

PIUS THE SEVENTH.

under Jesus Christ, and chief-Bishop



the Centre of unity, of the Catholic Church .

DEFENCE

OF THE

ANCIENT FAITH,

IN FOUR VOLUMES;

OR

A FULL EXPOSITION

OF

The Christian Religion.

IN A SERIES OF

CONTROVERSIAL SERMONS.

BY THE REV. PETER GANDOLPHY,
Priest of the Catholic Church.

VOL. IV.

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VOL. III.

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- 171 in sixth line dele only.

VOL. IV.

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- 102 dele note.
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SERMON XLVI.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

If any one be sick among you let him call in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him. (James v. 14, 15.)

MAN, a compound of spirit and matter, requires a religion which can occupy the soul, and strike the senses. For as it is only by the means of corporal senses that the soul expresses her thoughts and affections,—so it is through the organic senses of the body that she receives impressions. Thus when man kneels to worship his Creator, or sings forth his praises, it is the action of the body, which expresses the vol. IV.

intentions, and sensations of the soul. Hence Jesus Christ adapted his religion to our nature and necessities: and instituting the divine sacraments of his Church to be sensible signs of a secret and spiritual operation, has made them all consist of an invisible grace, and some sensible sign. The invisible grace is for the soul, the sensible sign for the body.—And as there is always a union between the one and the other in this life, the grace and the sign must ever accompany each other to insure the administration of the sacrament: so that the sign being made the necessary condition—the fixed stipulation for the special grace which is promised, we have no divine assurance of the grace in question without it. Who, for instance, will say, that he is regenerated in grace, without baptism in water?-Who will affirm that he can feed on the bread of life in the Lord's supper, without partaking of the material elements? Who can hope that his sins have been forgiven him by God, if he which texpresses the

refuse humbly to ask the absolution of his minister?

My Brethren, the whole religion of the old law, as ordained by God, was a prescribed language of signs, to express the faith and worship of the soul. Such were all the sacrifices of the Patriarchs, -the covenant of circumcision, -and the ceremonial laws of the Jews, and such is the whole and every part of the external worship of the Christian. Now having already established as much of the Christian ritual worship as is comprised in the four first sacraments-having shewn how they are spiritual objects of faith to the soul, and sensible signs to the body, I conceive that I have already done much towards preparing your minds for the sacramental mystery of extreme-unction, which is another sacrament of grace, instituted by Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and to prepare persons for a happy death. *

^{*} There are two points, connected with this sacrament, to which the attention of Catholics should be particularly

administered to the sick when in danger of death, by a priest of the Church, who

called. First, they should often during life reflect upon this sacrament, and whilst in a state of health, thoroughly instruct themselves in every thing concerning it. Secondly, when on the bed of sickness they should be careful not to defer the receiving it too long. Many are often alarmed at the very mention of extreme-unction, because they view it only as the forerunner of death; and false friends, through a fear of disturbing the sick, or of accelerating their dissolution, either never speak to them of it, through which neglect, numbers die without it-or they only call in the priests of the Church when the danger of death has given way to manifest certainty. By this unnatural delay the sick man is exposed to the risk of not being relieved in his corporal infirmities, (yet this sacrament was designed for the re-establishment of health, if advantageous to the salvation of the soul)-or the dying Christian receives it, when he is no longer sensible of what is administered, nor capable of uniting his prayers with those of the Church. As this sacrament moreover is one of the sacraments of the living, that is, one that must be received in a proper disposition of mind, it would prove unavailable to those sinners, who in mortal sin should be no longer capable of reflecting on their state and of repenting. As it is also designed to remit sins committed after confession, and which may have been forgotten, how wretched must be the state of the sinner, should it not be administered! It likewise remits those sins, which cannot be submitted to the sacrament of anoints the different senses of the body, with blessed oil, repeating at the same time this form of words:—" May our Lord, by this holy anointment and his own most tender mercy, pardon thee whatever sin thou hast committed."

The Council of Trent expresses itself on extreme-unction in this manner.*
"The holy synod has thought fit to add to her doctrine respecting penance what follows concerning the sacrament of extreme-unction: that it is considered by the fathers, as the consummation not only of penance, but of the whole Christian life, which should be a perpetual penance. In the first place, therefore, concerning its institution, it declares and teaches, that our most merciful

penance, through failure of the organs of sensation. For as the soul is often in possession of the interior faculties of the will, and understanding, after she has ceased to be outwardly sensible, so joined with repentance, and a desire of penance extreme-unction is capable of justifying the sinner. How cruel then to delay what is so important!

^{*} Sess. 14. c. 9.

Redeemer, who desired that his servants at all times, should have salutary helps to protect them against every attack of their enemies, as he has provided a most powerful aid in the other sacraments, by which Christians may preserve themselves during life from every great spiritual distress,so he has provided the sacrament of extreme-unction as a powerful succour at the end of life. For although our adversary during every period of our lives seeks and takes every occasion to destroy our souls in any way that he can, still there is no time, when he more industriously employs every art to ruin us interiorly, and if possible to extinguish our confidence in divine mercy, than when he sees us at the point of death."

My Brethren, as our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the sacraments of his Church, to be so many spiritual and divine resources of grace for his disciples,—as he provided for our entrance into his service, and for every subsequent spiritual necessity in life,

we are justified in concluding, that his merciful providence would not be wanting to us when threatened with dissolution; but on the contrary, that his graces would then flow into our souls, in a more copious stream, than at any other period of our lives. For surely it is only reasonable to expect that he who began by regenerating us with the laver of water in the word of life; who fortified us with the Holy Spirit in confirmation, who afterwards nourished us with bread from heaven, and provided for the repenting sinner the grace of forgiveness in the tribunal of penance,surely, I say, it is only reasonable to expect, that he would continue his gracious succours and assistance to the last, and that when the man is stretched on the bed of sickness in the hour of agony, he would not leave him to exclaim, My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?

My Brethren, you are to observe that the divine sacraments are the greatest sources of consolation to the soul, inas-

much as they are so many pledges of the mercy of Jesus Christ, and assurances of his love to men. Since, therefore, he has provided these succours of grace, for every necessity of the soul, while the body is strong and equal to active religious duties, -we cannot doubt but he would also leave her some pledge of mercy and love suited to the circumstances of approaching dissolution. For how often does it happen that the Christian is incapable of speech, and therefore unequal to the confession of his sins? How often may he be prevented from partaking of holy communion by inability to swallow, or total insensibility of mind? In short, how often, through defect of a proper disposition, may the soul defeat the intention of Christ in the institution of the other sacraments!

Surely then, I repeat, we may suppose that Jesus Christ, the Saviour of Men, would provide for this important circumstance of every man's life, and that in this hour of distress and alarm he would not abandon the soul to herself. No! Brethren, reason, Scripture, and the Church inform us, that Jesus Christ has taken care to provide his graces for the dying, as well as the new-born Christian. He has suited his institutions to the necessities of both, and has left his followers nothing to desire in the way of grace and spiritual help. is by the mouth of his apostle James, that he tells us himself, if any one be sick among you let him call in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him. (James v. 14, 15.)

Thus he has specially instituted for the sick and dying a sacred religious rite, by which he assures the soul of divine protection and of the forgiveness of her sins. And what comfort and consolation must it not bring to the Christian's anxious mind in those moments, to reflect on this promise of his Redeemer, and with the eyes of

faith to see in the minister of the Church, Jesus Christ the divine physician of his soul! With what pious joy will he not behold him approach his bed of sickness, and lay the sacred oil on his temples, as the pledge of that hope and of that grace with which his Saviour shall enrich his soul for eternity! Then with calm contentment he will offer himself to his Creator, reposing on the firm hope, that his sins have been forgiven him, and that he will be admitted into the glorious society of the blessed.

My Brethren, the ceremony of the last anointment, has formed a sacrament of the Catholic Church, from the days of the apostles, and is even still administered as such by every sect and class of Greek Christians.*

^{*} A distinguished writer among them treating of this sacrament writes thus.—" We believe that the oil consecrated by the invocation of Jesus Christ our Saviour and our God, has been ordained by him, because the apostles used it, as St. Mark attests, and anointed with oil a number of sick whom they cured, and have ordered us to do

The form of administering this sacrament among the Greeks, differs in some

the same thing. For the apostle St. James says, if any one be sick among you, let him call in the priests of the Church, anointing him with oil-and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him. The apostles never would undoubtedly have ordained such things, if they had not received the commandment of their Master, who in sending them to preach, told them, go and preach to the whole world, teaching all nations; teaching them to observe whatever I have commanded them; what you have heard in the dark, tell in the light, and whatever you have heard in private, preach on the house tops. It manifestly follows that their ordinances were the precepts of Jesus Christ; that they never brought forward any thing which could be considered as a human institution; but only that which they had learnt from Jesus Christ our Saviour and our God, and from his Holy Spirit consubstantial with him. By the unction of this holy oil, which is the symbol of that joy, which a reconciliation with God produces in the sick soul, not only the health of the body is often restored, which is a certain proof of things invisible by things that are visible, but the remission of sins is also promised. For St. James said, that the Lord will raise the sick man, and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him. From whence we conclude that what we call the holy oil, Ευξ αλιον, is truly a sacred mystery, that is to say a sacrament."* To every word of this we implicitly subscribe as to the doctrine of the Catholic Church.

