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The Catholic.

Quod semper; quod ubique; quod ab omnibus.

VOL. I.

KINGSTON, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1830.

NO. 8.

ORIGINAL.

HYMN TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse: and a flower shall rise up out of this root; and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him."—Isaiah, Ch. 11. v. 1, 2.

Sweet flow'rs, the fairest ever blown
In Sharon's lovely vale:
Whose balmy fragrance, wide around
Perfumes the wafting gale!

By sacred Sion's sainted bands
In strain prophetic sung;
At length from Jesse's regal root
All pure and spotless sprung!

The Heav'ns to nurse thy growing stem,
Distill'd their brightest dew:
And, hovering o'er thine hallowed top,
The ethereal spirit flew.

Not Eden, in her blooming haunts,
With all her flow'rs so fair,
Could boast a flow'r so choice as thine,
For worth and beauty rare.

'Twas she, the stem from Jesse's root,
God's Virgin sprung;
And he the flow'r, Jez. Son Divine,
By all the Prophet's sung.

On him in Jordan's stream baptiz'd,
Descends the mystic dove:
And loud his Son below'd the Sira
Proclaims him from above.

SELECTED.

From the London Catholic Miscellany.

DIFFICULTIES OF PROTESTANTISM.

PROTESTANTISM necessarily labours under the disadvantage of all systems founded on negatives: it is instable, because, being only a reformed creed, men will entertain adverse opinions respecting the extent of the original reformation, and suggest further improvements; and it must always continue sectarian, because its very existence depends on the permanency of that religion from which it separated. To appreciate its doctrines properly, you must familiarize yourself with the tenets of the church which it impugns; and, were it possible for these to become, as it were, extinct, Protestants must, at once, dissolve, or, at least, separate into sectarian particles, without any bond of unity, or possibility of perpetuating their doctrines.

Dr. Burgess was quite correct in stating that Protestantism was an abjuration of Popery; there is nothing original about it; its origin was negative, and can be traced to men who called themselves Catholic reformers. The name which, in fondness, they gave themselves, sufficiently testifies the nature of their opinions, and their belief in the Apostolic descent of the church, which they wished to improve. Circumstances produced in them a more

daring mind, and the new doctrines which they promulgated in a spirit of envy and detraction, have been ever since supported, by a mental delusion, which has its foundation in popular ignorance. As long as Catholicism could be misrepresented with impunity, Protestantism did not want adherents: men were impelled into its folds by fear, and the Pope was the raw-head-and-bloody-bones which was being perpetually conjured up to fright the people into spiritual propriety. It is not in the nature of things that children of dissent could maintain their ground if people were placed in a condition which would admit them to examine, dispassionately, the claims of the mother church and the separatists. Christianity is not a thing that admits of improvement: being a revelation it was originally perfect; and having been enforced by the life, miracles, and death of the Redeemer, it is nothing less than gross impiety to suppose, for an instant, that He would establish a church which might, even by possibility, need reform—not in discipline—but in doctrinal matters. This is an argument which suggests itself, at once, to every capacity; which cannot be resisted, when fairly stated; and which must for ever operate against the stability of Protestantism. Dr. Fletcher remarks:

"There are various causes, however,—although I shall not enumerate them,—why the Protestant refuses to investigate the claims, and discuss the character of the Catholic Religion. One of these, for I will just cite one or two of them,—is the ignorance,—the strange, the false, the preposterous notions, which he entertains of our sacred institution. For, although there be, perhaps, no subject that is more familiar to him than that of 'Popery,'—none upon which he divells more delightfully, and dissertates more fluently,—(it is the constant topic of his conversations, and the favourite theme of his invectives,)—yet it is true that there is no one subject upon which his ignorance is more pitiful, and his notions more erroneous. The circumstance, is, unhappily but too natural. For, not only is the whole education of the Protestant—(I speak with some exceptions,)—from the very lap of the nurse to the completion of his studies in the schools, a system of misrepresentation of our religion, but every thing, almost, in society contributes to burn still deeper upon his mind the false and pernicious impressions,—conversations, the laws, the pulpit, and above all—still worse than the sword of persecution,—the pen and the press. And, then, to correct, or counteract, all this injustice, he never,—or, at least, hardly ever,—gives himself the trouble to consult any proper medium for correct instruction,

neither any Catholic writer, nor any well instructed Catholic. He neither suspects,—as he would do in any other case of violent accusation,—that the imputations may be false; or that the charges may be exaggerated. Imposed upon by the defectiveness of his early education;—deceived by a set of preachers, who are, themselves, the dupes of ignorance and prejudice; cheated by works which are the effusions of hostility, bigotry, and interest; he lives on, calmly and imprudently, contented and secure—violating, alike, both his own principles, which bid him discuss before he believes, and the rules of justice, which command him to listen to the accused, ere he ventures to condemn. I do not say, that having done this—having studied our religion carefully—he will, therefore, be induced to embrace it. He may not do this: for faith is the effect of grace. But, at all events, his knowledge will produce this effect: he will no more condemn or insult our religion; and although his sin may be greater, still it will be a less stupid sin than it is at present. For then, like the angel of pride, he will choose between truth and falsehood, between right and wrong, with a knowledge of the cause.

"However, such, unhappily, is the cause: there are no disorders which it is so difficult to cure as the disorders of the understanding. The passions of the heart may be soothed and rendered calm. Conflicting interests may be reconciled, and enmities done away. All this is the work of time; and time, by degrees, effects it. But against the disorders of error time has, in general, hardly any effect whatever: because, still fostered by prejudices, and animated by the passions which it engenders, error constantly goes on increasing, and never waxes old. Hence, therefore, it is—from the fruits of ignorance, generated chiefly by misrepresentation; and from the disorders of the understanding, produced by misconception—that the Protestant refuses, with so much obstinacy, to investigate the character of his parent church."

The truth is, that Protestantism, being a reformed religion, is, from the admission implied in the term, necessarily imperfect, and those who think that it needs further reform have a right, on the fundamental principle of Protestantism, to adopt innovations as speedily and as abundantly as they conscientiously may think fit; hence the crowds of sects which distract every Protestant country. A plurality of sects begets, first, indifference; and, subsequently, infidelity. When one affirms and another denies, both cannot be right; and when religion degenerates into fanaticism, and the vulgar undertake to interpret the word of God, superficial

thinkers, who take upon trust whatever tends to release them from religious responsibility, regard the whole as a solemn mockery and gross imposition.

"In this country the character of religion has been, very generally and systematically, reduced by Hoadley, and his literary followers, to a something that is little better than artfully concealed deism. Compelled, as these men constantly tell they were, by the principles of the reformation, to allow all men to judge for themselves, and to follow the dictates of their own judgment, and therefore, of course, to tolerate every order of believers; they thus opened an abyss, in which all sects and forms of religion come together and unite; or, to speak more accurately, in which, all plunged together, mutually confound and destroy each other. For, as no one religion can properly subsist but by the rejection of all others, so do they reciprocally expire in each other's embraces. Thus, by removing that sacred barrier, which separates truth from error, and the real worship of Christianity from the pretended reformations of human wisdom, our modern innovators have gone so far as to have set aside the very badge—that distinctive badge—which points out and first forms, the Christian—the divine seal and stamp of baptism. Baptism—which, the Scripture declares is so essential to the security of salvation—is, according to the School of Hoadley, neither more nor less than an empty, unmeaning ceremony—a mere childish rite. Such, too, as this is the notion, which is very commonly entertained of the mysterious action in many other Protestant states; insomuch that, in some of them, the civil power has been obliged to interfere, in order to prevent its total abolition. In these,—or, at least, in several of these,—if the infant be still a sacred being—if religion still sheds its amiable influence around its cradle—it is to the wisdom of the civil policy that the gratitude is due: for, it is its protection alone that has defended the rights both of the Christian, and of the man, against the cold and insupportable indifference of a barbarous theology.

