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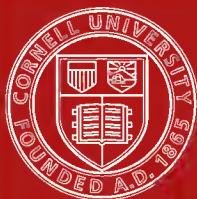
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IN SIX LETTERS,

ADDRESSED

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BY THE

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MDCCCXXVI.

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TO THE
REV. EDWARD COPLESTON, D.D.

PROVOST OF ORIEL COLLEGE, OXFORD; PREBENDARY OF
ROCHESTER, &c. &c. &c.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOU have allowed me to inscribe this work to you, and I feel proud thus to associate it with your name before the public.

As the subject, however, on which I have ventured, is one which violently agitates men's minds at this moment, it would be selfish and ungrateful in me, if, while I enjoyed the benefit of an implied approba-

tion from an authority so highly and so deservedly respected, I were not as anxious to save you from misrepresentation, as I am with regard to myself. To conceal that, upon the view of part of my manuscript, you have, with the greatest kindness, encouraged me to proceed; would require a degree of self-denial at which I shall never aim. But the hurry in which, from the pressure of other literary engagements, I have been obliged to prepare the ensuing pages, prevented my having the same advantage for the whole of the work; and that circumstance mars the pleasure which I should have derived from your complete sanction.

Disappointed of that satisfaction, I am happy that another is left me in the similarity of our views, as to what is called the *Catholic Question*. From the friendly inter-

course with which you have honoured me, I know that you hold it wrong to put down religious error by force, or to propagate religious truth by degrading and branding those who do not think with us.—I have suffered too much from religious despotism, not fully and cordially to hold the same doctrine. The fetters which, by God's mercy, I have been enabled to break, I would rather die than help to rivet upon a fellow-Christian; but the Power which made me groan in protracted bondage, is striving to obtain a direct influence in this Government; and I cannot regard such efforts with apathy. For myself—thanks to the generous country which has adopted me—I have nothing to fear; but I deem it a debt of gratitude to volunteer my testimony in the great pending cause, that it may be weighed against the studied and coloured evidence of such writers, as would

disguise the true character of the spiritual tyranny, whose fierce grasp I have eluded. Indeed I would never have shown myself in the field of controversy, but for the appearance of a book evidently intended to divert the public from the important, and, to me, indubitable fact, that *sincere* Roman Catholics cannot conscientiously be *tolerant*. How far, my dear Sir, you are convinced of this, I cannot take upon myself to say; but I am sure you will allow, that if such be the real character of Catholicism, the only security of *Toleration* must be a certain degree of intolerance, in regard to its enemies; as prisons in the freest governments are necessary for the preservation of freedom.

I have thus far thought it necessary to touch upon the political question with which my work is indirectly connected. I say *indirectly*, because the parliamentary question about the claims of the Roman

Catholics is by no means the object which I have had in view while writing. I will not deny that I should be glad if my humble performance could throw any light on a question in which the welfare of this country is so deeply concerned ; but it is probable that it will not appear till after the decision of Parliament. Let this, however, be as it may, still I humbly hope that, whether the Roman Catholics are admitted into Parliament, or allowed to continue under the disabilities which their honest opponents lament, my labour will not have been thrown away. For as the danger which may threaten this country in the admission of Roman Catholic legislators depends entirely upon their religious sincerity ; I shall not have troubled the public in vain if, either I can convince the *conscientious* of the papal communion, that a Roman Catholic cannot honestly do his

duty as a member of the British Parliament without moral guilt ; or, what I ardently wish, my arguments should open their eyes to the errors of their church.

A work written with these views, cannot, I trust, however imperfect in the execution, be an unworthy testimony of the great respect with which I am,

My dear sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

Chelsea, April 30, 1825.

P R E F A C E

TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

I WOULD dwell with pleasure upon the reception which has been given to the first edition of this work, if the expression of my gratitude might not be mistaken for the complacency of success. Only the few who know me intimately, those who witnessed the struggle I endured between a sense of duty, and a natural aversion to part of the task which that duty demanded ; can have a just idea of my thankfulness for the indulgence which I have experienced. Indeed, nothing but the many proofs of kindness and good-will bestowed upon me, could dispel the depressing feelings which,

when my work was done, and on the eve of appearing, sprung up from my peculiar circumstances, and those of the subject in which I had engaged. Had it been in my power to separate the controversy between Protestants and Romanists, from the political question respecting the admission of the latter to legislative power in these kingdoms, I should have taken up the pen with little or no reluctance. By actively joining the defenders of that Church, of which, by a deliberate act, I am a member ; I knew that I exposed myself to the regular and established obloquy, kept in store by the world, for the man who loves truth above his involuntary, or ill-chosen connexions with a party or sect. But the epithets of *Apostate* and *Renegade*, applied in a sense directly opposite to that by which they acquired their odiousness—that sense of defection from Christianity, in which they strictly belong to nearly all who use them—are, I confess, pleasing to my ear ; being acknowledgments of intellectual and moral qualities, of which it is a happiness to me to have my humble consciousness confirmed.

In the Theological part of my work, I could proceed, supported by a confirmed and habitual certainty that truth was on my side. But, from the first time I read a Parliamentary debate on the Catholic Question, till the day when I undertook the examination of Mr. Butler's *Book of the Roman Catholic Church*, I had purposely abstained from forming what I would call a *political* opinion upon that difficult and important subject. Whenever I was questioned upon it, I invariably answered, that, if the point were to be settled upon the abstract consideration of the doctrines believed by the sincere Roman Catholics, I had no doubt, their admission into Parliament could not be allowed, without exposing the Established Church, and even the general liberty of conscience, to an indefinite danger: but if the measure of the miscalled *Emancipation*, was to be considered as one of mere *practical expediency*; I was not able to give a confident opinion. But how could I, without affecting the question of *expediency*, answer a work in which the true character, and, consequently, the practical tendency of certain

Roman Catholic doctrines, were disguised? If present advantages are to be weighed against possible and probable dangers, it will not be denied that the true character of the risk should be known. That *somewhat* would be hazarded in admitting spiritual subjects of the church of Rome into Parliament, is, I believe, granted by every candid supporter of the Catholic claims. If, therefore, I showed how short of justness was the measure of that risk, which Mr. Butler had given to the public, I must turn the scales in proportion to the weight of my arguments and testimony.

Under this conviction, I could not but experience that anxiety which every honest man must feel, who takes a side in a question deeply involving the interests of a large portion of the community. I had, besides, to contend against the deep regret of finding it my duty to oppose the most earnest wishes of persons whom I have long loved and respected. But, most of all, I shrunk from the appearance of presumption and want of taste

in manners, which my foreign birth might give me, when I should be seen meddling (as it would be called) with the parties and divisions of the country which has adopted me. Yet, no alternative was left me. Deeply impressed, as I am, with my personal insignificance, I could not doubt that Providence had, by very unusual means, placed me in a situation which loudly demanded my testimony in a trial, on the issue of which the prevalence of true religion, and the welfare of this country, might ultimately depend. To withhold that testimony, on any human consideration, was dooming myself to eternal shame and reproach, from my own conscience.

I know it to have been said, that whilst I make my love of religious liberty the paramount reason for publishing this work, I show myself in it desirous of making men suffer for their *opinions*; and support a principle which would go to justify the re-enactment of all the penal laws against the Catholics. As a few words will suffice to answer this plausible fallacy, I hope I shall be allowed to

notice it in this place.—To lay any description of men under restraints or privations, for fear that their opinions should urge them into actions from which the law deters them, by the dread of punishment ; is insufferable tyranny, except when the commonwealth is in evident danger from a faction which appears able and disposed to defy the law in its regular course. But to exclude men, who hold opinions of evil tendency to the state, from the rank of legislators, in which they would not be answerable to any law for giving force and activity to those opinions ; is the mildest and lowest degree of caution which human prudence can devise.

It is time that I should conclude with a few words concerning the present edition. Unwilling to disturb the unity of argument which I proposed to myself in the body of the work, and still desirous to afford the general reader as much information on the subject as could be done conveniently ; I have added some long notes on various points, and an Appendix on the Council of Trent. I am aware, that these collateral illustrations exceed the

text to which they are appended ; but I hope that they will be regarded in the light of detached essays, given in a more unpretending form, than if I had eked out my materials into another volume.

Few and slight are the alterations made in the **LETTERS** ; but I have taken care to expunge two or three expressions from the last, which some of my friends have deemed too sarcastic. In relating the absurd legends with which the Church of Rome endeavours, at this time of day, to lower the human intellect to the level which best suits her purposes ; it is almost impossible to suppress the mixed feelings of scorn and indignation which seize the whole mind. I should, certainly, not scruple to give them vent, if the *deceived* could be spared, and the smart confined exclusively to the *deceivers*. But Heaven forbid that I should attempt to wound the guilty through the breast of the innocent ! If still there should be any thing in my work which can give an unnecessary pang to the sincere Roman Catholic, I will say to him

what the amiable Bedell wrote to his deluded friend Waddesworth: "Excuse my grief, mixed, I confess, with some indignation, but more love to you, though I thus write."

THE No. LXXXV. of the EDINBURGH REVIEW has reached my hands just in time to allow me, by stopping the Press, to notice a charge, which the writer of an article on the Catholic Question makes against me. In a note (page 135) I am accused of suppressing part of the identical canon of the Council of Florence on the authority of the Pope, of which Mr. Butler omitted some very important periods; and for which he was treated with just severity by Dr. Phillpotts*. As to myself, it will be seen in the following pages, that, by trusting to Mr. Butler's quotation of that Canon, I had to argue under evident disadvantage; and that, far from suspecting that any words in it made against me, I have added a note, in the present edition, for the purpose of publishing the definition of the Florentine Fathers, both in Greek and Latin†. So much for the man who, having charged me, by implication, with the *intentional* suppression of part of the Canon in question, adds the following words: "Mr. B. W. we regret to say, betrays many similar suppressions of the whole truth in his book."

* Letter XIV. p. 274.

† See page 35, and Note C, page 233, of this volume.

But I entreat the patience of the Reader, in order that he may form a notion of the character of the writer who has been deemed worthy of appearing as the champion of the Roman Catholics in the EDINBURGH REVIEW. Could any one imagine, that the words which I am accused of having intentionally omitted, are a fresh instance of Mr. Butler's convenient mistranslations, supported by a falsification of the Latin text, contrived by the Reviewer? Such, however, is the fact. The Fathers of the Council of Florence, after having established by their *own declaration* (Definimus) the authority of St. Peter, and his pretended successors the Popes, confirm what they have defined, by a reference to former Councils and the holy Canons of the Church. "As it is ALSO * contained (says the Decree) in the acts of the General Councils and the holy Canons:" *quemadmodum etiam in gestis œcumenicorum conciliorum, et in sacris canonibus continetur*. Mr. Butler overlooked the *etiam* (also) in his translation, and so disposed the whole English period, as to make the word *authority* be closely followed by "*as is expressed* in the General Councils and the holy Canons." As the meaning of the Canon of the Council of Florence has been familiar to me since, at the age of nineteen, I began the study of Roman Catholic Divinity, I understood Mr. Butler's version in the obvious sense of the original; and as the concurrence of the Decree with previous Councils, and the body of the Canon law (for that compilation is certainly meant by the words *holy Canons*), far from being against me, added strength to my argument, I did not think it necessary to cumber it with the addition of Mr. Butler's last sentence. But the trap being once contrived, the Reviewer could not fail to set it for the readers of the EDINBURGH

* Etiam. Græce, Καὶ ἐν τοῖς, κ. τ. λ.

REVIEW, whom he wishes to persuade, that the last sentence of the Canon obliges the Pope to act under the limitations of the Councils and holy Canons, which, he probably thinks, were framed as securities to the Protestant liberties of England. But, obscurity being a most valuable auxiliary in such cases, the Reviewer has improved Mr. Butler's trap, by changing *continetur*, in the Latin decree, into *continentur*, which deprives the clause of all meaning. I have neither time nor space to notice any part of the article, but what relates personally to me. But I must say, that if the writer of that article will bring out his budget of suppressions similar to that of which he directly accuses me, he will furnish my book with most valuable additions.

January 24, 1826.

C O N T E N T S.

	Page
LETTER I.	
The author's account of himself	1
LETTER II.	
Real and practical extent of the authority of the Pope, according to the Roman Catholic Faith. Intolerance, its natural consequence	30
LETTER III.	
Examination of the title to infallibility, spiritual supremacy, and exclusive salvation, claimed by the Roman Catholic Church. Internal evidence against Rome, in the use she has made of her assumed prerogative. Short method of determining the question	72
LETTER IV.	
Specimen of the unity exhibited by Rome. Roman Catholic distinction between <i>infallibility</i> in doctrine and liability to misconduct. Consequences of this distinction. Roman Catholic unity and invariableness of Faith, a delusion. Scriptural unity of Faith	96
LETTER V.	
Moral character of the Roman Church. Celibacy. Nunneries	118

	Page
LETTER VI.	
Rome the enemy of mental improvement : the direct tendency of her Prayer-book, the Breviary, to cherish credulity, and adulterate Christian virtue	147
Notes	225
Appendix I. On the Council of Trent	309
Appendix II. Extracts from the DEVOTION AND OFFICE OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS	339

PRACTICAL AND INTERNAL
EVIDENCE

AGAINST

CATHOLICISM,
ETC.

LETTER I.

The Author's account of himself.

IF a man be at any time excusable in speaking of himself, it must be when he finds it necessary to address those to whom he is unknown. The name and designation of a writer are, indeed, sufficient in most cases, and even unnecessary in some, for the purposes to which the press is commonly made an instrument; but the occasion of this address requires a more intimate acquaintance with my personal circumstances.

Before I proceed, however, I beg you to observe the word *impartial*, by which I have qualified *Roman Catholics*.—From such Roman Catholics

as renounce their intellectual rights, and leave the trouble of thinking to others, I cannot expect a hearing. To the professed champions, in whom the mere name of discussion kindles the keen spirit of controversy, I can say nothing which they are not predetermined to find groundless and futile. Among those who, bound to Catholicism by the ties of blood and friendship, make consistency in religious profession a point of honour, I am prepared to meet only with disdain. But there must be not a few, in whom the prepossessions of education and parentage have failed to smother a natural passion for truth, which all the witchery of kindred, wealth, and honour, cannot allure from its object. To such, among the British and Irish Roman Catholics, I direct these letters ; for, though the final result of their religious inquiries may be diametrically opposite to that which has separated me from my country, my kindred, my honours, emoluments, and prospects ; I trust that in the following account of myself they will readily recognise an intellectual temper, for which no difference of opinion can prevent their feeling some sympathy.

*I am descended from an Irish family, whose

attachment to the Roman Catholic religion was often proved by their endurance of the persecution which, for a long period, afflicted the members of their persuasion in Ireland. My grandfather was the eldest of three brothers, whose voluntary banishment from their native land rooted out my family from the county of Waterford. A considerable fortune enabled my ancestor to settle at Seville, where he was inscribed on the roll of the privileged gentry, and carried on extensive business as a merchant. But the love of his native land could not be impaired by his foreign residence; and as his eldest son (my father) could not but grow attached to Spain, by reason of his birth, he sent him in his childhood to Ireland, that he might also cling to that country by early feelings of kindness. It was thus that my father combined in his person the two most powerful and genuine elements of a religionist—the unhesitating faith of persecuting Spain : the impassioned belief of persecuted Ireland.

My father was the first of his kindred that married into a Spanish family; and his early habits of exalted piety made him choose a wife whom

few can equal in religious sincerity. I have hal-
 lowed the pages of another work * with the cha-
 racter of my parents : yet affection would readily
 furnish me with new portraits, were I not anxious
 to get over this preliminary egotism. It is enough
 to say, that such were the purity, the benevolence,
 the angelic piety of my father's life, that, at his
 death, multitudes of people thronged the house
 to indulge a last view of the dead body. Nor was
 the wife of his bosom at all behind him, either
 in fulness of faith or sanctity of manners. The
 endeavours of such parents to bring up their
 children in conformity with their religious no-
 tions may, therefore, be fully conceived without
 the help of description.

No waywardness of disposition appeared in me
 to defeat or obstruct their labours. At the age
 of fourteen all the seeds of devotion, which had
 been assiduously sown in my heart, sprung up as
 it were spontaneously. The pious practices, which
 had hitherto been a task, were now the effect of
 my own choice. I became a constant attendant
 at the Congregation of the Oratory, where pious

* Letters from Spain, by Don Leucadio Doblado.

young men, intended for the Church, generally had their spiritual directors. Dividing my time between study and devotion, I went through a course of philosophy and divinity at the University of Seville; at the end of which I received the Roman Catholic order of sub-deacon. By that time I had obtained the degrees of Master of Arts and Bachelor of Divinity. Being elected a Fellow of the College of St. Mary *a Jesu* of Seville, when I was not of sufficient standing for the superior degree of Licentiate of Divinity*, which the Fellowship required, I took that degree at Osuna, where the statutes demand no interval between these academical honours. A year had scarcely elapsed since I had received priest's orders, when, after a public examination, in competition with other candidates, I obtained the stall of *Magistral* or Preacher, in the chapter of king's chaplains, at Seville. Placed, so young, in a situation which my predecessor had obtained

* Previous to the degree of Doctor of Divinity a severe examination takes place, which gives to the *Licentiate* all the rights, though not the honours of Doctorship. These may be obtained by a *Licentiate*, at any time, by the payment of some fees.

after many years' service as a vicar, in the same town, I conceived myself bound to devote my whole leisure to the study of religion. I need not say that I was fully conversant with the system of Catholic divinity; for I owed my preferment to a public display of theological knowledge: yet I wished to become acquainted with all kinds of works which might increase and perfect that knowledge.

My religious belief had hitherto been undisturbed: but light clouds of doubt began now to pass over my mind, which the warmth of devotion soon dissipated. Yet they would gather again and again, with an increased darkness, which prayer could scarcely dispel.—That immorality and levity are *always* the source of unbelief, the experience of my own case, and my intimate acquaintance with many others, enable me most positively to deny. As to myself, I declare most solemnly that my rejection of Christianity took place at a period when my conscience could not reproach me with any open breach of duty, but those committed several years before; that, during the transition from religious belief to incredulity, the horror of sins against the

faith, deeply implanted by education in my soul, haunted me night and day; and that I exerted all the powers of my mind to counteract the involuntary doubts which were daily acquiring an irresistible strength. In this distress I brought to remembrance all the arguments for the truth of the Christian religion, which I had studied in the French apologists. I read other works of the same kind; and having to preach, in the execution of my office, to the royal brigade of carabineers, who came to worship the body of Saint Ferdinand preserved in the king's chapel, I chose the subject of infidelity, on which I delivered an elaborate discourse*. But the fatal crisis was at hand. At the end of a year from the preaching of this sermon—the confession is painful, indeed, yet due to religion itself—I was bordering on atheism.

If my case were singular, if my knowledge of the most enlightened classes of Spain did not furnish me with a multitude of sudden transitions from sincere faith and piety to the most outrageous infidelity, I would submit to the humbling con-

* This sermon was published at Seville, at the expense of the brigade.

viction, that either weakness of judgment or fickleness of character, had been the only source of my errors. But though I am not at liberty to mention individual cases, I do attest, from the most certain knowledge, that the history of my own mind is, with little variation, that of a great portion of the Spanish clergy. The fact is certain: I make no individual charge: every one who comes within this general description may still wear the mask, which no Spaniard can throw off without bidding an eternal farewell to his country.

Now, let us pause to examine this moral phenomenon: and, since I am one of the class which exhibits it, I will proceed with the moral dissection of myself, however unpleasant the task may be. Many, indeed, will dismiss the case with the trite observation that extremes generally produce their opposites. But an *impartial* mind will not turn to a common-place evasion, to save itself the labour of thinking.

When I examine the state of my mind previous to my rejecting the Christian faith, I cannot recollect any thing in it but what is in perfect accordance with that form of religion in which I was

educated. I revered the Scriptures as the word of God ; but was also persuaded that, without a living, infallible interpreter, the Bible was a dead letter, which could not convey its meaning with any certainty. I grounded, therefore, my Christian faith upon the infallibility of the church. No Roman Catholic pretends to a better foundation. " I believe whatever the holy mother church holds and believes," is the compendious creed of every member of the Roman communion. Had my doubts affected any particular doctrine, I should have clung to the decisions of a church which claims exemption from error ; but my first doubts attacked the very basis of Catholicism. I believe that the reasoning which shook my faith is not new in the vast field of theological controversy. But I protest that, if such be the case, the coincidence adds weight to the argument ; for I am perfectly certain that it was the spontaneous suggestion of my own mind. I thought within myself that the certainty of the Roman Catholic faith had no better ground than a fallacy of that kind which is called reasoning in a circle ; for I believed the infallibility of the church because the Scripture said she was

infallible ; while I had no better proof that the Scripture said so, than the assertion of the church, that she could not mistake the Scripture. In vain did I endeavour to evade the force of this argument ; indeed I still believe it unanswerable. Was, then, Christianity nothing but a groundless fabric, the world supported by the elephant, the elephant standing on the tortoise ? Such was the conclusion to which I was led by a system which impresses the mind with the obscurity and insufficiency of the written word of God. Why should I consult the Scriptures ? My only choice was between revelation explained by the church of Rome, and no revelation. Catholics who live in Protestant countries may, in spite of the direct tendency of their system, practically perceive the unreal nature of this dilemma. But wherever the religion of Rome reigns absolute, there is but one step between it and complete infidelity*.

To describe the state of my feelings, when, believing religion a fable, I still found myself compelled daily to act as a minister and promoter of imposture, is certainly beyond my powers. An

* Note A.

ardent wish seized me to fly from a country where the law left me no choice between death and hypocrisy. But my flight would have brought my parents with sorrow to the grave; and I thank God that he gave me a heart which, though long "without law," was often, as in this case, a "law to myself." Ten years, the best of my life, were passed in this insufferable state, when the approach of Buonaparte's troops to Seville enabled me to quit Spain, without exciting suspicion as to the real motive which tore me for ever from every thing I loved. I was too well aware of the firmness of my resolution, not to endure the most agonizing pain when I irrevocably crossed the threshold of my father's house, and when his bending figure disappeared from my eyes, at the first winding of the Guadalquivir, down which I sailed. Heaven knows that time has not had power to heal the wounds which this separation inflicted on my heart; but such was the misery of my mental slavery, that not a shadow of regret for my determination to expatriate myself, has ever exasperated the evils inseparable from the violent step by which I obtained my freedom.

Having described the fatal effects of Catholicism on my mind, I will, with equal candour, relate the changes operated upon it by my residence in England.

It was the general opinion in Spain, that Protestants, though often adorned with *moral* virtues, were totally deficient in true religious feelings. This was the opinion of Spanish Catholics. Spanish unbelievers, like myself, were most firmly convinced that men, *enlightened* as the English, could only regard religion as a political engine. Our greater acquaintance with French books, and with Frenchmen, strongly supported us in the idea that belief in Christianity decreased in proportion to the progress of knowledge, in every part of the world. As to myself, I declare that I did not expect to find a sincere Christian among educated Englishmen. Providence, however, so directed events, that some of my first acquaintance in London were persons whose piety was adorned with every good quality of the heart and mind. It was among these excellent friends, and under the protection of British liberty, that the soreness and irritation produced by ten years' endurance of the

most watchful religious tyranny, began to subside. I was too much ashamed of being supposed a Roman Catholic, to disguise the character of my religious opinions; but the mildness and toleration with which my sentiments were received, made me perceive, for the first time, that a Christian is not necessarily a bigot. The mere throwing away the hated mask which the Inquisition had forced me to wear, refreshed my soul; and the excellent man to whom, for the first time in my life, I acknowledged my unbelief without fear, was able to perceive that I might yet be a Christian, provided I saw religion divested of all force but that of persuasion.

An accident (if any thing which leads to results so important can be so called) made me, in an idle moment, look into Paley's *Natural Theology*, which lay upon a table. I was struck by the author's peculiar manner and style: I borrowed the book, and read it with great interest. Feelings of piety towards the great Author of Nature began to thaw the unnatural frost which misery, inflicted in his name, had produced in a heart not formed to be ungrateful. It was in this state of mind that,

being desirous of seeing every thing worthy of observation in England, I went one Sunday to St. James's church. A foreigner, ignorant of the language, would have brought away nothing but an unpleasant recollection of the length of the service; but I had learned English in my childhood, and could understand it, at this time, without difficulty. The prayers, though containing what I did not believe, appeared to me solemn and affecting. I had not for many years entered a church without feelings of irritation and hostility, arising from the ideas of oppressive tyranny which it called up in my mind; but here was nothing that could check sympathy, or smother the reviving sentiments of natural religion, which Paley had awakened. It happened that, before the sermon, was given Addison's beautiful hymn,

When all thy mercies, O my God!
 My rising soul surveys,
 Transported with the view, I'm lost
 In wonder, love, and praise.

At the end of the second verse my eyes were streaming with tears; and I believe that from that day I never passed one without some ardent

aspirations towards the Author of my life and existence.

This was all the change that for a year or more, took place in my religious notions. Obligated to support myself chiefly by my pen, and anxious at the same time to acquire some branches of learning which Spanish education neglects, my days and nights were employed in study: yet religion had daily some share of my attention. I learned that the author of the Natural Theology had also written a work on the Evidences of Christianity, and curiosity led me to read it. His arguments appeared to me very strong; but I found an intrinsic incredibility in the facts of revealed history, which no general evidence seemed able to remove. I was, indeed, labouring under what I believe to be a very common error in this matter—an error which I have not been able completely to correct, without a very long study of the subject and myself. I expected that *general* evidence would remove the natural *inverisimilitude* of miraculous events: that, being convinced by unanswerable arguments that Christ and his disciples could be neither impostors nor enthusiasts, and

that the narrative of their ministry is genuine and true, the imagination would not shrink from forms of things so dissimilar to its own representations of real objects, and so conformable in appearance with the tricks of jugglers and impostors. Now the fact is, that *probable* and *likely*, though used as synonymous in common language, are perfectly distinct in philosophy. The *probable* is that for the reality of which we can allege some reason: the *likely*, that which bears in its face a semblance or analogy to what is classed in our minds under the predicament of existence *. This association is made early in life, among Christians, in favour of the miraculous events recorded in the Holy Scriptures; and, if not broken by infidelity

* *Likely* is the adjective of the phrase *like the truth, simile vero*. It is strange that the English language should not possess a substantive answering to *le vraisemblable* of the French. The use of *improbable* to denote what in that language is meant by *invraisemblable*, is incorrect. When the French critics reject some indubitable historical facts from the stage, because they want *vraisemblance* (likelihood), they do not mean to say that they are *improbable*, or deficient in proofs of their reality; but that the imagination finds them *unlike* to what in the common opinion is held to be the usual course of events.

in after-life, the study of the Gospel evidence gives those events a character of reality which leaves the mind satisfied and at rest ; because it finds the history of revealed religion not only *probable*, but *likely*. It is much otherwise with a man who rejects the Gospel for a considerable period, and accustoms his mind to rank the supernatural works recorded by Revelation, with falsehood and imposture. *Likelihood*, in this case, becomes the strongest ground of unbelief ; and *probability*, though it may convince the understanding, has but little influence over the imagination*.

* I have found a passage in Mr. Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*, which, as it confirms my notions of these early religious impressions, and must be welcome to every reader of taste and feeling for its uncommon beauty, I will here insert, as a testimony of my admiration of the author's genius.

“ The great fundamental truths and doctrines of religion, the existence and attributes of God, and the life after death, are in Christian countries taught so early, under such circumstances, and in such close and vital association with whatever makes or marks *reality* for our infant minds, that the words ever after represent sensations, feelings, vital assurances, sense of reality—rather than thoughts, or any distinct conception. Associated, *I had almost said identified*, with the parental voice, look, touch, with the living warmth and pressure of the mother, on whose lap the child is first made to kneel, and the motion of whose eyes *its* eyes follow and imitate—(yea, what

A sceptic who yields to the powerful proofs of Revelation, will, for a long time, experience a most painful discordance between his judgment and the associations which unbelief has produced. When most earnest in the contemplation of Christian truth, when endeavouring to bring home its comforts to the heart, the imagination will suddenly revolt, and cast the whole, at a sweep, among the rejected notions. This is, indeed, a natural consequence of infidelity, which mere reasoning is not able to remove. Nothing but humble prayer can, indeed, obtain that faith which, when reason and sound judgment have led us to supernatural truth, gives to unseen things the body and substance of reality. But of this I shall have occasion to speak again.

The degree of conviction produced by Paley's Evidences was, however, sufficiently powerful to the blue sky is to the mother, the mother's upraised eyes and brow are to the child, the type and symbol of an invisible heaven!)—from within and from without, these great first truths, these good and gracious tidings, these holy and humanizing spells, in the preconformity to which our very humanity may be said to consist, are so infused, that it were but a tame and inadequate expression to say, we all take them for granted."—Page 229.

make me pray daily for divine assistance. This was done in a very simple manner. Every morning I repeated the Lord's Prayer seriously and attentively, offering up to my Maker a sincere desire of the true knowledge of him. This practice I continued three years; my persuasion that Christianity was not one and the same thing with the Roman Catholic religion, growing stronger all the while. As my rejection of revealed religion had been the effect, not of direct objection to its evidences, but of weighing tenets against them, which they were not intended to support; the balance inclined in favour of the truth of the Gospel, in proportion as I struck out dogmas, which I had been taught to identify with the doctrines of Christ*. The day arrived, at length, when, con-

* Paley, with his usual penetration, has pointed out this most important result of the Reformation: "When the doctrine of Transubstantiation," he says, in his address to Dr. Law, Bishop of Carlisle, prefixed to the Principles of Moral Philosophy, "had taken possession of the Christian world, it was not without the industry of learned men that it came at length to be discovered that no such doctrine was contained in the New Testament. But had those excellent persons done nothing more by their discovery than abolished an innocent superstition, or changed some directions in the ceremonial of

vinced of the substantial truth of Christianity, no question remained before me, but that of choosing the form under which I was to profess it. The deliberation which preceded this choice was one of no great difficulty to me. The points of difference between the church of England and Rome, though important, are comparatively few: they were, besides, the very points which had produced my general unbelief. That the doctrines common to both churches were found in the Scriptures, my early studies and professional knowledge, left me no room to doubt; and as the Evidences of Revelation had brought me to acknowledge the authority of the Scriptures, I could find no objection to the resumption of tenets which had so long possessed my belief. The communion in which I was inclined to procure admission was not, indeed, that in which I was educated; but I had so long wandered away from the Roman fold, that, when approaching the church of England, both the absence

public worship, they had merited little of that veneration with which the gratitude of Protestant churches remembers their services. What they did for mankind was this—*they exonerated Christianity of a weight that sunk it.*"

of what had driven me from Catholicism, and the existence of all the other parts of that system, made me feel as if I were returning to the repaired home of my youth.

Upon receiving the sacrament for the first time according to the form of the English church, my early feelings of devotion revived ; yet by no means, as it might be feared in a common case, with some secret leaning to what I had left ; for Catholicism was thoroughly blended with my bitterest recollections. It was a devotion more calm and more rational ; if not quite strong in faith, yet decided as to practice. The religious act I performed I considered as a most solemn engagement to obey the laws of the Gospel ; and I thank God, that, since that period, whatever clouds have obscured my religious views, no deliberate breach of the sacred law has increased the sting of remorse which the unbelieving part of my life left in my breast.

The renovated influence of religion, cherished by meditation and study, induced me, after a period of a year and a half, to resume my priestly character ; a step without which I thought I had not

completed the re-acknowledgment I owed to the truth of Christianity. If any one unacquainted with my circumstances should be inclined to suspect my motives, he may easily ascertain his mistake, by inquiring into the uniform tenour of my conduct, since, in 1814, I subscribed the articles of the church of England.

Having now done what I conceived to be a public duty, I retired to Oxford, not to procure admission into the university, which my age would have rendered preposterous; but to live privately in that great seat of learning, devoting my time exclusively to the study of the Scriptures. I had resided a year in that place, when an English nobleman, who since he knew me in Spain has ever honoured me with his friendship, gave me the highest proof of esteem by inviting me to become tutor to his son. I accepted the charge, though with fears that the declining state of my health would greatly disqualify me for the important duties to which I was called: and which I discharged for two years to the best of my power, till my growing infirmities compelled me to resign.

Neither the duties of the tutorship, nor the con-

tinual sufferings which I have endured ever since, could damp my eagerness in the search of religious truth. Shall I be suspected of *cant* in this declaration? Alas! let the confession which I am going to make, be the unquestionable, though melancholy proof of my sincerity.

For more than three years my studies in divinity were to me a source of increasing attachment to Christian faith and practice. When I quitted my charge as tutor, I had begun a series of short lectures on religion, the first part of which I delivered to the young members of the family where I lived in that character*. Having retired to private lodgings in London, it was my intention to prosecute that work, for the benefit of young persons; but there was by this time a mental phenomenon ready to appear in me, to which I cannot now look back without a strong sense of my own weakness. My vehement desire of knowledge did not allow me to neglect any opportunity of reading whatever books on divinity came to my

* These Lectures were published at Oxford, in 1817, with the title of PREPARATORY OBSERVATIONS ON THE STUDY OF RELIGION, BY A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

hands. In this way I studied the small work on the Atonement, by Taylor of Norwich, and the confirmed habits of my mind being then too much in accordance with every thing that promised to remove *mystery* from Christianity, I adopted that author's views without in the least suspecting the consequences. It was not long, however, before I found myself beset with great doubts on the divinity of Christ. My state became now exceedingly painful; for, though greatly wanting religious comfort in the solitude of a sick room, where I was a prey to pain and extreme weakness, I perceived that religious practices had lost their power of soothing me. But no danger or suffering has, in the course of my life, deterred me from the pursuit of truth. Having now suspected that it might be found in the Unitarian system, I boldly set out upon the search; but *there* I did not find it. Whatever industry and attention could do, all was performed with candour and earnestness; but, in length of time, Christianity, in the light of Unitarianism, appeared to me a mighty work to little purpose; and I lost all hope of quieting my mind. With doubts unsatisfied wherever I turned, I found

myself rapidly sliding into the gulf of scepticism : but it pleased God to prevent my complete relapse. I knew too well the map of infidelity to be deluded a second time by the hope of finding a resting-place to the sole of my foot, throughout its wide domains : and now I took and kept a determination to give my mind some rest from the studies, which, owing to my peculiar circumstances, had evidently occasioned the moral fever under which I laboured. What was the real state of my faith in this period of darkness, God alone can judge. This only can I state with confidence,—that I prayed daily for light ; that I invariably considered myself bound to obey the precepts of the Gospel ; and that, when harassed with fresh doubts, and tempted to turn away from Christ, I often repeated from my heart the affecting exclamation of the apostle Peter—“ to whom shall *I* go ? thou hast the words of eternal life.”

For some time I thought it an act of criminal insincerity to approach, with these doubts, the sacramental table ; but the consciousness that it was not in my power to alter my state of mind, and that if death, as it appeared very probable,

should overtake me as I was, I could only throw myself with all my doubts upon the mercy of my Maker ; induced me to do the same in the performance of the most solemn act of religion. But I had not often to undergo this awful trial. Objections which, during this struggle, had appeared to me unanswerable, began gradually to lose their weight on my mind. The Christian Evidences which, at the period of my change from infidelity, struck me as powerful *in detail*, now presenting themselves *collectively*, acquired a strength which no detached difficulties (and all the arguments of infidelity are so) could shake*. My mind, in fact, found rest in that kind of conviction which belongs peculiarly to moral subjects, and seems to depend on an intuitive perception of the truth through broken clouds of doubt, which it is not in the power of mortal man completely to dispel.

* I believe it a duty to mention a work which, under Providence, contributed to put an end to my trial ; I mean the *Internal Evidences of Christianity*, by the Rev. John Bird Sumner :—a book which I would strongly recommend to every candid inquirer into religious truth, as containing one of the most luminous views, not only of the proofs, but the doctrines of the Gospel, which it was ever my good fortune to peruse.

Let no one suppose that I allude to either mysterious or enthusiastic feelings; I speak of conviction prepared by examination. But any man accustomed to observe the workings of the mind, will agree, that conviction, in intricate moral questions, comes finally in the shape of internal feeling—a *perception* perfectly distinct from syllogistic reasoning, but which exerts the strongest power over our moral nature. Such *perception* of the truth is, indeed, the spring of our most important actions, the common bond of social life, the ground of retributive justice, the parent of all human laws. Yet, it is inseparable from more or less doubt; for *doubtless* conviction is only to be found about objects of sense, or those abstract creations of the mind, pure number and dimension, which employ the ingenuity of mathematicians. That assurance respecting things not seen, which the Scriptures call *Faith*, is a *supernatural* gift which reasoning can never produce. This difference between the conviction, resulting from the examination of the Christian Evidences, and *Faith*, in the Scriptural sense of the word, appears to me of vital importance, and much to be attended to by

such as, having renounced the Gospel, are yet disposed to give a candid hearing to its advocates. The power of the Christian Evidences is that of leading any considerate mind, unobstructed by prejudice, to the records of Revelation, and making it ready to derive instruction from that source of supernatural truth ; but it is the *Spirit of truth* alone, that can impart the internal conviction of *Faith*.

I have now gone through the religious history of my mind, in which I request you to notice the result of my various situations. Under the influence of that mental despotism, which would prevent investigation by the fear of eternal ruin, or which mocks reason by granting the examination of premises, while it reserves to itself the right of drawing conclusions, I was irresistibly urged into a denial of Revelation ; but no sooner did I obtain freedom, than, instead of my mind running riot in the enjoyment of the long-delayed boon, it opened to conviction, and acknowledged the truth of Christianity. The temper of that mind shows, I believe, the general character of the age to which it belongs. I have been enabled to make an estimate of the moral and intellectual state of

Spain, which few who know me and that country will, I trust, be inclined to discredit. Upon the strength of this knowledge, I declare again and again that very few among my own class (I comprehend clergy and laity) think otherwise than I did before my removal to England. The testimony of all who frequent the Continent—a testimony which every one's knowledge of foreigners supports—represents all Catholic countries in a similar condition. Will it, then, be unreasonable to suppose, that if a *fair* choice was given between the religion of Rome and other forms of Christianity, many would, like myself, embrace the Gospel which they have rejected? Is there not some presumption of error against a system which every where revolts an improving age from Christianity? Let us examine that system itself.

LETTER II.

Real and practical extent of the authority of the Pope, according to the Roman Catholic Faith. Intolerance its natural consequence.

WERE I addressing Catholics, who live under the full and unchecked influence of the church of Rome, it would be unnecessary to come to a previous understanding of the true nature of their tenets; for even persons who have never looked into a theological treatise, are fully aware, in such countries, of the difference between some disputed points, and the doctrines which their church holds as immutable articles of faith. The case is, I perceive, much otherwise in England. From the attention which I have of late given to the books which issue out of the English Roman Catholic press, I am convinced that there exist two kinds of writers of your persuasion; one, who write for the Protestant public, and for such among yourselves as cannot well digest the real unsophisticated

system of their Roman head; the other, for the mass of their British and Irish church, who still adhere to the Roman Catholic system, such as it is professed in countries where all other religions are condemned by law. In your devotional books, and in such works as are intended to keep up the warmth of attachment to your religious party, I recognise every feature of the religion in which I was educated; in those intended for the public at large, I only find a flattered and almost ideal portrait of those to me well-known features, which, unchanged and unsoftened by age, the writers are conscious, cannot be seen without disgust by any to whom custom has not made them familiar.

The most artful picture of this kind which has come to my hands is the *Book of the Roman Catholic Church*, by Charles Butler, Esquire, of Lincoln's Inn. The high character which the author bears for learning and probity makes me desirous to avoid even the shadow of a charge implying any thing derogatory to those qualities; but I cannot hesitate to declare that his statement of the Roman Catholic doctrines, since it must be believed to have been drawn with sincerity, pre-

sents a strange instance of the power of prejudice in distorting the clearest objects. In another part of this book * you will find a striking proof that the vehemence of his party spirit goes even to impair his knowledge of the Latin language ; and makes a man, whom report classes among your best scholars, render a passage into English, in a manner so far from giving the meaning of the original, that it contradicts itself in the translation.

Had such inaccuracies affected only points of secondary importance, or related exclusively to the many historical facts to which Mr. Butler's book refers, I would leave them to more learned and experienced critics ; but as he has, besides, given an incorrect view of your most essential duties as Catholics, I must beg your attention to some remarks on that part of his book, which treats of the authority of the Pope. He that, fully aware of the nature of his engagements to the Church of Rome, is still determined to obey her, should not be disturbed in the use of his

* See note B.

discretion; but varnished accounts of religious systems must not be allowed to rivet religious prejudice, or stand as a lure to the unwary.

The *Book of the Roman Catholic Church* labours to persuade the world that the authority of the Pope over the Catholics is of so spiritual a nature, as, if strictly reduced to what the creed of that church requires, can never interfere with the civil duties of those who own that authority. That the supreme head of the Catholics has, for a long series of centuries, actually claimed a paramount obedience, and thus actually interfered with the civil allegiance of his spiritual subjects, is as notorious as the existence of the Roman see. The question, then, is whether this was a mere abuse, the effect of human passions encouraged by the ignorance of those ages, or a fair consequence of doctrines held by the Roman church as of divine origin, and consequently immutable. I will proceed in this inquiry upon Mr. Butler's own statement of the Roman Catholic articles of faith, which is found p. 118 of the first edition of his work.

“ A chain of Roman Catholic writers on papal

power might be supposed: on the first link we might place the Roman Catholic writers who have immoderately exalted the prerogative of the Pope; on the last we might place the Roman Catholic writers who have unduly depressed it; and the centre link might be considered to represent the canon of the 10th session of the council of Florence, which defined that ‘full power was delegated to the bishop of Rome in the person of St. Peter, to feed, regulate, and govern the universal church, as expressed in the general councils and holy canons.’ THIS (adds the author, in capitals) is the doctrine OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE POPE, and beyond it no Roman Catholic is required to believe*.”

* The entire canon of the council of Florence is as follows:

“Moreover we define that the holy Apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff have a primacy over the whole world, and that the Roman pontiff himself is the successor of St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, and true VICAR (or Representative, *Τοποτηγητής*) of CHRIST, and that he is HEAD OF THE WHOLE CHURCH, and the Father and Teacher of all Christians; and that to him in St. Peter was delegated by our Lord Jesus Christ full power to feed, *rule* (*regere*), and govern the universal church; as also is contained in the acts of general councils, and in the holy canons.” Concil. Labbé, t. xiii. p. 516.

When I examine the vague comprehensiveness of this decree, I can hardly conceive what else the Roman Catholics could be required to believe. *Full power to feed, regulate, and govern the universal church*, can convey to the mind of the sincere Catholic no idea of limitation. Whatever be the extent of the chain imagined by our author, the decree appears to have been framed wide enough not to exclude the *link* containing the writers who have most exalted the papal power. The task of those on the other extremity of the chain, is certainly more difficult; for it cannot well be

I have taken this translation from Dr. Phillpott's admirable answer to Mr. Butler, to which I am also indebted for this fresh proof of Mr. B.'s ingenious sparingness of quotation, when authorities run against him. I will not, however, alter one word in my argument. It is true he beguiled me to fight with weapons he had previously blunted; but it makes no other difference than that I should have had less trouble if the whole passage had been before me. Having however, I hope, fully made out my case under a disadvantage contrived by the adversary, the discovery of this circumstance shows with increased evidence the reality and force of the objections which are usually made to the Roman Catholics on account of their doctrines relating to the Pope. As some readers may wish to see the original decree of the council, it will be found, both in Greek and Latin, in Note C.

conceived why mere human rights should be allowed to limit a *full* power to govern the minds of men, derived from the authority of Christ himself. Let this be, however, as it may, one thing is certain, that a true Catholic may understand the *full power of feeding, regulating and governing* the universal church according to either of the explanations of the doctrine declared by the council of Florence, which Mr. Butler calls *Transalpine*, and *Cisalpine*. He may consequently believe, that the Pope has, “at the least, an *indirect* temporal power for effecting a spiritual good in any kingdom to which the universal church extends;” and “that every state is so far subject to the Pope, that when he deems that the bad conduct of the sovereign renders it essential to the good of the church that he shall reign no longer, the Pope is authorised by his divine commission to deprive him of his sovereignty, and absolve his subjects from their obligation of allegiance*.” A Catholic may, on the other hand, with the *old* divines of the Gallican church †,

* Book of the Roman Catholic Church, p. 121.

† The French divines of the present day show themselves far from friendly to the ancient liberties defended by Bossuet.

deny to the Pope this power of deposing princes. Of these two explanations of the *infallible* doctrine on the Pope's supremacy, Mr. Butler says, that "neither speaks the church's faith." This is, indeed, a remarkable fact. It is a fact from which we may infer, either that the Pope and his church do not understand the nature of the *inspiration* on which they build the claim to infallibility, or that they receive that *inspiration* under a kind of political cipher, which, though laid before the eyes of the world, still leaves us in perfect obscurity as to its meaning. Can any one doubt that the Pope, in the face of Christendom, issued a sentence of deposition against Queen Elizabeth? Had not a similar practice prevailed for many centuries before? Was this not done by virtue of what the Popes conceived to be their divine prerogative, declared in the council of Florence? Did not the *greatest part* of the Catholic bishops allow, by their tacit or express consent, that the head of their church was acting in conformity with the *inspired* definition of his power? Were I not too well acquainted with the extreme flexibility, the deluding slipperiness

of Roman Catholic theology, I should contend that the sense of the council of Florence had, on these occasions, been fixed by infallible authority ; for the Pope “ may promulgate definitions and formularies of faith to the universal church, and when the general body, or a great majority of her prelates have assented to them, either by formal consent or *tacit consent*, all are bound to acquiesce in them *.” But alas for those who *will not* be convinced ! The bulls of deposition, though always prefaced by a declaration of doctrine concerning the power of the Roman see ; though issued with all possible solemnity ; though assented to by all the bishops, except, perhaps, a few among the subjects of the monarch so deposed and condemned—these bulls will be found not to be *definitions* and *formularies* of faith. They express a doctrine *tolerated* in the church of Rome, but not her faith : “ this (says Mr. Butler) is contained in the canon of the council of Florence. *All the doctrine of that canon on the point in question, and nothing but that doctrine, is pro-*

* Book of the Roman Catholic Church, p. 120, 1st ed.

pounded by the Roman Catholic church to be believed by the faithful *." But will Mr. Butler tell us how the faithful are to ascertain what it is this ALL contains? No, he certainly cannot. His church *tolerates* the opinion which in this ALL, comprehends the authority to depose princes; nay, the Popes have acted according to that opinion, till the consolidation of the European powers tied their hands; but she also *tolerates* (the word is here in its place) the opinion of those who strike off from that ALL, no less a part than the Pope's supremacy over the sovereigns of the earth.

Little indeed has the *inspiration* of the Florentine fathers done for you, who, sincerely attached to the Roman Catholic church, are desirous to perform ALL your duty to its head. You might, indeed, have expected that, former Popes having unfortunately increased the obscurity of this important point of your faith by their political claims, those who have filled the Roman see in later times, would have put an end to these doubts, by tolerating no longer, but publicly and positively disclaiming, the doctrines of supremacy embraced by their pre-

* Book of the Roman Catholic Church, p. 124, 1st ed.

decessors. Instead of allowing the English and Irish Catholics to apply to Catholic universities for declarations, which these bodies are not authorised to give, the Pope himself might at once have removed the doubt, as to the obedience which he claims from you. Why, then, this silence? why this *toleration* of an opinion which casts a suspicion upon your loyalty; which, if adopted, as you certainly may adopt it so long as it is *tolerated*, must more than divide your allegiance? I think I can explain the cause of this conduct.

If either of the two systems concerning the authority of the Pope were considered by the Roman Catholic church as absolutely false, she could not *tolerate* it consistently with her claims to infallibility: she must therefore believe them both *partially* true. This, however, could not take place if she understood the council of Florence (as Mr. Butler contends) in a sense equally distant from the two extreme theological opinions. If both express *partially* her own sense, that sense must be broad enough to embrace a substantial part of the two; and such is really the case. The *Transalpine**

* *Transalpine* and *Cisalpine* are used here in a very unclas-

divines regard the grant supposed to have been made by Christ to the Pope, *abstractedly* from the external circumstances of the Roman church ; and, considering that he who has *full* authority to feed the flock, must also have it to preserve the pasturage safe and unobstructed, assert that the deposition of a heretical prince falls within the divine prerogative of the head of the Roman Catholics. The *Cisalpine* writers, on the other hand, perceiving that the assertion of this doctrine, and any attempt to put it into practice, would defeat the object of the Pope's authority, by raising political opposition to the church ; deny that such a specific power against secular princes was ever intended by Christ. The Roman see allows these two opinions to be held, because, as it believes that the Pope's power, to be *full*, must extend to every act which

sical sense ; but as these denominations, or rather *Ultramontane* and *Gallican*, prevail among Roman Catholic divines, I am in a certain degree compelled to use them. If the reader imagines himself in France, where they were first employed, the mistake into which they are apt to lead, will easily be avoided. *Transalpine* writers are those who scarcely set any bounds to the authority of the Pope ; *Cisalpine* those who, with Bossuet, contend for the privileges of the Gallican church.

circumstances may make advantageous to the church ; it will not restrain his hands, in any possible emergency, from checking *political* opposition to the prosperity of the Roman Catholic religion. But as it *may be true* that under the circumstances of the civilized world, it will never be expedient to call upon Catholics to refuse their allegiance to an enemy of the Roman Catholic church, the *Cisalpine* opinions, which at first were strongly opposed by Rome, are at present *tolerated*.

I have hitherto examined the Roman Catholic doctrine concerning the Pope's supremacy, not because I conceive it to have any practical effect in this country, but in order to expose the vagueness, obscurity, and doubt in which the declaration of one of your *infallible* councils—a declaration, too, relating to so important a subject as the *divine* power of your *spiritual* head—is involved. The days, however, are no more when the Pope, in virtue of his *full power to feed, regulate, and govern you*, might endeavour to remove a Protestant king from the throne. The trial to which, as British subjects and Roman Catholics, you are still

exposed, is perfectly unconnected with the *temporal* claims of your ecclesiastical head ; it flows directly from the *spiritual*. Hence the constant efforts of your political advocates to fix the attention of the public on the question of temporal supremacy, in which they may make a show of independence. Hence the irrelevant questions proposed to the Catholic universities, which, as their object was known, gave ample scope to the versatile casuistry of those bodies. Their task, in assisting their brethren of England and Ireland, would have certainly required a greater degree of ingenuity, had the following question been substituted for the three which were actually proposed :—*Can the Pope, in virtue of what Roman Catholics believe his divine authority, command the assistance of the faithful in checking the progress of heresy, by any means not likely to produce loss or danger to the Roman Catholic church ; and can that church acknowledge the validity of any engagement to disobey the Pope in such cases ?* This is a question of great practical importance to all *sincere* Catholics in these kingdoms. Allow me, therefore, to canvass it according to the settled principles of your

faith and practice, since political views prevent your own writers from placing it in its true light.