* Perpet, de la Foi. Vol. 5. p. 333.

degree from that practised in the Latin Church, but varies in nothing essential to the sacrament, as may be seen by this circumstance that no objection was laid against their ceremonies, at their union with the Latins in the Council of Florence, My Friends, my object at present is to prove, that extreme-unction is a divine sacrament of Christ's Church, and therefore I conceive, when I present it to you as a common and universal religious rite among Christians in every part of the world, that you will admit it to be necessarily derived from apostolical tradition. It is frequently spoken of by the most ancient fathers and councils of the Church, who apply to it the words of St. James in my text; and in the 69th Arabic canon of the Council of Nice, the oil of the sick is particularly mentioned and distinguished from the oil of the catechumens, or that which is used in baptism. - St. Augustin in one of his Sermons, is very express. "As often as any one is sick," he writes, "let him receive the body and blood of Christ, and then let him anoint his body, that what is written may be fulfilled in him, if any one be sick among you, let him call in the Priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sin, his sins shall be forgiven him. (James v. 14, 15.)

It may be asked, why the ancient fathers and councils, who published so much on the Christian religion, were not as explicit and precise in describing the ceremonies employed in administering the sacraments, as modern writers and divines; and why they seem rather to allude to these sacred rites than professedly to treat them?

My Friends, as all the sacraments of the Church were objects of the highest veneration to the Christians, and were viewed by them as the divine institutions of Jesus Christ, it was their constant care to conceal

the knowledge of them from the infidels; who on every occasion sought to turn our religion into jest, even on the public stage, and often perverted its ceremonies to purposes of superstition and magic. Hence that secret form in which the holy sacrifice of the mass has always been celebrated, and at which not even the catechumens were anciently allowed to be present; and hence very probably the sacraments were styled by the Greeks, mysteries or secrets. Thus Pope Innocent the first, replying by letter to Decentius, informs him, "That only bishops who have the sovereignty of priesthood, can confer the Holy Ghost in confirmation, by anointing the foreheads of persons baptized, but that he cannot recite the words of the form, for fear of discovering the mysteries to the infidels." This father also speaks of extreme-unction with the same caution, and expressly says, "it is the sacrament mentioned by St. James." and the second second will be the second will

My Brethren, I have already asserted

that the sacrament of extreme-unction has been universally administered to the sick in the Church of Christ. The certainty of this fact determined me to leave nothing unexamined in the history and religion of my Protestant Brethren, that could refer to this article of the Christian doctrine.

On opening their Common Prayer Book, which contains an account of all the sacraments and rites of their church, I was immediately led by the title to the order for the visitation of the sick. After reading it with great attention, I felt extremely perplexed to discover the real object and purport of this ceremony called The Visi-TATION OF THE SICK; in which only a minister in priest's orders is employed,in which much prayer and solemnity is prescribed,—and in which the great sacrament of confession of sin with absolution is only provisionally spoken of. I also observed the ceremony began with the same words as the Catholic prayers for extreme-unction-Peace be to this house

and all those who inhabit it. Without hesitation therefore I concluded, that here must have existed another instance of foul play on the part of our adversaries, and that the order for the visitation of the sick was originally the Protestant form of administering extreme-unction.

My Friends, I determined to pursue my inquiries, and did it with success. After searching the different editions of the Protestant Common Prayer Book, as they are deposited in the British Museum, I at length came to that one which contained every thing essential to the sacrament. It is the Protestant Prayer Book of King Edward the Sixth, or the first Common Prayer Book of the Church of England, and which the reformists themselves proclaim to be the inspired work of the Holy Ghost. Immediately after the last prayer of the modern edition, which begins with these words, "The Almighty Lord who is a strong tower," the ancient Protestant rubric there says: "if the person desire to

be anointed, then shall the priest anoint him on the forehead or breast only, making the sign of the cross, saying thus: "As with this visible oil thy body outwardly is anointed, so may our heavenly Father Almighty God, grant, of his infinite goodness, that thy soul inwardly may be anointed with the Holy Ghost, who is the spiritual strength, comfort, relief, and gladness. And may he vouchsafe for his great mercy (if it be his blessed will) to restore unto thee thy bodily health and strength, to serve him; and may he send thee release of all thy pains, troubles, and diseases, both in body and mind; and howsoever his goodness, by his divine and unsearchable providence, shall dispose of thee, we his unworthy ministers and servants humbly beseech the eternal Majesty to do with thee according to the multitude of his innumerable mercies, and to pardon thee all thy sins and offences committed by all thy bodily senses, passions,

vol. iv. D

and carnal affections, and may he also vouchsafe to grant unto thee ghostly strength, by his Holy Spirit, to withstand and overcome all temptations and assaults of thine adversary, that in no wise he prevail against thee, but thou mayest have perfect victory and triumph against the devil, sin, and death, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who by his death hath overcome the prince of death."

Thus, my Friends, extreme-unction once formed a sacrament of the Protestant Church of England, and I challenge any Protestant Bishop or Clergyman to deny it. You want not me then to remind you, how completely our modern adversaries are disconcerted by this discovery, which lays open a secret prevarication, ruinous to the cause and character of Protestantism in the opinion of every discerning and upright mind. Surely every argument urged by them against the Catholic

system of faith and religion, will now recoil with double force upon their reformation, or completely justify that Mother
Church, from which they have so impiously withdrawn. They are reduced to a
dilemma, from which they can never
escape without sacrificing the idol of their
reformation. For either extreme-unction
is a sacrament of the new law, instituted by Jesus Christ, or it is not. If
it is, then it is a sinful heresy to reject it; whereas if it is not, then their
reformation contained heresy, — they
were the dupes of a lying spirit, and
thus no real reformation was effected.

But, my Brethren, it is against that collusion and deceit, which here so strongly mark the conduct of our adversaries, that I vehemently protest. They may produce five hundred reformations as they have done, but let them do their work openly and fairly. By a second reformation they have chosen to expunge from

their religion the sacrament of extremeunction :-- this they were at liberty to do, by their reforming principles-but why have they never said, that they have done it? Why have they tried to deceive the people, by leaving them the prayers and instructions for the sacrament, at the same time that they took away the essence of it, which as you have seen, is the administration of oil? Strange and profound indeed has been their silence on this subject, though they are communicative enough In every other. Which of you for instance ever heard before, that extremeunction once formed a sacrament of the Protestant Church of England? What Protestant Bishop or Clergyman ever mentioned this to his flock? Even the author who published the last edition of the Common Prayer Book,* and whose celebrated Introduction, in spite of all its faults, is the best apology for the Catholic tion they have chosen to expange from

faith and worship, that ever came from the pen of a professed Protestant; even he, who had thoroughly examined into every change and alteration of the Protestant Liturgy, and who is deeply read on the subject, preserves a marked and profound silence on this matter. This silence however of the Protestant Clergy and writers, I call treason against God and religion, — misprision of the gospel of Jesus Christ. If an angel from heaven, says St. Paul, preach a gospel different from that which I have preached, let him be anothema. (Gal. i. 8.)

Before I conclude, you may wish to be informed, how the Protestants came to make this second alteration in their religion, which we have just noticed. My Brethren, the many succeeding changes which have occurred in the Protestant religion, have all originated in the same cause, as their first grand reformation, and have all been conducted on the same principles. For many

years before Luther and his companions appeared in the undisguised characters of reformers, men were generally prepared for reformation, that is, in other language, a change in religion. They had already thrown off the burthensome yoke of the gospel,—they had ceased to practise its virtues, and to study its precepts. They still made shew of religion in the exterior, but in their hearts they worshipped the idol of every sensual passion. Having no longer any relish for prayer, for virtue and for pious practices, they exclaimed, "let us throw off this yoke, let us reject all but what is apparently essential to the faith and religion of Jesus Christ." Thus instead of opposing the dissolute manners of the age, -instead of reforming the hearts of men, and bringing them back by repentance to prayer, virtuous deeds and religion, Luther and his companions both in England and in Germany, unfortunately undertook to shape religion to the desires of men, and in the attempt involved a miserable race of followers in heresy and schism. In this manner irreligion and depravity of morals were the causes of the first reformation, while its sole object was to render religion less adverse to the corrupt inclinations of men.

I have said that the first intention of these reformers was to retain all they conceived essential to religion and faith; -but, my Brethren, it is our nature to grow worse by indulgence. The hearts of these men were not more attached to virtue and religion than before. - Still they despised every species of devotion.—They had given up the exercise of every religious duty, even those which were retained by the reformers themselves as essential to the revealed worship of Christ, -our souls, they said, loath this light food; if we cannot have religion without it, we had better return to the Catholic Church, where at least we shall do the same thing with more eschanger a contain of the aginion of those who record it

only as a medicine for corporal diseases." . y y ... I O W

consistency, confidence, and comfort to

Such then were the feelings and dispositions of the Protestants for many years after their first reformation was completed; they refused to practise their own reformed religion-and hence they called for a second reformation, in which they rejected the sacrament of extreme-unction till then retained, + abolished prayer for the dead, and the anointments in baptism till then retained, and declared more openly against the Catholie Church. Thus, this second reformation having originated in the same cause as the first, that is, the wickedness of the human heart, was conducted on the same principle; that of making religion more agreeable to the corrupt wishes of men.

Here then we might suppose that all was finally settled. But, no! I have said, the

^{*} Centuriators, Magdeburg, Cent. 8. cap. 6. p. 204.