"From England, the doctrine of latitudinarianism and infidelity have passed over to America. It is in its newly-erected university of Cambridge in particular, that the seeds of irreligion are sown in the minds of the young. Thence, they are carried, and profusely scattered abroad, through all the provinces of that boundless continent. There they grow and develop, and expand themselves, with such a degree of luxuriance, that the old plant of the reformation is nearly choked under the confusion and pressure of their shade. There, as in Europe, the ministers of the countless sects are careful not to shock and offend each other by preaching a series of contested mysteries. Or, rather,—since all mysteries are contested—they appear to be mutually agreed amongst each other not to preach by mystery whatsoever. Their method is, vaguely to dissertate upon certain subjects of morality; which, alone, just like the deist, they are pleased to inculcate as essential. It is true they put the Bible, without note or comment, into the

hands of the people: and in doing this—that is, in giving them a book which they either do not read, or else read without understanding it—they give them as they are pleased to call it—'a religion.'

"In Protestant Germany the scene, as it is described by its own Protestant writers, is if possible, more afflicting still. There, these writers tell us, the very ministers of the different sects, whilst they pretend to revere the Bible as the oracle of Christian faith, make it at the same time, their real endeavour to bring it into contempt."

A nation of infidels, however, is a moral impossibility: man will be religious in spite of absurd theories; and the result of religious doubt—for nothing is so potent in generating doubt as infidelity—as a spirit of inquiry comparatively free from prejudice, which generally terminates in truth. Thus, the thinking part of the German Protestants are embracing Catholicism; and the same thing is taking place in Geneva—the Protestant Rome. A native writer, addressing the pastors of the Swiss church, says, "You delight the Catholic clergy, who had long since foretold you that the reformation would lead to deism. Certain it is, that these men have converted great numbers to Catholicity. And I know that a still greater number are on the point of re-entering that church."

ON BIBLE READING.

"To the aid of reason, and to the sanctions of sentiment and inspiration, the Protestant, call in the aid of the Scriptures; appealing constantly, and confidently, to their testimony; and reposing his convictions upon their presumed authority. This is; indeed one of the chief,—if not the best,—stronghold of his defence. And it is because the Catholic does not exactly approve of this mode of deciding the truth, or the falsehood; of any doctrine, that he is so severely condemned, as the enemy of the word of God. This is even a subject, which forms the great theme of those countless publications, which are unceasingly issuing from the press, against Popery; and, above all, it is that which fires the zeal and animates the eloquence of our modern hosts of bibliomaniacs. Wherefore, since both the imputation, and the question itself, are so important, I will hence, pause, at some length upon them. And first, I will state the opinion which the Catholic entertains respecting the sacred volume; evincing, how groundless is the accusation of our supposed hostility, either to the divine book, or to its circulation.

"The fact, then, is that the church of Rome, so far from being an enemy to the Bible, considers its possession as the most valuable of its treasures; and so far from being averse to its circulation, she, on the contrary, wishes to see it dispersed through every corner, and cottage, of the Christian universe,—provided only that its translations be correct; and that men read it, in the dispositions of humble, and prudent piety. We deem it a peculiarly fortunate and happy circumstance, that the Christian religion,—although, indeed, it was established without the aid of any written word,—should have its annals, and its written code of doctrines. It is well, that the faithful should possess

the authentic registers of their faith, and the titles of their future expectations; well, that, amidst the trophies of error, and the monuments of incertitude and incredulity,—truth should equally,—and still more,—have its trophies, and its monuments too. It is well, that whilst books without end, and number, attest the thoughts of man, there should at least, be one to attest the thoughts of God.

"But the utility and advantages of the Scriptures, are, still, farther, rendered evident from the consideration of the following circumstances,—that, precisely, as tradition serves to explain, and determine, the sense of the sacred pages, so also do these same pages, in return, serve to prove the antiquity of tradition, and to confirm, and strengthen its authority. They show, that religion, its dogmas, and its duties, are, at all times, binding and irrevocable. They fix, or contribute to fix, the language,—and consequently, too, the stability,—of the public faith.—Whilst moreover, it is true, that, without their aid, and testimony, a variety of facts, instructions, &c., which help powerfully to move the heart and to enlighten the understanding, would either, by this time, be unknown, or at all events, known but to few; they present to us truths, the most sublime; and injunctions, the most important,—designed, for the regulation of the church; the order of society; and the conduct and sanctification of individuals.—Whence, St. Paul says: 'All scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; in order that the man of God may be made perfect, and thoroughly furnished unto all good works.' Such are the Scriptures; and such as these, the notions, which the Catholic entertains of their sanctity; their utility; and their benefits.—revering them as the most precious and important gift, that the wisdom and goodness of the Almighty has bestowed upon his creatures.

"With all these advantages; then,—and seeing that the sacred volumes have been lent to us for the above-cited purposes;—seeing this, is it not, for these reasons, but a piece of consistency to suppose, that the understandings of men, assisted at the same time, by the instincts, and impulse, of their feelings, are competent, with these aids, to judge, and determine, what in religion, it is wise and proper to believe, and what it is right and prudent to reject?—Such as this, no doubt, is the doctrine.—the necessary doctrine,—of every Protestant church, and of every consistent Protestant. All these in the language of the 'immortal' Chillingworth, as he is called, exultingly proclaim, 'The Bible, the Bible, and only the Bible, is the religion of Protestants.—And hence it is, that we hear, the clergy, and the preachers, of each Protestant sect, so earnestly exhorting their respective followers to read, and study, the divine book unceasingly. 'Read it,' they call out; 'examine it: for it is the book of life. Learn from it, for it will teach you what it is proper for you to believe, and what it is right to practice.' As I have just remarked, all this is but a piece of consistency.

"Since then, it is thus contended, that it is the privilege; and duty, of men to interpret the sacred

pages, ought not the direct consequence to be,—and is it not the dictate of common sense to suppose it,—that they should, therefore, be competent to understand them? Such consequence is, no doubt, palpable:—else, the reading, and examination, become nugatory and unavailing. Well; and do they, then understand,—or are they competent to explain the mysterious volumes?—This is, indeed, a question, which requires no discussion whatever. They do not understand them.—Even the learned themselves, left to their own talents, do not understand them. The truth is,—and it is the concession of the most enlightened scholars,—that, amongst all the variety of books in the whole order of literature, there is not one single work that is more obscure, more perplexing, and difficult to be understood, than the sacred Scriptures; proof, this alone, that they never were designed by the eternal wisdom to be subjected to the interpretation of each private individual. ‘Open your bibles, take the first page that occurs in either Testament, and tell me, without disguise, is there nothing in it too hard for your understanding? If you find all before you clear and easy, you may thank God for giving you a privilege which he has denied to many thousands of sincere believers.’ Accordingly, referring to the opinions of even the most learned Protestants, we constantly find, that, whenever they pretend, or attempt, to interpret the holy pages, by the light of their own private reason, and the dictates of their own feelings, they not only, all, differ amongst themselves, just equally as do the ignorant, and the simple, but they plunge, many of them, into errors, which are, sometimes, as pernicious as they are absurd. Their opinions are as various as their respective characters; and as numerous, almost, as their persons. Yes, and not only this,—but even the creeds, and symbols, of the reformed churches,—although composed by the wisdom and policy of the learned; and reposing professedly upon the plainest texts of Scripture;—and designed to create a something like unity amongst the public;—even these are, all, at variance with each other. So that, no where, amongst all the innumerable sects of Protestantism, do any two of these important, but singular, instruments agree together.