At the time when I am writing this, one branch of the legislature has declared itself favourable to what is called Catholic emancipation; and, for any thing I can conjecture, Roman Catholics may be allowed to sit in parliament before these Letters appear in public. A *Roman Catholic* legislator of *Protestant* England would, indeed, feel the weight of the difficulty to which my suggested question alludes, provided his attachment to the Roman Catholic faith were sincere. A *real* Roman Catholic once filled the throne of these realms, under similar circumstances; and neither the strong bias which a crown at stake must have given to his mind, nor all the ingenious evasions proposed to him by the ablest divines of the court of Louis XIV. could remove or disguise the obstacles which his *faith* opposed to his political duties. The source of the religious scruples which deprived James II. of his regal dignity, is expressed in one of the questions which he proposed to several divines of his persuasion. It comprises, in a few words, what every candid mind

must perceive to be the *true and only* difficulty in the admission of Roman Catholics to the parliament of these kingdoms. What James doubted respecting the *regal sanction*, a member of either house may apply to the more limited influence of his vote. He asked "Whether the king could promise to give his assent to all the laws which might be proposed for the greater security of the church of England?" Four English divines, who attended James in his exile, answered without hesitation in the negative. The casuistry of the French court was certainly less abrupt. Louis XIV. observed to James, that "*as the exercise of the Catholic religion could not be re-established in England, save by removing from the people the impression that the king was resolved to make it triumph, he must dissuade him from saying or doing any thing which might authorise or augment this fear.*" The powerful talents of Bossuet were engaged to support the political views of the French monarch. His answer is a striking specimen of casuistic subtlety. He begins by establishing a distinction between adhering to the erroneous principles professed by a church, and the protection

given to it “*ostensibly, to preserve public tranquillity.*” He calls the Edict of Nantes, by which the Huguenots were, for a time, tolerated, “*a kind of protection to the reformed, shielding them from the insults of those who would trouble them in the exercise of their religion.*” It never was thought (adds Bossuet) that the conscience of the monarch was interested in these concessions, *except so far as they were judged necessary for public tranquillity.* *The same may be said of the king of England; and if he grant greater advantages to his Protestant subjects, it is because the state in which they are in his kingdoms, and the object of public repose, require it.*” Speaking of the Articles, the Liturgy, and the Homilies, “it is not asked (he says) that the king should become the promoter of these three things, *but only that he shall OSTENSIBLY leave them a free course, for the peace of his subjects.*” “The Catholics (he concludes) ought to consider the state in which they are, and the small portion they form of the population of England; which obliges them not to ask what is impossible of their king, but on the contrary, to sacrifice all the advantages with which

they might idly flatter themselves, to the real and solid good of having a king of their religion, and securing his family on the throne, though Catholic; *which may lead them naturally to expect in time, the entire establishment of their church and faith*.*"

Such is the utmost stretch which can be given to the Roman Catholic principles in the toleration of a church which dissents from the Roman faith. A conscientious Roman Catholic may, for the sake of public peace, and in the hope of finally serving the cause of his church, *ostensibly give a free course* to heresy. But, if it may be done without such dangers, it is his unquestionable duty to undermine a system of which the direct tendency is, in his opinion, the *spiritual and final* ruin of men. Is there a Catholic divine who can dispute this doctrine? Is there a learned and conscientious priest among you, who would give absolution to such a person as, having it in his power so to direct his votes and conduct in parliament as to diminish the influence of Protestant principles, without disturbing or alarming the country, would still heartily

* See the whole of Bossuet's answer in note D.

and stedfastly join in promoting the interest of the English church? Let the question be proposed to any Catholic university; and, though I am fully aware of the inexhaustible resources of casuistry, I should not fear to stake the force of my argument upon its honest and conscientious answer.

The author of the *Book of the Roman Catholic Church* rejects as a gratuitous imputation whatever is attributed to that church, without the express authority of one of her definitions of faith. I will only remind those who are well acquainted with the Roman Catholic system of divinity, that, in what relates to moral and practical principles, such references cannot fairly be demanded. The definitions of your church upon such points are very few. Some moral doctrines have been censured as lax, some as being of a depraving tendency; but the consciences of Catholics are guided by the broad rules of action acknowledged by all Christians. In the application of these rules there is, indeed, some variety of opinion among your moralists; for as they often dwell upon imaginary cases, an ample field is left to ingenuity for all the

shifts and turns of expediency. The doctrine, however, that he, who being able to prevent a sin allows its commission, is guilty of that sin and its consequences; requires no sanction from Pope or council. No Christian will ever deny this position; and even a deist, if he is to preserve consistency, will be obliged to admit its justness. This being so, it follows with unquestionable certainty that a Roman Catholic cannot, without guilt, lend his support to a Protestant establishment, but is bound, as he wishes to save his soul, to miss no opportunity of checking the progress of heresy: the most grievous of all moral offences, according to the doctrines of the Roman Catholic church. Murder itself is less sinful, in the judgment of the Roman see, than a deliberate separation from her communion and creed. I need not prove this to those who are disposed to recognize the Roman Catholic doctrines in the face of the world; but if any one still doubts the place which heresy holds in the Roman Catholic scale of criminal guilt, let him explain away, if he can, the following passage of the papal bull which is every year published in the Spanish dominions, under the

title of The Crusade. By that bull, every person who pays a small sum towards an imaginary war against infidels, is privileged to be released from all ecclesiastical censures, and receive absolution at the hands of any priest, of all, whatever sins, he may have committed, “even of those censures and sins which are reserved to the apostolic see, *the crime of heresy excepted*.*” Is it then to cherish, foment, and defend this heinous crime—the crime which the Pope exempts from the easy and plenary remission granted to the long list of abominations left for the ear of a common priest—is it *this crime*, as established, honoured, and endowed by the law of England, that you are anxious to sanction with your votes in parliament?

Suppose, for a moment, that it were possible for such a state as that of the Old Man of the Mountain or Prince of the Assassins, to have grown into a powerful nation, and reduced a Christian people under its dominion, without extinguish-

* “Que puedan elegir Confesor Secular o Regular, de los aprobados por el ordinario, y obtener de él plenaria indulgencia, y remision de qualquiera pecados y censuras, aun de los reservados, y reservadas a la Silla Apostolica, excepto el crimen de heregia.” Bula de la Cruzada.

ing their faith: the condition of these Christians would have greatly differed at two different periods. Before a sad experience had convinced them of the inadequacy of their power to overcome those enemies of God and man, they would naturally have fought openly and manfully against the assassin establishment, or died martyrs in passive resistance. When finally subdued, two courses alone would be left open: either to keep their hands clean from blood, by declining all participation in the acts of the government, or join it with the intention of checking, by indirect means, the commission of an interminable series of crimes, secured by the constitutional laws of the state. Is there, I ask, any difference between this case and that of *real* Roman Catholics under a Protestant government, whose very essence is to maintain a separation from the communion of Rome, thereby placing millions of souls in a state which, you are bound to believe, cancels their title to salvation as Christians?

I am aware that a practical sense of the absurdity of this tenet of your church, has forced many of you to avert their eyes from it, and

persuade themselves that it is possible to be a Roman Catholic without holding the absolute exclusion of heretics from the benefits of Christ's redemption. This, believe me, is an error. Examine that profession of faith in which your church has set forth her fundamental doctrines, and you will find that she positively confines salvation to her members, and makes this very article a necessary condition for reception within her pale *. Your English catechisms endeavour to throw a sort of veil on this doctrine, by stating that Protestants may be saved if they labour under *invincible ignorance* of the true Roman Catholic faith ; leaving such as are unacquainted with their theological language to understand, that by *invincible ignorance*, is meant unconquerable conviction. But has the church of Rome ever modified her declarations against heretics, even with that poor and degrading exemption of *ignorance* ? Will the learned conviction of a Melancthon, a

* “ This true Catholic faith, OUT OF WHICH NONE CAN BE SAVED, which I now freely profess and truly hold, I, N. promise, vow, and swear, most constantly to hold,” &c. &c. *Creed of Pius IV.*

Calvin, a Grotius, an Usher, and the innumerable host of Protestant luminaries, pass under the humble denomination of that *ignorance*, on which Catholic divines allow a chance of eternal happiness to pagans and savages? If *sincere conviction* is a valid plea with the Roman Catholic church, why has she scattered to the winds the ashes of those who allowed that conviction to be tried in her inquisitorial fires?

I rejoice to find the dogma of intolerance branded in the *Book of the Roman Catholic Church* with the epithet of DETESTABLE* ; but cannot help wondering that a man who thus openly expresses his detestation of that doctrine should still profess obedience to a see, under whose authority the inquisition of Spain was re-established in 1814. If Catholics are so far improved under the Protestant government of England as to be able to *detest* persecution, by what intelligible distinction do they still find it consistent to cling to the source of the intolerance which has inundated Europe with blood, and still shows its old disposition unchanged, wherever it

* *Book of the Roman Catholic Church*, p. 303, 1st ed.

preserves an exclusive influence? In what church did Spain learn the necessity of forbidding her subjects, *for ever*, the right of choosing their religious tenets, and that at the very moment when she was proclaiming a *free* constitution? Who has induced the republican governments of Spanish America to copy the same odious law in their new codes?—That church, no doubt, who looks complacently on such acts and declarations, in countries where even her silence stamps public doctrines with the character of truth. Yes; the “*detestable dogma of religious intolerance*” is publicly and solemnly proclaimed in the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church, without a single observation against it from the Pope or the bishops of that church; nay, the legislators themselves are forced to proclaim and sanction it against their own conviction, because the mass of the people are allowed by the church to understand that such are their duty, and her belief.

If the Roman Catholic Church can thus allow *detestable dogmas* to act in full force within the inmost recesses of her bosom, those Catholics who differ from her notions, so far as her apologist

Mr. Butler, might guide themselves in religious matters without the assistance of her infallibility. That able writer allows himself to be blinded by the spirit of party, when he labours to prove that intolerance does not belong exclusively to his Church; and charges Protestants with persecution. That Protestants did not at once perceive the full extent of the fundamental principle of the Reformation—the inherent right of every man to judge for himself on matters of faith—can neither invalidate the truth of that luminous principle, nor bind subsequent Protestants to limit its application. It is a melancholy truth, that Protestants did persecute at one time; but it is a truth which rivets the accusation of inherent and essential intolerance upon that Church, whose erroneous doctrines the patriarchs of the reformation could not cast off at once. Thanks be to the protecting care of that Providence, which, through them, prepared the complete emancipation from religious tyranny which Protestants enjoy at this moment; the *infallibility* of their churches made no part of the common belief on which they agreed from the beginning, or the spirit of intolerance would only have changed its name among us.

The dogma of an infallible judge of religious subjects is the true source of bigotry; and whoever believes it in his heart, is necessarily and conscientiously a persecutor. A *fallible* Church can use no compulsion. If she claim "authority on matters of faith," it is to declare her own creed to those who are *willing* to be her members. The *infallible judge*, on the contrary, looks on his pretended gift as a miraculous divine commission, to stop the progress of what he condemns as an error. He persecutes and punishes dissenters, not because they cannot be convinced by his reasons, but for obstinate resistance to his supernatural authority. Rome never doomed her opponents to the flames for their errors, but their *contumacy*. It is by this means that she has been able so often to extinguish sympathy in the breast of her followers; for error excites compassion, while rebellion never fails to kindle indignation*.

The Roman Catholics have been accused of holding a doctrine which justifies them in not keeping faith with heretics. This charge is false as it stands: but it has a foundation in truth which I will

* Note E.

lay before you, as an important consequence of the claims of your church to infallibility. The constant intercourse with those whom you call heretics, has blunted the feeling of horror which the Roman Church has assiduously fomented against Christians who dissent from her. It is, indeed, a happy result of the Reformation, that some of the strongest prejudices of the Roman Catholics have been softened wherever the Protestant religion has obtained a footing. Where this mixture has never taken place, true Roman Catholics remain nearly what they were in the time when Christendom rejoiced at the breach of faith, which committed Huss to the flames by the sentence of a general council. In England, however, far from pretending to such unfair advantages, the Roman Catholics resent the suspicion that their oaths, not to interfere with the Protestant establishment, may be annulled by the Pope. The settled and sincere determination to keep such oaths, in those who appear ready to take them, I will not question for a moment; but I cannot conceal my persuasion, that it is the duty of every Roman Catholic pastor to dissuade the members of their

flocks from taking oaths which, if not allowed in a spirit of the most treacherous policy, would imply a separation from the communion of the Church of Rome. Let me lay down the doctrine of that Church on this important point.

I will assume the most liberal opinion of the Catholic divines, and grant that the Pope cannot annul an oath in virtue of his dispensing power*. But this can only be said of a *lawful* oath; a quality which no human law can confer upon an engagement to perform a sinful act. A promise under oath, to execute an immoral deed, is in itself a monstrous offence against the divine law; and the performance of such a promise would only aggravate the crime of having made it. There are, however, cases where the lawfulness of the engagement is doubtful, and the obligation bur-

* Thomas Aquinas, whose authority is most highly revered in these matters, maintains, however, that there exists a power in the church to dispense both with a vow, which, according to him, is the most sacred of all engagements, and, consequently, with an oath. *Sicut in voto aliqua necessitatis seu honestatis causâ potest fieri dispensatio, ita et in juramento.* Secunda Secundæ Quest. lxxxix. Art. ix. The popes, in fact, have frequently exercised this dispensing power with the tacit consent of the church.

densome, or, by a change of circumstances, inexpedient and preposterous. The interference of the Pope, in such cases, is, according to the liberal opinion which I am stating, improperly called *dispensation*. The Pope only declares that the original oath, or vow, was null and void, either from the nature of the thing promised, or from some circumstances in the manner and form of the promise; when, by virtue of his authority, the head of the church removes all spiritual responsibility from the person who submits himself to his decision. I do not consider myself bound to confirm the accuracy of this statement by written authorities, as I do not conceive the possibility of any Roman Catholic divine bringing it into question.

The Roman Catholic doctrine on the obligation of oaths being clearly understood, *sincere* members of that church can find no difficulty in applying it to any existing test, or to any oath which may be tendered, in future, with a view to define the limits of their opposition to doctrines and practices condemned by Rome. In the first place, they cannot but see that an oath binding them to lend a

direct support to any Protestant establishment, or to omit such measures as may, without finally injuring the cause of Catholicism, check and disturb the spread and ascendancy of error; is in itself sinful, and cannot, therefore, be obligatory. In the second place, it must be evident, that if, for the advantage of the Catholic religion suffering under a heterodox ascendancy, some oaths of this kind may be tolerated by Catholic divines, the head of that church will find it his duty to declare their nullity upon any change of circumstances. The persevering silence of the Papal see in regard to this point, notwithstanding the advantages which an authorized declaration would give to the Roman Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland, is an indubitable proof that the Pope cannot give his sanction to engagements made in favour of a Protestant establishment. Of this, Bossuet himself was aware, when to his guarded opinion upon the scruples of James II. against the coronation oath, he subjoined the salvo:—"I nevertheless submit with all my heart to the supreme decision of his Holiness." If that decision, however, was then, and is now, withheld, notwithstanding the disadvantages to which

the silence of Rome subjects the Roman Catholics, it cannot be supposed that it would at all tend to remove them. To such as are intimately acquainted with the Catholic doctrines, which I have just laid before you, the conduct of the Roman see is in no way mysterious.

It would be much more difficult to explain upon what creditable principle of their church, the Catholic divines of these kingdoms can give their approbation to oaths tendered for the security of the Protestant establishment. The clergy of the church of England have been involved in a general and indiscriminate charge of hypocrisy and simulation, upon religious matters. It would ill become one in my peculiar circumstances to take up the defence of that venerable body* ; yet I cannot dismiss this subject without most solemnly attesting, that the strongest impressions which enliven and support my Christian faith, are derived from my friendly intercourse with members of that insulted clergy ; while, on the contrary,

* Since writing this passage, a most spirited and modest defence of the church of England clergy has been published by Dr. Blomfield, Lord Bishop of Chester.

I knew but very few Spanish priests whose talents or acquirements were above contempt, who had not secretly renounced their religion. Whether something similar to the state of the Spanish clergy may not explain the support which the Catholic priesthood of these kingdoms seem to give to oaths so abhorrent from the belief of their church, as those which must precede the admission of members of that church into parliament; I will not undertake to say. If there be conscientious believers among them, which I will not doubt for a moment, and they are not forced into silence, as I suspect it is done in similar cases*, I feel assured that they will earnestly deprecate, and condemn all engagements on the part of the Roman Catholics, to support and

* I recollect something about the persecution of one Mr. Gandolphy, a London priest, who was obliged to appeal personally to Rome against the persecution of his brethren, for exposing too freely the doctrines which might increase the difficulties of Catholic emancipation. The Pope did not condemn him. Since writing this note I have seen the case of Mr. Gandolphy stated in an able publication of the Rev. George Croly, entitled *Popery and the Popish Question*. Mr. G.'s doctrines were highly approved at Rome.—This statement, which is literally that of the first edition, requires an explanation. The reader will find it in Note F.

defend the church of England. Such an engagement implies either a renunciation of the tenet excluding Protestants from the benefits of the Gospel promises, or a shocking indifference to the eternal welfare of men.

If your leaders, whom it would be uncharitable to suspect of the latter feeling, have so far receded from the Roman creed as to allow us the common privileges of Christianity, and can conscientiously swear to protect and encourage the interests of the church of England; let them, in the name of truth, speak openly before the world, and be the first to remove that obstacle to mutual benevolence, and perfect community of political privileges—the doctrine of exclusive salvation in your church. Cancel but that one article from your creed, and all liberal men in Europe will offer you the right hand of fellowship. Your other doctrines concern but yourselves; this endangers the peace and freedom of every man living, and that in proportion to your goodness; it makes your very benevolence a curse. Believe a man who has spent the best years of his life where Catholicism is professed without the check

of dissenting opinions ; where it luxuriates on the soil, which fire and sword have cleared of whatever might stunt its natural and genuine growth ; a growth incessantly watched over by the head of your church, and his authorized representatives the Inquisitors. Alas ! “ *I have a mother,*” outweighed all other reasons for a change, in a man of genius*, who yet cared not to show his indifference to the religious system under which he was born. I, too, “ had a mother,” and such a mother as, did I possess the talents of your great poet, tenfold, they would have been honoured in doing homage to the powers of her mind and the goodness of her heart. No woman could love her children more ardently, and none of those children was more vehemently loved than myself. But the Roman Catholic creed had poisoned in her the purest source of affection. I saw her, during a long period, unable to restrain her tears in my presence. I perceived that she shunned my conversation, especially when my university friends drew me into topics above those of domestic talk. I loved her ; and this behaviour

* Pope : see his letter to Atterbury on this subject.

cut me to the heart. In my distress I applied to a friend to whom she used to communicate all her sorrows : and, to my utter horror, I learnt that, suspecting me of anti-catholic principles, my mother was distracted by the fear that she might be obliged to accuse me to the Inquisition, if I incautiously uttered some condemned proposition in her presence. To avoid the barbarous necessity of being the instrument of my ruin, she could find no other means but that of shunning my presence. Did this unfortunate mother overrate or mistake the nature of her Roman Catholic duties? By no means. The Inquisition was established by the supreme authority of her church ; and, under that authority, she was enjoined to accuse any person whatever, whom she might overhear uttering heretical opinions. No exception was made in favour of fathers, children, husbands, wives : to conceal was to abet their errors, and doom two souls to eternal perdition. A sentence of excommunication, to be incurred in the fact, was annually published against all persons, who having heard a proposition directly or indirectly contrary to the Romanist Faith, omitted to inform the in-

quisitors upon it. Could any sincere Catholic slight such a command?

Such is the spirit of the ecclesiastical power to which you submit. The monstrous laws of which I speak do not belong to a remote period: they existed in full force fifteen years ago; they were republished under the authority of the Pope, at a later period. If some of your writers assume the tone of freedom which belongs to this age and country; if you profess your Faith without compulsion; you may thank the Protestant laws which protect you. Is there a spot in the universe where a Roman Catholic may throw off his mental allegiance, except where Protestants have contended for that right, and sealed it with their blood? I know that your church modifies her intolerance according to circumstances, and that she tolerates in France, after the revolution, the Hugonots, whom she would have burnt in Spain a few years ago, and whom she would doom to some indefinite punishment, little short of the stake, at this present moment. Such conduct is unworthy of the claims which Rome contends for, and would disgrace the most obscure leader of a

paltry sect. If she still claims the right of wielding "the sword of Peter," why does she conceal it under her mantle? If not, why does she not put an end to more than half the miseries and degradation of Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Spanish America, by at once declaring that *men are accountable only to God for their religious belief*, and that *sincere and conscientious persuasion must, both in this and the next world, be a valid plea for the pardon of error?* Does the Church of Rome really profess this doctrine? It is then a sacred duty for her to remove at once that scandal of Christianity, that intolerance which the conduct of Popes and councils has invariably upheld*. But if, as I am persuaded, Rome still thinks in conformity with her former conduct, and yet the Roman Catholics of these kingdoms dissent from her on this point, they have already begun to use the Protestant *right of private judgment* upon ONE of the articles of their faith; and I may hope that they will follow me in the examination of that alleged divine authority

* Note G.

by which they are prevented from extending it to ALL.

POSTSCRIPT.

Want of books, or rather want of sufficient health to undergo the fatigue and discomfort of consulting them in public libraries, had made me proceed in the composition of these Letters, deriving the materials from my own stores, and from the book itself against the general tendency of which I was induced to take up the pen. My knowledge of the Roman Catholic doctrines led me soon to conclude that Mr. Butler was a writer who, on the fairest construction, knew how to divert his adversaries from all the weak points of his cause. Yet I trusted that the accuracy of his quotations might be depended upon, especially when he gave us authorised statements of the Roman Catholic tenets. The translation of the creed of Pius IV., which Mr. Butler inserted in his *Book of the Roman Catholic Church*, was, therefore, the only document of that kind from which I deduced my arguments to prove the duty incumbent on Roman Catholics to propagate their

religion by every means in their power. Whether I have succeeded or failed in proving that fact by inference, my readers will decide. But upon a revision of my arguments, I do not regret that *an omission* which I subsequently discovered in Mr. Butler's translation of that Creed, deprived me, at first, of the easiest and most direct proof which I could wish to support my assertion. For had I consulted the original at once, the *positive* confirmation which that document gives it, and my own familiar conviction of its truth, would have induced me to save myself the exertion of fully developing my argument. As it now happens, I flatter myself that my readers will give me some credit for accuracy in the knowledge of the Roman Catholic doctrines, when they shall see that a theoretical reasoning from her established general principles, fully and accurately agrees with a positive injunction of the church of Rome, of which lapse of time had made me forget the existence.

Let us, then, compare the last article in Mr. Butler's translation of the Creed, with the original.

Mr. Butler's translation:—"This true catholic

faith, out of which none can be saved, which I now freely profess, and truly hold, I, N., promise, vow, and swear most constantly to hold and profess the same whole and entire, with God's assistance, to the end of my life. Amen."

The Latin original.—“ Hanc veram catholicam fidem, extra quam nemo salvus esse potest, quam in præsentī sponte profiteor, et veraciter teneo, eandem integram, et inviolatam, usque ad extremum vitæ spatium constantissime (Deo adjuvante) retinere et confiteri, ATQUE A MEIS SUBDITIS, VEL ILLIS QUORUM CURA AD ME IN MUNERE MEO SPECTABIT, TENERI, DOCERI, ET PRÆDICARI, QUANTUM IN ME ERIT, CURATURUM EGO IDEM N. SPONDEO, VOVEO, AC JURO.”

Now, the words in small capitals, omitted by Mr. Butler, contain the very pith and marrow of the strongest argument against the admissibility of Roman Catholics to parliament. For if the most solemn profession of their faith lays on every one of her members who enjoys a place of influence, the duty of “ *procuring, that all under him, by virtue of his office, shall hold, teach, and preach the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, and*

his under an oath and vow ; how can such men engage to preserve the ascendancy of the Church of England in these realms ?

When, in the *New Times* of the 5th of April, [exposed this important omission before the public, I thought that Mr. Butler would have explained the origin of it. But I am not aware of his having given any explanation. Neither on that, nor on the present occasion, is it my intention to cast a suspicion on that gentleman's good faith. He probably copied from some garbled translation, prepared by less scrupulous members of his communion, who wished to conceal the real tenets of their church from a Protestant public. At all events, this fresh instance of inaccuracy on a most important point, gives additional propriety to caution in reading Mr. Butler's defences of Catholicism.

LETTER III.

Examination of the title to infallibility, spiritual supremacy, and exclusive salvation, claimed by the Roman Catholic Church. Internal evidence against Rome, in the use she has made of her assumed prerogative. Short method of determining the question.

AT the conclusion of my preceding Letter, I entreated you to examine the title by which your church deprives her members of the right of private judgment on religious matters, and denies salvation to those who venture to think for themselves. In making this request I may appear to have overlooked the very essence of your religious allegiance, and to demand a concession which would at once put you out of the pale of the Roman church. But I beg you to observe, that whatever be the extent of the authority of that church over you, there is one point which it cannot withhold from the judgment and verdict of your reason. The *reality* of her title to be the guide and rule of your faith, must be a matter, not of authority, but of proof. He that claims

obedience in virtue of delegated power, is bound to prove his appointment. Any attempt to deprive those who without that appointment would be his equals, of the liberty to examine the authority, nature, and extent of the decree which constitutes the delegate above them; is an invasion of men's natural liberty, as well as a strong indication of imposture. If before we come to God we must, through nature, believe that he is; surely before we yield our reason to one who calls himself God's Vicar, our *reason* should be satisfied that God has truly appointed him to that supereminent post.

How then stands the case between the church of Rome and the world?

The church of Rome proclaims that Jesus Christ, both God and man, having appeared on earth for the salvation of mankind, appointed the apostle Peter to be his representative; made him the head of all the members of his church then existing; and granted a similar privilege to Peter's successors, without limitation of time. To this she adds, that, to the church, united under Peter and his successors, Christ ensured an infallible

knowledge of the sense of the Scriptures, and an equally infallible knowledge of certain traditions, and their true meaning. On the strength of this divine appointment, the church of Rome demands the same faith in the decisions of her head, when approved “by the tacit assent or open consent of the greatest part of her bishops,” as if they proceeded from the mouth of Christ himself. The divine commission, on which she grounds these claims, runs in these words of Christ to the chief of his apostles : “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it : And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

It will not be denied that between this unquestionable authority and the statement which precedes it, there is no verbal agreement. A man unacquainted with the system of divinity supported by the church of Rome, would, probably, perceive no connexion between the alleged passage and the commentary. But let us suppose that

these words of our Saviour contain the meaning in question: yet no man will deny, that if they do contain it, it is in an indirect and obscure manner. The fact then is, that even if the church of Rome should be really endowed with the supernatural assistance which she asserts, the divine Founder of Christianity was pleased to make the existence of that extraordinary gift one of the least obvious truths contained in the Gospels. It might have been expected, however, that Peter, in his Epistles, or in the addresses to the first Christians which the Acts record, would have removed the obscurity; and that, since the grant of infallibility to him, to his peculiar church, and to his successors in the see of that church (either independently of the infallibility of others, or in combination with other privileged persons,—for this is also left in great obscurity) was made the only security against the attacks of hell; he would have taken care to explain the secret sense of Christ's address to him. Peter, however, does not make the slightest allusion to his privileges. His successors being not named in the supposed original

grant of supremacy, it was in course that, by an express declaration, Peter would obviate the natural inference, that they were excluded from his own personal prerogatives. But Peter is equally silent about his successors; and to add to the original mysteriousness of the subject, he never mentions Rome, and dates his epistles from Babylon. Babylon may figuratively mean Rome; the silence of both our Saviour and his apostle may, by some strange rule of interpretation, be proved to denote those successors; the whole system, in fine, of the Roman Catholic church may be contained in the alleged passage; but, if so, it is contained like a diamond in a mountain. The plainest sense of any one passage of the Scriptures cannot be so palpable as the obscurity of the present. It follows, therefore, with all the force of demonstration, that the divine right claimed by the Pope and his church to be the infallible rule of faith, having no other than an obscure and doubtful foundation, the belief in it cannot be obligatory on all Christians; who are left to follow the suggestions of their individual judgment as to the

obscure meaning of the Scriptures, till the Scriptures themselves shall be found to demand the resignation of that judgment.

I request you to observe, that the force of my argument does not depend upon the erroneousness of the Roman interpretation of the passages alleged for the spiritual supremacy; all I contend for is the *doubtfulness* of their meaning: for to suppose that the divine founder of Christianity, while providing against doubt in his future followers, would miss his aim by overlooking the obscurity in which he left the remedy he wished to appoint; is a notion from which Christians must shrink. It follows, therefore, either that Christ did not intend what the Romanists believe about Peter and his church; or that, since he concealed his meaning, an obedience to the Roman church cannot be a necessary condition in his disciples.

The liberty which, upon the supposition most favourable to Rome, Christ has granted to believers in his Gospel, the Pope and his church most positively deny them. Placing themselves between mankind and the Redeemer, they allow

those only to approach him, who first make a full surrender of their judgment to Popes and councils. A belief in Christ and his work of redemption, grounded on the Scriptures and their evidences, is thus made useless, unless it is preceded by a belief in Roman supremacy, grounded on mere surmises. Christianity is removed from its broad foundation, to place the mighty fabric upon the moveable sand of a conjectural meaning.

This looks more like love of self than of Christ; more like ambition than charity. The title to infallibility and supremacy being *at the best* doubtful, the benefit of the doubt should have been left to Christian liberty.—But may not the opposite conduct of the Roman church have arisen from sincere zeal for what she conceived to be the true intention of Christ? Christian candour would demand this construction, were it not for the use she has made of the assumed privilege: yet if we find that, having erected herself into an organ of Heaven, all her oracular decisions have invariably tended towards the increase of her own power; it will be difficult to admit the purity of her intentions.

By comparing the articles of the church of Rome with those of the church of England, we shall find that the points of difference are chiefly these : tradition, transubstantiation, the number of sacraments, purgatory, indulgences, and the invocation of saints. Such are the more prominent questions on doctrine, at issue between the two churches ; for the differences about free-will and justification might, I believe, be settled with less difficulty *, by accurately defining the language on

* I said in the first edition, *without much difficulty*. This was one of those incorrect assertions, which are apt to drop inadvertently, upon collateral points, when the mind is in full pursuit of some main object. Some difficulties might, indeed, be removed by accurately defining the terms in the vital question of *Justification* ; but the Scriptural doctrine on that subject stands so boldly and decidedly opposed to the Romish tenets on the merit of works and indulgences ; and these again have been so deeply ingrafted by the Roman Catholic, on the doctrine of Justification, that no agreement between the churches of England and Rome, on that point, appears probable. As far, however, as *Justification* is connected, in Romanist Theology, with *good works* and *indulgences*, it comes within the description of doctrines, whose tendency is to increase ecclesiastical power, and consequently within the scope of my argument.—I have, besides, made another alteration in the text, in order to avoid being misunderstood, by calling the points mentioned therein, the *main questions* between the Protestants and Rome. By *main questions* I did not mean, in the

both sides. Now, I will not assume the truth of the Protestant tenets on these points, nor enter into arguments against those of the Roman church ; my present concern is with their tendency.

To begin with tradition : let us observe how broad a field is opened to the exercise of infallibility, by the supposition that an indefinite number of revealed truths, were floating down the stream of ages, unconsigned to the inspired records of Christianity. The power of interpreting the word of God by a continual light from above, might be confined by the Scriptures themselves, as it would be difficult to force doctrines on the belief of Christians, of which the very name and subject seem to have been unknown to the inspired writers. *Divine tradition*, the first-born of *infallibility*, removes this obstacle ; and, so doing, increases the influence of Rome to an indefinite extent. I do not *here* contend that to place *tradition* upon the same footing with the Scriptures, is an error ; but

first edition, the *most important* in religion, but such as, in my opinion, opposed the greatest bar to re-union. As a Christian doctrine, however, I hold that of *justification by faith alone* as one of the essentials of true religion.

whether error or truth, it is certainly *power* in the hands of the Roman church.

By the combined influence of *tradition* and *infallibility*, the church of Rome established the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. From the moment that people are made to believe that a man has the power of working, at all times, the stupendous miracle of converting bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, that man is raised to a dignity above all which kings are able to confer. What, then, must be the honour due to a bishop, who can bestow the power of performing the miracle of transubstantiation? What the rank of the Pope, who is the head of the bishops themselves? The world beheld for centuries, the natural consequences of the surprising belief in the power of priests to convert bread and wine into the incarnate Deity*. Kings and emperors were forced to kiss the Pope's foot, because their subjects were in the daily habit of kissing the hands of priests—those hands which were believed to come in frequent contact with the body of Christ.

The abundance of ceremonies supposed to pro-

* Note H.

duce supernatural effects, must magnify the character of the privileged ministers of those ceremonies. Hence a church possessing seven sacraments, is far superior in influence, to one who acknowledges but two. Add to this the nature of four out of the five *Romanist* sacraments—penance, extreme unction, ordination, and matrimony—and the extent of power which she thereby obtains, will appear. Penance, *i. e.* auricular confession, puts the consciences of the laity under the direction of the priesthood. Extreme unction is one of her means to allay fear and remorse. Ordination is intimately connected with the influence which the Roman church derives from transubstantiation, and its being made a sacrament adds probability to the miraculous powers which it is supposed to confer. Finally, by giving the sacramental character to matrimony, the source and bond of civil society is directly and primarily subjected to the church.

There still remain three exclusive offsprings of tradition, explained and defined by infallibility, which yield to none in happy consequences to the Roman church,—indulgences, purgatory, and the worship of saints, relics, and images.

The wealth which has flowed into the lap of Rome, in exchange for indulgences, is incalculable. Even in the decline of her influence, she still looks for a considerable part of her revenues from this source: to which also she owes the degree of subjection in which she keeps the Roman Catholic governments. My unfortunate native country shows the nature and extent of this influence in a striking light. I have already mentioned the *Bull of the Crusade*, through which the barter of indulgences and dispensations for money, is carried on, in a manner worthy of the darkest ages. The Spanish government has two or three paltry fortresses on the coast of Africa, which are employed as places of punishment for criminals. The existence of a few soldiers in these garrisons is construed into a perpetual war against the *Infidels*, with whom, in the mean time, the King of Spain is mostly at peace; from inability to oppose to them an effectual resistance. The see of Rome, which wants but a slight pretext to *spiritualize* whatever may open a market for its wares, calls this state of things between the Spaniards and the Africans a *perpetual war against infidels*; which

being, according to the principles of that see, a meritorious Christian act, deserves its pastoral encouragement. For this purpose every year are printed *summaries* of a Papal bull, which the Spaniards purchase at different prices, according to their rank and wealth, in order to enjoy the indulgences and privileges granted by the Pope in exchange for their alms. The benefits to be derived from the possession of one of these bulls are several plenary indulgences, and leave to eat, during Lent, milk, eggs, and butter, which are otherwise forbidden, under pain of *mortal sin*, at that season. The sale of these privileges having been found most valuable and extensive, a second, third, and even a fourth bull, of a similar kind, were devised. The *flesh* bull, as it is called in Spain, allows the purchasers to eat meat during Lent, every Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday, except in Passion Week. The third bull is called the *compounding bull*. By possessing one of these documents, and giving a certain sum, at the discretion of any priest authorized to hear confessions, to the fund of the *holy crusade*; any property may be kept, which, having been obtained by robbery and extortion,

cannot be traced to its right owners for restitution. This *composition* with the Pope and the King, is made by depositing the sum appointed by the confessor in an iron chest fixed outside the doors of churches: a comfortable resource indeed for the tender consciences of peculators and extortioners, two very numerous classes in Spain. The fourth bull is to be purchased for the benefit of the deceased, and is called the *defunct bull*. The name of any dead person being entered on the bull, a plenary indulgence is, by this means, believed to be conveyed to his soul, if suffering in purgatory. To secure, however, a double sale, the three latter bulls are made of no effect, unless the original *summary* of the crusade be possessed by the person who wishes to enjoy the dispensations and privileges therein set forth. It is also a very common practice to bury these bulls with the corpses of those whom they are intended to benefit. The tax thus levied upon the people of Spain is divided between the King and the Pope: yet it is not the money which, in this and similar transactions, proves most beneficial to Rome; the habit of spiritual dependence which it supports among the

Spaniards is, no doubt, its most valuable result to that see. The Spanish Cortes, who were bold enough to reduce the tithes by one half; when struggling hard to shake off the silent yet formidable influence of the Pope, found their power inadequate to the task; well knowing, that were he to withdraw one of these bulls, the mass of the people would instantly rise against them. I have selected this fact among thousands, that prove the accession of *power* which the doctrine of indulgences produces to the see of Rome*.

The belief in purgatory is so inseparable from the former tenet, that I need not enlarge on the peculiar advantages which Rome has derived from it. I will only observe how fortunately for the interests of the church of Rome, not only the existence, but even the mutual help and connexion, of her *peculiar* doctrines, have happened. The power of remitting canonical penance would have been useless on the cessation of penitential discipline; but TRADITION having about the same time brought purgatory to light, offered an ample scope to the power of the Roman keys. Transubstantiation now pre-

* Note I.

sented the means of repeating the sacrifice of the cross for those who were supposed to be undergoing the purification by fire. The whole system, indeed, is surprisingly linked together; and the very connexion of its parts, tending to secure the influence and power of the source from whence it flows, gives it the appearance of an original invention, enlarged from the gradual suggestions of previous advantages.

The worship of saints, relics, and images, might, when *tradition* began to spread it, have appeared less connected with the wealth and power of the church of Rome; yet none of its spiritual resources has proved more productive of both. Europe is covered with sanctuaries and churches, which owe their existence and revenues to some reported miraculous appearance of an image, or the presence, real or pretended, of some relic. To form a correct notion of the influence which such places have upon the people, it is necessary to have lived where they exist. But the house of Loretto alone would be sufficient to give some idea of the power and wealth which the church must have derived from similar sources, when the whole

of Christendom was more ignorant and superstitious than the most degraded portions of it are at present. Of this fact, however, I am perfectly convinced by long observation, that were it possible to abolish sanctuaries, properly so called, and leave the same number of churches without the favourite virgins and saints which give them both that peculiar denomination and their popular charm ; more than half the blind deference which the multitude pay to the clergy, and through the clergy to Rome, would quickly disappear.

The advantages resulting to Rome from the combined effect of indulgences, relics, saints and their images, are not, however, derived only indirectly through the deference enjoyed by her clergy. The bond thereby created between the Pope and the most distant regions which acknowledge his spiritual dominion, is direct. The Mexican and the Peruvian expects the publication of the annual bull, which allows him to eat eggs and milk in Lent, enables him to liberate, by name, a certain number of his relations from purgatory, and enlarges the power of his confessor, for the absolution of the most hideous crimes. Where-

ever he turns, he sees a protecting saint, whose power and willingness to defend him, could not be ascertained without the supernatural and unquestionable authority of the Pope. It is the Holy Father who, by a solemn declaration, allots every district to the peculiar patronage of a saint; it is he who, by grants of indulgences, encourages the worship of those *miraculous* images which form central points of devotion over all the Roman Catholic world: it is he who warrants the supernatural state of incorruption of the body of one saint, and traces, with unerring certainty, some straggling limb to another. It is, finally, he who alone has the undoubted power of *virtually* furnishing the faithful with the relics of the most ancient or unknown patriarchs and martyrs, by bidding the fragment of any skeleton in the catacombs be part of the body in request*.

I do not intend to cast any part of your religious system into ridicule; though, I confess, it

* This is called christening relics. The persuasion that bones so christened are as good as those of the favourite saint to whom they are attributed, is certainly general in my country. I have no doubt that it is common to all Catholics.

is difficult to mention facts like these, without some danger of exciting a smile. These and similar practices you will, perhaps, construe into innocent means of keeping up a sense of religion among the lower classes; but without insisting, at present, upon their demoralizing and degrading tendency, I only present them in conjunction with all the other means of power and influence which the church of Rome has drawn from the, at least, doubtful title, on which she grounds her spiritual supremacy. It is, indeed, of great importance in the question between Rome and the Protestants, to observe the consequences of their respective interpretation of scripture, in regard to their own interests. The mass of Christians who, unable to weigh the theological arguments urged by the controversialists of both parties, content themselves with an implicit, and often an indifferent, acquiescence in the tenets which education chanced to impress on their minds; might form a pretty accurate notion of the whole case by the following easy and compendious method. They should, in the first place, endeavour to become familiar with

the reasoning which shows the absurdity of settling the question of papal supremacy on other than Scriptural grounds. Let them remember, what cannot be too much repeated, the necessity of deriving the knowledge of any infallible expounder of the Scriptures from the testimony of those Scriptures, perused and understood without the aid of that expounder. To appeal to *divine* tradition as a rule for the interpretation of Scripture in this state of the question, is equally unreasonable and preposterous; since, from the nature of the case, there is, as yet, no infallible rule to distinguish *divine* tradition from human and fallible report. The next step in this momentous inquiry, is to ascertain, by human means, the true sense of such passages of the Scriptures as are said to contain the appointment of a living supreme authority in matters of faith. Here, two sets of men, deeply learned in all the branches of divinity, present themselves as interpreters. These affirm that the passages in question contain the rights and privileges which the church of Rome and her head claim for themselves: those positively deny that the passages can bear such mean-

ing. Remember again, I request you, that the decision must depend exclusively on the reasoning faculties of mankind. Which, now, of these two opposed masses of intellect, is most likely to catch the true meaning of the texts? Which of the two interpretations have we most reason to suppose free from the distortions of prejudice? Common sense answers, that which is directly against the interests of the interpreters. Europe lay prostrate at the feet of the Pope, and every member of his clergy was raised by the common opinion, to a rank and dignity to which even kings bowed their head. The meanest priest claimed and enjoyed exemptions which were often denied to the first nobles of the land. Wealth and honours were theirs; the law shrunk before them when guilty, and piety was ready to throw a cloak on their vices. The church had, for many ages, been in possession of unrivalled power on earth; when, at the rousing voice of a few obscure men, who questioned the foundation of that mighty structure, a large portion of those that might have continued under its shelter, unani- mously declared that the whole was a work of

delusion, which had sprung from an original, unexamined error. Such was the *unanimous* conviction of all the Protestants, when no bias but that of a contrary tendency could exist in their minds. If *common sense*, therefore, must be the interpreter of divine authority, conveyed to us in human language; this fact alone suffices to point the side to which that plain and faithful guide gives its sanction.

The Reformed churches are taxed with their *variations*, as if, like Rome, they had pledged their existence upon infallibility. They have, indeed, varied and dissented from each other; with this difference from the oracular church of the Vatican, that they have not disguised their proceedings, nor set up an inquisition as the guard of their unity. But while the love of truth compelled the Reformers to expose themselves to the insults and raillery of their mortal enemies, by breaking into parties upon the more abstruse points of divinity; not even a doubt has disturbed their unanimity as to the insufficiency of the title to divine supremacy, by which Rome commands intellectual homage. That, indeed, was the only

point of controversy which common sense could decide ; and the renunciation of all the worldly advantages to which the Roman church invited the Reformers, had left their judgment unbiassed. Other disputes in divinity must be settled by a long, difficult, and laborious process of inquiry ; but a privilege is a matter of fact, which, if not *evidently* proved, becomes a nonentity. Now, the peculiar privilege claimed by Rome, essentially precludes *doubtful* proofs of its existence. A *doubtful* gift from God, with a view to remove *doubt*, is a mockery of his wisdom. If the *common sense* of many learned and unbiassed minds is found to agree in denying that the Scripture passages alleged by Rome, in favour of her miraculous infallibility, contain a *clear* promise of that gift, or describe in whom, and how it was to exist after the decease of the apostles ; the pretensions of the Pope and his church must be visionary. The negative proof, in such cases,—the absence of a *clear* title—has the strength of demonstration. Nothing can weaken its force upon a candid mind, but the very common habit of starting away from newly discovered truth in fear of

its consequences, which we have previously condemned.

I am aware that, unable as you must be to find a direct and sufficient answer to this argument, and inclined to admit its truth, as an honest mind will make you ; yet a crowd of such consequences will deter you from the path into which reason is ready to lead you.—A church subject to error and division !—You shrink from such an inference, without remarking that the *preconceived* and *unproved* necessity of having an infallible church, is the true and only source of that illogical process, by which you have endeavoured to establish the *certain* existence of infallibility, upon the *uncertain* sense of a few words of the Gospel.

LETTER IV.

Specimen of the unity exhibited by Rome. Roman Catholic distinction between *infallibility* in doctrine, and liability to misconduct. Consequences of this distinction. Roman Catholic unity and invariableness of Faith, a delusion. Scriptural unity of Faith.

“ So long since as the council of Vienne (I quote the words of your great champion Bossuet, translated by your apologist Mr. Butler*) a great prelate commissioned by the Pope to prepare matters to be treated upon, laid it down for a groundwork to the whole assembly, that they ought to *reform the church in the head and members*. The great schism which happened soon after, made this saying current, not among particular doctors only, as Gersen, Peter d’Ailly, and other great men of those times, but *in councils too*; and nothing was more frequently repeated in those of *Pisa* and *Constance*. What happened in the council of Basil, *where a reformation was unfor-*

* Book of the Roman Catholic Church, p. 156, 1st ed.

tunately eluded, and the church re-involved in new divisions, is well known." Such is the picture of the Roman Catholic church at the beginning of the fifteenth century, drawn by the most able as well as cautious of her divines. The distinct mention of the *unfortunate* cause which prevented the proposed Reformation, would have given more colour and individuality to the picture. It was, in fact, a revival of the *great schism*, which for fifty years had lately kept the Roman Catholic church divided between two or three Popes, who at one and the same time claimed the prerogative of vicars of Christ: it was a fierce contest between the council of Constance and Eugenius IV. the Pope who had convened it, and whom the assembled bishops wished to reform: it was a sentence of excommunication issued by the council against Eugenius: it was a rival council convoked at Ferrara by the excommunicated Pope, where he employed the same arms against the fathers assembled at Basil: it was the deposition of Eugenius and the installation of Felix V. by the offended council: it was, in fine, the triumph of Rome against the spirit which

had attempted to execute the work, of which "great prelates," "particular doctors," and "councils too," spoke so frequently, as to establish it into a "current saying," that the church needed reform in *head and members*. The *head*, unwilling to be reformed, imprecated the curse of Heaven upon the *members*; and the *members* finding that *head* incurable, chose for themselves another, when they had duly devoted the refractory one to the unquenchable fire. Such are the "well-known" events which took place in "*the council of Basil, where a reformation was unfortunately eluded, and the church re-involved in new divisions.*"

And now, I will ask, is this the unity, the harmony, without which your writers contend that the church of Christ cannot exist? Is it thus that the necessity of your interpretation of the Scripture passages, on which the system of infallibility has been erected, is sanctioned by experience? Can you still close your eyes against the demonstration contained in my preceding letter, because *variations* and dissent are in the train of its consequences?

“ Our troubles and dissensions, however (you are taught to answer) are limited to externals; those of the Protestants affect the unity of the faith.” Such is the last shelter, the citadel, of your infallible-church theory. See, then, the series of assumptions, doubts, and evasions, of which that theory consists, and observe its inevitable consequences. 1st, You assume that which is in question, the *necessity* of an infallible judge of faith. 2dly, Upon the strength of that assumption, you interpret certain passages of Scripture, so that they are made to prove the existence of such a judge. 3dly, You are then in doubt as to the identity of the judge himself, without being able to determine by any fixed rule, whether the supernatural gift of infallibility belongs to the Pope alone, or to the Pope and the general council *. 4thly, When, to evade this difficulty, you avail yourselves of the term church, as embracing the privileges of the Pope and council; you are still obliged to contrive another method, which may meet the objections arising

* Note K.

from such dissensions between the assembled bishops and their head, as took place in the instances above mentioned. This you do by allowing no council to be infallible till it has been approved by the Pope, and thus resolve church infallibility into the opinion of the Roman See. 5thly, and finally, You intrench yourselves within the distinction of infallibility on abstract doctrines of faith, and liability to practical error. Now, observe, I entreat you, the consequences to which the whole system leads. The only *sensible* mark of a legitimate council, being the approbation of the Pope; and the only *sensible* mark of a legitimate Pope, being his undisputed possession of the see of Rome; you have, in the first place, entailed the gift of infallibility upon the strongest of the rival candidates for that see; and, as moral worth is, by the last distinction, denied to be a necessary characteristic of the vicar and representative of Christ, you have added, in the second place, one chance more of having for your *living rule of faith* that candidate who shall contend for the visible badge of his spiritual and supernatural office, under the least restraint of moral obliga-

tion. If we find, therefore, upon consulting the history of the Popes, that no episcopal see has oftener been polluted by wickedness and profligacy, the fact is explained by the preceding statement. What chance of success to be head of the Christian church could attend a true disciple of Jesus, when a Borgia was bent upon filling that post? Gold, steel, and poison, were the familiar instruments of his wishes; whilst the belief that *faith* was still safe in the custody of such a monster, prevented opposition from the force of public opinion. The *faithful* still revered in Alexander VI. (be the blasphemy far from me!) the true representative of Christ on earth.

The strength of mind which enabled the reformers to disregard the generally received distinction between exemption from doctrinal errors, and liability to misconduct, cannot be adequately valued by those who have never imbibed that scholastic prejudice. When a distinction of this kind has once become incorporated with common language, men seem to be placed out of the reach of conviction on the points it affects. If my obser-

vations of intellectual phenomena do not deceive me, the mass of those who may be said to think at all can go no farther in a reasoning process, than just to perceive one difficulty against their settled notions, and to catch some verbal quibble which removes the difficulty from their sight. The process of examining the usual fallacies of such answers is, to most men, so painful, that any serious attempt to urge them upon it, seldom fails to rouse their anger. There are, indeed, but few who can take a true second step in reasoning.

The stand which is generally made at the first stage of an argument, is more resolutely taken when arguments are brought against a system which is itself a palliative of some previous objection. The case now before us is perhaps the best illustration of my view of popular intellect.