[†] Calvin himself says, in p. 5. Epist. Jac. v. 4. "I confess, the disciples of Christ did use extreme unction as a sacrament; I am not of the opinion of those who regard it only as a medicine for corporal diseases."

perversity and corruption of human nature gain strength by indulgence. The people kept retiring more and more from the reformed religion, and their pastors were so foolish and impious as to attempt to make religion follow. They have since altered and reformed their own work again and again, but all to no purpose—even at this day they are meditating another reformation. They look with fright and terror at the general abandonment of the people,they are shocked at their fanatic, and what they are pleased to term heretical ideas, they discover in their hearts rebellions against the established reformed Church, - they are puzzled in their councils and they know not what to do. These people, they say, cry out, "No Bishops,"-" no episcopal appointments to congregations;"-" we'll choose for ourselves."-" We'll have no priestly garments, nor appointed liturgy, -we'll pray as we like."-"We'll have no uniform system of doctrine, and articles of religion, -we'll

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teach and believe as we please."—My Protestant Friends! Bishops and Clergymen, I am aware of your distressing situation, the same in which we were once ourselves, when your forefathers abandoned us.—I'll press this matter no farther. Enough has been said for the instruction of all parties, and that is sufficient.

and that is sufficient.

But I will tell you plainly what should be your course as men. Own your own errors, and earnestly endeavour to retrace your steps back again to the fold of the Catholic Church. Yield nothing to flesh and blood, -I mean the passions of men. They must be trampled down, and the edifice of virtue and religion must be raised in their place. The enemy must be encountered, to sleep upon your arms is ruin and destruction. Such has ever been the wise policy of the Catholic Church, recommended by Jesus Christ in the Gospel,such is the example which the Catholic Clergy set you at the Reformation. Infine, if this principle be true, that religion is not

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to be shaped to the fancies and wickedness of men's hearts, but men's hearts to be moulded to religion, it is your duty before God and men to lead back these souls to the fold of the Catholic Church, from which yourselves originally strayed.



all beginning authority, contempt of all the moral virtues, degracation of all the ties of go II."

SERMON XLVII.

to be shaped to the funcies and wickedness

of since sent And best of near back to on the SACRAMENT OF ORDERS.

Fasting and praying and laying their hands upon them they sent them away. (Acts xiii. 3.)

IT is scarcely possible for any one to read the acts and epistles of the apostles, and to contemplate the history of the Christian Church, without immediately observing, that from her first establishment, there has been an order of men selected and set apart to do the public duties of religion.* They have ever acted in qua-

^{*} Through the malevolent spirit of the age, many aspersions have been cast upon the Church, on account of the temporalities she possesses; and philosophers, * (i. e. Deists under that abused title), Protestants and Jansenists,

[&]quot; They call themselves philosophers," writes La Harpe, because they preach atheism, irreligion, impiety, hatred of all legitimate authority, contempt of all the moral virtues, destruction of all the ties of society."

lity of superintendants in the community, and have devoted themselves to the func-

have emulated each other, in their eagerness to break in upon her integrity by that quarter. Providence however has held a shield of protection over his Church, and her enemies discovered in their artful designs, have seen their weapons only recoil upon themselves.

The arguments which these politicians affect, is, that Popes, Bishops and Priests are spiritual characters, and that the gospel contains nothing approving of temporalities in the Church. On the contrary, that the spirit of the gospel only inculcates peace, mildnesss, humility and poverty, directly in contradiction to her secular grandeur, and to the temporal sovereignty of the Popes. "Either shew." exultingly exclaim these adversaries, "where temporalities are ordained in scripture, or acknowledge that the Church has overstepped her proper limits."—To these slypoliticians I will reply, by calling upon them, to shew in scripture, where temporalities are forbidden. Is nothing lawful for Christians but what is written in scripture? From what passage then do they deduce their doctrine that temporalities are unnecessary and objectionable? Perhaps they will reply, that this is to be inferred at least, though it be not positively stated. But among Catholics, is it not settled that the Church is the regular interpreter of scripture? Are not her Doctors of divinity better qualified to understand the sense of the scripture, than the politicians, of the age? or are the latter specially privileged to rise up doctors on this point, though they submit to be taught on

tions of preaching and administering the sacraments. This is a truth so uncontested,

every other? At least let them understand that neither the Fathers, the Doctors of Divinity, nor the saints, nor the Church herself have disapproved of these temporalities, or considered them opposed to the humble spirit of the gospel.

The apostles were the first to interpret the scriptures in opposition to these our politicians, and consented to become the depositories and dispensators of the property of the first Christians; (Acts iv. 24.) and St. Peter gave such a strong instance of his displeasure against some delinquents on account of these temporalities, that were any thing similar tohappen in this age, the Church would not escape the bitterest reproaches. It has been asserted that the Church in her purest days, and till the reign of Constantine, was unpolluted by the touch of temporalities. True it is, no doubt, that during that period, her riches and her splendor chiefly consisted in the blood of her martyrs; -and therefore, in recommending that glorious mode of extending and maintaining the faith, do these politicians offer themselves as her first victims? Are they so ready to become the poor children of a destitute mother? Or do they only wish to exhibit the contrast of their own wealth, that they may more easily insult her in her poverty and abjection?

It is erroneous however to assert, that the Church possessed not temporalities until the conversion of Constantine; for one of the first acts of that Christian Emperor was to restore to the Church those possessions which

so plain and evident, that it would be a waste of time to offer a single reflection in

under the power of paganism had been wrested from her. The decree itself stands in Eusebius. (De Vit. Const. 1.2. c. 39.) It says, "We decree therefore that all the effects which shall appear strictly to belong to the Churches, whether houses and goods, or fields, or gardens, or any other property shall be restored in their full value, with all their rights, immunities and appendages."—The pastors therefore of the primitive Church held this property, and did not consider the possession of temporalities any way contrary to the spirit of the gospel.

It is also well known that this property wonderfully augmented under the Christian Emperors. Fleury in his Maurs des Chret. p. 311, says, "The poverty of the Bishops of that period was quite voluntary in the midst of immense riches, which were the first fruits of its liberty. What I have to relate is almost incredible, though it rests on the authority of regular proofs. The histories of the lives of all the Popes from St. Silvester, and from the beginning of the 4th century down to the 9th, are filled with the accounts of the presents made by the Popes, the Emperors, and private individuals to the churches of Rome. And these presents did not only consist of vessels of gold and silver, but of houses in Rome, and of estates in the country, both in Italy and other provinces of the Empire."-St. Anastasius has left us a detail of these riches, which appear to have been incalculably immense. Fleury continuing says, "besides

its support. I shall therefore confidently take my stand upon this acknowledged

the great church of St. John Lateran, and its prodigigious rich establishment, Constantine built seven other churches at Rome-one at Ostia, one at Albania, one at Capua, and one at Naples. The riches of these churches in vessels of gold and silver amounted to one thousand three hundred and fifty-nine marks of gold, and twelve thousand four hundred and thirty-seven marks of silver; which are equal to more than forty-one thousand pounds sterling. Their revenues amounted to seventeen thousand seven hundred and seventeen golden pennies; that is, more than five thousand eight hundred and sixty-six pounds sterling. The church of St. Peter at Rome, possessed houses at Antioch, and estates in the neighbourhood. It also had property at Tarsus in Cilicia, at Alexandria, and in every part of Egypt. It held property even in the province of the Euphratus, and a part of these estates were obliged to furnish a certain quantity of Oil of Nard, of Balsam, of Storax, of Cinnamon, of Saffron, and of other precious drugs for the incense and for the lamps."-(Vid. Euseb. de Vita Const. l. 3. cc. 34, 35, &c. c. 50. l. 4. cc. 58, 59.)

Having shewn therefore that the possession of temporal riches was never viewed by the primitive Church, in any manner as contrary to the spirit of the gospel, it only remains for me to justify her possessing and exercising a temporal sovereignty. In effecting this however, I will not here enter into those questions of historical controversy,

fact, and thence argue for the sacrament of orders, or that religious rite, by which

in which opposite parties are not agreed upon the points of legitimute possession and succession, I shall be satisfied if all admit, that the exercise of this power was very early practised by the first characters of the Church for learning and piety; since this will be a satisfactory proof, that the lawful possession and exercise of temporal power, by the Popes and some other Bishops of the Church, was never considered as detrimental to religion, or contrary to the spirit of the gospel. Sozemen writes, that upon Constantine's conversion, "The Emperor assisted the Church with large sums of money from the public treasury, and wrote to the Bishops as well as to the Governors of the provinces: to the former, desiring them to issue whatever orders they pleased; to the latter, obliging them to obey the Bishops and studiously follow their directions." (L. 1. c. 8.) Socrates also recounts (l. 7. cc. 7. 13.) that St. Cyrillus Bishop of Alexandria, created a greater principality for himself than his predecessor Theophilus ever had. And from that period the Bishops of Alexandria governed in civil affairs as well as in ecclesiastical."-Socrates makes a complaint that Pope Celestin had deprived the Novatian heretics of their churches, and that the Roman episcopacy like the Alexandrian, having extended itself even beyond the limits of the priesthood, had for some time past degenerated into a sovereignty,"-jam olim in dominationem degenerasset. (Socr. 1. 7. c. 11.) Let it be observed that Pope Celestin died about the year 432. Theodoret (l. 2. men receive that grace, which is to qualify them for the discharge of these holy and

c. 30.) also describes St. James of Nisiba as the Saviour and the Governor (Dux) of that city in the Character of Bishop. St. Cuthbert likewise on being chosen Bishop in the year 685 received from King Egfrid, the palace of Caec, and all the land three miles round,—also the city of Carlisle, with all the lands fifteen miles round, given to him and his successors in full right, with the approbation of the Primate Theodore, and a Synod of seven Bishops. (See Wilkin's Councils, vol. 1, p. 56.)

