were twelve or thirteen bishops in this council. But because it was received without opposition, its decisions are no more rejected than those of the coun-

oil of Nice; because every thing depends upon the consent, or general agreement of the dispersed Church. Even the author of the Reply (Leibnitz or Molanus) admits this truth, that every thing depends on the certainty of the consent. The number is nothing, says he, when the agreement is notorious. There were but few bishops of the west in the council of Nice; none in that of Constantinople; in those of Ephesus and Chalcedon, only the pope's legates; and so of others. But because all the world agreed, or have since agreed, their decrees are the decrees of the world. If we choose to go still higher, Paul of Samosata was only condemned by a private council, held at Antioch; but because its decree was addressed to all the bishops of the world, and was received by them (for it is in this that all its virtue consists and without this the address would avail nothing,) this decree is unchangeable."

"I thoroughly understand your theory, you reply, and perhaps it would be more easy for you to persuade me of it, than to get it adopted by a great number of your catholics. Formerly I travelled in Italy. I questioned some doctors of that country, and heard them reason quite otherwise upon this point. They maintained that infallibility, which according to you belongs to the episcopal body, was the personal attribute of the vicar of Jesus Christ; and they were within a trifle of treating as heresy the contrary opinion of the Gallicans. Thus then you are involved in an intestine war upon a most important article. For it is not enough for you to believe that the Church has by your divine legislator been put in possession of so high a prerogative: you ought moreover to know in what part of the Church this possession resides; if it were in the general body of the bishops, as would result from your proofs, it is inconceivable that this general body does not know that this prerogative belongs to them. But you have yet to learn in what part of the Church to fix it, some placing it in the sovereign Pontiff, others in the oecumenical council, by which the universal body of bishops is represented. First agree together among yourselves, if you please, before you require protestants to come into your opinion."

"I am very well pleased, Sir, that you furnish me an opportunity of replying to this difficulty: your ministers have repeated it to us a hundred times: it is plausible, I do not deny it. I will give you satisfaction on this point, as briefly as possible. 1st., There is a point, which the catholics of all countries fall in with and which suffices to produce an acknowledgment from all parties of the supreme and infallible authority. In fact, those who place it in the chief bishop maintained also that it never can happen that the greater number of bishops should separate from him. Therefore, where the majority of the bishops visibly appears, there, according to both parties, is infallibility to be found: according to us who attribute it to this majority; and according to them, who teach that the pope can never be separate from it in solemn decisions. On both sides therefore it is granted that infallibility is inseparable from the great number of pastors. 2dly, There is another principle on which we agree with the advocates of papal infallibility. They have no difficulty in acknowledging that the majority of the bishops is infallible when united to the successor of St. Peter; and we have still less in acknowledging him infallible when united to the majority of the bishops. Thus on both sides the strength consists in the union of the head with the members: thus on both sides there is always infallibility where the great number of the pastors is united to him who is at their head. And in point of fact, they are certainly united among themselves: in point of fact, they must necessarily be so, they must of necessity agree upon the same doctrine, otherwise they would cease to regard themselves as forming one and the same body, one and the same church. But if ever it

should happen, which God forbid, and which we Gallicans think impossible, if it ever should happen, that the great number should separate from the head, it would then be necessary that one of the two parties should adopt the sentiments of the other to preserve the Church from schism, the greatest of all evils.

3dly, When we examine more narrowly this dispute, so much agitated in the schools, it appears that it should be banished among speculative and idle questions, and that in the main both parties meet in the same opinion. In fact, the warmest and most skillful defenders of the pontifical prerogative teach that a sentence proceeding from the chair of Peter does not become a decree of faith but by the acception of the Church spread through the world. They must therefore argue upon the judgements passed *ex cathedra*, as we all do upon the judgements passed by general councils, the infallibility of which is recognized by every catholic, and say with us. It is by the acception, that we are convinced that a council is really oecumenical and it is by acception equally that we know with certainty that the people has pronounced *ex cathedra*. Thus we all agree in the same principle, and both are ultimately found to attach the seal of infallibility to the universal agreement of the Church.

To be Continued.

To the Editor of the Catholic.

REV. SIR :

I have copied the above from the first number of your paper. I have selected the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, because it lies at the very foundation of our differences, and because correct notions of it are of great importance in practice as in theory. I consider the above the best written article in your paper, on the momentous doctrine, both as to matter and manner. It is a doctrine in which you and I, as well as each of our readers, have a vast interest at stake. I hope we may all examine it with a candor and diligence commensurate to its importance.

You admit that Catholics worship the consecrated elements, with the intention of worshipping the true God; and the intention of the worshipper you consider as sufficient, whether the elements are *transubstantiated* or not. I answer—do not the heathens sincerely believe their idols are the supreme objects of adoration, and possessed of Divine attributes? But does their worshipping the creature, when they intend to worship the Creator, exonerate them from the sin and guilt of idolatry? St. Paul verily thought it was God's service to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus (Acts xxvi, 9,) but did his sincere intentions transubstantiate his cruel slaughter of the christians into God's service? No more can any one worship corporeal elements, without being guilty of idolatry, unless they are *transubstantiated*; nor even then, for God has said; thou shalt not worship nor bow down to any thing in the likeness or appearance of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath, Ex. xx, 5. Have not the elements (whether they be the real body and blood of Christ or not) the likeness of bread and wine! Are not bread and wine something on the earth? You admit it, How then can any one bow down to these elements, without violating a positive and unrepealed command of the Most High God?

You speak of what God can do. I admit and rejoice to believe that God can do any thing that does not imply a contradiction. "God cannot deny Himself." 2 Tim. ii. 13. But what God can do, and what he does, are two different things. It is the latter about which we are concerned.