Christianity was at an early period systematized according to the notions and habits which some of its learned converts had acquired in the philosophical schools. It was soon presented to the world in the shape of a new theory, where the links which appeared to be wanting between the

clearly revealed doctrines, were supplied by the ingenuity of inference. Nothing, we know, is so opposed to this vulgar systematic spirit, as taking facts as they are. The chasm between what *is*, and an assumed standard of what *should be*, must be filled up. Few men refuse to grant what is demanded with this object; for fragments of real knowledge are not to the taste of the multitude. Having agreed that the Gospel was a revelation from God, they could not conceive the possibility of doubt affecting it directly or indirectly. Optimism is the system of the many: a revelation which could not remove every doubt, and silence every objection, must certainly fail to suit their previous notions.

Had these Christians, however, studied the Scriptures without the bias of such notions, they would have found that the divine author of Christianity has nowhere provided a remedy against doubt and dissent. There were heretics when the church was still under the personal guidance of the Apostles; yet the New Testament mentions them without allusion to any infallible methods of ending these first disputes on

doctrines. On a *practical* question, indeed, we find that St. Paul was sent to ask the opinion of the church of Jerusalem; yet, that very opinion was, in part, set aside and neglected, soon after, by the tacit consent of most other churches*. The natural inference from such facts is, that the analogy of God's moral government was not broken in the direct revelation which he made to the world through his own Son; but having granted us convincing proofs that the Scriptures contain the knowledge supernaturally vouchsafed to man, he has left the search thereof to human industry. Industry supposes difficulty, and difficulty implies danger. The field of moral discipline does not appear to have been changed by Christianity: the light, indeed, thrown upon it is clearer, and "the high prize of our calling" is made fully to shine in our eyes; but it nowhere appears that we are therefore to close them, and run blindly after certain men endowed with supernatural vision.

* The injunction against eating blood and suffocated animals, though given as from the Holy Ghost, was considered as of mere temporary expediency, and set aside as soon as heathen converts formed the majority of Christians.

Such sober reasoning upon *facts*, could not be popular in the Christian church. An infallible judge of abstract questions was wanting, and one was soon found ; for St. Peter was the chief of the apostles, and Rome the chief of cities. Nothing, therefore, appeared more *natural*, than that Peter should be bishop of Rome ; and little proof of this fact was demanded : tradition, a mere report, was sufficient for those who wished it to be so. Yet something more was necessary to fulfil the object of the first theory or supposition ; for Peter could not live for ever, and the judge of faith was to exist till the end of the world. But what could be more *natural*, than that Peter's successors should inherit his supernatural gifts ? In popular logic, what is *natural*, *i. e.* what agrees with some original supposition, is certain. Subsequent doubts arising from a system so *natural*, must be settled any way, or left unsettled. Whether infallibility belonged to the Pope alone, or to the Pope and the church, and who was to be considered the church—these minutiae were left for the ingenuity of divines. The Pope and Rome were all in all for the mass of Christians. The effects of un-

controlled power, however, soon became visible in the monstrous corruptions of Rome herself. Here the second step of popular intellect was required, *vis.* to seize the happy distinction of *infallibility* in doctrine, and profligacy in morals. This was a most welcome discovery for the Popes; for who that loves wealth, power, and pleasure, would wish to be a *sinless* oracle? No: the system of spiritual supremacy was now complete: the original supposition, that the church could not resist the attacks of hell without an unerring judge of abstract questions, had been followed to its remotest consequences; he that ventured to doubt the accuracy of the whole theory was declared a heretic. The Pope might be, in his conduct, an enemy of Christ and his gospel, and nevertheless succeed in the enjoyment of whatever privileges were granted to Peter, *in consequence* of the love which, above the other apostles, he bore to his divine master *. He might be a monster of vice, yet he did not cease to be vicar of him *who did no*

* Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. John, xxi. 15, *et seq.*

sin. The church, under his guidance, might be corrupt in “*head* and *members* ;” but still she must be infallible in matters of faith.

To the *solidity* of this structure have your divines committed the stability of the church of Christ: unless all this be true, the gates of hell have actually prevailed against her. A moral corruption in *head* and *members* ; a system which ensured the continuance of this corruption, by repeatedly defeating the efforts of those who wished for a reformation, were, if we believe them, no subject of triumph to the enemy of God and man. As long as the authority of Rome was safe, the gates of hell had still the worst of the contest: let the Pope possess the *heads* of Christians, and Satan was welcome to their *hearts*. “The followers of Luther,” says Bossuet *, “assuming the title of reformers, gloried that they had fulfilled all Christendom’s desires, inasmuch as a reformation had been long the desire of Catholics, people, doctors, and prelates. In order, therefore, to authorize this pretended *reformation*, whatsoever church-writers had said against the disorders, both

* Ubi supra.

of the people and even of the clergy, was collected with great industry. But in this lay a manifest conceit, there not being so much as one of all the passages alleged, wherein these doctors ever dreamt of altering the church's faith; of correcting her worship, which chiefly consisted in the sacrifice of the altar; of subverting the authority of her prelates, that of the Pope especially—the very scope which this whole reformation, introduced by Luther, tended to.”

If there be any *conceit* in the matter, it is that of admitting the extreme corruption of the Christian church, with the unavailing efforts of the advocates of reform, who preceded Luther; and yet blaming the Protestants, because, by making the Pope's supremacy the “very scope” of their reformation, they took the only effectual method of putting an end to the evil. The absurd notion that the unity of the church of Christ depended on *unity* with the bishop of Rome, tied the hands of all Christians who wanted either the knowledge or the courage to examine the airy basis of that system.

The *sword* and *the faggot*, besides, stood in the

way of approach to that delicate point; else the invectives so carefully restricted to *morals* would not have always left the *doctrines* untouched. Submit your understanding to Rome; confess that you cannot hope for salvation out of the Pope's communion; acknowledge that immorality and wickedness do not detract from his supernatural privileges; and, on these conditions, you are at liberty to oppose the corruptions of the church of Christ. *Conceit* is not, indeed, a word which I should apply to such advice: *deceit* would seem more appropriate.

Invariableness in Doctrine is Bossuet's criterion of the Christian characteristic of *unity*: but surely any set of men, who agreed on a system similar to that on which Roman unity depends, might equally boast of *invariableness* and *unity*; surely there cannot be, at least there cannot appear, any difference of opinion in a society which excludes every member who does not submit his own views to those of one individual, placed at its head; and which lays down, as an indubitable fact, that that individual, whoever he may happen to be, and whatever he may add to the common

doctrines of the society, always speaks the mind of his predecessors, and only gives explicitness to things implied in former decisions. Such is the artful contrivance which the author of the *Variations of the Protestant Churches* disguises into a miraculous unity of doctrine and belief; the effect, as he pretends, of Christ's promise of support to his church against the gates of hell. Raking up, besides, all the calumnies and atrocious reports with which the character of the opposers of Rome has been blackened at all times, and setting in the strongest light of mutual opposition the theological disputes which divided the reformers, he gives the whole weight of his authority and talents to a delusion, which nothing but an overwhelming combination of interest and prejudice could prevent his acute mind from perceiving. Had the Bishop of Meaux bestowed the ten-thousandth part of the perverse industry with which he followed that argument, in examining the gratuitous assumption on which it is founded, we may hope that his honesty would have directed his pen to some other topic. Instead of availing himself of the inveterate notion that Christ had established an infallible

judge in his church, lest, by the existence of doubt as to the sense of the Scriptures, there should be diversity of opinion among his followers—instead of taking it for granted that the victory of hell depended on the diversity of abstract doctrines among Christians, and not in the prevalence of dark works of wickedness, provided they were wrought in the unity of Papal faith—he should, in the spirit of philosophical reasoning, have penetrated to that part of the argument which conceals the gratuitous assumptions, whence the whole Roman Catholic theory has sprung. When Catholics have proved, without the aid of *church authority*, that the church of Christ must be infallible, then, and not before, they may object their *variations* to the Protestants.

The Protestants have *varied* in search of the divine simplicity of the Gospel, which Rome had buried under a mountain of metaphysical notions. The Protestants have *varied*, because they could not at once divest themselves of the habits of thinking which they had acquired in the Roman Catholic schools. The Protestants have *varied*, because they had the honesty not to imitate the

contrivances by which the Roman church gives to her new decisions the appearance of unity with the preceding. The Protestants have *varied*, because they would not, upon the fanciful notion of a perpetual miracle, claim for any of their churches the supernatural gift of unerring wisdom, nor counterfeit, by obstinacy in error, the conscious certainty of inspiration. The Protestants, in fine, have *varied*, because, by restoring the Scriptures to their full and unrivalled authority, they perceived the intrinsic power of settled, recorded, *invariable* revelation; and were aware that, in spite of doubts and divisions, the light of those divine records needed no help to withstand the attacks of the gates of hell.

If mere controversy were my object, I should feel satisfied with having demonstrated that the system of Roman Catholic unity is but an arbitrary contrivance; a gratuitous assumption of a supernatural privilege, which is nowhere *clearly* asserted in the Scriptures; an endeavour to produce certainty by a standard conceived and planned upon conjecture. A more Christian feeling, however, induces me to dwell still on this subject, and

propose to you what I conceive to be the true scriptural notions on the *unity* of the church of Christ.

In reading the New Testament with a mind carefully freed from the prejudices of school-divinity, it is impossible not to perceive that the assemblies of men who are called to obtain salvation through Christ, cannot, either singly or collectively, constitute *the* church, whereof the Roman see has tried to appropriate the qualities and privileges to herself. Wherever men assemble in the name of Jesus, there he has promised to be by means of his Spirit; and certainly the works of that Spirit are more or less visible in the Christian virtues, which never yet failed to spring up in these *particular* churches, though mixed with the tares, and other evils, which are not separable from "the kingdom of heaven" in this world. But there is a structure of sanctity in perpetual progress, towards the completion of which the Christian churches, on earth, are only made to contribute as different quarries do towards the raising of some glorious building. The churches on earth partake, in various proportions, of the attributes of the

great church of Christ, “ which is his body, the FULNESS of him that filleth all in all*.” But the church to which the great privileges and graces belong, has characteristic marks which cannot be claimed by any one of the churches on earth; for it is that church “ which Christ loved, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having *spot or wrinkle or any such thing*; but that it should be holy and without blemish†.” To become members of that church, we should, indeed, “ endeavour to keep the *unity* of the spirit in the bond of peace ‡;” but such unity is proposed as the effect of *endeavour*, and consequently of choice and judgment, not of blind submission to a silencing authority, which is the Roman bond of union. The true *unity* of Christians must arise from the “ one hope of our calling.” There is indeed for us “ one Lord, one faith, one baptism;” but that faith is a faith of trust, a “ confidence, which hath great recompense of reward §,” not an implicit be-

* Ephes. i. 23.

† Ephes. v. 25—27.

‡ Ib. iv. 3.

§ Heb. x. 35.

lief in the assumed *infallibility* of men, who make a monopoly of the written word of God, prescribe the sense in which it must be understood, and, with a refined tyranny, which tramples equally upon Christian liberty and the natural rights of the human mind, insult even silent dissent, and threaten bodily punishment to such as, in silence and privacy, may have indulged the freedom of their minds*.

Such is the saving faith of the council of Trent! How different from that proposed by St. Paul, when he says, “if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved †.” “That is the word of

* Præterea ad coercenda *petulantia* ingenia, decernit (eadem sacrosancta synodus) ut nemo suæ prudentiæ innixus, in rebus fidei et morum, ad ædificationem doctrinæ Christianæ pertinentium, sacram Scripturam ad suos sensus contorquens, contra eum sensum quem tenuit et tenet sancta mater ecclesia, cujus est judicare de vero sensu et interpretatione Scripturarum sanctarum, aut etiam contra unanimem consensum sanctorum patrum, ipsam Scripturam sacram interpretari audeat, *etiãmsi hujusmodi interpretationes nullo unquam tempore in lucem edendæ forent. Qui contravenerint per ordinarios declarentur, et pœnis a jure statutis puniantur.*—Decretum Concilii Trident. de editione et usu sacrerum librorum, Sessione IV.

† Rom. x.

faith which WE preach," says St. Paul ; and well might that faith be made the bond of union between all the churches which the Apostles saluted, without requiring a previous proof of their implicit submission. " Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," is St. Paul's language. Cursed be they who, whatever be their love of Christ and veneration for the Scriptures, yield not obedience to the church of Rome ; is the spirit of every page which has been published by Popes or councils.

Whatever might be the effect of the prejudices which the first reformers brought away from their *Roman captivity* ; whatever the necessity which Protestant churches still acknowledge of preventing internal feuds, by proposing formularies of faith to their members, they have never so misunderstood " what spirit they are of " as to deny salvation to those who love their common Lord and Redeemer. Their churches, indeed, may differ on points which the subtilty of metaphysics had unfortunately started long before the reformation, and even before the publication of Christianity : they may observe different ceremonies, and adopt

different views of church hierarchy and discipline; but their spirit is the only one which deserves the name of Catholic in the genuine sense of that word ; the only spirit, indeed, which can produce, even on earth, an image of the glorious church which will exist for ever in *one fold*, and under *one shepherd*.

LETTER V.

Moral character of the Roman Church. Celibacy. Nunneries.

THE attempt to describe the *moral character* of a collective body, which, constantly changing its composition, can seldom consist of the same elements for any considerable portion of time, will probably appear rash and invidious. A long familiarity with the subject which I have in hand, has, however, convinced me, that if there be any truth in the general observation, that men who act under certain laws and interests, in collective bodies, are swayed by a peculiar influence, which, without borrowing a foreign phrase, might be called *Corporation Spirit*; the church of Rome presents the strongest and most marked instance of that moral phenomenon. Its great antiquity, and the gigantic power which it has enjoyed for ages, are the natural and intelligible causes of those fixed views and purposes which, existing at all times in the mass of its living members, must

inevitably be imparted to its successive recruits. The character of no one man can be more indelibly stamped by a long life of consistent, systematic conduct, than that of a collective body which, for many centuries, has practically learnt the true source of its power. If, on the other hand, it should appear that, in describing the moral character of that body which Catholics consider as the only depository of divine authority on earth, I bring a charge of guilt against the whole succession of men who have composed, and compose it at present ; I must observe, that individual conduct, modified by corporate influence, cannot be judged by the common rules which guide us in estimating private character. That every *true* Roman Catholic, every man whose religious tenets are in strict conformity with those of Rome, must partake the spirit of his standard of faith, in proportion to his sincerity ; my own experience would compel me to aver, independently of any theoretical conviction. But the same experience teaches me that the natural disposition of every person has a certain degree of power to modify, though not to neutralize, the Roman Catholic re-

ligious influence.—This being premised, I will openly, before God and man, declare my conviction, that the necessity of keeping up the appearance of infallibility, makes the church of Rome, essentially and invariably, tyrannical ; that it leads that church to hazard both the temporal and the eternal happiness of men, rather than alter what has once received the sanction of her authority ; and that, in the prosecution of her object, she overlooks the rights of truth, and the improvement of the human understanding.

In the proof and substantiation of these charges, I will strictly observe the conditions proposed for similar cases by the author of the *Book of the Roman Catholic Church*. “ I beg leave to suggest,” says Mr. Butler, “ that in every religious controversy between Protestants and Roman Catholics, the following rule should be observed : THAT NO DOCTRINE SHOULD BE ASCRIBED TO THE ROMAN CATHOLICS AS A BODY, EXCEPT SUCH AS IS AN ARTICLE OF THEIR FAITH *.” Now, it is agreed on all hands, that a canon of a general council, approved by the Pope—i. e. a *rule*

* *Book of the Roman Catholic Church*, p. 9.

of belief delivered to the people, under the fearful sanction of an *anathema*, leaves no other alternative to a Roman Catholic but that of embracing the doctrine it contains, or being excluded from his church by excommunication. By one, then, of such canons, every member of the church of Rome is bound to believe that all baptized persons are liable to be compelled, *by punishment*, to be Christians, or, what is the same in Roman Catholic divinity, spiritual subjects of the Pope. It is, indeed, curious to see the council of Trent, who passed that law, prepare the free and extended action of its claims, by an unexpected stroke of liberality. In the Session on Baptism, the Trent Fathers are observed anxiously securing to Protestants the privileges of true baptism. The fourth canon of that Session fulminates an anathema or curse against any one who should say that baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, conferred by a heretic, with an intention to do that which the church intends in that sacrament, is not true baptism *. Observe, now, the

* Si quis dixerit baptismum, qui etiam datur ab hæreticis in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, cum intentione

consequences of this enlarged spirit of concession, in the two subjoined canons.

“ If any one should say that those who have been baptized are free from all the precepts of the holy church, either written or delivered by tradition, so that they are not obliged to observe them, unless they will submit to them of their own accord, LET HIM BE ACCURSED *.”

Having soon after declared the lawfulness of infant baptism, they proceed to lay down the XIV. Canon.

“ If any one should say that these baptized children, when they grow up, are to be asked whether they will confirm what their godfathers promised in their name; and that if they say they will not, they are to be left to their own discretion, and not to be forced, in the mean time, into the observance of a Christian life *by any other punishment* than that of keeping them from the

faciendi quod facit ecclesia, non esse verum baptismum, anathema sit.—Concil. Trident. Sess. VII. Can. IV.

* Si quis dixerit, baptizatos liberos esse ab omnibus sanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ præceptis, quæ vel scripta vel tradita sunt, ita ut ea observare non teneatur, nisi se sua sponte illis submittere voluerint, anathema sit.

reception of the eucharist and the other sacraments till they repent, LET HIM BE ACCURSED*.”

Now, “it is most true,” says the author of the Book of the Roman Catholic Church, “that the Roman Catholics believe the doctrines of their church to be unchangeable; and that it is a tenet of their creed, that what their faith ever has been, such it was from the beginning, such it now is, and such it will ever be.” Let him, therefore, choose between this boasted consistency of doctrine, and the curse of his church. The council of Trent, that council whose decrees are by the creed of Pius IV. declared to be obligatory above all others †; that council has converted the sa-

* Si quis dixerit hujusmodi parvulos baptizatos, cum adleverint, interrogandos esse, an ratum habere velint quod patrini, eorum nomine, dum baptizarentur, polliciti sunt, et, ubi se nolle responderint, suo esse arbitrio relinquendos, *nec alia interim pœna ad Christianam vitam cogendos*, nisi ut ab eucharistiæ, aliorumque sacramentorum perceptione arceantur donec resipiscant, anathema sit. Can. VIII. et XIV. de Baptismo.

† “I also profess and undoubtedly receive all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, *particularly by the holy council of Trent*,” &c. &c. Creed of Pius IV. in the Book of the Roman Catholic Church, p. 8.

crament of Baptism into an indelible brand of slavery: whoever has received the waters of regeneration, is the thrall of her who declares that there is no other church of Christ. She claims her slaves wherever they may be found, declares them subject to her laws, both written and traditional, and, by her infallible sanction, dooms them to indefinite punishment, till they shall acknowledge her authority and bend their necks to her yoke. *Such is, has been, and will ever be,* the doctrine of the Roman Catholic church; such is the belief of her true and sincere members; such the spirit that actuates her views, and which, by every possible means, she has always spread among her children. Him that denies this doctrine, Rome devotes to perdition. The principle of religious tyranny, supported by persecution, is a necessary condition of Roman Catholicism: he who revolts at the idea of compelling belief by punishment, is severed at once from the communion of Rome.

What a striking commentary on these canons of the Council of Trent have we in the history of the Inquisition! Refractory Catholics born under

the spiritual dominion of Rome, and Protestants originally baptized out of her pale, have equally tasted her flames and her racks*. Nothing, indeed, but want of power, nothing but the much-lamented ascendancy of *heresy*, compels the church of Rome to keep her infallible, immutable decrees in silent abeyance. But the *divine* authority of those decrees, the truth of their inspiration, must for ever be asserted by every individual who sincerely embraces the Roman Catholic faith. Reason and humanity must, in them, yield to the infallible decree in favour of compulsion on religious matters. The human ashes, indeed, are scarcely cold, which, at the end of three centuries of persecution and massacre, these decrees scattered over the soil of Spain. I myself saw the pile on which the last victim was sacrificed to Roman infallibility. It was an unhappy woman, whom the Inquisition of Seville committed to the flames under the charge of heresy, about forty years ago: she perished on a spot where thousands had met the same fate. I

* Llorente mentions the punishments inflicted by the Spanish Inquisition on English and French subjects.

lament from my heart that the structure which supported their melting limbs was destroyed during the late convulsions. It should have been preserved, with the *infallible* and *immutable* canon of the Council of Trent over it, for the detestation of future ages.

How far, to preserve consistency, Rome, in the present time, would carry the right of punishing dissent, which her last general council confirmed with its most solemn sanction; it is not in my power to tell. It may be hoped that the spirit of the age has extinguished her fires for ever*: but the period I fear is still remote when she will change another part of her system, by which she ruins the happiness and morals of numbers,—I mean her monastic vows, and the laws which bind the Catholic clergy to perpetual celibacy.

Where church infallibility is concerned, I can readily understand the necessity imposed on the most liberal individuals who have filled the Roman see, to adhere strictly to former decrees and declarations; but nothing can excuse or palliate the

* Note L.

proud obstinacy which Rome has always shown on such points of *discipline*, as might be altered for the benefit of public morals, without compromising her claims. Such are the laws which annul and punish the marriages of secular clergymen, and those which demand perpetual vows from such as profess any of the numerous monastic rules approved by the Roman church, both for males and females.

I will not discuss the question, whether a life of celibacy is recommended in the New Testament as preferable to matrimony at all periods, and in all circumstances of the church. I will suppose, what I do not believe, that virginity, by its own intrinsic merit, and without reference to some virtuous purpose, which may not be attainable otherwise than by the sacrifice of the tender passions of the heart; has a mysterious value in the eyes of God: a supposition which can hardly be made without advantage to some part of the ancient Manichæan system—without some suspicion that the law, by which the human race is preserved, is not the pure and immediate effect of the will of God. I will not assail such views, which, more or less, might be

inferred from the writings of the Roman Catholic mystics. I will take up the subject on their own terms. Let virginity be the *virtue*, not (as I believe) the *condition* of angels : let it be desirable, as Saint Augustine expresses himself somewhere, that mankind were blotted from the face of the earth by the operation of celibacy *. Let all this be so ; yet, are not celibacy and virginity described in the New Testament as peculiar and uncommon gifts, as perilous trials, and likely to place human beings in a state which Saint Paul compares to burning ? Are not the warnings and cautions given by our Saviour and his apostles, as frequent as the allusions to it ? Did not Saint Paul fear that the very mention of this topic might become *a snare* to his converts ?—But how is the subject of virginity and celibacy treated by the Roman Catholic church ? The world rings with the praises of the unmarried state, which her writers, her fathers,

* I cannot tax my memory with the words, nor is the object worth the labour of a long search. I believe that St. Augustine, in answering the objection that, if all the world followed the principle he recommended, the earth would soon be a desert, says with an air of triumph—*Oh felix mundi exitium !*

her Popes, her councils, have sounded from age to age. Not satisfied with placing it at the very summit of the scale of Christian virtue, they contrived the most cruel and insidious of all moral *snare*s, in the perpetual vows with which they secured the *profession*, not the observance, of the virtue they extolled. Saint Paul lamented that young widows, after devoting themselves to the service of the church, and living at the expense of her members, grew disorderly and married, *incurring blame* * from the enemies of the Christian religion, who scoffed at their fickleness of purpose. Against this evil he provided the most rational remedy—that of receiving no widow to the service of the church, who was not threescore years old. The church of Rome, on the contrary, allures boys and girls of sixteen to bind themselves with perpetual vows: the latter are confined in prisons, because their frailties could not be concealed; the former are let loose upon the people, trusting that a superstitious reverence will close the eyes, or seal

* The word *damnation* is, in its present sense, quite inappropriate in this and several other passages.

up the lips of men, on their misconduct. "Christian clemency," says Erasmus, "has for the most part abolished the servitude of the ancients, leaving but vestiges of it in a few countries. But under the cloak of religion a new kind of slavery has been invented, which now prevails in a multitude of monasteries. Nothing there is lawful but what is commanded: whatever may accrue to the professed, becomes the property of the community: if you stir a foot, you are brought back, as if flying after murdering your father and mother*." The council of Trent enjoins all bishops to enforce the close confinement of nuns, by every means, and even to engage the assistance of the secular arm for that purpose; entreats all Princes to protect the inclosure of the convents; and threatens instant excommunication on all civil magistrates who withhold their aid when the bishops call for it. "Let no professed nun (say the fathers of the Council of Trent) come out of her monastery under any pretext whatever; not even for

* See the whole dialogue, *Virgo Mισογαμος*, Note M.

a moment." "If any of the regulars (men and women under perpetual vows) pretend that fear or force compelled them to enter the cloister, or that the profession took place before the appointed age; let them not be heard, except within five years of their profession. But if they put off the frock, of their own accord, no allegation of such should be heard; but, being compelled to return to the convent, *they must be punished as apostates*, being, in the mean time, deprived of all the privileges of their order*." Such is the Christian lenity of Rome; such the fences that guard her virgin-plots; such were the laws confirmed at Trent by the wild uproar of a crowd of bishops, of whom but few could have cast the first stone at the adulteress, dismissed to sin no more by the Saviour. "Accursed, accursed be all heretics!" exclaim the legates: "Accursed, accursed!" answer, with one voice, the mitred tyrants†. The blood, indeed, boils in one's veins, and the mouth fills with re-

* See the laws on this subject, Note N.

† See the *Acclamations* in the last session of the Council of Trent. See also the state of morals among the clergy, according to the avowal of the first legates. Note O.

taliating curses, at the contemplation of that odious scene: yet, I thank God, the feelings of indignation which I cannot wholly suppress, leave me completely free to obey the divine precept respecting those that "curse us, and despitefully use us."

That my feelings are painfully vehement when I dwell upon this subject; that neither the freedom I have enjoyed so many years, nor the last repose of the victims, the remembrance of whom still wrings tears from my eyes, can allay the bitter pangs of my youth; are proofs that my views arise from a real, painful, and protracted experience. Of monks and friars I know comparatively little, because the vague suspicions, of which even the most pious Spanish parents cannot divest themselves, prevented my frequenting the interior of monasteries during boyhood. My own judgment, and the general disgust which the prevailing grossness and vulgarity of the regulars, create in those who daily see them; kept me subsequently away from all friendly intercourse with the cowled tribes: but of the secular clergy, and the amiable life-prisoners of the church of Rome, few, if any, can possess a more intimate knowledge than my-

self. Devoted to the ecclesiastical profession from the age of fifteen, when I received the minor orders, I lived in constant friendship with the most distinguished youths who, in my town, were preparing for the priesthood. Men of the first eminence in the church were the old friends of my family—my parents' and my own spiritual directors. Thus I grew up, thus I continued in manhood, till, at the age of five-and-thirty, religious oppression, and that alone, forced me away from kindred and country. The intimacy of friendship, the undisguised converse of sacramental confession, opened to me the hearts of many, whose exterior conduct might have deceived a common observer. The coarse frankness of associate dissoluteness, left, indeed, no secrets among the spiritual slaves, who, unable to separate the laws of God from those of their tyrannical church, trampled both under foot, in riotous despair. Such are the sources of the knowledge I possess: God, sorrow, and remorse, are my witnesses.

A more blameless, ingenuous, religious set of youths than that in the enjoyment of whose friendship I passed the best years of my life, the world

cannot boast of. Eight of us, all nearly of the same age, lived in the closest bond of affection, from sixteen till one-and-twenty; and four, at least, continued in the same intimacy till about thirty-five. Of this knot of friends not one was tainted by the breath of gross vice till the church had doomed them to a life of celibacy, and turned the best affections of their hearts into crime. It is the very refinement of church cruelty to say they were free when they deprived themselves of their natural rights. Less, indeed, would be the unfeelingness of a parent who, watching a moment of generous excitement, would deprive a son of his birthright, and doom him, by a voluntary act, to pine away through life in want and misery. A virtuous youth of one-and-twenty, who is made to believe Christian perfection inseparable from a life of celibacy, will easily overlook the dangers which beset that state of life. Those who made, and those who still support the unnatural law, which turns the mistaken piety of youth into a source of future vice; ought to have learnt mercy from their own experience: but a priest who has waded (as most do) through the miry slough of a

life of incessant temptation—falling, and rising, stumbling, struggling, and falling again—without at once casting off Catholicism with Christianity; contracts, generally, habits of mind not unlike those of the guards of oriental beauty. Their hearts have been seared with envy.

I cannot think on the wanderings of the friends of my youth without heart-rending pain. One, now no more, whose talents raised him to one of the highest dignities of the church of Spain; was for many years a model of Christian purity. When, by the powerful influence of his mind and the warmth of his devotion, this man had drawn many into the clerical, and the religious life (my youngest sister among the latter), he sunk at once into the grossest and most daring profligacy. I heard him boast that the night before the solemn procession of *Corpus Christi*, where he appeared nearly at the head of his chapter, one of *two* children had been born, which his two concubines brought to light within a few days of each other. The intrigues of ambition soon shared his mind with the pursuit of pleasure; and the fall of a potentate, whom he took the trouble to instruct in the policy

of Machiavel, involved him in danger and distress for a time. He had risen again into court influence, when death cut him off in the flower of life. I had loved him when both our minds were pure: I loved him when Catholicism had driven us both from the path of virtue; I still love, and will love his memory, and hope that God's mercy has pardoned his life of sin, without imputing it to the abettors of the barbarous laws which occasioned his spiritual ruin.

Such, more or less, has been the fate of my early friends, whose minds and hearts were much above the common standard of the Spanish clergy. What, then, need I say of the vulgar crowd of priests, who, coming, as the Spanish phrase has it, from *coarse swaddling clothes*, and raised by ordination to a rank of life for which they have not been prepared; mingle vice and superstition, grossness of feeling, and pride of office, in their character? I have known the best among them; I have heard their confessions; I have heard the confessions of young persons of both sexes, who fell under the influence of their suggestions and example; and I do declare that nothing can be more

dangerous to youthful virtue than their company. How many souls would be saved from crime, but for the vain display of pretended superior virtue, which Rome demands of her clergy!

The cares of a married life, it is said, interfere with the duties of the clergy. Do not the cares of a vicious life, the anxieties of stolen love, the contrivances of adulterous intercourse, the pains, the jealousies, the remorse, attached to a conduct in perfect contradiction with a public and solemn profession of superior virtue—do not these cares, these bitter feelings, interfere with the duties of priesthood? I have seen the most promising men of my university obtain country vicarages, with characters unimpeached, and hearts overflowing with hopes of usefulness. A virtuous wife would have confirmed and strengthened their purposes; but they were to live a life of angels in celibacy. They were, however, men, and their duties connected them with beings of no higher description. Young women knelt before them, in all the intimacy and openness of confession. A solitary home made them go abroad in search of social converse. Love, long resisted, seized them, at length, like

madness. Two I knew who died insane : hundreds might be found who avoid that fate by a life of settled systematic vice.

The picture of female convents requires a more delicate pencil : yet I cannot find tints sufficiently dark and gloomy to pourtray the miseries which I have witnessed in their inmates. Crime, indeed, makes its way into those recesses, in spite of the spiked walls and prison grates, which protect the inhabitants. This I know with all the certainty which the self-accusation of the guilty can give. It is, besides, a notorious fact, that the nunneries in Estremadura and Portugal are frequently infected with vice of the grossest kind. But I will not dwell on this revolting part of the picture *. The greater part of the nuns, whom I have known, were beings of a much higher description—females whose purity owed nothing to the strong gates and high walls of the cloister ; but who still had a human heart, and felt, in many instances, and during a great portion of their lives, the weight of the vows which had deprived them of their liberty. Some there are, I confess, among the

* Note P.

nuns, who, like birds hatched in a cage, never seem to long for freedom: but the happiness boasted of in convents is generally the effect of an honourable pride of purpose, supported by a sense of utter hopelessness. The gates of the holy prison have been for ever closed upon the professed inhabitants; force and shame await them wherever they might fly: the short words of their profession have, like a potent charm, bound them to one spot of earth, and fixed their dwelling upon their grave. The great poet who boasted that "slaves cannot live in England," forgot that superstition may baffle the most sacred laws of freedom: slaves *do live* in England, and, I fear, multiply daily by the same arts which fill the convents abroad. In vain does the law of the land stretch a friendly hand to the repentant victim: the unhappy slave may be dying to break her fetters; yet death would be preferable to the shame and reproach that await her among relatives and friends. It will not avail her to keep the vow which dooms her to live single: she has renounced her will, and made herself a passive mass of clay in the hands of a superior. Perhaps she has promised to prac-

tise austerities which cannot be performed out of the convent—never to taste meat, if her life were to depend on the use of substantial food—to wear no linen—to go unhosed and unshod for life;—all these and many other hardships make part of the various rules which Rome has confirmed with her sanction. Bitter harassing remorse seizes the wavering mind of the recluse, and even a yielding thought towards liberty, assumes the character of sacrilege. Nothing short of rebellion against the church that has burnt the mark of slavery into her soul, can liberate an English nun. Whereto could she turn her eyes? Her own parents would disown her; her friends would shrink from her as if her breath wafted leprosy: she would be haunted by priests and their zealous emissaries; and, like her sister victims of superstition in India, be made to die of a broken heart, if she refused to return to the burning pile from which she had fled in frantic fear.

Suppose that the case I have described were of the rarest occurrence: suppose that but one nun in ten thousand wished vehemently for that liberty which she had forfeited, by a few words, in one moment: what law of God (I will ask) has en-

titled the Roman church thus to expose even one human creature to dark despair in this life, and a darker prospect in the next? Has the Gospel recommended perpetual vows? Could any thing but a clear and positive injunction of Christ or his apostles justify a practice beset with dangers of this magnitude? Is not the mere *possibility* of repenting such vows, a reason why they should be strictly forbidden? And yet they are laid on almost infants of both sexes! Innocent girls of sixteen are lured by the image of heroic virtue, and a pretended call of their Saviour, to promise they know not what, and make engagements for a whole life of which they have seen but the dawn!

To what paltry shifts and quibbles will not Roman Catholic writers resort to disguise the cruelty of this practice! Nuns are described as superhuman beings, as angels on earth, without a thought or wish beyond the walls of their convents. The effects of habit, of religious fear, of decorum, which prevented many of the French nuns from casting off the veil, at a period when the revolutionary storm had struck awe into every breast; are construed into a proof of the unvariableness

of purpose which follows the religious profession. Are nuns, indeed, so invariably happy? Why, then, are they insulted by their spiritual rulers by keeping them under the very guards and precautions, which magistrates employ to secure external good behaviour among the female inmates of prisons and penitentiaries?—Would the nuns continue, during their lives, under the same privations, were they at liberty to resume the laical state? Why, then, are they bound fast with awful vows? Why are they not allowed to offer up, day by day, the free-will offering of their souls and bodies?

The reluctant nuns, you say, are few.—Vain, unfeeling sophistry! First prove that vows are recommended on divine authority, that Christ has authorized the use of force and compulsion to ratify them when they are made; and then you may stop your ears against the complaints of a few sufferers. But can millions of submissive, or even willing recluses, atone for the despair of those few? You reckon, in indefinite numbers, those that in France did not avail themselves of the revolutionary laws. You should rather inquire

how many, who, before the revolution, appeared perfectly contented in their cloistral slavery, overcame every religious fear, and flew to the arms of a husband, as soon as they could do it with impunity. *Two hundred and ten nuns* were secularized in Spain during the short-lived reign of the Cortes*. Were these helpless beings happy in their former duration? What an appalling number of less fortunate victims might not be made out by averaging, in the same proportion, the millions of females who, since the establishment of convents, have surrendered their liberty into the hands of Rome!

Cruel and barbarous, indeed, must be the bigotry or the policy which, rather than yield on a point of discipline, sees with indifference even the chance, not to say the existence, of such evils. To place the most sensitive, innocent, and ardent minds under the most horrible apprehensions of spiritual and temporal punishment, without the clearest necessity; is a refinement of cruelty which has few examples among civilized nations. Yet the scandal of defection is guarded against by fears that would

* Report of the minister Garelli, laid before the Cortes, 1st of March, 1822.

crush stouter hearts, and distract less vivid imaginations, than those of timid and sensitive females. Even a temporary leave to quit the convent for the restoration of decaying health is seldom given, and never applied for, but by such nuns as unhappiness drives into a disregard of public opinion. I saw my eldest sister, at the age of two-and-twenty, slowly sink into the grave within the walls of a convent; whereas, had she not been a slave to that church which has been a curse to me, air, amusement, and exercise might have saved her. I saw her on her deathbed. I obtained that melancholy sight at the risk of bursting my heart, when, in my capacity of priest, and at her own request, I heard her last confession. Ah! when shall I forget the mortal agony with which, not to disturb the dying moments of that truly angelic being, I suppressed my gushing tears in her presence; the choking sensation with which I forced the words of absolution through my convulsed lips; the faltering steps with which I left the convent alone, making the solitary street where it stood, re-echo the sobs I could no longer contain!

I saw my dear sister no more ; but another was left me, if not equal in talents to the eldest (for I have known few that could be considered her equals), amiable and good in no inferior degree. To her I looked up as a companion for life. But she had a heart open to every noble impression—and such, among Catholics, are apt to be misled from the path of practical usefulness, into the wilderness of visionary perfection. At the age of twenty she left an infirm mother to the care of servants and strangers, and shut herself up in a convent, where she was not allowed to see even the nearest relations. With a delicate frame, requiring every indulgence to support it in health, she embraced a rule which denied her the comforts of the lowest class of society. A coarse woollen frock fretted her skin ; her feet had no covering but that of shoes open at the toes, that they might expose them to the cold of a brick floor ; a couch of bare planks was her bed, and an unfurnished cell her dwelling. Disease soon filled her conscience with fears ; and I had often to endure the torture of witnessing her agonies at the confessional. I left

her, when I quitted Spain, dying much too slowly for her only chance of relief. I wept bitterly for her loss two years after; yet I could not be so cruel as to wish her alive.

LETTER VI.

Rome the enemy of mental improvement : the direct tendency of her Prayer-book, the Breviary, to cherish credulity and adulterate Christian virtue.

I COULD not connect the subject of my preceding Letter with any other, without doing the greatest violence to the overpowering feelings which the recollection of celibacy and monachism never fail to raise in me. I now proceed to show the natural opposition which exists between the spiritual power assumed by the church of Rome, and the improvement of the human understanding. After this I shall close my subject with numerous proofs of her disregard of truth, in the dissemination of a timid, superstitious, and credulous spirit, — the best security of her influence among mankind.

The long list of illustrious writers, members of the Roman Catholic communion, with which the first part of my charge will be met, is well known to me. I would allow that list to be doubled: I

would grant every one of your boasted authors the whole weight of learning and abilities which you allot to them by your own scale of merit ; yet it would remain to be proved, that vigour of mind and comprehensiveness of knowledge were, in such instances, attained in accordance with the influence of the Roman Catholic Church, and not, as I am ready to show, in the very teeth of its spirit. The resources of the human mind, when once in motion after knowledge, are innumerable. Fear and restraint may force it into devious and crooked paths, not without injury to its moral qualities ; but no power on earth can prevent the exertion of its activity.

It is curious to observe the invariable accuracy with which certain principles, true or false, will work ; and how perfectly analogous their effects will be when applied to the most different objects. We see the assumption of supernatural infallibility, gradually leading the popes to attempt the subjection of all Christian powers. A criminal ambition might often mix in their political plans and views ; but the impulse which threatened the thrones of Europe, was independent of the indi-

vidual temper of the popes. The mildest, humblest individual, believing himself an infallible guide to salvation, must have considered the removal of every obstacle to that paramount object, a part, not only of his privilege, but his duty. He would, therefore, strive to reduce all human power, so as to suit his views of spiritual rule. The declaration that Christ's kingdom is not of this world, would not prevent a conscientious Pope from checking any temporal power, which he conceived to oppose the interests of the next. On the same grounds, and from the very same principle, has Rome been, at all times, the declared enemy of mental independence. She, it is true, confines her *open* claims, in this case, to points of Christian faith, as to *spiritual* supremacy in the former. But remove opposition in both, and you will see her become as great a tyrant over the human intellect, as she was at one time over the governments of Christendom. There is, in fact, a greater connexion between the learned and scientific opinions of men and their religious tenets, than between moral practice and civil allegiance. Hence the rights of the Roman Catholic

church to prescribe limits to the mind are still openly contended for, while the indirect dominion of the popes over Christian kings and their people is only timidly whispered within the walls of the Vatican.

But how does it happen that Italy and France have produced men of extraordinary eminence, notwithstanding their mental subjection to Rome?— I might answer this question by another: How is it that the talent of Spain and Portugal has been rendered abortive?—The *tendency* of moral as well as physical agents must be estimated, not by that which they fail to effect, but by the condition of what is fairly submitted to their action. Will you have an adequate notion of the fetters laid by Rome upon the human mind? examine the intellect of such as wear them really, not ostensibly. Would you ascertain the true practical consequences of any law? observe its results, where it is not eluded. The Roman Catholic restraints on the understanding have been and are still actively enforced in Spain; whereas the weakness of the papal government has never been able to put the Italian inquisitions into full activity. France was always free

from that scourge; and the confinement of a few authors to the Bastille, was a poor substitute for the *Autos-da-Fe* of the unfortunate Spanish peninsula.

But has not the influence of Roman Catholic infallibility, even in those less oppressed countries, disturbed the best efforts of the human intellect, closed up many of the direct roads to knowledge, and forced ingenuity to skulk in the pursuit of it like a thief? Sound the antiquarian, the astronomer, the natural philosopher of Italy; and the characteristic shrug of their shoulders will soon tell you that they have gone the full stretch of the chain they are forced to drag. What if the chain be already snapt at every link, and kept together by threads? Reckon, if you can, the struggles, the sighs, the artifices, the perjuries which have brought it to that state. Look at Galileo on his knees: see the commentators of Newton prefixing a declaration to his immortal *Principia*, in which, by a solemn falsehood, they avoid the fate of the unhappy Florentine astronomer. “Newton,” say the great mathematicians, Le Seur and Jacquier, “assumes, in his third book, the hypothesis of the earth’s

motion. The propositions of that author could not be explained except through the same hypothesis. We have, therefore, been forced to act a character not our own. But we declare our submission to the decrees of the Roman pontiffs against the motion of the earth*." The same sacrifice of sincerity is required at the Spanish universities. Science, indeed, has scarcely ever made a step without bowing, with a lie in her mouth, to Roman infallibility. Mankind has to thank Lord Bacon, as *he* might thank the intellectual liberty which the Reformation allowed him, for that burst of light which at once broke out from his writings, and spread the seeds of true knowledge, too thick and wide for Rome to smother them. She had been able, at former periods, to decide the fate of philosophical systems according as they appeared to favour or oppose her notions. In this case, however, she

* Newtonus, in hoc tertio libro, telluris motæ hypothesim assumit. Autoris propositiones aliter explicari non poterant, nisi eadē quoque facta hypothesi. Hinc alienam coacti sumus gerere personam. Cæterum latis a summis pontificibus contra telluris motum decretis, nos obsequi profiteamur.—Newtoni Principia, vol. III. Coloniae Allobrogum, 1760. This declaration was made in 1742.

was both unable to perceive the extent of her danger, and to check the simultaneous impulse of the awakened mind of Europe. The Council of Trent, however, had, a short time before, done every thing in their power to keep mankind in subjection to the church, upon every branch of knowledge. By a solemn decree of that Council, the press was subjected to the previous censure of the bishops or the inquisitors, in every part of Christendom. It is not difficult to conceive the use which these holy umpires of knowledge would make of their authority to check and subdue the *petulant minds**, who dared to broach any thing which jarred with the principles of school philosophy or divinity. But we need not leave this to conjecture: the censures attached to the long list of books condemned in the *Index Expurgatorius* of Rome, accurately describe the extent of intellectual freedom which Rome grants to the faithful subjects of her spiritual empire †.

* *Ad coercenda petulantia ingenia.*—The Council of Trent confirmed the decree of the Council of Lateran, which extends the censure to all kinds of books.

† I cannot deny myself the pleasure, nor this part of my argument the advantage, of a quotation from the excellent

The fact that both popes and bishops of the Roman Catholic communion have often patronized knowledge, is anxiously brought forward to prove the existence of a liberal and enlightened spirit in

speech of Sir Robert Harry Inglis, on the third reading of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill, Tuesday, May 30, 1825.—“ If I,” said the Honourable Baronet, “ were asked to measure the progress of public opinion, and the state of the human mind in any country, I should refer, not so much to her laws, not so much to her institutions, as to her literature—to that which represents man in every condition of his social and private life, which models his character, and is itself modelled by it. Now, by that test I am willing to try the Church of Rome. I will tell you, not what her literature *is*, but what it *is not*. Her tyranny over literature, her proscription at this day of all the great masters of the human mind, can be paralleled only by the tyranny and the proscription which she exercised five centuries ago over the minds and bodies alike. The volume which I hold in my hand, the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, contains a list of the books which are at this time proscribed in the Church of Rome, under the penalties of the Inquisition. It was printed at Rome, by authority, in 1819, and I bought it there, in the College, I think, de Propaganda, in 1821. The list was framed at different times: the literature of every generation since the Reformation has added some of its treasures to it: but when I quote the names of earlier greatness proscribed in it, let me not be supposed to violate the pledge with which I began; for I quote no charge against the sixteenth century, which cannot in the same words be applied to the nineteenth—none against a Pius V. to which a Pius VII. did not actually and honestly expose himself. The

the Roman church. Now, if the conduct of individuals were admitted as a criterion of the temper of their church, it would be easy to produce thousands who have opposed real knowledge

first book in this great catalogue of works, which are taken from the faithful every where, and are given up to the Inquisition, is *Bacon de Augmentis Scientiarum* : *Locke on the Human Understanding*, and *Cudworth's Intellectual System*, follow in the train. Let me add a minor fact, connected with the Papal condemnation of Bacon's work : The date of the publication of that work preceded the date of the decree against it about fifty years ; so little had the Church of Rome in that day risen to the level of the age, that fifty years had elapsed before the name and the work of Bacon appear to have reached the Vatican. It is true that the best modern literature of the land of these great men is not as yet proscribed ; but may we not venture to believe, that fifty years hence, when some future Pius shall have heard, that, in the heretical country of England, there had existed about this time two such men as Dugald Stewart and William Paley, their names will be added to those of Bacon, Locke, and Cudworth ; and their works also will be condemned, as fatal to the faith of man ? Many other English works are proscribed. One only I will mention—the *Paradise Lost* of Milton. The reading of the work was interdicted, indeed, nearly a hundred years ago ; but the prohibition was renewed in 1819. Is not this enough to prove, that the character of the Church of Rome is not so open to a beneficial change as some of my Honourable Friends are willing to hope and believe it to be ? I pass over large classes of books, the very possession of which is forbidden ; but I must notice the impartial prohibition of science. Sir,

for every one that has promoted its interests*. Besides, a Pope may be a patron of the fine arts, and a determined enemy to philosophical studies. A cardinal or a bishop may spend his savings and fortune in the erection of a college, with a view to perpetuate the metaphysics of the thirteenth century. Such will be found to be the bene-

the Church of Rome proscribed Copernicus; but, to make all things even, it has proscribed Descartes also. Will the House believe it possible, that the celebrated sentence, in 1634, against Galileo,—a sentence immortalized by the execration of science in every country where the mind is free,—should be renewed and republished in 1819? Yet of this fact I hold the proof in my hand, in the volume of the *Index* which I have already quoted. The work of Algarotti, on the Newtonian system, shares the same fate: so that every modification of science, in other words, every effort of free inquiry, every attempt to disengage the mind from the trammels of authority, is alike and universally consigned to the Inquisition. I venture to think, that a good library, in almost every class of literature, might be formed out of the books which the Church of Rome in this *Index* prohibits. Am I not justified in saying, that the Church of Rome remains unchanged, the unchangeable enemy to the progress of the human mind? Every other institution is advancing with sails set, and banners streaming, on the high, yet still rising, tide of improvement: the Church of Rome alone remains fixed and bound to the bottom of the stream, by a chain which can neither be lengthened nor removed."

* See note Q.

factions which learning has generally received from the members of the church of Rome. It is true, we owe the preservation of manuscripts to the monks, though it would be difficult to enumerate the multitude of works which were destroyed by their sloth and ignorance. The public schools of Europe were endowed by the liberality of Roman Catholics; but if either those that preserved the treasures of ancient literature, or those who founded our universities, had suspected the direction which the human mind would take from the excitement of these mental stimuli, they would have doomed poets, orators, and philosophers to the flames, and flung their endowing money into the sea. I do not blame individuals for partaking the spirit of their age, but must protest against a church which, having attained the fulness of strength under the influence of the most ignorant ages, would, for the sake of that strength, stop the progress of time, and reduce the nineteenth century to the intellectual standard of the thirteenth*.

* The inveterate enmity of a sincere Roman Catholic against books which directly or indirectly dissent from his church, is unconquerable. There is a family in England who,

Moral as well as physical beings must love their native atmosphere; and Rome being no exception to this law, is still daily employed in renovating and spreading credulity, enthusiasm, and superstition—the elements in which she thrives. The charge is strong, and expressed in strong language; but I believe, not stronger than the following proofs will warrant.

A Christian church cannot employ a more effectual instrument to fashion and mould the minds of her members, than the form of prayer and worship which she sanctions for daily use. Such is the *Breviary* or Prayer-book of the Roman Catholic clergy, which, as it stands in the present day, is the most authentic work of that kind. In consequence of a decree of the Council of Trent, Pope Pius V. ordered a number of *learned and able* men to compile the *Breviary*, and by his bull *Quod a nobis*, July, 1566, sanctioned it, and commanded the use thereof to the clergy of the

having inherited a copious library under circumstances which make it a kind of heir-loom, have torn out every leaf of the Protestant works, leaving nothing in the shelves but the covers. This fact I know from the most unquestionable authority.