Now without seeking for other evidences of sovereign power, the reader may surely be satisfied if I direct him to the letters of that star of the Church, St. Gregory the Great, who appeared towards the end of the sixth century, and seems, according to his writings, to have borne in peace and war the full weight of the sovereignty of the Emperors of Rome. (See l. 1. Ep. 3. l. 2. epp. 22. 29.—l. 9. epp. 6. 100.) I will therefore conclude this body of evidence, drawn from the constant practice of the Church, with a decisive decree of the general Council of Trent. "If any one, either amongst clergy or laity, whatever be his dignity, whether imperial or regal, should so far be carried away by avarice, the root of all evil, as by any art or species of pretext, whether by the means of fear excited by themselves or others, or through pretended characters amongst clergy or laity,-to venture to seize or convert to their own use, the property, rent, feudal and acquired rights, fruits, emoluments, or any profits belonging to any Church, or secular

sublime duties. This mystical seal is called the sacrament of orders, because it per-

or regular benefice, or religious fund, or the jurisdiction of other religious places—or shall prevent their being received by those persons to whom by right they appertain, let them be under an anathema, as long as they shall withhold (the same) from the Church or her administrator, and until complete restitution having been made, they shall have obtained absolution from the Roman Pontiff." (Sess. 22. c. 11.)

Having, therefore, clearly proved that the temporalities possessed by the Church, are no ways in opposition to the spirit of religion, I ought now to establish the consistency of these principles, by shewing, that they are useful to religion—which I am fully able to do; and as brevity is a principal object in a note, I conceive, that in shewing the sovereignty of the Roman Pontiff to be advantageous to religion, by that particular instance I shall succeed in illustrating the general principle for which I contend, viz. that the independence of the Church is essential to her prosperity.

Writers have noticed the great diminution of heresies, since the temporal authority of the Popes became more settled and extended, and appeal for a proof to the catalogues of heresies and heretics published by St. Irenœus, St. Epiphanius, and St. Austin. The fact is, that heresy is usually the burst of some turbulent mind, that can only be controuled by force—and therefore, where the civil authority acts not with the spiritual, it is often difficult to pre-

petuates the hierarchy established by Jesus Christ in his Church, as baptism perpetu-

vent or suppress the evil. The dogmatizer of heresy would be at liberty to pass from one diocese to another, scattering his poisonous cockle in every direction; and should a Pope in these circumstances be a mere subject of some other state, (possibly a prisoner in the hands of his enemies, like the two Popes Pius VI, and Pius VII,) his pastoral voice would scarcely be heeded by the sheep.

In the event, however, of his being a sovereign himself, he is more respected by other Princes, who see in him not only a master in points of faith, but moreover an equal in the rank of sovereignty, and able temporally as well as apiritually to support the welfare of the Church, Hence on account of the weight and influence of the Popes, their friendship and alliance have always been courted by the other sovereigns of Europe, and every attack upon their peaceful territory has been viewed with jealousy by the states of Christendom. It is on account of this protection afforded to religion by the temporal power of the Popes, that the Wickliffites, the Albigenses, the Protestants, and modern Deists or Philosophers have been its most violent opponents. The utility of this sovereignty is maintained by our best writers. " From the time, (writes Fleury) that Europe became divided into different states, independent of one another, it was to be feared that some would hesitate to acknowledge the Pope as common Father, and that schism might frequently happen. We may consider it therefore as the particular ordination of Providence that

ates Christianity, and by conferring a new spiritual character on the soul, places the

the Popes have been made independent; and that in presiding over states sufficiently powerful not to be easily oppressed by other sovereigns, they have found themselves free to exercise their spiritual power, and more able to keep the other hishops to their duty." (Disc. 4.)

Bossuet also says in his Sermon on Unity: "It pleased God that his Church, the common Mother of all Kingdoms, should in the end be dependent of no kingdom, for a temporal support; and that the holy See, with which all the faithful ought to preserve unity, should at last be placed out of the influence of all those partialities that the different interests and jealousies of states occasion."

In short it is the paramount independence of the Church, that constitutes its real security and protection in every circumstance; and what she should always value above all the promises, assurances, and fair language that the civil authority can bestow upon her. Riches of themselves are not essential to the preservation of religion, as we have clearly witnessed in the example of Ireland. But independence is so necessary, that to the want of it kingdoms may attribute the loss of their faith—and it was owing to the controul of the civil government over the ecclesiastical authorities, that Henry the 8th and Queen Elizabeth were twice enabled to overthrow the true religion, in this country. It is this that has degraded religion among the Greek Christians,—that originally fostered the Reformation at its birth in Germany,—and like the smothering cockle has

individual in a distinct rank of the Christian community.

Happy am I moreover on this occasion, to reflect that I shall not have the members of the Established Church in the number of my adversaries. We have been opponents long enough, and would to God that we could now join hands in spreading the religion of Jesus Christ, and in defending it against that host of enemies, who under the title of Anabaptists, Dissenters, Methodists, and Independents, have attacked the very vitals of religion, by rejecting the Priesthood of the Christian Church.

These deluded and mistaken reformers having pushed the reformation a degree further than their brethren of the establish-

choaked the good seed in every nation, where it was allowed to exist. On this account, I will not overlook the opportunity of this note to place the British Catholic community on their guard,—and to entreat generations yet unborn, never to sacrifice for any consideration, THE INDEPENDENCE OF THEIR CHURCH.

ment, as I observed in my last discourse, have with heretical impiety risen up against the sacerdotal character, and in defiance of scripture, of ecclesiastical authority and tradition, have dared to confound the pastor with the flock, and to reduce his divine and apostolical ministry to the level of a mere human employment. Instead of seeking grace and spiritual blessings through his ministry from Jesus Christ by an apostolical succession, they pretend to impart to him those very graces they need themselves, and in subversion of all order give him that authority which should come from Jesus Christ. My Friends, it is therefore in conjunction with our brethren of the Established Church, and in opposition to this heresy of the Dissenters, that I undertake to prove the holy Sacrament of Orders; and intend to shew, that by this sacred sign exclusively, all persons must be advanced to the dignified situation of pastor in the Church of Christ; and that whoever presumes to

climb into the ministerial sanctuary of religion by any other way, is not the shepherd of the sheep, but rather a thief and a robber.* (John x. 1, 2.)

* Protestants seem completely to have lost sight of what has been universally considered essential to a valid exercise of divine jurisdiction in the Catholic Church, I mean ecclesiastical mission. How can you preach, says St. Paul, unless you be sent? (Rom. x. 15.) This mission is to be viewed as totally distinct from orders, and implies a government or subjects to superintend. For as a man may have the commission of a general without an army to command, so it is not every priest and bishop that has a mission, or subjects to govern; but only those who are called by God as Aaron was. (Heb. v. 4.) This mission, therefore, is always delegated; not in the sense of Protestants, immediately by God, but by a competent ecclesiastical authority. Indeed otherwise all would be strife, disorder and confusion in the Church, and there would be many contending ministers where there should be only one. He that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. (John x. 2.) Wide, therefore, is the distinction between a minister in orders, and a minister with a flock which must necessarily be committed to him; for if he seize the flock, he is a thief and a robber. Such is the distinctive feature of lawful jurisdiction in the Catholic Church, with which Protestants in general appear to be wholly unacquainted. The following, therefore, is offered to them as a just explanation of

It is evident, my Brethren, that to work those extraordinary operations of grace

the original division of jurisdiction among the several orders of the hierarchy.

The mission which the apostles received from Jesus Christ was to the whole world. Go ye, said he, into the whole world, preach the Gospel to every creature. (Mark xvi. 15.) The jurisdiction, therefore, of each apostle, extended to the whole human race; yet we must suppose that in the exercise of it, they were regulated by a concerted plan of proceedings, and that all acted in harmony and understanding with their common head, the holy apostle St. Peter. Let the latitude of this mission then be well attended to, since it at once explains the title of the Bishop of Rome, successor of St. Peter, to a diffused authority over all the nations of the earth; and our inquiry should not be how one bishop became possessed of universal jurisdiction, but how any of the episcopal order should have been without it.

It is to be observed then, that this universal jurisdiction was a privilege of the apostles, and with the exception of St. Peter, (in whose supreme office it was ordinary and inherent) was attached to them as an extraordinary power, suited to the extraordinary circumstances of the Church; but not essential to their office, nor intended to devolve to their successors. When the apostles therefore propagated the Gospel in particular nations and cities, it was their practice to appoint a bishop, to whose care they committed the newly-converted people of that district or city, whilst they pushed forward to new conquests of souls. For this

which, as I have already shewn, take place in the soul by the medium of the sacra-

cause, writes St. Paul to Titus (chap. i. ver. 5.) I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldst ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee.

