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The Catholic.

Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus

VOL. I.

KINGSTON, FRIDAY, MAY 6, 1831.

NO. 29.

SELECTED.

AMICABLE DISOUSSION.

Continued.

ON UNITY.

APPENDIX I.

"But (have the innovators said, corruption had wound its way to the very heart of the Catholic church; we were positively obliged to leave for our own security." They have said this, I am aware. We shall presently see what we are to think of the weighty accusation; let us examine in the first place whether it be sufficient to justify their separation.

I maintain that their accusation, were it true, would not excuse them from schism, for I would answer them with one of your learned teachers. "The corruptions in a Church are not of so destructive an influence, as schisms and divisions from it. It being much in the body spiritual as in the natural: where that which severs and dissolves the continuity of parts, tends more to the destruction of the whole, than that which corrupts them. You may cure a throat when it is sore, but not when it is cut.

I would answer them with St. Cyprian and St. Augustine, that there never can be a lawful necessity for destroying unity; that Aaron bore with a multitude of Jews, who had erected for themselves an idol; Moses with a million of people who were ever murmuring against God; David, with Saul; Isaiah, with those whom he accused of an infinity of crimes; and Jesus Christ with Judas. I would reply with the same fathers that Jesus Christ has enjoined the preservation of union among ourselves, reserving separation to himself alone, because the right of separating belongs to him alone, who can never be mistaken; that, until the harvest, that is, till the last judgment the chaff and the wheat, the straw and the grain must remain mixed together: that therefore we are not to leave the Church, because we discover chaff in the morals of individuals, though never in the public faith; that we for our parts have only to endeavour to become the good grain: I would reply that the Donatists in vain pleaded for their justification, that Catholics were become Pagans, they have not on that account been the less justly accused of schism by the whole Church, even by the acknowledgement of protestants.

As for the heads of accusation, there is no need of other witnesses, than the protestants themselves, to acquit the catholic church of them. In fact, if in the beginning, to attract the poor people or to retain them in their party; if afterwards to jus-

tify their separation by some specious pretext, it was found necessary to make a noise with the sounding words, corruption, errors, dangerous to salvation, and idolatry in worship, divine providence permitted that there should arrive moments of disinterestedness and calmness, during which the reformers themselves, and their adherents after them, have relieved the catholic Church of these horrible accusations. For this I appeal to the confession of Augsburg, the most authentic and most solemn act of the Lutheran communion: it thus concludes the exposition of its doctrines: "Such is the abridgment of our faith, in which nothing will be discovered contrary to scripture, or to the catholic church, or even to the Roman Church, as far as we can know it from its writers. The dispute turns upon some few abuses which have been introduced into the churches without any certain authority; and should there be found some difference, that should be borne with, since it is not necessary that the rites of the church should be every where the same." In the apology is found the same moderation. Luther (would you believe it?) in the treatise which he published against private masses, and in which he relates his famous dialogue with the Devil, out ages as he shows himself against the catholic church, which he regards as the seat of Antichrist and abomination, far from refusing it the title of Church on that account, declares in spite of every thing, "that it is the true church, the pillar and support of truth and the most holy place. In this Church, continues he, God miraculously preserves baptism, the text of the Gospel in all languages, the remission of sins and absolution, as well in private confession as in public; the sacrament of the altar about Easter and three or four times a year although they have cut off one kind from the people: the vocation and ordination of pastors, consolation in the last agony, the image of the crucifix, and at the same time the remembrance of the death and passion of Jesus Christ: the psalter, the Lord's prayer, the Creed, the Decalogue, and many pious canticles in Latin and German." And a little later: "Where are found the true relics of the saints, there no doubt has been and still is the holy church of Jesus Christ; there have dwelt the saints, for the institutions and the sacraments of Jesus Christ are there, except one of the kinds, which has been forcibly removed. On this account it is certain that Jesus Christ has been present in it, and that his spirit preserves therein the true knowledge of himself, the true faith in his elect."

Two protestant ministers of France, in their work *Montauban justifie*, published in 1662, quote a similar passage from Luther's book against the Ana-

baptists. They inform us afterwards that the answer given by Melancthon to his mother was known by all Germany and even through the whole of Europe. She asked him, which of the two religions was the better, the Catholic or the Protestant. "In my opinion, replied he, the Lutheran is the most plausible; the Catholic, the most secure."

I appeal moreover, both to the declarations of faith sent by the Calvinists of France to the protestants of Germany, in which they adhere to the Confession of Augsburg except the 10th article upon the Eucharist; and to that of Theodore Beza speaker for the calvinistic party at the celebrated conference of Poissy. The cardinal de Lorraine having proposed to him to receive the Confession of Augsburg in all its articles, Beza accepted them without hesitation, with the exception of that of the Lord's supper, and solemnly assured him of the consent of all his brethren. Here then is the Catholic and Roman faith recognized, by authentic acts, to be conformable in essential points with the faith of the Lutherans and Calvinists (the Eucharist excepted) and consequently exculpated by their own confession, from idolatry, fundamental errors, and all corruptious incompatible with salvation. And as for the Eucharist, they cannot accuse of idolatry the adoration we there pay to Jesus Christ, since they tolerate it in the Lutherans, many of whom pay the same adoration to Jesus Christ in their sacrament, while the rest, agree at least, after Luther, that there is no crime in adoring Jesus Christ present upon the altar. It is moreover remarkable that the most learned Calvinists have argued with these latter, that they could not without impiety refuse their adoration to Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, where they believe him to be present, and that in this respect Catholics reasoned more consistently than they did themselves.

Calvin in person assures us, that Jesus Christ in order that his Church might not entirely perish, had preserved baptism and the essentials of religion in France, Italy, Germany, Spain, England, &c. and in his commentaries upon St. Paul he ranks among the saints, Cyprian, Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory Bernard, and many others who resembled them, professing, no doubt, the doctrine that these saints professed, as the Catholics of their time did, and as they have done ever since. Peter Martyr expresses himself much in the same manner.

Daille, the celebrated minister of Charenton, after proving that the Church of Rome admitted the articles of the creed, adds: "And if there be still any other principal article this Church receives them all and embraces them with you, and condemns the names and the memory of those, who

have either shaken or overturned them in ancient or modern times. Truly we cannot deny, nor would we wish to deny, that the Church of Rome believes these holy truths. Thanks be to our Lord for having preserved them for so many ages amidst so many revolutions. We could indeed have desired that she had never added any thing of her own,—If she had remained within these bounds, neither our fathers, nor we should ever have had any reasons for leaving her communion." And in another part, after enumerating the fundamental articles of Protestants, he continues; "Rome does not call in question the articles, which we believe; it even professes to believe them.—Who can deny, even in our day, that Rome admits the necessary articles. Truth however obliges me to tell you, that Daille seemed to be ashamed when in presence of his brethren in Germany, of having conceded so much to the Church of Rome. But, whatever he asserted afterwards respecting the pernicious opinions added by her to the necessary articles, it still is equally certain that the acknowledgments just cited were made by him.