Roman Catholic church, all over the world. Clement VIII., in 1602, finding that the Breviary of Pius V. had been altered and depraved, restored it to its pristine state; and ordered, under pain of excommunication, that all future editions should strictly follow that which he then printed at the Vatican. Lastly, Urban VIII., in 1631, had the language of the whole work, and the metres of the hymns, revised. The value which the church of Rome sets upon the Breviary, may be known from the strictness with which she demands the perusal of it. Whoever enjoys any ecclesiastical revenue; all persons of both sexes who have professed in any of the regular orders*; all subdeacons, deacons, and priests, are bound to repeat, either in public or private, the whole service of the day, out of the Breviary. The omission of any one of the eight portions of which that service consists is declared to be a mortal sin, *i. e.* a sin that, unrepented, would be sufficient to exclude

* Some orders have a peculiar Breviary, with the approbation of the pope. There is no substantial difference between these monkish prayer books and the *Breviary* which is used by the great body of the Roman Catholic clergy.

from salvation. The person guilty of such an omission loses all legal right to whatever portion of his clerical emoluments is due for the day or days wherein he neglected that duty, and cannot be absolved till he has given the forfeited sums to the poor, or, in Spain, redeemed the greatest part by a certain donation to the Crusade. Such are the sanctions and penalties by which the reading of the Breviary is enforced. The scrupulous exactness with which this duty is performed by all who have not secretly cast off their spiritual allegiance, is quite surprising. For more than twelve years of my life, at a period when my university studies required uninterrupted attention, I believed myself bound to repeat the appointed prayers and lessons; a task which, in spite of a rapid enunciation, took up an hour and a half daily. A dispensation of this duty is not to be obtained from Rome without the utmost difficulty*. I never, indeed, knew or heard of any one who had obtained it.

* Among the many charges made in the name of the Pope by Cardinal Gonsalvi, against Baron von Wessenberg, Vicar General of Constance, one is, that he had granted dispensations of this kind to many clergymen in his diocese. This curious correspondence was published in London, by Acker-

The Breviary, therefore, must be reckoned the true standard to which the church of Rome wishes to reduce the minds and hearts of her clergy, from the highest dignitary to the most obscure priest. It is in the Breviary that we may be sure to find the full extent of the *pious* belief, to which she trains the pastors of her flock; and the true stamp of those virtues which she boasts of in her models of Christian perfection. By making the daily repetition of the Breviary a paramount duty of the clergy, Rome evidently gives it the preference over all other works; and as far as she is concerned, provided the appointed teachers of her laity read her own book, they may trouble themselves very little about others. Nay, should a Roman Catholic clergyman, as is often the case, be unable to devote more than an hour and a half a day, to reading; his church places him under the necessity of deriving his whole knowledge from the Breviary.

Precious, indeed, must be the contents of that

mann, in 1819. It deserves the attention of such as wish to ascertain the temper of the court of Rome in our own days.

privileged volume, if we trust the authority which so decidedly enforces its perusal. There was a time when I knew it by heart; but long neglect of that store of knowledge, had lately left but faint traces of the most exquisite passages contained therein. The present occasion, however, has forced me to take my old task-book in hand; and it shall now be my endeavour to arrange and condense the copious extracts made in my last revision.

The office of the Roman Catholic church was originally so contrived as to divide the Psaltery between the seven days of the week. Portions of the Old Scriptures were also read alternately with extracts from the legends of the saints, and the works of the fathers. But as the calendar became crowded with saints, whose festivals take precedence of the regular church service; little room is left for any thing but a few psalms, which are constantly repeated, a very small part of the Old Testament, and mere fragments of the Gospels and Epistles. The great and never-ending variety consists in the compendious lives of

the saints, of which I will here give some specimens.

In the first place, I shall speak of the early martyrs, the spurious records of whose sufferings have been made to contribute most copiously to the composition of the Breviary. The variety and ingenuity of the tortures described, are only equalled by the innumerable miracles which baffled the tyrants, whenever they attempted to injure the Christians by any method but cutting their throats. Houses were set on fire to burn the martyrs within; but the Breviary informs us that the flames raged for a whole day and a night without molesting them. Often do we hear of idols tumbling from their pedestals at the approach of the persecuted Christians; and even the judges themselves dropped dead when they attempted to pass sentence. The wild beasts seldom devour a martyr without prostrating themselves before him; and lions follow young virgins to protect them from insult. The sea refuses to drown those who are committed to its waters; and when compelled to do that odious service, the waves generally convey the dead bodies where the Christians may

preserve them as relics. On one occasion a pope is thrown into the Lake Mœotis, with an anchor, which the cautious infidels had tied round his neck, for fear of the usual miraculous floating: the plan succeeded, and the pope was drowned. But the sea was soon after observed to recede three miles from the shore, where a temple appeared, in which the body of the martyr had been provided with a marble sarcophagus*.

There is a good deal of romantic interest in the history of Cyprian and Justina. The former being a heathen magician, who to that detestable art

* “Clemens . . . a Trajano imperatore relegatus est trans Mare Ponticum in solitudinem urbis Chersonæ, in qua duo millia Christianorum reperit . . . qui cum in eruendis et secandis marmoribus aquæ penuria laborarent, Clemens facta oratione in vicinum collem ascendit; in cujus jugo vidit Agnum dextro pede fontem aquæ dulcis, qui inde scaturiebat attingentem, ubi omnes sitim expleverunt; eoque miraculo multi infideles ad Christi fidem conversi, Clementis etiam sanctitatem venerare cœperunt: quibus concitatus Trajanus, misit illuc qui Clementem, alligatâ ad ejus collum anchorâ, in profundum dejicerent. Quod cum factum esset, Christianis ad littus orantibus, mare ad tria milliaria recessit; eoque illi accedentes, ædiculam marmoream in templi formam, et intus arcam lapideam, ubi Martyris corpus conditum erat, et, juxta illud, anchoram quâ mersus fuerat, invenerunt.”

joined a still more infamous occupation; engaged to put a young man in possession of Justina, a Christian virgin. For this purpose he employed the most potent incantations, till the devil was forced to confess that he had no power over Christians. Upon this, Cyprian very sensibly concluded, that it was better to be a Christian than a sorcerer. The readers of romance may, after this, expect every sort of incident except a marriage, which none but inferior saints ever contract; and from which all must extricate themselves before they can be in a fair way of obtaining a place in the calendar. Cyprian and Justina being accused before the Roman judge, are, however, fried together in a caldron of melted "pitch, fat, and wax," from which they come out quite able to be carried to Nicomedia, where they are put to death by the almost infallible means of the sword or the axe. I say *almost*, because I find an instance where even this method had nearly disappointed the persecutors. That happened in the case of St. Cecilia. This saint, of musical celebrity, having been forced to marry a certain Valerius, cautioned most earnestly her bridegroom to avert from him-

self the vengeance of an angel who had the charge of her purity. The good natured Valerius agreed to forego his rights, and promised to believe in Christ, provided he saw his heavenly rival. Cecilia, however, declared that such a sight could not be obtained without previous baptism; upon which, the curiosity of the bridegroom supplying the place of faith, he declared his readiness to be baptized. After the ceremony the angel showed himself to Valerius, and subsequently to a brother of his, who had been let into the secret. This Cecilia is the martyr on whom, as I mentioned before, a whole house flaming about her for a natural day, had not the smallest effect. Even when the axe was employed, the lictor exerted his strength in vain on the delicate neck of his victim, which being but half divided, yet allowed her miraculously to live for three days more, at the end of which she fairly died*.

* “Cyprianus, primum magus, postea martyr cum Justinam Christianam virginem, quam juvenis quidem ardentem amabat, cantionibus ac veneficiis ad ejus libidinis assensum allicere conaretur, dæmonem consuluit, quânam id re consequi posset. Cui dæmon respondit, nullam illi artem processuram adversus eos, qui vere Christum colerent. Quo re-

After the romantic miracles of the early martyrs, I have to mention the stories by which the

sponso commotus Cyprianus, vehementer dolere cœpit vitæ superioris institutum. Itaque relictis magicis artibus, se totum ad Christi domini fidem convertit. Quam ob causam una cum virgine Justina comprehensus est, et ambo colaphis flagellisque cæsi, mox in carcerem coniecti . . . in sartaginein plenam ferventis picis, adipis et ceræ injecti sunt. Demum Nicomediæ securi feriuntur.

“ Cæcilia virgo Romana, nobili genere nata, a prima ætate Christianæ fidei præceptis instituta, virginitatem suam Deo vovit. Sed cum postea contra suam voluntatem data esset in matrimonium Valeriano, primâ nuptiarum nocte hunc cum eo sermonem habuit : Ego Valeriane, in Angeli tutelâ sum, qui virginitatem meam custodit : quare ne quid in me committas, quo ira Dei in te concitetur. Quibus verbis commotus Valerianus, illam attingere non est ausus : quin etiam addidit, se in Christum crediturum, si eum Angelum videret. Cui Cæcilia cum sine baptismo negaret id fieri posse, incensus cupiditate videndi Angelum, se baptizari velle respondet . . . (Baptizatus, et) ad Cæciliam reversus, orantem et cum ea Angelum divino splendore fulgentem, invenit. Quo aspectu obstupefactus, ut primum ex timore confirmatus est, Tiburtium fratrem suum accersit qui a Cæcilia Christi fide imbutus . . . ipse etiam ejusdem Angeli quem frater ejus viderat, aspectu dignatus est. Uterque autem paulo post, Almachio Præfecto, constanter martyrium subit. Qui mox Cæciliam comprehendi imperat . . . eamque in ipsius ædes reductam, in balneo comburi jussit. Quo in loco cum diem noctemque ita fuisset, ut ne flamma quidem illam attingeret ; eo immissus est carnifex, qui ter securi ictam, cum caput abscindere non potuisset, semivivam reliquit,” &c. &c.

Breviary endeavours to support the extravagant veneration for the Popes and their see, which at all times has been the leading aim of the Roman court. The most notorious forgeries are, for this purpose, sanctioned and consecrated in her Prayer Book. That these legends are often given in the words of those whom the church of Rome calls *fathers*, shows the weakness both of the Popish structure, and of the props that support it. We thus find the fable about the contest between St. Peter and Simon Magus, before Nero, gravely repeated in the words of St. Maximus. "The holy apostles (Peter and Paul) lost their lives," he says "because, among other miracles, they also, by their prayers, precipitated Simon from the vacuity of the air. For Simon calling himself Christ, and engaging to ascend to the Father, was suddenly raised in flight, by means of his magic art. At this moment Peter, bending his knees, prayed to the Lord, and by his holy prayer defeated the magician's lightness; for the prayer reached the Lord sooner than the flight; the right petition outstripped the unjust presumption. Peter, on earth, obtained what he asked, much before Simon

could reach the heavens to which he was making his way. Peter, therefore, brought down his rival from the air as if he had held him by a rope, and dashing him against a stone, in a precipice, broke his legs: doing this in scorn of the fact itself, so that he who but a moment before had attempted to fly, should not now be able to walk; and having affected wings, should want the use of his heels*.”

The use which the Breviary makes of the forged epistles of the early popes, known by the

* “ *Hodierna igitur die beati Apostoli sanguinem profuderunt. Sed videamus causam quare ista perpassi sunt; scilicet, quod inter cætera mirabilia etiam magum illum Simonem orationibus suis de aeris vacuo præcipiti ruina prostraverunt. Cum enim idem Simon se Christum diceret, et tanquam filium ad patrem assereret volando se posse conscendere, atque elatus subito magicis artibus volare cœpisset; tunc Petrus fixis genibus precatus est Dominum, et precatione sancta vicit magicam levitatem. Prior enim ascendit ad Dominum oratio quam volatus; et ante pervenit justa petitio, quàm iniqua præsumptio: ante Petrus in terris positus obtinuit quod petebat, quàm Simon perveniret in cælestibus, quò tendebat. Tunc igitur Petrus velut vinctum illum de sublimi aere deposuit, et quodam præcipitio in saxo elidens, ejus crura confregit; et hoc in opprobrio facti illius, ut qui paulo ante volare tentaverat, subito ambulare non posset; et qui pennas assumpserat, plantas amitteret.*” Septima die infra Octavam SS. Apost. Petri et Pauli.

name of false Decretals, is frequently obvious to those who are acquainted with both. As these Decretals were forged about the eighth century, with a view to magnify the power of the Roman see, nothing in their contents is more prominent than that object. The Breviary, therefore, never omits an opportunity of establishing the Papal supremacy by tacit reference to these spurious documents. Yet as this would have but a slight effect upon the mass of the faithful, a more picturesque story is related in the life of Pope St. John.

His Holiness being on a journey to Corinth, and in want of a quiet and comfortable horse, borrowed one, which the lady of a certain nobleman used to ride. The animal carried the Pope with the greatest gentleness and docility; and, when the journey was over, was returned to his mistress; but in vain did she attempt to enjoy the accustomed services of her favourite. The horse had become fierce, and gave the lady many an unseemly fall: "as if (says the authorized record) feeling indignant at having to carry a woman, since the Vicar of Christ had been on his

back*.” The horse was accordingly presented to the Pope, as unfit to be ridden by a less dignified personage.

The standing miracles of the city of Rome—those miraculous relics which even at this moment are drawing crowds of pilgrims within its walls†, and which, in former times, made the whole of Europe support the idleness of the Romans at the

* “Cum ei nobilis vir ad Corinthum, equum, quo ejus uxor mansueto utebatur, itineris causâ commodasset; factum est ut Domino postea remissus equus ita ferox evaderet, ut fremitu, et totius corporis agitatione, semper deinceps dominam expulerit: tanquam indignaretur mulierem recipere ex quo sedisset in eo Christi vicarius.” Brev. Rom. die 27 Maii.

The Breviary, true to its plan of giving the substance of every story that ever sprang from the fertile imagination of the idle monks, concludes the life by stating the vision of *a certain hermit*, who saw the soul of Theodoric the Goth carried to hell by Pope John and Symmachus, through one of the volcanoes of the Lipari Islands. “Paulo post moritur Theodoricus: quem quidam eremita, ut scribit Sanctus Gregorius, vidit inter Joannem Pontificem, et Symmachum Patricium, quem idem occiderat, demergi in ignem Liparitanum.”—“This legend (says Gibbon) is related by Gregory I. and approved by Baronius; and both the Pope and Cardinal are grave doctors, sufficient to establish a *probable* opinion.” Chap. xxxix. Note 108.

† Note R.

expense of their devout curiosity—are not overlooked in the prayer-book of her church. Let me mention the account it gives of St. Peter's chains, such as they are now venerated at Rome. Eudoxia, the wife of Theodosius the younger, being on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, received as a present one of the chains with which St. Peter was bound in prison, when he was liberated by an angel. This chain, set with jewels, was forwarded by the pious empress to her daughter, then at Rome. The young princess, rejoiced with the gift, showed the chain to the Pope, who repaid the compliment by exhibiting another chain, which the holy apostle had borne under Nero. As, to compare their structure, the two chains were brought into contact, the links at the extremities of each joined together, and the two pieces became one uniform chain*.

After these samples, no one will be surprised

* “Cum igitur Pontifex Romanam catenam cum ea, quæ Jerosolymis allata fuerat, contulisset, factum est, ut illæ inter se sic connecterentur ut non duæ sed una catena ab eodem artifice confecta, esse videretur.” In Festo Sti. Petri

to find in the same authorized record, all the other supposed miracles, which, in different parts of Italy, move daily the enlightened traveller to laughter or disgust. The translation of the house of Loretto from Palestine to the Papal States, is asserted in the collect for that festival; which being a direct address to the Deity, cannot be supposed to have been carelessly compiled*. The two removals of that house by the hands of

ad Vincula.—The present Pope mentions this chain as one of the inducements for the faithful to visit Rome this year of Jubilee. See the translation of the Proclamation, Note R.

* “Deus, qui beatæ Mariæ Virginis domum per incarnati Verbi mysterium misericorditer consecrasti, eoque in sinu ecclesiæ tuæ mirabiliter collocasti,” &c. &c. The account of the pretended miraculous conveyance of the house by the hands of the angels, is given in the Lessons: “Ipsius autem Virginis natalis domus divinis mysteriis consecrata, Angelorum ministerio ab Infidelium potestate, in Dalmatiam prius, deinde in Agrum Lauretanum Picenæ Provinciæ translata fuit, sedente sancto Cœlestino quinto: eandemque ipsam esse in qua Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis, tum Pontificis diplomatibus, et celeberrima totius Orbis veneratione, tum continuâ miraculorum virtute, et cœlestium beneficiorum gratiâ, comprobatur. Quibus permotus Innocentius Duodecimus, quò ferventius erga Matris amantissimæ cultum Fidelium memoria excitaretur, ejusdem Sanctæ Domus Translationem anniversariâ solemnitate in tota Piceni Provincia veneratam, Missa etiam et Officio proprio celebrari præcepit.”

angels, first to the coast of Dalmatia, and thence, over the Adriatic, to the opposite shore, are gravely related in the Lessons; where the members of the Roman Catholic church are reminded that the identity of the house is warranted by papal bulls, and a *proper* mass and service, published by the same authority for the annual commemoration of that event.

It is rather curious to observe the difference in the assertion of Italian and of French miracles: the unhesitating confidence with which the former are stated; the hypercritical jealousy which appears in the narrative of the latter. The walk of St. Dionysius, with his own head in his hands, from Paris to the site of the present abbey of St. Denis, is given only as a credible *report*. “De quo illud *memoriæ proditum est*, abscissum suum caput sustulisse, et progressum ad duo millia passuum in manibus gestasse*.” The French,

* The Breviary, however, does not betray such hesitation as to the works of the said Dionysius, the Areopagite—the most barefaced forgery which ever was foisted on the credulity of the world. *Libros scripsit admirabiles, ac planè cælestes, de divinis nominibus, de cælesti et Ecclesiastica Hierarchia, de mystica Theologia, et alios quosdam.*

indeed, with their liberties of the Gallican church, have never been favourites at Rome; but all is certainty in the accounts of Italian worthies. Witness the renowned St. Januarius, whose extraordinary miracles, both during his life under Diocletian, and in our own days, are stated with equal confidence and precision. That saint, we are told, being thrown into a burning furnace, came out so perfectly unhurt, that not even his clothes or hair were singed. The next day all the wild beasts in the amphitheatre came crouching to his feet. I pass over the other ancient performances of Januarius, to show the style in which his wonderful works, after death, are given. His body, for instance, on one occasion, extinguished the flames of Vesuvius*. This is no miracle upon

* “ In ardentem fornacem coniectus ita illæsus evasit ut ne vestimentum aut capillum quidem flamma violaverit.—(Feræ) naturalis feritatis oblitæ, ad Januarii pedes se prostravere.— In primis memorandum quod erumpentes olim e monte Vesuvio flammæ globos, nec vicinis modo, sed longinquis etiam regionibus vastitatis metum afferentes, extinxit.— Præclarum illud quoque, quod ejus sanguis, qui in ampulla vitrea concretus asservatur, cum in conspectu capitis ejusdem martyris ponitur, admirandum in modum colliquescere, et ebullire, perinde atque recens effusus, ad hæc usque tempora cernitur.”

vague report, but one which, according to the Breviary, deserves a peculiar remembrance. Next comes that “noble miracle”—*præclarum illud*—the liquefaction of Januarius’s blood, which takes place every year in Naples. The usual state of the blood, as a coagulated mass, and its change into a bubbling fluid, are circumstantially described, as might be expected from historians who convey the most minute information, even about the clothes and hair of a martyr that died fifteen hundred years ago. The liquefaction, indeed, with all its circumstances, they must have witnessed themselves, or derived their information concerning it from thousands of Neapolitan witnesses.

And here let me observe by the way, the extraordinary liberality of his church upon these points, which Mr. Butler sets forth to the admiration of the world. “A person,” he tells us, “may disbelieve every other miracle (except those which are related in the Old or the New Testament), and may even disbelieve the existence of the persons through whose intercession they are related to have been wrought, without ceasing to

be a Roman Catholic*." We must, however, exempt from this very ample privilege those who thus solemnly publish the miracles themselves, or their honesty would certainly be placed in a strange predicament. Still, by a stronger reason, we must suppose them perfectly convinced of the reality of that annual wonder, which for ages has been repeated under their eyes. How, then, can they be so insensible to the forlorn condition of heretics and unbelievers, as not to allow a close inspection of that undeniable proof of the Roman Catholic faith? The present Pope invites us to see the manger where the infant Saviour lay at Bethlehem—would it not be more charitable to allow one of our chemists to view the blood of St. Januarius, and observe its change,—not surrounded by priests, candles, and the smoke of frankincense,—and thus convert us all at one stroke?

The world is full of Roman Catholic miracles, in the incorrupt bodies of saints, which lie on the altars, inclosed in gold and silver cases. I have often performed high mass before that of St. Ferdinand, which is preserved in the royal chapel

* Book of the Roman Catholic Church, p. 46.

at Seville; and, though a member of the chapter to whose charge the Spanish kings have intrusted their holy ancestor, I could never obtain a distinct view of the body, which the church of Rome declares to be incorrupt*. On certain days the front of a massive silver sarcophagus is removed, when a gold and glass chest is seen, containing something like a man covered with splendid robes. But the multitude of candles on the altar, and the want of light from behind, prevent a distinct view of the objects within. Once, when the multitude was thronging the chapel, a lady of high rank, who had applied to me for a closer view than was allowed to the crowd, was furnished with a stool to stand upon a level with the body. To gratify at once her and my own curiosity, I took a candle from the altar, and endeavoured to counteract the reflection of the glass, by throwing in the light obliquely. One of our inferior clergy, the sacristan, whose duty it was to stand near the

* “*Jacet ejus corpus incorruptum adhuc post quatuor sæcula in templo maximo Hispalensi, honorificentissimo inclusum sepulchro.*” *Breviarum Rom. in Festo Sancti Ferdinandi.*

saint in his surplice, seeing what I was about, snatched the candle from my hand, with a rudeness which nothing but his half roguish, half holy zeal, could have prompted. He pretended to be alarmed for the pane of glass; but I more than suspect that he knew the incorruptibility of the saint could not bear inspection. The head, which I distinctly saw, was a mere skull, with something like painted parchment holding up the lower jaw. A similar covering seems to have been laid on the right foot, which projects out of the royal robes.

When the greatest miracle of Christianity, the resurrection of Christ, was performed for the conversion of men to the gospel, the Saviour himself offered the marks of his wounds to the close inspection of a doubting disciple. The church of Rome follows a different plan in the use of the multiplied miracles of which she boasts. She has no compassion for men who will credit only their sight and touch.

Historical miracles are safe from this troublesome curiosity; and to these I must return after my digression. Let us take a few specimens from those of the early ages of monachism. Among

these hardly any narrative will be found more curious than that which the Breviary copies from Saint Jerome, as a record of the life of Paul, the first Hermit. Paul, we are told, retired to a cave in the desert parts of the Thebais, where he lived from early youth to the age of one hundred and ten. Being near his death, Anthony, another Egyptian anchorite, paid him a visit by a supernatural command from heaven. Their names being, in the same manner, revealed to each other, they met, for the first time, with the familiarity of old acquaintance. While they were talking about spiritual matters, a raven dropped a loaf of bread at the feet of Paul. "Thanks be to Heaven," exclaimed the father of hermits; "it is now sixty years that I receive half a loaf daily in this manner: to-day my allowance has been doubled." On the morrow Paul requested his friend Anthony to return for a cloak, which, having belonged to Saint Athanasius, he wished to have as his winding-sheet. Anthony was coming back with the cloak, when he saw the soul of Paul going up into heaven, surrounded by the holy company of the prophets and apostles. In the cave he found

the corpse with crossed legs, erected head, and the arms raised above it. He was, however, at a loss how to dig a grave, being also an old man of ninety, and having no spade or any instrument of that kind. In this distress he saw two lions hurrying towards him from the interior of the desert. The lions, in the best manner they could, gave him to understand that they meant him no harm, but, on the contrary, were much affected by the death of Paul. They then set to work with their claws, and having made a hole of sufficient size to contain the dead body, quietly and decently retired to their fastnesses. Anthony took possession of Paul's coat, which was made of palm-leaves like a basket, and wore it regularly as a holiday-dress on Easter and Whitsunday*.

* “ Cumque ad ejus cellam pervenisset, invenit genibus complicatis, erecta cervice, extensisque in altum manibus; corpus exanime : quod pallio obvolvens, hymnosque et psalmos ex Christiana traditione decantans, cum sarculum, quo terram foderet non haberet, duo leones ex interiore eremo, rapido cursu ad beati senis corpus feruntur : ut facile intelligeretur, eos, quo modo poterant, ploratum edere ; qui certatim terram pedibus effodientes, foveam, quæ hominem commode caperet, effecerunt. Qui cum abiissent, Antonius sanctum corpus in eum locum intulit : et injectâ humo, tumulum ex Christiano

The life of Saint Benedict, the great propagator of monachism in the sixth century, has furnished the Breviary with several curious miracles. One of the first among the wonders he wrought, does not give a favourable idea of the character of religious associations at that period. Saint Benedict, having undertaken the government of a certain monastery, where he wished to introduce a more severe discipline than the inmates were disposed to follow, had a poisoned cup presented by the monks. He would have fallen a victim to their wickedness but for the habit of making the sign of the cross over every thing he eat or drank. The sign was no sooner made than the cup burst into pieces, and spilt the deadly contents on the table.

Saint Benedict is inseparably coupled in my recollection with his sister, Saint Scholastica, who had the gift of working a peculiar kind of light

more composuit: tunicam verò Pauli, quam in sportæ modum ex palmæ foliis ille sibi contexuerat secum auferens, eo vestitu diebus solemnibus Paschæ et Pentecostes, quoad vixit, usus est." Die xv. Januarii.—I give the original words only for the passages which might appear exaggerated in my own descriptions.

playful miracles, which our neighbours, the French, would probably denominate *miracles de famille*. By one of these, the holy nun Scholastica, who paid a yearly visit to her brother in an outhouse of his monastery, wishing to keep him a whole night in conversation, and not being able to persuade him, forced him to break the rule which bound him to sleep in his cell. The manner of carrying her point was simple enough. On hearing a positive refusal, she crossed her hands, laid them upon the table, then reclined her head upon them, and wept profusely. Her tears disturbed the state of the atmosphere, which, at that moment, was beautiful; and a violent storm of thunder and rain instantly ensued. In a few minutes the rivers overflowed their banks, and the whole country around was like a sea. Benedict, who was familiar with miracles, could not mistake the cause of the storm, and goodnatureedly reproached his sister. "What could I do?" said she, with a saintly archness, of which none but readers of the Breviary could ever suspect the existence: "I entreated you, and was refused; I therefore asked my God, and he heard me. Now, brother,

go if you can: leave me and run away to your monastery." This playfulness is the more surprising, as the good lady Scholastica had then a certainty of her approaching death. Benedict saw her soul, in the shape of a dove, wing up her way to heaven only three days after this miracle.—The instructive Lessons in which this is related come from no vulgar pen. They are portions of the Dialogues of Pope Gregory the *Great* *.

* Scholastica, venerabilis Patris Benedicti soror, . . . ad eum semel per annum venire consueverat ; ad quam vir Dei non longè extra januam in possessione monasterii descendebat. Quâdam vero die venit ex more, atque ad eam cum discipulis, venerabilis ejus descendit frater, qui totum diem in Dei laudibus, sanctisque colloquiis ducentes, incumbentibus jam noctis tenebris, simul acceperunt cibum. Cumque adhuc ad mensam sederent, et inter sacra colloquia tardior se hora protraheret, eadem sanctimonialis fœmina soror ejus eum rogavit, dicens: "Quæso te, ut istâ nocte me non deseras, ut usque manè de cœlestis vitæ gaudiis loquamur." Cui ille respondit: "Quid est quod loqueris, soror? manere extra cellam nullatenus possum." Tanta verò erat cœli serenitas, ut nulla in aère nubes appareret. Sanctimonialis autem fœmina, cum verba fratris negantis audivisset, insertas digitis manus super mensam posuit ; et caput in manibus, omnipotentem Dominum rogatura, declinavit. Cumque levaret de mensa caput, tanta corruscationis et tonitruï virtus, tantaque inundatio pluvie erupit, ut neque venerabilis Benedictus, neque fratres qui cum eo aderant, extra loci limen, quo consederant, pedem movere

No one, however, who observes the profusion of wonders recorded in the Breviary, can be surprised at these sportful displays of supernatural power. There is scarcely a saint who has not been honoured by miracles, which I would call *ornamental*. Celestial meteors have generally shone over the houses where a future saint was born,

potuerint. Sauctimonialis quippe fœmina caput in manibus declinans, lacrymarum fluvium in mensam fuderat, per quas serenitatem aëris ad pluviam traxit. Nec paulo tardius post orationem inundatio illa secuta est: sed tanta fuit convenientia orationis, et inundationis, ut de mensa caput jam cum tonitru levaret: quatenus unum idemque esset momentum, et levare caput, et pluviam deponere. Tunc vir Dei, inter corruscos, et tonitruos, atque ingentis pluviae inundationem, videns se ad monasterium non posse remeare, cœpit conqueri contristatus dicens: "Parcat tibi omnipotens Deus, soror, quid est quod fecisti?" Cui illa respondit: "Ecce rogavi te, et audire me noluisti; rogavi Dominum meum, et audivit me: modò ergo, si potes, egredere, et me dimissâ ad monasterium recede," &c. Die 10 Februarii.

The collect for the feast of Scholastica is both a specimen of the assurance with which the church of Rome circulates her legends, and of her tenets concerning the intercession of saints. "Deus, qui animam beatæ Virginis tuæ Scholasticæ ad ostendendam innocentiae viam, in columbæ specie cœlum penetrare fecisti, *da nobis, ejus meritis et precibus*, ita innocenter vivere, ut ad æterna mereamur gaudia pervenire." This is almost an invariable form of words in the Roman Catholic collects.

and the bells have rung of their own accord on the infants' coming to light *: swarms of bees settled on their mouths, and even built a honey-comb in their hands, while lying in the cradle †. A baby saint had her face changed into a rose, that she might be called after that flower ‡. An angel, in a bishop's robes, appeared upon the baptismal font where a future prelate was to be baptised §. The mothers of these extraordinary beings seldom were without prophetic dreams during the time of gestation ||. Some saints performed miracles while yet in the womb; and it is asserted of St. Bridget that, in that invisible state, she saved her mother from shipwreck ¶. These holy children have not unfrequently spoken when scarcely five months old; though the object of

* St. John à Deo; St. Peter Celestinus, and many others.

† St. Ambrose, St. Peter Nolascus, St. Isidore, and many others.

‡ St. Rose à Sancta Maria.—“Vultus infantis, mirabiliter in rosæ effigiem transfiguratus, huic nomini occasionem dedit.”
Die 30 Augusti.

§ St. Julian of Cuenca.

|| See the life of St. Andrew Avellini and others, *passim*.

¶ “Cum adhuc in utero gestaretur, è naufragio, propter eam, mater erepta est.”

their speeches was seldom so important as that of St. Philip Beniti, when, at that age, he chid his mother for sending some begging monks empty from her door*. Nor was this wonder exhibited only in the embryo-saints; common every-day babes have often spoken to discover the hiding-places of that nearly extinct generation of men, whom an impending mitre drove with affright into the fastnesses of deserts. St. Andrew Avellini, for instance, could not have been consecrated Bishop of Fiesole, unless he had been actually *betrayed* by the voice of an infant †.

The apostles, who had received the power of working miracles from Christ himself, for the great object of establishing his religion, appear to have been greatly limited in the use of their supernatural gifts; and never to have controlled the order of nature, except under the influence of that supernatural impulse, that unhesitating faith, which being in itself a miracle, was, in the strong and figurative language of their divine Master,

* "Vix enim quintum ætatis mensem ingressus, linguam in voces mirifice solvit, hortatusque fuit matrem, ut Deiparæ servis eleemosynam impertiret." Die 23 Augusti.

† "Pueri voce mirabiliter loquentis proditus."

said to be able to move mountains. It is far otherwise with the wonder-workers of the Breviary. While these modern saints lived on earth, nature suffered a daily interruption of her laws, and that often for their own personal convenience. With the exception of St. Paul's preservation from the bite of the viper, we do not find miraculous interpositions in his favour. Indeed the account he gives of the hardships, dangers, and narrow escapes during his ministry, shows that miracles were not wrought for his comfort. Modern saints are more fortunate: Frances, a Roman widow, who enjoyed the familiar view and conversation of her guardian angel, once multiplied a few crusts of bread, so as to afford a substantial meal to fifteen nuns, and fill up a basket with the fragments. On another occasion she allayed their thirst with a bunch of miraculous grapes; and more than once was preserved by supernatural influence, from the inconvenience of getting wet in the rain, or even from the stream of a river*. St. Andrew Avel-

* "Deus, qui beatam Franciscam famulam tuam, inter cætera gratiæ tuæ dona, familiari angeli consuetudine decorasti," &c. Collect.

"Non semel aquæ, vel è cœlo labentes, intactam prorsus,

lini, retiring home in a storm, was equally preserved from the effects of rain. The benefit of this miracle was not only extended to his companions, but the whole company had the advantage of seeing their way in a pitch-dark night, by the radiancy of the saint's person *.

These phosphoric appearances, as well as a supernatural tendency to fly upwards, are so common among saints of the last four or five centuries, that it would be tedious to mention individual instances. St. Peter of Alcantara, a saint very remarkable for antigravitating qualities †, exhibited a very curious phenomenon in another storm. A tremendous fall of snow came on as he was re-

dum Deo vacaret reliquerunt. Modica panis fragmenta, quæ vix tribus sororibus reficiendis fuissent satis, sic ejus precibus Dominus multiplicavit, ut quindecim inde exsaturatis, tantùm superfuerit, ut canistrum impleverit: et aliquando earundem sororum extra urbem, mense Januario ligna parantium, sitim, recentis uvæ racemis ex vite in arbore pendentibus mirabiliter obtentis, abunde expleverit.” Die 9 Martis.

* “Cum enim intempesta nocte ab audita ægri confessione domum rediret, ac pluvix ventorumque vis prælucentem facem extinxisset, non solum ipse, cum sociis, inter effusissimos imbres nihil madefactus est, verum etiam inusitato splendore, e suo corpore mirabiliter emicante, sociis inter densissimas tenebras iter monstravit.” Die 10 Novembris.

† “In aera frequenter sublatus, miro fulgore corruscare visus est.”

turning at night to the convent. Distressed for shelter, he entered a building, the most unfit for the occasion, as it wanted a roof to stop the snow. But the walls which still remained saved half the trouble to the miraculous agent employed on this occasion. The snow congealed into a solid roof, and completed the building, in which Peter passed the night *. The cooling properties of this structure must have been highly welcome to a man, whose *charity* (I relate what I find in the Breviary) so used to raise the temperature of his blood, that it obliged him to break out from his cell and run distracted into the fields †.

The repetition of miracles is a matter of some

* “Cum noctu iter ageret, densâ nive cadente, dirutam domum sine tecto ingressus est, eique nix in aëre pendula pro tecto fuit, ne illius copia suffocaretur.”

† “Charitas Dei et proximi in ejus corde diffusa, tantum quandoque excitabat incendium; ut è cellæ angustiis in apertum campum præsilire, aerisque refrigerio conceptum ardorem temperare cogeretur.”—Another physical effect of charity is recorded in the life of St. Philip Neri, whose chest being too confined for the expansive ardour of that virtue, was miraculously enlarged by the fracture of two ribs.—“Charitate Dei vulneratus, languebat jugiter; tantoque cor ejus æstuabat ardore, ut cum inter fines suos contineri non posset, illius sinum, confractis atque elatis duabus costulis, mirabiliter Dominus ampliaverit.” Die 26 Maii.

curiosity, as it might be expected that powers which baffle the laws of nature, would display an inexhaustible variety. Yet we find the earliest miracles repeated, and many occur regularly in the life of every saint. Of the latter kind are the luminous appearance of their faces; the multiplication or creation of food; living without sustenance; conversing with angels; emitting sweet effluvia from their dead bodies. More peculiar displays of supernatural interference appear, sometimes, at distant periods. St. Gregory, the wonder-worker of the fourth century, fixed his staff in the ground, and it instantly grew up into a tree which stopt the floods of the river Lycus. The lately mentioned Peter of Alcantara made also his staff grow into a fig tree, which the friars of his order have propagated by cuts, in every part of Spain. This happened only in the sixteenth century. A raven provided Paul the hermit with bread: a wild doe presented herself daily to be milked by St. Ægidius. St. Eustachius, a martyr said to have been a general under Trajan, was converted by seeing, in the chase, a stag bearing a crucifix between his antlers. St. John of Matha

founded the order of the Trinity, in consequence of seeing a similar animal with a tri-colour cross in the same position. There are also certain miraculous feats, for which saints have shown a peculiar fondness. Three navigations on a mantle are recorded in the Breviary. Saint Francis de Paula crossed the strait of Sicily on his own cloak, taking another monk as a passenger. St. Raymond de Pennafort sailed in the same manner, from Majorca to Barcelona. St. Hyacinth, a Pole, deserves no less credit for the management of his cloth vessel across the flooded Vistula, notwithstanding the weight of his companions*.

The mention of a Polish saint reminds me, however, of a miracle performed by St. Stanislaus,

* St. Francis de Paula. "Multis miraculis servi sui sanctitatem Deus testari voluit, quorum illud in primis celebre, quòd a nautis rejectus, Siciliæ fretum, strato super fluctibus pallio, cum socio transmisit." Die 2 Aprili.

St. Raymond de Pennafort. "Multa patravit miracula; inter quæ illud clarissimum, quòd ex insula Baleari Majori Barcionem reversurus, strato super aquas pallio, centum sexaginta milliaria sex horis confecerit; et suum cœnobium januis clausis fuerit ingressus." Die 23 Januarii.

St. Hyacinth. "Vandalum fluvium prope Visogradum aquis redundantem, nullo navigio usus trajecit, sociis quoque expanso super undas pallio, traductis." Die 16 Augusti.

bishop of Cracow, which is not likely to have been often repeated. Stanislaus was on the point of being deprived of some lands, which he had purchased for his church. He could not show the title deeds: and the person to whom they formerly belonged had been dead three years. The king being a decided enemy of the bishop, no witness would come forward in his favour. The diet of Poland was on the point of punishing Stanislaus for his supposed fraud, when, to the no small amusement of the noblemen present, he engaged, within three days, to present the late possessor of the estate. On the third day the saint called the dead man out of the grave. Peter (that was his name) rose without delay, and followed the bishop to the diet; where having duly given his deposition in support of the bishop's right, he died a second time*. The king was, however, too hardened to profit by this great miracle; and being enraged at

* "Spondet episcopus se Petrum, pagi venditorem, qui triennio ante obierat, intra dies tres in iudicium adducturum. Conditione cum risu acceptâ, vir Dei ... ipso sponsionis die, post oblatum Missæ sacrificium, Petrum e sepulchro surgere jubet, qui statim redivivus, episcopum ad regium tribunal euntem sequitur, ibique rege, et cæteris stupore attonitis, de

the sentence of excommunication which the bishop soon after fulminated against him, killed him with his own hand, and ordered his body to be quartered and scattered about the fields. The wild beasts would have made a repast on the holy relics, but for the watchfulness of some eagles, which never allowed any one to touch them, till the canons of Cracow, led by a light from heaven, collected the scattered limbs the ensuing night. The different parts of the body, when properly adjusted together, united as closely as kindred drops, and not a mark was left of the effects of the knife*.

Novel and singular as the history of Stanislaus appears, I have a suspicion that another dead witness has somewhere else appeared before a court of justice ; but I defy hagiography to match

agro a se vendito, et pretio rite sibi ab episcopo persoluto testimonium dicit, atque iterum in Domino obdormivit."

* "*Corpus membratim concisum, et per agros projectum, aquilæ a feris mirabiliter defendunt. Mox Canonici Cracovienses sparsa membra, nocturni de cælo splendoris indicio colligunt, et suis locis aptè disponunt, quæ subito ita inter se copulata sunt, ut nulla vulnerum vestigia extarent."* Die 7 Maii.

the miracles I am going to relate from the life of a Spanish saint recorded in the Breviary.

St. Peter Armengaud, of the family of the counts of Urgel, had entered the Order of Mercy, and made some visits to Barbary for the liberation of Christian captives. The money collected for that purpose being exhausted before he could ransom some boys, whose faith appeared to be wavering; he sent them away with his companion, and remained as a hostage for the full amount of the debt. Charity like this, exerted by a free choice, and without the dangerous and oppressive system of religious vows, would be worth all the miracles of the Breviary. But the marvellous is a necessary element in every saint's life; and the good friars of the Mercy, have mixed it here in a rather undue proportion. Peter waited for his companion with a very natural anxiety; but the expected money did not come on the appointed day, and the barbarians settled the account by hanging their hostage. Great indeed was the distress of Father William, on learning the sad consequences of his delay: yet the body of a

martyr was worth having, and he insisted upon carrying it back to Spain. The Moors had no objection to part with it, and willingly led the monk to the place where Peter was still hanging by the neck. Three days in that posture would have closed a wind-pipe of brass; but Peter's was sufficiently free to address his religious brother, as soon as he saw him within hearing. The Virgin Mary, he informed him, had, since his execution, supported the weight of his body, and was still holding him up at that moment. Not to prolong the necessity of supernatural assistance, Peter was cut down without delay. Of the pleasures he had experienced while hanging, he used always to speak in raptures; notwithstanding a wry neck and a habitual paleness for life, which the Virgin allowed him to keep, in remembrance of her assistance. It seems that, omitting the rope and beam, the scene of suspension was often repeated between Peter and his glorious prop; for the Breviary informs us that he frequently was seen raised in the air, uttering "the sweetest words" in answer to questions which the bystanders heard not, but

conjectured, most rationally, to proceed from the Virgin*.

“May I not ask (says the author of the Book of the Roman Catholic Church), if it be either just or generous to harass the present Catholics with the weaknesses of the ancient writers of their communion; and to attempt to render their religion and themselves odious by these unceasing

* “Ipse interim compedibus detentus, cum ad statutam diem parta pro redemptione merces non fuisset allata, et Mahometicæ superstitionis haberetur contemptor, collo ad lignum suspenditur. Ex Hispania ejus socius Guillelmus cum redemptionis pretio in Africam interea revertitur, et graviter beati viri amissionem deflens, ad locum ubi suspensus manebat, accessit; quem viventem reperit, sibique dicentem audit: ‘Charissime frater, ne fleveris; ecce enim sanctissimæ Virginis manibus sustentatus vivo, quæ mihi his diebus hilariter adfuit.’ Inenarrabili itaque gaudio illum e suspendio deposuit, et, cunctis demirantibus, ac barbaris non credentibus, una cum aliis libertate donatis, læti in patriam reversi sunt. Ex illo autem tempore beatus Petrus collum e supplicio obtortum, et vultum squalore marcidum, quoad vixit, retinuit. . . Frequenter alienatus a sensibus in aerem sublatus, suavissima verba proferre auditus est, quibus, ut adstantibus videbatur, beatissimæ Virgini interroganti respondebat; sui que martyrii memor, hæc fratribus dicere erat solitus: ‘Ego, credite mihi, nullos reputo me vixisse dies, præter felicissimos illos paucos, quibus ligno suspensus, mundo putabar jam mortuus. Officia propria SS. Hispanorum, die 27 Aprilis.

and offensive repetitions?" This complaint should be addressed to the Pope and the Roman Catholic bishops, by whose authority, consent, and practice, these *weaknesses* are *unceasingly* repeated for the instruction of the members of their communion. I can sympathise with the feelings of the author: I can easily conceive how galling it must be for a *modernized* Roman Catholic, in this country, to be constantly suspected of being a Roman Catholic, in deed, and according to the Pope's heart. His case is as deplorable as that of a man of fashion, who should be compelled to frequent the higher circles in company with an old, fantastic, half-crazed mother, who daily and hourly exposed herself to contempt and ridicule, in spite of his filial efforts to hide her absurdities. The truth is, that the Protestants have nearly forgotten the monstrous heap of falsehood and imposture from which Rome daily feeds her flock. But the offensive repetitions resound on the ears of your *harassed* apologist from the lips of every bishop, priest, deacon and subdeacon of his communion: they are chanted incessantly in every Roman Catholic cathedral, in every con-

vent of males or females: they are translated into popular tracts*: they are heard and read with avidity by the mass of straight-forward, uncompromising Catholics, and cannot be scouted by the more fastidious, without a direct reproach on the most constant, solemn, and authorized practice of their church. In vain would the suffering scholar, the *harassed* man of refinement, attempt a distinction between the miracles of dark ages, and those of more modern times; in vain would he venture a smile on the "Golden Legend, and the patrician Metaphrastes." His mother church has thrown her mantle over them, by borrowing from them all for her own peculiar book, her own corrected work, the task-book of all her clergy. He must remember that the *weaknesses* for which he implores the benefit of oblivion are

* I believe that these stories are much circulated among the Roman Catholics of these kingdoms in the shape of popular pamphlets. I have not, however, been able to procure a copy, owing to the unwillingness of Roman Catholic booksellers to furnish unknown purchasers with a certain peculiar produce of their press. I had strong reasons to suspect the existence of this policy, when it was confirmed to me by the personal experience of a clerical friend.

no longer imputable to their original and ancient sources, but to the Popes who republished them at the Vatican, in 1631; to the church which, with one accordant voice, repeats them to the faithful of all climates and languages.

It were well, however, for the happiness and virtue of the spiritual subjects of Rome, if their church had sanctioned *weaknesses* only—absurdities which degrade the understanding—and had left the rules of Christian conduct undisturbed. But the Breviary is not more absurd in matters of fact than depraved in the views of moral perfection which it disseminates. I will not, however, dwell long upon this topic, since the attachment of the church of Rome to *monastic* virtue has at all times betrayed her distorted views of evangelical perfection. The specimens which I am about to select from the multitude of her saintly models, are not intended to convict her of errors which she glories in, but to impress their consequences on those that seldom or never dwell upon these important topics. As I cannot separate, in these specimens, what strictly belongs to the subject on which I am going to touch,

from the miraculous ornaments with which these legends are crowded, I beg you to keep this in mind, that the progress and course of my argument may be perceived.

Whatever may be the freedom which Rome allows in the belief or rejection of her miracles—whatever be the unfairness of asserting and propagating absurdities, under the excuse that no force is employed to ensure their reception—whether the church that sanctions and uses the Breviary believes the accounts it contains, or secretly smiles at the credulity of those who credit them; it might be hoped that the models proposed for imitation would have been safe in regard of Christian practice. This is certainly not the case. There is, indeed, in most of the Roman Catholic saints, much of that benevolent spirit of the Gospel, which must always be found in every heart which opens itself to the divine influence of its leading truths; but Christian charity is in them so mixed with substantial and pervading errors, that it is seldom unproductive of evil.

The first noxious ingredient which poisons charity in the Roman Catholic system of sanctity, is

intolerance. The seeds of this bitter plant are, indeed, inseparable from a hearty reception of her doctrines, as I have proved before ; but its mature fruit, persecution, is praised among the virtues of saints whose circumstances enabled them to use force against pagans or heretics. Thus, in the life of Canute the Dane, his donations to the church are hardly more commended than the zeal with which he conquered the barbarians, with the purpose of making them Christians*. St. Ferdinand, King of Castile, is represented as an eminent sample of that peculiar Roman Catholic virtue, which visits dissent from the faith of Rome with the mild correctives of sword and fire. “ In alliance with the cares of government, the regal virtues (says the Breviary) shone in him—magnanimity, clemency, justice, and, above all, zeal for the Catholic faith, and an ardent determination to defend and propagate its worship. This he performed, in the first place, by persecuting heretics,

* “ Religioni promovendæ sedulo incumbens, ecclesias redditibus augere, et pretiosa suppellectili ornare cœpit. Tum zelo propagandæ fidei succensus, barbara regna justo certamine aggressus, devictas, subditasque nationes Christianæ fidei subjugavit.” Dic 19 Januarii.

to whom he allowed no repose in any part of his kingdom; and for whose execution, when condemned to be burnt, he used to carry the wood with his own hands *." Who then shall be surprised to find inquisitors canonized by Rome, or to hear her addressing a daily prayer to the great and merciful Father of mankind, "that he would be pleased to bruise, by the power of his right hand, all pagan and heretical nations?" Such are the words which Rome puts in the mouth of every Spanish priest who celebrates high mass †.

The power of persecuting others, upon the grand scale, which the church of Rome exalts into a kingly virtue, is given but to very few among

* "In eo, adjunctis regni curis, regię virtutes emicuere, magnanimitas, clementia, justitia, et præ cæteris Catholicę Fidei zelus, ejusque religiosi cultus propagandi ardens studium. Id præstitit in primis hæreticos insectando, quos nulli regnorum suorum consistere passus, propriis ipse manibus ligna comburendis damnatis ad rogam, advehebat." Propria SS. Hispan. Die 30 Maii.

† The concluding collect contains a prayer for the Pope in the first, for the bishop of the diocess in the second, and for the royal family in the third place; it then proceeds to pray for peace and health, and concludes, "*et ab ecclesia tua cunctam repelle nequitiam, ET GENTES PAGANORUM ET HÆRETICORUM DEXTERÆ TUE POTENTIA CONTERANTUR,*" &c. &c.

mankind : whilst every individual may be made his own tormentor by adopting the practices which that church represents as the means to arrive at Christian perfection. Zeal and sincerity are equally dangerous under the tuition of Rome. The Catholic nunneries rob society of the most amiable and virtuous female minds—those who, in the practice of social duties, would be a blessing to their relatives and friends, and patterns of virtue to the community—to make their lives, at the best, a perpetual succession of toilsome and useless practices. The quiet and sober-minded are made the slaves of outward ceremonies ; the ardent and sensitive are doomed to enthusiasm or madness. Such are the invariable results of the model which Rome presents them daily for imitation.