Now these pastors could only hold that authority or jurisdiction, which they had received from the apostles, and consequently could only transmit the same to their successors; but the authority or jurisdiction which they had received from the apostles was local and not universal, (for, as I have already observed, they were specially appointed to particular districts and departments of the Church) therefore only a local and limited jurisdiction could be inherited by succeeding bishops; that is, the same as had been possessed by the predecessor in that diocese, to whose jurisdiction the newly appointed prelate succeeds:-and the same is to be said of the inferior orders of the hierarchy. Now as the distribution of the civil powers usually determined the local divisions of the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of a country, it should be observed that in the prelates appointed by the apostles, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction corresponded to the civil authority exercised by the Roman magistrates and governors at that period; and in this manner we are able to ascertain with tolerable accuracy the relative rank and authority of cities and governors at that day, by considering the relative jurisdiction of the bishops, metropolitans, and patriarchs of the Church. Such was the universal proceeding of the apostles, with an

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ments, there must be adequate power in the minister to produce the grace, and a suffi-

exception for St. Peter's See, in which was inherited by his successors, in virtue of his supremacy, a universal as well as a local jurisdiction, corresponding to the paramount rank which the imperial city of Rome then enjoyed. And here I conceive, alluding to Rome as the capital of the Church and fountain of jurisdiction, I may very appropriately introduce a few lines quoted from an unknown writer, which beautifully unveil the mystical character of this Christian Sion. "It is a fact not unworthy of observation, that of all the celebrated cities of antiquity, the city of Rome stands alone the monument of ages, verifying the well-known symbol of the two-faced Janus, equally viewing both ancient and modern events. For if we look to the spot where formerly stood so many famed cities we read of in history, we shall search for them in vain.-Where is the proud city of Babylon, whose walls were ranked among the wonders of the world? Where is Niniveh, Tyre, Memphis, Thebes with her hundred gates ! Where is Balbec, Persepolis, Syracuse, Troy, Carthage, and Ephesus, and even the city of cities Jerusalem the fair daughter of Sion? Where are the cities of Sparta, Mantinea, Grecian Thebes, Argos, with the palace of the king of kings Agamemnon? Where are those temples the pride of nations, built of the most solid materials to resist the shock of ages? All, all swept away, 'like the baseless fabric of a vision.' Rome alone, the eternal city, stands in awful majesty, having preserved a sufficient number of her monuments of antiquity to tescient capability in the person, who is to receive the effect. We are not invested by nature with these prerogatives, they are supernatural, and must therefore be derived from God. Who for instance, by any natural or human endowment can change bread and wine into the pure substance of the body and blood of Christ? Who without some divine privilege, would be able to pardon and remit the guilt of sin in the sacraments of penance, extremeunction, or baptism? My Friends, as the old maxim is true, that no one can give what he has not, so no one can presume to exercise these sacred and divine functions without being specially appointed to them by God himself. Now the whole Christian world bears evidence to such a divine appointment, and that the hierar-

of her edifices, particularly in that magnificent dome of St. Peter, under which rest the martyred apostles! Rome infine pre-elected even with the dawn of her existence to be the seat of faith, the center of Christianity!"

chy or ministry of the Christian Church is as select and delegated an order of men as were the Priests and Levites among the Jews. Moreover, that as the priesthood of the Jews was a figure of that which was to be established in the new law, and was solely inherited by the male generation of Aaron, so the ministry and priesthood of the Christian Church, is absolutely confined to those members who have received the character of priest and minister with the grace of the sacrament of orders.

By the sacrament of orders, I just told you is meant that religious rite or ceremony which, by divine institution, confers power and authority to preach and administer the sacraments, and impresses on the individual the indelible character of a priest and minister of Jesus Christ.* St.

^{*} As the Levitical law was the figure of the Christian dispensation, so its prominent characteristics strikingly represented what has been since ordained. In Moses we behold the figure of the Eternal Father, whilst Aaron appeared the type of Jesus Christ, and the figure of the Priesthood of the Christian Church. The following pas-

Paul says, Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. (1 Cor. iv. 1.)

sage of Ecclesiasticus corresponds so perfectly in all its circumstances and parts with the venerable hierarchy of the Catholic Church, that it might be viewed as an historical description of the latter, representing the glory of the Pontiff, and the covenant which the Deity has made with his seed for ever. God exalted Aaron the brother of Moses, and like to himself of the tribe of Levi: he made an everlasting covenant with him, and gave him the priesthood of the nation, and made him blessed in glory: and he girded him about with a glorious girdle, and clothed him with a robe of glory, and crowned him with majestic attire. He put upon him a garment to the feet, and breeches, and an ephod, and he encompassed him with many little bells of gold all round about, that as he went there might be a sound, and a noise made that might be heard in the temple, for a memorial to the children of his people. He gave him a holy robe of gold, and blue, and purple, a woven work, of a wise man, endued with judgment and truth: of twisted scarlet the work of an artist, with precious stones cut and set in gold, and graven by the work of a lapidary for a memorial, according to the number of the tribes of Israel. And a crown of gold upon his mitre, wherein was engraved Holiness, an ornament of honour, a work of power, and delightful to the eyes for its beauty. Before him there were none so beautiful, even from the beginning. No stranger was ever clothed with them, but only his children alone, and his grandchildren for ever. His sacrifices were consumed with

My Brethren, in opposition to the mistaken principles of the Dissenters, who

fire every day. Moses filled his hands, and anointed him with holy oil. This was made to him for an everlasting testament; and to his seed as the days of heaven, to execute the office of the priesthood, and to have praise, and to glorify his people in his name. He chose him out of all men living, to offer sacrifice to God, incense, and a good savour, for a memorial to make reconciliation for his people: and he gave him power in his commandments, in the covenants of his judgments, that he should teach Jacob his testimonies, and give light to Israel in his law. And strangers stood up against him, and through envy the men that were with Dathan and Abiron, compassed him about in the wilderness, and the congregation of Core in their wrath. The Lord God saw, and it pleased him not, and they were consumed in his wrathful indignation. He wrought wonders upon them, and consumed them with flames of fire. And he added glory to Aaron, and gave him an inheritance, and divided unto him the first-fruits of the increase of the earth. He prepared them bread in the first place unto fulness: for the sacrifices also of the Lord they shall eat, which he gave to him, and to his seed. But he shall not inherit among the people in the land, and he hath no portion among the people: for he himself is his portion and inheritance. Phineas, the son of Eleazar, is the third in glory, by imitating him in the fear of the Lord: and he stood up in the shameful fall of the people: in the goodness and readiness of his soul he appeased God for Israel. Therefore he made to him a covenant of peace, to be the prince of the sanctuary, and of his people, that the dignity of priesthood should be to him and to his seed for ever. (Eccles, xlv. 7.)

raise their members to the high office of pastor, by the simple form of election, and consider them as the ministers of God, though they acknowledge in them no real and essential change of character, you may observe by the means of scripture and the universal practice and tradition of the Church, that down to the days of Luther and Calvin none were ever considered validly advanced to the high and holy office of minister of God's Church, if not advanced by those who were already in the highest ranks of that ministry themselves.

When the apostles for instance were called to the sublime function of ministers of God's word, did they assemble with the rest of the disciples, and raise each other to that dignity by the mode of election, or did they not wait to receive it from the hands of Jesus Christ, in whom resided the plenitude of sacerdotal grace and the perfection of the priesthood? And he breathing into them his divine benediction, said,

Peace be to you; as my Father sent me so send I you; receive ye the Holy Ghost, whose sins ye shall forgive they are forgiven them, and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained. (Matt. xx. 21.)

Moreover, when Stephen and the six were selected for the ministry, did the other disciples immediately instate them, or did they not bring Stephen, though he was already full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and set him and the others before the apostles; and they praying imposed hands upon them. For although these men were of good reputation and full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, (Acts vi.) still they had not received that particular grace which was to qualify them to be ministers of God; and therefore they were conducted to the apostles, who had been already sanctified with the fulness of the priesthood of Jesus Christ.

We observe another instance in the conduct of the apostles when they were divinely admonished at Antioch, that Saul

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and Barnabas had been selected for a more important ministry. The apostles did not merely confirm and approve this choice of heaven; but before they sent them away, with fasting and prayer they imposed their hands upon them. (Acts xiii. 3.) By which we may conclude that till then they had not attained to the fulness of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Our adversaries may moreover instruct themselves by what St. Paul writes in his Epistle to Timothy. He does not remind him of any pastoral authority or character conferred on him by the suffrages of his brethren, but he speaks of that grace, which by the special direction of God, he had imparted to this disciple, with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood. Neglect not, says he, the grace which is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood. (Tim. iv. 14.) And in his second Epistle he writes, I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee by the

imposition of my hands. (2 Tim. i. 6.) And remark again, when writing to Titus, he does not say that he left him in Crete, that he might assist at the election of elders or ministers, but that he should set in order the things that were wanting, and should ordain priests in every city, as he also appointed him. (Tit. i. 5.)

Nothing therefore can be more clearly deduced than the necessity of seeking the priesthood and pastoral appointment from those who are already in regular possession of the plenitude of priesthood. These passages of scripture, joined with the universal practice and tradition of the Church, serve easily to overset all the Calvinistic arguments of Dissenters, and to shew that as Jesus Christ only communicated what as man he had received from his Father, so the ministry of the Christian Church is to be perpetuated, not by election, or any power that can be conveyed by the community, but exclusively, by those who hold it of Jesus Christ and the Church:

and the ministry of their hands is an essential sign, as water is the sign of baptism. The grace within thee, says St. Paul to Timothy, was given with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood. (1 Epistle iv. 14.) And a little after, he cautions him against advancing improper persons to the ministry, by the words, impose not hands lightly upon any man. (1 Tim. iv. 14.-v. 22.) Nay so essential is this act to a due ordination, or admission to the ministry, that the Catholic Church has never recognized the spiritual character of any individual not thus sacramentally and canonically introduced into the sanctuary of religion: and so indispensable does she consider this sacred rite for the forming of a minister of God, that even where there subsists a question or a doubt of its having been complied with in any particular case, for greater safety she requires a new ordination. In short, she requires the Sacrament of Order, or ordination, as the only door into the sanctuary of the

Church of Christ, and applies to every one who seeks an entrance by any other way these words of her divine Master: Amen, amen I say to you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, is a thief and a robber; but he that entereth by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. (John x. 1, 2.)

The ministry of Jesus Christ thus forms an unbroken chain; it is a true filiation, like the levitical priesthood of Aaron, and its stock is Christ. As the vine stretches. her branches in every direction, and by different channels pours her generous stream into every shoot, so the Christian hierarchy, has grown out of this divine root of Jesse, and branching into the four quarters of the world, continues to communicate the sacerdotal grace to every duly consecrated minister of the Christian Church. I am the vine, says Jesus Christ, you the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing. If any one

abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither. (John xv. 5, 6.)