TESTIMONY CONCERNING CHRIST.

The sublimity of the gospel, and the purity and excellence of its maxims, and of the person of Jesus Christ, of whose life it is a summary, are described by one of the greatest infidels of the age, John James Rousseau, in the following words:—
 “I must acknowledge that the majesty of the scriptures fills me with astonishment, the sanctity of the gospel speaks to my heart. Look at all the books of the philosophers, with all their pomp, and you will find them little and mean, if compared with this. Is it possible that a book at once so sublime and so simple, can be the production of men? Is it possible that he, whose history is here given, should be nothing more than man? Is this the tone of an enthusiast or an ambitious sectary? What swiftness, what purity in his morals! Whatunction in his instructions! What dignity in his max-

ims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what wariness and exactness in his answers! And what command over his passions!—Where is the man, where is the sage, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die, without either weakness, or ostentation? When Plato describes his imaginary just man laden with all the ignominy of guilt, though really deserving all the honors and rewards of virtue, he draws Jesus Christ at every stroke. The resemblance is so striking, that all the fathers have taken notice of it, and it is not possible for any one to be deceived by it.—How great must be the prejudices, how great the blindness of the man, who durst compare the Son of Sophronisca with the Son of Mary? How great a difference is there between the one and the other! Socrates dying without pain, and without ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if this easy death had not crowned his life, we might doubt whether Socrates with all his wisdom, had been any thing more than a mere sophist. They say, he invented the rules called Moral Philosophy. But others had first reduced those rules to practice, he did nothing more than say what they had done, and turn their examples into lessons. Aristides had been just, before Socrates had said what justice was. Leonidas had died for his country, before Socrates declared it a duty to love it. Sparta was sober, before Socrates praised sobriety, and before he had defined virtue.—Greece abounded in virtuous men. But from whom did Jesus learn that pure and sublime morality, of which he alone has given both the lessons and the examples?

The death of Socrates, peacefully philosophizing in the midst of friends, the easiest, one can desire; and that of Jesus, expiring in torments on the cross, insulted, scoffed at, and blasphemed by a whole people, is the most horrible one can fear. Socrates taking the poisoned cup, blesses the man who presents it to him with tears! Jesus, in the midst of the agonies of a most cruel death, prays for his savage executioners. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates be those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God.—Shall we then say that the Gospel History is a fiction? No, my friends this cannot be, for the facts of Socrates, of which one doubts, are not half so well attested as those of Jesus Christ. And at best this would be only evading the difficulty, not answering it. For it would be more difficult to convince, that many should combine to write such a book, than one should furnish the matter. Jewish authors would never have been able to hit upon either this manner of expression, or this sublime morality; and the Gospel has characters of truth, so great, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that the inventor would have been more astonishing than the hero.”

ORIGINAL.

ON THE WORD OF GOD.

Speak, Lord: for thy servant heareth.—1 King i. 11.
 WERE any earthly prince or potentate to do us the honour of conversing with us, as his intimate friends

and familiars, especially about whatever tended most to our own honour and advantage; with what attention and respect, with what lively sentiments of gratitude and love, would we listen to the words of so good and gracious a sovereign? And how readily would he not perform whatever he were pleased to enjoin? But in point of dignity, what earthly prince can be compared to the God and Sovereign Lord of all things! The greatest monarch is but a mere worm in his presence; a glittering insect, the being of a day; who borrows all his grandeur and importance but from the relation he bears to his fellow-creatures: but who dwindles into a mere nothing, when compared with the Deity, that great, eternal, all-wise, and omnipotent being; compared with whom this whole universe and all nature is but like an almost imperceptible atom floating within the boundless sphere of his immensity; who, in the sublime language of the prophet Isaias, has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand; and weighed the heavens with his palm. Who has poised with three fingers the bulk of the earth, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, ch. xl. v. 12.

Such is that great God, who deigns to address himself to us, poor worms of the earth. Nor did ever earthly prince shew himself so familiar and affectionate towards any of his subjects, as the Deity has done towards us. He admits us to an audience as often as we please. He never tires of our company and conversation. He exhorts us to ask with confidence for whatever we need, and assures us that he will grant it, if it be for our good. And when he himself vouchsafes to converse with us, it is always about our own concerns, in so much that he seems to have nothing but our good at heart, and to consult nothing so much as our welfare and happiness. And yet with what inattention do we hear his sacred word announced to us by the pastors of his Church, or read to us from the inspired writings and pious books! How seldom do we profit, as we ought, of his admonitions, and with what reluctance do we perform what he is pleased to enjoin! The reason doubtless why his word thus communicated to us, makes so little impression on our minds, is because we do not sufficiently consider that it is not the word of man, who is but the echo and the organ, through which he is pleased to converse with us, but of God himself, who deigns to speak with us concerning the most important of all concerns, our eternal salvation. It is because we consider the meanness of the visible speaker, who is but a fellow creature, and whose voice can only reach the corporeal ear; more than the dignity of the invisible inspirer, whose words can find their way to the innermost recesses of the heart, and communicate themselves in secret whispers to the soul of the attentive hearer. Our Lord has given us to understand that we are to hear his word when spoken to us by our spiritual directors, with the same respect and deference, as if it were addressed to us by himself in person. He who hears you, says he to his apostles, hears me; and he who despises you, despises me.

The profound respect and attention, with which

the word of God ought to be listened to, appears from the sublime and emphatic manner in which the prophet Isaiah, commands all nature to hearken what he is going to announce it. *Hear, O ye heavens, says he, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken.* And indeed all nature, and even the inanimate creation hears and obeys the word of God.

He commands the sun, and lo! he walketh forth with all his brightness; and taketh his appointed journey from east to west. At night he bids the moon lead on the starry host of heaven; and instantly their numerous squadrons are ranged in bright array. None of them are missing. Each one knows his place. He calls them by their names, and they answer him, lo, here we are. *He has set bounds to the ocean, and has made for it bars and doors.— He has said to it, thus far shalt thou come, and shalt go no farther; and here shall thou break thy swelling waves.* Job xxxviii. 10. At his word the Spirit of the storm is roused. Whithersoever he directs, thither on the red wings of the lightning it directs its flight, and proclaims aloud his dread commission in thunder along the sky.— Again he speaks, and already it has fled. It has returned to the place from which it came. The seasons at his call are ready in their turns. The earth at his command renews her cloathing, and decks herself out in her gayest attire. She unlocks all her stores, displays her rich harvests, and pours forth her various herbs, fruits and flowers.

And shall all nature hear and obey the word of God, though not for her own sake, but for the sake of man, to whom God has made her subservient; and yet man remain deaf to his voice and disobedient to his commands! Man, whom God would not compel to obey him as a slave, but rather as a child should a father from motives of choice and affection! Shall man, whom God has so much honoured and loved above all the other creatures, be the only one who refuses all due respect and deference to his sacred word, though addressed to him merely with a view to secure his happiness for time and eternity.

ON THE LOVE OF GRATITUDE WHICH WE OWE TO GOD

Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and soul and mind this is the greatest and the first commandment Matth xxii 37.

There is something in our very nature, which compels us to love what is amiable, to admire what is beautiful, and to esteem and appreciate whatever is perfect and valuable. We naturally feel our hearts glow with gratitude towards an earthly benefactor. The sweet emotions of love and tenderness towards him are stirred within us: and we are never easy, nor can we rest satisfied, till we have made some suitable acknowledgements for all his favours.