The love of external ceremonies is notorious in the Roman Catholic church ; but few, even among the persons whom I address, will probably have given a distinct and separate consideration to the special models, by which their church sanctions and recommends this peculiar manner of sanctity. Let them, therefore, conceive themselves as con-

temporaries of Saint Patrick, and imagine they see him pursuing the regular and daily employment of his time. The holy saint rises before daylight, and, under the snows and rains of a northern winter, begins his usual task of praying *one hundred* times in a day, and again *one hundred* times in the night. Such, the Breviary informs us, was his daily practice, while still a layman and a slave. When raised to the see of Armagh, his activity in the external practice of prayer appears quite prodigious. In the first place he repeated, daily, the one hundred and fifty psalms of the Psalter, with a collection of canticles and hymns, and two hundred collects. The two hundred genuflexions of his youth were now increased to three hundred. The ecclesiastical day being divided into eight canonical hours, and each of these having one hundred blessings with the sign of the cross allotted by Saint Patrick, his right hand must have performed that motion *eight hundred times* a day. After this distracting stir and hurry, the night brought but little repose to the saint. He divided it into three portions: in the first he recited *one hundred* psalms, and knelt

two hundred times; during the second he stood immersed in cold water, repeating *fifty* psalms more, “with his heart, eyes, and hands raised towards heaven;” the third he gave up to sleep, upon a stone pavement*. Imagine to yourselves, I again request, the patron saint of Ireland, not as an ideal and indistinct personage of legend; but as a real man of flesh and blood. Depict, in the vivid colours of fancy, the bustle, the perpetual motion, the eternal gabbling, the plunging into water for prayer, the waving of the hands for benedictions, the constant falling upon the knees, the stretching of hands, the turning up of eyes, required for the ascetic practices of his life; and then repeat the memorable words of our Saviour—*The hour*

* “Antelucano tempore per nives, gelu, ac pluvias ad preces Deo fundendas, impiger consurgebat; solitus centies interdium, centiesque noctu Deum orare... Aiunt enim integrum quotidie Psalterium, una cum canticis et hymnis, ducentisque orationibus consuevisse recitare: ter centies per dies singulos flexis genibus Deum adorare, ac in qualibet Hora Canonica, centies se crucis signo munire. Noctem tria in spatia distribuens, primum in centum psalmis percurrendis, et bis centies genuflectendo, alterum in reliquis quinquaginta psalmis, algidis aquis immersus, ac corde, oculis, manibusque ad cœlum erectus, absolvendis insumebat: tertium vero super nudum lapidem stratus, tenui dabat quieti.” Die 17 Martii.

cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father, in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth *. Compare the sublime simplicity of this description of Christian piety, with the models which your church sets before you; and tell me whether they agree. I will not dispute whether the list of devotional practices attributed to Saint Patrick, be authentic or fictitious, accurate or exaggerated. The church of Rome would not have recorded it in her authorized book of spiritual instruction, if, in her opinion, it did not exalt the piety of her saint. The worthies of the Breviary, whether sketched from nature or pictured from fancy, must be a faithful transcript of Rome's ideal models of Christian perfection. The practices attributed to Saint Patrick are, therefore, made an object of imitation to all the sons of the church of Rome, according to their strength and circumstances; and the principle that such practices are a part of Evangelical virtue, will not be

* John iv. 23, 24.

questioned by a sincere Roman Catholic. Indeed, among the saints of the Breviary, most will be found commended for similar practices ; and not a book of devotion, by writers of that communion, exists, which does not represent some bodily exercise or distortion as an effectual method of pleasing God*.

All this, however, is intimately connected with the Roman Catholic notions on penance—a subject which well deserves the dispassionate consideration of every impartial member of that communion.

* The least morose of all Roman Catholic saints, Saint Francis de Sales, though not carrying these practices to the degree usual among professed saints, strongly recommends this kind of spiritual gymnastics to his friends. The following are his directions to a gentleman “*qui vouloit se retirer du monde.*”

“ Je vous conseille de pratiquer ces exercices pour ces trois mois suivans . . . que vous vous leviez toujours à six heures matin, soit que vous ayez bien dormi, ou mal dormi, pourvu que vous ne soyez pas malade (car alors il faut condescendre au mal) et pour faire quelque chose de plus les vendredis, vous vous leviez à cinq heures . . . Item, que vous vous accoutumiez à dire tous les jours, après ou devant l’oraison, quinze *Pater noster* et quinze *Ave Maria*, les bras étendus en guise de crucifix . . . Encore, voudrois-je quelquefois la semaine vous couchassiez vêtu . . . et ces jours-là de fête, vous pourrez bien visiter par manière d’exercice les lieux saints des capucins, S. Bernard, les Chartreux.”—Lettres de Saint Francois de Sales.

If it be once settled that self-inflicted suffering is, by itself, a virtue ; the progress between a simple fast and the tortures voluntarily endured by the Indian fanatics, is natural and unbroken. The practice of Roman Catholic saints approaches very nearly indeed to that of the Eastern worshippers of the Evil Principle. Open the Breviary at any of the pages containing the lives of saints, males or females, and you will find uninterrupted abstinence from food (whether real or not, certainly held out to admiration, and sanctioned by the assertion of miracles in its favour) since Ash Wednesday till Whitsunday* : living one half of the year on bread and water † : confinement for four years to a niche excavated in a rock ‡ ; and every where the constant use of flagellation, lacerating bandages, and iron chains bound constantly about the body, immersions in freezing water, and every method of gradually and painfully destroying life. The Roman Catholics will talk of penance *in modera-*

* Life of St. Catharine of Siena.

† St. Elizabeth of Portugal.

‡ The blessed Dalmatius Monerius, in the Propria SS. Hispan.

tion ; but where is the line drawn—where, indeed, can it be drawn, to mark the beginning of excess? Must I again revive the memory of the victims whom I have seen perish in their youth, from the absolute impossibility of moderating the enthusiasm which their church thus encourages? It is chiefly among the tender and delicate of the female sex, that the full effects of these examples are seen. How can a confessor prescribe limits to the zeal of an ardent mind, which is taught to please God by tormenting a frail body? Teach an enthusiastic female that self-inflicted death will endear her to her heavenly bridegroom, and she will press the rope or the knife to her lips. Distant danger is lighter than a feather to hearts once swollen with the insane affections of religious enthusiasm. Talk to them about the duty of preserving life, and they will smile at the good-natured casuistry, which would moderate their pursuit of a more noble and more disinterested duty—that of loving their God above their own lives. Their church has, besides, practically dispensed with the duty of self-preservation in favour of penance. Does not the young victim read of her model

Saint Theresa, that “ her ardour in punishing the body was so vehement as to make her use hair-shirts, chains, nettles, scourges, and even to roll herself among thorns, regardless of a diseased constitution ?”—Is she not told that St. Rose, “ from a desire to imitate St. Catharine *, wore, day and night, three folds of an iron chain round her waist ; a belt set with small needles, and an iron crown armed inside with points ? That she made to herself a bed of the unpolished trunks of trees, and that she filled up the interstices with pieces of broken pottery ?” She did all this in spite of her “ tortures from sickness,” and by this means she obtained the frequent visits of saints and angels ; and heard Christ himself uttering the words, “ *Rose of my heart, be thou my bride.*” Can the poor, weak, visionary recluse doubt the reality of scenes attested by her church, or question the lawfulness of slow self-murder, supported by the brightest of her commended models † ?

* Observe the effect of the proposed models. The Breviary records a number of similar imitations : every one acquainted with Roman Catholics must have seen them repeated every day.

† St. Theresa. . . . “ Per duodeviginti annos gravissimis morbis et variis tentationibus vexata, constantissimè meruit

The only rational principle which can regulate self-denial, and give it the stamp of a Christian virtue, would condemn the whole of the monkish system at once: Rome, therefore, cannot, will

in castris Christianæ pœnitentiæ. . . Infidelium et hæreticorum tenebras perpetuis deflebat lacrymis, atque ad placandam divinæ ultionis iram, voluntarios proprii corporis cruciatus Deo, pro eorum salute dicabat. . . Tam anxio castigandi corporis desiderio æstuabat, ut quamvis secus suaderent morbi, quibus afflictabatur, corpus ciliciis, catenis, urticarum manipulis, aliisque asperrimis flagellis sæpe cruciaret, et aliquando inter spinas volutaret, sic Deum alloqui solita: ‘ Domine, aut pati aut mori’. . . Ei morienti adesse visus est inter angelorum agmina Christus Jesus: et arbor arida cellæ proxima statim effloruit.” Die 15 Octobris.

St. Rose of Lima. . . “ Oblongo asperrimoque cilicio sparsim minusculas acus intexuit; sub velo coronam densis aculeis introrsus obarmatam, interdium noctuque gestavit. Sanctæ Catharinæ Senensis ardua premens vestigia, catenâ ferreâ, triplici nexu circumductâ, lumbos cinxit. Lectulum sibi è truncis nodosis composuit, horumque vacuas commissuras fragminibus testarum implevit. Cellulam sibi angustissimam struxit in extremo horti angulo, ubi cælestium contemplationi dedita, crebris disciplinis, inediâ, vigiliis corpusculum extenuans, at spiritu vegeta, larvas dæmonum frequenti certamine victrix, impavidè protrivit ac superavit. . . Exinde cœpit supernis abundare deliciis, illustrari visionibus, colliquescere Seraphicis ardoribus. Angelo tutelari, sanctæ Catharinæ Senensi, Virgini Deiparæ inter assiduas apparitiones mirè familiaris, a Christo has voces audire meruit: ‘ Rosa cordis mei, tu mihi sponsa esto.’ ” Die 30 Augusti.

not admit it. Make the good of mankind the only ground for voluntary endurance of pain; make the habit of rational self-denial (without which extensive usefulness is impossible) the object of certain slight privations, used as a discipline of mind and body; and a convent assumes the character of a mad-house. Penance is, consequently, erected into an independent virtue, and saints are made to appear after death, in glory, to proclaim the Indian doctrine of heavenly enjoyments purchased by bodily sufferings*.

The models which Rome presents for imitation, are not more removed from the spiritual simplicity of the Gospel, than they are from that soberness of devotional feeling which pervades the whole of the New Testament. Read the accounts of saints who have lived since the beginning of the sixteenth century; and, whether male or female, you will find a *sentimentality* of devotion, a suspicious kind of tenderness, which from time to time, has alarmed the truly sincere sons of Rome,

* St. Peter of Alcantara is said to have appeared after death to St. Theresa, and exclaimed: *O felix pœnitentia, quæ tantam mihi promeruit gloriam!* Die 31 Octobris.

under the grossest shape of devotional sensuality. There is, I am aware, a distinction between the raptures of St. Theresa, and the ecstatic reveries of the quietists; but on reading her own account of her feelings, and hearing the description which the church of Rome gives of her visions, it is impossible not to observe that both have some moral elements in common. The picture of St. Theresa fainting under the wound which an angel inflicts on her heart with a fiery spear, were it not for the nun's weeds worn by the principal figure, might easily be mistaken for a votive tablet intended for some heathen temple: and her dying "rather of love than disease" is more worthy of a novel of doubtful tendency, than of a collection of lives prepared by a Christian church, to exemplify the moral effects of the Gospel*.

* "Tanto autem divini amoris incendio cor ejus conflagravit, ut merito viderit angelum ignito jaculo sibi præcordia transverberantem; et audierit Christum datâ dexterâ dicentem sibi: 'Deinceps ut vera sponsa meum zelabis honorem.'"—(I cannot venture any remarks on the apposition of these emblems.) "Intolerabili igitur divini amoris incendio potius, quam vi morbi... sub columbæ specie purissimum animum Deo reddidit." Ubi supra.—I must observe, without however insinuating any thing more than the dangerous

Does the Breviary produce effects analogous to the character of its contents, and commensurate to the extent of the use of it by the Roman Catholics? Does it everywhere degrade faith into credulity, and devotion into sentimentality? That it does so among Roman Catholics, in Italy, in Spain, in Portugal, and in all other countries where the religion of Rome predominates, is a matter of general notoriety. It would afford an additional praise of the reformed religion, if it could be proved that the Roman Catholics of Great Britain and Ireland, had been preserved from the injurious effects which the *true* book of their church has so widely produced among their foreign brethren. It is possible that the class of Roman Catholics to whom I have addressed myself in these letters, and who alone are likely to read them, have never since their childhood ex-
nature of this kind of devotion, that in male saints it generally has the Virgin for its object. The life of St. Bernard contains descriptions of visions, which would be unfit for the eye of the public in any other book. Hagiography, however, gives great liberty both to writers and painters. The picture of the vision I allude to, I have seen in a convent of Cistercian Nuns. The Breviary, however, omits the story which forms its subject.

mined the devotional books published in England for the use of the *sincerely pious* among them. If they should be well acquainted with such books, they will not require any further proof of the perfect agreement between the minds and feelings of such persons, and those which I have instanced from the Breviary. Such as may have forgotten the character of their devotional books would do well to re-peruse them. I will, however, in the mean time, give one or two specimens, from the TWELFTH London edition, of the DEVOTION AND OFFICE OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS*. I have so much exceeded the length which I proposed to give this letter, that I will not detain my readers much longer upon this subject.

The *ostensible* Roman Catholics of England, I mean such as appear in the character of specimens of their religious communion, are so dexterous in the use of theological distinctions, so practised in the pious work of throwing a cloak over the nakedness of their spiritual parent, that the Protestant public

* Extracts from this book will be found in an Appendix after the Notes to these Letters,

will hardly expect to find the following rule of belief, upon matters not strictly of dogmatic faith, prevalent among the pious and sincere Roman Catholics of these realms. The rule applies to the subject of revelations and miracles, such as the Roman Church records in her Breviary.

“ The public is in possession of many writings of holy women, who have yielded to advice and obeyed their spiritual directors. They contain an account of many revelations, celestial visions, and other extraordinary graces, which they have received from God. Now I reason thus: either these writings were penned by the saints, or they were not. If they were, either they designedly published a falsehood, or were themselves deluded, and have given us idle dreams. Will you suppose that they were not the real authors of these works? You shock every idea of reason and common sense. The man who will venture to deny that St. Theresa wrote her life, may doubt of her existence. But you will say she was deluded, and her imagination deluded all she wrote. The delusion must be the work of the evil spirit, which no Catholic can believe to have had any

power over the chaste spouse of Jesus Christ, canonized by the church. If imagination prevailed, it is true she was not a hypocrite, but a fool. *I shudder at the thought of so impious, so groundless an imputation.* Who can believe that these saints lived in a perpetual aberration of mind? I say perpetual, for we are not here treating of transient acts, which lasted a few hours or days, or even during certain periods of life, but the duration of which is measured by the whole extent of their existence*.” I know this argument to be unanswerable upon the principles of a sincere Roman Catholic; and cannot but feel pained to see that it must have weight with millions of Britons. Such is the genuine work of Rome among the most thinking people of Europe! Strange that a set of Italian priests should have it in their power thus to emasculate understandings, which claim kindred with Locke, Napier, and Berkeley!

Nor is their power less effectual in rendering Christian devotion in these kingdoms as childish,

* Page 70.

disgusting, and contemptible as it appears in the worst pages of the Breviary. I have at this moment before me an *Angelical Exercise*, which the same English Manual of Devotion recommends in the following terms: "Whosoever is devoted to this exercise in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary, in reading over every point, may meditate upon it for the space of one *Hail Mary*, or more, and by God's grace, he will in a short time find himself greatly increase in love towards that blessed queen of Heaven; and at the hour of death will, by so pious a mother, be received as her dearest child. Nor can such a one, according to St. Anselm and St. Bernard, possibly perish, but shall find life everlasting, and taste of the joys of eternal bliss*."

Under these assurances the devout Roman Catholic is urged to peruse a series of questions, as from the Virgin Mary, and give his own answers, in the words which the book suggests. I select the *Exercise for Monday* as a specimen, not be-

* Page 275.

cause its tone of devotion is more puerile than the rest, but as containing a fresh and striking proof of the indefatigable industry of Roman Catholic priests, in entrapping young people to take the dangerous vow of perpetual celibacy.

“ I am the Queen of Virgins, *Regina Virginum*, says the glorious Mother of God. Will you, my dear child, remain a virgin all your life, and live, as it were, an angel in flesh, as did my dearly beloved son Aloysius Gonzaga, St. Agnes, St. Catherine, and a thousand others, my devoted children, who have rather chosen to lose their lives than their virginity? I will love you as I have loved them, and cherish you as I cherish the angels, and, if it be possible, more than the angels themselves; and moreover, my child, I will obtain your name shall be written in the book of the blessed; and assure you, with a heart truly maternal, that at your death you will wish you had been the most chaste and holy in the world. Think well upon it, and resolve the best. Hail Mary!”

“ Yes, my most dear Mother! I desire to be pure all my life, as well in body as soul: I

do, I say, most humbly desire it, and most earnestly beseech you, dear Lady, to obtain for me that which you so much recommend to me. I do here, prostrate, reverence you, O sacred Virgin Mary, Mother of the Word incarnate! and together with the holy thrones and all celestial spirits, ever bless and praise you infinitely, the Morning Star, *Stella Matutina*; for that you, the most beautiful of all creatures, were the first that did vow perpetual chastity, preparing the way to so many virginal souls which have already followed, and shall hereafter follow you in so high, so glorious, and so divine an enterprise.—Hail Mary!”

In the name of the Father of Spirits, “whose eyes are upon the truth,” I entreat such as love the Author of our common faith, more than the name of a religious party, not to efface the impression of shame which these passages must produce, by the usual method of recrimination. I protest before Heaven, that neither through these quotations, nor by any expression which in the course of this work may have flowed from my

feelings, it has been my purpose to hurt yours. Remember, that whatever absurdities you might glean from Protestant writers, cannot affect a church whose authorised articles of faith and form of prayer, have nothing in common with such aberrations from common sense and the Gospel. Observe, on the other hand, how naturally the credulity and dangerous sentimentality with which your *pious books* abound, flow from the system of Rome, exhibited in her *prayer-book*, as well as in her whole conduct in regard to miracles and devotional practices. Remark the activity and watchfulness with which she has at all times persecuted all kinds of books, wherein the least insinuation was thrown out, not against her articles of faith, but even the least part of this her deluding system. Compare it with the supine indifference which she exhibits in giving free course to thousands of books which, at this very day, propagate every thing that can degrade the understanding and enfeeble the mind, under the name of piety. When you have candidly and honestly weighed all this, decide with yourselves, if it be not the part of every

ingenuous and liberal Catholic of these kingdoms, to strike out the *Roman* from his religious denomination, and place in its stead the noble epithet of Christian? Preserve, with God's blessing, so much of your tenets as may appear to you consistent with his word; but disown a church which, by her miracles, libels the Gospel history with imposture; and whose mawkish piety disfigures the sublime Christian worship into drivelling imbecility.

NOTES.

A.—Page 10.

“Wherever the religion of Rome reigns absolute, there is but one step between it and complete infidelity.”

A DIVINE of great eminence has observed to me, that this important position demands proof and elucidation.—I am most willing to defer to his judgment; though nothing is so difficult as reducing to theory the daily experience of life. I have stated as a general fact what I have seen invariably happen in my native country; what all inhabitants of Roman Catholic countries, in every part of the world, with whom I have become acquainted in the course of my life, have confirmed to me, both as witnesses and as instances. I hope I can give good reasons, and probable explanations of this moral phenomenon; but, to a mind deeply impressed by the *experience* of the fact, they must all appear tame and lifeless. As I cannot, however, communicate the impressions themselves, I request, that in case my *theory* should appear unsatisfactory, it may not be allowed to weaken my *testimony*.

The tendency of Roman Catholic Christianity to produce complete and sudden infidelity arises, in the first place, from its *exclusiveness*. A Romanist is, from infancy, taught, as an article of faith, that Popery and Christianity are iden-

tical. He must therefore be prepared to reject the Gospel revelation, the moment he shall find cause to reject Popery.

A Roman Catholic is also taught to believe in the *infallibility of the church* as an *essential* part of Christianity. He must therefore reject Christianity, upon being convinced of the existence of a single error in his church's creed.

But, it will be asked, why do not Roman Catholics, in countries where Romanism reigns supreme, doubt and examine those two articles, before they reject the whole system of Christianity?—I answer, because those two articles are impressed upon their minds above all others. *I believe whatever the Holy Roman Church believes*, is made to be the compendious creed of the Romanist. This implicit acquiescence, this faith by proxy, dispenses from all thought, all reading, all attention. The very common aversion of the understanding to abstract subjects, is cherished by this short-creed; a load of care and trouble is thus thrown off the mind, and all apprehensions from the want of *faith*, vanish at the comfortable recollection, that the church is believing mightily for her children. The mass of Romanists are, on this point, like the good Tartar tribes, who employ praying-machines; a kind of little windmills which whirl their written prayers in the face of heaven. The church is a *Faith-engine* for the Roman Catholic. Now, suppose a young Tartar, in the practice of setting up daily his praying-machine, grows intimately acquainted with an European traveller, who indulges his wit at the expense of the devout contrivance:—Can you expect that, when the force of ridicule or reason shall induce him to destroy his whirl, he will sit down to inquire into the necessity of prayer, and the right mode of performing it? No more will the young Spaniard (I say Spaniard, because I know them best), when Voltaire has made him heartily laugh at popes, saints, monks, and miracles, undertake a long and laborious study, to distinguish Christianity from Popery.

The more I reflect upon the popular customs and feelings of Spain, the more clearly I perceive the bitter roots of unbelief which Rome has twined, as it were, round the very heart of the country, in the bonds with which she has secured it to herself. The Inquisition has indissolubly connected, in the popular mind, the ideas of absurdity, confusion, immorality, and disgrace, with that of heresy. The language preserves proverbial expressions, denoting a complete misrule, in the names of *Geneva* and *Leghorn**; the first, as the best known school and shelter of the unfortunate Spanish Calvinists of the seventeenth century; the second, from the scandal of its commercial toleration of different sects. The historical origin of these proverbs is now lost to the multitude; but the spirit which produced them remains. I well remember the difficulty I often experienced in the attempt to persuade Spaniards, not of the lowest description, that, in Protestant countries, the practice of all vice and debauchery was not open and free. To my assertions they objected the common expression, "*Alli cada qual vive en su ley*" (Every man lives there according to his own law); conveying the notion most industriously spread at all times by the agents of Rome, that a heretic does not deserve the name of Christian. With these rooted prejudices, and under the regular and established ignorance of the Bible, which the Romanist system encourages, how is it possible that the doubts of the bolder minds should be properly and exclusively directed to the false foundation on which Rome has fixed the Gospel? The last thing which discipline gives to the intellect, is the power and habit of discrimination; will that discrimination be expected in the Romanist school of religion, where men are most anxiously accustomed to see Christianity as a *whole*, a system which cannot exist but

* *Esto es una Ginebra: esto es una Liorna*, are, at this day, very common expressions to denote confusion.

by a miraculous kind of attraction, of which the Pope, with the church, is the centre? It is said that Henry IV. of France excused his change to the Romanist persuasion by the childish argument, that since both Protestants and Catholics agreed that salvation might be obtained in the church of Rome, whilst that church denied the benefits of redemption to Protestants; it was most prudent to embrace a faith the sufficiency of which was denied by no party*. The thorough-bred Romanist abroad, who finds an insuperable objection to any one article of the Papal creed, and is, consequently, forced to disbelieve the infallibility of his church, carries the calculating argument of the French king still farther. If (says he) the best of these two chances of salvation is grounded on clear error; if the infallibility on which I reposed, is a fiction, why should I trouble myself at all about religion?

I will not, however, fatigue the reader with speculations upon a matter of experience. I repeat, that, according to my own observation, the transition from Romanism to infidelity is sudden and violent. It is certainly so in Spain: if Roman Catholics, in countries where other forms of Christianity exist, are more disposed to pause and examine before they reject Christianity; they owe it to the political circumstances which check the effect of the Romanist principles in their minds. Rome, certainly, by her intolerant and exclusive spirit, by identifying herself with Christ, does every thing in her power to exclude from the minds of her members the idea of any spiritual advantage, except in a complete surrender of the understanding to her. According to her decisions, there is no salvation for such as would believe all her doctrines, but not upon her own authority. What is this but teaching men, that if they leave the Pope,

* Jeremy Taylor has exposed with admirable strength of reasoning the absurdity of this calculation of chances, in the 2nd Part of his *Dissuasive from Popery*.

it is a matter of indifference, in regard, at least, to the next world, whether they become Protestants or Atheists?

B.—Page 32.

THOUGH it is impossible that Mr. Southey can omit to take notice of the strange charge which his antagonist makes against him, respecting a passage of Paulus Emilius Veronensis, Mr. Butler's hallucination is so extraordinary on this point, that I must expose it as a general caution to my readers.

The passage relates to some deputies of the city of Palermo, who came to implore the Pope's mercy in behalf of their fellow-citizens. I will copy both the Latin words and the translation of them from Mr. B.'s Book of the R. C. Church, pp. 131 and 132, first edition.

“Cum apud Pontificem de hac consternatione ageretur, a Panormitanis missos ad eum oratores, viros sanctos, qui ad pedes illius strati, VELUT pro arâ hostiâque, CHRISTUM AGNUM DEI SALUTANTES illa etiam ex altaris mysteriis verba supplices effarentur—‘ Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nostri:—Qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nostri:—Qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.’ Pontificem respondisse, Panormitanos agere quod fecissent, qui, cum Christum pulsarent, eundem regem Judæorum salutabant, re hostes, fando salvere jubentes.”

Mr. Butler thus translates the passage:—

“The city of Palermo having grievously offended the Pope sent some holy men to him as ambassadors, who prostrated themselves at his feet, AND SALUTED CHRIST THE LAMB OF GOD, as before an altar and the blessed sacrament, and suppliantly pronounced the mystic words of

the altar, 'Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us! Who takest away the sins of the world, give us peace!' The Pope replied by telling them, that they acted like those who, after they had struck Christ, saluted him King of the Jews; that in reality they were his enemies, although in these words they wished him health."

This translation makes the transaction quite unintelligible. The ambassadors SALUTED CHRIST, and yet the Pope, taking the salutation to himself, accuses them of being his enemies in reality, though in the words they had used they wished him health. The fact is, that a school-boy that can construe the *Selecta è Profanis* would be able to clear the difficulty at once. Had Mr. Butler taken notice of the *VELUT*, which qualifies the whole of the next sentence, and the *ETIAM*, which applies to the words taken from the Mass, he would have perceived his mistake. But he drew the attention of the readers to the *Christum agnum Dei salutantes* by means of a larger type, for fear of their stumbling on those two little words. Let, now, the public judge if the natural translation of the words be not as follows:—"Who being prostrate at his feet, AS IF they were saluting Christ the Lamb of God before the *ara* and the host, used EVEN those words from the mysteries of the altar, (i. e. the Mass), *Agnus Dei*," &c.

This translation ought to have been evident to a Roman Catholic, well acquainted with the ceremony to which the writer alludes. The priest, Mr. B. well knows, bending upon the *ara*, or consecrated slab of marble which lies in the centre of the altar, and looking on the consecrated host, smites his breast three times, using these very words, *Agnus Dei*, &c., and concluding with *dona nobis pacem*. Nothing, therefore, can be clearer, than that when the ambassadors used these words at the Pope's feet, they wished to address them to the Pope himself, of whom they came to ask *peace*.

Mr. B. asserts that the Pope *resiled* from the address. Why? If the words were directed to Christ, what fault could he find in them? He *resiled*, because he believed the ambassadors to be insincere in their professions towards him.

The whole mistake is so unaccountable, and the writer, by copying the original words, has made it so palpable, that it seems to stand in the book of the R. C. Church to warn the readers of the strong bias under which the author labours.

Since writing the preceding note, it has cost me no small trouble to find the passage quoted by Mr. Butler. If that gentleman took it from the original, he should have mentioned the edition. In that of Basle, 1601, the words in question are found at page 233: Mr. B. refers to page 328. I might have spared myself the trouble of a long and tedious search, but for a strong suspicion, grounded upon several instances of Mr. Butler's inaccuracy of quotation, that in his transcript of Paulus Æmilius's words there was an *additional comma*, just in the place where it may throw some ambiguity on the sense. And so I have found it. The original has *qui ad pedes illius strati, velut pro arâ hostiâque Christum agnum Dei salutantes*; evidently connecting the whole sentence with the particle of comparison *velut*. Mr. Butler, however, places a comma after *hostiâque*. It fortunately happens, however, that the rest of the passage betrays the original reading. I must add one word more to obviate a possible subterfuge of casuistry. Will it be possible that the figure of a semicolon used in old editions to denote the abbreviation of the *que*, in *hostiâq*; be pleaded in favour of Mr. Butler's punctuation? If such a defence should be

attempted, the reader must know, that, in the very same page, of the original work, a comma is placed after the mark of abbreviation, whenever the sense requires it. Thus, in the eighth line from the bottom, it is written, *per nefariam fraudem, furtumq; sed id atrocissimum, &c. &c.*

Soon after the publication of this work, my very kind friend, Mr. Southey, referred me to a passage in the history of the Council of Trent, by Sarpi, which puts the industrious error of Mr. Butler beyond all possibility of defence; and quite out of the reach of the most inveterate special pleading. On the twenty-ninth of March, 1546, a Congregation was held to prepare the decrees concerning the use of the Scripture: it was debated whether passages from the inspired books might be applied to profane subjects, as it was then a very general custom. That the scriptures should be used with reverence could not admit a question; but it was observed that a decree prohibiting all accommodation of texts to worldly subjects would be too strict and morose; for St. Antoninus in his history did not blame the Sicilian ambassadors, who, demanding pardon of Martin IV. in a public consistory, exposed their message in no other words but *Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis*, three times repeated: nor the Pope's answer, who repeated also three times: *Ave Rex Judæorum, et dabant ei alapas* *. I subjoin the original passage of St. Antoninus.—*Ibi etiam (in chronicis) narratur quod facta magna strage Gallicorum per Siculos, Panormitani cum aliis Siculis antequam rex Aragonum venisset eis in adiutorium, miserunt oratores suos, viros religiosos, ad summum Pontificem pro petenda venia, timentes iras Karoli. Et eorum oratio fuit hæc: Agnus Dei qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis, ter replicantes. Quibus in publico consistorio Papa re-*

* Sarpi Istoria del Concilio di Trento, lib. II. p. 165. Geneva, 1629.

spondit hæc solum: Ave Rex Judæorum, dixerunt Judæi Christo; et dabant ei alapas: ter et ipse hoc ipsum dicendo. Aliud responsum non habentes, abierunt contristati valde.—Tertia pars Hystorialis venerabilis domini Antonini, tit. xx. capit. III. § iii. fol. LXX. verso.—Lugduni, 1586.

C.—Page 35.

DEFINITION OF THE POPE'S AUTHORITY BY THE COUNCIL OF FLORENCE, IN THE TWO LANGUAGES USED IN THE ACTS OF THAT COUNCIL*.

Ἐπι ὀρίζομεν τὴν ἁγίαν ἀποστολικὴν καθέδραν, καὶ τὸν Ῥωμαϊκὸν ἀρχιερεᾶ, εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν οἰκουμένην το προτεῖον κατεχεῖν, αὐτὸν τε τὸν Ῥωμαϊκὸν ἀρχιερεᾶ διαδοχὸν εἶναι τοῦ μακαρίου Πέτρου τοῦ κορυφαίου τῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ ἀληθῆ τοποτηρητὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ πάσης τῆς ἐκκλησίας κεφαλὴν, καὶ πάντων τῶν Χριστιανῶν πατέρα καὶ διδάσκαλον ὑπαρχεῖν, καὶ αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ μακαρίῳ Πέτρῳ τοῦ ποιμαίνειν, καὶ διΐθυειν ἐξέσσαν παραδιδόσθαι, καθ' ὃν τρόπον, καὶ ἐν τοῖς πρακτικοῖς τῶν οἰκουμενικῶν συνοδῶν, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς κανοσὶ διαλαμβάνεται.

Item, definimus sanctam apostolicam sedem, et Romanum pontificem in universum orbem tenere primatum, et ipsum pontificem, Romanum successorem esse beati Petri principis apostolorum, et verum Christi vicarium, totiusque ecclesie caput, et omnium Christianorum patrem ac doctorem existere; et ipsi in beato Petro pascendi, regendi, ac gubernandi universalem ecclesiam a Domino nostro Jesu Christo plenam potestatem traditam esse; quemadmodum etiam in gestis œcumenicorum conciliorum, et in sacris canonibus continetur. *Labbe Concil.* tom. XIII. p. 515.

* Owing to the attempt at the union of the Greek Church with the Latin, the acts of this council were written in the languages of the two parties.

D.—Page 47.

BOSSUET'S OPINION TO JAMES II.

Sur la Déclaration du Roi d'Angleterre.

LA déclaration qu'on a demandé au Roi d'Angleterre en faveur de ses sujets Protestants, consiste principalement en deux points.

Le premier est que S. M. promette *de protéger et défendre l'Eglise Anglicane comme elle est présentement établie par les loix, et qu'elle assure aux membres d'icelle toutes leurs églises, universités, colleges, et écoles, avec leurs immunités, droits, et privilèges.*

Le second que sa dite Majesté promette aussi *qu'elle ne violera point le serment du Test, ni n'en dispensera point.*

J'ai répondu et je réponds que S. M. peut accorder sans difficulté ces deux articles.

Et pour entendre la raison de cette réponse, il ne faut que fixer le sens véritable de deux articles en question.

Le premier a deux parties : L'une de protéger et défendre l'Eglise Anglicane comme elle est présentement établie par les loix ; ce qui n'emporte autre chose que de laisser ces loix dans leur vigueur, et comme Roi les exécuter selon leur forme et teneur.

La conscience du Roi d'Angleterre n'est point blesée par cette partie de sa déclaration, puisque la protection et la défense qu'il y promet à l'Eglise Anglicane Protestante ne regarde que l'extérieur, et n'oblige S. M. à autre chose qu'à laisser cette prétendue Eglise dans l'état extérieur où il la trouve, sans troubler ni permettre qu'on l'y trouble.

Et pour décider cette question par principes ; il faut faire

grandé différence entre la protection qu'on donneroit à une Eglise par adhérence aux mauvais sentiments qu'elle professe et celle qu'on lui donne pour conserver à l'exterieur la tranquillité publique. Le premier genre de protection est mauvais parcequ'il a un mauvais principe, qui est l'adhérence à la fausseté : mais le second est très-bon parcequ'il a pour principe l'amour de la paix, et pour object une chose bonne et nécessaire, qui est le répos public.

Ceux qui traitent en cette occasion avec le Roi d'Angleterre ne lui demandent pas l'approbation de la Religion Anglicane, puisqu'au contraire ils le supposent Catholique, et traitent avec lui comme l'étant : Ils ne lui demandent donc qu'une protection royale, c'est-à-dire, une protection à l'exterieur, telle qu'elle convient à un Roi qui ne peut rien sur les consciences : et tout le monde demeure d'accord que cette protection est legitime et licite.

Les Rois de France ont bien donné par l'édit de Nantes une espèce de protection aux prétendus réformés, en les assurant contre les insultes de ceux qui les voudroient troubler dans leur exercice, et leur accordant des espèces de privilèges, où ils ordonnent à leurs officiers de les maintenir. On n'a pas cru que leur conscience fût intéressée dans ces concessions, tant qu'elles ont été jugées nécessaires pour le repos public, parceque c'étoit ce repos et non pas la religion prétendue réformée qui en étoit le motif. On peut dire à proportion la même chose du Roi d'Angleterre ; et s'il accorde de plus grands avantages à ses sujets Protestants, c'est que l'état où ils sont dans ses royaumes et le motif du répos public l'exige ainsi.

Aussi ceux qui trouvent à redire à cet endroit de l'article ne mettent-ils la difficulté qu'en ce qu'ils prétendent qu'il enferme une tacite promesse d'exécuter les loix pénales qui sont décernées par les parlements contre les Catholiques : parceque, disent-ils, les Protestants mettent dans ces loix pénales une partie de la protection qu'ils demandent pour l'Eglise Anglicane Protestante.

Mais les paroles dont se sert le Roi n'emportent rien de semblable; et il importe de bien comprendre comme parle cette déclaration: *Nous protégerons, dit-elle, et défendrons l'Eglise Anglicane comme elle est présentement établie par les loix.* Il ne s'agit donc que des principes constitutifs de cette prétendue Eglise en elle-même, et non pas des loix pénales par lesquelles elle prétendrait pouvoir repousser les religions qui lui sont opposées.

Ces principes constitutifs de la religion Anglicane selon les loix du pays sont, 1°. les prétendus articles de foi réglés sous la Reine Elisabeth; 2°. la liturgie approuvée par les parlements; 3°. les homélies ou instructions que les mêmes parlements ont autorisées.

On ne demande point au Roi qu'il se rende le promoteur de ces trois choses, mais seulement qu'à l'extérieur il leur laisse un libre cours pour le repos de ses sujets: ce qui suffit d'un côté pour maintenir ce qui constitue à l'extérieur l'Eglise Anglicane Protestante, et de l'autre ne blesse point la conscience du Roi.

Voilà donc à quoi il s'oblige par cette première partie du premier article de sa déclaration, la deuxième partie de l'article où il promet d'*assurer à l'Eglise Protestante et à ses membres leurs églises, etc.*, a encore moins de difficulté, et même elle tempère la première en réduisant manifestement la protection et la défense de l'Eglise Anglicane Protestante aux choses extérieures dont elle est en possession, et dans lesquelles le Roi promet seulement de ne souffrir point qu'on la trouble.

Le Roi est bien éloigné d'approuver par là l'usurpation des Eglises et des bénéfices; mais il promet seulement de ne point permettre que ceux qui les ont usurpés soient troublés par des voies de fait, parceque cela ne se pourroit faire sans ruiner la tranquillité de ses états.

A l'égard du serment du *Test*, qui fait le second article de la déclaration du Roi: Il n'oblige S. M. à autre chose sinon à exclure des charges publiques ceux qui refuseront de faire

un certain serment ; en quoi il n'y a point de difficulté puisqu'on peut vivre et humainement et chrétiennement sans avoir des charges.

Que si cela paroît rude aux Catholiques, ils doivent considérer l'état où ils sont, et la petite portion qu'ils composent du royaume d'Angleterre, ce qui les oblige à n'exiger pas de leur Roi des conditions impossibles, et au contraire à sacrifier tous les avantages dont ils se pourroient flatter vainement, au bien réel et solide d'avoir un Roi de leur religion et d'affermir sur le throne sa famille quoique Catholique, ce qui leur peut faire raisonnablement espérer, sinon d'abord, du moins dans la suite, l'entier rétablissement de l'Eglise et de la foi.

Que si on s'attache au contraire à vouloir faire la loi aux Protestants qui sont les maîtres, on perdra avec l'occasion de rétablir le Roi, non seulement tous les avantages qui sont attachés à ce rétablissement, mais encore tous les autres quels qu'ils soient, et on s'exposera à toutes sortes de maux, étant bien certain que si les rebelles viennent à bout selon leurs desires d'exclure tout à fait le Roi, ils ne garderont aucune mesure envers les Catholiques, et ne songeront qu'à assouvir la haine qu'ils leur portent.

Pour ces raisons je conclus, non seulement que le Roi a pu en conscience faire la déclaration dont il s'agit, mais encore qu'il y étoit obligé, parcequ'il doit faire ce qui est possible pour l'avantage de l'Eglise et de ses sujets Catholiques, auxquels rien ne peut-être meilleur dans la conjoncture présente que son rétablissement.

On doit même déjà regarder comme un grand avantage la déclaration qui fait S. M. *de recommander fortement à son parlement une impartiale liberté de conscience*, ce qui montre le zèle de ce Prince pour le repos de ses sujets Catholiques, et tout ensemble une favorable disposition pour eux dans ses sujets Protestants, qui acceptent sa déclaration.

Je dirai donc volontiers aux Catholiques, s'il y en a qui n'approuvent pas la déclaration dont il s'agit:—*Noli esse justus multum : neque plus sapias quam necesse est, ne obstupescas.* Ecc. vii. 17.

Je ne doute point que N. S. P. le Pape n'appuie le Roi d'Angleterre dans l'exécution d'une déclaration qui étoit si nécessaire, et ne juge bien des intentions d'un Prince qui a sacrifié trois royaumes, toute sa famille, et sa propre vie, à la religion Catholique. Je me soumet, néanmoins, de tout mon cœur, à la suprême décision de S. S.

Fait à Meaux, ce 22 May, 1693.

✠ J. Bénigne, E. de Meaux.

Mazure, Histoire de la Révolution de 1688, en Angleterre, tom. III. p. 382.

This opinion was to have been laid before the Pope through Cardinal de Janson Forbin, to whom both Bossuet and Lord Melfort wrote for that purpose. But neither the letters nor the opinion were forwarded to Rome by Louis XIV.

The postscript in Lord Melfort's own hand is very curious. The errors of language are scrupulously preserved.

“ Ce qu'il y a affaire n'est que pour EVITER LES CENSURES DE ROME, non pas pour faire examiner l'affaire, CE QU'IL FAUT EVITER, ET PRINCIPALEMENT LES CONGREGATIONS, ce que sa Majesté souhaite estant de satisfaire sa Sainteté en particulier des nécessités sous les quelles sa Majesté est tant à l'égard de son établissement que pour avoir la liberté de faire élever le Prince de Galles dans la religion Catholique, ce qui est un plus grand bien à la dit religion que aucun autre que puisse arriver. Il est aussi à considerer que sa Majesté a des assurances des principaux avec lesquelles elle a traité d'obtenir une liberté de conscience pour les Catholiques d'Angleterre, pourveu que sa Majesté ne le presse pas par son autorité, mais qu'il le

laisse au Parlement. En fin celle cy j'entends LA DECLARATION N'EST QUE POUR RENTRER, ET L'ON PEUT BEAUCOUP MIEUX DISPUTER DES AFFAIRES DES CATHOLIQUES A WHITEHALL QU'A ST. GERMAIN."—Ib. p. 390.

E.—Page 56.

ROME NEVER DOOMED HER OPPONENTS TO THE FLAMES
FOR THEIR ERRORS, BUT THEIR CONTUMACY.

THIS is a well-known fact to all who have examined the spirit, and even the letter, of the inquisitorial laws of Popedom. The case of John Huss is, however, so striking a proof of my assertion, that I must beg leave to refer the inquisitive reader to the account which Mosheim gives of that victim of Romanist ambition. The principal object of his invectives were the vices, not the errors, of Rome; and he rather opposed the tyranny of her ecclesiastical polity, than the unscriptural use of her pretended infallibility. It was because he did not submit to her *authority*, that Huss was committed to the flames; for, as I have observed in a previous note, a full conformity with the Romanist creed does not exempt from the imputation and punishment of heresy, unless it is the effect of unbounded submission to the authority of the church. Mosheim has made a most happy application to the conduct of Rome in such cases, of a passage in the well-known letter of Pliny to Trajan concerning the Christians.... "It became (says the learned historian) a dutiful son of the church to renounce his eye-sight, and to submit his own judgment and will, without any exception or reservation, to the judgment and will of that holy mother, under a firm belief and entire persuasion of the infallibility of all her decisions. This ghostly mother had, for many

ages past, followed, whenever her unerring perfection and authority were called in question, the rule which Pliny observed in his conduct towards the Christians: ‘When they persevered (says he in his letter to Trajan) I put my threats into execution, from a persuasion, that, whatever their confession might be, their audacious and invincible obstinacy deserved an exemplary punishment.’ Perseverantes duci jussi. Neque enim dubitabam, qualecumque esset quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri.” Plin. Epist. lib. 2. ep. 97.

F.—Page 62.

THE CASE OF THE REV. PETER GANDOLPHY, A LONDON
ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIEST.

THE mention of Mr. Gandolphy, in a marginal note to my 2d Letter, is so perfectly incidental, that, were it not because his case presents a most striking instance of the policy with which approbations and censures are suited to the interests of the Popish *kingdom of this world*; as well as a sample of the odious tyranny exercised by its hierarchy; it would be hardly necessary to correct my own misstatement, as to the non-condemnation by the Pope of Mr. G.’s work, or to vindicate my friend Mr. Croly, on whose work I grounded that assertion. The real fact is, that the book in question was first approved, at Rome, by legitimate authority; and subsequently condemned, on the urgent demands of the English Roman Catholics, whose political interests required the sacrifice of an unsuspecting divine, who had been Romishly orthodox, out of season. My information, on this curious case, is wholly drawn from a most useful and

important publication of the Rev. Arthur H. Kenney, D. D. entitled, *An Enquiry concerning some of the Doctrines maintained by the Church of Rome.* London, 1818. I shall only give a few extracts from the documents copied at large by Dr. Kenney, referring the reader to the publication itself, where he will find a great deal of interesting matter relative to the Roman Catholic tenets in general, and the peculiar views and principles of some leading divines of that communion in England.

To such as good-naturedly believe the entire unanimity, the matter-of-fact certainty with which the Roman Catholics assure us they are able to ascertain every doctrine of their oracular church, it will be a matter of surprise that a Roman Catholic divine, after devoting himself to the study of theology, with the decided purpose of giving a summary, not of his own views, but of the faith of his church; and having besides obtained for his work the encouragement of his own prelate, in England, and the *imprimatur* of the person appointed by the Pope himself to watch over the Roman press; may still find himself altogether in the wrong, and have to publish a recantation in order to be reinstated into the exercise of his priestly office, from which he had been suspended for his errors. That this, however, was literally the case of Mr. Gandolphy, the following proofs will evince.

In 1816, when the first part of Gandolphy's *Defence of the Ancient Faith* was printed, Dr. Douglas, Vicar Apostolic of the London District, bestowed a most flattering approbation on that work, "hoping that it was only a prelude to greater exertions; and rejoicing that he had one of his clergy qualified by his talents so ably to assert the cause of religion." * It happened, however, that before the conclusion

* Dr. Kenney's Enquiry, p. 34.

of Gandolphy's Defence, Dr. Poynter had succeeded to the *Apostolic Vicarage*, and that, when the whole of the work appeared, nine Romish clergymen (if we believe the author himself) formed a conspiracy against him, and contrived to make Dr. Poynter his enemy. The persecuted priest, conscious of the integrity of his views, and the orthodoxy of his doctrines, thought it worth the while to apply personally for protection to the Pope himself. "I declared (he says) it was my intention immediately to present the whole work to his Holiness, and to get it, together with the Prayer-book, well examined at Rome; and requested his lordship (Dr. Poynter) to read my act of submission, printed in the last page of the fourth volume, whereby I had engaged to correct and cancel every inaccurate expression. I was to leave London for Rome in the space of a week. Within three days however, Dr. Poynter was persuaded by Mr. Hodgson and Mr. Brampton, to send me a summary order to *suppress these entire works before I quitted England*; and at two subsequent interviews, wherein I offered to *correct, change, reprint, and cancel* whatever he pleased, *in the presence of those gentlemen*, he declared that I should forfeit my faculties, and even be interdicted from saying mass (*ipso facto*) if I travelled twenty miles from London without satisfying him. Neither my own honour, reputation, nor the great value of the work, pleaded with any effect; I submitted, expecting JUSTICE at Rome. Scarcely, however, was I out of London, when the same clergymen, of whom I have already spoken (in number about nine) entered heartily into Doctor Poynter's *plans of suppressing my works*."...At Rome *all examination* was opposed by their wily agent, Mr. Macpherson, and the absolute condemnation of the works demanded: nay, more, *the detention of the author within the precincts of the Inquisition*, was earnestly sought. Fortunately for the author, his character carried him through

every difficulty *at Rome*, and he returned with the approbations of his works, by the *proper authority*; that authority without whose approbation *the Pope himself cannot publish*.

Those approbations were given by two divines, to whom the Master of the Sacred Palace referred the works. Both the censors understood English, and one of them appears to have been an Irishman. The first asserts, that the author “has rendered the Articles of the Catholic Faith clearer than the light.” The second concludes by declaring his admiration of the talents, the erudition, the piety, &c. of this most distinguished and well deserving defender of religion, “and that multiplied editions of his work, so worthy to be cased in CEDAR and GOLD, will be profitable, and highly advantageous, to the Catholic Church*.” In consequence of these opinions, the Master of the Sacred Palace granted his *imprimatur*.

Poor Gandolphy, proud of his Roma approbations, hastened to England, in hopes of enjoying his triumph. But in the mean time, Cardinal Litta had been gained by the exertions of the English priest's opponents, who, fearing the consequences which, in the approaching debate on the Catholic question, his open statements of the Romish tenets might have; urged the necessity of some of those *prudential* measures in which Rome is well known to excel. The first, it seems, was that of making the Master of the Sacred Palace recal his *imprimatur*, and throw the blame on the censors. The good fathers, though long accustomed to obedience, felt hurt at this piece of tyranny. The master refused to comply, and one of the censors published a solemn certificate, out of which I shall content myself with copying this remarkable passage:—

“Moreover, as *anonymous* objections against the said works were afterwards handed to us—objections weak in

* Ib. p. 36 and 37.

themselves, but full of cavilling—I, the undersigned, in order to defend the honour and authority of the said Most Rev. Father, the Master of the Sacred Palace, and vindicate my own judgment on the sacred works, immediately drew up the answer, and presented it to the Master of the Sacred Palace, who *pronouncing the adversary confuted by the evidence I produced, again confirmed his former imprimatur*, giving notice of the same by letters to his Eminence Cardinal Litta, prefect of the Holy Congregation of Propaganda, to whom the undersigned also presented the same answer; and in a lengthened discourse with me, HIS EMINENCE ACKNOWLEDGED THE UNJUST PERSECUTION OF THE SAID AUTHOR, and promised to use all his endeavours to bring the adversaries to a reconciliation with him. But since the adversaries of the said author (through their agent in this city) have contrived by their artifices to gain over or frighten several into silence, so as to deter them from declaring the truth on this subject, as they are required—lest, therefore, the TRUTH should be suppressed or called in question, I have subscribed these letters, *written by the order of the Most Rev. Father the MASTER of the SACRED PALACE*, and have sealed them with the usual SEAL of my OFFICE, certifying solemnly to all, that the two works of the said Rev. Peter Gandolphy have, by *right* as well as by *merit*, obtained a FULL APPROBATION FROM THE HOLY SEE*.”

So it was declared by the Most Rev. “Peter Damiani, Conventual of the Order of St. Francis, Master of Sacred Theology, and Apostolical Penitentiary of his Holiness Pope Pius VII. at the Vatican Church, for the English Tongue;” and this his declaration was attested by three other Penitentiaries of the same rank. No wonder that Mr. Croly and myself should have asserted the same. But it really seems a very difficult matter to come at the truth, whenever it is the interest of Rome to disguise or conceal it. For we find

* Ib. p. 51.