I have still another important witness to produce, the too famous Bishop of Spalatro, who, while a refugee in England under James I, published there, in 1616, his Latin work upon the Ecclesiastical republic, in which he expresses himself as follows; "It is one thing to desert the faith, by a deficiency and another to injure the faith, by excess. Heresy properly speaking consists in the deficiency, that is to say, when an essential article is denied or not admitted. I was born it is true, in the Church of Rome; to it I am indebted for my education and my dignities; I grew gray in its bosom. Although I have for a long time been imbued with its errors, I will not, for I cannot, acknowledge that I ever was a heretic, in the sense above explained, not even materially so. For most assuredly there is no fundamental articles of faith, that this church rejects of that I have ever rejected with it." And afterwards on this point: "What then are we to think of the Church of Rome? Is it Catholic or not? I answer, still keeping in view a deficiency in fundamentals, that this Church has always been and is still at the present day, perfectly Catholic, inasmuch as she professes and believes the Catholic and fundamental faith, in all its integrity; although I doubt not that its faith is rather sickly than sound, and that it has lost some of its beauty by an admixture of strange additions."

There is no one, not even the impetuous Jurieu, but who has been obliged to acknowledge that salvation is attainable in the church of Rome. He afterwards indeed denies having said it, and doubtless would wish not to have done so—He redoubles his invectives and calumnies against it, and goes so far as to pretend to say that in it is idolatry as gross as formerly existed at Athens. "But, with all this (said M. Bousset,) God is the Master, God compels the enemies of the truth and the calumniators of the Church to say more than they would wish, and while in the very act of calumniating the Church, they unavoidably find themselves at the feet of that Church, acknowledging that men

are saved in her communion." The passages from Jurieu, follow after: you may find them in the third "Advertisement" of this great Bishop to the Protestants.

I pass on to some particular facts, which will also give you to understand that the opinion of the reformed teachers is favorable to the Church of Rome. Henry IV. after having conquered his kingdom sword in hand, applied himself seriously to the study of religion. Although the interests of his crown might give him an inclination towards Catholicism, he weighed the reasons on both sides; and it was principally from the acknowledgment of the divines of his party, that he determined upon embracing the catholic religion; for when the most able ministers acknowledged to him that he could also work out his salvation in this church, he exclaimed; "Then I will take the safest side." * M. de Sully had not only declared to him that he held it as certain that men might be saved being Catholics, but more-over mentioned to this Prince five of the principal ministers who were not opposed to this sentiment.

Formerly, when in England, I read the declaration made by the Duchess of York before her death under Charles II. of the reasons that had induced her to embrace the Catholic religion. I have now nothing but the translation before me; † I have reason to believe it faithful. "I was desirous (says she) of conferring upon these matters with the two most talented bishops that we have in England, and both of them candidly acknowledged to me, that there are many things in the Church of Rome, which it were desirable that the Church of England had always preserved, such as, confession, which they cannot deny that God himself commanded, and praying for the dead, which is one of the most authentic and most ancient practices of the Christian religion; that, as for themselves, they still made use of them in private, without making profession of them in public.

"As I was pressing one of these bishops upon the other points of controversy, and principally upon the real presence of Jesus Christ in the adorable sacrament upon the altar; he frankly replied to me, that if he were a Catholic, he would not change his religion, but that having been brought up in the church in which he believed himself to enjoy all that was necessary for salvation, and having been baptized in it, he thought he could not leave it without great scandal." O! but unity and schism! did they never enter your mind, my Lord?

Elizabeth Christina, Queen of Charles VI. and mother of the immortal Maria Theresa, was desirous before she accepted the imperial crown, of securing the most important of all affairs, her salvation. She consulted upon the subject the most able protestant divines, and they declared to her, by an authentic and public document, that the catholic religion also conducted to salvation.

On occasion of the projected marriage (afterwards ratified,) of the Princess of Wolfenbuttel with Charles III. King of Spain, the faculty of theology, at Helmstadt were consulted upon the

* Mem. de Sully, ch XXXVIII.—† See the end of vol. II. of the Hist. of Calvin, by Maimbourg.

following question. Can a Protestant Princess, destined to marry a Catholic Prince, embrace the Catholic religion, with safe conscience? The professors unanimously gave an affirmative opinion in a long and argumentative reply, which they all signed, the 29th of April, 1707.—You may read it at the end of a small work entitled: The Duke of Brunswick's fifty reasons for leaving the Lutheran communion to enter into into the Catholic church.*

To these decisions, I could join the testimonies of your own instructors, such as Barrow, Hooker, Cowel, Bunny, Some, Morton, Montague, Heylin, Potter, Laud, Stillingleet, &c. Of these I shall only cite one, who is of great weight.—"I declare & am bound candidly to declare (says Thornyke) I know not of any article necessary to salvation, that is prohibited by the Church of Rome! nor of any incompatible with salvation, that is propounded by her.†"

What shall we say of so many individuals who, being born and brought up in protestant communions accustomed to hear of nothing but the errors, superstitions, and idolatry: of the Church of Rome induced afterwards by circumstances to examine more closely its doctrine, its principles, and its worship; have acknowledged their purity and conformity with the primitive faith and practice, have thrown aside their hatred of it together with the prejudices that had only been recommended to their belief by misrepresentations and calumnious imputations, and have concluded by ranking themselves among the number of her children, and by defending and vindicating her from the errors and crimes which they themselves had so long been accustomed to lay to her charge. Such among others, in my country, were the celebrated Cardinal Duperon, the grave and sensible Desmahis, the eloquent Pelisson, the learned Morin, priest of the Oratoire, and Papin, long a zealous minister of Calvinism and who, after preaching his errors in France, England, and Germany, came to renounce and abjure them in the hands of the great Bishop of Meaux; and in your country, Challoner, Gother, the two Hays, and the anonymous author of an excellent work which does no less honour to his heart than to his head.‡ All these distinguished men, to

* Sold by Keating, Duke-street, Grosvenor-square, London. 1814.—† Thornyke in Epilog p. 146.—‡ An essay towards a proposal for Catholic Communion. This is an excellent work, that cannot be sufficiently recommended to the English, who wish to become acquainted with the true Church. It was reprinted in London some few years back at the expense of the late M. Sheldon Constable, of Burton.

And to cite more recent examples, I will here call to your recollection, two striking conversions, that of Mr. Nathaniel Thayer, who after being minister of the sect of puritans at Boston, was converted at Rome, in 1783, and has himself published the motives that led him back to Catholic unity: that of Miss Elizabeth Pitt: a relation of the immortal minister, whose talents and eloquence have so long been the admiration and the astonishment of England. she pronounced her vows at the convent of the visitation at Abbeville, the 26th of November, 1787. I present you with the conclusion of the letter which she wrote upon her conversion to the Cure de Saint Jacques, of the same town the 20th of June, 1788: "As for the protestants, who may obtain information of it, I do not consider myself calculated to instruct them, much less to convert them: but I can assure them, as my brethren, whose salvation is most dear to me, to follow one piece of advice; which is, not to reject without the most serious examination, the doubts, which must be originated in their minds, if they think deliberately upon it, by the novelty of their belief and its variations since the reformation, compared with the antiquity and unity of

whom many more might have been added, have left behind them admirable works, equally useful to those who seek the truth and to those who are carried on by their zeal to defend it.

I can personally assure you, Sir, that, having often had occasion, during my long residence in your country, to converse upon the difference of our religions with English bishops and divines, and even with well instructed laics, I have always found them of the same opinion and almost employing the same words. They would say to me that "their religion and mine were equally good; that the greatest part of the differences turned upon ceremonies and points of discipline, and some also upon opinions superadded (would they say), to the ancient belief by our Church, and which theirs had thought proper to retrench; they considered the Churches of France and England as two sisters, in whom were discoverable a family likeness and the leading features of resemblance."

Would to God, Sir, that this resemblance might become perfect, as it formerly was, and as it ought never to have ceased to be!