To exculpate this doctrine of your church from the charge of absurdity, you appeal to mystery, and particularly to that of the Trinity.

The Trinity of the Godhead is mysterious, because it is above our reason; but is what we see, smell, taste, and feel above our reason? Yet your doctrine requires us to believe that we see, smell, taste, and feel the flesh and blood of Christ, while your champion, Prince Gallitzin, says, "I confess that the senses of my body discover nothing in the sacrament but bread and wine." See Catholic b. 229, col. 1. As a sincere Trinitarian, I believe there is a God, who has one Essence but nevertheless has three Persons. If it were asserted that God is three in the same sense that He is one, it would be a contradiction: for a proposition cannot be true and false at the same time, and in the same sense. But this is not my thesis. I believe that God is one in the sense to which we give the term, essence, when applied to the Self Existing Being; I believe that he is three in the sense to which we give the name of persons. But of the nature of this essence or personality, I profess to have no distinct idea. This is above reason, but does not contradict it; it is requisite to have a distinct idea of what I call essence & persons. As human intelligence, in man's present state of existence, is incapable of forming any distinct idea of either the one or the other, it is impossible that it should appear absurd; for an absurdity is an evident opposition between two known ideas. For instance, I have an idea of bread and of flesh. I see an essential difference between the two consequently, there appears an evident absurdity in the proposition, that both are the same, or that bread is flesh, or (what amounts to the same) that bread becomes flesh, and yet retains the original and specific properties of bread. Let us apply the above reasoning to the doctrine of transubstantiation, as held by your Church.

In the third canon of the third session of Trent it is said—"If any one deny, that in the venerable sacrament of the eucharist the body of Christ is really present in both kinds, and in such sort that the body of Christ is wholly present in every separate part of the Host, let him be anathematized." Again, your Church asserts, that Jesus Christ gives us under each form, "All that he is; that is Perfect God, and Perfect Man; and that Jesus Christ remains entire under each part of the form divided."*

This appears to me to be a most manifest contradiction. If your Church had said that, "the bread is destroyed, that the body of Christ intervenes by an effect of the Divine Omnipotence," she might possibly have concealed the absurdity of this doc-

* "Catechism for the use of all the Churches in the French Empire," pub. 1806, by the authority of Napoleon Buonaparte, with the bull of the Pope and the mandamus of the Abp. of Paris.

trine behind the curtain of mystery. But to assert that the substance of the bread is transubstantiated into "*perfect God and perfect Man*," while it subsists in all its original modifications, is evidently, as I conceive, an absurdity, and not a mystery.

Had your Church said, that "the body of Christ passes in an instant from heaven to earth," she might perhaps shelter herself from the reproach of absurdity, (though condemned by Scripture) and escape under the plea of mystery. But to affirm, that the body of Christ, (while it is wholly in heaven and must remain there "until the times of the restitution of all things," Acts iii. 21.) is "wholly" on earth; is it a mystery? Is it not as manifest a contradiction, as that a part is greater than the whole?

If your Church had even said that, "some parts of the body of Christ are detached, and are mixed with the elements in the eucharist," it might perhaps have been possible for her even then to avert the charge of contradiction, by escaping under the cloak of mystery and the contracted limits of frail reason. But to declare that the body of Christ is only one in number, and that it is, "wholly present in every separate part of the Host," which are without number, in all Catholic countries, can surely be no mystery, it must be an egregiously absurdity, and if believed, evidence can no longer be the character, of truth. How, dear Sir, is it possible to reconcile the contradictory (not mysterious) ideas, that a *body having but limited circumference*, is at the same time in *heaven at the same time on earth at the same time in a thousand places* on the earth, *yea wholly present in every separate part of an innumerable Hosts*? It appears to me to be as impossible to believe this, as it would be to believe that God is three in the same sense that He is one.

If you reject the testimony of the senses by which we judge of the eucharist, will you please to inform us how we are to prove the resurrection of Jesus Christ?

The institution of the Lord's Supper I purpose to examine in another article. I will confine my subsequent remarks this week to your exposition of the sixth Chapter of St. John.

You affirm that our "Saviour meant all he said in the strictest literal sense." Let us try this rule of interpretation. Our Saviour says *seek not the bread that perisheth*. This is plain and unequivocal. If "our Saviour meant what he said in the strictest literal sense," it is positively unlawful for us to seek bread.

Again our Saviour says, *if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever*. Did not the Apostles eat of it? Have not your Popes, and Priests, and their flocks in past ages (according to the doctrine of your Church) eaten of it? Are they not dead already?—These examples are sufficient to show the insuperable difficulties which attend your rule of interpretation.

I think you will admit that in order to ascertain the meaning of any part of the sacred, as well as other writings, it is important to mark the time, occasion character, and customs of the persons, whose discourses or sayings, or actions are recor-

ded. Let it then be remembered, the conversation related in this chapter took place more than a year before the Lord's supper was instituted. An application of it to that institution, I think, is a misinterpretation of the whole chapter, as I shall presently endeavour to show.

In the next place, it was customary with our Lord to improve passing events to illustrate his doctrines and enforce his precepts. Thus from the dispute of the two brothers about the division of their estate, our Lord took occasion to warn his disciples against covetousness; the young man's going away sorrowful, because a discipleship to Christ required a sacrifice of his possessions, lead our Saviour to enlarge upon the danger of riches; and thus he improved the opportunity afforded by drawing water at Jacob's well, to explain to the woman of Samaria the effects and blessings of his gospel, under the figure of water. Hence, in the sixth of St. John, the circumstances of the multitude following Jesus for the sake of getting bread from heaven to eat in the desert, are improved by our blessed Redeemer, to instruct the inquiring Jews and the attending multitude relative to his doctrines and the means of salvation through his death. This he does under the idea of bread a figure obviously suggested by the circumstances just mentioned.