Dr. Poynter asserting, in a *Pastoral* condemnation of Gandolphy, published a fortnight before the debate of the 9th May, 1817, on the Catholic Question, that the Cardinal Prefect of the Propaganda informed him that his approbations "were obtained in a clandestine manner, and that the Sacred Congregation, to which *our Missions* (*i. e.* the English Roman Catholic Clergy) are subject, had no part in them, and that one of the two persons who gave these approbations was commanded to write to the author, and to charge him not to dare to publish his works till the whole should be explained." *

The whole transaction is, indeed, a tissue of intrigues, evasions, and contradictions. It was, however, settled in the genuine style of Roman Catholic church government. Gandolphy, a man of a weak superstitious mind, was frightened by the censures of his bishop into a most abject, and, as it appears from the certainty of some facts, which he denies in general terms, a *false* recantation. Such a breach of truth, at the expense of a person's own character, if intended to hush the scandal which truth itself may have raised against the church; is an act of humility which a Roman Catholic of Gandolphy's temper would consider highly meritorious. To me this is no cause of surprise. But I cannot read without a smile the declaration of the good priest who having so innocently believed, that, in order to escape from the arbitrary injunction of his bishop, he had only to fly to the successor of St. Peter; finds himself bewildered at Rome; mistakes the mouth of the many-headed oracle, which *alone* could give a right answer in his case, and when the sweet sounds of approbation were still in his ears, is thunderstruck on his return to London, by another voice from the Capitol, which denounces him as a propounder and abettor of heresy, and leaves him in the hands of the bishop

* *Ib.* p. 56.

from whom he had fled. "Thank God! (exclaimed Mr. Gandolphy in October, 1816) I was at Rome, to keep my enemies in awe; but it is always much easier to slander than to justify. There, however, I did nothing unfairly. At the *Propaganda* I was informed, that the examination and approbation of books *was not within its department*. By the Rev. Mr. Macpherson also, I was told on my arrival at Rome, that he had received a letter from Dr. Poynter, stating, that, *were a decision favourable to my case given by the Propaganda, his Lordship would not abide by that sentence, but would appeal from it, and denounce my works to the INDEX**, a branch of the Inquisition. This is positively fact. In consequence of this communication, I had no reason to press my works on the Propaganda; and as I wished for nothing but what was fair and just towards Dr. Poynter, as well as towards the public and myself, I begged the POPE † to direct the *Index* to do what was right in the affair; and his Holiness immediately gave instructions to Cardinal Litta, Prefect of that Congregation. I also saw the Secretary of the *Holy Office*, and pressed the matter upon him. But *one* and *all* informed me, that the *Index* was not the authority for approving books, but rather for condemning propositions, and that a few inaccuracies of the press did not amount to a denunciation of *heresy* against my publication. On which, by a FORMAL MEMORIAL, which I have in my possession, I addressed myself to the MASTER of the SACRED APOSTOLICAL PALACE, whose *special* duty it is to examine and approve of *all writings* designed for the

* Yet it appears that this *Propaganda* is the peculiar authority which, according to Dr. Poynter, the Pope has set over the *English Missions*. At all events, one might be inclined to believe that that fraction of the Holy See knew which were the true doctrines it meant to *propagate*.

† Unfortunate man! He ought to have been told that the POPE was not the Pope he looked for, but a passive figure moved by the crowd of greedy *Eminentissimi* and *Monsignori*, who have his infallibility in their keeping.

public; and I requested, in the *usual form*, that he would depute *any number of divines* for the examination of these works. He immediately sent a written order to two, under whose written testimonies he inscribed his *official imprimatur*, which Mr. Macpherson, *seconded by every powerful influence in London*, has been since moving heaven and earth to get him to *rescind!* On this last attempt against me, my adversaries are at present calculating with no little anxiety.*

It is really melancholy to see the same man, after this fatiguing search for the true Pope, the oracular successor of St. Peter, obliged to publish the following statement of his fruitless exertions.

“ I, the undersigned, ardently wishing to be sincerely reconciled to my Prelate, the Right Rev. Lord Bishop of Halia, the Vicar Apostolic of London, do profess and declare, that I was by some persons led into the persuasion, that the approbation of my works entitled *Exposition of Liturgy, and Defence of the Ancient Faith*, which I obtained at Rome, from the Most Rev. Master of the Sacred Apostolic Palace, was *exactly* the same as the approbation of the Apostolic See; on the ground of which opinion, I thought that these works were undeservedly condemned and prohibited by my bishop, and on that account I opposed him. But I acknowledge that I was deceived, and that the approbation which I obtained, was not such as may be truly called the *supreme and definitive* approbation of the Holy See. For, in reality, sometimes works which have been published with the licence of the same Rev. Master, have been afterwards condemned and prohibited by a sentence of the Sacred Congregations. †”

Our bewildered divine was not aware that the Holy See is a kind of Proteus, which changes its shape as it suits the purposes of the court of Rome, or any other party who avail

* Ib. p. 46.

† Ib. p. 58.

themselves of that name to maintain their authority over the Romanists, all over the world. Mr. Gandolphy should have remembered that his Bishop had expressed a determination not to submit to the decision of the Congregation *de Propaganda*; most undoubtedly because, in his opinion, it was not the *supreme* and *definitive* decision of the Holy See. He might with equal right have declined the sentence of the *Index*. But Mr. G. seems to have been a straight-forward, guileless divine, who firmly believed in the reality of every thing his books told him about the *visible* centre of Catholic faith, so that he had only to take a journey to Rome, and come back, without a shadow of doubt as to the doctrines held there. What must have been his dismay when he found himself unable to distinguish the *supreme* and *definitive* decision, from those *experimental* definitions which may be set aside!

But I might have saved him a great deal of trouble and anxiety, by a golden rule of my own, which will never deceive any man, who, among a heap of Romish decrees, wishes to find the *supreme* and *definitive*—See what will best suit the interests of Rome, and that is the *supreme* decision.

I must observe, before I conclude this long note, that the charges made against Gandolphy's book at Rome were, in general, *that his doctrines were too accommodating* to Protestants. So that, after all, the book was not prohibited for exaggerating the Romish tenets*.

However this may be, the *Congregation* of the *Index* having clearly understood that the circulation of Mr. Gandolphy's book was unfavourable to the interest of the Romish Church in Great Britain and Ireland, fulminated its censure in the Appendix to the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, published at Rome in 1819, against the *Defence of the Ancient Faith, &c. &c.* “Una cum testificatione seu epistola quadam

* See Dr. Kenney's Remarks, p. 57.

alterius auctoris (qui tamen eandem epistolam deinde *laudabiliter* retractavit) sive conjunctim, sive seorsim impressa, quæ incipit *Omnibus et singulis*, &c. Anglice et Latine scripta, et Romæ data 13 Novembris, 1816, in qua temere et falso asseritur, dicta opera, amplam approbationem a Sede Apostolica obtinuisse."

It is thus that the Holy See is secured against error—practical error against herself. In the first place, she employs *fallible* divines on whom to lay the blame of any slip in matters which it is not easy to foresee how it would be best to define them. A *congregation* may then correct the mistake; and if the divines, in a fit of galled pride, speak out, nothing is easier than to *laud* them for calling themselves *liars*, or to clap them into the Holy Inquisition for their impudent wish of saving their honour at the expense of the church*.

That a poor enslaved Italian monk should submit to this degradation, is what might well be expected; but to see Mr. Gandolphy, an Englishman, so broken down by the Romish system of tyranny and superstition, as to dishonour himself under his own signature, where the law invited him to be free, and was ready to protect him against his ghostly oppressors; is a striking, though melancholy proof of the enslaving tendency of Romanism.

* The Rescript of Quarantotti, in 1813, presents another instance of the *oracular* economy of the Vatican. Quarantotti, the representative of the Pope, in full council of the most learned bishops and divines at Rome, approves the securities proposed in Mr. Grattan's bill, of 1813, as consistent with the doctrines and practice of the Church of Rome. The Irish Roman Catholics send a mission to the Pope; and Signor Quarantotti, his Council of Bishops, and his Rescript, are all unceremoniously condemned by the *Congregation de Propaganda*—that very same *Congregation* which the *Vicar Apostolic* of London was ready to defy, in case it should decide against him.

G.—Page 67.

ALPHONSO DE CASTRO, AND THE FOURTH COUNCIL OF
TOLEDO.

THE task of defending the Roman Catholic Church from the charge of intolerance and persecution, involves Mr. Butler in strange difficulties, and calls forth that light, skimming, glancing manner of arguing which distinguishes that writer, and must make him a great favourite with the fair readers of his party. I dislike historical more than any other controversy, and have purposely abstained in the preceding pages from every topic that could lead me into the labyrinth of contradictory authorities, where truth lies concealed, especially on points of ecclesiastical history. But as Mr. Butler has, by the way, discovered two hitherto unknown phenomena, a tolerant Spanish friar and a liberal Spanish Council, I, as a Spaniard, cannot pass these wonders unnoticed.

“It should not be forgotten,” says Mr. Butler *, “that Alphonsus de Castro, a Spanish friar and confessor to Philip, in a sermon preached before the court, condemned these proceedings (the sanguinary persecutions of Mary) in the most pointed manner, as contrary both to the text and the spirit of the gospel.” He said, “that it was not by severity, but by mildness, that men were to be brought into the fold of Christ; and that it was not the duty of bishops to seek the death, but to instruct the ignorance of their misguided brethren.”—“Many,” says Dr. Lingard, “were at a loss to account for the discourse; whether it was the spontaneous effort of the friar, or had been suggested to him by

* Page 203, 1st ed.

the policy of Philip, or by the humanity of Cardinal Pole, or by the repugnance of the bishops—it made however a deep impression. The preacher was afterwards advanced to a bishopric in Spain.”

This is a remarkable specimen of the art of weakening strong impressions by a crowd of new ones, vague, indefinite, and discordant. It is analogous (I beg my readers to pardon the homeliness of the illustration) to the mode in which rubbing and scratching in every direction, relieve some deep sensations of the skin. Four suppositions are suggested to account for the fact that a Spanish friar preached toleration in London under the sanguinary Mary. The reader, of course, will not stop to choose among them. He then finds that the sermon “made a deep impression,” and that the friar was advanced to a bishopric in Spain: the consequence is, that, whereas he formerly believed that Spanish friars were the most horrible persecutors, he must now suspend his judgment; and who knows, but he may feel inclined to think that the shortest cut to a Spanish bishopric is a sermon on toleration?

But who was this mild, goodnatured friar—this Alphonsus de Castro?

Nicholas Antonio, in his *Bibliotheca Hispana Nova*, gives a pretty long article about him, of which I will only copy the notice of one of this meek friar's works.

“*De justa Hæreticorum Punitione*, libri tres. Salmanticae, 1547. in fol. ex officina Joannis Giuntæ. Lugduni, 1556, in 8. apud hæredes Jacobi Junctæ. Antuerpiæ, apud Steelsii hæredes, 1568. in 8. *ut confirmaret justas esse omnes illas pœnas quibus in jure civili atque canonico hæretici addicuntur.*”

Such was the man that proclaimed forbearance from the pulpit, in the presence of those two notorious tyrants, Philip and Mary. He, indeed, exhibits one of the numerous in-

stances of that mixed spirit of fierce intolerance, and accommodating casuistry, to which men grow prone under the tuition of Popes and Cardinals. It was certainly not the spirit of Christian meekness that produced the extraordinary contradiction which appears between Castro's works in Spain, and his sermon in London; but the same ambitious views of Philip, which made him endeavour to acquire popularity by protecting the Lady Elizabeth from the spite of the Queen, and by procuring the release of Lord Henry Dudley, Sir George Harper, Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, and many others, who, as Hume observes, had been confined, from the suspicions or resentments of the court.

I have, in the next place, to show the true character of that *liberal* Council of Toledo, whose open profession of toleration is so triumphantly adduced by the advocate of the Roman Catholic church. "The fourth Council of Toledo had declared," says Mr. Butler, "that it was unlawful and unchristianlike to force people to believe, seeing it is God alone who hardens and shows mercy to whom he will." A noble declaration, indeed, to come from the seat of one of the Spanish inquisitions! But when did this humane council meet, and what was its general character? Did it apply this broad principle to every dissenting sect? Did it really anticipate the Protestants in the recognition of the right of *private judgment* in matters of faith? Our author will not deprive his cause of the chance of his readers' answering all these questions in the sense most favourable to the object for which the quotation is made. I will, however, deal more explicitly upon these points.

The fourth Council of Toledo was held in the year of our Lord, 634. Mariana, the Spanish historian, says that Sisenand (an usurper who, with the aid of Dagobert, king of France, had deposed Swinthila) "convened from all parts of his dominions about seventy bishops, at Toledo,

under colour of reforming the morals of the ecclesiastics, which the troubles of the times had greatly depraved; but with the real object that the fathers should condemn Swinthila, as unworthy of the crown, and by this means, both his open followers and secret friends might be made to change their minds and be quiet*." It is probable that this holy council, finding it necessary to allay the alarm of the Jews, whose wealth was for many centuries the best resource of the Spanish kings, was induced to pass the decree in *their favour*, which Mr. Butler gives us as an unlimited declaration in behalf of all dissenters from the Church of Rome. Numbers of that persecuted people had been forced to receive baptism by a law of Sisebute. This law alone is repealed by the fourth Council of Toledo. Had Mr. Butler either read the original decrees, or wished to state the whole matter without curtailment, the character of his church would have gained little from the *liberality* of the Toletan fathers. Indeed the same canon of the Council, which favours the world with the comprehensive principles of toleration which have been adduced as a parallel to the most liberal concessions of the Protestants on that point, declares that the *Jews who were baptized by force* should be compelled to the observance of Christianity. I will subjoin the whole decree:

Canon. 55. "De Judæis autem hoc præcepit sancta synodus nemini deinceps ad credendum vim inferre. Cui enim vult Deus miseretur, et quem vult indurat. Non enim tales inviti salvandi sunt, sed volentes, ut integra sit forma justitiæ. Sicut enim homo propriâ arbitrii voluntate serpenti obediens, perit; sic (vocante se gratiâ Dei) propriæ mentis conversione quisque credendo, salvatur. Ergo non vi, sed libera arbitrii facultate ut convertantur suadendî

* Mariana, Book vi, c. 5.

sunt, non potius impellendi. *Qui autem jam pridem ad Christianitatem venire coacti sunt (sicut factum est temporibus religiosissimi principis Sisebuti), quia jam constat eos sacramentis divinis associatos, et baptismi gratiam suscepisse, et chrismate unctos esse, et corporis Domini, et sanguinis extitisse participes; oportet ut fidem ETIAM QUAM VI VEL NECESSITATE SUSCEPERUNT tenere cogantur, ne nomen Domini blasphemetur, et fides quam susceperunt contemptibilis habeatur *.*"

But I have in reserve a string of tender mercies, such as flowed from the tolerant principle of the liberal Council of Toledo. They are recorded in the same page with the proclamation of mental freedom, by which the apologist of Rome has stopped the mouths of those who charge his church with intolerance.

The models of Roman Catholic liberality, having in the 55th canon forbidden the Jews baptized by force to return to their religion, proceed, in the 60th, to provide for the spiritual safety of children born of unconverted parents, from whom they are directed to be taken away, and placed in convents. *Judæorum filios vel filias, ne parentum ultro involvantur erroribus, ab eorum consortio separari decernimus.* The forced converts are then made the objects of the Council's anxiety. To prevent the secret exercise of their national practices, all intercourse between them and their unconverted brethren is made punishable, by making the unbaptized parties slaves to the Christians, and putting the

* The Spaniard, Carranza, not satisfied with the inquisitorial force authorized by the latter part of this canon, took care to omit, in his *Summa Conciliorum*, the words, "Ergo non vi, sed libera arbitrii facultate ut convertantur suadendi sunt, non potius impellendi." Yet Carranza himself was suspected and imprisoned by the Inquisition. My transcript of this and following canons is from the Collection of the Jesuits, Labbé and Gossart, vol. v. p. 1720.

offending neophytes to death. *Nulla igitur ultra communio sit Hebræis ad fidem Christianam translatis, cum his qui adhuc in vetere ritu consistunt; ne forte eorum participatione subvertantur. Quicumque igitur amodo ex his qui baptizati sunt, infidelium consortia non vitaverint; et hi Christianis donentur, et illi publicis cædibus deputentur.* Finally, the 63d canon orders that Jews married to Christian women be divorced from their wives, unless they submit to be baptized.

There is a sacred duty incumbent on every man who appears as an author before the public, which the writer of the *Book of the Roman Catholic Church* has, I fear, often overlooked in his work; but seldom more openly than in the present instance. The best excuse is, that the apologist of Rome has copied from others; but dishonesty lies somewhere: the garbled statement comes, no doubt, from among the writers of the Roman Catholic communion who have lately appeared before the British public. Am I not therefore justified in earnestly saying to that public—Beware!

H.—Page 81.

TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

AN accurate and detailed history of the rise and gradual progress of the doctrine of Transubstantiation, would be a valuable contribution to the philosophy of the human mind. What appears to me most deserving the attention of philosophical observers, is the *concurrence* of two perfectly unconnected errors, in giving birth to this intellectual monster.

The natural propensity of mankind to refer their worship

of the invisible to the symbols employed to express it, is found even among the early Christians. A great reverence for the bread and wine, which, in the words of the Saviour, were called his flesh and blood, far from being to blame in them, must be viewed as a direct consequence of the certainty they possessed, that the Eucharist had been established by the Son of God. But here the usual process of the vulgar mind began. Abstractions and distinctions are difficult and painful to the generality of mankind. The spiritual presence of Christ, the intimate connexion between an external and simple act of eating and drinking, and the influence of his grace on the soul of those who eat and drink by faith in his death and passion, was soon lost sight of. Though Christ himself had declared that "the flesh profiteth nothing," the bread and wine gradually assumed the character of his material flesh and blood. Yet neither the people nor their leaders were able to use any definite language upon the mysterious work of consecration.

It happened, however, in the metaphysical ages (such name, I believe, would suit the period between the twelfth and the sixteenth centuries) that every system which successively occupied the attention of the schools, had an effect not unlike that which is now produced by physical discoveries, though upon very dissimilar objects. A newly discovered law or power of nature, in our days, puts the whole mass of European intellect into motion : a thousand applications are tried, ten thousand hopes of improvement are raised, till the effervescence is sobered down by experience and failure. A new metaphysical system produced in those times a similar state of mind, among the class who pursued abstract knowledge, with regard to the objects of their favourite studies, and that without any thing to check it. Platonism first, and then Aristotelism, were believed to be sufficient to explain every mystery in theology. The success, however, of the latter was unrivalled in defining, explaining, and demon-

strating the as yet indistinct and fluctuating theory of the Eucharist.

One of the doctrines introduced by the Aristotelian system of the schools is that of *substantial forms* or *absolute accidents* *. The schoolmen suppose that the universe consists of a mass of matter, invested by certain forms or qualities, which possess a real and *substantial* being. This was a lucky discovery for the school divines. It explained the bodily presence of Christ in the sacrament. The *substance* of the bread and wine, they said, is converted into his body and blood; but the *absolute accidents*, the *substantial forms* of both, remain as before. Hence the word *transubstantiation*.

The idea of a general mass shaped by these *substantial forms* or moulds, is so agreeable to the external impressions of mankind, and so analogous to the operations by which what we call materials are converted into objects fitted for peculiar uses; that the words in which the school philosophers expressed them, have been incorporated with all the European languages †.

That the doctrine of *transubstantiation* could not have been established without the aid of Aristotle, any one who examines the technical words of the Roman Catholic divines

* The schoolmen have palmed many of their absurdities upon the Greek philosopher. From the definition which Aristotle gives of matter, it is evident that he considered that word as the sign of an abstraction. "Materia est neque quid, neque quantum, nec aliud eorum quibus ens denominatur." I quote the translation used among the schoolmen.

† It is curious to trace to the same source even the word *elements*, which seems to have been chosen by the Protestants as the most independent from the theory of transubstantiation. *Elements* is another scholastic name for that substratum which is conceived to bear the qualities of things. "Omnium *elementa* possunt invicem in se transmutari, non generatione, sed alteratione." The bread and wine were *elements*, because they were supposed to be changed into the body and blood of Christ. See Brucker, Hist. Philos. Pars II. Lib. II. c. vii.

upon that question, will readily perceive. Of this they were so fully convinced but a short time ago, that I recollect the opposition to which the modern system of natural philosophy was still subject in my youth, as depriving the Roman Catholic faith of its chief support, by the rejection of the *substantial* forms. Indeed *transubstantiation* conveys either no meaning at all, or one entirely the reverse of what Rome intends; unless we suppose the separableness of *substance*, and forms or qualities. The *substance* of the bread and wine, it is said, is converted into the body and blood of Christ; which, translated into any language but that of the schools, means that the body of Christ (I wish to speak reverently), chemically analyzed in the consecrated bread and wine, will be found to consist of every thing that constitutes bread and wine: *i. e.* the body and blood of Christ will be found to have been converted into real bread and wine. What else do we designate by bread and by wine, but two aggregates of qualities, identical to what the analytical process will show after consecration? Substance without qualities is a mere abstraction of the mind; with qualities it is that which the qualities make it. So here we have a mighty miracle to convert Christ into bread and wine; for such would be the substance of his body and blood if it changed its qualities for those of the two well known compounds which the Roman Catholics adore. If it is said that Christ occupies the place of the bread and wine, and produces the impressions peculiar to them on the senses, the supposed miracle should change the name of *transubstantiation* into that of *delusion*.—Surely transubstantiation has for its basis the most absurd philosophical system which ever disgraced the schools of a barbarous age!

I.—Page 86.

PECUNIARY CLAIMS OF THE COURT OF ROME ON THE SCORE
OF INDULGENCES, DISPENSATIONS, ETC.

The system of taxation pursued at this day by Rome, in regard to her spiritual subjects spread over the world, appears in the Memoirs of Dr. Villanueva, a learned dignitary of the church of Spain, whose adherence to the late Constitution has deprived him of his honours and emoluments in Spain, and forced to live an exile in London.

The Cortes of 1820 appointed a committee of their members to propose a plan of reform on points of ecclesiastical discipline. Dr. Villanueva, the leading member, and reporter of that committee, gives, in his own Memoirs, the following curious facts relating to the pecuniary demands of Rome on the Spaniards*.

The Report recommended, that to the *annual contribution of three hundred and fifty thousand reals*, paid by Spain, towards the repairs of the churches of Saint Peter, and Saint John of Lateran, an addition of *two hundred thousand reals* should be made, for the present, and till the nation should be allowed, by circumstances, to think of a further increase of that yearly tribute. In the mean time the Pope was intreated to accept this sum as a composition of all demands on individual Spaniards for bulls, dispensations, &c.

This Report was agreed to by the Cortes, and a law made in consequence, prohibiting any remittances of money to

* See *Vida Literaria de Don Joaquin Lorenzo Villanueva*. 2 Vols. London, 1825.

Rome. The note written by the Pope's minister, on that occasion, deserves particular attention: "His Holiness (said Cardinal Gonzalvi) has been surprised at the contents of your note, not only on account of its object, but of the *principles* it lays down. He could not suspect that Spain, a nation so thoroughly Catholic, could, without any previous communication with the Holy See, pass a law forbidding all payment for dispensations, and appointing instead thereof nine thousand dollars, and that, *not to fulfil the duty of contributing towards its dignity*, but only as a free-will offering *." The note then proceeds to state, that every Spanish family contributes to the Holy See only at the rate of between two to three pence per annum; that the payment of such contributions is grounded on the *most sacred rights*, and that his Holiness will never submit to the decree of the Cortes.

Dr. Villanueva, in answer to this note, collects from Spanish history the complaints made by the ancient Cortes, on the incessant and exorbitant exactions of Rome. He reminds the Pope of the enormous sums which "exhausted, spoiled, dilapidated Spain" had poured into his lap. He refers to the detail of those sums, as it appears, officially, in one of the documents appended to the Report of the Ecclesiastical Committee, dated March, 1821. It is therein shown, that from the year 1537 to 1820, the regular contribution of 350,000 reals above mentioned, had been paid by the government of Spain. The annual sums paid by private individuals, during that period, might be conjectured from the fact, that from 1814 to August, 1820, the payment for bulls exceeded FIVE MILLIONS OF REALS; and the cost of dispensations for marrying within the prohibited degrees of

* Tom. II. p. 257.

consanguinity, affinity, and spiritual relationship *, was more than FOUR AND TWENTY MILLIONS of the same money.

The account which Dr. Villanueva gives of the *tariff* of prices for this sort of dispensations, as negotiated by the Spanish ambassador Azara in 1781, shows the principles on which the Roman laws are made and dispensed with. The price of the dispensation rises in proportion to the proximity of the relationship, and the *absence of a sufficient plea for obtaining it*. In this manner, a dispensation, which with a *cause* is valued at 936 reals, *without a cause* rises to 12,036 reals and 14 *maravedis*: another, which with a reasonable cause amounts to 1570 reals and 12 *maravedis*, if wantonly and *causelessly* granted, must be paid at the rate of 32,130 reals and 1 *maravedi*. Thus his Holiness expects to be rewarded in proportion to the degree of liberty he takes with the ordinances of his infallible church, and calculates that the *unreasonableness* of one of his usual grants may be such, as to require that the pecuniary *motive* shall be increased from *fourteen reals* (about two shillings, the price of a certain dispensation, with a cause) to *thirty-two thousand reals*, or *three hundred and twenty pounds*.

K.—Page 99.

UNCERTAINTY OF ROMAN CATHOLIC INFALLIBILITY.

Nothing can be more *certain* than the uncertainty of the Roman Catholic Church, as to the seat and source of her pretended infallibility. If any thing can be deduced from

* The baptismal sponsors, the child baptized, and the parents of the child, become *spiritually* related, according to the doctrine of the church of Rome.

the vague and unsettled principles of her divines, on this subject, it would appear that infallibility finally resolves itself into the authority of the Pope. For, as no council whatever is deemed infallible till the Pope has sanctioned its decrees, the pretended assistance from heaven must apply to that discriminating oracle, on whose decision the supernatural authority of the councils depends:

The opening speech of the papal legates who presided at the council of Trent represents the expected inspiration as conditional: a very natural caution in the representatives of that see, which has always most strenuously opposed the notion that the Pope is inferior to a general council. After a candid acknowledgment of the enormous corruptions of the Roman Catholic clergy, which the reader will find hereafter, the legates speak of the expected inspiration in the following words:—

“Quare nisi ille spiritus nos apud nos metipsos primum condemnaverit, nondum illum ingressum esse ad nos affirmare possumus, ac ne ingressurum quidem, si peccata nostra audire recusamus. Idem enim dicetur nobis, quod populo veteri per prophetam Ezechielem est dictum, cum nondum agnitis suis sceleribus, Dominum per prophetam interrogare vellent. *Venerunt viri Israel ad interrogandum Dominum, et sederunt coram me. Hæc autem dicit Dominus: numquid ad interrogandum me venistis? Vivo ego, dicit Dominus, quia non respondebo vobis.* Sequitur autem, *si judicas eos, abominationes patrum illorum ostende illis.* In quibus verbis ostendit Deus, quare noluerit respondere illis, quia nondum scilicet abominationes suas et patrum suorum audierant. Quare cum idem Dei Spiritus sit, qui tunc dabat responsa, et quem nunc nos sedentes coram Domino invocamus, quid nobis faciendum sit, ut propria responsa habeamus, ex his videtis.....Quia vero nonnullos nunc videmus, sua primum peccata, et nostri ordinis graviter deflentes,

atque Dei misericordiam omnibus votis implorantes, ideo quidem in *maxima spe sumus*, advenisse, quem invocamus, Dei Spiritum." — *Concilia per Labbeum et Gossartium*, Tom. XIV. p. 738.

It is clear that the legates grounded their hopes of inspiration for the Council, on the marks of repentance which they perceived in some of its members. Must, then, Roman Catholics ascertain the spiritual condition of their oracles, before they admit them to the privilege of infallibility? It should seem, however, that the Popes are not subject to such restrictions in the use of their infallible sanction; else, a man with the moral tact of Alexander VI. would have been subject to strange mistakes, in calculating the fitness of the bishops in council, to receive an inspiration totally dependent on moral character.—See Appendix on the Council of Trent.

L. —Page 126.

CASE OF A SPANISH PROTESTANT PRIEST, IMPRISONED BY
THE INQUISITION IN 1802.

Since the execution of the unhappy woman whose death I mention in the 5th Letter, the Spanish Inquisitors seemed less disposed to shed blood. It is also true that men were also much more averse to sacrifice their lives to their religious views, than at the time of the Reformation. Spain, which in the 16th century gave a host of martyrs to Protestant Christianity*, has, of late, produced but one instance of the power of the Scriptures "in an honest and good heart." This most interesting case is related by the secretary of the Inquisition

* See Art. 9 of No. 57 of the *Quarterly Review*, in which the author of the present work gave an account of the Spanish Reformers, and their sufferings.

of Madrid, Llorente, in his *History of the Spanish Inquisition*, Vol. IV. p. 127.

Don Miguel Juan Antonio Solano, a native of Verdun, in Arragon, was vicar of Esco, in the diocese of Jaca. His benevolence and exemplary conduct endeared him to his parishioners. Though educated according to the Aristotelian system, and the school divinity, which was very lately prevalent at many of the Spanish universities; the natural strength of his mind led him to study pure mathematics, and mechanics, by himself. The goodness of his heart combined with his inventive talents in the work of fertilizing a dale, or rather a mere ravine, belonging to the inhabitants of his parish, which lay waste for want of irrigation. Without any help from the government, and with no mechanical means but the spades of the peasants, he succeeded in diverting the waters of a mountain streamlet upon the slip of vegetable soil which had been deposited in the glen.

A long and severe illness, which made him a cripple for life, withdrew the good vicar of Esco from these active pursuits, and limited his employment to the perusal of the few books which his little library afforded. Fortunately the Bible was one of them. Solano read the records of revelation with a sincere desire to embrace religious truth, as he found it there; and having gradually cleared and arranged his views, drew up a little system of divinity, which agreed in the main points with the fundamental tenets of the Protestant churches. His conviction of the Roman Catholic errors became so strong, that he determined to lay his book before the bishop of the diocese, asking his pastoral help and advice upon that most important subject. An answer to his arguments was promised; but despairing after a lapse of time to obtain it, Solano applied to the faculty of divinity of the University of Saragossa. The reverend doctors sent the book to the Inquisition, and the infirm vicar of Esco was lodged in the

prisons of the holy tribunal of Saragossa. This happened in 1802. It seems that some humane persons contrived his escape soon after, and conveyed him to Oleron, the nearest French town. But Solano, having taken time to consider his case, came to the heroic resolution of asserting the truth in the very face of death; and returned of his own accord to the inquisitorial prisons.

The Inquisitor General, at that time, was Arce, archbishop of Santiago, an intimate friend of the Prince of Peace, and one strongly suspected of secret infidelity. When the sentence of the Aragonese tribunal, condemning Solano to die by fire, was presented to the supreme court for confirmation, Arce, shocked at the idea of an auto-da-fe, contrived every method to delay the execution. A fresh examination of witnesses was ordered; during which the inquisitors entreated Solano to avert his now imminent danger. Nothing, however, could move him. He said he well knew the death that awaited him; but no human fear would ever make him swerve from the truth. The first sentence being confirmed, nothing remained but the *exequatur* of the *supreme*. Arce, however, suspended it, and ordered an inquiry into the mental sanity of the prisoner. As nothing appeared to support this plea, Solano would have died at the stake, had not Providence snatched him from the hands of the Papal defenders of the faith. A dangerous illness seized him in the prison, where he had lingered three years. The efforts to convert him were, on this occasion, renewed with increased ardour. "The inquisitors," says Llorente, "gave it in charge to the most able divines of Saragossa to reclaim Solano; and even requested Don Miguel Suarez de Santander, auxiliary bishop of that town, and apostolic missionary (now, like myself, a refugee in France), to exhort him, with all the tenderness and goodness of a Christian minister, which are so natural to that worthy prelate. The vicar showed a grateful sense

of all that was done for him ; but declared that he could not renounce his religious persuasion without offending God by acting treacherously against the truth. On the twenty-first day of his illness, the physician warned him of approaching death, urging him to improve the short time which he had to live. ‘ I am in the hands of God,’ answered Solano, ‘ and have nothing else to do.’ Thus died, in 1805, the vicar of Esco. He was denied Christian burial, and his body privately interred within the inclosure of the Inquisition, near the back-gate of the building, towards the Ebro. The inquisitors reported all that had taken place to the supreme tribunal, whose members approved their conduct, and stopt further proceedings, in order to avoid the necessity of burning the deceased, in effigy.”

M.—Page 130.

The account of nuns and friars which Erasmus gives in the dialogue from which I borrowed the passage in the text, so perfectly agrees with all I know of them—the arts by which girls are now drawn into monasteries are so similar to those which he describes—and the reasons he uses to dissuade the young enthusiast from sacrificing her liberty, are so applicable to every case of that kind in our days, that I hope the reader will pardon me for inserting the whole dialogue, in the elegant translation of my excellent friend the Rev. Robert Butler ; to whom I am also indebted for the following notice of the alarm which those delightful compositions, the Colloquies, excited in the University of Paris.

“ The faculty of theology passed a general censure, in 1526, upon the Colloquies of Erasmus, as upon a work in

which the fasts and abstinences of the Church of Rome are slighted, the suffrages of the Holy Virgin and of the saints are derided, virginity is set below matrimony, Christians are discouraged from monkery, and grammatical is preferred to theological erudition. Therefore it is decreed that the perusal of this wicked book be forbidden to all, more especially to young folks; and that it be entirely suppressed if it be possible."—*From Dupin, as quoted in Jortin's History of Erasmus, Vol. I. p. 298.*

ERASMUS'S DIALOGUE, ENTITLED VIRGO MISOΓAMOS, OR THE
MARRIAGE-HATING MAIDEN.

Eubulus.—Catharine.

EU. I rejoice that dinner is at last over, and that we are at leisure to enjoy this delightful walk.

CA. It was quite wearisome to sit so long at table.

EU. How every thing smiles around us! Truly this is the very youth and spring-time of the world.

CA. It is so, indeed!

EU. And why is it not with thee also the spring-time of smiles and joy?

CA. Wherefore do you ask such a question?

EU. Because I perceive a sadness in your countenance.

CA. Are my looks then different from what they are wont to be?

EU. Would you like me to show you to yourself?

CA. Of all things.

EU. You see this rose. Observe how, as the night approaches, it contracts its leaves.

CA. Well! and what then?

EU. It thus presents you with an image of your own countenance.

CA. A most excellent comparison!

EU. If you will not believe me, look at yourself in this little fountain. Those frequent sighs, too, during dinner—tell me what could be the meaning of them?

CA. Question me no farther. The subject is one in which you are not concerned.

EU. Nay, Catharine: it cannot but concern one whose happiness is bound up in thine. Another sigh? Alas! how deeply drawn!

CA. My mind is in a state of great anxiety; but I cannot safely mention the cause.

EU. What! not even to him who loves thee better than he loves his own sister? Fear not, dearest Catharine; let the secret of thy affliction be what it may, rest assured that it is safe in my keeping.

CA. That may be; but I should tell it to one who would give me no assistance.

EU. How know you that? I might, at least, have it in my power to aid you by advice and consolation.

CA. I cannot tell thee.

EU. How is this? You hate me, then, Catharine?

CA. Yes; if I can hate my own brother; and yet I cannot bring myself to tell thee.

EU. Should I be able to guess the cause of your suffering, will you confess it? Nay, do not turn away: promise me, or else I will never cease to importune thee.

CA. Well, I promise.

EU. I do not at all understand what can be wanting to make you perfectly happy.

CA. O that my condition were really such as you conceive it to be!

EU. In the first place, you are in the flower of your age; for if I mistake not, you are now in your seventeenth year.

CA. Just so.

EU. The apprehension, then, of old age cannot, I suppose, be the source of your trouble?

CA. Nothing in the world troubles me less.

EU. You have a form that is perfect in every part; and this is one of God's chief gifts.

CA. Of my form, such as it is, I neither boast nor complain.

EU. Then your colour and habit of body indicate that you are in sound health—unless indeed you carry about you some secret disease.

CA. Nothing of the kind, I thank God.

EU. Your character moreover is unspotted.

CA. I trust so.

EU. You have a mind also worthy of the body wherein it dwells; a mind of the happiest disposition, and as apt as I could desire for every liberal pursuit and study.

CA. Whatever it may be, it is the gift of God.

EU. Neither is there any want of that loveliest grace of moral excellence, the absence of which is too often to be regretted in forms of the most perfect beauty.

CA. It is certainly my desire that my behaviour should be such as becomes my situation.

EU. Many are dejected in mind on account of the infelicity of their birth: but you, on the contrary, have parents of honourable descent and of virtuous manners—possessed also of an ample fortune, and attached to you with the fondest affection.

CA. I have nothing, in this respect, to complain of.

EU. In a word, of all the maidens in this neighbourhood there is not one (were some propitious star to shine upon me) whom I would choose for a wife but thee.

CA. And I, if I had any wish to marry, would desire no other husband than thyself.

EU. Surely then it must be something very extraordinary which can occasion you so much trouble.

CA. Something of no light moment, be assured.

EU. Will you not take it ill if I divine what it is?

CA. I have already promised not to do so.

EU. Well then, experience has taught me what pain there is in love. Come, confess, according to your promise.

CA. To say the truth, love is the cause; but not the kind of love you mean.

EU. What kind then?

CA. Divine love.

EU. I have done; my stock of conjecture is exhausted: and yet I will not let go this hand of thine till I wrest thy secret from thee.

CA. How violent you are!

EU. Only confide it to me, whatever it may be.

CA. Well, since you are so very urgent about it, I will tell you. Know then, that from my tenderest years a passion of an extraordinary nature has possessed me.

EU. What can it be? to become a nun?

CA. Just so.

EU. Hem! I have gained a loss!

CA. What is it you say, Eubulus?

EU. Nothing, my love: I only coughed. Go on, I pray you.

CA. The desire I have mentioned to you was always opposed by my parents with the greatest pertinacity.

EU. I understand.

CA. On the other hand, I, for my part, never ceased to besiege their affection with entreaties, caresses, and tears.

EU. You surprise me.

CA. At length my perseverance in this course so far prevailed upon them that they promised that, if I should continue in the same mind upon my entering into my seventeenth year, they would then yield to my wishes: that year is now arrived; my desire remains unchanged: and yet, in

opposition to their promise, they positively refuse to gratify it: this it is that troubles me. I have now disclosed to you the nature of my disease: prescribe the remedy if you have any.

EV. In the first place, let me counsel you, sweetest maiden, to moderate your desires; and if you cannot obtain what you would, to wish for no more than what may be in your power to obtain.

CA. I shall die if I do not obtain the present object of my wishes.

EV. But what could have given rise to this fatal passion?

CA. Some years ago, when quite a girl, I was taken into a convent, where they led me about and showed me every thing. I was charmed with the sweet looks of the nuns, who seemed to me like so many angels; and was delighted with the beautiful appearance of every thing in the chapel, and with the fragrance and pleasantness of gardens, dressed and cultivated with the nicest art. In short, whichever way I turned my eyes, every thing smiled upon me. Add to this the pleasant conversation I had with the nuns themselves, some of whom I discovered to have been my playfellows during my childhood. From this period it was that I conceived the ardent desire I have to adopt the same kind of life.

EV. It certainly is not my intention to reprobate the institution of nunneries*, though the same things are not of equal advantage to all; and yet, from my opinion of the nature of your disposition, such as it appears to me from your countenance and manners, my advice to you would be, to marry a husband of a character similar to your own, and thus give rise to a new society at home, of which your husband should be the father and yourself the mother.

* "... Mihi aliud dictabat animus, aliud scribebat calamus," is the melancholy acknowledgment which Erasmus made of his own want of courage.

CA. I will rather die than give up my purpose.

EU. A virgin life, if purity attend it, is no doubt an excellent thing; but it does not require you so to bind yourself to a particular convent as to be unable afterwards to leave it. Surely, you may live at home with your parents, and preserve at the same time your virgin honour?

CA. True; but not with equal safety.

EU. In my opinion, you will preserve it there much more securely than amongst so many fat and bloated monks:—fathers they are called, and fathers they not unfrequently are, in more senses than one. Remember also, that in former times young maidens were considered to live no where more honourably than at home with their parents; nor had they any father, according to the religious sense of the word, except the bishop. But tell me, I beseech you, what nunnery is it that you have fixed upon as the place of your servitude and seclusion?

CA. The Chrysertian.

EU. I know it. It is close to your father's house.

CA. Just so.

EU. And well, too, do I know the whole of the worthy fraternity for which you would give up father and mother and the excellent family to which you are related. As for the patriarch of this venerable society, he has long been foolish, both from infirmities of age and nature, and from indulgence in the pleasures of the table. His knowledge is now confined to his bottle. He has two companions, John and Jodocus, both worthy of him. John, though not perhaps a bad man, has nevertheless nothing of the man about him but his beard—not one grain of learning, and a very slender stock of prudence. As for Jodocus, he is so stupid, that, if it were not for the recommendation of his sacred dress, he might walk about in public, in the cap and bells of a fool.

CA. They seem to me, however, to be very good men.

EU. My dear Catharine, I know them better than you can do. But I suppose that these are your patrons with your father and mother ;—the persons who would make you their proselyte ?

CA. Jodocus is very favourable to my wishes.

EU. Oh! worthy patron! But let it be granted that these men are now both learned and good, it will not be long before you will find them both ignorant and wicked ; and you will, moreover, have to bear with every one that meets you.

CA. The frequent entertainments that are given at home are very disagreeable to me ; nor is every thing that is spoken there between those who are married, such as is suitable to a maiden's ear : besides, I cannot sometimes refuse a kiss.

EU. They who would avoid every thing that can give offence, must needs depart out of this life altogether. Our ears must be accustomed to hear every thing, but transmit to the mind only what is good. Your parents, I suppose, allow you a private chamber ?

CA. Certainly.

EU. Thither, then, you may retire, if any entertainment should happen to become disorderly. There, while the rest are drinking and trifling, do you hold holy converse with Christ, your spouse ; praying, singing, and giving thanks. Your father's house cannot defile you ; while you, on the contrary, may impart to it a character of greater sanctity.

CA. Yet, it is safer to be in a convent of nuns.

EU. I say nothing against a society of such nuns as are truly virgins ; but I wish you not to be deceived by your imagination, and take appearances for realities. Were you to remain for some time in the convent you wish to retire to, and acquire a nearer insight into what is going forward there, possibly you might not think every thing quite so

correct and charming as you did at first. Take my word for it, Catharine, all are not virgins who wear a veil.

CA. Use proper language, Eubulus!

EU. Nay, if there be propriety in truth, I do so; unless, perhaps, the praise which we have hitherto been in the habit of considering as peculiar to the Virgin Mother be transferred to other females also.

CA. Mention not such an abomination.

EU. In no other way, however, can the virgins you speak of be altogether such as you take them to be.

CA. No? and why not, I pray you?

EU. Because there are more amongst them who will be found to rival Sappho in her morals, than to resemble her in her genius.

CA. I do not exactly comprehend the meaning of your words.

EU. My dear Catharine, I do not wish that you should; and therefore I talk in the way you hear me.

CA. My wishes still point in the same direction, and I cannot but conclude that the spirit by which I am actuated on this subject comes from God, inasmuch as it has continued for so many years, and still gathers strength from day to day.

EU. For my part, I regard this spirit of thine with no small degree of suspicion, on account of its being opposed with so much earnestness by your excellent parents. Were the object you have in view really a pious one, God would no doubt breathe into their hearts an acquiescence in your wishes. The fact is, that the spirit you talk of took its rise from the splendid things which affected your imagination as a girl, from the soft language of the nuns, from revived affection towards your old companions, from the celebration of divine worship, the specious pomp of ceremonies, and the vile exhortations of a set of stupid monks, who court you in

order that they may have the more to drink. They are well aware, that your father is of a kind and liberal disposition, and that they shall either have him for their guest (on condition that he bring with him wine enough for ten potent drinkers), or that they shall be able to carouse, as they please, at his table. Wherefore, my advice to you is, not to think any farther of venturing upon a new course of life, in opposition to the wishes of your parents. Remember that the authority of our parents is that under which it is God's will that we should remain.

CA. But in a case of this kind, it is no want of piety to disregard both father and mother.

EU. I grant that it is piety to do so on some occasions, for Christ's sake; though if a Christian have a father who is a heathen, and whose whole subsistence depends upon him, it certainly is no mark of piety in the son to desert him, and allow him to perish of hunger. Supposing that you had not already professed yourself a Christian at your baptism, and that your parents were to forbid you to be baptized, you would certainly act a pious part in preferring Christ to impious parents: or, even now, if your parents were to endeavour to force you to the commission of any loose or impious act, you would undoubtedly do right, in such a case, to disregard their authority. But what has this to do with a convent? Christ is with you equally at home. It is the dictate of nature that children should obey their parents—a dictate ratified by the approbation of God, by the exhortations of St. Paul, and by the sanction of human laws: and will you then withdraw yourself from the authority of the excellent parents you possess, in order to deliver yourself up to those who can be father and mother to you only in name, or who, to speak more truly, will rule you rather as tyrants than as parents? At present, your situation with your parents is such, that they still wish

you to be free ; but you, of your own accord, would make yourself a slave. The merciful nature of the Christian religion has, to a great degree, abolished the ancient state of servitude, except in a few countries, in which some traces of it still remain. But now, under the pretext of religion, a new kind of servitude, according to the mode of living that at present prevails in many convents, has been invented. In these places nothing is lawful but what is commanded : whatever wealth may fall to you will accrue to the community ; and should you attempt to stir a step beyond your bounds, you will be dragged back again, as if you had murdered your parents. And, that this slavery may be still more conspicuous, their proselytes are clothed in a dress different from that which was given to them by their parents, while, in imitation of the ancient custom of those who formerly made a traffic in slaves, a change also is made in the baptismal name ; so that he who was baptized into the service of Christ under the name of Peter, is called Thomas on being enlisted in the service of St. Dominic. If a soldier in the army cast away the uniform given him by his commander, he is looked upon as having renounced the authority of his commander ; and yet we applaud those who put on a dress not given by Christ, the Lord of all ; while the punishment inflicted upon them, should they change it afterwards, is far greater than would be experienced were they to cast off, ever so frequently, the dress of their great Leader and Master—I mean, innocence of mind.

CA. They make a great merit, however, of thus voluntarily submitting to this kind of servitude.

EV. They who do so, preach a doctrine worthy of the Pharisees. St. Paul's doctrine is a very different one ; for he teaches, that whoever becomes a Christian when in a state of freedom, should not willingly be made a slave : while, on the other hand, the slave who becomes a Chris-

tian, should, if an opportunity of freedom presents itself, avail himself of it. But, farther, the servitude we are speaking of is the more galling, from your having to submit to more masters than one, and these, too, for the most part fools and profligates; while, in addition to this, you are kept in a state of continual uncertainty from the changes that occur amongst them from time to time. Now, answer me a question,—Do the laws release you from the authority of your parents?

CA. By no means.

EU. Are you at liberty to buy or sell a farm against their will?

CA. Certainly not.

EU. What right, then, can you have to give yourself to I know not whom, in express opposition to the will of your parents? Are you not their most valuable possession—that which is in a peculiar sense their own?

CA. Where religion is concerned, the laws of nature cease.

EU. Religion has respect chiefly to baptism; the present question relates merely to a change of dress, and to a mode of life which in itself is neither good nor bad. Consider, also, how many advantages you part with when you lose your liberty. You are now free to read, pray, or sing, in your own chamber, as much and as long as may be agreeable to you; or, when you become weary of the privacy of your chamber, you have it in your power to hear sacred songs, attend divine worship, and listen to discourses on heavenly themes. Moreover, should you meet with any one remarkable for his piety and wisdom, or with any matron or maiden of superior virtues and endowments, you can enjoy the advantage of their conversation and instructions, for improvement in all those graces that become the female character. You are free, besides, to esteem and love the preacher who

teaches in sincerity the pure doctrines of Christ. But if once you retire into a convent, all these superior opportunities of improvement in a sound and rational piety are lost to you for ever.

CA. But, in the mean time, I shall not be a nun.

EU. Is it possible that you can still be influenced by the sound of a mere name? Consider the subject with attention. Much is said about the merit of obedience; but will there be any want of this merit if you obey those parents whom the ordinance of God himself has made it your duty to obey—if you obey also your bishop and your pastor? Or will you be deficient in the merit of poverty, where every thing belongs to your parents? In former times, indeed, holy men thought it highly praiseworthy in females, dedicated to the service of God, to be liberal towards the poor; yet I do not very well perceive how they were to exercise this virtue of liberality, if they had nothing themselves to give. Farther, the jewel of your chastity can suffer no diminution in its lustre by your remaining under the same roof with your parents. In what, then, consists the superiority of the state for which you are so eager to leave your own home? truly, in nothing but a veil, a linen dress worn outside instead of inside, and a few ceremonies which of themselves make nothing for piety, and commend no one in the sight of Him with whom favour can be obtained only by purity of heart and life.

CA. You preach strange doctrine.

EU. Not the less true, however, for being strange. But tell me, since you are not released from the authority of your parents, and you have not a right to sell either a dress or a field, how can you prove that you have a right to put yourself under the perpetual control of strangers?

CA. The authority of parents, they say, cannot prevent the claims of religion.

EU. Did you not make profession of your faith in your baptism?

CA. Yes.

EU. And are not they religious persons who follow the precepts of Jesus Christ?

CA. Undoubtedly.

EU. Then what, I pray you, is this new religion which makes void what the law of nature has sanctioned,—what the ancient law has taught, what the gospel has approved, and the doctrine of the apostles established and confirmed? I tell you, that such a religion is the invention of a parcel of monks, not the decree of God.

CA. Do you then think it unlawful for me to become the spouse of Christ without the consent of my parents?

EU. You are already espoused to Christ—we have all been espoused to him; and who, I pray you, ever thinks of being married twice to the same person? The subject in debate is merely a question of place, dress, and ceremony; and certainly I cannot think that the authority of parents is to be slighted and set at nought for things like these.

CA. But the persons I speak of affirm, that there cannot be an act of greater piety than to disregard one's parents on such an occasion.

EU. Demand, then, of those doctors, to produce you a single passage out of the holy scriptures in which any such doctrine is taught. If they cannot do this, then require of them to quaff off a cup of good Burgundy—you will find them at no loss on such a subject. It is the part of true piety to fly to Christ for succour from wicked parents; but what piety can there be in flying from virtuous parents to a convent,—when to do this (as experience often shows) is but to fly from the good to the bad? Indeed, in former times, when a person was converted to the Christian faith, his parents, though idolaters, were still considered to have a claim

on his obedience, as long as that obedience involved no compromise of his conscience and his faith.

CA. Do you then condemn the life of a nun altogether?

EU. By no means: but as I should not willingly advise any who have entered upon such a mode of life to seek a release from it, so I have no hesitation in earnestly exhorting every maiden, especially such as are of a noble and generous nature, to take care how they heedlessly place themselves in a state from which it will be impossible for them afterwards to retreat: more particularly as, in the places I allude to, a virgin's honour is not unfrequently exposed to the greatest danger; and as nothing, moreover, is done there, but what can be as well accomplished at home.

CA. I cannot but confess that the arguments with which you have pressed your point are both numerous and weighty; yet my desire continues unchanged and unchangeable.