After the facts and testimonies you have just read, I dare flatter myself, Sir, that you by this time no longer doubt of the injustice of the imputations cast upon the church of Rome. They have originated in that sourness, malignity, and hatred, which the spirit of party always produces, and from people unfortunately finding it their interest to extend and support the defection. Destitute of reality and proofs, they recoil upon their inventors, & never will they justify the rupture. "It was evil done of them who first urged such a separation." Calvin therefore was wrong in his conceit, when he wrote to Melancthon in 1552; "We have been compelled to separate from the whole world."

To prove however that all these accusations were inadmissible, it would have been quite sufficient, without the detail, to have made the single observation, with which this note, already too long, shall be concluded. Who are they, that have dared to accuse the church of innovation in dogma, error in doctrine, superstition in practice, and idolatry in worship? Who are they? The question is important.

At the head of all appears Luther, an Augustinian friar; next Carlostadius, an archdeacon; Melancthon, a professor of the Greek language; all three at Wirtemberg; their party is quickly joined by Ecolampadius, a monk of the order of St. Laurence, near Augsburg; by Munster, a grey friar; by Bucer, a Dominican; and by the famous Muncer, who from a disciple, became the infuriated

the catholic doctrine; for the true faith is one; and must necessarily be traced to the apostles and to Jesus Christ. May it please God to enlighten them, as he has deigned to enlighten me, in order to draw me from the errors in which my birth and education had unfortunately engaged me." Germany presents, in our days a multitude of enlightened protestants, who have embraced catholicism, such as the learned M. Schlegel and his wife, daughter of the celebrated Mendelssohn; M. le comte de Stolberg, not less illustrious for his profound learning than for his noble birth; M. Werner who from a poet becomes an humble priest, attracts all Vienna to his eloquent discourses, as he had before drawn Berlin to his dramatic representations; the learned Lutheran minister Barron de Stark, a catholic in private life and still more in his last works; the celebrated jurist M. de Haller, &c. &c.

leader of the anabaptists. So much for the first anabaptists. In Switzerland, Zuinglius, the curate of Glaris; at Geneva, in Switzerland and in France, Calvin, the young curate of pont l'Eveque, near Noyon; Theodore Beza, the Latin poet and prior at Longjumeau; Peter martyr, a florentinian, who left the regular chapter of St. Augustine, ran from Italy with Ochin, general of the Capuchins, to dogmatize in Switzerland, then at Strasburg, then in England, and last of all, once more in Switzerland, where he died. So much for the Calvinists.

In Scotland Knox, a monk, a priest, and afterwards the furious disciple of Calvin, whose principles he conveys to his native country, where he puts every thing into a flame: the Earl Murray, the natural, but unnaturally cruel brother of Mary Stuart, who passed from the convent of St. Andrew to the regency of the kingdom; Buchanan the ungrateful calumniator of Mary Stuart.* So much for the Presbyterians. In fine, for the reformers of your country, I find a house of Lords, with the exception of many lords, and of all the bishops; a small majority in the house of commons, together with the Queen and her council. Now what do we discover in the persons I have just named? I touch not here upon selfish motives of ambition, interest, and lust, nor upon the morals and the conduct of these fiery fabricators of the reformation, which present an appearance any thing but apostolic. I pass by the scandalous marriages of the priests, and of religious men with religious women, which when recurring among us in the midst of our impious revolution, have excited contempt and ridicule.† But I ask what was the character of the personages in the ecclesiastical hierarchy? Were they such as Jesus Christ had in view when he said; "Go, teach all nations—I am with you to the end of the world?" Was it to them that he said; "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me?" Was it to them that he promised the holy Spirit, to come and instruct them in all truth? But as these lofty and magnificent promises were made to the apostles and their successors, as the apostles, and after them the bishops only, have, at all times, according to the promises and ordinances of Jesus Christ, governed his Church, decided controversies, and declared as judges, what was revealed and what not; it was an easy and simple thing to stop the mouths of the innovators, by unanimously replying to them on all sides. "Who are you, that you must meddle with doctrinal points, must decide that such a doctrine is an error, such a point of discipline a corruption, such a practice idolatrous, and that you must needs produce a schism in the church. As for you, you are but mere laics; and you others only ecclesiastics of an inferior order. To decide on these subjects belongs not either to one of the other of you: the power comes from a higher source. Tell your complaints, lay open your doubts, and welcome. Put forth to the world your reasonings upon the matters that offend and scandalize you.

* It is said that he retracted on his death-bed all that he had said injurious to the character of Mary.—† The bantering of Erasmus upon these sacrilegious connections is well known: "Ecolampadius has just married a tolerably pretty girl; seemingly this is the way he intends to mortify his flesh. They are mistaken in saying that Lutheranism is a tragical affair; for my part, I am persuaded that nothing is more comic, for the winding up of the piece is always a marriage, as in the comedies."

Solicit and urge, if you please, your superior in the spiritual order, your judges, the Bishops, to examine into them. But respectfully await their decision, and receive it with submission: for such is the ordinance of God, and obedience is your duty, and the part you have to act in religion."

Instead of this christian and canonical proceeding, we find them disregarding the authority of all the bishops in the world, arrogating to themselves supereminence, overturning the arrangements of the divine Legislator, introducing anarchy in its place, preaching up and commanding a separation; and tearing in pieces the body of Jesus Christ. And this is what they have called a reformation. Let them give it what name they please, it is as clear as the sun, that a reformation of such a kind will eternally bear on the face of it the character of revolt, and in the ineffable stain of schism will disclose the mark of reprobation.

To be Continued.

DEFENCE OF CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES,

By Demetrius A. Gallitzin, a Russian Prince; now a Catholic Priest; addressed by him to a reviler of our Holy Religion.

Continued.

Can it be superstition, dear sir, to believe that our pastors are really in possession of the power which Christ himself asserts he gave them, and which he promises shall remain with them for ever? Since Jesus Christ has pledged his sacred veracity for the existence of those several powers in the pastors of his Church, and since he has likewise promised that the very fountain of truth, the Holy Ghost, shall be and remain with those pastors for ever, we should think ourselves guilty of a great sin if we refused submission, of either understanding or will, to their decisions and their precepts; and of a most daring presumption and diabolical pride, if we would, even for one moment, permit our limited reason to sit in judgment over the decisions and precepts of those, whom Jesus Christ declares to be guided by the Holy Ghost for ever.

Seeing then that the pastors of the Church of Christ have always been secured by the infinite power of God, against the danger of being led astray, and leading those under their care astray, into false and erroneous doctrines, we rest secure under their guidance, knowing that the understanding of the most transcendent genius can never penetrate into the mysteries of the Most High; we, both learned and unlearned, take the easy and only safe way of submission, that path in which holy writ assures us, that the very fools cannot err. Isa. xxxv. 8.

It is perhaps necessary to observe, that we do not believe this unerring authority to reside in any individual pastor. No: the Pope himself, the successor of St. Peter, and the supreme pastor of the Catholic Church, is not by any article of Catholic communion, believed to be infallible.

This unerring authority is by all Catholics believed to reside in the body of the pastors, united with their head. If it does not reside there, it resides no where on earth, and the plain promises of Christ are made void, and we are left to be "tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine," which Christ meant to prevent in the establishment of pastors. Ephes. iv. 11, 12, 13, 14.

If we are asked how a body of sinful and fallible

men can give infallible decisions, we answer, by the power of God.

How can there be life in a lump of clay? We find the answer in Genesis ii. 7: "And the Lord God breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

How can there be infallibility in the decisions of a body of fallible men? We find the answer in John xx. 22; "He (Jesus Christ) breathed on them and said to them, receive ye the Holy Ghost," &c. &c.