The question now at issue 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 the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye shall not have life in you—he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood shall live for ever," &c. Your understanding of their meaning is best expressed in your own words, as given above. On the contrary, I contend, that the meaning of the whole evidently is that by eating the flesh of Christ, we are to understand the same idea that is implied in eating bread, namely, to derive support from it. The argument of our Lord, then, according to my views may be thus expressed:—The manna which your fathers did eat in the wilderness could only sustain a mortal life. That is the true bread which preserves to eternal life, and qualifies every one that eats it for everlasting happiness. I am the bread of my doctrine, which nourishes and purifies the believing soul and fits it for happiness, but also because I shall give my life for the life of the world. Our Lord calls himself the *true bread* in the same sense in which he calls himself the *true vine*, chap. xv; and as the branch partakes of the nature of the vine, is nourished by its juice, and lives by its life; so must ye abide in me, be partakers of my nature, (eat my flesh and drink my blood) live by faith in me, bringing forth much fruit, and be made pure through my holiness. "Thus spiritual happiness on earth and even in heaven, is expressed by eating and drinking instances of which may be seen, Matt. viii, 11, xxvi, 29; Luke xiv, 15, xxii, 30; Rev. ii, 17. Those who were made partakers of the holy Spirit, are said by St. Paul, 1st Cor. xii, 13, to be made to drink unto (or of) one Spirit." (Dr. A. Clarke.) The Scriptures abound in such metapho-

rical representations. Hence we are said to see those truths which we clearly understand; to feel that which excites and moves our affections; to hear the instructions to which we pay an obedient regard; and to taste the grace which we delightfully experience.

That our Lord in this chapter does not speak in reference to the Lord's supper is evident. 1. Because the Lord's supper was not instituted till more than a year after.

2. It is declared above "except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye shall have no life in you." If this refers to the Sacrament, the thief upon the cross, and all those who died previous to the institution of the sacrament, must have perished everlastingly.

3. St. Paul speaking of some, who partake of the sacrament, says that they "drink judgment to themselves," 1. Cor. xi. 30. Our Saviour says, "he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, shall live forever," v. 54th; therefore he cannot mean the Sacrament—else he and St. Paul contradict each other.

4. In reply the secret murmuring of his disciples, who misunderstood our Lord's meaning, taking his word literally, he says, "does this scandalize you? If ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? An author of your own Church in his annotations on the New Testament, remarks on this verse—"Christ's" mentioning his ascension, by this instance of his power and divinity would confirm what he had before asserted; and at the same time correct their gross apprehension of eating his flesh and drinking his blood in a vulgar and carnal manner, by letting them know he should take his *whole body with him to Heaven*; and consequently not suffer it to be, as they supposed, divided, mangled, and consumed upon earth." As if this were not sufficient to correct their mistake, our Saviour adds, verse 63, "it is the Spirit that quickeneth;" see Rom. viii. 11. 2 Cor. iii. 6th. Such only as eat and drink what I have mentioned in a spiritual sense have the promise of eternal life. For the flesh profiteth nothing, if you could corporally eat my flesh and drink my blood, it would profit you nothing; for as that which goeth into the mouth of a man cannot defile him Mark vii. 20 so neither can it save him; therefore "the words that I speak unto you are spirit, and are life," v. 63 they are spirit, in their meaning and influence; and spiritual and eternal life, in their effects.—St. Peter's confession, v. 69, gives us a farther clue (if it were wanting) to our Lord's meaning. This fervent apostle nearly repeats our Saviour's words: thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art Christ the Son of the living God. Is here any thing about oral manducation, as there undoubtedly would have been, had St. Peter understood our Saviour to have taught the doctrine of transubstantiation? All the transubstantiation that St. Peter perceived in our Lord's discourse is unquestionably expressed in his answer to the Saviour; and that was *faith in Christ*: Hence we infer that believing in Christ the Son of the living God, was what St. Peter understood by eating

the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, and was what our Saviour intended in his discourse—I will now demonstrate it by comparing our Lord's words together.

The people said, v. 34, "Lord evermore give us this bread." What does our Lord tell them it is necessary to partake of this bread? to go to the Priest and get a wafer? "Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh unto me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Is it not as plain as day, that coming to Christ would satisfy their hunger and believing on him would quench their thirst? What can satisfy the cravings of hunger and the rage of thirst, but eating and drinking? Is it not manifest, then, that coming to Christ and believing on him are synonymous with eating his flesh and drinking his blood? for the same promise is alike annexed to both. Therefore they either mean the same thing, or they are contradictory, or there are two ways of salvation, which is contradicted by the whole tenor of revelation.

Again; compare verse 49 with verse 51, and the above conclusion will be pressed upon the impartial judgment with a power that can neither be averted nor resisted.

Once more. "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life," verse 47.

"He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath everlasting life," verse 54. Now believing in Christ in one verse is the declared condition of man's salvation; and eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, is the declared condition of man's salvation in the other verse. These two solemn assertions of our Lord either mean one and the same thing, under different forms of speech; or they contradict each other; or there are two ways of salvation. Either of the last alternatives overthrows the whole fabric of revealed truth; the former alternative explodes the doctrine of transubstantiation from this Chapter."

I will conclude with one single remark. The Protestant, as you seem to suppose, does not, then, degrade all the blessings promised in this chapter into a little bread and wine; nor into any corporeal and corruptible elements; but exalts them to their primitive and native dignity and excellence, to the immortal part; to a divine energy forgiving sin and cleansing from all unrighteousness; to a spiritual union with the Eternal Spirit, a fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; a dwelling in God and God in us; his love being "shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us."

I have the honour to be,

REV. SIR,

Your obedient and humble Servant,
EDITOR OF THE GUARDIAN.