Now, my Friends, Anabaptists, Dissenters, Methodists and Independents, it is against these strong scriptural proofs, and that mass of evidence, which the history of ages furnishes, that you have ventured to innovate. By forming yourselves into a new society, and attempting to ordain ministers without an episcopal imposition of hands, you have schismatically broken from the apostolical succession of pastors; you have created for yourselves that order of lay or secular clergymen, who without authority to preach, and without power to administer, are effectually the branch, which abiding not in the vine cannot bear fruit :you exist not as a Church, for you have no real ministers who have been sealed with the divine grace of priesthood, and where there is no ministry to perform the essential offices of religion, there can be no Church. As legal marriage by the law of this land,

is necessary to perpetuate a family, and as the kingly power is essential to the transmission of the constitution, so the episcopal order in priesthood is both necessary to form and perpetuate a Church. How can you preach, writes the apostle, unless you be sent? (Rom x. 15.)

Here however you dissent from us, and say, that it is not necessary to receive either mission or ordination from Bishops,—that the community can appoint. Well! my Friends, only prove this doctrine by your own rule, where is it written? You have adopted the letter of scripture for your guide, and continually tell the Catholics, that there is no other rule for decision. I have however produced some very sturdy passages in favour of episcopal appointments; now then let us see what you in your turn can find in scripture, to oppose to them, and support your own form of ordination.

You say that in the time of the apostles the people took a part in electing their

ministers, and pastors, as may be seen by the election of a new apostle in the room of Judas. For it is mentioned in their acts. that the faithful presented them two, Barnabas and Matthias: and they cast lots for them, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles. (Acts i. 23.) Also that St. Paul and Barnabas, ordained in many cities those priests, who had been approved and chosen by the people. (Acts xiv. 22.) And have you no other proof from scripture, for your new form of ordination? Surely you will not maintain that these authorities can establish your proposition. They are no proofs whatever, but rather militate against your principle, and only shew that the apostles ordained those whom the faithful recommended to them, as distinguished for virtue and learning; which has more or less been the practice of their successors from that period to the present time. But do these passages authorize us to believe, that the individuals so elected were any thing but laymen, till the apostles had imposed their hands upon them? or that till then they were empowered by the Holy Ghost to preach and administer as pastors? Undoubtedly not.—Again therefore I ask, where is it written? Where is it said, that the spiritual powers and character of a minister can be derived from the community?

My Friends, without any authority from scripture for your proceedings, you are condemned by your own rule. * Therefore, however you may turn and distort a sentence,—never forget that I have produced many passages which are clear, and evidently in favour of that form of episcopal ordination practised in the Catholic Church. In opposition to your own principles you may attempt in your present straits,

^{*} See Luther de Missa privata et unctione Sacerdotum, tom. 7. p. 242.— Melancthon: Acta Ratisbonensia, art xi. de Sacramento Ordinis, tom. 4. p. 715.—Melan. Disputationis, tom. 4. p. 505. ex Epist. Pauli, Tit. et 1 Tim.—Calv. Institut. L. 4. c. xix. ver. 28.

to quote the sacred councils and holy Fathers, or appeal to historical facts; but remember that it would be easy for me to overwhelm you with canons of councils, and texts of the Fathers, condemning your unscriptural and schismatical course. Consider the number of holy priests in the primitive as well as in the modern Church, who were never elected by any congregation. St. Jerom, that learned and pious servant of God was of this number, living in a desert, wholly occupied with study and prayer;—yet would you refuse to him the character of a minister of God and priest of Jesus Christ?

History informs us, that congregations have often been driven to great difficulties for want of pastors, in periods of persecution, and that bishops have traversed countries in disguise, exposing themselves to extraordinary dangers, that they might form pastors by the administration of the sacrament of ordination. But where was the necessity of this proceeding, if the

community was qualified to advance its members to the ministry? Tertullian, who lived in the second age of the Church, violently reproaches the heretical sect of Marcionites, because they alternately charged priests and laymen with the offices of religion. But where was the ground for censure according to your ideas, or provided it was done with the consent of the congregation? for as Luther has said, Since the priest only differs from the lay-man, by his office I do not see why the priest cannot become a lay-man. Tertullian however who flourished nearer to the days of the apostles, held a differents entiment, and acknowledged that the sacrament of ordination, like baptism, impressed a character on the person, which no time, nor circumstance in life or death could ever efface.

But you deny that there is such an order in the Church instituted by Jesus Christ, as that of Bishops; or that there is any divine distinction of rank and authority in the ministry; and you call upon us

clearly to prove our doctrine from scripture. My Friends, as we are only defendants, and have no new scheme to advance, I conceive that the burden of proving from scripture remains with you. Our religion, our faith, and our principles had been firmly established throughout the world, for many ages before you undertook to controvert them by that authority: perform therefore what you have volunteered and engaged to do; shew that our doctrine and principles are opposed to scripture, and that your own are conformable to that rule. But, my Friends, you cannot,-I defy you.

We however, whose faith is grounded on scripture and universal tradition, find it easy by that unerring rule, to prove the order of bishops, to be a distinct order of ministry, instituted by Jesus Christ, and in dignity and authority the first in the hierarchy of the Christian Church. You Brethren, must therefore be informed that

this sacred body of persons, by the institution of Jesus Christ, is composed of three orders of ministers; -Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. The only difference between the apostles and other Bishops is, that the former received an extraordinary, the latter an ordinary commission. The character and order of both are the same. As therefore the distinction between Bishops and Priests, is the grand and prominent subject of dispute and dissension between us and the different classes of Calvinistic Christians, I shall conclude this discourse by establishing this point of Catholic doctrine; and in shewing this distinction, I shall necessarily prove the two first orders of the hierarchy.

My Brethren, I have already told you that the word of God revealed to us, is partly written, partly unwritten; and that the written word receives that light from the unwritten, which enables us clearly to discern the truths of revelation. Now we have ample evidence from Scripture to

prove the divine institution of the episcopal order, and tradition sufficient to shew, that there is a priestly order, distinct from the episcopal.

The Scriptures inform us, that the apostles ordained priests and bishops as you have seen. Timothy and Titus were ordained by St. Paul, and they also ordained others. For this cause, he writes to Titus, I left thee in Crete—that thou shouldst ordain priests in every city: and addressing Timothy on the priesthood, he says, impose not hands lightly on any man; and immediately before, he says, against a priest receive not an accusation, but under two or three witnesses. Them that sin, reprove before all; that the rest also may have fear. (2 Tim v. 22.) Therefore, my dissenting friends, in candour you will allow, that these passages imply the character and authority of a superior in these disciples as well as in St. Paul, together with the power of conferring ordination upon others.

Now then, as I have proved from Scrip-

ture the institution of the first or episcopal order, I have advanced far towards establishing the second order of priesthood in the hierarchy. For we observe by every monument of early history, that from the very days of the apostles, there were ministers in the Church, who were subject to a superior, and solely employed in administering the sacraments to the faithful. Moreover, that by the want of the necessary grace and power, these were considered incapable of administering the sacrament of ordination, which was the exclusive function of the superior order; and that in all ecclesiastical assemblies and councils, they only appeared in a subordinate rank of dignity. This is the true picture of the hierarchy of the Church from the apostolic age to the era of the Lutheran Reformation, and nothing can more strongly prove it to have been the divine institution of Jesus Christ, than the circumstance of its being at that early period so established in every city of the Christian world. For,

my Friends, is it likely that the apostles and their very disciples would have departed from the instructions of Jesus Christ? No! and on that account those fathers who flourished so near to the days of the apostles, in arguing with their heretical adversaries never failed where Scripture was silent, to appeal to the practice of those Churches, which had been founded by the apostles, as to so many undeniable evidences of what had been ordained by Jesus Christ.

In proof of this assertion, as well as to establish the Catholic doctrine of the hierarchy, I will quote the writings of the ancient fathers Iræneus and Tertullian. Speaking of the regular succession of bishops, in every city, the first says;* "since it would be very tedious to enumerate in such a volume, the successions of every Church, we will confine ourselves to that greatest, and most ancient, and universally

known Church of Rome, founded and constituted by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul; and by declaring that tradition which she has received from the apostles, and that faith which has been announced to men by a succession of bishops, reaching down to us, we refute all those, who for any reason, whether through malice, vain-glory, or blindness, or any other improper motive, bring them forward." He then subjoins the list of Roman Pontiffs, from the apostles Peter and Paul to Eleutherius, whom he mentions as the twelfth. "Founding, therefore, and instructing the Church, these apostles," he continues, "delivered the episcopal government of the Church to Linus-Anacletus succeeded him. After him it came to Clement in the third place from the apostles, who saw and conversed with them."

Tertullian also writes, * "it is in the same manner that the apostolical churches

* De Prescrip. cap. 32.

give testimony of the truth. As the Church of Smyrna having Polycarp, appointed by John, teaches; and as the Church of Rome having Clement ordained by Peter, does the same, so, as other Churches possess those who have been appointed to the episcopal government by the apostles, let them produce the apostolical seed."

Infine, my Friends, never forget the maxim laid down by St. Augustine* as the criterion of truth. "Whatever," he says, "is universal in the Church, and has been always so, though ordained by no Council, must be undoubtedly believed as delivered by apostolical authority." Which rule you will admit to be decisive for us, in the question immediately before us. For as there is no city, no country, no age in which the priestly and episcopal orders have not been regarded as distinct branches of the hierarchy; so you may conclude, with an infallible certainty, that the fact

^{*} Lib. 4, de Bap. c. 26.

rests on apostolical authority, and is of divine institution.