"The weak things of the world hath God chosen that he may confound the strong" 1 Cor. i. 27.

We readily grant that men, even the most learned, are fallible and subject to errors, whilst depending upon their reason and their learning alone; and for this reason we believe, that not even the most transcendent genius, improved by the most liberal education; that can be obtained on earth, will ever alone qualify, a man to be a minister of Christ, a pastor of souls, a spiritual guide to Heaven, to pilot us surely and securely through the raging billows of a tempestuous sea, into the harbour of eternal peace. No, dear sir, this would be for the blind to lead the blind; for if after nearly six thousand years of unrelenting exertions, human wisdom and philosophy have not been able to penetrate into one, out of millions of the secrets of this material world, which in a short time will be destroyed by fire, how much less can the limited understandings of even the most transcendent geniuses penetrate into the dark recess of God's sanctuary, where all is mystery; how much less, I say, can they comprehend and explain the profound mysteries of this spiritual world, the Church, created for the soul of man, which is to last for ever, so long as God shall be God.

Here, then, God in his mercy interposes his infinite power. Wishing to give us sure guides to lead us, safely into the harbour of eternal life, Jesus Christ, God-man, by infusing his Holy Spirit of truth into those fallible men, whom he appoints his successors in the ministry, and promising never to take that spirit from them again, supplies at once the want of that knowledge, which no genius, no talents; no education ever will be able to give.

The body of pastors, then, being guided by the Holy Ghost, every individual pastor draws his knowledge from that body, from the whole Church.

The most learned among them is willing to say with Jeremiah the prophet, "A, a, a, Lord God, behold "I cannot speak, for I am a child." Jer. i. 6. He is willing to acknowledge the depth of those mysterious truths of religion, in the investigation of which he must stumble at every step unless directed by an unerring guide. Thus he applies to the decision of the Church, for the true sense of holy writ, for the true doctrine of Christ delivered by tradition, for the knowledge of all those tenets of religion necessary to be known for salvation. Thus, the pastor himself is led, and he is only fit to be a pastor, because he is led by an infallible guide, and instead of consulting his limited and fallible reason, in the interpretation of

Scripture, instead of delivering from the pulpit his opinions of the sense of Scripture, and calling such fallible opinions the word of God, he gives no instructions to his flock, but what he derives from the decisions of the Church, guided by the Spirit of Truth. Thus thousands, and hundreds of thousands of pastors, scattered over the whole globe, of different nations and tongues, delivered to their respective flocks, one and the same doctrine on all the different parts and mysteries of religion, and this doctrine they deliver, not as opinions, but as matter of certainty, as certain as that God is God. Is it not a pity that things on which our salvation depend should be only matters of opinion? It is my opinion, says one, that children may be saved without baptism; it is my opinion, says another, that God is too merciful to damn souls for ever; I think, says another, that it is immaterial what a person believes, or what religious creed he adopts, so he leads a good life. It is your opinion, and you think! Pray are you certain? and if you are not certain in matters of such weight, how can you be happy? Good God! will you leave it to the day of judgment to disclose whether you were right or wrong? Or, will you not rather renounce that fallible guide, your limited and corrupted reason, which never can give you certainty in matters of revelation, and apply for spiritual knowledge to the fountain of eternal truth, the holy Catholic Church, guided by the Holy Ghost, that you may no longer feed on opinions and uncertainties, but repose in the bosom of certainty.

The true minister of Christ, dear sir, speaking in the name of his divine master, must speak with authority, with certainty, without any hesitation, on all the different mysteries of religion on which he is obliged to instruct his flock. Woe to the wretch who shall deliver his private opinions, his own uncertain notions as the word of God, and thus often give poison for wholesome food, the productions of weak and corrupted reason for divine revelation.

The idea we have of a minister of Christ, you will perceive, is precisely the same which the first Christians must have had. Surely, dear sir, the Church in 1820 must be the same as it was in the beginning, the same kind of pastors, provided with the same powers, administering the same baptism, the same Eucharist or Lord's Supper, in short, all the same sacraments, and preaching the same doctrine.

The apostles of Christ, scattered over the globe, preached one and the same doctrine, because Christ was with them. Mat. xxviii. 18, 20. The Ministers of Christ in 1820, scattered over the globe, preach likewise one and the same doctrine, because Christ is still with them.

"I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

The apostles of Christ received the confessions of the faithful. "And many of those who believed, came "confessing and declaring their deeds." Acts xix. 11. They had received from Jesus Christ the power of forgiving and retaining sins. John xx. 22, 23.

The ministers of Christ in 1820, likewise hear

the confessions of the faithful, because they have no idea that Christ ever deprived them of that power,

The apostles of Jesus Christ submitted to the decisions of the whole Church, because they knew the Church to be guided by the Holy Ghost; witness the first council held at Jerusalem, which settled the question about circumcision; to the decision of which all submitted.

"It has seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no further burthen upon you than these necessary things," &c. &c. Acts xv. 28.

The ministers of Christ in 1820, likewise submit to the decisions of the general councils of the Church, because they know that the Holy Ghost is as much with the Church in 1820, as he was immediately after her institution. In short, we do not conceive why less spiritual powers should be attributed to the ministry of Christ in 1820, than in the year 100 or 390, &c. &c. for at all times, and in all ages, the Ministry is, most assuredly, intended for the same functions.

A minister of Christ, in 1820, is a preacher of the truth, as well as the year 100, and the truth in 1820 is certainly the same as in the year 100.

A minister of Christ in 1820, is a minister of reconciliation, as well as in the year 100. You will readily allow that men in 1820, are sinners as well as in former years, and therefore stand as much in need, as in former years, of those heavenly means and remedies which our blessed Lord sent his apostles to administer. Thus, by baptism, they, in 1820, wipe away the stain of original sin, as well as Christ's immediate successors did. Thus, also, by absolution, in 1820, they wipe away the stains of actual sin, as well as the ministers first appointed by Christ. It cannot be conceived, that Jesus Christ should grant the power of forgiving sins, merely in favour of a single generation, and should then (as if repenting of that grant) deprive all future generations of the same favour and benefit: neither ought it to be believed, as there is not a word from the mouth of Christ in favour of such a belief. We believe then, (even from the written word, without reference to the decision of the Church,) that all the spiritual powers originally granted by Christ to his ministers, still continue with his ministers, and will to the consummation of time. And we believe that any one, not in possession of those spiritual powers which Christ himself declares he gave his ministers, cannot be a minister of Christ; he may be a gentleman, he may be a man of learning, he may be what you please, but, most assuredly, he cannot be a minister of Christ. I shall thank you, dear sir, to point out to me how, in thus believing, we are guilty of superstition.

Having explained to you, what we believe of the Church, and the Ministry of Jesus Christ, I shall now, in a brief manner, lay before you some of the particular tenets of the Holy Catholic Church—those, I mean, which distinguish that church from all others. I begin with confession.

CONFESSION.

This, I know, is the greatest stumbling block for

all those who, within the last three hundred years, have separated from the holy Catholic church. We believe that the ministers of Christ, those whom we call bishops and priests, have received the power of forgiving and retaining sins, which was given to the Apostles, according to St. John xx. 22. 23.

Pray, sir, is it superstition to believe, that our omnipotent and merciful God is able and as willing to continue that power in 1820, as he was to give it to his first ministers?