EU. Well, if I cannot succeed in persuading you to act as I wish, bear this at least in mind, that Eubulus gave you good counsel. In the mean while, I will pray, from the love I bear you, that this passion of yours may be attended with better fortune than my advice.

N.—Page 131.

TYRANNICAL CONDUCT OF THE CHURCH OF ROME TOWARDS
PERSONS OF BOTH SEXES BOUND BY RELIGIOUS VOWS.

The history of religious oppression under the Church of Rome is far from being well known. That, under her spiritual government, Christianity has at all times contributed towards the happiness of mankind, I am ready to acknow-

ledge; because no human power can completely quench the healing spirit of the gospel. But it would be difficult, indeed, to ascertain whether the at once gloomy and pompous superstition which, under the guidance of the popes, has been so intimately blended with Christianity, has not produced more bitterness of suffering in the human breast, than even the hope of immortality can allay. Woe to the ardent and sincere, amongst the spiritual subjects of Rome! for she will sacrifice them, body and soul, to a mere display of her spiritual dominion.

Nothing, however, is more difficult, than to collect the evidence of individual suffering, produced by Roman Catholic tyranny. Enough transpires in the monasteries of both sexes, to form an estimate of the wretchedness that dwells in them. But hopelessness and shame smother the sighs of their female inhabitants. Yet knowledge of human nature, a moderate degree of candour, and the consideration of the laws which have enforced, and still ensure, an external compliance with the engagements of the religious profession; are sufficient to give an awful, though momentary, view of the mass of misery which perpetual vows have produced.

There was a time when the will of a parent could bind a child for ever to the monastic life. That *liberal* Council of Toledo, whose laws about the Jews have been inserted in a preceding note, declare, that "a monk is made either by paternal devotion, or personal profession. Whatever is bound in this manner, will hold fast. We therefore shut up, in regard to these, all access to the world, and forbid all return to a secular life." *Monachum aut paterna devotio, aut propria professio facit. Quicquid horum fuerit alligatum tenebit. Proinde his ad mundum revertendi intercludimus aditum, et omnem ad sæculum interdicimus regressum.* (Concil. Tolet. IV. Can. 48.)

By the more modern discipline of the Church of Rome, this practice has been abolished; but, as it happens in all palliations of essential evils, the abolition of the barbarous power granted to parents, by removing that which shocked at first sight, only makes the remaining grievance more hopeless. There is, indeed, little difference in allowing boys and girls of sixteen to bind themselves with perpetual vows, and devoting them irrevocably to the cloister from the cradle. The Church of Rome, in her present regulations, only adds the artfulness of seduction to the unfeelingness of cruelty. I will here give her laws upon this subject, in the original language of the Council of Trent; and subjoin the brief statement of two cases, as instances of their practical operation.

Can. 9. *De Matrimonio*.—" Si quis dixerit, clericos in sacris ordinibus constitutos, vel regulares castitatem solemniter professos*, posse matrimonium contrahere contractumque validum esse, non obstante lege ecclesiastica, vel voto; posseque omnes contrahere matrimonium, qui non sentiunt se castitatis, etiamsi eam voverint, habere donum, anathema sit; cum Deus id recte petentibus non deneget, nec patiatur nos supra id quos possumus, tentari."

Sessio xxv. cap. 5. " Bonifacii octavi constitutionem, quæ incipit: *Periculoso*, renovans sancta synodus, universis episcopis, sub obtestatione divini judicii, et interminatione maledictionis æternæ, præcipit, ut in omnibus monasteriis sibi subjectis, ordinaria, in aliis vero, sedis apostolicæ auctoritate, clausuram sanctimonialium, ubi violata fuerit, dili-

* The reader will here observe the difference between the secular and the regular clergy. The former do not bind themselves with vows: their celibacy is enforced only by the law which renders their marriages null and void.

genter restitui, et ubi inviolata est, conservari maxime procurent: inobedientes atque contradictores per censuras ecclesiasticas, aliasque pœnas, quacumque appellatione postposita, compescentes, invocato ad hoc, si opus fuerit, auxilio brachii sæcularis. Quod auxilium ut præbeatur, omnes Christianos principes hortatur sancta synodus, et sub pœna excommunicationis, ipso facto incurrenda, omnibus magistratibus sæcularibus injungit. Nemini autem sanctimonialium liceat post professionem exire a monasterio etiam ad breve tempus, quocumque prætextu."

Ib. cap. 19.—"Quicumque regularis prætendat se per vim et metum ingressum esse religionem, aut etiam dicat ante ætatem debitam professum fuisse, aut quid simile, velitque habitum dimittere, quacumque de causa, aut etiam cum habitu discedere sine licentia superiorum, non audiatur, nisi intra quinquennium tantum, a die professionis, et tunc, non aliter nisi causas quas prætenderit deduxerit coram superiore suo et ordinario. Quod si antea habitum sponte dimiserit, nullatenus ad allegandum quamcumque causam admittatur; sed ad monasterium redire cogatur, et tamquam apostata puniatur; interim nullo privilegio suæ religionis juvetur."

How strictly these laws are preserved in vigour by the proud tyranny of the Church of Rome, and the blind subserviency of every government and people who acknowledge her, I will instance in two cases. The first I have on the authority of Don Andres Bello, Secretary to the Colombian Legation in this country: a gentleman whose great worth, talents and learning, I have had many an opportunity to know and admire, during an acquaintance of nearly fifteen years. The second is one of the many cases which I can attest from my personal knowledge.

The desertion of monks, according to the information which my friend Mr. Bello has given me on this point, has

been at all times frequent in the territories of Spanish America. Their general conduct, I have been assured by every one acquainted with that country, is openly and outrageously profligate. One of the unfortunate slaves of Rome, "a man who (to use my friend's own expression) having been his own instructor, lived miserable because his mind was far above all that surrounded him," took the determination of absconding from his cowed masters, and sought for liberty in exile. His real name was Father Christoval de Quesada, a native of Cumana, and Friar of the Order of Mercy. Under the assumed designation of Don Carlos de Sucre, he travelled in different countries of Europe, and was everywhere admired for his accomplishments and agreeable manners. The love of his country betrayed him, at length, into the rash step of venturing back,—yet at a sufficient distance from his native town to imagine himself safe from detection. His abilities recommended him to the archbishop of Caracas, who made him his secretary. Some years had elapsed, when a person, having desired to speak privately to the supposed Sucre, showed him that he was in possession of his secret; but engaged to keep it—probably in consideration of some pecuniary reward. The unfortunate runaway knew too well the nature of his circumstances, and danger; and only thought of surrendering on the most favourable conditions. He disclosed his case to the archbishop, who engaged the head of the Order of Mercy to receive the unfortunate Father Christoval, without inflicting any punishment for his flight. "It was in these circumstances (says my friend, in an interesting letter to me) that he taught me Latin, a language which he possessed in perfection. He was a man of uncommon good nature; plain and unaffected in his manners, and rather slovenly in his dress. To classical knowledge he added that of mathematics, and a considerable taste for Spanish poetry.

His sermons were excellent whenever he took the pains to write them, which was seldom the case. He voluntarily took charge of the library of the convent; which he enriched with many excellent works, unknown till then in my town. He also devoted part of his time to the garden of the convent, which had hitherto been allowed to be overrun with weeds. Part of the ground he allotted to a numerous breed of ducks, fowls, and other domestic animals; but from this he was obliged to desist; for the friars, whose *siesta* was disturbed by the cackling, contrived to poison their brother's favourites."—"Such (he concludes) is the history of Father Quesada, who gave to his return to the convent the appearance of a voluntary act, and donned his frock with the best good humour in the world; well aware that in his circumstances any thing else would have been most imprudent. I have heard in South America a thousand other cases of runaway friars, who have been forced back to their convents; but I am not in possession of the individual circumstances."

A strong mind, and a natural good temper, divested the preceding instance of the horrors which generally attend the capture of the spiritual slaves who seek liberty by flight. That which I am about to relate is of a much more melancholy cast. I have laid it already before the public, in *Doblado's Letters from Spain*; but though that work contains no other fiction but a few changes of names, I deem it necessary to record, with all the solemnity of history, the fate of the unfortunate nun, whom I there introduced to my readers.

The eldest daughter of a family, intimately acquainted with mine, was brought up in the convent of Saint Agnes at Seville, under the care of her mother's sister, the abbess of that female community. The circumstances of the whole transaction were so public at Seville, and the subsequent

judicial proceedings have given them such notoriety, that I do not feel bound to conceal names. *Maria Francisca Barreiro*, the unfortunate subject of this account, grew up, a lively and interesting girl, in the convent; while a younger sister enjoyed the advantages of an education at home. The mother formed an early design of devoting her eldest daughter to religion, in order to give to her less attractive favourite a better chance of getting a husband. The distant and harsh manner with which she constantly treated *Maria Francisca*, attached the unhappy girl to her aunt by the ties of the most ardent affection. The time, however, arrived when it was necessary that she should either leave her, and endure the consequences of her mother's aversion at home, or take the vows, and thus close the gates of the convent upon herself for ever. She preferred the latter course; and came out to pay the last visit to her friends. I met her, almost daily, at the house of one of her relations; where her words and manner soon convinced me that she was a victim of her mother's designing and unfeeling disposition. The father was an excellent man, though timid and undecided. He feared his wife, and was in awe of the monks; who, as usual, were extremely anxious to increase the number of their female prisoners. Though I was aware of the danger which a man incurs in Spain, who tries to dissuade a young woman from being a nun, humanity impelled me to speak seriously to the father, entreating him not to expose a beloved child to spend her life in hopeless regret for lost liberty. He was greatly moved by my reasons; but the impression I made was soon obliterated. The day for *Maria Francisca's* taking the veil was at length fixed; and though I had a most pressing invitation to be present at the ceremony, I determined not to see the wretched victim at the altar. On the preceding day, I was called from my stall at the Royal Chapel, to the confessional. A lady, quite covered by her

black veil, was kneeling at the grate through which females speak to the confessor. As soon as I took my seat, the well-known voice of Maria Francisca made me start with surprise. Bathed in tears, and scarcely able to speak without betraying her state to the people who knelt near the confessional box, by the sobs which interrupted her words; she told me she wished only to unburden her heart to me, before she shut up herself for life. Assistance, she assured me, she would not receive; for rather than live with her mother, and endure the obloquy to which her swerving from her announced determination would expose her, she "would risk the salvation of her soul." All my remonstrances were in vain. I offered to obtain the protection of the archbishop, and thereby to extricate her from the difficulties in which she was involved. She declined my offer, and appeared as resolute as she was wretched. The next morning she took the veil; and professed at the end of the following year. Her good aunt died soon after; and the nuns, who had allured her into the convent by their caresses, when they perceived that she was not able to disguise her misery, and feared that the existence of a reluctant nun might by her means transpire, became her daily tormentors.

After an absence of three years from Seville, I found that Maria Francisca had openly declared her aversion to a state, from which nothing but death could save her. She often changed her confessors, expecting comfort from their advice. At last she found a friend in one of the companions of my youth; a man whose benevolence surpasses even the bright genius with which nature has gifted him: though neither has been able to exempt him from the evils to which Spaniards seem to be fated in proportion to their worth. He became her confessor, and in that capacity spoke to her daily. But what could he do against the inflexible tyranny in whose grasp she languished!

About this time the approach of Napoleon's army threw the town into a general consternation, and the convents were opened to such of the nuns as wished to fly. Maria Francisca, whose parents were absent, put herself under the protection of a young prebendary of the Cathedral, and by his means reached Cadiz, where I saw her, on my way to England. I shall never forget the anguish with which, after a long conversation, wherein she disclosed to me the whole extent of her wretchedness, she exclaimed, *There is no hope for me!* and fell into convulsions.

The liberty of Spain from the French invaders was the signal for the fresh confinement of this helpless young woman to her former prison. Here she attempted to put an end to her sufferings, by throwing herself into a deep well; but was taken out alive. Her mother was now dead, and her friends instituted a suit of *nullity of profession*, before the ecclesiastical court. But the laws of the Council of Trent were positive; and she was cast in the trial. Her despair, however, exhausted the little strength which her protracted sufferings had left her, and the unhappy Maria Francisca died soon after, having scarcely reached her twenty-fifth year.

O.—Page 131.

CORRUPTION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLERGY AT THE
PERIOD OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.

The corrupt morals which prevailed among the Roman Catholic bishops and higher clergy, are attested by the legates who presided at the first sessions of the Council of Trent.

“Hoc enim summatim dicimus de omni genere armorum si, qui illa contra nos tractarunt, a suis ecclesiis pastores fugarunt, ordines confuderunt, laicos in episcoporum locum suffecerunt, ecclesiæ bona diripuerunt, cursum verbi Dei impediverunt: hic, inquam, dicimus, nihil horum esse, quod in libro abusuum pastorum, *maxima illorum pars*, qui hoc nomen sibi vendicant, per se factum esse, si legere libuerint, non scriptum apertis verbis inveniant. *Nostram enim ambitionem, nostram avaritiam, nostras cupiditates*, his omnibus malis populum Dei prius affecisse statim inveniet atque harum vi ab ecclesiis pastores fugari, easque pabulo verbi privari, bona ecclesiarum, quæ sunt bona pauperum ab illis tolli, indignis sacerdotia conferri, et illis qui nihil a laicis præterquam in vestis genere, ac ne in hoc quidem differunt, dari. *Quid enim horum est, quod negare possumus per hos annos a nobis factum esse.*”—Concione ad Concilium, pp. 736, 737. Collect Labbei et Gossartii.

P.—Page 151.

ON THE ACCOUNT OF THE MORAL STATE OF MONKS AND NUNS, IN THE DIOCESE OF PISTOIA AND PRATO, CONTAINED IN THE LIFE OF BISHOP RICCI.

Protestant writers, in this time and country, labour under a great disadvantage, when they touch upon the immoral tendency of those two monstrous evils of Romanism—forced celibacy, and auricular confession. The veil which Rome anxiously keeps over the abominations which frequently spring from both, decency compels us to leave unremoved. It happens, however, as a natural consequence of confession itself, that the best and most conscientious Romanists become familiarized with the most filthy images, both in the study of their casuists, and in the secret intercourse of their Sacrament of Penance. In countries where an essential part of the education of the clergy consists in the learning detailed

classifications of every possible species of vice, and where young men preparing for the priesthood, are lectured and examined on books of a more dangerous tendency than those which are prosecuted for immorality in this country; the rules and feelings of delicacy must be peculiarly modified. Hence the perfect unconcern with which sometimes religious men give circulation to statements, which exceed in indecency every thing that ever appeared in the worst cases brought before the English courts of justice.

Of this character are the examinations and evidence of several nuns, which Scipio de Ricci, bishop of Pistoia, inserted in the Memoirs of his own life, from which Monsieur de Potter has, in part, written a work of the greatest interest to those who wish to ascertain the present state of the Romanist Church*. Ricci was one of the most exemplary and zealous members of the Jansenist party—that Roman Catholic sect, which, for the space of more than two centuries, has been vainly trying to obtain the benefits of our Reformation, without rejecting the authority of the Pope and his Church. He was made Bishop of Pistoia and Prato, in 1780, by the Archduke Leopold, then reigning in Tuscany, who, being also a Jansenist, wished to employ Ricci in the work of ecclesiastical reform, which he meditated in his dominions. The zealous bishop, bound, by his allegiance to Rome, to respect the monastic institutions, was yet too well aware of the depravity which they are apt to produce. He knew that the Dominicans of Tuscany were notoriously profligate, and had for a long time made an infamous use of their exclusive authority over the nuns of their order. In 1642 the *commune* of Pistoia had petitioned the Grand Duke, that the direction of the convents of St. Lucy and St. Catherine should be taken out of the hands of the Dominicans, “on account,” they said, “of the great evils arising from

* Vie de Scipion de Ricci, Evêque de Pistoia et Prato, par De Potter. Brussels, 1825. 3 vols. 8vo.

it, which, out of reverence and modesty, are passed over in silence; for the greatest scandals and worst consequences would follow from the exposure." In another petition by the *Gonfaloniero*, and two hundred noblemen, knights and citizens of Pistoia, it was demanded that the government should "apply a remedy to protect the honour of the nuns, who were of the first families of that town." The circumstances which occasioned these applications were stated *verbally* to the *Auditore* of the Grand Duke, by a trusty messenger commissioned by the *Gonfaloniero* *.

It appears, however, that the same state of things continued in spite of these efforts; for, in 1775, six nuns of St. Catharine presented to the Grand Duke an accusation against the Dominicans, the spiritual directors of the convent, which is literally inserted among the documents appended to the life of Ricci †. The accusation contains details so shocking, that I refer to it with pain. It had, however, the good effect of making Leopold issue an order, prohibiting the monks all communication with the nuns, under pain of imprisonment. This separation produced the most scandalous resistance on the part of the deluded females. They applied to the Cardinal Protector of the order, imploring his assistance to have their directors restored to them; but the cardinal, knowing that his court was not able to cope with Leopold and his brother Joseph, who at that time was giving great alarm to Rome in his Austrian dominions, advised the nuns to stand firm to the privileges of their order, and be assured that the storm would blow over ‡. The cardinal's prediction would probably have been verified if Ricci had not been raised at that period to the see of Pistoia. The new bishop was a man who could not wink at the profligacy of any part of his flock for the sake of their privileges.

* Vol. i. p. 337.

† P. 339.

‡ P. 347.

The accusations of a few uncorrupted nuns were repeated. I will insert a passage which describes in general terms the character of the monks. It is copied from De Potter's French translation, which I prefer to the original Italian, as being in a language generally understood. The writer, Flavia Peruccini, Prioress of the convent of St. Catherine of Pistoia, in her report to the rector of the Episcopal Seminary, having given the names of the most profligate monks who frequented the nunnery, thus continues :

“ Mais à quoi bon en nommer davantage ? Excepté trois ou quatre religieux, parmi tant de moines, actuellement vivans ou déjà morts, que j'ai connus, il n'en étoit pas un seul qui ne fut du même calibre. Tous ils professent les mêmes maximes, et tiennent la même conduite. Ils vivent avec les religieuses plus familièrement que ne vivent entre elles les personnes mariées.”

The details which follow this general charge I will not transfer to my pages. Nor will I give even an abridged account of the horrible state to which the tyrannical laws of the Church of Rome brought the two nuns Spighi and Buonamici. I only refer to their cases, in order to assure my readers, that though such shocking instances are seldom allowed to transpire, they are not unfrequent in the nunneries on the continent. The reason why they do not more frequently appear, may be learned from the conduct of the Pope and his court in the present instance. It is an undeniable fact that the exertions of Bishop Ricci to put a stop to the abominable practices of the Dominicans and their nuns, gave the greatest offence at Rome. Pius VI., in a brief addressed to Ricci, in consequence of the steps he had taken against the offenders, calls him “ an insincere fanatic, a liar, calumniator, seditious, and usurper of other men's rights*.” The Pope could not forgive the exposure which the Bishop's zeal had produced, by declining the method,

* Vol. i. p. 472.

usual in such cases, of accusing the guilty to the Inquisition; for that secret tribunal not only supports the Church of Rome by its terrors, but hides the profligacy arising from her institutions, by the secrecy of its trials. Four times had the nuns Spighi and Buonamici been absolved by means of a private recantation, in which the judges had taken care to insert an abjuration of the principles of the *reformed religion*, though the culprits professed the boldest Spinozism, and the most unbounded debauchery. The profligacy of the monks was evident from these repeated confessions. One of the nuns of St. Catherine had, some time before the proceedings of Ricci, addressed a petition to the Pope, acquainting him with the dissoluteness which prevailed in the convent. Another nun of Santo Sepolcro had given a similar account to the General of the Dominicans. Yet the Pope, in his insulting brief, lavishes the most unbounded praise on the members of that order; and declares, on the word of the General, that no information had been received concerning the monasteries in question. I cannot, however, give a correct idea of the conduct and policy of pope, cardinals, and heads of religious orders, such as it appears from the documents extracted by De Potter. The documents themselves must be consulted.

Q.—Page 156.

REAL INFLUENCE OF ROME AND THE MONKS UPON
LEARNING.

Opinion is no less subject than taste to the periodical turns and changes of fashion. The love of the romantic has lately raised every thing belonging to the middle ages in the estimation of the reading public, and monks and monasteries share the favour into which the period of their full prosperity has grown. We constantly hear of the services

which the monks and their church, have rendered to religion and learning ; and men seem willing either to disbelieve or forget the deep wounds which their gross ignorance, and still grosser immorality, gave to both.

These alternate turns of the public attention to the favourable and unfavourable side of historical subjects, deprive us of the benefits of experience, as we might derive them from the records of former times. To judge of the utility of old institutions, we should be careful not to mistake the accidental effects which they may have produced, for the predominant and decided tendency of their moral operation. There is no human establishment unmixed with evil : of this we are well aware ; but few men are fully impressed with the fact, that no pure and unmixed evil can long exist, except by open violence. When, therefore, we see any law, custom, or establishment supported and cherished for a length of time, we may be sure that its existence is connected with some real, though partial advantages. The philosopher, in such cases, should not confine his observation to the partial operation on either side, good or evil ; but examine, in the first place, whether the original rise of the institution took place at the expense of social prosperity ; and next, whether, upon the whole, it was calculated eventually to improve or degrade society.

The epigram made upon the usurer who, having impoverished a district, founded an extensive almshouse *to keep the poor he had made*, is, I believe, perfectly applicable to the monks and their peculiar church, in regard to the mental interests of mankind. They first barbarized the polished subjects of imperial Rome, and then fed them with the intellectual garbage of their schools.

A number of circumstances made the Christians of the primitive ages extremely averse to profane literature. The first cause of this was their general want of education ; for it pleased God to change the moral face of the world by the

instrumentality of the poor and ignorant, that the supernatural work of his grace in the conversion of mankind might be evident. "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, that no flesh should glory in his presence *." The abuse of the name of science was, in the second place, a source of strong dislike to knowledge among the early Christians. Abominable practices of sortilege and imposture were common among those men who, under the name of mathematicians, Chaldeans, and astrologers, were known all over the empire, in the first century of the Christian æra. The prevalence of these abuses may be conceived by the multitude of books on magic which were burnt at Ephesus; in consequence of the preaching of Paul †.

But nothing appears to have so much prepared the darkness of the middle ages, as the prevalence of monkery in the Christian church. The extraordinary reverence paid to the grossly ignorant multitudes who inhabited the Egyptian deserts ‡ must naturally have tended to the discredit of study and mental acquirements. When the monastic institution was introduced into the West, and became widely spread under the patronage of the Popes, a spirit of opposition to every thing that can refine and enlighten the mind, became visible. As both literature and the arts had flourished among the heathen, zeal and piety conspired to render them odious to the generality of Christians. If, as there is reason to suspect it, the Christians joined the barbarians in the destruction of the works of art, the charge falls especially

* 1 Cor. i. 27, 29.

† "Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver." Acts xix. 19.

‡ There were 76,000 monks in Egypt at the end of the 4th century.

upon the monks, who appear to have courted and gained the favour of the invaders*.

But nothing is more certain than that the neglect of ancient literature, and the substitution of scholastic learning, was chiefly the work of him who, as it were in mockery of titles bestowed by men, is called the *Great*, among the Popes who bore the name of Gregory. That his zeal in the propagation of Christianity was extraordinary and sincere, it would be injustice to doubt; but it is equally indubitable, that, to a mind grossly superstitious and ignorant, he joined a shocking indifference to moral character, in those who felt disposed to favour the Roman see, and her then maturing plans of supremacy. His flattery of the monster Phocas, is a disgrace both to Gregory and to his see, and shows the character of papal ambition in its true colours †.

Gregory enjoyed a most extraordinary moral influence in his time, which he wholly directed to the object of effacing the few remaining traces of ancient literature, and introducing monkish learning in its worst shape. "A report has reached our ears," he writes to a professor of grammar, "which I cannot mention without shame, that your fraternity expounds grammar to some persons: this is so painful to us, and it so vehemently raises our scorn, that it has

* Dr. Clarke, in his work on *Greek Marbles*, seems to understand two passages from Eunapius in this sense. I confess that, considering the circumstances of the case, the fact is extremely probable to me; but the words of Eunapius may be understood, not of direct, but indirect co-operation with the irruption of the barbarians into Greece. Eunapius says, that "the impiety of those who wore black garments (the monks) had opened the passage of the Thermopylæ to Alaric and his barbarians." This may be understood in the same sense as it is said that the weakness of the Roman government invited the invasion of the northern tribes. The Latin translation is too definite for the original, and does not render it strictly. Instead of the abstract word ἀσεβεία, it has *impia gens*. See *Eunapius De Vit. Philos. in Maximo*.

† See the article under Gregory's name in Bayle's Dictionary. See also Gibbon.

changed all I have previously said into wailing and sorrow—the same mouth, indeed, cannot hold the praises of Jupiter and of Christ.” Gregory made a public boast of his ignorance, and inveighed with such vehemence against all polite literature, that the report of his having burnt the Palatine library, collected at Rome by the emperors, though doubted by modern critics, receives a strong confirmation from his character. “I scorn,” he says, “that art of speaking which is conveyed by external teaching. The very tenor of this epistle shows that I do not avoid the clashing of metacism, nor the obscurity of barbarism: I despise all trouble about prepositions and cases, because I hold it most unworthy to put the heavenly oracles under the restraint of a grammarian*.”

With such a pattern of elegance and learning before them, the Christian world had no fair chance, at the beginning of the seventh century, to escape the intellectual darkness which was settling on Europe. Gregory’s books on morals were generally substituted in the room of Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero. Pope Theodore 1st gave out that he had recovered the lost copy of that work by a revelation of St. Peter and St. Paul, and thus enhanced its value to those who, from distant countries, sent for it to Rome, to make it the source and standard of their knowledge †. Abstracts and digests of it were industriously compiled for the use of students; and Gregory became the founder, master, and leader of the barbarous schools of the middle ages.

The limits of a note oblige me to refer my readers to the interesting history of the rise of school philosophy, given by Brucker, *Period. II. Pars II. cap. ii. de Philos. Christ. Occident. tom. iii.*

* Non metacismi collisionem effugio, non barbarismi confusionem devito: situs, motusque præpositionum casusque servare contemno, quia indignum vehementer existimo, ut verba cælestis oraculi restringam sub regulis Donati.

† Mariana claims the honour of the revelation for Tajon, Bishop of Saragossa. *Hist. de Espana*, l. vi. c. viii.

On the moral character of the monks, Fleury, a Roman Catholic, gives considerable information in his eighth discourse, prefixed to Vol. XX. of his *Histoire Ecclesiastique*.

R.—Page 171.

PROCLAMATION OF THE JUBILEE FOR THE
YEAR OF 1825.

The Bull by which the present Pope has proclaimed the jubilee is so curious a document, that posterity will hardly believe it was really published in the last year of the first quarter of the nineteenth century. I wish to increase its circulation as much as it may be in my power; for I am persuaded no arguments are so powerful against Rome as the authentic documents in which she breathes out her genuine spirit. I beg the attention of the reader to the catalogue of curious relics, by which the Pope tries to draw pilgrims to his capital; and to that part of the Bull where he addresses all Protestants, inviting them “to have one consentient mind with this (the Roman) Church, *the mother and mistress of all others, out of which there is no salvation.*”

The translation which I use is taken from the Roman Catholic *Laity's Directory* for 1825.

LEO BISHOP,

SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD,

*To all the faithful of Christ who shall see these presents, health
and apostolical benediction.*

In the merciful dispensations of the Lord, it is at length granted to our humility, to announce to you with joy, that

the period is at hand, when what we regretted was omitted at the commencement of the present century, in consequence of the direful calamities of the times, is to be happily observed according to the established custom of our forefathers; for that most propitious year, intitled to the utmost religious veneration, is approaching, when christians from every region of the earth will resort to this our holy city and the chair of blessed Peter, and when the most abundant treasures of reconciliation and grace will be offered as means of salvation to all the faithful disposed to perform the exercises of piety which are prescribed. During this year, which we truly call the acceptable time and the time of salvation, we congratulate you that a favourable occasion is presented, when after the miserable accumulation of disasters under which we have groaned, we may strive to renew all things in Christ, by the salutary atonement of all christian people. We have therefore resolved, in virtue of the authority given to us by Heaven, fully to unlock that sacred treasure, composed of the merits, sufferings, and virtues of Christ our Lord, and of his Virgin Mother, and of all the saints, which the Author of human salvation has intrusted to our dispensation.

In this it becomes us to magnify the abundant riches of the divine clemency, by which Christ, preventing us with the blessings of sweetness, so willed the infinite power of his merits to be diffused through the parts of his mystical body, that they by reciprocal co-operation, and by the most wholesome communication of advantages flowing from faith, which worketh by charity, might mutually assist each other: and by the immense price of the blood of the Lord, and for his sake and virtue, as also by the merits and suffrages of the saints, might gain the remission of the temporal punishment, which the fathers of the Council of Trent have taught is not always entirely remitted, as is the case in baptism, by the sacrament of penance.

Let the earth, therefore, hear the words of our mouth, and let the whole world joyfully hearken to the voice of the priestly trumpet sounding forth to God's people the sacred Jubilee. We proclaim that the year of atonement and pardon, of redemption and grace, of remission and indulgences is arrived; in which we know that those benefits which the old law, the messenger of things to come, brought every fiftieth year to the Jewish people, are renewed in a much more sacred manner by the accumulation of spiritual blessing through Him by whom came peace and truth. For if the lands that had been sold, and property that had passed into other hands, were reclaimed in that salutary year, so we recover *now*, by the infinite liberality of God, the virtues, and merits, and gifts, of which we are despoiled by sin. If then the chains of human bondage ceased to exist,—so at present, by shaking off the most galling yoke of diabolical subjection, we are called to the liberty of God's children, to that liberty which Christ has granted us. If, in fine, by the precept of the law, pecuniary debts were then pardoned to debtors, and they became discharged from every bond,—we are also exonerated from a much heavier debt of sins, and are released by the divine mercy from the punishments incurred by them.

Eagerly wishing that so many and such great advantages may accrue to your souls, and confidently invoking God, the giver of all good gifts, through the bowels of his mercy, in conformity to the exigency of the prescribed period, and the pious institutes of the Roman pontiffs, our predecessors, and walking in their footsteps,—we, with the assent of our venerable brethren, the cardinals of the holy Roman church, do, by the authority of Almighty God, and of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own, for the glory of God himself, the exaltation of the Catholic church, and the sanctification of all christian people, ordain and publish the

universal and most solemn Jubilee, to commence in this holy city from the first vespers of the Nativity of our most holy Saviour Jesus Christ, next ensuing, and to continue during the whole year 1825; during which year of the jubilee we mercifully give and grant in the Lord a plenary indulgence, remission, and pardon of all their sins, to all the faithful of Christ of both sexes, truly penitent and confessing their sins, and receiving the holy communion, who shall devoutly visit the churches of blessed Peter and Paul, as also of St. John Lateran and St. Mary Major, of this city, for thirty successive or uninterrupted (whether natural or ecclesiastical) days, to be counted, to wit, from the first vespers of one day until the evening twilight of the day following, provided they be Romans or inhabitants of this city; but if they be pilgrims or otherwise strangers, if they shall do the same for fifteen days, and shall pour forth their pious prayers to God for the exaltation of the holy church, the extirpation of heresies, concord of Catholic princes, and the safety and tranquillity of christian people.

And because it may happen that some persons who shall set out on their journey, or shall arrive in this city, may be detained in their way, or even in the city itself, by illness or other lawful excuse, or be prevented by death from completing the prescribed number of days, or perhaps even beginning them, and may be unable to comply with the premises, and visit the said churches, we will, in our desire of graciously favouring their pious and ready disposition as far as we can in the Lord, that the same, being truly penitent and confessing their sins, and receiving the holy communion, become partakers of the aforesaid indulgence and remission as fully as if they had actually visited the said churches on the days by us appointed; so that though hindered by the necessities aforesaid, they may, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, obtain the effect of their desires.

These things we announce to you, beloved children, with a

fatherly affection, that you, who labour and are burthened, may hasten thither, where you know for certain that refreshment awaits you. Neither is it allowable to remain indifferent and heartless about acquiring these salutary riches from the eternal treasures of divine grace which the most holy and indulgent mother, the church, throws open to you, whilst men are so eagerly intent on amassing earthly possessions, which the moth consumes or the rust eats away. And when, from the earliest times, there has been great and constant concourse of people, of every station, flocking from all parts of the globe, in defiance of the length and dangers of the journey, to visit this principal residence of the fine arts; which they admire like a brilliant prodigy, for the magnificence of its buildings, and the majesty of the place, and the beauty of its monuments,—it would indeed be base and most foreign to the desire of never-ending happiness, to pretend the difficulty or dangers of the journey, and similar excuses, to decline the pilgrimage to Rome. There is, beloved brethren, there is in reserve what will most amply remunerate you for every inconvenience and hardship: yes, these sufferings, if any such occur, are not fit to be compared to the weight of glory to come, which, with God's assistance, will be secured to you by the means prepared for the sanctification of your souls. For you will here reap the most abundant fruits of penance, by which you may offer to God the sacrifice of your bodies, chastised by continued acts of self-denial: may religiously perform the works of piety prescribed by the conditions of the indulgence; and may add a new force to your fixed and persevering resolution to satisfy for your past crimes by penitential austerities, and to avoid all sin for the time to come.

Therefore ascend with loins girt up to this holy Jerusalem, this priestly and royal city, which, by the sacred chair of the blessed Peter, become the capital of the world, is seen to maintain more extensive dominion by the divine influence of

religion than by earthly authority. "For this is the city," said St. Charles, exhorting his people to visit Rome in the holy year, "this is the city whose soil, walls, altars, churches, tombs of the martyrs, and every visible object, suggest something religious to the mind, as they experience and feel, who approach these sacred abodes with proper dispositions." Consider how much it conduces to excite faith and charity, to proceed round those ancient places, by which the majesty of religion is wonderfully recommended; then to place before one's eyes so many thousand martyrs, who have consecrated this very soil with their blood—to enter their churches, to witness their honours, and venerate their shrines. Now, "if heaven is not so resplendent, when the sun darts forth its rays, as is the city of the Romans, possessing those two luminaries, Peter and Paul, diffusing their light through the universe," as St. John Chrysostome said, who will dare, without the affection of the tenderest devotion, to approach their **CONFESSIONS**, to prostrate before their tombs, and kiss their chains, more precious than gold and gems? Who, in fine, can refrain from tears, when, perceiving the cradle of Christ, he shall recollect the infant Jesus crying in the manger; or, saluting the most sacred instruments of our Lord's passion, shall meditate on the Redeemer of the world hanging on the cross?

Since these venerable monuments of religion, by the singular bounty of divine Providence, are collected in this city alone, they are truly the sweetest pledges of love—that the Lord loveth the gates of Sion above all the tents of Jacob; and they affectionately invite you all, dearest children, without delay to ascend the mountain, where it has pleased the Lord to dwell.

But here our solicitude demands that we especially address all ranks in this holy city; reminding them that the eyes of the faithful, arriving from every part of the world, are fixed upon them; that, therefore, nothing but what is grave, mo-

derate, and becoming the Christian, ought to appear in them; so that all may seek from their conduct an example of modesty, innocence, and of every kind of virtue. Hence from this chosen people, among whom the Prince of pastors has pleased that the chair of the most blessed Peter should be fixed, let the rest of mankind learn how to reverence the Catholic church and ecclesiastical authority, to obey its precepts, and always to render great honour to ecclesiastical things and persons.

Let the respect that is due to churches be conspicuous in them, so that nothing may be observed by strangers of a nature to bring the sacred rights of religion or holy places into contempt or disrepute; nothing that can offend decency, purity, or modesty; nothing but what will excite admiration and edification. Let all be correct and regular in their conduct; let them show by their external behaviour that they attend the duties of religion, not merely by their corporeal presence, but in the true spirit of piety and devotion.

We also press on their attention not to appear engaged, on the days appointed for sacred offices and the honour of God and his saints, in the celebration of feasting, and amusements, and unseasonable mirth, and wanton licentiousness. In fine, "whatever things are true, whatever are modest, whatever are just, whatever are holy, whatever are lovely, whatever are of good fame,"—let these shine forth in the Roman people, so that we may congratulate them that the glory of faith and piety, for which they were recommended as an example by the apostle Paul, and which have been transmitted to them by their ancestors as their best inheritance, has received no tarnish, but has even been illustrated in their zeal and edifying conduct.

We are indeed refreshed with this consoling hope, that each one will be zealous for the better gifts, that the sheep of the Lord's flock will run to the embraces of the Shepherd, and that all will be as an army in battle array, having charity

for their banner. Therefore, "Jerusalem, lift up thine eyes round about, and see: thy sons from far shall come to thee, and thy heart shall wonder and be enlarged." But would to God "that the children of them that afflicted thee would come bowing down to thee, and all that slander thee would worship the steps of thy feet." To you, to you we address ourselves with the entire affection of our apostolic heart, whom we bewail as separated from the true church of Christ and the road of salvation. In this common exultation, this alone is wanted: grant it to your most loving parent, that at length, called by the inspiration of the Spirit from above into his admirable light, and bursting asunder every snare of division, you may have one consentient mind with this church, the mother and mistress of all others, out of which there is no salvation. Enlarging our heart, we will joyfully receive you into our fatherly bosom, and will bless the God of all consolation, who, in this greatest triumph of Catholic faith, shall enrich us with these riches of his mercy.

But you, venerable brethren, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, co-operate with these our cares and desires; call a solemn assembly, gather the people, that your children may be prompted to receive those gifts which the Father of mercies has entrusted for distribution amongst the children of his love, through the ministry of our humility; remind them, that short are the days of this our pilgrimage; and since we know not at what hour the Father of the household may come, that we must therefore be on the watch, and bear in our hands burning lamps full of the oil of charity, so that we may readily and cheerfully meet the Lord's arrival. To you it belongs to explain with perspicuity the power of indulgences; what is their efficacy, not only in the remission of the canonical penance, but also of the temporal punishment due to the divine justice for past sin; and what succour is afforded out of this heavenly treasure, from the merits of Christ and his saints, to such as have departed real penitents

in God's love, yet before they had duly satisfied by fruits, worthy of penance for sin of commission and omission, and are now purifying in the fire of purgatory, that an entrance may be opened for them into their eternal country, where nothing defiled is admitted. Courage and attention, venerable brethren! for some there are, following that wisdom which is not from God, and covering themselves with the clothing of sheep,—under the usual pretence of a more refined piety, are now sowing amongst the people erroneous comments on this subject. Do you teach the flock their several duties; in what deeds of piety and charity they ought to employ themselves; with what diligence, with what sense of sorrow they ought to examine themselves and their past life; that they should remove and correct what is pernicious in their conduct, so that they may obtain the most abundant and proper fruit of this most sacred indulgence.

But it becomes you, venerable brethren, principally to attend to this, that the members of your respective flocks, who undertake the pilgrimage, may perform it with a religious spirit: that they should avoid every thing on the journey which can disturb their pious purpose, or withdraw them from their holy resolutions; and that they should diligently follow up whatever is conducive to animate and inflame devotion. If, taking into consideration your persons and places, you be at liberty to visit this capital of religion, much splendour will be reflected by your presence on this solemnity; you will accumulate the most abundant riches of the divine mercy, and on your return will delightfully share the same, as most valuable treasures, amongst your people.

Nor can we doubt but that all our dearest children in Christ, the Catholic princes, will assist us on this great occasion with their powerful concurrence; that these our views, so beneficial to souls, may have the desired effect. For this purpose, we entreat and exhort them, by their com-

commendable zeal for religion, to second the ardour of our venerable episcopal brethren, to co-operate diligently with their exertions, and to provide safe conduct and protection, and houses of hospitable reception, along the roads throughout their several dominions, that they may not be exposed to any injury in the performance of this most pious work. They must be fully aware what a general conspiracy was formed to root up the most sacred rights of the altar and the throne, and what wonders the Lord has wrought, who stretching forth his hand, has humbled the arrogance of the strong. Let them reflect, that constant and suitable thanks ought to be rendered to the Lord of lords, to whom we are indebted for the victory; that the succour of the divine mercy is to be obtained by humble and frequent prayer; and that, as the wickedness of the impious is still creeping like a cancer, He may accomplish, in his clemency towards us, that work which he himself has begun. This, truly, we had chiefly in view, when we deliberated on the celebration of the Jubilee; well persuaded of the importance of such a sacrifice of praise to the Lord, in this common consent of all Christian people, for obtaining those heavenly gifts, all the treasures of which we now throw open. Let, therefore, the Catholic princes labour for this purpose; and as they are endowed with great and generous minds, let them protect this most sacred work with earnest zeal and perpetual care. Assuredly they will learn, by experience, that by this means particularly they will secure to themselves the mercies of God; and that they certainly add to the support of their own government by whatever they do for the protection of religion and the encouragement of piety; so that, having destroyed every seed of vice, a delightful crop of virtues may succeed.

But in order that all may prosper to our wishes, we entreat your prayers with God, dear children, who are of

the fold of Christ ; for we confide in your common vows and supplications, which you put forth to the divine mercy, for the welfare of the Catholic religion, and for the return of those that err to the truth, and for the happiness of princes ; and that you will hereby powerfully assist our infirmity in supporting our most weighty functions.

And that these presents may more easily come to the knowledge of all the faithful in every place, we will, that precisely the same credit be paid even to printed copies, signed nevertheless by the hand of some public notary, and certified by the seal of a person invested with ecclesiastical dignity, as would be paid to these present, if they should be produced or shown.

Be it, therefore, utterly unlawful for any man to infringe, or by any rash attempt to gainsay, this page of our ordinance, promulgation, grant, exhortation, demand, and will. But if any one shall presume to attempt it, let him know, that he shall incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of his blessed apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, in the year of our Lord's Incarnation, 1824, on the 24th May, in the first year of our Pontificate.

A. G. Cardinal, Pro-Datary.

J. Cardinal Albani.

APPENDIX I.

ON THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.

“ THE Church at Trent invited the heretics of the XVIth century (those who broached or renewed the errors which are now revived) to plead their own cause before the Council: these blind and obstinate men refused to do so; but their cause was examined fully and dispassionately, sentence at length was passed, and the matter set at rest for ever. *Causa finita est.*”

So says Dr. Doyle * in an address to his clergy, whose members he forbids to hold public conferences with the Protestants on the free circulation of the Bible, and the leading points of controversy connected with the authority of the written word of God. Broad and positive assertions of this kind, seasoned with the epithets of *blind* and *obstinate men*, and *heretics*, and swelled by the mysterious phrase of *the Church at Trent*, are in perfect harmony with the system they support. The delusion so long and so successfully practised by that combination of Italian priests, who, for ages past, have turned the superstition and credulity of Europe into a source of wealth and power to themselves,

* These words are copied from his Address, as it appeared in the *New Times*, of the 8th September, 1825.

consists chiefly in the invention and artful circulation of a set of words of high sound, conveying to the common mind no other distinct idea but that of *submission on their part* to an imaginary being called the Church, and consequently to a certain number of men who act in that Church's name—that church, that omniscient oracle, which has defined every thing, but has never defined herself*. Nay, but *the Church at Trent!*—Oh! that “local habitation” is of infinite value; not, however, at Trent itself, when the Church was a thing which might be approached, heard, and seen—but at the distance of more than three centuries, conjured up in the warm imagination of the Irish, by the spell of a *Pastoral Letter*. No: Rome has always been the worst place in the world to believe in the Pope; and *Trent*, at the time of the Council, the most unfavourable position for seeing *the Church* to advantage. I do not say this on conjecture—I give the impressions of a countryman of mine called Pañan, who was present as *Chargé d’Affaires* of the Spanish ambassador, the Marquis of Pescara †. Pañan used often to repeat, that “he deserved much credit for being a Christian, after having been present at two elections of Popes, and at a Council.” But who warrants the authenticity of that speech? No heretic, I can assure the reader; but one of the holy fathers of the Council of Trent—Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, bishop of Salamanca. I request the attention of Dr. Doyle’s clergy to a few facts relating to the *Church at Trent*, which, though curious, they can never expect to find in their bishop’s *Pastorals*. Detail would certainly spoil the roundness of assertion, which the learned doctor thinks most befitting his cause.

* In the conferences preparatory to the decrees of the 11th session of the Council of Trent, Vincent Lunello, a Franciscan Friar, proposed that a definition of the church and her authority should precede the declarations on the disputed points of doctrine. The motion was rejected. See Sarpi’s Hist. of the Council of Trent, l. ii. p. 155. Geneva, 1629.

† Francis d’Avalos.

The Spanish bishops who sat in the council of Trent (I believe about thirteen in number) being desirous to check the exorbitant power which the Roman See had usurped from their episcopal order, set up a sturdy opposition to the prelates, whom the Pope had sent to support him. The court of Spain, under the Emperor Charles V. and his son Philip II., during whose reigns the council was held, at distant intervals; though jealous of the ascendancy of the Pope, was also jealous of the Protestants: and as either feeling prevailed, so it checked or encouraged the opposition of its bishops. Let me, however, caution the Romanist divines of Carlow, against the suspicion of heterodoxy in the Spanish prelates: for a more determined set of bigoted Catholics never hurled their curses on Lutherans and Calvinists. Yet, they were so little edified by the appearance of the *Church at Trent*, that the pictures they draw of her in their private letters, and unpublished writings, might be supposed to have been from the pen of one Paolo Sarpi, whose history of that ecclesiastical congress, were it not forbidden under pain of excommunication, I would recommend the reverend gentlemen to read. The ambassadors, too, sent to Trent by the Spanish kings to moderate the inspiration of the Fathers, did not spare the holy council in their dispatches. Many of these documents, either original, or in authentic copies*, are preserved in Spain, and were lately examined by Don Joaquin Lorenzo de Villanueva, whose *Literary Life* I have previously had occasion to quote. The second volume of that Life concludes with an Appendix, in which that learned ecclesiastic has given copious extracts from those interesting manuscripts.

* Some of the originals were destroyed in a fire which consumed part of the library of the Dukes of Alva. Fortunately, copies had been previously made.

It is from one of them, entitled *Lo sucedido en el concilio de Trento desde 1561 hasta que se acabó*, and written by Mendoza, bishop of Salamanca, that I have borrowed the words of Pañan. But as these extracts contain much important matter, I will here give a selection, in English, though at the trouble of translating from the Spanish of the XVIIth century, which, from its looseness and want of precision, presents no trifling difficulty to the version*.

When Charles V. doubting his power to stop the progress of the Reformation, wished to try the effect of a general council, he found the Pope decidedly averse to that step. I cannot enter into a detailed history of the intrigues and evasions which were employed at Rome, either to prevent the meeting, or to stop its progress when assembled. The causes of such a determined aversion on the part of Rome were, alarm for her own power and abuses, and a consciousness that all embodying of that undefined thing, the church, though useful to the Roman see, when melted down by time; is apt, for the time being, to destroy

* In 1714, Dr. Geddes published a tract on the Council of Trent, consisting chiefly of the correspondence between the Spanish ambassador Vargas and Cardinal Granville. The originals of those letters were communicated to Geddes by Bishop Stillingfleet, who had them from Sir William Trumbull, to whose hands they had come among the papers of his grandfather, who, for fifteen years, had been envoy at Brussels, in the reign of James I. It seems that the documents were sold by the descendants of some of the secretaries of Cardinal Granville, and that, when purchased, it was stipulated that they were not to be published during the vender's life. Many other such documents, all unanimously proving the council of Trent to have been a farce conducted by the court of Rome, to impose upon the world, have been published, and lie forgotten on the shelves of a few libraries. Even Dr. Geddes's tract is not easily found. It is to be hoped that my mention of Dr. Villanueva's Extracts, and the few translations I am about to give, may induce some lover of truth and true religion, to write a short and clear account of that council, whose name is still an instrument of delusion. The documents in Dr. Villanueva's work, are distinct, if I may trust a comparison of dates, from those of Dr. Geddes.

the superstitious awe of her spiritual subjects. But let us proceed to the proofs of that reluctance, without discussing its source.

My first witness shall be Charles V. himself, in a letter to Juan de Vega, Lord of Grajal, his ambassador at Rome; dated Brussels, October 16, 1544.

“Your best plan will be (says the Emperor) to abstain from all mention of reform of abuses, which, as you know, is very painful to the Pope, and to all the disorderly members of that court, and they are sure to find evasions; not that they fear that they will have to reform their lives, but on account of their exactions, which they call *rights of the chamber*.”

Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, Spanish ambassador at Venice, and accredited in the same capacity to the Council of Trent, wrote to the emperor from the latter town, on the 28th March, 1545, in these words.

“One of the reasons why it is said that the Pope dreads the council, is, that there are some cardinals, his enemies, to whom money^s was offered by him at his election, and these know others who accepted it. I remember to have heard this from the Cardinal of Ravenna, but I cannot tell whether he said it from spite.”

Mendoza well knew the necessity of qualifying such information with a cautious doubt on his part; which will be observed as a regular conclusion to similar passages. There is, however, no reason to acquit the Pope, by charging the Cardinal with being the author of such a piece of scandal against the head of his church. That church, besides, must have been in the moral condition in which the early Protestants describe her, when the Pope might be accused of having purchased his supernatural and miraculous office, and that by one of the members of that college, whose exclusive privilege it is to furnish candidates for the Holy

See, and appoint the true successor of St. Peter. I am not aware that the accusation of simony has been brought by historians against Paul III., of whom Mendoza speaks; but the practice of purchasing the Roman pontificate was so common before the Reformation, and the lives of the Popes were often so notoriously profligate, that it is evident Mendoza's doubt was of the same nature as those which the Inquisition has made fashionable upon such subjects, even among the most determined unbelievers of Italy and Spain. That the predecessor of Paul, Clement VII., opposed the convocation of a council from a consciousness of the nullity of his election, arising from simony and the illegitimacy of his birth, is too certain even for Romish historians to deny. Were the moral character of Paul III. free from blame, we might be inclined to reject the Cardinal's charge, though supported by its consistency with the usual practices of the period. But Paul, the father, and author of the council of Trent, began his spiritual reign by giving a cardinal's hat to each of his two grandsons, the eldest of whom was only six years old. And let not such as derive their knowledge of the Council of Trent exclusively through Dr. Doyle's *Pastorals*, imagine that the two scarlet-robed nurslings had sprung from the Father of the Faithful, either under the blessing of the church in wedlock previous to his elevation to the purple, or that they were both the issue of only one living proof of a transient frailty. *Alessandro Farnese*, and *Guido Ascanio Sforza*, the two diminutive eminences, were the Pope's grandsons, the first by his Holiness's son, *Pietro Aloysio*, the second by the Holy Father's daughter, *Constanza*. I must add, that one of the transactions which more than divided Paul's attention to the Council of Trent, during the first sessions, was the separation of Parma and Placentia, from the patrimony of the Church, to which they had been annexed by that *Military* Pope Julius II. to be-

stow them on his own son, Pietro Aloysio. It is curious, indeed, to see a Pope so practically acquainted with the consequences of Romish celibacy, and so encumbered with the cares of an unlawful progeny, convoke a council to curse any one who should question the laws which bind the priesthood to perpetual continency. But these anomalies produce little impression upon the true sons of Rome. The good monk Onuphrius Panvinius, who wrote the lives of the Popes, as a continuator of Platina, makes out Paul III. one of the most virtuous men that ever sat in Saint Peter's chair. The marginal note or index to the list of Cardinals created by that Pope, beginning with the two children, his grandsons, invites the reader's attention to the *holiness of his leading principles* in raising persons to that dignity; and is worded *Giudizio santissimo di Paulo 3 nel crear Cardinali* *. Whether the note be from the author, or his editor, it is a remarkable instance of the blindness and moral insensibility which certain doctrines can produce when supported as a party distinction.

