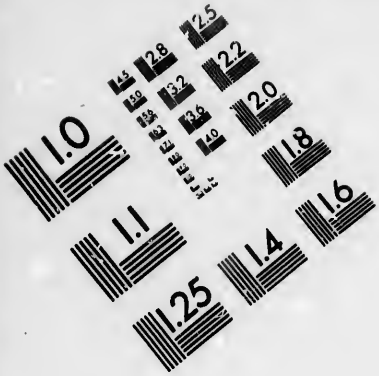

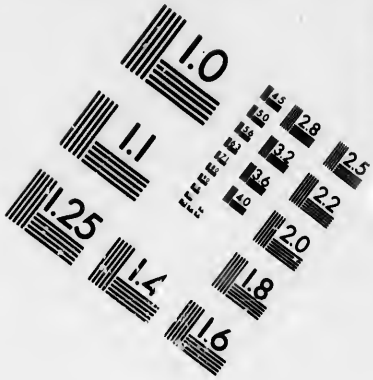

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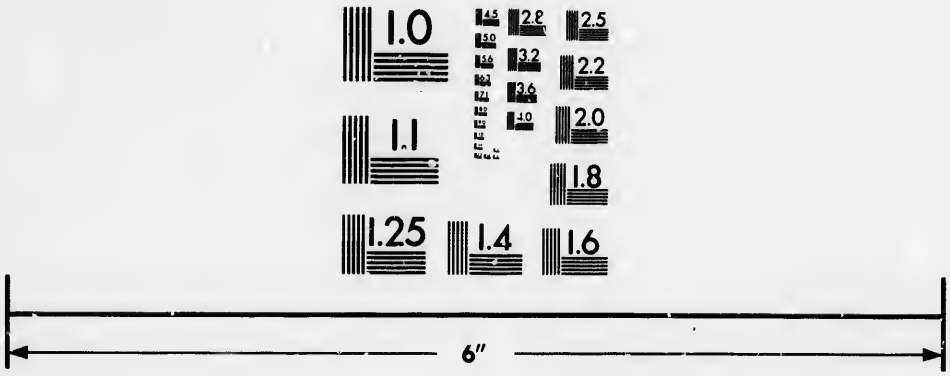

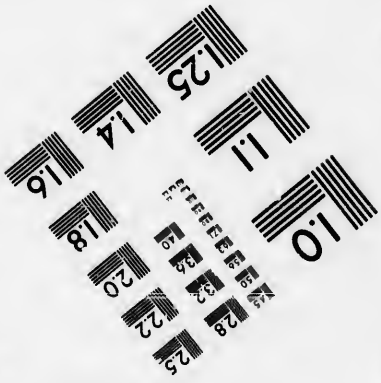

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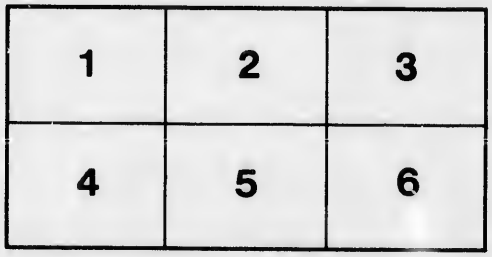

A

NARRATIVE

OF

THE CONVERSION

OF

STEPHEN CLEVELAND BLYTH,

TO THE FAITH

OF THE

Catholic,

APOSTOLIC & ROMAN CHURCH,

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

A BRIEF REFUTATION OF THE CURRENT OBJECTIONS
TO MANY ARTICLES OF CATHOLIC
FAITH AND DISCIPLINE.

ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM.—*Eph. iv. 5.*

MONTREAL:
PRINTED BY NAHUM MOWER.

1822.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND

JOHN CHEVERUS,

BISHOP OF BOSTON.

My dear Lord and Friend,

I take the liberty to inscribe my Pamphlet to your Lordship.—To you it owes its existence; for to you (under God,) I owe my Conversion.

It would, perhaps, have a better claim to notice, had Providence permitted me to prolong my pupilage and mature my Catholicity under such Gamaliels as yourself, and the late beloved and ever lamented Doctor Matignon.

I pray God, that delaying your reward for the good of mankind, he will protract the life of so diligent a labourer in his Vineyard—that you may long remain to instruct by your precept, and edify by your example;—in short, that the lapse of many years may still find you a blessing to your Diocese, and an ornament to the American Republic!

I am

My dear Lord and Friend,

Your affectionate grateful Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

Boucherville, L. C.
Michaelmas, 1821.

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BIOGRAPHICAL PART.

WHENEVER a Citizen finds it a duty to change his Religion, he owes it in deference to public curiosity, so generally excited, to impart the motives which prompt his secession from his native communion.

I HASTEN to acquit myself of this obligation—and I trust that my readers will recognize in the following recital of my conversion to the Catholic Faith, every trait of artless sincerity, diligent research and cautious deliberation, which a measure connected with Salvation should so imperiously require.

I WAS born in Salem, Massachusetts, on the 20th of January, 1771, and was baptized by the Reverend Mr. Gilchrist, the Rector of St. Peter's Church. My family on both sides were Episcopalians, and my maternal grandfather, the Reverend Aaron Cleveland, had been Rector of Halifax in Nova-Scotia.

THE war of the American Revolution coming on, the Clergy of this persuasion, being generally Royalists, emigrated, and the Churches were closed. During this interval, our family attended Congregational worship in the meeting-house of the late Reverend Doctor Barnard,

I was introduced to an acquaintance with the English Alphabet by Dame Chapman, a School-mistress of the vicinity; and as soon as I had learned to read, the Catechism of the Westminster Divines was put into my hands. This is a compendium of the Calvinistic doctrines then generally held in New-England: and this I repeated periodically to our Pastor in the Meeting-house, with other children of the Society. The peace of 1783 re-opened the Episcopal Churches; and we had for our new Incumbent, the late Reverend Nathaniel Fisher, a very able Preacher, as is sufficiently evinced by the posthumous volume of his Sermons.

After attending a few preparatory Schools, in January 1782, I was admitted into Phillips' Academy at Andover. This Institution was then in high reputation, and under the care and tuition of the Reverend Eliphalet Pearson, a learned scholar, and a rigid disciplinarian.—Kind and indulgent to the industrious Student; to delinquents his look of displeasure was petrifaction.

Although Religion mingled with many of our academical exercises, hitherto I had experienced no very serious impressions of this nature. While at Andover I met with *Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.* This was well calculated to inflame a youthful imagination like mine. *Hervey's Meditations* also fell in my way, and charmed me with their glitter of style and pious enthusiasm.

I soon afterward met with a work which has never since been out of my reach—*Young's Night Thoughts*—to the reading of which I was recommended by the advice and example of my maternal grandmother, with whom "the Poet of the Tombs" was a favourite and daily companion. The perusal of this admirable volume impressed

me deeply. It presented me with new and exalted views of the providence of God and the destination of Man. It diffused a soft and tender melancholy over my mind, and I aspired to Immortality.

In July 1786, having passed the usual examinations in the Classics, I was admitted into Harvard University, the first literary Institution, in age and renown, upon the American Continent. The Presidency was then filled by the Reverend Joseph Willard. Among my fellow-students at college was the celebrated John Quincy Adams, then a senior-sophistic: and was, at that immature age, a finished Scholar, Philosopher and Politician. That distinguished orator in Congress, Josiah Quincy, was my class-mate.

This was the æra of Daniel Shay's famous insurrection. The sound of the drum and fife inspired me with a thirst for military glory. Too young, however, to enroll myself for war, I was merely an impatient spectator of toils and dangers which I could not share. My reading was consonant with this ardor of mind, and letting the dust gather upon books of every other description, Voltaire's *History of Charles XII.*, whose exploits engrossed every faculty of my soul, was ever waking, in my hand; and sleeping, under my pillow. Addison's *Cato* had already turned my head to *Stoicism.*—I resolved to pass unmoved through all the varying scenes of life—unelated by prosperity, and undepressed by adversity.

My Mother falling sick and dying, I was withdrawn from the University, before I had completed the year of my Freshmanship. I returned to Salem, and after a few months solitary application to miscellaneous studies, in April, 1788, I began

the study of Physic, under the late Doctor Joshua Plummer, a Practitioner of high reputation.

I now became a hard student. I rose early, retired late, and addressed myself to the elementary studies of the various branches of this profession, with indefatigable industry. A morbid sensibility of heart, however, gave me an aversion to the operations of Surgery. Of course, in this department, I made less proficiency.

I was branded by nature with a wild romanticity of character, and ready for any enterprize to which the warmth and caprice of my temperament might impel me. I was seized with a gust for Travel; and having finished my medical studies, I embarked in December, 1790, for South-Carolina. I arrived at Charleston on the first of January, 1791.

This was a scene of sufficient danger for the immaturity of nineteen years. A warm climate invites to luxury, and affluence furnishes the means. Aware of the perils which surrounded me, I determined to be upon my guard. I kept much at home; and when unoccupied by the calls of my profession, devoted my time to reading. Poetical composition, for which I had much taste, and was flattered to have some talent, occasionally amused me. I also cultivated Music with much zeal and some success.

I re-opened Young, and he fortified my love of abstraction and retirement. Blair's *Sermons* I also read with profit and delight. My companions were few—and from my industrious seclusion from the gay world, I hoped to escape the snares which had caught so many unwary youth. Alas! I was mistaken. Gradually enlarging my sphere of Society, I began to lose sight of those solid maxims of piety and prudence which I had brought from

New-England. No longer had I relish for serious lecture and private prayer; and in a short time neglected public worship.

About this time the new Theatre was built in Charleston, and opened under West and Bignall. The dramatic mania spread far and wide. I breathed the air of contagion, and found my way to the stage. One essay cured me of my folly, and I renounced at once and forever the sock and buskin.

I removed in July, 1793, to Savannah, in Georgia, where, in February, 1794, I embarked for the West-Indies.—I arrived at St. Martin's, and soon afterward fixed myself in the Virgin Islands.

In this part of the world I met nothing calculated to renew the pious impressions of my early years; but much to make me forget them altogether. There was a Methodist Mission in Tortola, but seldom any other public worship. The poor Africans were among the few who appeared to have any sense of Religion.

Hitherto, although far from living up to the standard of the Gospel, I had never been taught to doubt the truth of Divine Revelation. It was now my misfortune to add infidelity to my other follies, and to have the whole fabric of my religious belief overturned by a single blow. This was achieved by Thomas Paine's *Age of Reason*. I read this book with undivided attention; and subscribing to every position, I became a convert to *Deism*. The Religion of Nature, in my estimation, afforded sufficient sanctions for every purpose of moral government; and I considered all supernatural Revelation superfluous, devised by priestcraft, and addressed to the fears of men.

The war with France was now raging in all parts of the globe, and every American heart pal-

pitated in devotion to the French Republic. Eager to add my suffrage to that of my countrymen, I sailed from St. Thomas for St. Domingo. After a short residence at Port de Paix, where my sole employment was composing and singing republican songs, I solicited and obtained from General Lavaux, a commission appointing me *Officier de Santé en Second* on board of the *Ranger* Corvette, in which in the month of Floreal of the 3d year I sailed for France.

On my arrival at Brest, in Prairial, I was assigned employment successively in the Marine Hospital of that Port, and in that of Pontanezen. Internal dissensions had now in some degree subsided, and France began to breathe. Robespierre and the Mountain party had perished, and the axe of the guillotin was left to rust.

In the autumn of 1795, I was invited to Paris, to join the commercial house of Dallarde, Swan & Co. I took place in the Diligence for Rennis the 24th Fractidor of the 3d year. The *Vendée* country was still the theatre of war and bloodshed. We traversed it with an escort, through a thousand dangers and escapes, and arrived the 10th Vendémiaire of the 4th year, at the French Capital.

I had hardly began to recreate myself with the novelties of this superb metropolis, when the lapse of a few days exhibited one for which I was not prepared. This was the sanguinary scene of the 13th Vendémiaire, an æra which will be recorded by the faithful historian, as equally tragical and disgraceful to the French nation. For on this calamitous day was fought that memorable battle between the militia of the Sections of Paris, and the guards of the National Convention. Here Bonaparte (who was entrusted with the defence

of the Convention) made his *coup d'essai* as a commander, and was instrumental in the destruction of more than *eight thousand* of his fellow men.

James Monroe, now President of the United States, was at this time the American Ambassador in France. Thomas Paine lived at his house.—I soon became acquainted with him: and meeting with the second part of his *Age of Reason*, was fortified in my disbelief of divine Revelation.

I was still however, in some degree, under the influence of virtuous habit, which had been early fashioned by religious credence, though now effaced from my mind. I was anxious to sustain a good name by being in my narrow sphere a doer of good. I gave alms liberally out of my small means, and innumerable were the services which I rendered to the poor English prisoners. These sentiments resembled that precious "leaven hid in three measures of meal," Matthew xiii. 33.

In 1796, I was sent to the United States with dispatches. I embarked at Havre de Grace, the 24th Germinal of the 4th year, and arrived at New-York the 10th Prairial. I went on to Philadelphia and delivered my dispatches. Citizen Adet was then the French Minister. I re-visited my relatives in Massachusetts, with whom having passed the Summer, and deafened them with my jacobinical clamor. I returned in the Autumn to France. I embarked at Salem the 10th Thumidor, 4th year, and arrived at Bordeaux the 2d Vendémiaire, 5th year. Desirous of seeing to greater advantage the South of France during the vintage, I proceeded to Paris on foot—descending the Garonne to Blaye, Royan, thro' Rochfort, Rochelle, Niort, Poictiers, Tours, &c.—a journey of between four and five hundred miles. I arrived the 8th Brumaire.

Throphilanthropy now began to prevail in France, and temples for the exercise of this species of religious worship were opened in various places. Had the views and sentiments of its projectors quadrated with the import of the word, they would have been justly entitled to the gratitude of mankind. But it was an unqualified system of Deism.

I wished to make the campaign of the 5th year, and early in 1797 I applied to government for leave to join the Army of Italy under Bonaparte: but was too late for an appointment.

In March, 1797, I was commissioned to go to England, in order to recover the amount of some spoliations of American property upon the high seas. On my arrival in London, finding the recovery hopeless, I accepted an Assistancy in an Academy at Kennington, a village of the vicinity. While here, I attended divine service regularly with the pupils, at the Church of Lambeth, the seat of the Arch-bishop of Canterbury. Prayers were also read morning and evening in the School Room. In these exercises I assisted, and occasionally preached a Sermon. All this, however, I considered merely as a matter of routine, which did nothing to awaken me from the torpor of Infidelity.

In the year 1798, being at Manchester, I was drawn by curiosity to visit Fairfield, a village of the *Unitas Fratrum*, or *Moravian Brethren*. I was delighted wi h the beautiful simplicity of their worship, and felt a revival of pious emotions in my heart. This prompted me to enter into correspondence with the Reverend John Swertner, one of their ministers, in order to learn the peculiar doctrines and discipline of this Sect, and with a view to admittance into their Society. He obli-

ged me with a candid exposition of their tenets; but I did not find them satisfactory, and I pursued the design no farther.

The Moravians address their prayers exclusively to Christ. This appeared to me a sort of impiety to the Father, and was a virtual denial of his existence. I conceived it, moreover, contrary to the express precept and example of our Saviour himself, who commanded us when we pray, to say "Our Father, &c." Their notions of Faith also seemed to my apprehension, wild and incoherent. They do not indeed reject good works: but their practice is certainly more favourable to them than their doctrine. Many points too, of the Moravian discipline, had in my mind an air of extravagance. Their marriages I thought ill-assorted, and the decision of every question by the *Lot* in a Protestant Church, which declares that miracles have ceased, seemed to the last degree, absurd and inconsistent.

Having returned to London, I got acquainted with some members of the Society of *Universalists*, founded by my countryman, the Reverend Elhanan Winchester, and addressed myself to the Reverend Mr. Vidler for a sketch of their doctrines. My much honored Father had indulged this belief, and entertained that peculiarity of it professed by the Reverend John Murray, of Boston. But I soon suspected that this ground was untenable by any who adhered to the plain text of Scripture, and was solely supported by some detached passages, obscure and equivocal. I dropped the Universalists. There had now been for several years in London a Society under the name of the *New Jerusalem*. I heard such astonishing accounts of their doctrines, that my curiosity was strongly excited to learn them in detail. For this

purpose I addressed myself to the Reverend Joseph Proud, their High Priest, who lent me several tracts, written by their founder, Baron Swedenborg. I was struck with the intrepidity of his undertaking. Conjecture and hypothesis are out of the question. All is pronounced to be fact. On the bold assumption of immediate correspondence with the Deity, this hardy Dogmatist had erected a system of doctrines, unequalled for ingenuity of contrivance. I went through much of this voluminous writer, and was for a while charmed with the subtility of his deductions; but finding the whole scheme rest solely on the personal responsibility of one who wrought no miracle in support of his pretensions, I took leave of him as an entertaining madman, and classed his tale with those of the Arabian Nights.