If we believe that man, by his own power, could forgive sin, you would be very justifiable in accusing us of superstition; for who can forgive sins but God, or he who has received that power from him.

We believe confession necessarily deducible from the grant of the above power. It cannot be conceived how a minister of Christ is to exercise his power of forgiving or retaining sins, unless he has an exact knowledge of the state of the sinner's conscience; this knowledge no one can give him but the sinner himself, as probably ninety-nine out of a hundred are sins concealed from the public eye, sins of thoughts or desires, &c.

The minister of Christ forgives in the name and by the power of Christ; he cannot grant absolution or forgiveness then, unless he has a moral certainty, that such is the inward state of the sinner, such his repentance, such his purpose of amendment, such his willingness to make restitution of property, his character, &c. as to entitle him to the mercy of God, and to forgiveness from above.

The objections made against Confession, and the power of forgiving sins; are so futile, the benefits arising from that sacred institution so manifold and so solid, that it cannot be conceived how so many thousands were and are willing to be deprived of so valuable a blessing.

These benefits are so great, that even some of the most relentless enemies of the Church could not refuse their encomiums to that holy institution. "There is not, perhaps, a wiser institution," says Voltaire, "in his remarks on the Tragedy of Olympe. "The lawmakers, who established mysteries and expiations, were equally studious to prevent the guilty from yielding to despair, and re-pressing into their crimes."

This Voltaire, the greatest enemy that the Church ever had, who spent his life in ridiculing the holy Scriptures, and all the institutions of Christ, who declared an open war against Christ; this Voltaire, at the age of eighty odd, when in his last sickness, sent for a priest to make his confession to him. "Confession is an excellent thing," says the Philosophical Dictionary, a curb to inveterate wickedness. In the remotest antiquity, Confession was practiced in the celebration of all the ancient mysteries, we have imitated and sanctified this wise practice; it is excellent to induce ulcerated hearts to forgive and to make thieves restore what they have unjustly taken from their neighbour." The Lutherans in the Confession of Augsburg, have preserved that salutary institution. Luther himself would not suffer it to be abolished. Sooner (say he) would I submit to the Papal tyranny, than let Confession be ab-

olished." Collection of Luther's German writings vol. ii. p. 272.

We find the precept of Confession given by Almighty God, to his chosen people.

"Say to the children of Israel; when a man or woman shall have committed any of all the sins that men are wont to commit, and by negligence shall have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and offended, they shall confess their sin, and restore the principal itself, and the fifth part over and above." &c. Numb. v. 6. 7.

It does not appear that the power of forgiving sins had been granted by the Almighty God to the ministers of the old law. The Confession ordered to be made under the law of Moses, may then be considered as a preparation and a figure of that required under the law of grace, which we call Sacramental Confession, as by the power of God and the merits of Christ, it has the grace of forgiveness and reconciliation annexed to it.

We find the practice of Confession in the beginning of Christianity: "And many of those who believed, came confessing and declaring their deeds." Acts xix. 18.

We cannot believe that they came to boast of their good deeds; and therefore we understand that they confessed their bad deeds, commonly called sins.

All the holy fathers of the Church, from the earliest dawn of christianity, bear ample testimony to the general practice of Confession. It is difficult to conceive how any man could ever have persuaded mankind to submit to a practice, so repugnant to flesh and blood, so mortifying to pride, so humiliating to human nature. The universality of this practice, to which the most powerful kings and emperors, the most renowned military commanders, the most exalted geniuses, in all ages, and in all parts of the world, have cheerfully submitted, establishes in our minds a conviction beyond the possibility of a doubt, that Confession owes its origin to the founder of christianity.

The objections against sacramental Confession, I repeat it, are so futile, so trifling, as hardly to deserve any answer.

First objection.—How can man forgive sins?

I answer by the power of God.

I answer again, with our blessed Saviour,

"That you may know, that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins," &c. Matt. ix. 6. He does not say, "That you may know, that the Son of God has power on earth to forgive sins;" to give us to understand that this power, essentially belonging to God alone, is here communicated to man the minister of God by excellence and exercised by him in his own person: and again exercised by him in the persons of the ministers, as he sends them most assuredly; to do what he did, to preach as he did, administer reconciliation as he did, &c. All power "is given to me in Heaven and in Earth." Why this preamble, if he did not mean to give a supernatural power? "Go ye, therefore," &c. &c. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. "And receive ye the Holy Ghost; "whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven," &c. John xx. 22, 23.

Second objection.—The institution of Confession is a great encouragement to sin, as Papists think they have nothing to do, in order to obtain forgiveness, but to relate their sins to a priest.

Answer.—The institution of Confession misrepresented, is an encouragement to sin—granted; but surely, sir, to form a sound judgment on Catholic doctrines, it is not to polluted sources you will apply, I do not know the Protestant writer who represents them fairly; yet, it is beyond all doubt, that almost all the knowledge which Protestants have of Catholic principles, is derived from Protestant books. And pray, what do they all say? Beware of Catholic books, beware of Popish priests, beware of priest-craft, beware of Popish superstition; thus, not one Protestant out of a hundred, ever had an opportunity of knowing the genuine Catholic principles.—As Fletcher very justly observes, the little knowledge which the Protestants possess of our religion, is borrowed entirely from the declamations of pulpit violence, and misrepresentation of interested prejudice. In general, Catholic principles are exhibited in all the dark colorings of malevolence, and in all the ludicrous shapes of low ribaldry. In Dryden's words:

"A hideous figure of their foes they draw;
"Nor lines; nor looks, nor shades, nor colours true;
"And this grotesque design expose to public view—
"And yet the daubing pleases!"

To return to the second objection—I say, that Confession, far from being an encouragement to sin, is the greatest check, and the greatest remedy against sin.

It is in Confession that the sinner discovers to the minister of Christ, the physician of his soul, all his spiritual maladies, his weaknesses, his temptations, his inclinations, his doubts, the scruples of his conscience his apprehensions, &c. and it is there he finds comfort, encouragement, advice, instructions, remedies against temptations, in short, every thing that is necessary to cause him to forsake the ways of perdition, and with the prodigal son to return to his father; it is there sir, he is told of his obligations—it is there he is made sensible of the impossibility of obtaining forgiveness unless he restores what he has got by stealing, cheating, usury, or by any kind of injustice, unless he is reconciled with his adversary, unless he forsakes the occasion of sin. It is there he is reminded of the vanity of earthly pleasures, of the shortness of time, of the dreadful punishments prepared for sinners by the infinite justice of God and of the incomprehensible blessings which the mercy of God has prepared for his saints. It is there, that in the most pathetic strains, the minister of Christ exhorts the sinner to sincere repentance and exhibits before his eyes, the merits and the sacred wounds of his dying Saviour, to rouse the confidence of the desponding sinner. Ah sir, is this encouragement to sin? Is this superstition? Great God! your wrath must have been provoked to a very high degree, by the abominable sins committed on this polluted earth, when you permitted so many thousands of sinners to be deprived of so valuable a blessing, as that derived from Sacramental Confession.

Yes sir, many thousands of sinners, and of the most abandoned sinners, have been reclaimed in the tribunal of penance, and by the pious exertions of Christ's ministers, brought back to the practice of virtue. There have been instances of sinners dying in the confessional, their hearts breaking with grief at the thoughts of having had the misfortune to offend their merciful God and Saviour. Thus, according to Christ's declaration Luc. vii. 47, in one moment they expiated, by the perfection of their love, the sins of many years.