P.S. The above article has been written in haste, and has been put to press without being re-written, or scarcely corrected, the first part having been in type before the last was written. If any unguarded or offensive expressions have escaped me, I beg to say they have not been intended.

REPLY

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CHRISTIAN GUARDIAN.
Sir,

Is Jesus Christ, (the sole object of the Catho-

lic's worship in the sacrament of the Altar,) an improper one; like that of the heathen? Like Jupiter, Juno, Mars, Mercury, Venus, Vulcan, Pluto, and every other false and abominable divinity? The intention of the Heathens was to worship such: their worship therefore was essentially idolatrous: that of the Catholic is to worship the one, true and living God, under the forms which he said he took; and which none can say, he could not take; whom all acknowledge to have taken the form of man; even that of a helpless babe in the manger at Bethlehem; and of a suffering criminal on the cross; and why not also, in order to try our reliance on his word, of bread and wine in the Eucharistic sacrament; as well as the Holy Ghost could take the visible form of a dove, or a fiery tongue? Tho' St. Paul's intention to serve God in persecuting his Church, did not altogether excuse him; for had he considered well the prophecies, & the whole tendency of the Jewish institute, he would have recognized in Jesus Christ the long promised Messiah: yet his upright intention, as he himself declares, was so far from displeasing God, that it merited his conversion. The Catholic worships not the corporeal elements; but in the firm belief, relying on the words and omnipotence of Jesus Christ, that they are transubstantiated. With regard to the bowing down to any thing in the likeness or appearance of what is in Heaven above, or earth beneath; Exod. 20, 5. This regards not the Catholic, who bows but to the Saviour. But this text may be justly cited against the Protestant communicant, who kneels to receive what he considers the bare elements of bread and wine.

The likeness of a thing is not always the thing it seems. Thus, what appeared to Josue a man in armour, was not a man in armour; but a protecting angel; whom Josue, bowing down worshipped, though knowing him to be but a creature; and surely the likeness of something in the heavens above: nor did he withal reject Josue's worship; but enforced it by commanding him to loose the shoes from off his feet, for that the place whercon he stood was holy ground. Jos. 5, 13. &c.

Your notion of the trinity is strictly Catholic; and I do not see how it applies against the doctrine of transubstantiation. Much more aptly could it be turned against, than for your negative reasoning. My sight, touch, taste and smell may be deceived; but when God speaks my hearing cannot: and faith says saint Paul, comes by the hearing. Rom. 10, 17, Matt. 18, 17, Luke 10, 16. The apostles heard and taught; and the whole church has believed and believeth that Christ took bread, and blessed it, and broke it, and gave it to his apostles, saying, take and eat, this is my body. Can you shew me that he, who said this, could not verify his declaration? Or can you point out to me the limits of his acknowledged omnipotence?

Your next objection is easily answered; and indeed has already been answered, in our last number, which was in print when your letter came to hand; by the avowed possibility of a spirit's being in more places than one at the same time. God, you will own, who is a pure spirit, is present at the

same time in every place; and yet but one in all places. But is not Christ's body, or humanity a spiritual body, or humanity? Or who will prove to me that God cannot give to that body, or humanity, the qualities of a spirit: not indeed omnipresence, which is the attribute of God alone; but of multipresence, if I may use the expression, to that which is but finite; within the bounds of finitude?

To prove that the same Jesus of Nazareth, who ascended into heaven; may, at the same time, be here on earth; I have only to cite the words of Saint Paul; who says that the same Jesus, who had been seen by the other apostles, had last of all been seen also by himself. 1 Cor. 15, 8. Was not Saint Paul then on the earth, while on the road to Damascus; when the Saviour answered his earnest query: who art thou Lord? and said to him: I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutes? Now Jesus of Nazareth, was not simply God, but the very man-God reared in Nazareth.

No Catholic, properly speaking, rejects the testimony of the senses: for these truly testify that there is in the sacrament the appearance of bread and wine. And so there is.—But the senses cannot testify to the real essence of things, as chemists even will tell you. But the unerring word of God can inform us of what is concealed under the external appearances; and thus warn us not to judge by the mere appearance of things.

Who does not understand that our Saviour by saying: seek not the bread that perisheth, meant only that we should not make the sustenance of the body the sole, or main object of our solicitude? Whereas he promised to give them a bread that would feed and preserve their better half the soul unto life everlasting.

Your next observation seems a mere *makes weight* argument, to confound the ignorant: for you never could suppose that, the Saviour's promise of everlasting life annexed to the eating worthily of his promised living bread, could ever supersede the doom denounced against all of temporary death. So that though apostles, popes, priests and people, who have worthily eat of this divine food, are temporarily dead; yet they shall escape the second endless death; and live and reign with God eternally.

The Saviour always prepared beforehand the minds of his disciples for the great events that were to take place; and the supernatural wonders, which he intended to perform; as his conversations with them shew concerning his passion, crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, ascension; the propagation of his faith; the establishment of his church all over the world; and her preservation to the end of time. "But for the Eucharistic wonder; the most stupendous and inconceivable of all; he prepares their minds in the 6th ch. of St. John's Gospel, in terms the most explicit, solemn and unequivocal so much so, that the only evangelist, who in his gospel records them, thinks it needless to repeat them, in describing otherwise so minutely the Saviour's last interview with his apostles;

You seem to infer that because our Saviour often

spoke figuratively; he must therefore have always spoken figuratively. But on this subject it is evident, from a thousand circumstances already pointed out in the course of our numbers, that he proposed to our belief no figure; but a stupendous reality; the victim itself so long prefigured: the true paschal lamb; on which the faithful fed: the real heavenly manna, for better than that eaten by the Jews in the wilderness; the unbloody sacrifice of the new law, offered up, according to the prophet Malachi, 1, 11. *in every place among the Gentiles: by him, who is a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech; who offered up bread and wine.*