Now Reason and Religion teach us that there is nothing so amiable and beautiful, nothing so perfect and estimable as God. He is beauty itself.— He is the sum of all perfection. In him all that is lovely and valuable is centered; and from him all that we love and admire in the creatures derives its

existence. He is our greatest, and, properly speaking, our only Benefactor, since from him we have received all that we have, and all that we are.— How come it then that, only when there is question of loving God, we act so contrary to the dictates of Reason and Religion, and struggle, I may say, so obstinately against the very impulse of our nature, as not to love above all things that which is most lovely! Not to desire most ardently that which is most beautiful and desirable! And not to prize above all things that which in itself is most perfect and estimable! The commandment of loving God above all things might seem unnecessary; and one would imagine it impossible for a rational creature such as man, a being created merely to love, not to burn with seraphic ardour, not to be all on fire with divine love, did not experience fatally convince us of the contrary. Whence all this coldness, and indifference for him, who ought to be the supreme object of our love, admiration, desire and esteem? It can proceed only from our want of reflection.— We seldom or never cast a thought on the sovereign excellence of God; or on the wonders of his goodness and merely towards us. Our minds are always so crowded with the ideas of the vain and transitory enjoyments of this life, as not to afford room for such pious and salutary considerations. Thus do we contract a habit of dissipation and thoughtlessness. We lose all relish for what is spiritual; and, like the brutes, we seek only those pleasures that affect the senses. *With desolation is the whole earth laid desolate, says the prophet, because there is no one who thinketh in his heart.* Jerem xii.

Let us then at present call back our wandering thoughts for a moment, and fix them upon God.— Let us take a view, if not of his infinite perfections, his intrinsic and essential excellence, for in the consideration of such, the imagination is apt to lose itself; at least of the stupendous effects of his mercy and predilection for us. These, indeed, are more the immediate object of our investigation, as they come within the sphere of the senses; and on this account require not such an effort of the mind, as the sublime and abstract contemplation of the Deity.

The effects of God's mercy and predilection for us are conspicuous in those gifts of Nature and of Grace, which he has so liberally bestowed upon us. By the gifts of nature I understand the good things which God has annexed to our being: which are derived to us from our nature; and which therefore are common to all. By the gifts of grace I mean those special favours, whether corporal or spiritual, to which our nature does not necessarily entitle us; but which, over and above the gifts of nature, God has been pleased to confer on mankind at large, or on certain individuals of the human race, whom he has singled out to be the special objects of his mercy and love. The gifts of nature tend chiefly to render happy, or supportable our condition in this world. Those of grace are generally granted in order to enable us to better our condition in the life to come. Now, if under both these heads we consider attentively the wonderful effects of God's mercy and predilection for us, we shall have motives more than sufficient to

stir up in our hearts that love of gratitude which we owe by so many titles to this our best of benefactors; and to induce us to love above all things that God, who has loved us with such an infinite love.

To begin then by the gifts of nature, of these the first is the creation of man. God has raised him up out of nothing, where he lay infinitely beneath the meanest creature existing; and has given him a dignified being, and assigned him an eminent rank among his creatures, to which he had not the least right or claim. He has made him to his own image and likeness, and has constituted him the Lord and Sovereign of this lower world. He has given him a soul capable of reflecting and reasoning, of investigating and discovering the truth. He has created this soul immortal and has designed her to be for ever happy in the enjoyment of himself hereafter. He has united this excellent creature the soul to a body the most comely and majestic of all others. And while the other animals grovel in the dust; while he makes them stoop towards their mother earth, which supplies them with all that can make them happy; he has placed man in a commanding posture, and has given him to stand erect; to look abroad upon the wonders of the creation, and contemplate the stupendous frame of this universe: to raise his eyes from off this earth, where he is to reside but for a time; and to carry his views towards his celestial country, where he shall live and reign for ever happy with his God in the company of the Angels. The Royal Prophet reflecting on all that God had done for man, exclaims in ecstasy of admiration: *What is man, O Lord, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou shouldst regard him? Thou hast made him little less than the angels: thou hast crowned him with glory and honour; and thou hast placed him over all the works of thy hands. Thou hast placed all things under his feet; the sheep, the oxen, the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the fishes the sea, that wander through the paths of the deep.— O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is thy name over all the earth.* Psalm viii.

Wherever we turn our eyes, we discover the effects of God's singular predilection to man. He has not only furnished him in his present imperfect state of existence with his absolute necessities; but he has also created numberless objects, calculated merely for his delight and amusement. What agreeable sensations do we not feel at the sight of that amazing variety of trees and herbs, fruits and flowers, so pleasing to the sight and taste and smell, which his hand has scattered so profusely over all the surface of the earth! What a beautiful scene has he not laid out before us of fields and meadows, hills and valleys, lakes, rivers, fountains and purling streams! The fire serves to enlighten, to warm us and to prepare our food. The earth, air, and water, are all equally subservient to us, and abound with numberless living creatures, made for our use and entertainment: and thus all nature ministers to man.

But if we look up towards the heavens, what a new scene of grandeur and beauty opens to our view! When we behold those numberless flaming orbs, or shining worlds, suspended in the void, and rolling so majestically over our heads, are we not lost in wonder and amazement! And ought not our hearts to overflow with gratitude and love to him, who has been pleased to create such an universe, to rear such a mighty fabric, and to prepare so magnificent a mansion for the reception and transient abode of his beloved creature Man! And if even here, where our life is but a day; if in this our place of banishment, this vale of tears, this region, withal of misery, sin and death, he has done so much to sweeten our exile, and render our state not quite so wretched; what will he not do to complete our happiness in that region of endless felicity, which he has prepared for us in the life to come! *O neither eye has seen, says St. Paul, nor ear has heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive what things God has prepared in the next life for those who love and serve him.* 1 Cor. ii. 19.

Such then, in general, and so great, are the gifts of nature, which Almighty God has bestowed on man. But if we pass on to consider the gifts of Grace, or those more special favours, which man has received from his Maker, particularly such as are more directly conducive towards his eternal salvation; we shall find that they as far exceed those of nature, and are as much more excellent than they; as eternity exceeds time; and as the soul is more excellent than the body. The gifts of nature regard chiefly, or at least more immediately our temporal existence: those of grace, our eternal. God has therefore in this respect exerted his power in a more striking manner; and he has omitted nothing to manifest his unbonded love to man.

When our first parents had allowed themselves to be seduced by the serpent; and at his suggestion had disobeyed God by eating of the forbidden fruit; the offended Deity might have justly condemned them, if not all their posterity, to endless misery for this breach of his commandment; or at any rate deprived them of that endless bliss, which was otherwise to have been their perpetual inheritance. The rebel angels for the first sin they committed, and that but in thought, were immediately cast forth from his presence, and delivered over to eternal torments; and they, who till then, had been the happy objects of his love and complacency, became in an instant the wretched victims of his wrath and unrelenting vengeance. But with man, who had made himself their accomplice in guilt, how differently has this same God vouchsafed to deal! He who spares not the glorious princes of his own household, but for their very first offence, condemns them at once to endless misery, sets, as it were his own infinite wisdom at work, to find out a way to save this Child of the earth from being, as a partner of their guilt, involved in their destruction. O man, thou too wert lost, and yet thy God has sought and saved thee. Thou deservedst eternal punishment, and yet thy God has pardoned thee.