But in closing this subject let me remind you, that the Holy Ghost, the promised Spirit of truth, has often spoken by the lips of his beloved spouse, the Councils of the Church, and especially by the last general Council of Trent; which in one of her canons has declared, * "if any one shall say, that in the Catholic Church, there is not a hierarchy instituted by divine ordination, consisting of bishops, priests, and ministers, he shall be anathema." May then every blessing and grace continue to flow among you from this fountain of apostolical benedictions, and nourish you to eternal life in Jesus Christ. Amen.

* Sess. 23, can. 6.



bas escremences ylemetize as di masbaca

SERMON XLVIII.

ON THE INVALIDITY OF PROTESTANT ORDINATION.

He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber. (John x. 1.)

IT may be a matter of serious astonishment to Protestants, that Catholics have so pertinaciously refused to recognize the spiritual character of the ministers of the Established Church, and have uniformly viewed its bishops and inferior clergy in the light of lay-men, doing the offices of this new-modelled religion. Our conduct has been ascribed to pique, malice, and a spirit of revenge, and even those who are the least inclined to offer these reproaches, condemn it as extremely ungenerous and illiberal.

My Friends, sensible as I am of the right and title which every man has to my good opinion and esteem, both justice and religion forbid me, either to think, to speak, or to write in any manner detracting from his character and reputation. I am moreover aware that bigotry is always odious and disadvantageous to the cause of religion. A real Christian deportment consists in judging humbly of ourselves, favourably of our neighbour, and in the true spirit of charity, rather to cover his deficiencies than expose them. It is more known by acts of benevolence and forgiveness, than ill-tempered reproaches, and effects a greater good by the force of example than by stern rebuke.

This is undoubtedly the humble and conciliating conduct of a private individual; but filling as I do a public station in the Catholic Church, and being expressly appointed to guard the truth and expose the errors of our adversaries, it would ill become me to fear the idle charge of illiberality, (and by my silence favour

the mistaken notion, that the ministry of the established Protestant religion branched from the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. The subject is too essential and important to religion, too connected with the salvation of souls, to allow me to leave it unnoticed, and in regard to the imputed motive of malice judge yourselves when you see the grounds on which we reject the ordinations of the Protestant Clergy.

The arguments of Catholics against the validity of Protestant ordinations, may be resolved into these two grand objections; a defect of succession from the Catholic hierarchy, and a defect in the sacramental form of ordaining.

As the burden of proving a title, always rests with the claimant, it undoubtedly belongs to the Protestant clergy, to shew that they have a well-founded claim to be admitted into the sanctuary of the Church. For since the Catholics remain in undisputed possession, they have nothing to gain or to lose in the controversy; and to

deny the validity of Protestant orders without good and solid reason, would in the consequences expose them to the crime of sacrilege. Guiding ourselves by this maxim, at present a Protestant bishop or clergyman, on his conversion to the the Catholic faith, returns to the rank of a lay-man; and should he solicit, and prove worthy to become a minister of that religion, he receives his consecration from a bishop of the Catholic Church, which would be a sacrilegious act of the Catholic party, were he really previously ordained. Whereas as we allow validity of Holy Orders among the Greeks, when a schismatic priest or bishop of that church is converted to the Catholic faith, we receive him in the sacerdotal character, and should consider it equally criminal to attempt a new ordination, as to confer upon him a second baptism. For valid orders, like valid baptism, can never be reiterated.

It remains for Protestants therefore to establish their claim to the priesthood by

solid and undeniable proof. This however they have never been able to effect, but like some plaintiffs in our courts of law, when good evidence is wanting, have been rather inclined to question our right to doubt the justice of their title, than to prove it by the sturdy testimony of facts. It has therefore necessarily fallen to our lot to shew, that they can have neither succession, nor orders, and that in point of fact, they are every way circumstanced as their brethren of the dissenting congregations; that their bishops and clergy are merely lay-men pretending to orders, destitute of every attribute of a clergyman, but such as they were able to obtain from the Parliament of Great Britain. * That consequently the Protestants in this country exist not as a church, any more than the lay corporations in the country.

In respect to the first objection therefore, there are two particular reasons why we reject their pretended claim to a succession from

^{*} I never intend to call in question their constitutional character.

when reproached by the Catholics at the very beginning of the reformation with the want of a connecting link, they never repelled the charge, but rather admitted it, and, as you shall presently see, only contended against the necessity of such a chain of succession. Secondly, because after an elapse of fifty years, they appealed to a register in Lambeth Palace of the consecration of their first Archbishop Parker, which was immediately detected and rejected by the Catholics as a forgery. These are our two grand arguments against the succession.

From the period of Henry the Eighth's schism with the See of Rome, till the death of that monarch, no other alteration in the ancient form occurred, than the omission of an oath of obedience to the Pope, which change certainly did not invalidate the sacrament. In the reign of Edward the Sixth however, when Protestantism may be said to have been first introduced

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into this country, the ordinal or the prescribed form of ordination, underwent that alteration and reform which completely invalidated the sacrament so conferred. Yet it appears that by this form and the apostate hands of the impious Cranmer, some few Protestants were advanced to the episcopacy, in the place of the deceased Catholic prelates. At the accession however of Queen Mary, all was again reversed by Act of Parliament; the new ordinal condemned as an invalid form both by the senate and the clergy, while those who had been ordained by it were reduced to the rank of lay-men. *

In this situation of things, at the death of Mary, Elizabeth mounted the throne of

^{*} The Act, and Acts of Edward VI. establishing and legalizing the new ordinal were repealed in the first of Mary.—And again in the first and second of Philip and Mary all Acts of Parliament passed in the reign of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. against the Supreme Authority of the Pope, were declared "thenceforth utterly void and of none effect."

England and again introduced the reformed religion; the Catholic prelates being shortly after either driven from their Sees or imprisoned. When Elizabeth therefore and her counsellors had determined to replace them with Protestant Bishops, and for that purpose had selected several individuals with the usual concurrence of the Deans and Chapters, they soon perceived that it would be no easy task to procure ordination for them, there being no Protestant Bishops in the kingdom. By holding out the promise of liberty, she endeavoured to prevail upon some of the Catholic prelates, her prisoners, to comply with her request, but all and each positively refused. Therefore after vainly employing every mean art to get an entrance into the sanctuary of the Church, by seeking orders in the regular way, these new apostles came to the bold resolution of climbing up another way, and it is related of them, that after performing a mock consecration among themselves at a tavern in Cheapside,

called the Nag's Head, * they presented themselves as Bishops to the people, took possession of the rich Sees of the Catholics, and were received in that character by Queen Elizabeth, the female head and Pontiff of this new Church. That which places the story of this mock ordination beyond all doubt is, that when immediately challenged by those learned and respectable priests Harding and Stapleton, they dared not say how they came by their consecration. † Nay this mock ordination is in

^{*} This was boldly acknowledged in open Parliament by Bishop Morton in the reign of Charles the first, when the hierarchy of the Established Church had to defend itself against the attacks and questions of the Dissenters, and is also evident by the unanswered declaration of Lord Audley, given in Ward's 2d Canto.

[†] The written evidences of the time are numerous. Mr. Mason, a Protestant, in his book of the Consecration of Bishops in the Church of England, brings in this question; (p. 132.) "If his, (that is Parker's) or their consecrations were sound, why did the queen in her letters patents, directed for the consecration of them, use divers general words and sentences, whereby she dispensed with all causes, or doubts, of any imperfections of disablity, that

a manner proved by the letters patents which Elizabeth issued immediately after

could or might be objected against them?" To which, as Ward observes, he makes this ridiculous answer: "She might entertain some reason in her royal breast, which you and I and such shallow heads are not able to conceive. But if I might presume to give conjecture, I suppose she did it, for greater safety."

Harding, after proving their want of succession, writes thus to Jewel; "Therefore to go from your succession which you cannot prove, and to come to your vocation how say you, Sir? You bear yourself as though you were Bishop of Salisbury. But how can you prove your vocation? By what authority usurp you the administration of doctrine and sacraments? What can you alledge for the right and proof of your ministry? Who hath laid hands on you? By what example hath he done it? How, and by whom are you consecrated? Who sent you?"-Again in his reply to Jewel's evasive answers we read, "but you were made you say, by the consecration of the archbishop (Parker) and other three bishops. And how pray you, was your archbishop himself consecrated? What three bishops in the realm were to lay hands upon him? Your metropolitan who should give authority to all your consecrations, had himself no consecration."

Stapleton also presses Horn in the same manner; "To say the truth," he writes, "you are no Lord of Winchester, nor elsewhere, but only Mr. Robert Horn. Is it not notorious that you and your colleagues were not ordained ac-

for supplying all deficiencies by her suppreme royal authority. The words of the

cording to the prescript, I will not say of the Church, but even of the very statute? How then can you challenge to yourself the name of the Lord Bishop of Winchester?" And again he says to Horn, "you were without any consecration at all, your metropolitan himself, poor man, being no bishop neither." In another place he tells them, "you have taken upon you the office of bishops, without any imposition of hands, without any ecclesiastical authority, without any order of canons and right. I ask not who gave you bishoprics but who made you bishops?" Harding also again urges Jewel in these terms; "It remains, Mr. Jewel, that you tell us, whether your vocation be ordinary or extraordinary; if it be ordinary show us the letters of your orders; at least shew us that you have received the power to do the office you presume to exercise, by due order of laying on of hands, and consecration; for who could give that to you of all these new ministers (howsoever else you call them) which he has not himself?" These are his words to Mr. Jewel, having but a little before urged him in the words of Tertullian thus: " you know what Tertullian says of such as you are, "let them shew the origin of their churches;" we say likewise to you Mr. Jewel, and what we say to you, we say to each one of your companions; tell me the original and first spring of your church; shew us the register of your bishops continually succeeding one another from the beginning."