When our Saviour said: *I am the vine, &c.* it was impossible for any one present to take his words in any other sense, than a figurative one. But when he said: *this is my body, which is given for you: this is my blood of the New Testament,* (not of the old: not of the paschal lamb, and other figurative victims; but of the real lamb of God; the final propitiatory victim, so many ways prefigured: the fulfilment in fine of all the figures; far exceeding them altogether;) the very blood then about to be shed for the remission of sins. Who, not deeply prejudiced could see in all this nothing but a mean figure proposed? Nor is it, Sir, a trifling consideration that he, who came only to seek and to save the sheep which were lost: and who, as God, looking from eternity to eternity, foresaw the many millions of his creatures, who in all ages would take his words in their literal meaning; (for those Christians, who take them in the figurative sense, are but a modern handful:) should not have expressed himself in the very opposite terms, in which he did, and which protestants use in declaring their faith concerning this sacrament. Then at once would all doubts upon the subject have been removed, and the disciples, who left him, would have had no cause whatever, to murmur at his doctrine, which, as propounded, had so shocked and offended them.

The body of Christ is whole, immortal and impassible, wherever it is: and cannot, as your author expresses it, be *divided, mangled, or comminuted.* This was the carnal idea of the capernaite disciples; which the Saviour corrects by telling them that *the flesh profiteth nothing:* He did not thereby mean his own flesh, the eating of which he had just said, would give us life everlasting: but such a dead flesh, as they imagined it would be, like that of their slaughtered victims. The words, said he, *that I speak to you, are spirit and life.* That is, what I have promised to give you, has spirit and life in it: or rather is spirit and life. For he had said: *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, which I will give, is my flesh for the life of the world.* And to obviate all objections to this, his stupendous doctrine, he reminds them that it is written in the prophets, *they shall all be taught of God,* (not then of man; whose glow-worm reason cannot light us into the mysterious depths of God's infinite wisdom and omnipotence.) And he asked them what their

ideas would then be, did they see him, who proposed such a mystery to their belief, ascending up to heaven; where, as God, he had been from all eternity before. Why such a reminiscence, or why such a question put to those who believed not in his words; if he had been inculcating nothing more difficult to be conceived than that he would give them a bit of bread, as a figure of his body; and a sip of wine, as a figure of his blood? Why did he suffer them to leave him under such a wrong impression? Why ask his apostles, if they also would leave him, rather than believe him capable of giving them his flesh indeed to eat: and his blood indeed to drink.

If after these considerations you are still satisfied with the clearness and correctness of your demonstration; I must say that in your logic appears to me more of wilfulness than wisdom. And the very text you cite as unavoidably and irresistibly proving your figurative eating and drinking; is the very text that (on attending well to the Saviour's declarations on the subject) unavoidably and irresistibly upsets your whole conjecture: for believing in Christ is surely believing that he never would say what he did not mean; nor promise what he could not give. *Believing in Christ* in the instance here alluded to, is surely to receive his doctrine: not to contradict and oppose it, as his apostatizing disciples did: but with Saint Peter and the rest of his apostles to take his words exactly as he had spoken them; not doubting but he—the omnipotent could verify his so clearly and emphatically repeated promise.

It would seem from your concluding remark that you dispense altogether with your *corruptible elements of bread and wine:* and that you hold your sacrament to consist wholly in the mere mental act of believing. This indeed, among all our religious novelties, is still something new: and what has this particular advantage in it, that it spares both cost and trouble to all those adopting it. For, if bare belief is all your sacrament; each can take it by himself; and where and when and as often as he chooses. Without bit or sip, or outward form, he can at all times and in every place furnish forth his mental feast; and feast; and feed upon the spiritual elements of belief in his ever ready inward communion. This indeed is reforming down the Saviour's institute with a vengeance.

I must now be free to observe that you take a little too much vantage ground in this polemical skirmish; considering the length of your communication, and the number, but especially the irrelevancy, of your objections to be answered. If to confound the Catholic, were the purpose, and not to confute it, a better method of doing so could not be adopted, than that of cramming its pages with broken and desultory quirks and queries, a thousand times refuted, and as often proposed: and all this to the exclusion of more important matter and regular discussion. We should thus have straight to toss our cargo overboard, to make way for what we deem not quite such precious merchandize. We refuse you not, however, a corner in our skiff,

(since you grant us one in yours) to any thing but useless and encumbering lumber.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

Your most obedient and humble servant,

EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC.

ORIGINAL.

CEREMONIES USED BY THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN BAPTISM.

FIRST, we must observe that as we have contracted the guilt of original sin by the distrust, or disbelief, and the consequent transgression of our natural first parents: so we must, ere freed from that guilt, make amends for their disbelief, by the open profession of our faith; and, if not able to do so by ourselves; by the mouths at least of our spiritual parents, who answer for us; our God-fathers and God-mothers: for having so contracted original sin without our knowledge, God in his mercy allows us to be thus freed from it without our knowledge. It is to the church too, that we are to apply for this inestimable benefit of regeneration to God in baptism. On this account does the priest begin by asking: *what doest thou ask of the church of God?* For the sacraments of Christ's church are forced upon none. All who receive them must duly apply for them. The answer is *faith.* *What does faith bring thee to,* continues the priest? *Answer. Life everlasting; for he who does not believe,* says Christ, *shall be condemned.* The priest then explains what that faith must be, which brings to us life everlasting. It must be, according to Saint James, *a lively faith, working by charity:* he therefore adds: *If then thou desirest to enter into life, keep the commandments. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, & with all thy mind: & thy neighbor as thyself.* Then, as the Saviour did, when imparting the holy ghost to his apostles, he breathes into the face of the Neophyte three times, saying, *go out of him (or her) thou unclean spirit: and give place to the holy ghost, the paraclete.*