I shall here add one remark, made by the celebrated author of the Philosophical Catechism. "A thing well worth observing (says he) and really supernatural and miraculous, is the seal or secret of Confession, entrusted every day to thousands of priests, some of whom, alas ! ill qualified for their profession, and capable of any other prevarication, and yet so faithfully kept. Scarcely can ALL church history, during a period of more than eighteen hundred years, furnish one example of infidelity in this point, even among those who, like Luther and Calvin, turned apostates to the Church. If any one reflects on the inconsistency of mankind on the curiosity of some, and the loquacity and indiscretion of others, on the nature and importance of the affairs entrusted to confessors, the revelation of which would often have astonishing effects, on the means which various interests, avarice, jealousy, and other passions fail not to try, in order to compass their ends, &c. there will remain no doubt but that God watches over the preservation of his work." Philosophical Catechism, (vol. 3. chap. vii. art. 1.

I cannot forbear recommending, for your perusal, a book not very long since published in the city of New York, entitled, the Catholic Question in America,

You will there find what respect was paid to that venerable institution, (sacramental confession,) by a Protestant Court of Justice, at which presided the Hon. De Witt Clinton. The Rev. Doctor Kohlman, a Catholic Priest, in the city of New York, was by that sacrament, an instrument of restoring stolen property to its owner. Certain persons had been previously arrested on suspicion, and a prosecution instituted against them ; Doctor Kohlman, after restoring the stolen property to its owner, was summoned to give in evidence, and required to disclose the person or persons from whom he had received it. He in a most respectful manner, stated to the Court, that not having any knowledge of the theft, by any natural or common way of information, it being solely acquired by sacramental Confession, it was his duty to suffer any punishment, even death itself, rather than divulge the knowledge acquired in that way. The Court unanimously decided in his favor ; and there being no evidence against the defendants, they were acquitted.

In that same book there is a complete treatise on Sacramental Confession, wherein by the most respectable testimonies from the Holy Fathers, it is clearly proved that a sacramental Confession owes

its origin to the divine founder of our holy religion and has been practised from the earliest dawn of Christianity, and in all the ages of the Church, down to our present times.

To be continued.

ORIGINAL.

SCRIPTURAL AND RATIONAL HARMONIES OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

Thou art all fair, O my love ! and there is no spot in thee. Cant. 4, 7.

There is a wonderful congruity in the doctrines of the Catholic Church : a constant harmony and a perfect agreement ; as every one, who either attacks or defends them, must feel a mutual, self-sustaining sympathy throughout ; which to the sincere seeker of truth, demonstrates her divine origin : and shews her, in whom all is invariably consistent, to be the spotless favorite of the beloved in the Canticle of Canticles ; the chaste spouse of Christ, whom St. Paul designates *without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing ; whom he has presented to himself holy and without blemish.* Eph. 5.

Like all the other works of God, the nearer she is inspected, the more unexceptionable she appears : whereas, the sects of man's invention, like all his other works, lose in our estimation on being closely examined ; exhibiting nothing to our view, but incongruities, contradictions, and practical, as well as doctrinal deformities : which their interested inventors, propagators and abettors, well knowing to be the case ; endeavour, by every possible artifice, to hide from the public view : smoothing over with the varnish of hypocrisy the haggard, harlot and vice worn countenances of their several sects ; and adding, to allure the ignorant, careless and unthinking, the heightened glow of a fictitious bloom ; agreeing together in nothing, but in hating, misrepresenting, calumniating, and persecuting where they can, the beauteous and much envied bride of the beloved ; the sole Church of the Redeemer : ever thrusting between us and her majestic form their various blinds and caricatures ; which represent her in all the hideous and disgusting shapes, that their own wicked and obscene imaginations are capable of suggesting : bawling out against her with tireless malignity : and proclaiming her to all in every sense abominable. But all their spiteful efforts to traduce and vilify her, only tend to shew in her a nearer resemblance to her divine founder : who, though God, and sanctity itself ; the Lord of nature and wisdom infinite ; was treated by his enemies as a fool : a mock king : a blasphemer : a breaker of the Sabbath : a Samaritan, who had a Devil : a wine bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners.

I was led into this train of reflection on considering the wretched and deceitful shifts, to which all Protestant Reformers have recourse, in order to captivate the multitude ; and gain the ascendancy in their opinion : to get the Saviour's religion proscribed ; and each his own system established in her stead. To effect this, not content with pouring out upon her their own calumnious accusations : in order to disfigure her quite, they rake together and

fling against her all the blackening falsehoods and foul aspersions, with which her ancient enemies, their predecessors, the old condemned heretics, were wont incessantly to assail her. They all delight particularly in renewing against her the long exploded clamours of the Iconoclasts, or image breakers of the eighth century ; who accused her of idolatry, on account of the respectful manner in which she always kept the images of Christ and his Saints, for the instruction & edification of the faithful.

To support this renovated falsehood, they not only, like its inventors, misconstrue God's prohibition to make images or likenesses of any kind to be adored, as Gods ; like the Heathen Divinities : and ridiculously pretend that all images and resemblances whatever, and for whatever useful, or harmless purpose, are thereby forbidden : but improving in the reformation tact upon their very masters ; and to make their careless and credulous followers believe that the Catholics sin against a particular and express commandment ; they have absurdly ventured even to derange the two tables of the law ; and discompose the Decalogue. Thus have they made two commandments of the first ; which is evidently but ONE : and therefore, not to exceed the acknowledged number TEN ; they were forced to make but ONE of the two last, which are as evidently two distinct ones.

Their first commandment is : *thou shalt have no strange Gods before me.* Their second is but an explanatory repetition of the first : for to make, adore and worship as Gods, any likenesses, or graven things, is having strange Gods before God.

Let us only put this point to the test of common sense. The first duty of the rational creature ; and consequently of man, is to worship God ; and him alone, as God, the Creator and Sovereign Lord of all things. To prevent therefore his chosen people from giving to any creatures or things, as the surrounding nations of the Pagans did, that supreme homage of adoration, which is due to him alone : he issues his first commandment in these peremptory terms : *thou shalt have no strange Gods before me ;* and then, in an explanatory clause, (like what he uses in some of his other commandments) describes the sort of objects, which, in imitation of their idolatrous neighbours, they might be, and often were, tempted to adore and worship. The Protestant's second commandment is therefore implied in the first : and both are but one and the same on the first table of the law. Suppose a lawful Sovereign, observing a great proportion of his subjects disowning his authority, and dividing their allegiance, which is due to him alone, between a number of usurpers ; suppose such a rightful superior to issue to his faithful adherents his prohibitory mandate thus : *You shall have no strange rulers before me.* Could it be accounted a distinct second mandate, were he immediately to add : *you shall not honour, nor obey, as your rulers, neither Alfred, nor Robert, nor James, nor Charles, for I am your lawful liege and sole sovereign Lord ?* This is evidently but a more explicit repetition of the first order. Just as evidently is the Protestant's second

commandment only a more explicit repetition of the first.

Having thus, for the aforementioned laudable purpose, made two commandments of one; our reformers, not to exceed, by the change, the original number ten; were now under the necessity of making but one of two: and the least glaringly absurd identification was of the two last, prohibiting sins in thought. But here again they have missed their mark as much as ever: and their contraction at the end of the Decalogue was as absurdly made, as their enlargement at the beginning. For sins are as distinct in thought, as they are in deed. Their respective prohibitions must therefore be equally so. For instance: *adultery* and *theft* are two distinct sins indeed: and their several prohibitions are acknowledged to be two distinct commandments. But adultery in thought is *to covet our neighbour's wife*: and theft in thought is *to covet our neighbour's goods*. Let Protestants then show how these two sins, which cannot be identified in deed; and are therefore prohibited by two distinct commandments: can be identified in thought, and prohibited by only one. Let them do this, or confess the villainy of the shifts, which their unprincipled Reformers had recourse to, in order to decry the Catholic Church, and render her odious to the deluded public: whom they taught thus to consider her as a sink of idolatry; in which were made, retained and worshipped the various objects prohibited by an express commandment.