My next tour was among the *Quakers*. Their modesty and simplicity had impressed me when a boy, and I loved the people without knowing their doctrines. To learn them satisfactorily, I applied to some of the most intelligent of the Society, and attended their Meetings. If I was at first pleased with their plain and artless deportment, I was soon dissatisfied with the nudity of their worship. I examined with the eye of reason and with the Scripture before me, their principal doctrine of a *Divine Light within*, which was to lead us into all truth. This was avowedly not the light of conscience, and I knew no other. I had no doubt indeed that conscience was susceptible of, and received at times, illumination from above: but it still appeared to me incontrovertible that, clear or cloudy, enlightened from heaven, or obscured by the powers of darkness, Conscience was our sole interior guide. Their definition of this favourite tenet, seemed to me a distinction without a differ-

ence, and much too subtle for edification. I gradually withdrew from their correspondence.

Still anxious and not disheartened in my pursuit, I began to attend the worship of a Society of *Unitarians*, then under the pastoral care of the Reverend D. Disney. Their Liturgy was modelled after that of the Church of England—and their doctrines appeared to me the simplest and most rational I had met with. The recognition of one Supreme God, the Father of all—and of whom all other beings, however elevated in the order of nature or of grace, are but the creatures, had in my estimation an air of grandeur, which engaged all my attention. But as if I were doomed to be the victim of a fastidious taste, and endlessly to roam in quest of what I should never find, I soon discovered in the simplest form of Christianity, the most palpable inconsistencies. The Socinians pretend that Reason is our sole guide, and the only touchstone by which all doctrines, divine or human, shotld be tried,—and that whatever cannot abide this test, should be rejected as false. In obedience to this rule, they deny the virginity of Blessed Mary, and the incarnation and Divinity of Christ. But in disobedience to the same rule, they admit all the miracles of the Old and New Testaments. I left them unsatisfied.

In justice to myself, and to the honest zeal with which I engaged in these tiresome expeditions in quest of truth, I must observe that I never entered into connexion with any of these Societies. I postponed my adhesion to the moment of ultimate conviction.

About this time I fell sick of a lingering fever, and passed several months in suffering and confinement. During my illness, I met with Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul.*

This work is of a high Calvinistical cast, and is written with much pathos. I trembled at his picture of the impenitent sinner, and resolved that if by divine mercy I should be restored to health, I would solemnly dedicate myself to God.

My ardor now began to abate. I saw on every side, hosts of Sects which claimed Divine Truth as exclusively their own, while the Bible served them all as a vast armoury, whence they supplied themselves with weapons, and waged an interminable war against each other. In short I met with nothing but disappointment, and began to despair of finding what I sought, in any Christian communion.

It is to be observed, that into my calculations the *Catholic Faith* had never entered. I had indeed heard the Reverend John Thayer of Boston preach once or twice in Salem when I was young. I admired his eloquence, but was indifferent to his theme. I had occasionally too, while in London, frequented the Sardinian Ambassador's Chapel, in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields; but I was attracted by the music, and not by the Doctrine. I had imbibed in early life most of the Protestant prejudices against Catholics, and never conceived that there was any truth in their Church, but what they enjoyed in common with all other Churches. In other respects, I viewed it as a sink of idolatry and corruption.

I now thought of taking leave of Christianity altogether, and embracing *Mahometanism*. I was acquainted with the leading tenets of the Koran, and with a view to further instruction, I wrote to the Turkish Ambassador. I was answered by his first Dragoman, but so unmeaningly, that I was ashamed of my project, and abandoned it. The

guardian of Israel, who never slumbers nor sleeps, preserved me from this wicked temptation.

Having at length wandered till I was fairly bewildered among the *ignes fatus* of contending Sects, I resolved to look no farther, but retire once more to the strong hold of Deism; and resting satisfied with the existence and perfections of the Supreme Being and with my moral obligations, together with what hope of a future state might be derived from analogy, desist from any farther pursuit.

On March 4th, 1799, I was married in the Church of St. Dunstan's, Stepney, to Miss Kingsley, of the Parish of St. George, in the East Middlesex. Shortly afterward I received an appointment upon the Hospital Staff of the Army, and was sent to Yarmouth, to assist in the Hospital filled with sick and wounded Russians, after the disastrous campaign of that year in Holland.

Notwithstanding my melancholy eclipse of mind with regard to the great truths of Christianity, books of devotion still continued to occupy my leisure hours. Having met with Law's *Serious Call to a devout and Holy Life*, I read it with great care and delight. I followed his method of prayer for a considerable time—and tho' I afterward discontinued this practice, his book still shares many of my reading hours.

I left Yarmouth in July, 1800, and served successively at York Hospital, in Chelsea, and at Blatchington Barracks in Sussex, with the 95th Rifle Corps.

Early in 1801, I was ordered on service to the West Indies. I sailed in the Packet from Falmouth, March 7, and arrived April 11th at Barbadoes. During the passage, I lost a little Boy, my first born. I lamented his death with the

acutest sorrow, and creation wore a gloom around me. Besides, it was my misery to "mourn like those without hope." A future state was to me problematical, and upon this melancholy occasion, I wanted the benign influence of this belief to cheer my despondency. I determined to re-consider the evidence of divine Revelation, and even to anticipate my final conviction, by "performing without Faith, the works of Faith." I accordingly gave myself up to religious reading and prayer, earnestly invoking the God of light and truth to direct my way, and guide me to that haven of tranquillity, of which my mind had been in long and anxious search.

From Barbadoes I sailed to Martinico; thence to St. Lucia, where I was charged with a Hospital of Invalids, by the late Sir George Provost, then a Brigadier General.

On my recal to Martinico, I met (for the first time, tho' not a rare book) with Thomas A. Kempis's *Following of Christ.* I was so pleasingly edified by this little volume, and so much impressed with the holy delights of a religious life, that, in order to have a nearer survey of them, I introduced myself to the Fathers of the Convent in St. Pierre, by whom I was received with courtesy, and listened to with kindness.

After the restoration of Martinico to the French at the peace of 1802, I proceeded on medical duty to St. Christopher's. There was a mission of the Moravian Brethren in this Island. Upon the strength of my former acquaintance with some of their Society in England, I cultivated the friendship of the Ministers who conducted this mission. I lived next door to their Chapel, and enjoyed much of their company. This circum-

stance contributed to keep my religious principles alive.

Some of the works of Doctor Priestley having fallen into my hands, I examined his evidences of the truth of Revealed Religion with great attention. They threw much light upon the subject, and dissipated many of my doubts.

During my long sickness in London, I had contemplated, as already related, dedicating myself to God by a formal act. Several obstacles had hitherto conspired to retard the execution of this design, but I now resolved to delay it no longer. I accordingly drew up a *Form*, and having with much care brought it to the perfection I wished, I borrowed the use of the Moravian Chapel for the occasion, and on the 1st of January 1803, I entered it with a lighted candle before day, and having read my solemn Covenant, I signed and sealed it.

I had not been long in this Island, before I projected and contributed to found a *Charitable Institution* for the relief of poor and destitute children. The history of this Establishment has been given to the public. The Committee of Superintendence were solicitous that I should take charge of it—and having persuaded me to resign my appointment upon the Hospital Staff, I yielded to their inclinations. I governed this Institution for two years, and was, I believe, under Divine Providence, the humble means of rescuing many a poor child from vice and misery, and bestowing on him the benefits of a virtuous education.

While in the exercise of this charge, I met with the *Sermons* of Massillon, which I read with uncommon interest. I found in this inimitable Preacher, an unction which penetrated to the heart. From the moral of this eloquent Prelate,

the transition was natural to the *Faith* which he professed, and to the *Church* of which he was so illustrious an ornament. I inferred either that the doctrine of the Catholic Church was not of the corrupt character imputed to it, or that Massillon had given it a false lustre.

I STILL, however, continued the forms of the Church of England, the established religion of the Island, but with a firm resolution to continue my Catholic enquiries, whenever Providence should afford me the opportunity.

THERE were other reasons which stimulated me to this research. Among the most prominent, was the unfortunate issue of the French Revolution. Conceiving that the cause of France was that of Freedom, I embarked my best wishes in it with a zeal bordering on madness. I hardly prayed but for the success of the French Republic, and was ready to invoke all the Gods of the Pantheon in her behalf. But the lapse of a few years shewed me my error. The crimes which had been committed in the name of Liberty, were more than sufficient to cool my enthusiasm. I contrasted with the excesses of the Jacobins, the heroic courage and saint-like constancy of the Professors of the Catholic Faith, who cheerfully submitted to exile and death in devotion to their Religion.—All this was beyond the reach of hypocrisy, and excited a powerful re-action in my mind.

I HAD already paid my quota of the general tax to the insalubrity of the climate of the West Indies, in the shape of several alarming fits of sickness. In 1805 I was in such a state of debility, that I was obliged to relinqnish my charge of the Institution, and seek my lost health in my native climate. I arrived at Boston in May. I had now happily the means of bringing the question which

had long agitated my mind, to a decision. There was in this town a Catholic Church, and Catholic Priests to hear and answer my enquiries. I immediately addressed myself to the Reverend Mr. Cheverus, then the assistant Minister, but since raised by his wonderful merit to the Episcopacy, with the title of *Bishop of Boston.* He received me with great kindness, and introduced me to his Colleague, the late Reverend Doctor Matignon. I found in Mr. Cheverus a man of uncommon zeal and uncommon talents. He had acquired a critical knowledge of the English language, and preached to the delight and edification of all who heard him. In Doctor Matignon I discovered a man of equal zeal and extraordinary piety, mingled with the most captivating suavity of manners. They lived in habits of friendship with the principal inhabitants of Boston—and the various Protestant Ministers of the neighbourhood were delighted to assist at the consecration of their new and beautiful Church.

Among other works, Mr. Cheverus put into my hands a little book of which I had been long in quest—Bossuet's *Exposition of the doctrine of the Catholic Church in matters of Controversy.* This celebrated writer, the famous historian Gibbon asserts to have achieved his conversion, and he adds by way of consolation, that he "surely fell by a noble hand." I read this tract with much interest, and found it luminous, candid and convincing. To this succeeded many other pieces of a similar description.

I removed to Salem, and continued my correspondence with Mr. Cheverus, at intervals, for four years. I had read and reflected enough to abandon all hope of finding satisfaction in any Protestant communion: but still my scruples with re-

gard to the Catholic Faith were not resolved. I had determined to take nothing upon trust—and during our controversy, every article of Catholic doctrine passed the ordeal of a critical examination. I had not much difficulty with regard to the *Sacrifice of the Mass*, and the *Real Presence* of Christ in the Eucharist—although I did not much relish the term *Transubstantiation*. I had more with regard to the existence of *Purgatory*, which appeared to be of Pagan origin. The worship also of *Mary and the Saints*, as well as the veneration of *Relics and Images* struck me as both irrational and unscriptural.

It is worthy of remark that one of the greatest difficulties which I had to overcome was not of Protestant growth. This was the doctrine of the Trinity. I saw no tenet in any system of religion apparently more repugnant to reason and scripture than this. I had applied to the best commentators for relief, but they had all left the subject in my mind darkened with new obscurities. This will ever be the case when men undertake to measure Divinity by a scale of humanity, and to sound depths unfathomable by the human understanding.

On the other hand, there were anti-catholic tenets, whose belief I cherished with fond pertinacity. The principal of these was the doctrine, which, however varied by different appellations, is essentially the same—I mean the *Fate* of Seneca with the ancient Stoics—the *Predestination* of President Edwards with the Calvinists—and the *Philosophical Necessity* of Doctor Priestley with the Socinians. I took leave of this dogma with reluctance—and even since my conversion have laboured, by pressing St. Austin into the service, to incorporate this favorite tenet with Catholicity.

I NEED not recapitulate the arguments which circulated between me and my learned correspondent, in this most momentous of all discussions, because the substance of them will be incorporated with the following pages. Suffice it to observe, that after an obstinate contest I began to give way; and in a short time afterward announced my surrender, and proposed to enter directly into fellowship with the Catholic Church. This, however, was a more serious measure than I had imagined. My correspondent desired I would take more time,—and urged the necessity of some important preparatory steps. During this delay, new scruples tormented me, which I frankly imparted to Mr. Cheverus, who answered them in the most affectionate terms, which marked neither chagrin nor disappointment.

THE controversy, however, was soon to close. I had exhausted every source of argument in my power against the doctrines of the Catholic Church, and I now saw that I could not, with any consistency, reject them, if I professed myself a *Christain*. There still remained to me, nevertheless, one resource—that of *Deism*, and a steady denial of supernatural Revelation. But again to remove from the pale of every visible Church, was a melancholy alternatrve, and I wished to avoid it. At every step in this all-important enquiry, more and more light was shed upon my path; and at length I perceived, that to resist any longer, were wilful and unpardonable obstinacy. I accordingly apprised my correspondent of my final conversion to the Catholic Faith. After some preliminary instructions, followed by a general confession at the feet of Mr. Cheverus, I made my first communion in the Church of the Holy Cross in Boston, at the Festival of Pentecost, May 21st, 1809. In this

interesting ceremony I was accompanied by my Wife, and Elizabeth King, a late pupil of the Institution, whom I had brought with me from the West Indies.

Soon afterward I was invited to settle in Lower Canada. Nothing could be more seasonable and to my taste, than this overture. Accordingly having made the necessary arrangements, I took leave of my friends, and departing with my family, arrived on the 13th of June at Montreal.

I brought and exhibited on my arrival, the following very flattering testimonial, which Mr. Cheverus had given me with his Valedictory Blessing.

Omnibus, &c. &c.

Ego infrâ Scriptus in Novâ-Angliâ Missionarius Apostolicus testor dilectum Stephanum Cleveland Blyth, artê Medicum, inter Protestantes natum et educatum, divinâ juvante gratiâ, fidem Catholicam suminâ pictate amplexum fuisse. Die Pentecostis ultimâ, Pane vitæ primâ vice refectus est. In fidei professione et sacramentorum participatione Socias habuit dilectam ipsius conjugem necnon et pupillam ipsius tutelæ commissam quæ ipsius exemplis et documentis ad Sanctum Ecclesiam Catholicam suaviter et fortiter attractæ sunt. Illum abeuntem sincero prosequi desiderio et ut charissimum in Christo fratrem ut virum pictate et zelo religionis insignem. Ecclesiarum Pastoribus et Omnibus ubique Catholicæ fidei professoribus commendatum velim.

Datam Bostonii in Novâ-Augliâ quarto Calendas Junii 1809.

Joannes Cheverus, *Sacerdos.*

Idem testor,

Franciscus A. Matignon, *Vic. Gen.*

I COULD not offer an English version of this document, without incurring the imputation of vanity.

IN November of the same year, I established myself in the practice of Physic at Boucherville, a pleasant Village on the St. Lawrence, nine miles below Montreal. I was confirmed by M. Plessis, Bishop of Quebec, August 30th, 1810, and superadded to my own the holy name of Saint Francis of Salis. I conclude this little biographical sketch by observing, that in obedience to the injunction of this eminent Saint to enter into the Confraternity of the place where we live, I sought and obtained admission into the Congregation of the Blessed Virgin, at their Festival of August 25th, 1814.

THE present Tract, of which I invite the perusal, has already passed through one edition. It was favourably received and extensively circulated. This honor has tempted me to renew my labours; with what success (as the matter is differently methodized,) the event can alone determine.

IN palliation of its faults, and in deprecation of criticism, it will, I trust, be sufficient to state, that my Pamphlet was composed amid the calls of an importunate profession, in the languor of disease, and under the pressure of misfortune:—circumstances which would, in the humane minds of my readers atone, I am persuaded, for grievances of uglier hue, and of greater magnitude.

STEPHANUS SOLYMIENSIS.
NOV-ANGLORUM.

SECOND,

OR,

CONTROVERSIAL PART.

IGNORANCE, although very properly contrasted with Truth and Knowledge, is not however their worst enemy. There is a greater, and that is *Prejudice.*

THERE is, it may be safely presumed, no quality of the human Mind, native or acquired, more base in its origin—more rapid in its growth—more active in its operations—more tragical in its effects—in short, more dissocial and cruel in its character, than Prejudice. As it is of the most malignant, so it is also of the most singular cast.—Other vices and follies are limited in their nature, and require proper recipients. Some assault the rich; others, the poor:—Some, the high; others, the low:—Some, the young; others, the old:—Some, the male sex; others, the female. But Prejudice has no choice either of place or company. It finds access every where.—It penetrates the inmost recesses of the mind.—It bursts every barrier.—It surmounts every obstacle.—It is equally at home, in town and country—in an Indian

wigwam, and in the Palace of an Emperor.—All it asks is *room*.—It is therefore with much propriety, that it has been called by an eminent political writer, *the Spider of the Mind.*

THE Catholic Church, for whatever reason, has been most eminently harrassed with the persecution of this malign power. To count the number and define the character of the millions of slanders which have been invented to blacken her reputation, and to diminish her heavenly influence, would be a task beyond my strength. So long have they been in circulation—propagated with such unwearied industry, and maintained with such tenacious constancy, that few, even among the most liberal and candid of our Protestant Brethren, are free from some ungracious prepossessions on this score. On every other subject, just and discriminating;—on this alone, blind, harsh and intolerant. Gross as are the untruths thus spread and patronized, tho' detected and exposed a thousand times over, they are still believed. Need it be asked why? Because of a thousand who hear the calumnies, there is scarcely one who learns their *refutation.* And if by some who pass for miracles of candor, Catholic evidence should be casually and slightly inspected, Prejudice is at hand to disfigure, discolor and distort—and that with such fertility of mischief, that where substance is wanting, it can thrive upon sounds, and convert them into weapons of deadliest offence. The terms *Rome, Pope, Mass, Crucifix, Inquisition, &c.* have done more to render our Protestant Brethren callous to Catholic testimony, than all the arguments of the Reformers united. "Names (said Cæsar Augustus) govern the world."