After our first parents had perpetrated the guilty

deed, they heard the voice of the Deity walking in Paradise, and they hid themselves from his face among the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called Adam, and said to him: *Adam, where art thou?* Gen. iii, 9. Was this the voice of an offended Deity? or not rather that of the good Shepherd, who already began to seek the sheep that was lost? He who might have appeared in the full blaze of his divinity, clad in all the terrors of his incensed majesty, and thundering in their ears the dreadful and irrevocable sentence of their condemnation; is pleased to go out after them, and to invite them back by that meek and gentle call: *Adam, where art thou?* Whither dost thou fly, O man; or where dost thou hope to find any happiness without thy God? Return to me again, and I will still receive thee into favor; and I will shew thee yet how much I love thee above all my other creatures. Whither wouldst thou stray, my poor forlorn creature. *Adam, where art thou?*

He deigns even to expostulate with them for what they had done. He hears their several excuses; and turning to the serpent, who had been the author of all this mischief, because, says he, *thou hast done this, thou art cursed among all the beasts of the earth. On thy belly shall thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed. She shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lay snares for her feet.* Gen. iii, 12.

Here he seems to have forgotten the sin of our first parents, and turns the whole weight of his indignation against the serpent. He lays his curse upon him, and foretels that the woman, the weakest half of man, whom he had seduced, should (particularly in the person of the Virgin Mother of our Lord, and in the persons of all holy women, who should imitate her purity of life) crush his head; that is, set all his craft and cunning at defiance; and that the seed of the woman, namely Jesus Christ, the Son of the woman, (not of the man); the second Adam, and first of men in dignity; whose blessed Mother, the second Eve, is the first of women in the order of grace; should be at enmity with him; and that their offspring, that is, the good and virtuous, should wage a perpetual war against him and his offspring, the wicked. That, in fine, this second Adam and his spiritual children, should finally prevail against the old serpent, by whose craft and guile the first Adam and his natural children were undone. For all this prophetic promise was contained in his mysterious address to the serpent in paradise.

Thus, instead of punishing man for his disobedience, he promises him the greatest favour that Omnipotence itself can bestow; an Emmanuel, that is a God with us.

Having thus awakened the hope of our first parents, by such an assurance, and dispelled their fears, he then pronounces their doom; but in such mild and gentle terms, that he seems to lay upon them scarce any thing more than a few temporal sufferings. Nay, he even deigns already to become their servant. And seeing that now their eyes were opened, and that they perceived themselves to be naked, he makes for them garments of skins to cover their shame, and defend them against the inclemency of the weather, to which they were now about to be exposed. O the wonderful predilection that God has shewn to man! O the excess of his mercy and goodness towards so mean a creature!

Look into the sacred scriptures, and contemplate

there the stupendous effects of God's love to man. Follow out the thread of the sacred story down from the beginning of the world till the coming of our Saviour. What a fondness and paternal regard does he not shew for his faithful servants and chosen people! with what assiduous and unwearied, care does he not watch over them, and what wonders does he not often work in their behalf!

When the wickedness of man had grown to such a pitch, that it provoked God to destroy him; having found but one just person among all the children of Adam, him he resolves to save, and by his means to prevent the human race from being utterly extinguished. He deigns to become his instructor, and teaches him how to build an ark, in which he and his family, with some of all living creatures, that people the earth and the air, might avoid perishing in the deluge which he was going to pour out upon the guilty world.

Being again provoked by the unnatural crimes of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorra, when about to rain down fire and brimstone on those wicked cities, he sends his angels previously to lead forth the just Lot and his family from those places devoted to destruction: nor had the heavenly messengers power to execute their commission, till such time as the servant of God was in safety.

How carefully did he not watch over his faithful servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In all their peregrinations he was ever near them to guard them from dangers, and to render prosperous their undertakings. He went down to Egypt with his servant Joseph. He delivered him out of bondage, and placed him at the head of a great nation; thereby enabling him to receive and maintain his aged father and his brethren with their families during the famine that prevailed for seven years over all the earth.

And when the Egyptians, after the death of Joseph, began to oppress the Israelites, his chosen inheritance; he sends a Moses, armed as it were, with his own omnipotence, to desire King Pharaoh, to let his people go. On the king's refusal, he but raises his rod; and all the waters of Egypt are turned into blood. At a signal given, the whole land teems with frogs. The very dust of the earth seems changed into gnats and flies. The cattle are destroyed with a murrain: the people afflicted with boils and blains; and all the country is laid waste with fire and hail. What the tempest spares, is devoured up by the locusts. Pharaoh still remaining obstinate, his whole kingdom, save that part where the Israelites dwell, is enveloped in palpable darkness. At last, the Lord himself puts forth his hand in defence of his chosen people, and slays in one night all the first born of the Egyptians; from the first born of Pharaoh, who sat upon the throne, to the first born of the captive women, who was in prison; and all the first born of cattle; (Exod. xii. 29.) and thus compels that hardened prince to let his people depart. Thus did he lead them forth in triumph from the land of slavery and the house of bondage, loaded with the spoils of their Egyptian oppressors. He then sends his angel before them, as a pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night, to lead them on in their journey towards the land of promise.

At the approach of this army of the Lord of Hosts, the sea cleaves assunder to afford a retreat from the face of their enemies; and these venturing their pursuit through the miraculous pass, are suddenly overwhelmed with the waters, that close upon them at the waving of Moses' rod. In the parched and barren desert the rock melts into liquid streams of water to quench their thirst, and miraculous bread is rained down to them from heaven. Their clothes remain entire, and the very shoes on their feet are not worn during all the forty years that they continue wandering up and down in the wilderness. Deut. viii, 4. The Lord him-

self was their conductor, and all nature seems in motion before him. The Jordan at their approach, divides his stream, and opens to them a passage into the promised land. The sun at the command of Joshua, stops short his career, and prolongs the day, till victory has declared for the house of Jacob. The walls of Jericho totter and tumble to the ground at the sound of the trumpet of Israel. Thus did the Lord with a mighty hand, according to his promise, establish his people in the land of Canaan, a land abounding with delights, and flowing with milk and honey.

Considering therefore how often and in what a wonderful manner God has interposed in behalf of man; like a most affectionate parent watching over his favourite child; guarding him from every danger; supplying him with all his necessities; consoling him in his afflictions and distresses; leading him, as it were, by the hand; lifting him up if he happens to fall, and encouraging him to pursue his journey towards the promised land of bliss; pointing out to him the way; removing, or beating down before him every obstacle that might retard its progress, moving heaven and earth for his sake; (and all this which he has done for the Jews in a temporal sense, he has done, and even more, in a spiritual sense for the Christian): considering, I say, all this; what an exalted idea must we not conceive of that love of predilection which he bears him! And how dear to the Deity does not that creature seem to be, for whom he has shewn, and continues to show so great regard, and on whom he heaps such singular favours!

But, alas! how ill does man requite him for so much goodness! and how insensible does he ever shew himself to the endearing expression of so much love! For, as in the case of the Jews we have seen and admired the prodigious effects of God's love to man; so in their conduct may we also trace a striking instance of his hard-heartedness and ingratitude towards his best of benefactors. How often at the very time their God was working the greatest wonders; and, as it were, overturning the very laws of nature on their account; did they not murmur and rebel against him! And scarcely were they well settled in the land of promise, when forgetful of all he had done for them, they began to provoke him by their sins. Yet, when he proceeds to punish, he rather corrects, like an affectionate father, than chastises like an angry or inexorable judge.—Whom ever of his dutiful children did he not readily forgive, on his humble acknowledgment of his fault, and resolution to sin no more! His bowels of compassion are moved at our repentance; and when about to strike, he is still more willing to pardon and to spare. And what return does he expect from man, for so much goodness, for such unspeakable mercy and love? Nothing but what every fond parent would exact from a favorite child. Nothing but his grateful affection; nothing, in a word, but love for love. What moving complaints does he not make at times against this unaccountable ingratitude of man, in not returning him love for love! Hear, O ye Heavens, says he, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord has spoken. I have brought u, children, and have exalted them, but they have despised me. The ox knows its owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel knew me not, and my people have not understood. Isa. i. 4. Are not these the moving complaints of the most tender and affectionate of parents, of the most generous and disinterested of lovers? And so much has he done to win our love, that he, who is omnipotent, asks himself what more he could have done. What could I have done, says he, for my vineyard, that I have not done? Have I not expected grapes, and it hath yielded me sour ones. Isa. v. 4. Yet still does he complain that man is less grateful to him, than the most stupid of the brute creation are to those who give them food. The ox knows its owner, and the ass his master's

crib; but Israel knew me not, and my people have not understood.