Yet, they well knew, all along, what every sincere seeker of truth among Protestants may, by only looking at any of her Catechisms, know also; that she expressly forbids her children to worship any *graven thing, image or likeness whatever*; as having any virtue in itself, or power to see, hear or help us. That she keeps such only to remind us of their immortal and ever blest originals: to recall to our minds what the Saviour has done and suffered for us; and to hold out for our imitation the heroic virtues of the Saints, his faithful followers. These indeed she keeps respectfully; as she does whatever is connected with Religion: never for their own sake, as they are nothing but the insensible works of man: (that which the most ignorant Catholic knows; and smiles at the more than childish credulity of Protestants; who can be brought to believe that he worships them, as the Pagan did his idols) but for the sake of the holy and dignified beings, whom they represent.

Did not God himself, after forbidding all idolatrous likenesses to be made and kept; order such religious ones to be made and placed even in his sanctuary? What were the *golden Cherubims*, but such. What was the *Brazen Serpent*, but, as our Saviour tells us, a figure of himself crucified? John 3, xiv. It was the first *Crucifix*; a figure held in general abhorrence by Protestants; and not less so for certain by him, who sees in it the sign of his own defeat by the Redeemer. It was, what must still more shock the Protestant, a *wonder-working image*. For to suppose that God should ever work wonders with such instruments, is quite a *papistical* notion; though a *scriptural* one. Witness the wonders he wrought with Moses' and Aaron's rods: with the tree thrown into the *bitter waters of Mara*, which made them sweet: *Exod. 15, 25*. With Gideon's fleece. *Judges 6, 37*. With the Mantle of Elias: *4 Kings, 2, 14*. With the Salt, cast by

Elisba into the Spring, which healed the waters of their bad quality; and the soil of its barrenness.—*ib. v. 20*. As well as the meal, thrown by him into the pot; which rendered immediately wholesome its poisonous contents—*ibid. ch. 4, 41*. I say nothing of Tobias, and the Fish: that part of scripture not being considered by Protestants as canonical: But even in the new Testament we find equally stupendous wonders wrought with things in themselves inanimate and insensible: such as the pool of *Siloe* and the *Probatic Pond*. The Hem of our Saviour's Garment: his sacred Spittle, and the clay made with it: *the handkerchiefs and aprons, which had touched the body of Saint Paul*: and even the shadow of St. Peter. I mention all this merely to shew that there is nothing unscriptural, absurd or idolatrous, in the Catholic's belief that God in his church may work wonders even with such an image as the *Brazen Serpent*; and such substances as Blessed Salt, Holy Oil or Water; every thing, which, according to Saint Paul, is sanctified by the word of God and with prayer—*1 Tim. 4, 5*—and that he may still, if he pleases, honour his Saints, by imparting to their relics, as he did to those of Saint Paul, a miraculous and wonder-working efficacy. Did he not himself with a tree, (the cross) repair the mischief caused us with a tree? And can he not, with any thing he chooses, do whatever he chooses? This is then the sum of what Catholics believe regarding things solemnly blessed by the Church, for the instruction and edification of her children: and through which her Benedictions (all derived from the infinite power, sanctity and superabundant merits of the Saviour) in sensible signs, like grace in the Sacraments, to their ultimate objects, the faithful.

But the Catholic is seen, in passing before his holy images, to uncover his head, and bow towards them. Nay he often kneels and prays before them: and what greater homage could the heathen pay than this to his Idols?

The heathen pays his homage to the thing itself; which, in the catholic language, can neither see, nor hear, nor help him: or to the imaginary deity, which it represents; and which, according to St. Paul, is a mere non-entity. Now we know, says he, that an idol is nothing in the world. *1 Cor. viii. 4, nothing real and true*.—*Ibid. ch. x. 19*, where as the Catholic's homage is referred, either as sovereign to Jesus Christ; or as inferior to his Saints, whom he honors in their images or likenesses. Nor can such homage paid to the true God in any place be blameable. Neither can it be displeasing to the deity to see those honored, for his sake whom he himself has honored and glorified in heaven.

But the Catholic prays to them. Yes, he asks them to use their influence with God in his behalf, just as we would our brethren here on earth; (that which even protestants allow, is lawful) well knowing, from what the Saviour has told us, that they are not unconscious of our state; nor unconcerned about our eternal welfare; but that they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner.—*Luke xv. 9*.

The sole reason then, which the Protestant has for his silly supposition that Catholics worship images as their Gods, is, that he sees them uncover, and bow, and pray before them.

But we uncover, and bow before our fellow creatures. Do we therefore worship them, as our Gods? Subjects even kneel, to kiss the King's hand. Do they then, as their God, adore him? The Lords and Commons of England never pass

the throne in the House of Peers, without uncovering and bowing before it. Yet, who ever thought, on that account, of calling them idolaters?

In kneeling any where to pray, we have always some object or other before us. Suppose a Protestant kneeling before his own image reflected in a glass would it be fair in such a case to accuse him of self adoration? If not, why should the Catholic be accused of adoring the object, before which he prays? Is it because he prefers having placed before him in his serious moments an object more corresponding with his pious reflections?

The particular antipathy which all Protestants have to holy images and pictures, is the more surprising and unaccountable, as they are remarkably fond of all such as are of an opposite description. The statues, busts, images and likenesses of their kings, warriors, statesmen, &c. are made and kept with choice attention: and even admitted by them into their churches; where those of the Saviour and his Saints would not be suffered to appear. To say nothing of their family portraits, and the carved or painted likenesses of their friends, kindred and acquaintance; of every person or thing in nature, provided such represent nothing holy and edifying. Can such a dislike to all that is sacred: and such a partiality to all that is profane; be supposed to originate in any blest, or christian principle?

But let us for a moment return to the consideration of the alteration made by the protestant reformers in the decalogue.

The alteration which they have made in it, as cannot but be evident from what has been already said upon the subject; was certainly too absurd, to have escaped their own notice. But, though they fools themselves in a worldly sense, they relished much in this instance, as they did in many others on the ignorant simplicity, the careless indifference and uninvestigating disposition of their followers. Yet, bold and venturesome as they were, they must have felt some twinges of remorse, ere they could have made up their minds for so deceitful a purpose, to offer the decalogue in so deranged a shape to the whole christian public. By making of the two last commandments but one, they have sunk the dignity of the woman; confounding her with the husband's goods and earthly property; with his ox and his ass.

The decalogue in its original shape, consists of two distinct tables; the first containing exclusively our duty to God; the second exclusively our duty to man.