As the opinion even of Catholic bishops, if left to themselves, might differ from the *most pious judgment*, the *Giudizio santissimo*, of their Roman head, Paul III. was indefatigable in preventing that evil. The Spanish ambassador Mendoza, in a letter of the 14th of April, 1545, informed the Emperor of the measures by which the Pope was collecting Dr. Doyle's *Church at Trent*.

“It is said that twenty-five bishops are now coming, and that the greatest part of those of Italy will follow. I have been informed that the Cardinal Santa Croce has expressed his hopes that, in the council, things will be decided by a majority which will consist of bishops sent by the Pope. I do not know whether it is true.”

* Platina, *Vite de Pontefici*. Venice, 1643.

Mendoza's doubt, if it was not affected, relates merely to the authority of the Cardinal; for in a dispatch, dated Trent, April 2, only twelve days before the one just quoted, he asserts the same thing in stronger language, to Cardinal Granville.

“I am informed that the said Seignory (of Venice) has received letters from Rome assuring that Miniately* is sent with unlimited powers to act as he pleases: and that this will certainly take place, on account of the fear which the Pope feels of the council, which is very great.....As these men (the Legates) are, on the one hand, greatly afraid of the Council, which they would prevent; and, on the other, should the Council be assembled, are trying to be absolute masters in it, I should not be surprised if they would take advantage of me on these trifles (the subject of precedence), and try to insult me, as the emperor's representative, by insisting on my giving way to them, and so they gain this point; or, if I protest and absent myself, they gain this other, and will celebrate the Council without an ambassador from the emperor, doing in it what they like: or, if I present myself, and insist upon having my proper seat, they will turn the whole into noise and confusion; declaring that I have disturbed the Council, and thus they will stop its proceedings, which is what they wish for, if they can find an opportunity.....Perhaps the worst would be to give them a handle for quarrelling; chiefly on account of the hinderance to the service of God, and the loss to Christendom, which would ensue from the dissolution of the Council; for I believe them capable of seizing the slightest occasion; and, in the second place, because they would thus have their hearts' desire, which is to lay traps in our way.”

Mendoza still addresses the Emperor in similar language,

* It should be Mignanello. Fabio Mignanello was sent as Nuncio to Ferdinand, in Germany. See Sarpi Hist. Conc. Trid. lib. ii. p. 117.

though with the usual saving clause, in a dispatch of the 16th April, of the same year.

“ Whenever mention is made of the Council, men do not fail to speak of a reformation in head and members ; and it might happen that the Council should be above the Pope. Since . . . this reformation is to be made by a majority, and Bishops are coming from Spain and France in the name of the Provinces, were they furnished with proxies from all their brethren, the Pope fears to be overwhelmed by a multitude of unanimous voices. He has therefore made an ordinance, that prelates be not allowed to vote by proxy, unless they show good cause to be absent. He has, however, delayed this decree, in order to take himself the advantage of it against the bishops ; so that by the presence of the Italian prelates, who are many, and all his own, and there being but few from other parts, he will be absolute lord of the Council, and able to *manage it* * as he likes, because the votes which may be against him, will be of no avail. Though the Pope's intention cannot but be holy, I form my judgment from what I have seen done on matters of less concern . . . and supposing that bishops should come from your Majesty's realms, and other countries, so as to fill up the Council, he might find himself in an awkward predicament.”

The reader probably has observed a frequent allusion to the intended manner of taking the opinion of the Council. Sarpi mentions, † that the Spanish Viceroy of Naples, had suggested the plan of sending a small number of Bishops from every kingdom, who should express their faith, and views of ecclesiastical reform, in the name of all the others. To this plan of voting by kingdoms or provinces, we have seen Mendoza alluding in the last extract. It was the

* *Baratar*, to haggle, to truckle.

† Hist. Concil. Trid. lib. ii. p. 125.

method, in fact, which the two anti-papal Councils of Constance and Basle adopted, to oppose the crowd of Italian bishops, and the alluring bribes of the court of Rome. But the first of those Councils was held when the Romanists were not able to know the true Pope from his rivals; and the latter in open defiance of Rome: so that the ambition of the Bishops was at liberty to devise restraints to the papal power. But Paul III. and his court, who kept those two Councils in view, in order to avoid, at Trent, every thing which, one hundred years before, had endangered their interests, insisted upon the decrees being made by a numerical majority of votes, and carried that point, as every thing else, by management and intrigue.

The Pope's wish to avoid the meeting of the Council, was nevertheless so strong, that the same Viceroy of Naples, Don Pedro de Toledo, wrote to Charles V. from Cerrata on the 5th of May, 1545, in the following terms.

“As his Holiness *cannot digest the Council* *, he sees a beam in every straw, which presents a difficulty.....I leave your Majesty to judge of the *aversion* † with which these people look on the completion of the Council.”

I will add one witness more, the Lord of Grajal, Spanish ambassador near the Pope, who, writing to Mendoza, says :

“It is necessary to proceed at the Council with the greatest caution, so that the Pope shall have no pretext to be off; for, as he dreads the Council more than any thing in the world, these men think of nothing else, and contrive nothing else, but how to avoid it. They would, indeed, avail themselves of the smallest opening to escape from it, with perfect disregard of the scandal which the world would receive thereby.....It seems also desirable, at the beginning of the Council, to use words of great respect, and make

* *La hace mal estomago.*

† *La intincion*, settled hatred, in old, and now vulgar Spanish.

a show of similar feelings towards his Holiness, and the authority of the Holy See, and that no mention be made of the power of the Pope, till the Council is firmly established.”

Such were the auspices under which the Council of Trent opened its sessions. The following extracts from the Spanish documents will give some idea of the influence which regulated its acts and decisions.

Extract of a Letter written to Cardinal Granville by the Spanish ambassador Don Francisco de Vargas, at Trent, October 1, 1551.*

“The subject of reform is a habitual cause of restlessness to the Pope and his ministers, and has, for many years, been the object of their struggles, not to let it slip out of their hands, so that nothing shall be done but what the Pope approves, and that the Council may not interfere with any thing, but according to his will. On that account they spend their time on other subjects, that none may be left for this, all which we now see put into practice, besides that the Legate has clearly told it to Don Francisco . . . The archbishop of Sazar, who is to make the speech at this session†, showed it to the Legate (for so they will have it); and, to be short, the archbishop has told me, that he obliges him to suppress all he had introduced about reform, and the utility of provincial Councils, telling him plainly that the Pope

* *The original is in the private library of the king of Spain. Villanueva, tom. ii. p. 416.*

† The order of proceeding consisted of *particular congregations*, where the divines discussed the subjects; *general congregations*, where the bishops voted the decrees; and *public sessions*, where the decrees were published. These public meetings were intended for show, and celebrated with great pomp; every thing else was private.

would take great offence, especially as coming from him, being a Prelate. I had seen the speech, and, to say truth, it was as moderate and modest, on that topic, as possible. Your Lordship may hereby understand the course of these matters, and whether there is any chance that the Church be reformed at this time. The cause of so many evils, heresies, and the loss of so many kingdoms and provinces, is this neglect of the true remedy, *ob solam dominandi libidinem*. There are people, indeed, who seem not to care if every thing should come to an end with themselves; which is extremely unfortunate

“From this determined mind of the Popes, and especially of the one we now have (Julius III.), will come, that if the prelates should attempt to treat the subject of reform with any freedom (as it would be just that they both had the power, and would exert it), they must fail: for the Pope and his ministers have the lead of the Council, and have reduced its being and substance to themselves. Opposition would only alarm the Pope and his ministers, and give them impudence enough to upset what is going on here, and bring us into fresh troubles, by occasioning a rupture between the Pope and his Majesty The Legate is, accordingly, canvassing, and smoothing matters, because (he says) that the Spaniards are too zealous and austere. . . . The result is, that as we wish to have the Council, and, by all means, to avoid its being dissolved, we must leave it entirely to the Pope, and content ourselves with no more reform than he will have, and such as his Legates may concert, and not otherwise; than which nothing can be more injurious to the authority of the present and all future Councils. But this is what they wish to establish and sanction, by means of their palliatives, as if the world were blind.”

Extract from a Letter of Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza to the Emperor Charles V., dated Trent, April, 1554.

...“As to the circumstances of the Council, they can hardly be worse than they are: in the first place, because its commencement shows that it was begun with the intention of discontinuing it, as it appears from the short time which the Pope gave the prelates to come, in his having made it to coincide with the Diet; and in his feeling his way with legates and bishops; for of the three legates, one is wanting, and the bishops drop in, day after day, by driblets. But the chief reason is, that the Pope is fully aware of the abuses, which indeed no one can deny; that they are useful to him; and that it is reported that he is generally believed not to be a good Christian; so that if he wants no Council for his soul, his body can do well without it.”

For his soul, Julius III. felt, indeed, so little, and for his body so much concern, that his biographer, the Catholic monk Panvinio *, is forced to declare, “that he was more given to enjoy himself than to govern his states; and gave his whole care and attention to a villa which he built for his own pleasure, a short way from the *Porta del Popolo*, and which seemed to have turned his head. In that villa, being now near seventy, he spent the whole time of his Pontificate, to the great detriment and greater danger of Rome, and of Christendom, in banqueting and pleasure, instead of attending to government, and other most important business.”—He was besides one of those successors of St. Peter who have held their own office very cheap. “He was also (says Panvinio), found guilty on another point; for, not knowing or understanding the great power and supreme

* In Vit. p. 676.

dignity which he possessed, he used, with light and vain words, often to degrade his own majesty, not without raising shame in those who heard him *.”—His extraordinary affection for Innocentio, a youth of Placentia, whose parents were unknown, was a subject of sport and satire to the Romans, especially when the first act of Julius’s pontificate was to heap preferment on that favourite, induce his own brother to adopt him, and, thus qualified, to make him a Cardinal. The whole transaction is related by Sarpi †, and alluded to by Panvinio ‡. “At four times (says the Romanist writer), he created about twenty cardinals, among whom there were many persons rather dignified and learned; some others, from a frequent desire of pleasing himself, were such as all the world holds unworthy of that great dignity.” By what means this holy man obtained the Popedom, the same writer, strong in the Romanist faith that no personal depravity can invalidate the supernatural privileges of the Bishop of Rome, hesitates not in part to expose, by mentioning the bribe which chiefly contributed to change Giovanni Maria de Monte, into Pope Julius III. It was the cession of the city of Parma, to Ottavio Farnese, the grandson of the late Pope, whose brother, the Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, engaged, on that condition, to manage the election. The sanguinary war, and more sanguinary treatment of the unhappy people of Parma, which arose from this infamous transaction, are well known to the readers of Italian history. Such was the *head* of the *Church at Trent*, at the date of the Spanish document last mentioned. He was well known as the chief instrument of

* E finalmenté gli si dava anche questo à vitio, che non sapendo, nè conoscendo il decoro della potestà grande, è della suprema dignità, ch’ egli havea, con leggiere, et vane parole, non senza rossore di chi le udiva, assai spesso la sua maestà ne scemava.—Ubi supra, p. 677.

† Lib. iii. p. 308.

‡ Ub. sup. p. 671.

Paul III. at Trent, where he acted as his Legate; and it was he who managed the scandalous removal of the Pope's own bishops from Trent to Bologna, whom the Court of Rome had the impudence still to call the *General Council*. That transaction is thus related by Juan Paez de Castro* to Geronimo Zurita, in a letter of the 3rd of April, 1547, which is preserved in the private library of the kings of Spain.

“The Pope's Legates have translated this Council to Bologna, without any reason, and with great disrespect to his Majesty. All who are here on the part of the emperor, did every thing in their power to prevent it; but it was of no avail. There were some remarkable circumstances, not observed by the generality of people. The first is, that as the sitting held for the translation of the Council was on the 11th of March, I believe that it must have been by the advice of some astrologer, on account of the approaching equinox. The second, that on that day, at the Mass, they chanted the Gospel, *In quamcumque civitatem intraveritis, &c.*, where it is said, *excutite pulverem calceamentorum vestrorum, &c.* which is, in a manner, to execrate this city. *The third* is, that when they started for Verona, some of them looked back, saying, *There you may stay, ye swine!* alluding to the Spaniards. *The fourth*, that some Italian bishops, speaking of the translation, and how the Spaniards opposed it, observed, that as the latter had spent two years in a land of heretics, they were not disposed to go to that of Christ. *The fifth*, that they took so little notice of the reasons given by the bishops against the removal of their protests against the evil consequences which might ensue therefrom, and of their determination to continue the Council at Trent, in the absence of those who chose to go, that

* Nicolas Antonio says that he was *Chronographus Regius* Philippi II. atque *eidem a sacris*. In what capacity he was at Trent, I know not. Zurita, to whom he writes, is the excellent historian of Arragon.

these votes and protests, written and signed, were left thrown about on the floor, though it was necessary that all should appear *in actis*. They have, subsequently, thought of this, and sent a man to recover the papers, or to get them from the prelates; but these have refused to give them, till they had acquainted his Majesty with the present state of things.

“His Majesty has taken up this business in a proper spirit, sending to Rome, and requiring the Pope to command that the Council be continued at Trent, where it had been opened, and dwelling upon the evil consequences of the removal, the value his Majesty has for the Council, and the troubles he has submitted to for the Roman See. Thus he wrote to Cardinal Jaen, and to the lawyers he has here, assuring them he would make the Council come back. That dispatch was directed to Signor Don Diego (Hurtado de Mendoza) under the idea that he was at Rome; but being at Pisa, about a garrison of six hundred Spanish troops, which his Majesty wishes to put over the people of Siena, on account of the late insurrections, the dispatch went to Signor Juan de Vega, who waited on his Holiness at two in the morning, and, having delivered the letter, spoke to him at length upon the subject, with great courage and decision. The Pope answered only with oaths, that he had not been aware of what it was said his Legates had done, and that he was sorry for it. When Juan de Vega replied, that what his Holiness said might be true; but nevertheless, neither his Majesty, nor a part of Christendom, would believe it, the Pope said, that the Council had taken their determination as a free body, and had acted unanimously. De Vega answered to this, that his Holiness was ill-informed: that the prelates of all the kingdoms of Spain, Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, of some of Italy and Flanders, had remained at Trent, and that the French bishops,

though they had not stayed there, were not gone to Bologna. Finally, his Holiness resolved that he would call a Consistory the next day, and give an answer with their advice. In the Consistory, most were of opinion that the translation had been lawfully made. The Cardinal of Burgos contradicted it; but the Cardinal of Coria surpassed all others, and said excellent things, and with great courage, in favour of the Imperial cause. The final resolution communicated to his Majesty from the Pope was, that the Council, as a free body, had adjourned itself without his knowledge; and that if it was inclined to return to Trent, his Holiness would approve of it. This is as much as to say he will not. His Majesty has returned no answer to this; but it is known that there is great disagreement between him and the Pope; but as many believe that (the Council) is the only thing that can heal the Church, it is impossible that such an important object should be passed over."

On the degree of freedom which the bishops, not wholly devoted to the Pope, enjoyed at the Council, it will be well to hear some of the bishops themselves.

There is, at the Royal Library of Madrid, a manuscript Life of Don Martin Perez de Ayala, bishop of Segovia, written by himself. In a long passage of that work, published by Dr. Villanueva*, of which I will only translate a part, the author relates the persecution and trouble which he endured from the Pope's party, for taking a leading part in the great question on the origin of episcopal authority. And here the reader, who has not attentively perused the history of the Council of Trent, either by Sarpi or his hired opponent, Pallavicini, must be informed, that the opposition party at the Council of Trent chose the question of episcopacy as their vantage ground against the exorbitant power of the Pope. Long and stormy were the debates on

* P. 419.

the point, whether the bishops derived their authority from Christ directly, or through the Pope. The arts and contrivances by which the declaration in favour of the bishops was evaded, would occupy a whole volume. They are related, in part, in Dr. Villanueva's documents.

Bishop Ayala, who, with all the Spanish prelates not bribed by the Pope, (for it appears by Sarpi* that a few went over, as it seems to me, when Philip II. began to fear that the Pope's interest would suffer too much by their opposition,) relates, that having once contradicted the Cardinal of Mantua, and exposed the faithlessness with which the acts of the Council were compiled, observes what follows:—

“God knows what state of mind, what resentment this produced in the Cardinal; indeed it was such, that if God had not taken him away within three months, many believe he would have got us into a scrape before we left Italy. He might, and probably would have done it; for he had power, and these Italians are revengeful. But he died; and this was one of the great dangers encountered for love of the truth, from which God, in his mercy, delivered me.

“When this Cardinal was dead, as we proceeded, Cardinal Moron came in his place—a *deceitful man* †; but, though he tried to flatter me, I nevertheless used my liberty in favour of the Universal Church, by opposing many things for its good, as well as by a protest which, as he often wished to establish doctrines without discussion or examination ‡, I made in the last Congregation of the last

* Lib. 7. p. 635.

† *Hombre doblado*, a double man, literally; but the Spanish phrase is very strong, and means dark and treacherous.

‡ The bishops, in general, grew tired of the theological debates, and would not attend, contenting themselves with having extracts sent to them. Braccio Martello, bishop of Fiesole, was reprimanded by the legates for speaking against this abuse. *Sarpi*, lib. ii. p. 172.

but one session, upon certain matters which the legates, by foul means, had perverted, when they had been voted and passed: to wit, the first instances, and the exemptions of the Chapters, which having been taken away completely, they contrived to put again to the vote, with the intention of restoring them: and because, in the last session, most of the deputies they elected were Italians, and the greatest enemies to reform; and, of the Spaniards, they elected me only, that I might be their only opponent; on which account I would not accept the appointment that time, though the Ambassador urged me greatly.

“ All this, and what had gone before, I said with Christian liberty, and under fear of hell, as it was fit; and thereby incurred the great hatred, both of them and their partizans; and they, accordingly, were constantly trying to raise calumnies against me, perverting sentences, in order to discredit me, because many in the Council followed me; and finally, because they made a Congregation, secretly, and I knew that they wished to define things which were disputable, whence great prejudice might arise to the Church and Councils; and I would not attend the last session, (though I was ill, too,) and had made my protest.

“ The protest demanded that a true and complete reformation should be made *tam in capite quam in membris*; since the Council was hastening to an end, or rather they themselves wished to strangle it: that the decrees of reformation should not be drawn up by the *Curiales* *, whom they had there with that object, with a view that they should so involve and confuse them, that they might give occasion to questions, and that, at Rome, they might put upon them any sense they liked, and deprive whatever good had been

* Lawyers and divines dependent on the *Curia*, i. e. the *Court of Rome*.

established, of its life and power: that the decrees should be in plain and *canonical* words, and not in *Curial* terms; for the language of the Council was new. I also told them, that they themselves ought to examine the decrees which passed the Council, and not to leave that to others; and that the disputations should be held before all the world*; the method which they observed being more apt, indeed, to convey the idea of an Italian Council, than a general one: that they should not decide any arduous question, of which there were many in that session, without discussion and debate; otherwise I protested the nullity thereof, to the whole extent of my rights, and opposed and contradicted the whole.

“ In all this I found myself quite alone, though I knew that God was with me, since he gave me firmness and boldness to say what I thought to be for the good of the Church: indeed, Cardinal Moron has conquered every thing by his arts, and gained both Cardinal Porena, and the archbishop of Granada, as well as seven or eight, who, at the beginning, had supported me †. None remained with me but the bishops of Gerona, of Vique, and of Guadix, though they did not venture to show themselves quite openly; but nevertheless my boldness did not fail; yet, by means of the report which they put about, that the Pope was at the point of death, they turned every thing to confusion, and put an end to the Council on the 4th of December, 1563.”

The conclusion, and, indeed, the principal part of the Council, took place under the ambitious and insolent Paul IV., against whom even the Spaniards under Philip II.

* They were held secretly. The acts of the Council published by the Church of Rome contain only the decrees.

† Compare Sarpi, in the place above cited, lib. vii. p. 635. These documents afford indeed the strongest confirmation of that great man's substantial and general accuracy.

were obliged to defend themselves with an army, and who, in the end, compelled the Duke of Alba to ask public pardon in his own and his master's name, for having carried his arms to the gates of Rome. I have not space for a historical sketch of his violent and tyrannical administration, and must content myself with inserting such passages of the Spanish documents as describe most strikingly the course which the *Church at Trent* took under his direction.

The ambassador Vargas, in a letter to Philip II. dated May 4th, 1562, the original of which is in the archives of Simancas.*

“Some prelates have written to me from Trent †, that they are in want of greater support, in order that the legates may not usurp every thing, as they do. . . Matters being carried on in such a shameless and dangerous way, it is necessary to give much encouragement to those who do their duty, and have a holy zeal. . . The Pope, besides his never having been thoroughly well inclined to this Council, and notwithstanding that nothing has been hitherto done but what he wished for, is extremely annoyed and almost enraged to see it assembled, and increasing daily in numbers, and fears that it will not be closed so soon as he desired, or in the manner he imagined. I know that in consequence of this, he is secretly planning another translation, or how to cut it short, or even upset the whole, if possible, under some colour. If any occasion, however slight ‡, should offer for either, he will probably seize it; and perchance, this is the main subject agitated between him and the legates, who, especially he of Mantua, have sent here a confidant of theirs to consult with the Pope what is to be done: he will be dispatched quickly. His (the Pope's) principal advisers, in

* Villanueva, ii. p. 433.

† Vargas was at Rome.

‡ Por descolorada que sea.—However *colourless* it may be.

these matters, Moron and Sanct Clemente, will not, I suspect, recommend him any thing else ; both that they may please and flatter him, as also on account of their own tempers, the one outrageous, the other designing—one by dissembling, the other by talking wildly—I mean Sanct Clemente, who with his usual fury, and thinking he was greatly serving the Pope, or perhaps because he had been the author and abettor of the clause *Proponentibus*, told me that it would not be repealed or explained away, *in sempiternum* ; that the Pope would be no Pope if such a thing were done ; and that Spain was not to give him the law ; with many other ravings, which would be needless to repeat. To this I answered in a manner that frightened him ; so that he softened down more than his nature generally allows."

The clause *Proponentibus Legatis*, to which the preceding extract alludes, was one of the means by which the Pope secured his ascendancy in the Council, and obviated the danger of being taken by surprise with questions and debates injurious to his power. It was inserted in the Bull for re-opening the Council in 1562. The opposition against this restriction of the liberty of debate was very sturdy on the side of the Spaniards. The Count de Luna, Philip's ambassador, in imitation of Cato's *Deleatur Carthago*, used to add to every speech of the opposition members, whatever might be the subject, a demand for the repeal of the clause *Proponentibus Legatis**.

The instructions or notes called *Apuntamientos*, prepared by Doctor Velasco †, for the Spanish ambassadors who were to attend the Council of Trent, and which are preserved in

* Sarpi, lib. viii. p. 795.

† I believe this was Doctor Velasco y Medinilla, a member of the Supreme Council of Castille.

the national archives of Simancas, contain the following passage on the clause which restricted the right of moving, to the legates.

“ Though in times past, as it appears by the series of events, the Roman pontiffs have proposed and contrived to derogate and diminish the authority of general councils; yet such a thing as the clause, or such a restriction and limitation of the liberty which the councils ought to enjoy, has never been seen. It is justly, therefore, that deep shame and scandal falls therefrom upon the Catholics, as surely they must receive from an innovation so greatly injurious to the Church*.”

Let us proceed with passages descriptive of the temper and character of the *Church at Trent*.

In a letter of Don Antonio Agustin, bishop of Lerida, Trent, May 18th, 1562, preserved at Simancas †.

“ Some people will have it ‡, that he (the Cardinal of Mantua) and Seripando were deceived by his Holiness, who did not care to tell them what kind of council he wished to have, because they would not undertake to serve him in this other way, defending abuses *juste vel injuste*; and that they are glad that other ministers will take this game in hand, where the winner will turn loser. . . All good men in this council are without hope of favorable results, or rather in fear of great evils.”

The same bishop, in a letter dated Trent, May 21st, 1562, preserved at Simancas.

“ As the legates and bishops were proceeding freely in the Council, and on the way to reform, we have had such changes and reproaches, that, for the safety of his Holiness,

* Villanueva, tom. ii. p. 454.

† *Ib.* p. 439.

‡ *Dicen algunas malas lenguas*, an ironical expression, very common in Spanish, and never understood but as a sarcasm, in confirmation of the report attributed to *evil tongues*.

other legates and other voters have been found necessary, and so the Council will be rendered more *courtly*; and whoever shall say any thing about the directions which arrive from Rome, will be marked for ever as an enemy... (The bishop of) Segovia says he never believed any thing else of the Council... The apostolic bishops and legates will come, and we shall make the article of *human residence**."

In a dispatch of the Count de Luna to Philip II. dated Trent, October 16th, 1563; preserved in the archives of the Marquis de Astorga †.

" Considering the present state of things, the mode of proceeding which has been observed in this Council, and what is seen every day, it may be suspected that the Pope agreed to celebrate it rather out of necessity, and thinking that it would not proceed so far, or in earnest, than from a wish that it should take place.

" This appears clearly from the constant efforts of his ministers to impede its good progress, and the matters of consequence which have here been touched upon, especially such as, some way or other, might injure the interests of the court of Rome, or keep his Holiness more in check as to the manner of governing the Church, than his predecessors have been for some time hitherto. For which purpose they have endeavoured, and are still trying to keep the Council oppressed and controlled by authority, by a multitude of votes, and every possible artifice and contrivance. This was resisted for a time without much difficulty, as long as the Cardinal of Lorraine conducted himself with the proper zeal which he showed when he

* One of the disguised methods of increasing their authority, devised by the opposition bishops at Trent, was an attempt to declare that the residence and superintendence of the bishops in their dioceses, was *de jure divino*; for, in that case, the Pope could not lay reservations upon them.

† Villanueva, tom. ii. p. 459.

arrived, so that the business went on almost fairly, and they (the Pope's party) could not manage it as they pleased.

“ But since he, owing to his private views, allowed himself to be won over by the legates, who went about it with all industry and diligence, their party has gained strength; and, from the last session to this moment, a great union has been observed between the cardinal and the ministers of his Holiness.

“ The least yielding would, no doubt, bring the Council to an abrupt conclusion; for of the Italian prelates, except a few honest men, they dispose as they please.

“ We must be careful not to fall into a great evil; such as there would be in the world's knowing that the Council is held rather for private objects, than for the sake of religion, and the public good.”

Extract of a letter of the Great Commander of Castille, Don Luis de Requesens, to the Great Commander of Alcantara, dated Rome, November 12th, 1563. The rough draught (original duplicate) of this letter is preserved in the archives of the Marquis of Astorga.

“ I am of opinion that the king should allow the Council to come to a close; not that I fail to understand how much better it would be to continue it, if what the king wishes could be done in it; but I much fear we want the power to prolong it, and if it were continued, nothing would be done in it but what may be ordered from here, for the Pope has a great majority of votes, and all has been managed very dexterously; nay, if ever so many points were carried, whatever may displease these people, or injure the court of Rome, will be here, the next day, done away by dispensation.”

I omit a great number of testimonies to the same pur-

pose, and conclude with a specimen of the treatment which the fathers of the Council met with at the hands of the legates, when those proud agents of Rome found them adverse to their views, and unsupported by political interest: The following letter, addressed to Philip II., through the hands of his secretary Gonzalo Perez, and dated Rome, January, 1564, is preserved in the archives of the Marquis de Astorga.

“ The bishop of Leon has been here, and he who was lately appointed to the see of Salerno, is with us at present, trying to get his bulls. As I was speaking with both, of the affairs at Trent, they told me, that, among others, there had been two Sicilian prelates, one named *Guayazo*, the other *Verdura*, very poor, but exemplary, and who had always voted with great freedom whatever was for the service of God, and in conformity with your majesty’s intentions.

“ This bishop *Verdura* is now here ; he is from *Mesina* ; and, as I am told, a gentleman and an excellent man. His see is in *Candia*, and being worth nothing (one of the Greek Church), and he an old man, he wishes to resign it ; but having, three days ago, waited on Cardinal *Moron* for this purpose, he was told that the Pope would not consent to it ; and from one thing to another, the cardinal came to say, that there was great dissatisfaction with him, for having always voted with the Spanish bishops, which arose from bribery, as another of the legates had declared. The poor bishop was going to prove his innocence, but the cardinal got into a passion, called him a rascal, and added that he ought to be hanged, or sent to the galleys. The bishop with great humility answered, that he was an honourable man, and had voted according to God and his conscience ; that his opinions were upon record, and he was ready to account for them ; that the Spanish prelates were above

using the means alluded to for procuring votes. Upon which the cardinal gave him the lie, and called him most insulting names, which the bishop has repeated to me with many tears. I have therefore thought it my duty to acquaint your majesty with these circumstances, because all the world speak highly of this man, and perhaps your majesty may be pleased to show him favour, when opportunity offers, in his country; as also that you may understand the violence and manner with which such things are treated here."

The violence, noise, and confusion which at times prevailed in the secret debates of the Council of Trent, may be seen in the uncontradicted accounts of Fra Paulo. And indeed, where the quarrels and divisions broke out in so scandalous a manner as the public transactions of the Council exhibited, no great weight of testimony is wanted to prove the intemperate character of the secret debates. I have, however, reserved till now a specimen of the temper of *the Church at Trent*, given by the bishop of Salamanca, Don Pedro Gonzales de Mendoza, in his manuscript account of the Council, which I have had occasion to mention before.

"The bishop of Guadix (says the Spanish prelate) said that the bishops had their whole authority *de jure divino*; and that even without the confirmation of the Pope, they would be true bishops; since there is no proof that either Chrysostom, or Basil, or Gregory of Nice, received such confirmation, or indeed any thing at the hands of the Roman pontiff.

"When he began to utter this sentence, Cardinal Simoneta desired him to have care to his words, for what he said was scandalous, especially in such times.

"Upon this there was a stir among the prelates, and they began to make a great noise. The patriarch of

Venice, rising out of his place, called the bishop a schismatic, and declared that he must recant. It is said that the archbishop of Granada, who was near, told those who had risen, that they themselves were the true *schismatics*, since, without listening to the bishop of Guadix, they made that uproar, and used words so offensive and outrageous, against so orthodox a man. I did not hear this, though I was at no great distance; for at this time, the uproar being great, I had also stood up, declaring that it was a shame they should run him down in that manner: that he ought to be allowed to finish his speech, and then it would be time to ascertain whether he had uttered any thing worthy of reproof or punishment *."

What a scene! One might imagine it had been drawn from one of the sittings of the Revolutionary Assembly in France! The most liberal among the Fathers of "the Church at Trent," have nothing better to claim for a brother bishop, than that he may be heard to the last, and then reproved or punished, if his opinion should displease a packed majority of the Pope's creatures. Reproved or punished! Observe the chance which the Protestants had with "the Church at Trent." Mark the true source of the unanimity of condemnation, which, when every thing else is uproar and tumult in the Council, imitates the indubitancy of inspiration in its curses. *Causa finita est.*—"Sentence was passed," no doubt; but it was passed long before this insulting mockery, this court of prejudiced, dependent, intimidated judges had been set up. It was passed when a Pope had hurled his anathemas against Luther unheard; when another had employed his own troops in murdering four thousand unarmed Vaudois during the early part of the Council; when another had deposed and excommunicated the Elector of

* Villanueva, tom. ii. p. 424.

Cologne, for those opinions which were to be examined at Trent; and when the sittings of the council were neglected by the head of the Romish church, to excite the sovereigns, his spiritual subjects, to war against the Protestants, and to make himself chief member of a military league against them. It was then, not at Trent, that the Pope's Church received its inspiration: the spirit of ambition, the spirit of pride, the spirit of fear, descended in a full illapse upon the bishops, through the legates, and the ambassadors of the courts at enmity with the reformed part of Germany.—Where such spirits prevailed, the Holy Spirit of God could not dwell.

READER! From the moment when I transcribed the words of the *Christian* bishop, who, in our days, and under the full light of history, has evoked the phantom of “the Church at Trent,” to obviate discussion, and prevent the spirit of religious inquiry which the Scriptures could not fail to excite among his flock; I have constantly had before my eyes a lamentable victim of the same delusion—one of the unhappy English enthusiasts, maddened by Rome into treason, and led to die, for her interest, on the gallows. As I translated the passages in which the Spaniards, who attended the Council of Trent, describe the character of that assembly, the words of Edmund Campian placed themselves in painful contrast with every one of them, in my mind*.

Tridentina Synodus quo magis inveterascet, eò magis indies, eòque perennius efflorescet. Bone Deus! quæ gentium varietas, qui delectus Episcoporum totius orbis, qui regum et rerum-publicarum splendor, quæ medulla Theologorum, quæ sanctitas, quæ lachrymæ, quæ jejunia, qui flores Academici, quæ linguæ, quantu subtilitas, quantus labor, quam infinita lectio,

* They are very appropriately placed by Sir Nathaniel Brent, at the head of his translation of Sarpi's History of the Council.

quantæ virtutum et studiorum divitiæ, augustum illud sacrarium impleverunt !

“ As the council of Trent gains in antiquity, so it will constantly gain in glory. Good God! what a variety of nations, what a selection of bishops from all parts of the world, what splendour of kingdoms and republics, what flower of divines, what sanctity, what tears, what fastings, what exquisite learning, what tongues, what acuteness, what industry, what infinite reading, what treasures of virtue and knowledge, filled up that august shrine !”

Time has not, however, been able to cast its shadows upon the shameful arts by which Rome got up the show which was to delude her credulous sons into a long, long resistance to the pure light of the Scriptures. And shall that show be still held up to infatuate the multitude, and keep them in perpetual danger of following the steps of the unfortunate Campian !

Heart of the B. V. Mary, &c. &c. &c. and the R
mandatory Pastoral Letter of the Bp. of Boulogne
ful in his Diocese. Twelfth Edition; with an A

humanity; it is the seat and centre wherein *corporeally dwells all the plenitude of his divinity*, and which becoming by virtue of the hypostatical union the heart of the King of kings, of the Holy of holies, of the God of majesty, is raised to an infinite dignity, which makes it worthy of our profound homage and adoration."—Pages 10, 11.

“ In a small town called Paroy le Monial, in the province of Burgundy, and diocese of Autun, there is a convent of the Visitation of the blessed Virgin Mary. Here a holy nun named Mary Margaret was consecrated to Jesus Christ at the age of twenty, and lived in retirement unknown. She died there in the odour of sanctity, aged forty, on the 17th of October, 1690. Her virtues are attested by her superiors, and we learn by a writing she gave in obedience to her director, how eminently she was favoured by Almighty God.

“ This holy virgin was chosen by Jesus Christ to give a beginning to the devotion to his sacred heart. To dispose her to accomplish his design, he infused into her a perfect knowledge of the excellence, the perfections, and the sufferings of this heart. This gave her an ardent desire to see it known, honoured, and glorified by all creatures. When she was thus prepared, Jesus Christ one day appeared to her, and declared his intention of establishing a solemnity in honour of his sacred heart, adding that he chose her to be the instrument of carrying it into execution. Happy to find that the devotion was to be established, she trembled at the thought of being employed in it. Her youth, her natural diffidence, and her retirement from creatures, made her conclude that the execution of the design must in her hands be impossible. Under this impression she stu-

diously concealed the revelation. But God still urging her to obey, she at length conceived that she could no longer resist without guilt. Father Claude la Colombiere, of the Society of Jesus, coming providentially to Paroy, she determined to open herself fully to him. This holy man, whose eminent sanctity and excellent writings still preserve his memory fresh in the minds of the faithful, full of the spirit of God, not content with hearing from her mouth all that had passed as above mentioned, obliged her moreover to deliver in writing a circumstantial account of the revelation she had received and so long concealed, concerning this devotion to the sacred heart. We have in the foregoing chapter quoted and explained it.

“ He was too well acquainted with the eminent sanctity of his penitent to doubt her sincerity, and he considered the concluding injunction as an order of Jesus Christ, obliging him to use all his endeavours to promote the design. But his absence from France, his infirmities, and the shortness of his remaining existence, prevented his making any considerable progress at the time. But we shall soon see that he was an instrument in the hands of Providence even after his death.”—Page 58—61.

“ In 1720, when Provence was afflicted with the plague, and saw its most flourishing cities fall a prey to the scourge ; when a general consternation pervaded the whole kingdom, God inspiring the suffering victims with a hope of safety from a devout address to his sacred heart, they had recourse to it to appease the vengeance of offended Heaven. One town followed another in adopting the means of delivery. Bishops and magistrates consecrated their respective people to the sacred heart, and engaged themselves

by oath to celebrate the feast annually to the end of time. It may be said with truth, that God employed this visitation as a means to promote the glory of his sacred heart, which was the fruit of it. Happy they who wait not for the scourge, but apply to this amiable heart in order to prevent the punishment which their sins have deserved.”—Pages 64, 65.

“ **OBJECTION.**—If the church approves a feast in honour of the divine heart of Jesus Christ, why not approve of other feasts to honour every part of his sacred body? Why a particular feast in honour of his divine heart? Moreover, the feasts are already so numerous in the church, that it seems improper to multiply them; new offices interrupt those which the church has formerly instituted.

“ As this objection has made great impression on many who have taken no pains to examine it, I have thought it necessary to mention it in a separate article, and to show the weakness of it.

“ The numerous confraternities who celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart with great solemnity, the number of bishops who have approved them, the number of briefs of indulgences granted to them by the holy see, are a great proof that the above objection has nothing solid. It is of little purpose to dispute whether the feast of the sacred heart deserves to be approved. In a point of this nature, a great part of the church, authorized by so many bishops and the holy see, cannot mistake; for which reason, the objection which opposes the institution of this feast can make no impression on a faithful and devout soul.”—Pages 115, 116.

LETTERS PATENT OF AGGREGATION.

We Brother FRANCIS of S. REGINALD, Prior of the venerable Arch-confraternity of the sacred heart of JESUS at ROME,—

To our beloved in Christ, the associates in the sacred heart of Jesus, the faithful of either sex, who are any ways British subjects, or descended from them, wheresoever they dwell; greeting in our Lord.

Whereas his holiness of pious memory, Clement the XII. has by sundry decrees, viz. by one of the 7th of March, 1732, another of the 28th of February, ditto, and a third of the 12th of June, 1736, granted many favours and privileges to our arch-confraternity of the sacred heart; and among the rest has empowered it to unite and associate to itself any particular confraternity of the sacred heart, extant any where out of Rome, and to impart to it all and every indulgence, grant, or release of the canonical penance due to sins, that has at any time been heretofore granted to this our arch-confraternity by his said holiness.

And whereas a confraternity of the sacred heart, erected in the church or domestic chapel of the English fathers of the society of Jesus at Bruges, has applied to us, through its solicitor in Rome, Signor Joseph Monionelli, in order to obtain leave to be thus associated to ours, and to share in all its privileges and grants: we have thought fit, considering the many good works of piety, penance, and charity, performed in that confraternity at Bruges (which as to all essentials is modelled upon the same plan as ours), to unite and associate to it our arch-confraternity, pursuant to the power given us for this purpose by the holy see; and we grant to it and its members all the indulgences and par-

ticular favours mentioned in the Popes' briefs, still keeping within the terms of the decree of Clement VIII. which directs such associations and communications of spiritual treasures.

Moreover, besides the indulgence and special favours set down in the above-mentioned papal grant, we impart to the said confraternity a share in all the masses, prayers, mortifications, pilgrimages, and other good works performed throughout the whole world by the several religious orders of Benedictins, Bernardins, Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, Theatins, and Fathers of the Society of Jesus, pursuant to the power we have received thereunto from the superiors of the said orders; as may be seen in the authentic deeds belonging to our arch-confraternity, and lodged in our archives.

For the proof whereof we have caused the present deed, signed by our own hand, to be underwritten and published by the secretary of our arch-confraternity, and to be sealed with the seal thereof.

Given at Rome, in the usual place of our congregation, the 30th of January, 1767, in the ninth year of his present holiness Clement the XIIIth's pontificate, formerly our fellow associate, and now our most liberal father and protector.

Br. Francis of St. Reginald, Prior.

Br. Philip of St. Joseph of Callasantio, Secretary.

Registered, book the first, page 63, No. 38.

THE APPROBATION OF THE BISHOP OF BRUGES.

We permit the publishing of these letters of aggregation, still with due regard to be paid to the decree of Clement the VIII. *Quæcumque a sede Apostolica*, and we approve of the choice made by the associates, of the Friday after the Octave of *Corpus Christi*, for the principal feast of the

association, in order to gain the plenary indulgence, and of the first Sunday in Advent, the second Sunday after the Epiphany, the third after Easter, and the first Sunday of October, to gain the indulgence of seven years, and of so many quarantines, or forty days.

Given at Bruges, in our episcopal Palace, the 20th of March, 1767.

By the order of his lordship the bishop of Bruges.

C. Beerenbrock, Secretary.

A petition that British Subjects might partake of the advantages of this institution, though remote from and unable to attend in the chapels appointed for the Association.

Holy Father,

The president, and the members of the confraternity of the most holy heart of Jesus, instituted for the subjects of Great Britain, of both sexes, in the chapel of the English seminary at Bruges, in Flanders, and associated to the arch-confraternity of the same title erected in the church of St. Theodore, at Rome, prostrate themselves at your Holiness's feet, and dutifully represent the signal advantages arising from the said confraternity in the increase of spiritual fervour among the faithful, and desirous to transmit these religious fruits to the latest posterity, humbly supplicate your Holiness to grant, that the members of the said confraternity of both sexes, who are not at liberty to visit the aforesaid chapel on the days appointed for obtaining the indulgences granted to the confraternity, may obtain all and every one of them, as if they had personally attended, provided they perform all the other good works prescribed for obtaining the said indulgences.

THE GRANT.

At the audience of his Holiness, Feb. 23d, 1768.

Our Holy Father Pope Clement XIII. is graciously pleased to grant the prayer of the petition, and enacts, that such members of the confraternity as have it not in their power to visit the aforesaid chapel on the days appointed for obtaining the indulgences granted to the same, may have the benefit of all and every one of them, provided they perform all the other religious duties prescribed on that occasion; and his Holiness was pleased to order, that this his concession should be at all times considered as valid without the expedition of a brief.

Dated, Rome, from the office of the Secretary of the Holy Congregation of Indulgences.

CARDINAL CALANI,
Prefect.

BORGIA, *Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences.*
—Page 188—195.

THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF MARY.

SECTION I.

As the adorable heart of Jesus was formed in the chaste womb of the blessed Virgin, and of her blood and substance, so we cannot in a more proper and agreeable manner show our devotion to the sacred heart of the Son, than by dedicating some part of the said devotion to the ever pure heart of the Mother. For you have two hearts here united in the most strict alliance and tender conformity of sentiment, so that it is not in nature to please the one without making yourself agreeable to the other, and acceptable to both. Go, then,

devout client, go to the heart of Jesus, but let your way be through the heart of Mary. The sword of grief which pierced her soul, opens you a passage: enter by the wound love has made; advance to the heart of Jesus, and rest there even to death itself. Presume not to separate and divide two objects so intimately one, or united together, but ask redress in all your exigencies from the heart of Jesus, and ask this redress through the heart of Mary.

This form and method of worship is the doctrine and the very spirit of God's church: it is what she teaches us in the unanimous voice and practice of the faithful, who will by no means that Jesus and Mary should be separated from each other in our prayers, praises, and affections. This consideration has engaged the sovereign pontiffs and head pastors of the church to give the self-same sanction to the pious practices instituted in honour of the sacred heart of Mary, as they give to those of the adorable heart of Jesus, both within their proper limits. They both have equally their feasts and solemnities, both their associations, and those too equally enriched with the treasures of the church, under the liberal dispensation of its governors. Many are the pious and virtuous souls who have drawn most signal fruit and advantages from these devotions.—Page 198—200.

A NOVENA, OR NINE DAYS' DEVOTION TO THE EVER-
BLESSED VIRGIN.

Having, out of devotion, lighted up a wax candle, either in your private oratory or in the church, recite each day the following prayer. The intent is for the obtaining some particular favour.

“ Incomparable Virgin! chosen by the ever adorable Trinity, from all eternity, to be the most pure mother of Jesus, allow thy servant to remind thee of that ineffable joy thou

receivedst in the instant of the most sacred incarnation of our divine Lord, and during the nine months thou carriedst him in thy most chaste bowels. O! that I could but renew, or if possible increase, this thy joy by the fervor of my prayers; at least, most tender mother of the afflicted! grant me, under the present pressure, those maternal consolations, and that peculiar protection, thou hast promised to such as shall devoutly commemorate this ineffable joy. Relying on thy sacred word, and trusting in thy promises, I humbly entreat thee to obtain from Jesus Christ, thy dearly beloved Son, my request."

Having specified it, say,

" May this light I burn before thy image, stand as a memorial of the lively confidence I repose in thy bounty. May it consume in honour of that inflamed and supernatural love and joy with which thy sacred heart was replenished during the abode of thy blessed Son in thy womb: in veneration of which I offer to thee the sentiments of my heart, and the following salutations."

Say nine Hail Mary's, and then the following Prayers.

" Mother of my God most merciful! to thee I offer these *Hail Mary's*: they are so many brilliant jewels in the diadem of thy accidental glory, which will remain increasing to the end of the world. I beseech thee, Comforter of the afflicted! by the joy thou receivedst in the nine months of thy pregnancy, to comfort my afflicted heart, and to obtain for me, from thy Son, a favourable answer to the petition I make to thy compassionate mercy and benevolence. To this effect I offer to thee all the good works that have ever been performed in the confraternities of thy sacred heart, and other associations in thy honour. I most humbly entreat thee, on this consideration, and for the love of the sacred heart of

Jesus, with which thy own was ever so inflamed, to hear my humble suit and grant my request. *Amen.*"—Page 208—211.

An Example.

"A nobleman, who for sixty years of his life past had never had access to the sacraments, and who had given loose to the passions of his body and mind, and abandoned himself to the slavery of his spiritual enemy, fell sick, and was in the utmost danger of death. Hopes of salvation he had none, and so desperate was his case, that he would not give ear to the salutary advice of his director, or admit into his mind the thoughts of reconciling himself to his Creator by means of the sacrament of penance. Nevertheless, in the midst of the excesses of so profligate a life, he had never entirely lost sight of some small devotion and regard to the ever blessed Mother of God. Jesus Christ, who manifests the riches of his mercy particularly to such as cast a favourable eye towards her, raised in him so great a compunction for his sins, that, entering into himself, and in the utmost contrition of his heart, he three several times in the same day made a general confession of his whole life, received the holy eucharist, and the sixth day after died in all peace and quiet of mind, and with the sentiments of joy which flow from a well-grounded confidence in the mercies and bounty of our suffering Redeemer and his sacred passion. In effect our blessed Saviour revealed, soon after his death, to the holy St. Bridget, that the said penitent died in a state of grace, was a blessed soul, and owed his happiness in great measure to the tender affectionate compassion which he had ever found and nourished in his heart, so often as he heard others speak of the sacred dolours of our blessed Lady, or happened to entertain the memory of them in his mind."—Page 234—236.

An Angelical Exercise in Honour of our Blessed Lady.

Whosoever is devoted to this exercise in honour of the blessed Virgin Mary, in reading over every point, may meditate upon it for the space of one *Hail Mary* or more, and, by God's grace, he will in a short time find himself greatly increase in love towards that blessed Queen of Heaven; and at the hour of death will, by so pious a mother, be received as her dearest child. Nor can such a one, according to St. Anselm and St. Bernard, possibly perish, but shall find life everlasting, and taste of the joys of eternal bliss*.—Page 275, 276.

Of Agnus Dei's.

An *Agnus Dei* (so called from the image of the Lamb of God impressed on the face of it) is made of virgin wax, balsam, and chrism, blessed according to the form prescribed in the Roman ritual. The spiritual efficacy, or virtue of it, is gathered from the prayers that the church makes use of in the blessing of it, which is to preserve him who carries an *Agnus Dei*, or any particle of it, about him, from any attempts of his spiritual or temporal enemies; from the dangers of fire, of water, of storms and tempests, of thunder and lightning, and from a sudden and unprovided death. It puts the devils to flight, succours women in childbed, takes away the stains of past sins, and furnishes us with new grace for

* A specimen of this *Angelical Exercise* will be found in Letter VI. It is a kind of dialogue between the Virgin and her worshipper; the language used by the former is often ludicrous, and now and then any thing but delicate. She always illustrates her advice by the example of saints; and in one instance recommends the caution of St. Aloysius Gonzaga, who "would not even speak alone with his own mother, for fear of the least danger of offence." "I assure you," says the Virgin, on another occasion, "in the sincerity of a mother, that it were better to sleep among serpents, dragons, basilisks, and even the very devils themselves, than to rest one night in mortal sin." Again, "My blessed servant Ignatius gave me one day power over his heart, and I did render it so chaste and strong, that he never after felt any motion of the flesh all his life."

the future, that we may be preserved from all adversities and perils, both in life and death, through the cross and merits of the Lamb, who redeemed and washed us in his blood.

The Pope consecrates the Agnus Dei's the first year of his pontificate, and afterwards every seventh year on Saturday before Low-Sunday, with many solemn ceremonies and devout prayers. *Franc. Cost. lib. 4. Christian Institut. cap. 12.*

The use of the Agnus Dei is so ancient, that it is now above 960 years since Pope Leo, the third of that name, made a present of one to the emperor Charles the Great, who received it from the hands of his Holiness, as a treasure sent him from heaven, and revered it with a singular piety and devotion, as it is recounted in the book intituled, *Registr. Sum. Pontif.*—Page 375—377.

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