THUS has the Catholic Church been condemned, upon ex-parte evidence and without a hearing.

Her enemies have furnished both text and commentary—and her Creed and Discipline have, in their busy hands, undergone such a metamorphosis, that Catholics no longer recognize their own Religion. In fine, the pencil of Malice has traced not a *Portrait*, but a *Caricature*.

This circumstance nevertheless, strange as it may seem, by that wonderful Providence which, in the language of the Poet of the Seasons,

> "From *seeming evil*, still educing *good*,"

has aided the best interests of Catholicity, and occasioned many Conversions. For sincere enquiries, stripping the Catholic Church of this ugly mask, are so struck with her native dignity and beauty—and the astonishing contrast between the semblance and the reality, that, indignant at the treachery of which they have hitherto been the victims, they fly to this ark of truth and safety, and are happy to live and die in her Communion.

Reconciled myself to the Religion of our common Ancestors, I may be pardoned if I wish the same happiness to others. With these sentiments, and as a proper sequel to the history of my Conversion, I hazard a few pages in defence of the Doctrines to which I am a Convert, against the popular cavils, which the zealots of the age are assiduous to spread far and wide, to the seduction, and perhaps to the destruction, of our weaker brethren.

By the consent of all parties, the most satisfactory and summary view of the Doctrines of the Catholic Church, may be found in the Profession of Faith, as drawn from the Decrees of the General Council of Trent, and commonly called the *Creed of Pope Pius the Fourth.*

The Council of Trent was assembled from all

parts of Christendom, soon after that famous revolt from the Church, generally called the *Reformation*, an event which deluged Europe with so many calamities, and which she has still so much reason to lament. It was one of the most numerous, as well as one of the most virtuous, wise and learned Assemblies ever convened in the Christian world: and its object was the condemnation of the recent Heresies of Luther and Calvin.

"I S. C. B., with a firm Faith, believe and profess all and every one of those things which are contained in that Creed, which the Holy Roman Church maketh use of: To Wit.

I BELIEVE in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things visible and invisible.—And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages—God of God, Light of Light, True God of True God: begotten not made; consubstantial to the Father, by whom all things were made: who for us Men, and for our Salvation, came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man. Was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate: he suffered and was buried: and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures; he ascended into Heaven: sits at the right hand of the Father, and is to come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, of whose Kingdom there shall be no end.—

AND in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, who begotten with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who spake by the Prophets.—

AND I believe One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church: I confess one Baptism for the remission of Sins, and I look for the Resurrec-

tion of the Dead, and the life of the world to come.—

I MOST steadfastly admit and embrace all Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Traditions, and all other Observances and Constitutions of the same Church.—

I ALSO admit the Holy Scriptures, according to the Sense which our Holy Mother the Church, has held and does hold, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Scriptures: neither will I ever take and interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous sense of the Fathers.—

I ALSO profess that there are truly and properly Seven Sacraments of the New Law instituted by Jesus Christ, and necessary for the Salvation of Mankind: though not all for every one: to wit. Baptism, Confirmation, The Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony: and that they confer Grace: and that of these, Baptism, Confirmation and Orders cannot be reiterated without Sacrilege.—

I ALSO receive and admit the received and approved Ceremonies of the Catholic Church, employed in the solemn administration of the aforesaid Sacraments.—

I EMBRACE and receive all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the Holy Council of Trent, concerning Original Sin, and Satisfaction.—

I PROFESS likewise that in the Mass there is offered to God, a true, proper and propitiatory Sacrifice for the living and the dead.—

AND that in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, there is truly, really and substantially the Body and Blood, together with the Soul and Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ: and that there

is made a change in the whole substance of the Bread into the Body and the Wine into the Blood: which change the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation.—

I ALSO confess that under either Kind alone, Christ is received whole and entire, and a true Sacrament.—

I CONSTANTLY hold that there is a Purgatory: and that the Souls therein detained are helped by the suffrage of the Faithful.—

LIKEWISE, that the Saints reigning together with Christ, are to be honored and invocated: and that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their Relics are to be held in veneration.—

I MOST firmly assert that the Images of Christ—of the Mother of God, ever Virgin—and also of other Saints, ought to be had and retained: and that due honor and veneration are to be given them.—

I ALSO affirm that the Power of Indulgences was left by Christ to the Church; and the use of them is most beneficial to Christian people.—

I ACKNOWLEDGE the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church for the Mother and Mistress of all Churches, and I promise true obedience to the Bishop of Rome, Successor to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and Vicar of Jesus Christ.—

I LIKEWISE undoubtedly receive and profess all other things delivered, defined and declared by the Sacred Canons and General Councils, and particularly by the Holy Council of Trent.—

AND I condemn, reject and anathematise all things contrary thereto: and all Heresies which the Church has condemned, rejected and anathematised.—

I S. C. B. do at this time freely profess and sin-

cerely hold the true Catholic Faith, without which no one can be saved: and I promise most constantly to retain and confess the same entire and inviolable, with God's assistance, to the end of my life."

This and this only is the Catholic Faith. And he who subscribes to its belief, and who leads a life in conformity to its dictates, is a Catholic Christian and an heir of Salvation.

Now let any dispassionate enquirer review this Creed with calmness and candor—with a spirit of love and meekness—and then ask himself what there is in it to stagger his confidence and preclude his assent? And would he believe, if sober history did not attest the fact, that an opposition to this Faith, ancient and Apostolical as it is, should have engendered insurrections, wars and slaughter; and that in order to overcome it, and to substitute the ravings and chimæras of ambitious madmen, the Dæmon of Schism and Heresy should have laid cities in ashes, and crimsoned whole lands with blood?

In the first place this Profession of Faith contains *all the essential and necessary Articles of the Christian Religion.* This our adversaries admit. And should it be doubted for an instant, the honest enquirer has only to examine the confessions of the various Protestant Communions, and he will find that their Fundamental Articles are in exact consent with the Nicene Creed, which makes the first part of the Catholic Profession of Faith. Indeed it has been adopted in most Churches *verbatim.*

But to put this matter beyond all dispute, let him peruse a document which we quote from the Duke of Brunswick's "Fifty Reasons," and which contains the Decision of the Faculty of Helmstadt,

(a famous Lutheran University in Germany) and he will be surprised with an illustrious testimony of the purity of Catholic Doctrine.

It appears that the opinion of the Faculty of Divinity in this University was asked on the following Question—"Whether a Protestant Princess, destined to marry a Catholic Prince, may with a safe conscience embrace the Catholic Religion."

The Faculty begin their answer by saying that "the Question propounded cannot solidly be solved, without deciding first, whether or no the Catholics are in Fuudamental Errors, and such as are opposite to Salvation?" "Our answer (say they) is without hesitation in the Affirmative—*Because the Catholics are at the bottom of the same Religion with us,* and have the necessary faith to know God, in order to Salvation. For the foundation of Religion and a Christian life is the belief of God the Father, our Creator, of God the Son, the Messiah; who had been promised, and has delivered us from Sin, Death, the Devil and Hell: and of the Holy Ghost, who enlightens us. We must also admit the ten Commandments of God, which teach us our duty to God and to our Neighbor: the Lord's Prayer, which instructs us how to pray: the practice of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, according to Christ's Institution and Command. Moreover, we must acknowledge *the power of the Keys,* and believe *with them,* that God has given in the Church to the Apostles and *their Successors* in Apostolical functions, the authority of declaring to penitents, *that their Sins are forgiven;* and to denounce to the impenitent, God's hatred against them, and what judgments He prepares for them, and so either *to remit or retain Sins*—and therefore

we sometimes repair to the Confession chair to receive Absolution of our Sins."

They proceed in a similar strain, and in one place they say "Neither can it be denied, that the *Roman Church is a true Church*, wherein the ministry of God's word, and the use of the Sacraments subsist, for if it were no more, or had not been a true Church, all its members would be in a state of damnation, and irrecoverably lost, which none amongst us would dare to advance. Nay, Malancthon himself has maintained, that the Roman Church did not cease being *a true Church*, because the word of God was sufficiently taught in the divers parts of the Catechism, which contains the ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer, and in the service of Baptism, and the Epistles and Gospels that are read on Sundays." They finally decide the Question in this manner—"Having demonstrated that the foundation of Religion subsists in the Roman Catholic Church, so that one may be orthodox and live and die well, and obtain Salvation in it—it is easy to decide the question propounded. The most serene Princess may in consideration of her marriage, embrace the Catholic Religion."

Can any thing be more satisfactory than all this?

It is matter for curious speculation, with what anxiety the authors of this Document, by the manner in which they speak of the *power of the Keys—Apostolical Succession—Confession—Remission of Sins, &c.*, labor to approximate their own Confession of Faith to the Catholic—aware that the Articles which the Reformers had rejected, were as well warranted by Scripture as those which they retained.

"When a man (says the great Bossuet) fixes

himself entirely upon *Faith*, as Catholics do; or entirely upon *human reason*, as Infidels do; it is easy for him to establish a connected and uniform model of doctrine. But when a man goes about to make a composition of one and the other, he always says something which he would not say, and afterwards falls into opinions, the sole contrarieties of which shew the manifest falsity of them."

The order of my task now brings me to a discussion of the several Articles which compose this Profession of Faith. I aspire not to a learned analysis and exposition of them; but shall content myself with a familiar review and refutation of the most current objections, which have been urged against this Creed—the Creed of all Christendom, before the malice of men had torn *Christ's seamless Robe*—and still the Creed of a vast majority of the Christian world. Happy, if in this enquiry, the most momentous of all others, I could, by the blessing of Almighty God, be in the humblest degree instrumental in fixing the wavering faith of any who are sincerely and anxiously asking *what they shall do to be saved!*

Before, however, we enter upon the discussion of Articles, which our Protestant Brethren do *not* believe, we will bestow a few words upon one which they *do* believe.

It has been already remarked, that our Protestant Brethren in general assent to the Nicene Creed. In subscribing to this, they acknowledge *One Holy Catholic* and *Apostolic* Church.

If the Gospel of Jesus Christ be true, He came into the world upon an errand of love, to redeem Mankind from that hopeless state of sin and misery, into which they were plunged by the defection of our first parents, and bless them with the precious boon of everlasting felicity.

This most sublime and benevolent of all purposes was to be accomplished by His Assumption of our nature—by His Precepts, Example, Miracles, Passion, Death, Resurrection, Ascension and perpetual Intercession.

The channel through which His Graces were to be communicated to us, was a Church; which, by commemorating His Sacrifice on the Cross, and applying His Sacraments to human exigency, was predestined to secure Salvation to all true Penitents who should be found in her bosom.

Now, it is obviously and most imperiously the duty of every Soul living, to be associated to this Church, wherever it be. But this is impossible, unless it be *known*. Therefore, all Tradition, oral and Scriptural, has assigned certain marks and features to identify and distinguish it, which are as prominent and palpable as the King's head upon the national coin.

She is *One*. She is *Holy*. She is *Catholic* or *Universal*. She is *Apostolical*.

Among the thousand Sects, heteroclite and heterogeneous, engendered by the Reformation, can one be named which possesses these traits of the true Church of Christ?—Certainly not. Many boast them. But few possess *any* of these features, and not a single one can challenge them *collectively*.

The more accurately we survey the various Protestant Communions at large throughout Europe and America, the result will be the more unpropitious to these lofty pretensions. They all repose with tranquil recumbence upon merely fictitious titles to legitimacy.

Having thus evidently shewn where the true Church of Christ is *not*, we will shortly exhibit where she *is*.

THE first Article of controversy, relates to *Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Traditions.*

THE Catholic Church has been accused of imposing articles of faith and rules of practice unknown to Christ and his Apostles, and not warranted by either Reason or Scripture.

IN answer to this objection, we may observe, that if our Protestant Brethren are opposed to Tradition *as such,* they must take leave of Religion altogether—for *all Religion is Traditional.* The Patriarchal, Jewish and Christian Covenants were Revelations to those to whom they were immediately addressed, but are only traditional to their posterity.

GREAT stress has been laid upon the difference between the Bible, which our Protestant Brethren call (and that truly) the *Word of God,* and other Traditions, of which she is the Guardian and Trustee.

THERE is however, no essential difference between them. The whole is tradition and the whole is the Word of God—and these Traditions, whether written or unwritten, are equally entitled to our homage and obedience.

THE Traditions of the Catholic Church comprehend the Bible—the works of the ancient Fathers—the ancient Liturgies—the ancient monuments—the universal practice of the Church—the condemnation of ancient Heresies—the acts of Councils—and the customs of Rome.

WHEN Christ established his Church, as the eternal depository of his Religion, not a line of the New Testament was yet in writing: nor during his residence on earth, did he write a syllable himself. All his instructions were colloquial. It pleased indeed the Holy Spirit, after the events which preceded, accompanied, and followed his

Divine Mission, to inspire the chosen Apostles to record them, in order to aid the infant interests of Christianity, by publishing to the world the most remarkable traits in the history and character of this divine Religion. But though these writings embrace the essentials, they were never intended to record the subordinate points of faith and practice. Still less were they designed to be *their own interpreters*, or to leave the awful truths which are the subject of them to *private interpretation*

That *unwritten Tradition* is competent to the preservation and application of every Precept, moral and ceremonial, of revealed Religion, is sufficiently evident from the circumstance that from the Creation of the world to the æra of Moses, a period of two thousand five hundred years, there was *no Scripture at all*,—yet there was no complaint, nor even apprehension, that the rule of faith was imperfect or obscure.

It is remarkable how our Protestant Brethren are obliged, in spite of their professions, to do justice to the Traditions of the Church and forget their Bible, when these are in question. Why do they observe the *first* day of the week, for purposes of worship, instead of the *seventh*, instituted by Jehovah himself, on Mount Sinai, and proclaimed in thunder and in flame? Why do they baptize *Infants?* Why do they baptize by *effusion?* Why do they not practice *pediluvium* or *foot-washing*, so emphatically commanded by our Saviour? The truth is, and it is a splendid triumph for Catholicity, that all these observances, the adoption of some and the rejection of others, are derived from the Catholic Church and are a homage to her Traditions.—See Deut. xxxii. 7. Ps. xviii. 5. 6. 7. 1 Cor. xi. 2. 2 Thess. ii. 15.–iii. 6. 2 Tim. i. 13.–ii. 2.–iii. 14.

The next article relates to the *Holy Scriptures.* Its tenor is more than sufficient to shield Catholics from holding them in cheap estimation. It is true indeed that with filial obedience, the Children of the Universal Church submit to her judgment and her's alone, the true sense and interpretation of these divine Oracles. Suspending farther elucidation however of this matter for the present, we will refer it to the moment when we shall examine the Protestant Rule of Faith.

The next Article relates to the *Sacraments,* which are seven in number. 1 *Baptism.* 2 *Confirmation.* 3 The *Eucharist.* 4 *Penance.* 5 *Extreme Unction.* 6 *Orders.* 7 *Matrimony.*

1. *Baptism.*—Against the matter and form of this Sacrament, our Protestant Brethren urge a variety of objections. The Quakers declare that Baptism of water is not of divine institution. The Anabaptists, that the baptism of Infants is without Scriptural authority. The Socinians and others, that it is no Sacrament, and is not necessary to Salvation.

On the contrary, we alledge that Catholic Baptism has all the three conditions of a true Sacrament.—1. It is an outward visible sign—2. It has the power of imparting Grace—3. It is of divine ordination. We say that Baptism is of water.—See Acts viii. 36. 38.–x. 47. 48. We assert that the Baptism of Infants is an Evangelical ordinance. See Luke xviii. 16. John iii. 5. We affirm that it is necessary to Salvation, and for proof refer to the last named text.

2. *Confirmation.*—This ceremony our Protestant Brethren insist is no Sacrament, and is of modern invention.

On the contrary, we declare that it possesses, in common with Baptism, the three essential requi-

sites of a true Sacrament, and as such has been administered from the age of the Apostles, as appears most evidently in the pages of Tertullian and the Fathers. See Acts viii. 15. 17.–xix. 6. 2 Cor. i. 21. 22. Heb. vi. 2.

3. *The Holy Eucharist.*—This Sacrament is so intimately connected with the Sacrifice of the Mass, that we will discuss them presently together.

4. *Penance.*—"This (says the excellent Bishop Challoner) is a Sacrament, by which the Faithful that have fallen into sins, confessing the same with a true repentance and a sincere purpose of making satisfaction, are absolved from their Sins by the Minister of God." Three things are required on the part of the Sinner, in order to obtain Forgiveness and Absolution—viz: Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction.

This Sacrament is declared by our Protestant Brethren to be an imposition on the world—that it has no foundation in either Reason or Scripture, but is the invention of a late date, in order, as Thomas Paine says of national Churches, "to terrify and enslave Mankind, and to monopolize power and profit."

On the contrary, we are of opinion that those who declaim in this manner, forget their own nature, and the world in which they live.