When God created man, he breathed into his face the breath of life.—Gen. ii. 7.—This the creator did himself at first. But man, having by sin come under the dominion of death, and of satan; he can be regenerated, and thus delivered from the devil's thrall only by the one, who can make the sufficient atonement for his sin to divine justice. But man himself, the offender, could not make this atonement. Then God himself the son becomes that guiltless man, who in that nature which had offended atones superabundantly for man's offence. It is he then to breathe again into the face of his regenerated creature the breath of life; and to free him from the dominion of death and of satan; that which he does by his deputy and representative, the priest. For to his priest he said: *all power is given to me in heaven and on earth: go ye therefore, &c.* And: *as the father has sent me, so I send you.* Therefore what his lawful pastor does, he himself does.

Then to shew that all this is effected, by the death of Christ upon the cross, in which sign we

we henceforth as christians, and like Saint Paul. to glory, in Christ crucified; and to cherish in our hearts its remembrance; the priest signs the Neophyte on the forehead and breast with the sign of the cross, saying: *Receive the sign of the cross, on thy forehead, and in thy heart. Take to thee the faith of the heavenly precepts; and be such in thy morals, as to be able now to be the temple of God.*

The prayers, which are addressed only to God, are in latin; and all for the same sanctifying purpose. Indeed, to prevent in the administration of the sacrament the possibility of altering the sense in translation, the whole liturgy of the Catholic church, as it is directed to God alone, is every where preserved unchangeably the same in the Catholic, or universal and unchangeable language, the latin. However, for the satisfaction of those who understand not that language, we shall give these prayers translated into English.

After the ceremony just mentioned, the priest says: *Let us pray*; for in all her solemn prayers the church supposes her children to join in supplication to their common heavenly father.

"We beseech thee, O Lord, graciously to hear our prayers; and by thy continual protection guard this, thy elect, (N.) signed with the sign of the cross of our Lord: that observing the rudiments (that is, the beginnings,) of the greatness of thy glory, by keeping thy commandments; he (or she) may deserve to attain to the glory of regeneration; through Christ our Lord." Answer, *amen.*

Then laying his hand on the head of the Neophyte, he says:

Let us pray.—Almighty and eternal God, father of our Lord Jesus Christ, vouchsafe to behold this thy servant (N.) whom thou wast pleased to call to the rudiments of faith; take from him (or her) all blindness of heart. Break all the bands of satan, wherewith he (or she) was tied: open to him (or her) the gate of thy mercy: that being endowed with the sign of thy wisdom, he (or she) may be free from the guilt of all concupiscences and, follow the sweet odour of thy precepts, may joyfully serve thee in thy church; and daily increase in perfection; through Christ our Lord.—Amen.

He then puts some particles of blessed salt into the mouth of the Neophyte, with these words:

"(N.) receive the salt of wisdom, May it be to thee a propitiation unto life everlasting." Amen. The salt of wisdom, is the virtue of christian prudence, which preserves us, and others by our example, from the corruption of sin. For it is the property of salt to preserve substances from corruption. In this sense did our Saviour say to his apostles and disciples: *ye are the salt of the earth.* Without that salt, we cannot be preserved uncorrupted unto life everlasting; much less can we so, by our example, preserve others.

Then he adds: "peace be with thee!" Answer, "and with thy spirit!" For the peace of the Saviour is the portion of those who have this salt.

The prayer that follows is:

"O God the author of all truth! we humbly beseech thee, graciously vouchsafe to behold this thy

servant (N.) and tasting this salt, the first food: do not permit him (or her) to hunger any longer; so as not to be replenished with heavenly food; to the end that he (or she) may always be fervent in spirit; joyful in hope; always obedient to thy name! Bring him, (or her) O Lord, we beseech thee, to the laver of regeneration; that, with thy faithful, he (or she) may deserve the eternal rewards, which thou hast promised: through Christ our Lord. Amen."

The priest then commands, in the name of the living God, father, son and holy ghost, the devil to be gone, and give up all his claim to the human creature, about to be baptized; and who, till baptized, is justly under his dominion, as an unregenerated child of the sinful Adam; but whom our God and Lord Jesus Christ has designed to call to his holy grace, benediction and the baptismal font.

"And this sign, says he, of the holy cross, (signing it on the Neophyte's forehead) dare thou not to violate, O wicked spirit, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

Then, laying his hand on the head of the Neophyte, the priest prays thus:

"O Lord, most holy Father Almighty, eternal God; the author of light and truth: I beseech thy eternal and most just piety in behalf of this thy servant, (N.) that thou would'st vouchsafe to enlighten him (or her) with the light of thy understanding. Cleanse and sanctify him, (or her) give him (her) true knowledge; that, being made worthy of thy baptism, he (or she) may persevere in firm hope, righteous council, and holy doctrine, through Christ our Lord.—Amen."

The priest then lays upon the one to be baptized the extremity of his stole: (the distinctive ornament of the priestly office) and with it introduces him (or her) into the church, saying: "enter into the church of God; that thou mayest have part with Christ unto life everlasting." This is the first connection that takes place between the church of Christ, represented by her minister, (the redeemer's legitimate deputy;) and the carnal child of Adam: on thus entering the church, the Neophyte repeats, or the god-father and god-mother in his name, repeat first the apostle's creed; for that is the sum of the faith of the church, into which the one to be baptized, is admitted a member: then the Lord's prayer, to shew, that on our becoming a christian, we can then, and not till then, call God our Father, who art in heaven; or address him as his children.