Sometimes he endeavours, as it were, to bribe our love by the promises he makes us. At other times, he would seem to extort it from us, by the dreadful threats he denounces against those who refuse him their love. Great God, how canst thou stoop so very low, as thus to court and solicit, or even to acknowledge, when freely offered to thee the love of so mean and abject a creature as man! But how can this creature be so insensible to the honour thou dost him, by requiring his love, as not most readily to yield it? Or is it possible that thine own creature, who owes thee all that he has and is, who is stamped with thy own image, and so much preferred to all thy other creatures; to whom thou hast given thy angels, the glorious princes of thy heavenly household, as guardians and tutors to a favourite son; and hast given them in charge to bear him up in their hands lest at any time he dash his foot against a stone. (Ps. xc.) a creature whom thou hast made but to love; and who therefore must necessarily love something else, if he loves not thee; is it possible that such a creature can refuse thee his love, when he reflects but for a moment on all the wonderful effects of thy love to him?

But raise your eyes, Christians! and contemplate a scene still more amazing that breaks in upon us. The Messiah: The Second Person of the adorable Trinity, the injured Deity himself descends upon our earth, takes upon himself our nature, and becomes man for the love of us. What an excess of love could have made the Deity consent to stoop so very low! Thus man, who before was by his nature inferior to the angels, is now by this very same nature made superior to the angels; he being of the self-same nature with the Son of God made man: and in the person of Jesus Christ he is raised infinitely above the highest arch-angels, and all creatures, by being so closely united to the Deity, as to make but one and the self-same person with him.

But to what humiliations did not this God-Man submit, in order to expiate our sins, to cure our pride, and to win our love! He became as a worm and no man, the reproach of men, and the very outcast of the people. Ps. xxi. 7. He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the ignominious death of the cross. Philip. ii. 8.

Draw near in imagination, O ungrateful Christian, to the cross of your Redeemer, and take a view of your God there bleeding a victim for your sins. Consider who he is who suffers, and for whom he suffers. The Creator for the creature: the innocent for the guilty: the offended for the offender. His justice demanded a full and complete atonement and satisfaction for thy sins. His unspeakable mercy, makes himself pay to his justice this debt of satisfaction for which all the creatures, though offered up together in one great holocaust, could never have atoned. Thus, as the Psalmist testifies, Mercy and Truth have met each other;—Justice and Peace have kissed, lxxxiv. 11.

Contemplate thy loving Lord on the cross, his throne of mercy. See his arms stretched out in agonizing supplication for thee. Hear the rabble insulting him and scoffing at the wisdom of the Most High, hid under the mean appearance of a suffering criminal. Behold the torments he endures, and even the anguish of mind he suffers;—and see him, in fine, give up the ghost. Shall the rocks themselves be rent asunder? Shall the dead start from their silent tombs? Shall the sun hide his face for grief and amazement at the death of his Lord? Shall all nature shudder throughout at this dreadful catastrophe? And thou alone, O ungrateful man, thou alone for whom the God of nature suffers and dies, remain unmoved and insensible!

Nor did our loving Lord, upon his departure out of this world, leave us orphans, as he himself so tenderly expresses. He sends us the Paraclete, or

Comforter, who is also the spirit of love, to comfort us in his absence, and to stir up in our heart the fire of charity or divine love, which he had come down from heaven, as he said, to cast upon the earth. (Luke xii. 49.) and which he desired so much to be enkindled in the heart of man. Nay, rather than remain himself separately from man in his humanity, which he had assumed for the sake of man, he has been pleased to institute the adorable sacrament of the Eucharist; and has given his apostles, and their successors, the Bishops and Priests of his Church the power of bringing him down in person upon our altars, and of there rendering present, under the form of bread and wine, his body and his blood, his soul and his divinity; and of distributing this heavenly manna, and presenting this true paschal lamb to the faithful, as the spiritual food and nourishment of their souls. For my flesh is meat indeed, says he, and my blood is drink indeed. And he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. John vi. 10 55, 59.—Thus has he literally fulfilled his promise made to his disciples, that where two or three are gathered together in his name there is he in the midst of them. Matt. xviii. 20. I will not leave you orphans says he: I will come again to you. As yet a little while and the world sees me not; but you see me because I live, and you shall live. In that day you shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me and I in you. John xiv. 18, 19. Yes, Christians, we still see him in the sacrament of the altar, where the unbelieving world sees him not. There he still lives in us, and we in him. There, in a borrowed shape, to try our faith, he still comes to unite himself to us so closely, that it can be said with truth, that as he is in the Father, so are we in him and he in us. Nor does he even hesitate to expose thus his sacred and glorified body to numberless insults, indignities and profanations, as he had done in his mortal state, rather than deprive our souls of their heavenly food, or himself of the pleasure he takes in dwelling with us; for my delight, says he, is to be with the children of men. Prov. viii. 31.

The Angels stand astonished to see such rare predilection manifested by the Deity towards so abject a creature as this poor child of the earth. They adore in silence the free and independent counsel of him who says, he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy. Exod. xxxix. 19. Rom. ix. 18. And they look down with amazement on the unaccountable ingratitude of man to God; and on his astonishing insensibility to the expression of such a unbounded love and partial favour.

Our Lord besides, in the superabundance of his mercy to us, has instituted other sacraments, through which, like so many channels, the merits of his sufferings and death might be conveyed to our souls by the worthy frequentation of which, we are duly purified from all the defilements of sin, adorned with innocence and sanctity, and rendered more and more pleasing in his sight, objects of his complacency, and living temples of the Holy Ghost.—Nor has he left any thing undone, that might any ways tend, directly, or indirectly, towards our spiritual advantage. Not to mention the numberless, and too often neglected particular graces, which he imparts to us; his inward calls, and secret inspirations to turn from this deceitful world to him, who is our only true and perfect good: the favourable opportunities he puts in our way to practice good works; and the means he gives us of breaking loose from the ties of sin, and of subduing our evil habits; which means, if once neglected, may never more be offered again. O what mysteries shall be revealed on the great accounting day, when the ways of God to man shall be made manifest;—the secrets of Divine Providence disclosed, and the black ingratitude of the sinner in all its deformity, held forth to the public view of men and angels! What wonder then, if the patience of God so long abused, if his love so often slighted and disregarded, should turn at last into the most detested hatred! The more we love, the more we resent our love's being scorned or neglected: and God, who loves above all, and without all bounds,

will therefore punish above all measure, and without all bounds, the unhappy wretches, who have dared so madly to slight his love. How then shall the wicked in that dreadful hour, venture to lift up their heads and to look upon him, who for all his unbounded love to them, has met with nothing but the most monstrous ingratitude? *O, they will fall upon the hills and mountains to fall upon them, and hide them from the face of him who sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.* Apoc. vii. 16. They will choose rather to be buried in the lowest hell, than abide the terrors of his wrathful countenance.

Go then, Christians, before it be too late, and cast yourselves in spirit at the feet of the Lord. Bewail with tears of real sorrow your past ingratitude to your best benefactors; your insensibility to the tenderness of the most affectionate of Fathers. Beg of him to enkindle in your hearts the sacred fire of charity; to feed and augment it by his grace, and to keep it for ever alive till it consume in you all the dross of earthly affections, and transform you into himself, who is love itself, as iron loses its earthly hue, and is transformed into fire, when it has become red hot in the furnace. Then prove your love to him by your strict observance of his commandments. For *he who loves me, says he, keeps my commandments.* John xiv. 15.