The state of Man is a state of ruin. He emerges into existence defiled with native and hereditary Sin, and under sentence of eternal death; from which nothing can redeem him but the blood of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and its application through the medium of the Sacraments which he has established in his Church. Of these, Penance is one of the most important. "Except ye do Penance (says he) ye shall all likewise perish." Those who cavil at this doctrine of the

Catholic Church, do not sufficiently reflect upon their condition. Some wonder that a benevolent Deity should impose sufferings upon his poor creatures for involuntary transgressions. Others insist that Christ has sufficiently satisfied for Sin. To the first class of objectors we urge that Man is not now, what he once wa. He is fallen from a state of Innocence into one of Guilt. Guilt entails misery. Reason and the whole œconomy of God's moral government teach us with sufficient certainty, that Sin and suffering in this life are intimately connected, and that the one follows the other, as its penalty and its corrective. We are not only Delinquents in a Prison; but we are Patients in a Hospital. As well may a sick man murmur that a different diet is prescribed for him, from one for another in sound health, as for mortals to complain of the regimen which infinite wisdom and goodness have ordained for the cure of our spiritual maladies, and to ensure our restoration to primæval felicity. How natural then it is, to co-operate with this kind intention of Providence, and impose upon ourselves voluntary pain, whenever the ordinary effects of our frailty and wickedness appear insufficient for pardon and reformation!

It is not the *broad* but the *narrow* path which leads to Heaven. As Christ our Saviour bore his Cross, we must also bear our's. He tells us expressly that unless we *suffer*, we cannot hope to *reign* with him. Consequently, not only all the unforeseen afflictions and calamities of life are to be cheerfully endured, but we must occasionally *seek* them. Not only pains, involuntary and accidental—but voluntary and elective, must be suffered. It is only through trials and tribulations that the diadem of the Saint is won.

To the second class of objectors we will reply anon.

Confession, which is a requisite and a condition of Penance, is, independently of its Divinity, one of the most admirable institutions that was ever conceived for the good of man. In every age, in every land, and among every description of people, the Church has had and still has, the happiness to see thousands of Sinners appeal to the sublime consolations of this duty, and not appeal in vain. Absolution is never accorded the Penitent, unless he fulfil the conditions required by the Institution. From this important duty no Christian is exempted. It is equally obligatory on the Clergy as the Laity—and to see a Priest of the highest rank, and Archbishop or a Cardinal, approach the Tribunal of Penance and humbly kneel at the feet of his Confessor, and softened by Contrition, divulge in his ear every Sin, fault and inadvertency, and receive forgiveness at his hands, is one of the most beautiful and edifying spectacles which the Catholic Church affords.

If neither the Divinity of this holy Institution, nor the injunctions of the Church, nor the verdict of the pious and penitent of all ages be satisfactory to the incredulous Protestant, let him listen to the opinion of a Philosopher, who disbelieved Revelation.

"Confession (says Voltaire in his Dictionary) is highly beneficial—a strong curb to vice and of very early institution. It was anciently practised at the celebration of all the Mysteries of the Church; and we have imitated and sanctified so devout an observance. It avails greatly, turning resentment and hatred into forgiveness and friendship. By it the petty rogues are induced to restore what they have stolen;"—and in his Age of

Lewis the XV. he declares "Confession is the greatest of all restraints to human wickedness."

"O SWEET balm of the wounded spirit! (apostrophizes the eloquent Dr. Milner.) O sovereign restorative of the Soul's life and vigor! best known to those who faithfully use thee and not unattested by those who neglect and blaspheme thee!"

THE Sage of England, Dr. Johnson, says in a conversation with his friend Boswell upon Confession, "I do not know but that is a good thing. The Scripture says 'Confess your faults one to another,' and the Priests confess as well as the Laity. Then it must be considered, that their Absolution is only upon repentance, and often upon penance also. You (the Protestants) think your sins may be forgiven without penance, upon repentance alone." See Numb. v. 6. 7. Mat. iii. 6. Acts xix. 18. James v. 16.

ABSOLUTION has been pronounced "a leave to commit Sin." This calumny would have been spared, if its inventors had duly weighed the conditions on which pardon is granted to the confessing Sinner. Confession alone is by no means a sufficient title to forgiveness. To this must be joined Contrition, and Satisfaction (if possible) for the offence.

THUS sanctioned by Reason, as a power in the highest degree conducive to purity of manners, and consolatory to the poor fallen Sinner, so also is it supported by Scripture, as a power promised and given to the Pastors of the Church. See Matt. xvi. 19.–xviii. 18. John xx. 22. 23.

5. *EXTREME UNCTION.*—This has all the qualities of a true Sacrament, and notwithstanding the objections of our Protestant Brethren, is of divine authority, and of Apostolical usage. See James v. 14. 15.

6. *Holy Orders.*—This ordinance may be dispatched in as few words as the preceding. It has equally all the features of a true Sacrament, and is equally supported by Scripture. See Luke xxii. 19. John xx. 22. Acts vi. 6.–xiii. 3.–xiv. 4. 1 Tim. iv. 14. 2 Tim. i. 6.

7. *Matrimony.*—Little detail is necessary to shew that this Institution is likewise of Divine origin, and is a true Sacrament. See Gen. ii. 24. Matt. xix. 6. Mark x. 11. 12. Luke xvi. 18. Rom. vii. 2. 3. 1 Cor. vii. 10. 11. 39. Eph. v. 32. 1 Thess. iv. 3. 4. 5.

Such are the Sacraments of the Catholic Church, Divine in their institution and salutary in their effect. To abuse their application or to abridge their number, is equally to profane their character and to endanger Salvation.

The next Article relates to the Ceremonies of the Catholic Church, which we will notice among our miscellaneous matter.

The succeeding Article, relating to *Original Sin* and *Justification*, has been among our Protestant Brethren the subject of much complaint and misrepresentation.

The Catholic Church is accused of depreciating the value of the Sacrifice of our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ on the Cross, and of overrating and substituting the merit of good works. Now it is impossible that any expressions should be more clear and pointed—more satisfactory in themselves, and in more perfect consent with Reason and Scripture, than those used by the Council of Trent upon this subject.

"We believe (say they) that our Sins are *freely* forgiven us by the Divine mercy for Jesus Christ's sake."—Sess. 6. ch. 9. They add "We are said to be justified *gratis*, because none of those acts

which *precede* Justification, whether they be of faith or good works *can merit his Grace.*" As to the merit of good works, the Council of Trent declares that "Eternal life ought to be proposed to the Children of God, both as a Grace which is mercifully promised to them by the mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as a recompence which is faithfully rendered to their good works and merits, by virtue of this promise." Again, "Although we say that Holy Writ esteems good works so much, that Jesus Christ himself promises that a glass of cold water given to the poor shall not want its reward, and that the Apostle testifies how a moment of light pain endured in this world, shall produce an eternal weight of glory—nevertheless, God forbid that a Christian should trust and glory in himself and not in the Lord, whose bounty is so great to all men, that he will have those gifts which he *bestows* upon them to be *their merits.*" Once more, "We who can do nothing of ourselves, can do all things with Him who strengthens us, in such sort that man has nothing of which he may glory, nor for which he may confide in himself; but all his confidence and glory is in Jesus Christ, in whom we live—in whom we merit—in whom we satisfy—bringing forth fruits worthy of penance, which draw their virtue from Him, and by Him are offered to his Father and accepted of by his Father through Him."—So that, it appears clearly from these decisions of the Council of Trent, "That our Sins are pardoned us out of pure mercy for the sake of Jesus Christ—that we are indebted for that Justice which is in us by the Holy Ghost to a liberality *gratis* bestowed upon us—and that all the good works we do are but so many gifts of his Grace."

ADD to all this the Prayer which the Catholic

Church uses in her daily Sacrifice.—"Vouchsafe, O God, to grant to us Sinners, thy Servants, who hope in the multitude of thy mercies, some part and Society with the blessed Apostles and Martyrs—into whose number we beseech Thee to be pleased to receive us, not looking upon *our* Merits, but graciously pardoning us *in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.*"

WHAT more satisfactory explanation would the most obstinate disputant demand?

THE Church's doctrine on these points is abundantly supported by Scripture. See Gen. iv. 7.–xxii. 16. 17. 18. Ps. xvii. 11. 23. 24.–xviii. 8. 11. Matt. v. 11. 12.–x. 42.–xvi. 27. 1 Cor. iii. 8. 2 Tim. iv. 8.

THE following article relates to the *Sacrifice of the Holy Mass*—in the language of the inspired St. Francis of Sales—"The most Holy, Sacred and Sovereign Sacrifice of the Mass, the centre of Christian Religion, the Heart of Devotion, the Soul of Piety, and an unspeakable Mystery: which comprehends in it the bottomless depth of God's Charity—and by which God, uniting Himself really to us, liberally communicates his Grace and Favors." This sublime definition and eulogy would be alone sufficient, it might be imagined, to silence every cavil and gain every heart. But Prejudice can convert nourishment into poison.

THIS Article likewise declares the *Real Presence* of our Lord Jesus Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist—which involves a Doctrine that has afforded matter for more acrimony of censure and even levity of ridicule, than perhaps any other tenet of the Catholic Church.

SHE teaches, that the Eucharist is the true body and blood of Christ, under the appearance of Bread and Wine. These elements undergo the

most important and miraculous revolution that Almighty Power can effect. This wonderful change, the sole perquisite and characteristic of the true Church and Ministry, is produced by the officiating Priest, and this we call *Transubstantiation*.

It has been urged against this doctrine, that it is not only a miracle greater than all others, but is of a very different nature—for whereas the other Miracles recorded in Holy Writ were addressed to the eyes and ears of men: here on the contrary, the senses are worse than useless; for their testimony directly contradicts the Miracle.

In answer to this objection, let it be observed, that we are not to dictate to our Divine Master, in what manner to operate His Miracles. We have no need of any remote arguments to prove, however, that we have faculties of higher authority than our senses; and that many truths in direct contradiction to their testimony are supported by the most invincible evidence. For example, the eye sees, as plainly as solar effulgence can enable it, that the Sun rises in the east, ascends to the zenith, declines and sets in the west. Now who does not know that this apprehension is a mistake? Do men in general discover this by any astronomical researches of their own? No. They trust to those of others, and prefer their authority to that of their own senses. "Blessed are those who have not seen (says our Lord and Saviour) and yet have believed."

The doctrine of the *Real Presence* has ever been thought so essential to Christianity, that among all the Schismatic Churches which have separated from Catholic unity, there is not one to be found before the æra of the Reformation, which called in question the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. How much soever they chose to differ in

other points from the Catholic Church and from each other, they all united in this belief. The perpetual consent of the Greek and all the Oriental Churches, in this Article, has been demonstrated and is acknowledged on all sides. And it is not a little remarkable, that even the Church of England, declares in her public Catechism, that "The body and blood of Christ *are verily and indeed taken and received* by the faithful in the Lord's Supper."

As Reason is by no means hostile to this doctrine, so Scripture supports it with the whole weight of its authority. See Matt. xxvi. 26.—Mark xiv. 22. 24. Luke xxii. 19. John vi. 51. 52. 1 Cor. x. 16.-xi. 24. 25. 27. 29. These texts are clear and decisive, and leave no room for cavil or objection to any who believe the Gospel.

If it be asked, why the Catholic Church interprets these passages in the literal sense, let the great Bossuet reply in her behalf. "There is no more reason to ask us why we fix ourselves to the literal sense, than there is to ask a traveller why he follows the high road. It is their part, who have recourse to the figurative sense, and who take bye paths, to give a reason for what they do."

The Holy Mass is the unbloody Sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ. As yet inactive, though present in the Eucharistic Sacrament, He is in the Holy Mass offered up to his Eternal Father, as a propitiatory Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole world.

This introduces one of the heaviest charges which has ever been invented against the Catholic Church—that of *Idolatry*. It is roundly asserted that Catholics are the grossest Idolators, and worship bread and wine as God!

What is Idolatry? A Catholic child, who had

made his first communion would answer—"Idolatry is rendering to the Creature the homage and worship due alone to the Creator." If this definition be correct, it will require neither much address, nor many words to clear Catholics from this reproach.

It is not then the elements of bread and wine which are worshipped in the most Holy Eucharist—nor even these elements consecrated for religious purposes—but it is these elements, humble as they are, converted, changed and Transubstantiated into *the body and blood, the real and true body and blood of Christ.*

Now it is hoped, that among our Protestant Brethren, there is no one who would have the impiety to assert that this worship ought not to be rendered, provided this doctrine be *true*, and Jesus Christ be really *present* on the Altar. Now would this worship be Idolatrous, were even the doctrine *false*. It is the Lord Jesus Christ our Redeemer whom Catholics adore. If they imagine Him in a place where He is not, and by mistake worship Him in that place, surely as no indignity is intended, no Sin is committed.

"There is no Idolatry in the Mass, (says Dr. Johnson to his friend Boswell.) They believe God to be there, and they worship Him.

It has been objected to the Sacrifice of the Mass, that it pretends to be a renewed oblation and propitiation of our Lord—thereby annulling or diminishing the Sacrifice which He once offered for our sins upon the Cross.

In answer to this objection, we say it is meant to do neither. The Sacrifice of the Mass is not a new payment of the price of our salvation, but is merely a *commemorative* Sacrifice, applying to Sinners the merits of Christ's Passion and Death.

Nevertheless, although His blood is only shed mystically, and his death only intervenes by representation, (to borrow the expressions of the great Bossuet) yet it is a *real sacrifice* inasmuch as Jesus Christ is *really present* in the Eucharist, and is offered up to His Eternal Father. In fine, "This Sacrifice is instituted (says the Council of Trent) only to represent that which was once accomplished upon the Cross; to perpetuate the memory of it to the end of the world; and to apply to us the saving virtue of it for the remission of those sins which we commit every day."

It has been insisted that although Sacramental Communion be as ancient as our Religion, yet the Mass bears little or no resemblance to the primitive rite; but is, on the contrary, new in name and character. Now it appears from the most authentic and remote records, that this Sacrifice ever bore the same name and exhibited the same shape that it does at the present day. St. Ambrose writes in the 4th century—"I continued the office—I began to say *Mass*," L. i. Ep. 14. St. Leo in the 5th writes—"When the multitude is so great that the Church cannot hold them all, let there be no difficulty made to *offer the Sacrifice* more than once. For some part of the people must of necessity be deprived of their devotions, if following the custom of *saying Mass* but once, none can *offer up the Sacrifice* but they who come early in the morning."

Such is this wonderful and propitiating Sacrifice—the mysterious chain which connects Earth with Heaven: repentant Man with his reconciled Maker. "Let a Person (says the eloquent Chateaubriand) worthily approach the Holy Sacrament only once a month, and he must necessarily become one of the *most virtuous on earth*."

Having said thus much respecting the Holy Mass as a *doctrine*, we will hazard a single remark on it as a *ceremony*.

As a religious Rite then, and as a solemn Act of Worship, it is in point of grandeur, beauty, elegance and pathos, one of the most interesting and affecting spectacles, ever exhibited—and nothing but its frequency enfeebles our admiration.

It is said there are things in the Mass which give offence—But to whom? Let the faculty of Divinity in the Protestant University of Helmstadt answer. "To those only who are ignorant what these ceremonies signify; for there is *none* of them but has a good represention. As for the rest, the Mass is a figure and representation of the most bitter Passion and Death of Jesus Christ."

This Sacrifice is sufficiently warranted by Scripture. It was prefigured Gen. xiv. 18—predicted Ps. cix. 4. Matt. i. 10. 11—and Instituted by Christ himself, Luke xxii. 19, 20. See also 1 Cor. x. 16, 18, 19, 20, 21. Heb. xiii. 10.

The Article following relates to the integrity of the Sacrament under *either kind* alone.

This has been the occasion of much obloquy and aspersion. It is thought to be great presumption in the Catholic Priesthood, to receive the Communion in both kinds themselves and to deny the Cup to the Laity.

As this regulation appears impossible to be ascribed to any sinister motive, we need not go far to learn the reason of it.

The Church has taught from the earliest ages that the Sacrament is *entire*, whether administered in *one* kind or in *both*. One reason, out of many, why the Cup is withheld from the Laity, is, lest the blood of Christ, in the shape of wine, should

be spilled, and great profanation and confusion ensue in large Congregations.

One kind alone, as sufficient for its intention as a Sacrament, is justified by the doctrine and practice of the Apostles.

In their private character, the Clergy themselves never receive the Eucharist but in one kind. If they receive it in both kinds at the Altar, they do it as officiating in the person of Christ, who offers his body and blood in the Mass as a Sacrifice for the sins of Mankind.

Dr. Johnson observes on this subject—"Catholics may think that in what is merely ritual, deviations from the primitive mode may be admitted on the ground of convenience: and I think that they are as well warranted to make this alteration, as we (the Protestants) are to substitute *sprinkling* in the room of the ancient Baptism."

We might add that this privation is no article of Catholic Faith, but one merely of *Discipline*; which may be abrogated by the Authority which ordained it.

Communion in one kind as sufficient to salvation is satisfactorily certified by Scripture—See Luke xxiv. 30, 31. John vi. 51. Acts ii. 42, 46.—Rom. vi. 9. I. Cor. x. 17.

The next article relates to *Purgatory* and *Prayers for the Dead*, all which have been pronounced unscriptural and absurd.

They are neither—and the real doctrine of the Catholic Church on this subject is of a nature to silence and satisfy the most scrupulous.