The priest then adjures the unclean spirit in the name of God the Father Almighty; in the name of Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord and judge; and in the virtue of the holy ghost, to depart from (N.); the creature of God, which our Lord has designed to call to become the temple of the living God; that the Holy Ghost may dwell in it.—Amen.

He then touches the ears and nostrils of the Neophyte with his spittle; (a ceremony partly used by Christ himself, when he healed the deaf and dumb; which every one is, in the spiritual sense, till baptized) repeating the very word of Christ: *Et, etc, be opened: in the odour of sanc-*

tity. This is an emblematical expression used in the Canticle of Canticles; shewing the powerful enticements of grace: draw me, and I will run after the odour of thine ointments. "But thou be gone, O devil; for the judgment of God is at hand."

Then the Neophyte is asked, and answers himself, or by the mouth of his sponsor: (N.) "Dost thou renounce satan? Ans. I renounce him."

"And all his works? Ans. I renounce them."

"And all his pomps? Ans. I renounce them."

This indicates that the acceptance of the Redeemer's covenant of mercy; and the renunciation of our vassalage to Satan, under which we had fallen by our sinful and voluntary obedience to him, rather than to God, our creator and rightful Lord; must be equally free and voluntary, when we come to the use of reason, and capable of judging for ourselves; and on this condition is the saving grace imparted to us; signified, as we have abundantly shewn, by the blessed oil, with which the priest then anoints the Neophyte on the breast and between the shoulders; saying: "I anoint thee with the oil of salvation in Christ Jesus our Lord, that thou mayest have eternal life."

On the breast, to signify that the divine grace may soften and make pliant our heart and will to the will of God; and on the shoulders, that he may strengthen us to bear manfully on our neck and shoulders the yoke and cross of Christ; and follow him through passing tribulation to eternal bliss.

After this the Neophyte is particularly asked thus, if he believes the chief articles of the christian faith: "Dost thou believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth? Ans. I believe." "Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord; who was born and suffered for us? Ans. I believe." "Dost thou believe in the holy ghost; the holy Catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting? Ans. I believe." "(N.) wilt thou be baptized? Ans. I will." For baptism, like all the other benefits of Christ's dispensation, must be freely sought for; not forced upon any.

Then is he baptized in the manner already described.

The preparatory ceremonies just detailed, shew what he is to become by baptism; the subsequent ones what by it he is now become: a royal heir of God, the king of kings; and therefore, during the recital of the following prayer, is he anointed on the head by the priest with the holy chrism; the same as that with which sovereigns are anointed; and bishops consecrated. "The Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who has regenerated thee by water and the holy ghost; John iii. 5, and who has given thee the remission of all thy sins: may he anoint thee with the chrism of salvation in the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, unto life everlasting. Amen." "Peace be with thee!—Ans. And with thy spirit."

A white linen robe, or covering is then put over the newly baptized, as an emblem of his spotless innocence; which he is desired to carry unstained before the tribunal of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he may have life everlasting. Amen.

Next a lighted candle, is given him, or those, who represent him, with these words: "receive this burning light; and keep thy baptism without

reproof. Observe the commandments of God; that when our Lord shall come to his nuptials, (Mt. xxv. 10) thou mayest meet him, together with the saints in the heavenly court; and mayest live life eternal, and live for ever and ever. Ans. Amen."

The whole is concluded with these words: (N.) "Go in peace: and may the Lord be with thee!" Ans. Amen."

BIBLICAL NOTICES AND EXPLANATIONS.

Continued

THE FIRST BOOK OF ESDRAS.

This book takes its name from the writer; who was a holy Priest and Doctor of Law.—He is called in the Hebrew Ezra. D. B.

Chapter I.—verse 1. *In the first year of Cyrus, King of the Persians, that the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremias might be fulfilled; the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, King of the Persians, and he made proclamation throughout all his Kingdom, and in writing also, saying &c.*

In the prophesy of Jeremias, Chap. 25. Verse 12, and Chapter 29.—Verse 10. the end of the seventy years captivity of the Jews in Babylon: and their liberation after the final overthrow of its Monarch, which was effected by the victorious Cyrus are clearly foretold.—But in this prophesy of Isaias ch. 25. v. 1. &c. the very name of Cyrus is given, four hundred years before he was born; the sight of which alone, if shown to that monarch is the sacred and unchangeable books of the Jews, was enough to have made him confess, as he did in his edict to rebuild the Jewish Temple, that the Lord, the God of Israel, the Lord and God of Heaven, who had given him universal dominion on all the Kingdoms of the Earth. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed Cyrus, whose right hand I have taken hold of to subdue nations before his fall. These are the words of Isaias, who even pointed out the way in which he was to make himself Master of Babylon: by turning the River Euphrates out of its bed, and entering that city in spite of its doors and gates so securely shut against him. *Whose right hand, says the Prophet, I have taken hold of to subdue nations before his fall; and to turn the backs of Kings, and to open the doors before him; and the gates shall not be shut, I will go before thee: and will break the gates of brass; and will burst the bars of Iron; that thou mayst know, that I am the Lord who call thee by thy name, the God of Israel. For the sake of thy servant Jacob; and Israel Elect: I have even called thee by thy name; I have made a likeness of thee, and thou hast not known me. Now Cyrus knew him not, for he was a Pagan: But how must that Pagan Prince have been struck on reading in a book so long composed before his time his exploits and success; and even his very name? the giving of which depended on the free will and fancy of his parents?*

Chapter 3. Verse 2. *And Joshue the son of Joshedeck rose up &c.* It is still Joshue, or Jesus that rises up &c. to build the Altar of the God of Israel. It is only the Saviour, who, and those whom he chooses for his associates who can set the Altar, that is the religion of God upon its basis. Verse 3.