The twofold distinction of these tables is owing to the twofold distinction of the duties they contain. But, as is observed by all who study the scriptures, and particularly by St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, St. Gregory the Great, and other holy fathers and doctors of the Church; there are certain numbers purposely chosen, and evidently intended by the inspiring deity to convey to our minds an important meaning, such, in particular, the *trium* number, or *one and three*; which in its singular or plural, we find always applied in scripture to what regards the deity; the eternal *one*: or *three*; such is also

the number seven : which is as remarkably used to designate what regards only the human race. It were too long at present to point out the many instances, in which the mystery of the unity and trinity of God is thus alluded to in the old testament : I cannot however omit mentioning that in all nations, doubtless from an original tradition, the number three has ever been accounted the number *all-efficient and divine*; the wonder working one in sorcery; as appears from the threefold charm described in Virgil's eighth Eclogue; and the reason given for employing it on the occasion: in these words: *NUMERO DEUS IMPARE GUADET. To God belongs the unequal number.*

It were equally needless to cite all the passages in scripture, shewing that, for some mystical reason the number seven is applied by the deity to what, in his merciful dispensation, regards chiefly ourselves: as in the hebdomadal and septennial division of our time: in the seven special modes of applying to our souls the merits of the Redeemer: or the seven sacraments of his church; which are the seven pillars of Wisdom's house.—Prov. ix. &c. I have only further to add, with regard to the decalogue, that the catholic division of the two tables of the law, shews forth the mystery indicated by the above mentioned numbers: for in the first table containing exclusively our duty to God in three commandments, we find the emblem of the eternal one in three: and in the second table, containing exclusively our duty to man, we find the mysterious number seven, the one, by which the deity so constantly regulates his purposes in man's regard: and, in both, these numbers united, which make ten, we have the whole legal code, containing in brief the duties which we owe to God and our fellow creatures. This is one of the numberless harmonies observable in the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

To be continued

BIBLICAL NOTICES AND EXPLANATIONS.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

Chapter vii. Verse 7.—None but the three hundred warriors, who, in their readiness to fight, only lapped the water from their hands, as they passed along; are chosen to be the champions and deliverers of Israel from the yoke of the Madiauites; while the others, more sensually intent on quenching their thirst, who had bowed down their knees to drink, are rejected, as unworthy of sharing in the promised victory. By this we are taught a lesson of self denial, and given to understand how much in our spiritual warfare our success depends on the mortification of our animal appetites. The Saviour thus drank of the torrent; therefore did he lift up his head.—Ps. cix. 8.

Verse 13, 14.—Under how many figures does God in his scriptures convey to the human mind the knowledge of his truths and mysteries; instructing us by our senses; and imprinting thus upon our imagination images, which it easily retains; and along with them the simple truths thereby clearly indicated. Thus, the hearth cake rolling down the hill, was interpreted the sword of Gideon. But Gideon, at the same time, like all the illustrious deliverers of God's people, was a prototype of their chief deliverer, the Messiah: who being, as he himself declares, the living bread which came down from heaven; is still more appropriately represented by the hearth cake, than Gideon. In this sense has the rolling hearth cake

upset the camp of Midian; by the universal destruction of idolatry; and the establishment in its stead of his religion and her eucharistic sacrifice, in which he himself is the victim.

Verse 16, &c.—By the division of Gideon's troops into three bands, is indicated the God in whose cause they fought; the eternal one in three. By the earthen pitchers, in which lamps were placed; are designated the mean, weak and frail instruments pitched upon by Almighty God to bring disorder and defeat into the enemy's camp: namely the Apostles, and their followers, the earliest christians; who by being agitated and beaten against one another, in persecution, and finally broken to pieces in martyrdom, displayed to their astonished and confounded enemies amid the dark night of error, the divine light of their confirming spirit, which their frail earthly vessels contained.

The sounding of their trumpets is their preaching and proclaiming of the gospel.

The men dismissed from the three hundred, were the multitude, who after so far following, at last, from their attachment to the enjoyments of this life, abandon the true Gideon, Jesus Christ.

Chapter x. Verse 16.—The moment sinners set about in earnest to prove by their deeds their sincere repentance; God is touched with their miseries; and is ready to forgive them.

Chapter xi. Verse 31.—It is most reasonably supposed that Jephtha's vow was to consecrate to God whatsoever should first meet him, according to the condition of the thing; so as to offer it up as a holocaust, if it were such a thing as might be offered by the law: or to devote it otherwise to God, if it were not such. And therefore it seems probable that the daughter of Jephtha was not slain, by her father; but consecrated by him, tho' with regret, to perpetual virginity.—D. B.

This supposition seems confirmed, from her bewailing with her companions her virginity: for in the old law the bearing of children was much coveted by women, in the hope that some day the Saviour might be born of their posterity.

Chapter xiii. Verse 3.—To the mother of Samson, who was barren, like Sarah, Rebecca and Rachael: (all emblems of the long barren spouse of the Redeemer, the Church of the Gentiles;) a son is promised by an Angel: who at the same time enjoins her to drink no wine, nor strong drink, nor to eat any thing unclean, while she is with child of him; and to let no razor touch his head; for he shall be, says he, a Nazarite of God from his infancy, and from his mother's womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel from the hands of the Philistines. The same restrictive injunction is repeated in verse 14.

Here then is abstinence ordained by an Angel from heaven; as conducive to holiness and supernatural powers. In the prodigious feats of Samson God shews us that he can turn any instrument, however mean and insignificant, even the jaw bone of an ass, to the salvation or destruction of his creatures, according to their merits or demerits.—Sensual pleasure, proved Samson's bane; as it does to all who become slaves to it. His hair was the sign of his consecration as a Nazarite to God; who, on that account endowed him with such matchless strength for the merited destruction of the Philistines: and, when the legally appointed sign was removed; the supernatural gift attached to it, was withdrawn. That sign however reappearing when his hair had grown again; in the midst of the blasphemous exultations of the Philistines, who praised their God, above the God of their prisoner: at that moment grasping the two main pillars, which supported the whole building, where the infidel and hostile multitude had assembled to make sport of the worshipper of the true God; he prayed that his former strength might be restored; and like the Saviour devoting himself to death for

the good of his people, he shook the pillars; and the house fell upon all the princes, and the rest of the multitude. And he killed many more at his death, than he had killed before in his life.

Chapter xviii.—Verse 1. They had not received, &c. Their portions had been assigned to them: Joshua, 19, 40, but through their own sloth, they had possessed themselves as yet but of a small portion of it.—Judges, 1, 34. D. B.

Chapter xx.—Verse 26. Wherefore all the children of Israel came to the house of God; and sat, and wept before the Lord: and they fasted that day till the evening; and offered to him holocausts and victims of peace offerings.

That sacrifice is grateful to God; and that prayer is sure to prevail, which is accompanied with fasting, weeping and mourning. The details in this chapter, and in the next, shew that the perpetration of heinous crimes is sure sooner or later to meet with condign punishment.

To be continued.

Man's days are as grass: as the flower of the field, so shall he flourish.—Psalm 102, 15.

Tune—Aldivalech.

See, o'er its thorny stalk reclining
Yon wither'd rose, so sickly pining!
Yet late its crimson cheek was seen
In dewy lustre brightly shining.

Thus quickly fades our youthful bloom,
When age, or sickness steals upon us;
And, when we sink into the tomb,
Not long our dearest friends bemoan us.

Fraile beauty hence the sage despises;
Him ne'er her tempting lure entices;
Nor ought, but virtue's deathless charms,
That deck the soul, he fondly prizes.

Unmov'd he smiles at fortune's frown,
And scorns all her short-liv'd favours;
His hope he rests on God alone,
And always him to please endeavours.

Beneath his sacred wing protected,
Still towards heav'n his steps directed,
He journeys on through life secure,
Till comes the happy term expected;

When, ended all his care and toil,
He flies to meet his God's embraces,
Who welcomes him with gracious smile,
And 'mong his saints in glory places.

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