She teaches us that the Saints and some few others who have passed lives of singular piety and virtue on earth, are at their death immediately received into glory. She informs us also, that there are others, and but too many, whose guilt is so

great that in quitting their mortal bodies they are cast into Hell. Finally she declares that there are great numbers, who, not deserving of eternal punishment for their sins, nor yet so immaculate as to go immediately to Heaven, are placed by Divine Justice in a *middle state;* where their personal sufferings, united with the Prayers of the Faithful on earth, may finally avail to procure them Pardon and Salvation. Upon this important and consolatory belief is founded the Catholic and pious custom of praying for the Dead. A multiplicity of passages might be cited from the Greek and Latin Fathers, to prove the antiquity of this salutary practice. Tertullian who wrote soon after the death of our Saviour, speaks of it often, and it is recognized as an Apostolical Tradition in the most ancient Liturgies of all the Christian Churches before the Reformation—as the Roman, Greek, Syrian, Armenian, Nestorian, Egyptian, Ethiopian, Indian, &c. &c.

"PURGATORY (says Dr. Johnson) is a very harmless doctrine. They (the Catholics) are of opinion that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment, nor so good as to merit being admitted into the Society of Blessed Spirits; and therefore that God is graciously pleased to allow of a *middle state*, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. There is nothing unreasonable in this."—He adds, "If it be once established that there are souls in Purgatory, it is as proper to *pray for them*, as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life." In fact, this tenet is so consonant with Reason as well as Scripture, that a vast number of intelligent Protestants have avowed their belief in it. One of high reputation observes in his Lectures: "With regard

to the doctrine of Purgatory though it may not be founded either in Reason or Scripture, it is not unnatural.—Who can bear the thought of dwelling in *everlasting torments?* Yet who can say that God, everlastingly just, may not inflict them? The mind of man seeks for some resource. It finds *one only*—in conceiving that some *temporary punishment* after death may purify the soul from its moral pollution, and make it at last acceptable even to a Deity infinitely pure." As the Doctrine of Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead is sanctioned by good sense and remote antiquity, so it has also the support of Scripture. These prayers made and still make part of the Ritual of the Jewish Synagogue—see II. Macc. xii. 43, &c.—See also Matt. v. 25, 26, xii. 22, 36. I. Cor. iii. 13, 14, 15. I. Pet. iii. 18, 19, 20. Apoc. XXI. 27.

THE next article relates to the *Invocation of the Saints*—to which may be added that of the *Blessed Virgin Mary* and of the *Angels.*

IN this exercise, Catholics are accused of rendering these glorified Persons divine worship, and of being thereby guilty of Idolatry.

LET it be then repeated for the millionth time that Catholics do not worship them, at least in the Protestant acceptation. They do indeed address them in certain forms and with much solemnity: but it is only to beseech them to add *their* Prayers to *ours,* and to intercede for us at the throne of the Most High.—Catholics recognize no power in them to help us by their own immediate act. They can assist us only by joining their supplications to ours. If our Protestant Brethren should still insist that God has no need of their vicarious Prayers, but is ever ready to hearken to the Petitions of the humblest of his creatures, and that

their intercession is superfluous, as our Lord Jesus Christ is our sole Intercessor with the Father; we can retort the objection, and ask them why they solicit the prayers of *each other?* If the Prayers of the Blessed Virgin and of the Angels and Saints cannot avail us, we may be very sure that nothing can be expected from those of our poor, sinful fellow creatures.

But that their Prayers can and do avail us, we have the express testimony of Scripture—See Luke xvi. 9. I. Cor. xii. 8. and Apoc. v. 8. We have a communion with them—Heb. xii. 22, 23. They have power over nations—Apoc. ii. 26, 27–v. 10. They know what passes among us—Luke xv. 10–I. Cor. xiii. 12. I. John iii. 2. They are with Christ in Heaven before the Resurrection—II. Cor. v. 1, 6, 7, 8. Phil. i. 23, 24. Apoc. iv. 4–vi. 9–vii. 9, 14, 15. &c.–xiv. 2, 3, 4.–xix. 1, 4, 5, 6.–xx. 4. The Prayers of God's Servants have great influence with Him—Ex. xxxii. 11, 14. I. Kings vii. 8, 9, 10. Job xlii. 7, 8. Rom. xv. 30. Eph. vi. 18, 19. I. Thes. v. 25. Heb. xiii. 13. James v. 16.

The dignity of the Blessed Virgin Mary appears from Luke i. 28, 42, 43, 48.

The Invocation of Angels appears from Gen. xlviii. 15, 16. Osa. xii. 4. Apoc. i. 4. They have been honored by the Servants of God—Jos. v. 14, 15. They have a charge over us—Ex. xxiii. 20, 21. Ps. xcii. 12, &c. Matt. xviii. 10. Heb. i. 14. They pray for us—Zach. i. 12. They offer up our Prayers—Apoc. viii. 4.

The next Article relates to the use of *Images*, and declares that *honor and veneration* are due to them.

Few tenets of the Catholic Church have excited more clamor and controversy than this: "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven Image," says

the divine Commandment—and it never ceases to be quoted to cover Catholics with confusion.

Now, that the strict Protestant sense is not that of the Law of Moses, must be evident, on examination, to the most common apprehension; unless we acknowledge that the Scripture is inconsistent, with itself. For Images were not only permitted in the Jewish worship, but were absolutely *commanded* by God himself—as appears from Ex. xxv. 18, &c. Numb. xxi. 8. 9. They were placed on each side of the mercy seat in the Sanctuary —Ex. xxxvii. 7. And in the Temple of Solomon—II. Chron. iii. 10. By Divine Command—I. Chron. xxviii. 18, 19. Relative honor to the Images of Christ and his Saints authorised, Heb. xi. 21. See also II. Kings vi. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16. II. Chron. v. 2, &c. Ps. xcviii. 5. Phil. ii. 10.

"Our intention is not (says the admirable Bossuet) so much to honor the Image, as to honor the Apostle or Martyr in presence of the Image." "The honor we render to Images (says the Council of Trent) has such a reference to those they represent, that by means of those Images which we kiss, and before which we kneel, we adore Jesus Christ, and honor the Saints, whose types they are." This Council forbids us expressly "to believe any divinity in them, for which they ought to be reverenced: to demand any favor of them or put any trust in them." To all this it may be added, that the use of Images is no duty of positive obligation. The Council of Trent merely says the practice is *good and beneficial.* If it be asked how this practice is good and beneficial, we answer, that it is most admirably calculated to animate and enliven the pious affections. In every Catholic family are seen the Crucifix, and pictures of the Blessed Virgin and of the Saints. We

kneel in prayer before the Image of our crucified Saviour, that our minds, impressed with the awful ideas of his Passion and Death, may be excited to follow the precepts and example of the great Captain of our Salvation, and learn that "we have Redemption through his blood."

HENCE may be inferred the utility of Images, and the honor and respect which are paid to them by all the members of the Catholic Church.

WITH regard to *Relics*, besides the motives to their retention and respect in common with Images; there are particular reasons which urge the Catholic Church to enjoin the veneration of Relics, 1. They have been the victims and living temples of God. 2. They are pre-ordained to a happy Resurrection. 3. They have been and are daily the Instruments of the power of God, for the working of innumerable miracles. 4. They serve to encourage the Faithful to an imitation of their virtues.

"NOTHING is more evident (says the learned Bishop Challoner,) from all kinds of monuments of antiquity, than that the veneration of the Relics of the Saints, is one of the most ancient things of Christianity; as may be seen in the writings of the Holy Fathers, particularly St. Basil, St. Gregory Nyssen, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Cyril, St. John Chrysostom, St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Austin and Theodoret." See 2 Kings xiii. 21. Matt. ix. 20. 21. Acts xix. 11. 12.

IT is here incumbent upon me to observe, once for all, that on this, as well as on every other point in the controversy, I quote only the *real doctrine* of the Catholic Church. It is to be regretted that in *practice* many have departed from her precepts; and as some have fallen short of her injunctions, so others have carried them to excess. Among

other indiscretions, the use of Images and Relics may sometimes have been perverted to purposes of improper devotion. But the best things are liable to abuse. Of this truth, the Bible itself is a melancholy example.

THE next Article relates to *Indulgences*, which are intimately connected with Penance, and in like manner have been sadly misunderstood and thoughtlessly censured.

"BY an Indulgence (says Bishop Challoner) we mean no more than the releasing of true Penitents from the debt of temporal punishment, which remained due to their sins, after the sins themselves, as to the guilt and eternal punishment, had been already remitted by the Sacrament of Penance, by a perfect contrition."

"THE power to grant Indulgences (says the Council of Trent) has been given to the Church by Jesus Christ, and the use of them is beneficial to Salvation." But the Council adds that "This power ought to be retained, yet nevertheless used with a moderation, lest Ecclesiastical discipline should be weakened by an over-great facility."

"WHEN therefore (says the great Bossuet) the Church imposes upon Sinners painful and laborious works, and they undergo them with humility, this is called *Satisfaction;* and when, regarding the fervor of Penitents, or some other good works which she has prescribed them, she relaxes some part of that pain which is due to them, this is called *Indulgence.*"

THAT a debt of temporal punishment may remain after the guilt of it is removed, we may learn from the royal Psalmist. It appears from the Book of Samuel, that though Nathan assures David that the Lord had put away his Sin, yet He denounced against him many temporal afflictions.

THE power of granting Indulgences is evident from Matt. xvi. 18. 19.—and the use of this power from 2 Cor. ii. 6. 7. 9. 10.

THE next Article relates to the identity of the *Church*, and is the most important of all, because it is the foundation, as well as the guarantee of every other article of the Catholic belief. If she be a false Church, it matters little what doctrines she teaches; for where there is no Authority, there can be no Obedience. But if, on the contrary, (O momentous question!) she be the true, and *only true* Church of Christ, her voice is consequently the voice of God. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

THE Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church claims to be this Church, and claims it *exclusively*. It therefore behoves All who seek Salvation, to examine with all possible care and industry these high pretensions. Compared with the importance of this duty, all other avocations are trifling, and their objects vain.

THE titles by which the true Church of Christ is to be recognized, have already been noticed.—It now only remains to test by these criteria the claim preferred by the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman Church.

SHE is *One*.—She is *Holy*.—She is *Universal*.—She is *Apostolical*.

SHE is *One*.—Her Members agree in *one* Faith—are all in *one* Communion—and are all under *one* Head. A Catholic of Rome subscribes the same Creed as a Catholic of Pekin. A Catholic of Vienna partakes the same Sacraments as a Catholic of Aleppo. A Catholic of Paris acknowledges the same Chief as a Catholic of Baltimore. She is the same Society in the present century as she was in

the very first. Ever *one*, and unchangeable in Faith and Doctrine.

She is *Holy*.—Her doctrines are derived from Christ and his Apostles. Her Sacraments have no tendency but to purify the lives of men. The holiness of her Saints has been the admiration of the world.

She is *Universal*.—This fact needs no special proof, as it has never been contested. Adorned with this feature, the Church assumes the title of *Catholic*: which is tacitly at least, acknowledged legitimate by Separatists of every denomination. Her Missionaries have carried the Cross of Christ to every part of the habitable globe; and have proclaimed the glad tidings of the Gospel from the Equator to the Poles—among the Snows of Siberia and the burning Sands of Abbyssinia.

She is *Apostolical*.—That this Church is the most ancient of all Churches, will not be questioned by any who have confidence in History. The succession of the Bishops of Rome may be traced, step by step, without the smallest interruption, from the present Pope to St. Peter, that zealous Apostle whom our Lord commissioned to be the Chief of his infant Church, in the ever memorable words recorded by St. Matthew xvi. 18.

Many and oft have been her struggles with the powers of darkness in the shape of Schisms and Heresies, which have disturbed her tranquillity. But she has risen from the combat with victory in her hand. Of these, every age has been unhappily fruitful. Latterly, the secession of half Europe from her communion menaced her downfall—which the events of the French Revolution were supposed to leave no longer doubtful. What confident predictions were hazarded of her utter des-

truction! What declamatory threats of a speedy extinction of the "Man of Sin!" Finally, when the French took Rome and imprisoned the Vicar of Jesus Christ, Epitaphs were written for departed Popery. But depression was not Ruin. God has tried his Church with Adversity, and is now raising her to new splendor. We have seen Greek and Protestant unite to re-instate the fallen Pontiff in his sovereignty, and to decorate with another wreath of glory the Chair of St. Peter.

She is Apostolical, in the Scripturality, Uniformity and Invariability of her Doctrines. Precisely those which she teaches at the present day are co-eval with Christianity itself. As a proof, a triumphant proof of this, allusion is made to them in the writings of the earliest Fathers of the Church—those holy Men, for whom our Protestant Brethren profess to feel (and I believe sincerely) the highest veneration:—nor has any investigation been able satisfactorily to fix a later date to a single Article of Catholic Faith. Infinite are the attempts which have been made in nocturnal researches among the musty and mangled records of the middle ages, to controvert this position, but in vain. Much of the clamor which has been excited against the Catholic Church on this subject has arisen from an egregious mistake. Articles of *Faith* have been confounded with those of *Discipline*. Over the latter, the Church has the most absolute control; over the former, none at all. Her Discipline has varied in different ages; but her Faith is immutable.

Among the liberal of our Protestant Brethren, the Fathers of the Church have always obtained credit and esteem. Let us hear their report on this important subject.

St. Irenœus, who lived in the second century,

says "The Founders of the Church delivered the Episcopacy and government of the Church to Linus: who was succeeded by Anacletus, Clement, Evaristus"—enumerating the others in succession down to the Chief who then ruled the Church, and concluding with these words, "This is a most full demonstration that the same lively Faith, taught by the Apostles, is still even unto this day, preserved in the Church and duly delivered." Tertullian, one of the earliest of the Fathers, speaks thus, "What I believe, I received from the present Church, and the present from the primitive: the primitive from the Apostles: the Apostles from Christ." St. Cyprian, who lived in the third century, says "We know Cornelius the Bishop of Rome to have been elected by Almighty God, and Christ our Lord, the Bishop of the most holy Catholic Church: neither are we ignorant, that there ought to be one God, one Christ our Lord, one Holy Ghost, and one Bishop in the Catholic Church." Lanctantius, who lived in the fourth century, says "It is she alone, which, as the ancient Fathers write, retains the true worship. She is the fountain of truth and the temple of God, into which whosoever shall not enter, or out of which which whosoever shall depart, can have no hope of everlasting life and Salvation."

In fact we should never cease if we continued these quotations. The Unity and Indivisibility of the Church, of which the Bishop of Rome is the sovereign Pontiff, are their favorite and endless topics.

We may also be permitted to adduce as one of the most signal and decisive test of the true Church, that she has the gift of *Miracles*. Here the Catholic Church shines with transcendent lustre. Not a sect which has had the misfortune to

secede from her communion, has ever pretended to this distinction. It follows irresistibly, that if the Catholic Church has ever, in the most solitary instance, been the instrument of a single Miracle, the triumph is all her own.

To controvert this stubborn pretension of the Catholic Church, her adversaries boldly aver, that Miracles once necessary, are no longer so, and have therefore ceased. In what book or record, or by what sentence and authority Miracles are declared to have ceased, Catholics have yet to learn. If this assumption find any support in Holy Writ, let the specific texts be cited.

This appeal, however, to Scripture in a question of Miracles, is altogether idle and superfluous. A Miracle, so far from meeting any extrinsic evidence to support it, is intended by its nature to give evidence and support to other truths. The doctrines of Scripture itself are founded upon Miracles: and had not the Miracles been performed, the doctrines which they were destined to sanction, had never been proclaimed nor believed.

No hypothesis, however ingenious, can be rationally opposed to a matter of fact. Has then a Miracle ever been performed in the Catholic Church? Let faithful history answer, whose records are full of the most exact details of miraculous power exercised in this Church, that the most sceptical enquirer can desire. To cite merely a catalogue of preservations and cures, together with other immediate interpositions of Divine agency, wrought through the instrumentality of living and departed Saints of this Church, would fill volumes.

From this immense mass of matter, it is difficult to select any particular examples for citation, when the whole seems so equally adapted to the pur-

pose. It is sufficient on this occasion to observe that the Miracles of St. Austin, the Missionary to whom England owes her Conversion from the darkness of Paganism to the light of the Gospel—and those of St. Francis Xavier, the Apostle of the Indies, have been acknowledged by the most judicious and impartial Protestant Writers.

Let it be understood however, that this power is not one which the Church can exercise at her option. It is only imparted occasionally, and never but for some signal purpose.

The preceding Positions established, no argument is necessary to prove that the Catholic Church is *infallible*. Her Infallibility is a direct and indisputable deduction from the Premises.

After recording the verdict of Reason, calm, collected and dispassionate, in favor of the Catholic Church—let us see with what splended suffrage Scripture ratifies this decision.