Chapter 4 Verse 3. The refusal of Zerobabel, Joshue, and the rest of the chief of the Fathers of Israel, to allow the Samaritans to build with them a Temple to the Lord the God of Israel; shews, that as Saint Paul says, the Faithful can have no part with the unbelievers;—The people of God must dwell alone. Numbers 23. 9. Deut. 32. 28. Hence the common hatred borne towards them; and the joint efforts made by those not allowed to build with them, to stir up, by misrepresentation, calumny and vituperation, the temporal powers against them.

Chapter 8—Verse 23. *And we fasted, and be-*

sought our God; and it fell out prosperously unto us. Still the Catholic doctrine of fasting and prayer proved from scripture to have been always that of the church of God.

Chapter 9—Verse 1, 2. This shows how sinful it is to intermarry with those, whom the church forbids us, on account of the danger of perversion and a falling off from the true faith. D. B.

Chapter 10—Verse 6. *He eat no bread: and drank no water: for he mourned for the transgression of them, that were come out of captivity. In how many places of scripture is the penitential discipline of the Catholic that of fasting; and abstinence shewn from scripture to have been always observed by the true believers.*

THE BOOK OF NEHEMIAS, OR THE SECOND BOOK OF ESDRAS.

This book takes its name from the writer, who was cup bearer to Artaxerxes, surnamed Longimanus, king of Persia and was sent by him with a commission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. It is also called the second book of Esdras: because it is a continuation of the history begun by Esdras; Esdras, of the state of the people of God after their return from captivity. D. B.

Chap. 1 Verse 4. Still fasting joined with prayer.

Chapter 2—Verse 19, 20. Those who oppose the rebuilding of Jerusalem, represent the enemies of the church: who are strangers, and have no part or portion, nor justice, nor remembrance in the spiritual Jerusalem.

Chapter 3. The building up of the gates and walls of Jerusalem, begun by the high priest and his brethren; and carried on by the rest; represents the labours of the apostles and their lawful successors in the propagation of the faith, and establishment of the Church of Christ; begun by the Chief priest, Saint Peter, in the face of their surrounding enemies.

Chapter 4—Verse 18. *Every one of the builders, in the spiritual must be girded with the sharp sword of wisdom or knowledge and truth.*

Verse 20. They will cooperate, and support each other in the work; and in repelling the adversary.

Chapter 5—Verses 1, 2, 3, 4. How many, like the Jews, barter their portion in the city of God; sell even their sons and daughters, and give up even their own liberty, for pelf, and worldly considerations!

Verse 10. *Remember me, O my God, for good according to all that I have done for this people!* There is then, in spite of Luther's, Calvin's and the Presdyterian doctrine against good works; (the doctrine evidently of the devil,) some merit in good works as the catholic church teaches.

Chapter 7—Verse 64. *These sought their writing in the record, and found it not: and they were cast out of the priesthood.* So is every one cast out of the christian priesthood, (of which the Jewish was but a figure,) who cannot produce the record of their ordination.

Verse 65. *Athersathu*, that is, Nehemias, as appears from ch. 8. verse 9, either that he vasso called at the court of the King of Persia, where he was cup-bearer; or that, as some think, this name signifies governor; and he was at that time governor of Judea. D. B.

Chap. 8—Verse 16. *And they made themselves tabernacles, every man on the top of his house, &c.* Their houses were, as they are in the East to this day, flat-roofed.

Verse 18. *And in the eighth day a solemn assembly, prelusive of the christian sabbath.*

Chapter 9.—verse. 1. *The Children of Israel came together with fasting and with Sackcloth, and Earth upon them, &c.* Why are Catholics ridiculed by Protestants for using a penitential discipline so sanctioned in Scripture, the pretended Rule of Doctrine and discipline in every upstart reforming Sect.

THE BOOK OF TOBIAS.

This Book takes its name from the Holy Man Tobias, whose wonderful Virtues are herein recorded. It contains most excellent Documents of great piety, extraordinary patience, and perfect resignation to the will of God. His humble prayer was heard; and the Angel Raphael was sent to relieve him. He is thankful and praises the Lord, calling on the children of Israel to do the same. Having lived to the age of one hundred and two years, he exhorts his Son and Grandsons to piety: foretells the destruction of Niniveh and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. He dies happy.—D. B.

This Book, though acknowledged by the Catholic Church, as canonical Scripture; is disowned as such, by protestants; Indeed, how could they, who pretend to build their faith on nothing but Scripture, admit it as such, and yet deny what it so clearly displays; the intervention in Man's behalf of the Blessed Angels;—As there is nothing particularly figurative, or difficult to be understood in it, we pass it over without any further remark as well as those of Judith and Esther; which, though inspired, and written for our instruction and Edification, are chiefly historical, and easily understood by every one.

To be continued.

ON REASON.

Extract from a M. S. poem.

Not all those luminaries bright, that roll
Wide scatter'd round our globe from pole to pole;
The flaming sun by day; the moon by night,
Fresh trimming at his ray her borrowed light;
With stars innumerable twinkling o'er the sky,
Might e'er, with her compar'd, in beauty vie.
Theirs all is transient, and to space confin'd;
Hers boundless flowing from th' eternal mind.
And, were the whole of this material world
Back reeling, whence it sprung to nothing hurl'd;
With undiminish'd lustre still would shine
Her radiance, streaming from its source divine.
Would millions then, no further change that know,
Than change of bliss; still feel her vital glow.
As fresh delighting objects they pursue,
And joyful prospects, op'ning on their view.
Ev'n here, so from her centre far remov'd
On man is reason's influence pow'rful prov'd:
Though all her noon-tide blaze in twilight guise
He through his prison's chinks but dim decries.
'Tis she calls forth; unfolds, and nurses kind
The infant buds of knowledge in his mind;
Till genius, art and science flourish gay,
And bear their fruits, full ripen'd in her ray.

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