If with such sentiments of sorrow for not having hitherto loved him, as you ought, and with the firm determination to love him above all things for the time to come, you approach in spirit to the feet of your Lord, and, like the penitent Magdalen, water them with your tears; he will say to you, as he did to that illustrious convert, *many sins are forgiven you, because you have loved much.* Luke vii. 47.

BIBLICAL NOTICES AND EXPLANATIONS.

EXODUS.

CHAPTER I.—This book begins with a detail of the excessive sufferings and persecutions which the people of God had to endure from the Egyptians, under a new king Pharaoh; who, knew not Joseph; and who dreading the prodigious growth of the children of Israel into vast multitudes, that filled the Land; and threatened to become stronger in it, than the natives themselves; sought by oppression and hard labour, to keep them under; and even to destroy their race, by commanding the Egyptian midwives, to kill every Hebrew male-child as soon as born.

VERSE 10.—Come, said he to his people; let us wisely oppress them, lest they multiply, &c. But his wisdom was folly in the end; as that always turns out to be, by which man thinks to counteract the designs of the omnipotent, whose views are only forwarded by the very measures adopted in order to frustrate his just and holy purposes. Of this, even in our days, and in our own country, we have lately had a striking example. The English, like the Egyptian government, has tried by every imaginable mode of oppression, to root out Catholicity from the British dominions.—Its usual Code of Laws, enacted against the followers of that religion, which converted our Pagan forefathers to Christianity, is traced in characters of blood.—of blood, which can never be effaced, on our Statute Books, and Parliamentary Records. Never was persecution more severe, long-lasting, and unrelenting.—Even as yet, after the long lapse of three hundred years, though its fury is abated, its effects are felt. The storm is hushed, that so agitated the deep:—But its troubled waters still heave and swell, and

dash their foaming billows on the hoarse resounding shore. In Ireland we have seen renewed, and enforced with growing rigour for so long a time, all the remorseless cruelties of a Pharaoh, and his Egyptians; who hated the children of Israel, and afflicted and mocked them. But it happened as of old, that the more they oppressed, and sought to destroy them; the more they were multiplied and increased.

Chapter 2.—Verse 10.—Moses, the deliverer of his people, is taken from the water; like Noah from the Deluge, the preserver; and Jesus, from the Jordan, the Saviour of our race. All saved with Noah, were saved by water.—1 Pet. iii. 20. All liberated with Moses, were saved through the Red Sea and all saved with Joshua, or Jesus, must cross the Jordan, before entering the Promised Land: must be born again of water and the Holy Ghost.—John, iii. 5.—Must pass through the purifying medium in Baptism; which, according to St. Peter, is of the like form.—1 Pet. iii. 21.—before they can enter the kingdom of God.

Verse 15.—Moses, flying from the face of Pharaoh, who sought to kill him, abode in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well.—And the Priest of Midian had seven daughters, who came to draw water; and, when the troughs were filled, desired to water their father's flocks. And the shepherds came, and drove them away. And Moses arose, and, defending the maids, watered their sheep.

Moses also was an illustrious prototype of the Messiah. His spouse too, SAPHORA, the beautiful (for such is the meaning of her Hebrew name,)—was found, like Isaac's and Jacob's, at the well; seeking to water her father's flocks.—Here then again is a figure of the Saviour's Church; the daughter of the Gentile priesthood; found by him in baptism, the fountain of regeneration.—Another figure is spied by the Catholic writers in the seven sisters, who came to water their father's flocks:—namely, the seven sacraments of the Redeemer's Church. Moses rising defended them against the Shepherds: The Saviour rising from the dead, defends them against the false teachers; who would prohibit them from pouring forth to the faithful their purifying and refreshing streams: the water, of which our Saviour says, that it shall become in those who drink it, a fountain of water, springing up into eternal life.—John iv. 14. It is he himself, like Moses, who draws with them the water, and gives the sheep to drink. Verse 19.

Moses takes to wife the daughter of the priest of Midian. The Saviour takes for his spouse the Gentile Church, the daughter, as we said before, of the heathen priesthood.

Chapter 3. Moses feeds the sheep of Jethro, his father-in-law.—The Saviour, forced to quit his kindred, the Jews; becomes the pastor of the Gentiles.

Verse 2.—And Moses, having drove the flock to the inner parts of the desert; and being come to the Mountain of God, Horeb, the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush; and he saw that the bush was on fire, and was not burnt. The Fathers of the Church find in this great sight

which Moses said he would go and see, an emblem of the Divinity, united in our Saviour with the humanity; of the eternal, essential, vital and all vivifying flame of charity; (for God is charity,)—1 John, iv. 8,—combined with the terrestrial creature, the bush, without consuming it.—The Supreme Majesty of the vision appears from the order given.—Moses, thus: come not nigh! put the shoes from off thy feet; for the place, on which thou standest is holy ground.—Saint Bernard compares the Blessed Virgin Mother of God, overshadowed by the Holy Ghost; full of grace, and conceiving the eternal son made man; to the bush all on fire, yet unconsumed.

The Almighty, doubtless the Filial Deity, whose specially favored creature from the beginning was man; reveals himself to Moses; declaring that he is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; on hearing which, Moses hid his face; for he durst not look at God. The Lord then tells him, that having seen the affliction of his people in Egypt; and heard their cry; he intended sending him to Pharaoh; to bring forth his people the children of Israel, from Egypt. He gives Moses, who asks his name, that sublime definition of himself; I AM, WHO I AM. All else, that is, was bid by him to be. He alone essentially exists; and is to all that is, the source of existence.

Chapter 4.—On Moses expressing his fear that the Israelites would not believe his word; the Deity said to him: what is that, thou holdest in thy hand? he answered a rod. And the Lord said; cast it down upon the ground. He, cast it down, and it was turned into a serpent; so that Moses fled from it. And the Lord said: put out thy hand, and take it by the tail. He put forth his hand, and took hold of it; and it was turned into a rod.

The Rod, is the sign of power. It is wielded by those empowered to strike the disobedient or guilty. The sceptre is the rod of the king, and the sign of the supreme authority. The shepherd's rod, is his crook; with which he rules and directs his flock: And hence the chief spiritual shepherds, or bishops of the Church, bear the pastoral staff; the emblem of their charge and jurisdiction. Even the wizards wand is the sign of his magical power. Moses, as the deliverer or legislator, and ruler of his people, is the representative of the Saviour; his rod is therefore the sign of the Saviour's kingly power. It is an ever living and wonder-working rod; with which he beats down the pride; and quashes all the efforts of his enemies against him. Addressing him, the Paternal Deity says: thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron: and shalt break them in pieces, like a potter's vessel.—Ps. ii. 9. In this manner has he dashed to pieces the mightiest powers that opposed his sway; and driven them, like dust before the wind, from the face of the earth.—Ps. i. 4.—where are now all the Heathen states, that persecuted his Church? Of the Romans even, the mighty masters of the universe, not a vestige now remains. He has beaten them as small as the dust before the wind: he has brought them to nought, like the dirt in the streets. Ps. 17, 48. The many heretics also, with their powerful abettors; have fallen all successively before him. He will complete in the end, with his ever-living rod, his kingly triumph over all his adversaries; when he has saved his saints, the objects of his paternal solicitude; and consigned the wicked to their place of torments and punishment.

To be continued.

THE HYMN AT PRIME.—TRANSLATED.

JAM LUCIUS ORTO SIDERE.