The Church of Christ is everlasting, Ps. xlviii. 8.–lxxi. 5. 7.–lxxxviii. 3. 4. 29. 36. 37.–cxxxi. 13. 14. Is. ix. 7.–liv. 9. 10.–lix. 20. 21.–lx. 15. 18.–lxii. 6. Jer. xxxi. 35. 36.–xxxiv. 17. Ezec. xxxviii. 24. 26. Dan. ii. 44. Matt. xvi. 18.–xxviii. 10. John xiv. 16. 17.—The Church is the Kingdom of Christ, Dan. ii. 44. Luke i. 33.—The City of the Great King, Ps. xlvii. 2. His rest and his habitation forever, Ps. cxxxi. 13. 14. The House of the living God, 1 Tim. iii. 15. The fold of which Christ is the Shepherd, John x. 16. The body of which Christ is the head, Eph. v. 23–Col. i. 18. The spouse of which He is the Bridegroom, Eph. v. 31. 32. Ever subject to Him and ever faithful to Him–24. Ever loved and cherished by Him, 25. 29. And joined to him by an indissoluble union, 31. 32. The Church is the pillar and ground of the truth, 1 Tim. iii. 15.—

God's Covenant with her is an everlasting covenant of Peace, Ezec. xxxvii. 62. Confirmed by a solemn oath, never to be altered, like that made to Noah, Is. liv. 9. A covenant like that of the day and night to stand to all generations, Jer. xxxiii. 20. 21. God shall be her everlasting light, Is. lx. 18. 19. Whosoever shall gather together against her shall fall; and the nation that will not serve her shall perish, Is. lx. 12. 15. 17. The Church is always one, Cant. vi. 9. 10. John x. 16. Eph. iv. 4. 5. Always visible, Is. ii. 2. 3. Mic. iv. 1. 2. Matt. v. 14. Spread far and near, and teaching many nations, Ps. ii. 8,–xxi. 27. Is. xlix. 6.–liv. 1. 2. 3. Dan. ii. 35. 44. Mal. i. 11.

The last Article relates to the *Sacred Canons* of the Church, and her *General Councils*. All these are identified with the Church herself; and as she is infallible in matters of Faith, so whatever emanates from her Councils, must necessarily bear the impression of her Infallibility.

Such are the principles upon which the Catholic Church urges her claim to the proud pre-eminence of being that *true Church*, predicted by the Prophets of Israel, and in due time founded by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and against which "the Gates of Hell shall never prevail."

Now, let me ask whether these tests be not satisfactory and decisive? And whether there be another Religious Society in the whole world, which in support of the same pretensions can adduce the same proofs, or any other of equal validity? No surely. Can we then doubt for a moment that she is the *true Church*, the Church without spot or wrinkle, the pillar and ground of truth, the chaste virgin and beloved spouse of Jesus Christ;

"A zeal without Knowledge" has constantly

nourished a mortal antipathy to the Pope or Bishop of Rome, who has long been an eye sore to our Protestant Brethren, who think he is worshipped as a God!

THE Papacy is indeed an office of great trust and dignity. And the same Divine Authority which created his elevation in the person of St. Peter, still maintains him in his rank, as a regular Descendant from the Prince of the Apostles, in the line of Ecclesiastical succession. Why our Lord and Saviour required such a Chief for the government of his Church, and why he chose that he should be invested with so much external grandeur, we are not to enquire, but refer it to His Almighty and Sovereign Will. This eminent personage has been very much calumniated, and bulky tomes have been written to perpetuate the real or supposed vices and intrigues of the Popes. But true History tells another tale; and we may safely challenge all Nations to exhibit a succession of Sovereigns more pious, virtuous, wise and learned, than those who now for eighteen Centuries have filled the See of Rome.

So much for the Catholic Profession of Faith.—We now proceed to notice some miscellaneous objections, which relate not to matters of *Faith*, but merely to those of *Discipline*.

THE *Sign of the Cross*, so universal among Catholics, is censured as superstitious. But a thousand testimonies prove it to be as ancient as Christianity. "At every step, (says Turtullian) at every coming in and going out, when we put on our clothes or shoes, when we wash, when we sit down to table, when we light a candle, when we go to bed—whatsoever conversation employs us, we imprint on our foreheads the *Sign of the Cross*.

THE Catholic Church has been accused of a

splendor and magnificence in her general œconomy and public worship, inconsistent with the simplicity of the Gospel. "God (it is said) is a *Spirit*, and they who worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

It is not sufficiently considered that God was not less a Spirit in ancient times than He is now. And yet He not only approved, but instituted for His chosen people a form of worship, the most splendid and magnificent that the world had ever seen. That the worship of the Apostles and primitive Christians was simple and unadorned, is freely granted. But this (as Soame Jenyns acutely remarks, in answer to the same objection respecting the service of the Church of England) was perhaps rather their *misfortune* than their *choice*. During the first Persecutions they had no public worship at all. Their ceremonies were performed, and the bread of life was broken to them in private—in the dark recesses of caves and grottoes; and wherever else they could escape the inspection and interference of the civil power.

"The malignant influence of Calvinism (says Dr. Johnson) has blasted ceremony and decency together."

It is objected as an unedifying practice that the public service of the Church is performed in *Latin*; a language unknown to the people at large, even in Catholic countries.

This objection is easily answered. A *Universal Church* requires a *Universal Language*. It requires also a language fixed and permanent in its construction, not varying and fluctuating, and embarrassed with different idioms and Provincialities. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is daily offered in every part of the known world. Missions expose Ecclesiastics to frequent and remote changes of place.

Were the public Service of the Church performed in the vernacular language of each nation, a foreign Missionary would be a stranger in every country but his own, and would be unequal to the duty imposed on him. But the Mass and Vespers being in *Latin*, an ancient and stable language, a Priest of the Catholic Church is *at home* in every quarter of the globe. In the infancy of Christianity, the language of the Church and of the People was the same. Rome was, as it still is, the seat of the chief Bishop; and Latin was the language of Rome. This tongue was vitiated by the incorporation of barbarous dialects introduced into Italy by invasion and conquest. So that it is not the *Church* which has adopted a foreign language, but the *People*. The Church continued, preserved and consecrated the ancient vernacular tongue. Besides, those who assist at the Sacrifice of the Mass, have nothing to do with what is called the *Ordinary* of the Mass, which is entirely said by the officiating Priest. This is not a public Liturgy. Every one of the congregation respects his own private prayers; which adds much to the beauty and solemnity of the Catholic worship.

This objection, whatever it be worth, is not exclusive. The Greeks, Armenians, and Oriental Churches in general, celebrate their divine service in a language not familiar to the common people.

A Convential Life—has been taxed as nourishing superstition—hostile to the best interest of Society—and destructive of population.

In answer to these allegations, in the first place, let us never forget, that in a question of Salvation, no human interests should come in competition with this most important of all concerns.—"Unum est necessarium" says our Lord and Saviour—"One thing is needful."—And he is but a

tepid Christian who can suffer this great duty to be arrested by any considerations of minor moment.

In the next place, we urge that it is a state of life as ancient as Christianity, and is sanctioned by the counsels and practice of the pious of every age. Let us hear the report of Eusebius, who lived at the time of the first General Council.

"There have been instituted in the Church of Christ (says he) *two ways* or manners of living.—The one raised above the ordinary state of nature, and common ways of living: rejects wedlock, possessions and worldly goods, and being wholly separated and removed from the ordinary conversation of common life, is appropriated and devoted solely to the worship and service of God, through an exceeding degree of heavenly love. They who are of this order of people, seem dead to the life of this world; and having their bodies only upon earth, are in their minds and contemplations dwelling in heaven. From whence, like many heavenly inhabitants, they look down upon human life, making intercessions and oblations to Almighty God for the whole race of mankind. And this is not with the blood of beasts, or the fat and smoke and burning of bodies; but with the highest exercises of true piety, with cleansed and purified hearts, and with a whole form of life strictly devoted to virtue. These are their sacrifices, which they are continually offering unto God, implore his mercy and favor for themselves and their fellow creatures. Christianity receives this as the most perfect manner of life."—The other is a secular life.

The Religious Orders take three vows—the first, of *Poverty*; the second, of *Chastity*; the third, of *Obedience*—all which find sufficient sanction in Scripture: See Matt. xix. 12. 21. &c.

That Monastic Establishments affect the popu-

lation of a country has been denied and disproved by many Protestant writers—particularly by David Hume.

The *Celibacy* or single life of the Regular and Secular Clergy of the Catholic Church, our Protestant Brethren hold to be obnoxious to equal censure.

In answer to this we observe, that the duties imposed on the Catholic Clergy are far more multifarious and weighty, than on any other order of men perhaps in the world. If they be faithful to their vocation, their whole time is absorbed in the discharge of these obligations. Mass must be said every morning—the sick must be visited—the Sacraments must be administered—the Dead must be interred—Confession, a never-ending duty, levies a heavy tax of occupation. Add to all this, that they are bound to recite their Breviary at the Canonical hours, occurring *seven times a day.*—They are exposed also to be sent as Missionaries to the ends of the earth. Let the candid judge, whether married men be competent to the discharge of these various and momentous duties.

"He that hath a Wife or Children (says Lord Bacon) hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprizes"—and elsewhere—"A single life doth well with *Churchmen;* for Charity will hardly water the ground, when it must fill a pool."

Thus sanctioned by Reason, Religious Celibacy has also the support of Scripture. Continency proved possible, Matt. xix. 11. 12. The vow binding, Deut. xxiii. 21. The breach of the vow damnable, 1 Tim. v. 12. The practice commended, 1. Cor. vii. 7. 8. 27. 37. 38. 40. For reasons which particularly affect the Clergy, 32. 33. 35.

The Catholic Church is taxed with *uncharita-*

bleness in her opinions, and with *cruelty* in her conduct: denouncing as Heretics, All who are not of her communion—and consigning them if in her power, to tortures and death! It is true indeed that Catholics believe, and that upon Divine Authority, that *out of the Church there is no salvation.*

But what is it, to be out of the Church—that only ark of salvation? They who are not immediately in her *communion*, are not therefore, by a necessary consequence, *out of the Church.* Hear the great St. Austin of Hippo—"They that defend their sentence (though false and perverse) with no stubborn stomach or obstinate heart; especially if it be such as *themselves* broached not, but received of their *deceived parents*; and do seek the truth warily and carefully: being ready to be reformed if they find it: *Such are not to be reputed Heretics.*"

"Not every one (says the Annotators to the Rheims Testament) that erreth in Religion is a *Heretic.* But he only that after the Church's determination, wilfully and stubbornly standeth in his false opinion, not yielding to decrees of Councils, or the Chief Pastor of the Catholic Church."

Agreeably to this doctrine The Church excepts from this denunciation, all Children who have received Christian Baptism—which alone, obviating the effects of Original Sin, qualifies them with a title to inherit the promises. She excepts also, all who are in a state of *invincible ignorance.*—"Because (says the learned Bellarmin) wherever there is *invincible ignorance*, united with a sincerity and love of truth—in virtue of the dispositions of their hearts, the Persons so circumstanced belong to the *true church.*" These two classes comprehend a prodigious number of Souls, who though in a state

of exterior separation from the visible Church, are nevertheless, inwardly united to her by *charity*.

For purposes inscrutable to the human intellect, God has seen fit to keep in a condition of uncatholicity, many pious and virtuous as well as learned Persons of various Sects. Their prejudices are those of birth and education, and not of the heart.

The pretended persecuting spirit of the Catholic Church is exhibited in vast relief in the muddy details of Fox and other zealots: but it is difficult to substantiate their charges by any documents of authentic History.

On the contrary, we assert that the Catholic Church is of a *tolerant* character. "During the space of eight hundred years (says W. E. Andrews, the sagacious Editor of the London Orthodox Journal,) in which the Catholic Church reigned uncontrolled; and her Ministers were invested with the plenitude of power, not a drop of blood was shed in support of her spiritual rights, nor a temporal law passed to punish those who dogmatised her doctrines."

After all these deductions however, that the Representatives of the Catholic Church have in many instances abused the power confided to them, is nevertheless acknowledged and lamented.—"Wherever there are men (says Seneca) there are faults."—The Church, though divinely commissioned, is a *human Society*—and human Societies are necessarily imperfect, because Man is imperfect. The Protestant Sects, with no commission whatever, have almost all persecuted in their turn. Rousseau, a Protestant, declares that "The Reformation was intolerant from its cradle, and its authors universally persecutors." It is acknowledged by another Protestant writer, that in the single province of Dauphiny in France, the Reformers

burnt down no less than *nine hundred* towns and villages,, and murdered *three hundred and seventy-eight* Priests and Religious persons, in the course of *one* rebellion. The total number of Churches in France which they burnt, was computed to be no less than *twenty thousand*. The history of the Reformation in England, though less sanguinary than on the Continent, has caused many a Conversion to the Catholic Faith.

But it is high time that all these complaints and reflections were hushed forever. The wrong was reciprocal. We are none of us answerable for the misdeeds of our ancestors. God is love. The Religion of Christ is a Religion of love. Instead then of brandishing the firebrands of religious contention, and reproaching each other for the crimes of our forefathers—crimes the offspring of a barbarous age—and which in this we all equally lament; let us learn to love one another—to live by faith and not by sight—and to pray and labor for our mutual Salvation.

"Non est Religionis Religionem cogere."

Another slander imputes great corruption of manners to Catholics, and boldly asserts that they substitute devotion for morality—thinking that a few *pater-nosters* and *ave-marias* mumbled over, are sufficient to atone for the most enormous offences; and that Catholic Priests are loose and unprincipled. In answer to this charge, we boldly insist, that if there be any thing in which the Catholic church is pre-eminent, it is in the *rigid morality* of her doctrine. What she preaches, she fails not to practise. Her Clergy are in general pious, just, and temperate; and her Laity are as virtuous at least, it is presumed, as the members of other communions.

It is true that a few of the Catholic Clergy, (and still more Laymen) do not live up to their profession. Some Ecclesiastics are proud, others ambitious—some dissipated, others covetous, and caring (as Massillon expresses it) more for the *fleece* than the *flock*. This is matter for regret, but not for surprise. Did not our blessed Lord complain that one of his chosen twelve Disciples was a *Devil?* If in the very infancy of the Church, under the immediate inspection of our Saviour himself, and among his own apostles, there could lurk treason and murder; what wonder is it that in so considerable a body as the Catholic Clergy, there should occur some examples of lamentable defection? But for our consolation, if there be here and there a Judas in the Catholic Church, so there are Peters and Pauls—men illustrious for piety and virtue, whose every thought and deed are a splendid commentary on that Gospel which they are sent to proclaim. Look at the innumerable band of Martyrs who have bled for the Faith! Look at the numerous Missionaries, who traversing sea and land, have penetrated to the deepest caverns of savage retreat, to announce the glad tidings of a crucified Saviour! Look at the various Convents all over Christendom; which, however calumniated, exhibit the most sublime virtues, and where the severity of the evangelical law is pure and unmitigated! There, thousands of holy men consecrate their days and nights to Devotion! There, thousands of faithful Virgins, with their lamps trimmed and burning, employ every hour of their life in offering prayers of intercession for a wicked world!

Finally, the Clergy and Dignitaries of the Catholic Church have been traduced as foes to civil liberty, as well as to light and knowledge—particu-

larly displayed in keeping the common people in ignorance, and in withholding from them the Bible of Salvation.

Were these tremendous charges founded in truth, they would long ago have annihilated the pretensions, if not the very existence, of the Catholic Church.—But they are false.

All the *Republics* in Europe have been reared and fostered in the bosom of the Catholic Church. *Magna Charta*, the bulwark of British freedom, was the enterprise of Catholics. *The House of Commons*, that sole democratic branch of the Constitution, had the same origin. In the language of an Irish orator—"It was in the bosom of the Catholic Church that our free Constitution received its birth. Catholics rocked its cradle. Catholics watched its infancy, cherished its childhood, and matured its youth." Literary works without number have been written by authors of this communion, in support of the rights and liberties of mankind. Among others, we may instance the illustrious Sir Thomas More, who wrote the *Utopia*, or the scheme of a perfect Commonwealth: in which (says David Williams, a Deist) "are more real principles, real truths, and real facts, than in all the systems of government, the codes of laws, and the commentaries on laws in the whole world." This great man was so zealous a Catholic, that he was put to death by Henry the eighth; because he would not renounce his allegiance to the Sovereign Pontiff, and recognize the supremacy of this sanguinary Tyrant in the Church.

Protestant writers of the highest reputation, have been zealous to eulogize the Catholics, as lovers of Freedom. None have executed this intention more successfully than that wonder of our age, and pride of Ireland, Phillips—who renders

Catholicity splendid justice, and that in a strain of eloquence, unparalleled perhaps in any language.

Look at the Missions of Paraguay. The Catholic Church had projected the conversion of the Aborigenes of this extensive region to the Christian Faith. A few Jesuits undertook the gigantic and hazardous enterprise. With a Crucifix in their hand and a chaplet at their girdle, they faced danger and death amid the pathless wilds of South America. They chewed the leaf of the forest for food, and slaked their thirst with the rain from heaven. Their lodging was among the branches of trees—and their slumbers were hourly interrupted by the roaring of lions, tygers and panthers, and the hissing of serpants. Nothing, however could appal these brave and indefatigable men. The hostility of the Savages made up the measure of their sufferings. But their zeal, patience, and trust in God, triumphed over every obstacle; and conciliating the barbarians by degrees, they founded a Colony—and such a colony as the world never yet saw. We say nothing of it as a *religious*, but merely as a *political* establishment, though in either view it excites equal wonder and merits equal praise. The republic of Plato was no longer a dream. In Paraguay was realized a society the happiest, and a legislation the most perfect, that History had yet presented to human admiration. Let those who stigmatize the Catholic Church in general, and the Jesuits in particlar, as enemies to civil liberty and the rights of man, read the Relation of the Missions of Paraguay, and thank God for the preservation of the one and the restoration of the other!

It is equally false that the Catholic Clergy are enemies to light and knowledge. They who love to contrast the learning of the ancient Pagans with

that of modern Christians, will do well to remember, that not a single line of any Greek or Roman writer would have reached our times and inspection, had it not been for the care and vigilance of the Catholic Clergy. During and after the ravages of the Goths, Vandals and northern barbarians in the South of Europe, who laid all waste; Literature found an asylum in the Convents of the Catholic Church—and if she has since come forth with her treasures to delight and edify the world, let those who afforded her so signal a protection, have their meed of praise.

Yet this is but a small part of the claim of Catholics. The revival of letters was the work of Leo tenth—not merely a Catholic, but a *Papal* power—and Voltaire boasts that the Catholic reign of Louis the fourteenth made a fourth æra in literature; and was more fertile in illustrious men, than the other three—viz: those of Pericles, Augustus, and Leo tenth, though, so renowned, put together.

In every branch of sacred and profane learning —in every art and in every science; Catholics have so greatly distinguished themselves, as to bear off the palm from every other society in the universe. David Hume acknowledges that the Catholics are the most learned of all the Christian denominations—and Lord Hutchinson, in a speech in Parliament, says that "Catholicity has been the belief of the most extensive and enlightened nations; and of the most illustrious characters that ever did honor to the name of man." Her two Religious Orders of Jesuits and Benedictines alone have done more for Letters, than all the learned men of the Reform united.

Scarcely a department of excellence can be named which does not find a Catholic at the head

of it. In such a galaxy of light and splendor, to particularize any single star were a sort of presumption. Theology is adorned with the names of all the Fathers of the Church from Tertullian down to St. Thomas Aquinas and Bossuet. In Philosophy, Descartes has divided the applause of mankind with Newton. Mallebranche associates with Locke in anatomizing the human intellect. Tasso, Ariosto, Petrarch, Corneille, Dryden, Racine and Pope, have rivalled Homer and Virgil in Song. Bourdalour and Massillon are names for eloquence itself. In Music, Catholicity has produced Corelli, Geminiani and Arne. In Painting, Raffaelle, Rubens, Michael Angello, Le Brun and Poussin.

A Catholic first traversed the Atlantic ocean, and the Indian seas. A Catholic first scaled the heavens in an air balloon. In fine, most of the inventions, either of use or ornament, which have appeared in modern time, owe their existence to the knowledge and enginuity of Catholics. Yet Catholics are denounced as enemies to human improvement!—*Risum Teneatis amici?*

As the Regular and Secular Clergy of the Catholic Church have been illustrious for Learning themselves, so have they generally been industrious in diffusing useful knowledge among the people.

Almost all the Universities, Colleges and Schools in Europe, that are not of recent institution, were founded by the zeal and charity of Catholics. These establishments are much more numerous in Catholic than in Protestant countries —and infinitely superior in their government and regulation.

That the Catholic Church withholds the Scriptures from the common people, is likewise false and calumnious. This inspired Volume has been

been translated into all the languages of the known world, where the Catholic Faith is professed. It is true and it was necessary, that in the distribution of copies, among many where a spirit of cavil and contention was ready by oblique interpretation to wrest the sense to their own destruction, the Pastors of the Church, under so weighty a responsibility, have shewn some reserve. Who can wonder at this prudence, after what we have seen take place among our Protestant Brethren, in whose communions an opposite line of conduct has multipled opinions and divisions without end?

Having thus anticipated and (we trust) obviated all current, and almost all possible, objections to Catholic Faith and Discipline, we may confidently affirm that this task is, nevertheless, altogether gratuitous and superogatory. For if it be clearly established, that the Catholic Church is the true Church of Christ; all discussions respecting her tenets, is superfluous. Because if she be the true Church, she is infallible. If infallible, she can impose no articles of credence, false or even doubtful. The inference is irresistible.

Let us never cease to insist, that the Catholic Church unites every feature and qualification, which Reason and Religion teach us to expect in the true Church of Christ. *One* in shape and form—*Holy* in character—*Universal* in extent—and *Apostolical* in Faith and Doctrine, and in the succession of her Pastors.

In all these traits (we repeat it) the Protestant societies are evidently deficient. If then the Catholic Church be not the true Church of Christ, there is and can be *None*. Consequently, they who deny her authority, must take refuge in Deism, and reject all Revealed Religion.

Notwithstanding the discordance of their

opinions, yet our Protestant Brethren insist, that they have a standard of truth, and a rule of faith, to which they appeal on all occasions, and by which they profess to be governed entirely. This is the Bible.

"The Bible (says Chillingworth) is the Religion of Protestants."

On the contrary, Catholics maintain that the Bible, however inspired, is insufficient as a rule of faith, and a guide to salvation.

Lest this sentiment should be misunderstood, it may be proper to state, that no people on the face of the earth, entertain a more profound veneration for the Holy Scriptures, than the Clergy and Laity of the Catholic Church. The solemnity and genuflexions which are exacted in reading them at Mass, are edifying to all strangers who occasionally assist at this Sacrifice. One side of the High Altar is called the *Gospel* side, and the other, that of the *Epistle*. Nor are they less respected by Catholics individually. They are read with great devotion; and by many upon their knees.

"The Bible (says Chillingworth) is the Religion of Protestants."

What is the Bible? The Bible it will be answered, is the History of the most remarkable Dispensations of God to Man. It records a series of the most astonishing events, analogous to nothing which we, of the present age, have ever seen or heard—events in constant contradiction to the usual routine of things, and in perpetual violation of the common laws of nature.

Now in the first place, what evidence does the Bible afford in proof of the amazing and miraculous transactions which it relates?—None whatever. No book can authenticate itself.—It must then be believed upon *external* testimony. And

what is this?—*Tradition.* So true is it that every thing in Religion is *traditional.*

In the next place, through what channel? Did the first Reformers witness the events narrated in Holy Writ, or even see them recorded?—Certainly not. From whom did they receive the Bible?—From the Catholic Church. Consequently then she is the regular channel of Tradition, is the sole legitimate depository of the Scriptures, and can alone prove their authenticity—and explain their meaning.

The Founders of Protestantism rejected the *unwritten* Traditions of the Church, on the pretext that they were fabricated and false. If the Catholic Church could with impunity have executed such imposition as these on the Christian world, could she not likewise have invented the Bible itself?

Should our Protestant Brethren object that the Old Testament has been also transmitted through the channel of the Synagogue; we might reply, that not a Christian in existence believes it upon this testimony. And had the Catholic Church rejected the Jewish Records as she did the Jewish Worship, not a Protestant at this day would have received them.

With regard to the New Testament, should our Protestant Brethren cite the Greek and Eastern churches—and alledge that it has been equally transmitted through their channel; we might rejoin that both Greeks and Orientals have separated from Catholic unity—and like the Protestants, owe their Bible to Catholic Tradition.

Luther himself acknowledges all this, and says "We are obliged to yield many things to the Papists—that *with them* is the Word of God, which

we received from them: otherwise we should have known nothing at all about it."

THESE facts being admitted, what guarantee have our Protestant Brethren, that the Catholic Church is not the *sole inventor* of Christianity, and that she has not herself *forged the Records* which proclaim its establishment?—Certainly none whatever.

AGAIN—Suppose the Bible true—of what number of books and what precise books does it consist?—It is itself silent upon the subject. Twenty books at least, it has been calculated, are *lost.* Among them are that of *the Wars of the Lord*—See Numbers xxi. 14.—that of Jehu the son of Hanani, 2 Chron. xx. 34.—that of Nathan the Prophet, 1 Chron. xxix. 29.—that of the Prophecy of Abijah, 2 Chron. ix. 29.—that of the Vision of Iddo the Seer, See ibid.—that of Samuel the Seer, See 1 Chron. xxix. 29.—that of Gad the Seer, ibid.—that of Jasher.—The Epistle of Paul to the Laodiceans, See Col. iv. 16.—that of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah and Israel, and many others—besides three thousand Proverbs by Solomon, and fifteen hundred Canticles!

Now we ask, who knows what these lost books contained; and whether they might not have contained something, the knowledge of which is absolutely necessary to Salvation?

ONCE more—Suppose this difficulty vanquished, others arise not less obstinate and perplexing, and the Protestant still holds his faith by the most precarious tenure.

"THE Bible (says Chillingworth) is the Religion of Protestants."

BUT what Bible—that is, what copy, what edition? The learned Dr. Mills computed that in his time, there were not less than *thirty thousand*

readings of the New Testament. Can we for a moment doubt that in these various readings, there is matter enough to form as many sects, when we see a hundred sects divide upon the *same reading* —viz; that of the Bible printed in the reign of King James the first?

If it be urged, that these variations are trifling and accidental, neither subversive of sound doctrine, nor implying any treachery in the Translators: let us appeal to the sentiments of the Reformers and other Protestants themselves, whose mutual complaints, sarcasms and abuse are unparalleled in the annals of controversy. Whitaker says "*Forgery*, I blush for the honor of Protestantism, while I write it, seems to have been peculiar to the *Reformed*. I look in vain for one of these accursed outrages of imposition among the disciples of Popery."

Zuinglius says to Luther—"Thou corruptest, O Luther! the divine word. Thou art an open and bold perverter of the Sacred Scriptures. Although we have esteemed thee beyond measure, yet we now blush at thy prophaneness." Luther is not much in his debt, but calls him and his followers "Asses, fools, antichrists and impostors." The Bible of the divines of Basil, Beza calls "wicked, and quite repugnant to the dictates of the Holy Ghost." The Bible of Castalio, the same Beza calls "Sacrilegious, wicked and pagan." Of the Bible of Beza himself, Castalio in his turn says, "Indeed to mention all Beza's corruptions of the Scripture would fill a volume." And Molinœus says "Beza changes entirely the text."—The Bible of Calvin, the same Molinœus criticises with equal severity, and says "Calvin makes the text of the Gospel leap up and down. He uses violence to the letter of the Gospel and adds to

the text." In Luther's Dutch translation of the New Testament only, there were found *one thousand four hundred* heretical errors!

Let us see whether our English versions have merited or found any better quarter.

A Petition directed to King James the First, complains "That our translation of the Psalms, comprised in the Book of Common Prayer, doth in addition, subtraction and alteration, differ from the truth of the Hebrew, in at least *two hundred places.*" If two hundred corruptions were found in the *Psalms alone*, and that by Protestants themselves, how many might be found from the *beginning of Genesis* to the *end of the Apocalypse*, if examined by an impartial judge?

Mr. Carlisle vouches "That the English translations have depraved the sense, obscured the truth, deceived the ignorant; that in many places they distort the Scriptures from the right sense—and that they shew themselves to love darkness more than light—falsehood more than truth!"

The ministers of Lincoln signify to the King, "That the English translation of the Bible is a translation that takes away from the texts—that adds to the texts, and that sometimes to the changing or obscuring of the meaning of the Holy Ghost. For which cause, Protestants of tender consciences made great scruples of subscribing thereto."

"How shall I approve (says Mr. Burgess) under my hand, a translation, which hath *so many omissions, many additions*, which sometimes obscure, sometimes pervert the sense: being sometimes senseless, sometimes contrary."

This great evil of corrupting the Scripture, being well considered by Mr. Broughton, one of the most zealous sort of Protestants, obliged him

to write an epistle to the Lords of the Council, desiring them with all speed to procure a new translation. Because (says he) that which is now in England is *full of errors.*" And in his advertisements of coruptions, he tells the Bishops " That their public translation of the Scripture into English is such, that it perverts the text of the Old Testament in *eight hundred and forty eight places,* and that it causes *millions of millions* to reject the New Testament, and run into *eternal flames !*"

Finally, the translators of the great English Bible declare that " Among the numberless translations which are extant this day in Europe, there is *none of them all of divine and infallible authority.*"

Thus it appears that the Bible is written in various and obsolete languages, translated and retranslated over and over again, offering at length innumerable copies, obscure and interpolated. Who has the sagacity, the patience, the time and the opportunity to collate, examine and compare all these copies, verse by verse, and erect a system of faith upon his labor?

Nevertheless, every person, without exception, who takes the Bible as his sole guide to salvation, is absolutely bound to do this. And after all his industry and research, it is at least a million chances to one that he mistakes in his doctrine and that his soul is lost !

We repeat it emphatically once and again, let none imagine, from the color of this argument, that Catholics do not entertain the most profound respect for this Divine Volume. They esteem it more than all other writings whatever. But they do not ascribe to it impossibilities. They know and they never cease to urge that the Bible cannot be *it's own interpreter.* Books cannot speak. What then is precisely, and without equivocation, it's use?

Simply this and this only. It is a *Law* in the hands of a *Judge*, excellent when applied: but absolutely incapable of self-application.

God, who wills the salvation of man, who would rescue him from sin and death, and raise him to a state of immortal life and glory, has appointed three powers which co-operate in this work of transcendant love and mercy, viz: a *Legislator*, a *Law*, and an *Interpreter*. The *Legislator* is the *Almighty* himself. The *Law*, is the *Traditions* of the Church, whether written or unwritten. The *Interpreter* is the *Church*. In this compound agency, the last (I speak it with awe) is as necessary as the first: and without whose co-operation, the second is absolutely useless.

To render this more clear and incontrovertible, let us suppose a code of laws framed for a country which were to be obeyed without the intervention and coercion of courts of justice. What would be the consequence of this arrangement? Exactly what we see take place among our Protestant Brethren, with regard to the laws of Scripture. And as men who recognize no common authority to explain and apply these laws, interpret them in their own way, and of course differently: one crying, this is the truth according to Scripture, another that—So in a community where every regulation was to be adjusted by private opinion, without judge or jury, every man offending or offended, sinned against or sinning would interpret the law in his own favor, to the multiplication of crime and the oppression of innocence.

It would not be possible to govern a community, if laws were left to arbitrary interpretation and execution. The Church, founded by our Lord and Saviour, is the grand tribunal, to which her children are to refer in all their spiritual concerns.

It she exacts the most implicit obedience, she repays it with peace an security.

This principle of submission and subordination so necessary to every society, though formally denied by our Protestant Brethren, who avow that the very essence of Protestantism is the *right of private judgment*, is nevertheless, virtually admitted. Assemblies and Synods have been convened in the several countries of the Reform to digest and impose articles of faith. And though the foundation of their revolt from the Church, rests on the *right of private judgment*; yet among our Protestant Brethren this right, which has been claimed and maintained by rebellion and bloodshed, is as much controlled by the decisions of their Assemblies and Synods, as it is among Catholics by the decrees of the General Councils. The Synod of Charenton in France in 1644, noticing the error of the Independents, who teach that "Every Church ought to be governed by her proper laws, without any dependance upon any person in ecclesiastical matters, and without any obligation to acknowledge the authority of Conferences and Synods, for her regulation and conduct," urge on the contrary and with great animation, "That this sect is as prejudicial to the state, as to the Church: and that it opens a door to all sorts of irregularities and extravagances, that it takes away all the means of applying any remedy to it, and that if it took place, there might be *as many religions framed as parishes or particular assemblies.*" Rational as this decision is in itself, can any thing be imagined more inconsistent and unbecomnig, than such language in the mouths of men, who had themselves renounced the authority of the universal Church?

Among the various abuses of terms, their is

none more palpable than the word *Church* among our seceding Brethren. They speak with great confidence of the *Protestant Church*, in contradistinction from the Catholic. But where is this Church? No where. A vast variety of sects has appeared within the last three centuries in Europe and America, denominated Protestant: from their protesting against the Church of Rome. But they have no other bond of union whatever. They are many of them bitter foes to each other, and profess tenets of reciprocal contradiction. In this chaos of creeds—amid this anarchy of sects and opinions, it is true with mathematical certainty, that all cannnot have truth on their side. All may be wrong, but all cannot be right. Yet alas! they all appeal to the same standard of truth—the *Bible*: though no two sects and scarcely any two men of this whole number can agree in their interpretation of its meaning.

Thus it is evident that out of the Catholic Church, there is no certainty of faith and no assurance of salvation, and many an example has there been of a Catholic, after rejecting the authority of his native Church, becoming an *Atheist*.

The Authors of the Encyclopœdia speak very pertinenly on this subject. "The first step (say they) which the curious and indocile Catholic takes, when he begins to be dissatisfied with his Religion, is to adopt the Protestant rule of investigation, to constitute himself a judge of Religion, and become Protestant. Led on by this rule in the ardor of investigation, he soon begins to discover that the principles of Protestantism are incoherent, and its doctrine unintelligible. Still therefore, conducted by the same rule, he goes forward, and becomes a Socinian. Socinianism, he finds out has all the perplexities and inconsis-

tencies of Protestantism, and he declares himself a Deist. Well, still discontented, because still pursued with difficulties, he insensibly becomes a Pyrrhonian. Pyrrhonism is a state too dreadful to eudure, and he concludes the series of his errors by sinking into the dreadful abyss of Atheism."