Again the flaming orb of day
Sheds on our earth his genial ray.
Again our praises we renew
To God; and humbly prostrate sue,
That he this day may us direct,
And from all dangers safe protect:
May ever with his grace restrain
Our tongues from wrangling speech and vain
Our sight may veil from vanity;
Our souls from sin may purify:
May teach us sloth to shun, and how
The flesh abstemious to subdue.
So, when the cheerful day is fled,
And night her sable veil has spread
O'er Nature's face; we'll guiltless raise
Again our voice, and sing his praise.

To God the Father, and the Son,
And Holy Spirit, Three in One,
Be glory giv'n, and praise ascend
From all the creatures without end!

SELECTED.

HUSENBETH'S DEFENCE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Continued.

But let us follow Mr. White to England, and see how he profited of his escape from the horrors of Popery. He tells us that the unmeaning ceremonies of Catholics had made him sick of Churches and Church service. If Mr. White had ever done his duty as a Priest, he would have examined the ceremonies of our Church more closely; and would have found that no one of them is without meaning. Very many have produced the most striking effects upon strangers who witnessed them, and have proved the beginning of far more valuable conversions than Addison's Hymen caused in Mr. Blanco White. Why, then, does he thus condemn our venerable ceremonies by wholesale, when he knows that the greater part of them are of the highest antiquity, and are only unmeaning to those who have "said in their hearts, there is no God?" He affects to have been moved with the "beautiful simplicity" and "warm heartedness" of the book of Common Prayer. Did he not know that whatever beauty that Book contains, belongs to the Catholic Missal, Ritual and Breviary, from which it is often literally translated? Yes, he knew all this; but his studied malevolence against the Catholic Church prompted him to conceal it.

After saying the Lord's Prayer every morning for three years, and reading Paley's Evidences, Mr. White tells us that he was enabled "with humble sincerity to receive the Sacrament according to the manner of the Church of England, which appeared to him to be, of all human establishments, the most suited in her discipline, to promote the ends of the Gospel; and in her doctrines, as pure and orthodox as those which were founded by the Apostles themselves." This sentence owns a great deal more, probably, than Mr. White meant to acknowledge. The Church of England may be the best of human establishments; and if Mr. White was in search of nothing higher, he did well to turn in there. The Catholic Church is no human establishment; it claims a divine foundation, and to have been built by the Apostles themselves, which Mr. White here admits that the Church of England was not as indeed all the world knows.

When Mr. White, soon after, was wavering between the Church of England Doctrines and Unitarianism, he tells us that, in the midst of all his doubts, he presented himself at the Sacramental table. We should be glad to know what dispositions he possessed for receiving that which, whatever the Church of England believe it to be, she considers faith at least quite necessary to receive. In fact faith is the whole of a Protestant's Communion; for if he expects to receive Christ at all in his Sacrament, it is only by faith that he considers himself to partake of his body and blood—so that Mr. White, in the judgment of a Protestant, must have had glorious dispositions for communion, with his mind full of doubts about the Divinity of the Son of God. However, this communion wrought wonders, if we are to believe Mr. White; for after it he found himself stronger than ever in the creed of the Church of England.

After detailing his various fluctuations in religion, Mr. White is forced to give testimony to the truth in these remarkable words: "Happy, indeed, are these millions of humble Christians, who from the publication of the gospel to our own times, have received the doctrines of the Bible by the simple means of their Catechism, and the instructions imparted by their Christian Pastors, and so ordered their lives as not to wish those doctrines to be false! How infinitely more happy is the lot of these humble Christians, than mine!" This is a true Catholic sentence. Our Church has ever proceeded upon the simple method here commended: and if Mr. White still thinks well of it, why has he joined a communion, which by extolling private interpretation, and making every man independent of pastoral instruction, acts completely at variance with the plan, which Mr. White here pronounces to be best calculated to make millions happy? But let the candid reader mark well the avowal contained in the words we have put in italics; and say if they do not refute his whole book, and if it be not just to exclaim: "*De ore tuo te judico!*"

Towards the close of the first dialogue in Mr. White's "Preservative," he is asked this question: "Do you believe then, sir, that the Roman Catholics are not Christians?" He answers, that though he has known most sincere followers of Christ amongst them, he is convinced that Catholicism, by laying another foundation than Christ, by making the Pope, with his Church, if not the author, certainly the finisher of their faith, exposes its members to the most imminent danger from the arguments of infidelity. If Mr. White has known most sincere followers of Christ amongst Catholics, our religion cannot be so bad as he otherwise labours hard to represent it; if it were possible for him to have been a sincere follower of Christ in our communion, he need not have left; nor is there any room for the exultation he affects to feel at his change from it. There cannot be any thing radically bad in a communion, which is capable of forming sincere followers of Christ; and therefore the charge of making the Pope the finisher of our faith; and building upon another foundation than Christ, is as contradictory and inconsequent as it is false and malevolent.* How will Mr. White

* This question which Mr. White puts to himself in the Dialogue, is as embarrassing as the celebrated one which St. Francis, of Sales, put to Theodora Beza; and Mr. White will find it as difficult as that reformer did to avoid its overwhelming consequence. St. Francis, of Sales, asked Beza, whether salvation was attainable in the Catholic Church? Beza left the room to consider; and after walking about in

attempt to prove so odious an accusation against the Catholic Church? In what book of Divinity, or in what profession of Faith did he ever find Catholics holding doctrines which by any perversion, but his own, could be construed into a blasphemous opposition to the words of the great Apostle, who directs us ever to look "on Jesus, the author and finisher of Faith?"

AVIS A NOS CHERS FRERES DU BAS CANADA.

Il est a esperer que tout bon Catholic entendant ou n'entendant pas la langue anglaise, prtera son support au seul journal Catholique anglois, qui ait jamais paru dans ces provinces surtout en sachant qu'il est publie avec l'approbation, et sous les auspices des Eveques et du clerge du pays. Le prix d'ailleurs, en est si modique n'etant que quatorze shelins par an, la poste inclue, pour une Feuille hebdomadaire; qu'il y a bien peu de personnes qui ne puissent contribuer cette miete a l'elucidation et defense de notre Sainte Religion, assaillie de toutes parts, et calomniee par ses Ennemis dans une langue, qu'il est indispensablement necessaire d'adopter, pour resister sur pied egal leurs erreurs. On s'attend que la moitie de l'abonnement annuel, sera paye d'avance, et envoye par chacun, avec son adresse, franc de post, a T. Dalton. U. C.

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agitated manner for quarter of an hour, he returned to St. Francis, and said: "We are alone; I can expose my real sentiments to you; I believe salvation to be there attainable." St. Francis, availing himself of an answer which gave him such a manifest advantage over Beza, observed, that he must then believe that the Catholic Church was the true Church; because if it were not the Church established by Christ, salvation could no more be attainable in it, than security from destruction could be found out of the ark in the deluge. Beza made no reply; and St. Francis asked, why then he had left the Catholic Church; for he observed, nothing but the absolute impossibility of being saved in the Catholic Church could justify such a separation from its communion. Beza was extremely embarrassed by this and other questions of the holy prelate, and became towards the end very violent and ever insolent. But the immovable meekness of St. Francis made him ashamed of his violence, and he at last made a handsome apology.

Libertinism contributed not a little to the apostacy of this unhappy man. When he was asked in confidence by Deshayes what was the leading reason which connected him with the Calvinists, Beza called in a beautiful young woman who lived with him, and said "That is the principal reason which convinces me of the excellence of my religion." Deshayes was struck with horror at such an answer, especially as Beza was then advanced in years. See a full account of St. Francis's conference with Beza, in the life of the Saint, by Marsollier, vol. 1. book 8d.