If all be true that is recorded, even by Protestants themselves, the history of the Reformation is a satire upon its name and pretensions. If sound doctrine gained nothing by this Revolt, there are abundant vouchers to prove that pure morality gained as little. Even in the infancy of this unhappy Secession, when prudence and policy ought at least to have saved appearances, what was the character of Protestantism and Protestants? Let us listen to their own report.—Parelus Eberus, a learned Lutheran minister, utters this bitter complaint—"Our whole evangelical congregation abounds with so many divisions and scandals, that it is nothing less than what it pretends to be. If you look upon the evangelical teachers themselves, you will see that some of them are spurred on with vain glory and an invidious zeal. Some of them raise unreasonable debates, and then maintain them with unadvised heat.—There are many of them who pull down by their wicked lives, what they had built up by the truth of their doctrine. Which evils, as every one sees with his own eyes, so has he great reason to doubt whether our evangelical congregation be the true Church, in which so many and such enormous vices are discovered."

Andrew Dudith, in his epistle to Beza, writes as follows—"What sort of people are our Protestants, struggling to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, sometimes to this side, sometimes to that? You may perhaps know what

their sentiments in religion are to-day: but you can never certainly tell what they will be to-morrow. In what article of religion do these churches agree among themselves, which have cast off the Bishop of Rome; Examine all from top to bottom, you shall scarce find one thing affirmed by one which is not immediately condemned by another for wicked doctrine."

LUTHER himself in many places, complains of his Followers growing worse and worse—"And men, (says he) are now more revengeful, covetous and licentious than they were in the Papacy:" "Heretofore (he remarks in another place) when we were seduced by the Pope, every body did willingly follow *good works.* And now no man either sayeth or knoweth any thing, but how to get all to himself by exactions, pillage, theft, lying, usury, &c." He elsewhere declaims—"Men are become so extravagant by the Gospel we have preached to them, that they think every thing lawful that flatters their passions, and have lost all fear of hell fire. There is but *one peasant* in the district of Wittemberg, who endeavours to instruct his family according to the word of God. *All the rest go straight to the Devil.* The same Luther acknowledges that under the Papacy are many good things; yea, *All that is good in Christianity.* "I say, moreover, (rejoins he) that *under the Papacy is true Christianity, even the very kernel of Christianity.*"

MELANCTHON says "It is plain, that in these countries, men's whole concern almost is about banquetting, drunkenness and carousing. And so strangely barbarous is the people, that most men are persuaded that if they do but fast one day, they must die the following night."

CALVIN says, "of so many thousands, who re-

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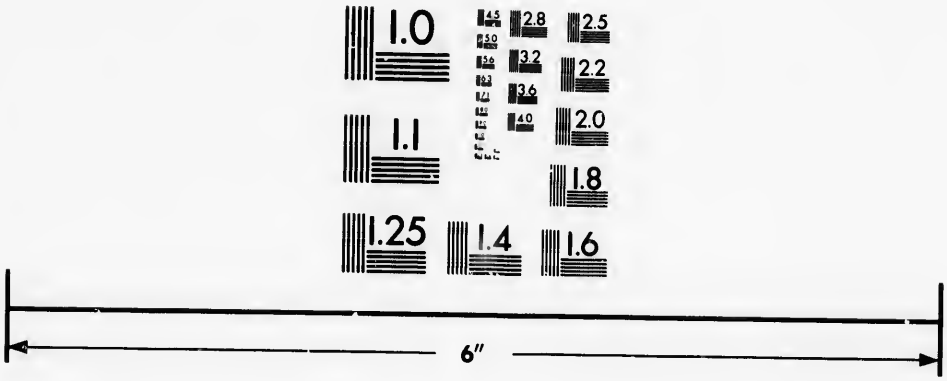

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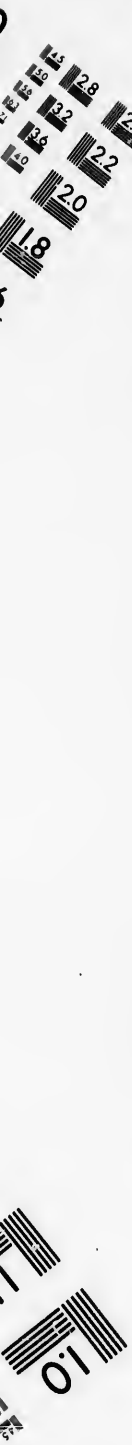
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nouncing Popery, seemed eagerly to embrace the Gospel, how few have amended their lives? Nay, what else did the greater part pretend to, but shaking off the yoke of superstition, to give themselves more liberty to follow all kind of lasciviousness? In another place—"Of the few that have separated themselves from the tyranny of the Pope, the greatest part are rotten at heart. They appear outwardly to be full of zeal; but if you search them to the bottom, you will find them full of hypocrisy and deceit."

Capiton, a minister of Strasburg says in one of his Letters—"The multitude has entirely shaken off the yoke, being trained up to libertinism. As if by pulling down the Pope's authority, we intended to destroy the word of God, the Sacraments, and the whole ministry. They even have the impudence to tell us, 'I am sufficiently instructed in Scriptures—I can read—and stand in no need of your direction."

Jacob Andreas says—"The Protestants give due place to the preaching of the word of God; but no amendment of manners is found among them. On the contrary, we see them lead an abominable, voluptuous, beastly life. Instead of fasts they spend whole nights and days in revellings and drunkenness."—In another place he says, "To make it plain to all the world that they are not Papists, and place no confidence in good works; they take care to practise *none*. When they ought to relieve the poor, they fleece and oppress them. Oaths, blasphemies, and imprecations are their usual prayers. So that Jesus Christ is not so blasphemed among the Turks as he is among them. In a word—instead of humility, nothing reigns among them but haughtiness, arrogance and pride; and this sort of life is called evangelical."

Wolfangus Musculus says—"Our Gospellers are grown so unlike themselves, that whereas under Popery, they were religious in their errors and superstition; now, in the light of the known truth, they are more profane, light, vain and temerarious than the very children of this world." In another place he declares, "As to us Lutherans, the matter stands thus; If any one has a mind to see a set of wicked men, drunkards, libertines, liars, cheats and usurers—let him go to a town *where the Gospel is preached in its purity*: and he will see, as clearly as the sun may be seen at noon day, that there is not so much insolence and wickedness practised among the Turks and infidels as among *evangelical people*, where all the reins of the Devil are let loose."

Sir Richard Baker confesses, "That now was the state of religion in England come to a strange pass; because always in passing and had no existence—that the fable of Proteus, who changed himself into all shapes and forms, might be no longer a fable, when the religion of England might be its true moral."

Finally, King Henry the eighth, in a speech delivered in the thirty-seventh year of his reign says, "What love or charity is there among you, when one calls another Heretic and Anabaptist—and he again calls him Papist, Hypocrite, Pharisee?—Of this I am sure, that charity and virtue were never less exercised; and that God among Christians was never less reverenced, honored or served."

Enough of these sad Reports of the tragic effects of the Reformation.

But perhaps the Reformers redeemed, by the excellence of their own characters, the disorders of their Adherents. Let us then add the portraits

which the Reformers draw of themselves and of each other.

"Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat."

LUTHER says—"I am burned with the flames of my *untamed lusts* and the *desire of women.* I, who ought to be fervent in spirit, am lost in impurity, in sloth, &c." In another place he says, "Relying on the strong foundation of my learning, I yielded not in pride either to the Emperor, King, or *Devil*—no, not to the universe itself."

"LUTHER (says Hospinian) is a man absolutely furious; accustomed to *combat the truth,* not only unjustly, but *in contradiction to his own conscience.*" "He is (says Œcolampadius) puffed up with arrogance and pride, and seduced by Satan.". Zuinglius says, "Indeed so great is the power which Satan possesses over Luther, that he seems to aim at the possession of the whole man." Calvin is called by Beza, "a mere mad dog—a malevolent man; judging of men by the measure of his love or hatred for them." Valmer says also of Calvin, "He is violent and perverse: but so much the better, since *violence is necessary to promote our cause.*" Zuinglius is called by Luther "A son of Hell, an associate with Arius—a man *undeserving to be prayed for.*" Melancthon is styled by Illiricus and Armsdorff, "A shoe for every foot—a corrupter of the word of God—a Pelagian."—Stancarus calls him "The northern Antichrist." Melancthon testifies of Carlostadius, that he was "void of piety and humanity, and more of a Jew than a Christian." Luther says of Œcolampadius, "He was beaten to death by the Devil." John Knox, the ringleader of the Revolt in Scotland, is stiled by Whitaker "A deluded Idiot in his notions—a wild raven in his speeches—a son of vio-

lence and barbarism—the religious sachem of religious Mohawks." Dr. Johnson hoped that he was buried in the *highway*. Burnet says, "The open lewdness in which many lived without shame or remorse, gave great occasion for their adversaries to say, that they were in the right to assert *justification without works*; since they were to every good work reprobate. Their gross and insatiable scrambling after the goods and wealth that had been dedicated with good designs, without applying any part of it to the promoting of the Gospel, the instruction of youth, and the relieving of the poor—made all people conclude that it was for *Robbery* and not for *Reformation*, that their zeal made them so active. The irregular and immoral lives of many of the professors of the Gospel, gave their enemies great advantage to say that they ran away from *Confession*, *Penance*, *Fasting* and *Prayer*, only that they might be under no restraint, but indulge themselves in a licencious and dissolute course of life." Fletcher of Madiley says, "How few of our celebrated pulpits where more has not been said *for* sin than *against* it. *Even adultery and murder* (according to these preachers) *do not hurt the pleasant children of God: but rather work for their good. God sees no sin in believers, whatever sin they commit.*"—Oh! jam satis est.

The candid Protestant will see the pertinacy of these Extracts—and not suspect me of any wish to give pain. I would gladly have omitted them; but I could not do justice to my subject, and exhibit the advantages of Catholic union, without depicting the miseries of Protestant disunion, dissension and uncertainty. Far be it from me to confound our Protestant Brethren of the present day with those who were guilty of these excesses,

Let it be, however, acknowledged, that the want of an infallible authority in matters of faith, was unhappily the cause of them. The radical evil still exists, and if it produce not such bitter fruits as in former times; our Brethren of the Reform owe it not to their doctrine, but to the general influence of civilization and refinement.

The sole, sure and safe remedy for all the disorders engendered by the multiplication of sects, and the diversity of opinions, is for all dissentient Christians, of whatever communion, *to return to Catholic Unity.* The Church, a tender mother, opens her arms to receive with smiles and embraces her wandering Children. She has never ceased to pray for them in their estrangement, and longs to reckon them once more among those of her household.

That this is the only remedy for the evils of the Reformation, and that this will prove effectual, has been the deliberate sentiment of many Protestants of high reputation.

Grotius (whose name is an honor to Letters) was clearly of opinion, that "Protestants will never be united with each other, until they are so with *those who adhere to the See of Rome*: without which, no common agreement can be expected.—He wishes therefore that the rupture now existing, as well as the occasions of it, were removed. Among the causes of which, the *Supremacy of the Pope*, according to the cannon cannot be reckoned, as Melancthon confesses; who even deems the Supremacy *necessary for the preservation of unity.*—Neither is this putting the Church at the Pope's feet, but it is only the *ancient and respectable order of things restored again.*"

Leibnitz (another illustrious name) gives his opinion as follows—"As God is the God of order,

and as the Church *One, Catholic and Apostolic*, under a hierarchy embracing all the members, *is from God*: it follows that in this body there is by Divine Right, *One Supreme Spiritual Magistrate*, acting within his own limits, having a dictatorial authority, and the power of executing what is necessary to discharge his duty for the advantage of the Church. Even should *Rome*, which is the metropolis of the Christian world, be chosen the seat and residence of this Power, from merely human considerations; really it is requisite in every commonwealth and consequently in the *Christian Church*, that there be *one supreme Magistracy*: whether it be determined to center all its authority in one individual, or divide it between many. And in the latter case, it is fit that one of the members should have the authority of dictator or supreme Magistrate, which is the same, though with a limited power." In another document he sighs for the restoration of the ancient order of things—"which (he says emphatically) would bring back to us the *Golden Age*."

"THERE is (says St. Cyprian) but one God and one Christ, and one Faith, and a People joined in one solid body with the cement of concord. This unity cannot suffer a division, nor this one body bear to be disjointed. He cannot have God for his *Father*, who has not the Church for his *Mother*. If any one could escape the Deluge out of Noah's Ark, he who is out of the Church may also escape."

THE great St. Austin thus addresses the Dissenters of his time—"If you think you have been sufficiently tossed about, and wish to see an end to your anxieties, follow the rule of Catholic discipline, which came down to us through the Apostles from Christ himself, and which shall descend from us to the latest posterity."

There are two considerations, which duly weighed, would no doubt facilitate the return of our Protestant Brethren to the Catholic Church. In the first place, the return of a Protestant to the communion of the universal Church cannot strictly be called a *Conversion*. He does not join a strange and foreign Church—he only returns to the Church of his Forefathers.—He is not *converted*, but merely *reconciled*.

In the next place, this return does not imply absolutely *a change of doctrine*. The convert still retains the fundamental articles of his former belief—and only *enlarges his creed*. Dr. Johnson observes with his usual wisdom and penetration—"A man who is converted from Protestantism to Popery may be sincere. He parts with nothing. He is only super-adding to what he already had."

These reflections are of the most consolatory nature, and ought surely to influence the minds of our Protestant Brethren to a measure fraught with such transcendant advantage. Still perhaps will they insist, that there are *corruptions* in the Catholic Church.—Enough, and perhaps more than enough has been advanced in refutation of this charge. But supposing for a moment, (and the concession costs us nothing) that in the long lapse of time the Catholic Church "covered with the awful hoar of innumerable ages" may have lost something of her primitive attraction and simplicity; is this a reason for estrangement and rejection?—Are the matron graces of Christ's Spouse less engaging than were her bridal charms? Or (to try another simile) would an Heir leave a venerable Palace, which had descended to him from the most remote ancestry, merely because, in the revolution of years, a few cobwebs had collected upon the walls?

I HERE close the subject.—There are in the various Protestant communions thousands of well disposed persons, who only require to have the substance of the controversy impartially laid before them, to receive the truth in all its integrity. To my fellow citizens of this description, I address this humble attempt; and affectionately request them to weigh the arguments thus offered to their consideration. Let them not forget that Religion is the most important concern of mankind: and that while all the Protestant sects unite in acknowledging that Catholics may be saved; the Catholic Church, "the city of God," and sole depository of all truth, emphatically declares that out of her pale, there is no salvation. O that we may all know in this our day the things which belong to our peace, before they be forever hidden from our eyes.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER,

Translated from the original Latin of the Sovereign Pontiff.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost—AMEN.

I believe in Thee, O Lord! May I believe more firmly.
I hope in Thee, O Lord! May I hope more safely.
I love Thee, O Lord! May I love Thee more fervently.
I repent, O Lord! May I repent more earnestly.

I adore Thee as my First Beginning.
I desire Thee as my Last End.
I praise Thee as my Constant Benefactor.
I invoke Thee as my Merciful Defender.

Direct me by thy Wisdom.—Restrain me by thy Justice.—Console me by Thy Pity. Protect me by thy Power.

That I may be Thine according to my Baptism. I renounce the Devil and his Works—the World and its Pomps—the Flesh and its Lusts—Heresy and its Errors.

To Thee I consecrate my Thoughts, that they may be occu-

pied with Thy Greatness; my Words, that they may proclaim Thy Goodness; my Actions, that they may be regulated by Thy Law; and my Sufferings, that they may be submissive to Thy Decrees.

I will whatever Thou willest—because Thou willest, in the manner Thou willest—and as much as Thou willest.

May I Accept what Thou Approvest—Reject what Thou Hatest——Shun what Thou Forbiddest—and Observe what Thou Commandest.

To this end I beseech Thee—
to Enlighten my Understanding—to Inflame my Will—to Purify my Body—and to Sanctify my Soul.

May I Bewail my Past Offences—Surmount Future Temptations—Correct Vicious Propensities—and practice the Christian Virtues.

Inspire me, good God! with a Love of Thee—a Hatred of Myself a zeal for my Neighbor—and a contempt for the World.

May I studiously Respect my Superiors—Condescend to my Inferiors—Assist my Friends—and Spare my Foes.

May I vanquish Pleasure by Austerity—Avarice by Liberality—Anger by Meekness—and Tepidity by Devotion.

Infuse in my heart, Fear without Despair—Confidence without Presumption—Piety without Enthusiasm—and Joy without Levity.

Render me also Prudent in Undertakings—Couragious in Dangers—Patient in Adversity—and Humble in Prosperity.

Grant, O Lord, that I may be Recollected in my Prayers—Sober in my Repasts—Diligent in my Employments—and constant in my Resolutions.

May I so govern my Senses, that I may Hear nothing Injurious—Speak nothing Licentious—See nothing Impure—and do nothing Perverse.

May I be careful to maintain—
an Inward Innocence—an Outward Modesty—an Examplary Conversation—and a Regular life.

May I assiduously watch to Subdue nature—to Cherish Thy Grace—to Obey Thy Law—and to secure my Salvation.

May I learn from Thee
how Little what is Earthly—how Great what is Heavenly—how Short what is Temporal—and how Durable what is Eternal.

Grant that I may Anticipate Death—Fear Thy Judgments—Escape Hell—and Obtain Heaven.

Finally, Grant Repentance to Sinners—Perseverance to the Just—Peace to the Living—and Happiness to the Departed.

THROUGH Christ our Mediator—Mary our Intercessor—the Prayers of the Saints—and the Suffrages of the Church.—

AMEN.

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