Dr. Bristow writes, "consider what that is whose mi-

letters patents run thus; "By our royal and supreme authority, on the other hand we will supply whatever is or shall be wanting in these things, which you are to do by our command, either as to yourselves, condition, state, or faculty, for the due execution of our ordinance according to our aforesaid command, in conformity with the statutes of our kingdom and those ecclesiastical laws necessarily in force for the existing circumstances."

My Friends, these letters patents were no sooner issued, establishing these Parliament Bishops, in legal possession of the re-

nisters are but very lay-men, unsent, uncalled, unconsecrated, holding therefore amongst us, when they repent and return, no other place but lay-men; in no wise admitted, nor looking to minister in any office, unless they take orders which before they had not." Mr. Reynolds, another adversary, also writes thus; "there is no herdsman in all Turkey who hath not undertaken the government of his herd upon better reason, and greater right, order, and authority, than these your magnificent apostles and evangelists can shew for this divine and high office of governing souls, reforming churches, &c."

venues of their Sees, than these novel constitutional characters, were assailed from every quarter, with jeers, reproaches and every species of raillery, against which as argument failed, they were compelled to defend themselves by every means which the arm of the civil law provided. Some denied the necessity of a better voucher, others maintained that the queen had the best right of judging, and all relied on the omnipotent strength of a British Act of Parliament. Still their adversaries were always in their front, declaring that although Parliament constituted power, its acts formed no proof, and were of no weight in a scale, in which the things of God are kept distinct from the things of Cæsar. (Matt. xxii. 21.)

Now, my Friends, I will simply ask, would these men have been content to bear this reproachful language, could they have helped themselves? Is it likely that, during a period of fifty years, they would have forgotten to appeal to the register at

Lambeth, had it then been in existence, or to some individuals of that multitude to which it refers? For it states the consecration to have taken place in the public church and in the presence of a great concourse of spectators. Yet on all these means of proof they are profoundly silent in their replies; and seem rather to give up the cause as defenceless, simply questioning the necessity of ordination. "I would not have you think," says Whitaker, "that we make such reckoning of your orders, as to hold our own vocation unlawful without them." Dr. Bennet also speaking of the foreign reformed churches, says, "They could not proceed exactly according to that rule which God had laid down, and which had ever been followed in all ages of the Christian Church, before their grievous calamity came upon them, and forced them unwillingly to a deviation from it." Barcroft moreover, who was Archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of James the First, publicly maintained, as Courayer VOL. IV. M.

asserts, "that the ordination given by priests ought to be esteemed valid, though it was not administered by bishops; for otherwise the greatest part of the reformed churches," he adds, "would be found to want ministers." And the same doctrine is held by the University of Oxford, in a letter addressed to the Pastors of Geneva.* Does not this whisper the consciousness of some defect in their ordinations at home?† A Bishop of London being

riest, publicly maintained, as Couraver

^{*} May be seen in the Annals of Queen Anne, Appendix 196.

[†] Feeling the weakness of the ground they stood upon in respect to holy orders, in a general convocation of the clergy in the year 1562, they made the following addition to their 25th article of religion, originally framed by Cranmer and his associates. "There are two sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the gospel, that is to say, baptism and the supper of the Lord.—Those five commonly called sacraments, that is to say, confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme-unction, are not to be counted sacraments of the gospel; being such as have grown, partly of the corrupt following of the apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the scriptures, but yet have not like nature of sacraments with baptism and the Lord's supper:

once asked how Parker and his colleagues were consecrated bishops, made this reply: "I hope that in case of necessity a priest may ordain bishops." The Priest he referred to was Scorey.

But I will put this question to rest by stating another fact. By an act of Parliament passed in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, any bishop of the realm was empowered to tender the oath of supremacy to any ecclesiastic within his diocese; and the person refusing was to incur a premunire. On the strength of this statute, Horn, the new Protestant Bishop of Winchester, tendered the same oath to Bonner, the late Catholic Bishop of London, then lying a prisoner in the

for that they have not any visible sign, or ceremony ordained of God." And in the Bible printed in the same year by their order, this passage, When they had ordained to them priests, was translated, When they had ordained elders by election. In the year 1540, Luther undertook to make a bishop of one Schuman, and in different times and places he conferred other ordinations. But let Luther say, who gave him the power to ordain priests and bishops.

Marshalsea, situated within the diocese of Winchester. Bonner refused the oath, and as Horn certified his refusal to the Court of King's Bench, the former was indicted on the statute. But Bonner prayed that judgment might be stayed, as he could shew "that he was not liable to prosecution, because the said Horn, called Bishop of Winchester, was not bishop when he tendered him the oath."

Now, my Friends, the end of this inquiry was, that the Lord Chief Justice and the other judges informed Horn and his Protestant friends that it would be very perilous and impolitic to bring the case into court; for if tried before a jury, a verdict would certainly be found for the defendant, the Catholic Bishop, since the other could never shew that he was a true and real prelate. In short, they gave in upon the question at issue between themselves and the Catholics, and the very following year, as I have already hinted, sought a securer

title to their bishoprics in an act of Parliament. By which it was enacted, "That all persons that had been or should be made, ordered, or consecrated archbishops, bishops, priests, ministers, or deacons, after the form prescribed in the said book, (the new ordinal) be in very deed, and also by authority hereof declared and enacted to be, and shall be archbishops, bishops, priests, ministers, and deacons, rightly made, consecrated, and ordered, any statute, law, canon, or any thing to the contrary notwithstanding." By this last act, the Protestant Doctor Heylin observes, "that the Church is strongly settled on her natural pillars." Oh how I should blush to profess a religion whose natural pillars are Acts of Parliament!

But if he even draw this conclusion that the reformed bishops are at length legally settled in their usurped titles, I think he has much mistaken his own ground. For surely the act requires a proper minister, for the making, ordering, and consecrating of bishops, otherwise a justice of the peace, or any other magistrate might ordain lawful bishops. To acknowledge of course the necessity of a proper minister, and then by law to dispense with that necessity is to decree an impossibility. However such were the means taken to establish their titles and characters as bishops, and hence they acquired the name of Parliament-Bishops.

But as the title of Parliament-Bishops was very different from that to which they aspired, and greatly lowered them in their own and the public estimation, it was thought after an elapse of 50 years, that an attempt might be safely made, to found a title to real episcopal consecration on the better authority of a register in Lambeth Palace, giving a full and particular account of the consecration of their first Archbishop Parker by the Protestant Ordinal, in the year 1559, when it was absolutely an illegal form.* But instead of strength-

^{*} It had been annulled by Mary, and was not again made legal till the 8th of Elizabeth, in the year 1566.

ening, it only weakened their cause, since the registeritself exhibited every evidence of forgery. It was no sooner mentioned by the Protestants than it was suspected by the Catholics. "Ah! the Catholics exclaimed, you have at length discovered a register in Lambeth Palace! What! you have been fifty years in search of it, and only find it now! Where and by whom has it been concealed all this time? Is it that you might have dead witnesses? Who ever heard of this register? who ever spoke of it before? And yet by the manner in which you now appeal to it, we might suppose that it had been long known both to Catholics and Protestants. Oh shame upon your stale trick !"

Such was the language in which this register was immediately attacked by the Catholics. Fitzherbert, a very learned writer, wrote against it, the very year it was first mentioned. "It was my chance," he says, "to understand that one Mr. Mason has lately published a book

wherein he endeavours to prove the consecration of the first Protestant bishops by a register testifying that four bishops cousecrated Matthew Parker, the first Archbishop of Canterbury. Thou shalt therefore understand, good reader, that this our expression touching the lawful vocation and consecration of the first Protestant bishops in the late queen's days, * is not a quarrel now lately raised, but vehemently urged divers times heretofore, by many other Catholics, many years ago; yea in the very beginning of the late queen's reign, as namely by two learned Doctors Harding and Stapleton, who mightily pressed them with the defect of due vocation and consecration, urging them to prove the same, and to shew how and by whom they were made priests and bishops."

But can we suppose if Parker had been consecrated at Lambeth, that all the historians and writers of the time would have been silent on the fact? Can we believe

^{*} Elizabeth.

that John Stow, who was Parker's intimate friend, and was so particular in noticing Cardinal Pole's consecration, and the very day he first officiated,—can it be believed, I say, that he would omit the consecration of the first Protestant archbishop, had it really taken place at Lambeth?

The register moreover bears both internal and external evidence of forgery. According to this document the consecration of Parker happened on the 17th of December, 1559. But Hollinshead speaks of him as a consecrated bishop on the 18th of November of the same year. His words are, "He (Bishop Tunstal) was by the noble Queen Elizabeth deprived of his bishopric, and was committed to Matthew Parker, Bishop of Canterbury, who used him very honourable, both for the gravity, learning and age of the said Tunstal: but he not long remaining under the ward of the same bishop, did shortly after, on the 18th of November, in the year 1559, depart this life at Lambeth, where he had received

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his consecration." Parker therefore must have been bishop before the 18th of November, and to be so must have been consecrated by some form. The register in short exhibits so many errors and inaccuracies that it is impossible to believe it genuine. *

However, should the register be admitted, what will be your reflections if the register itself bears evidence against the validity and legality of Parker's consecration; the register attests that Parker was consecrated according to the form prescribed in the ordinal of Edward the Sixth.—Now this ordinal, at the period we are speaking of, was both invalid in the sight of God, and illegal in the eye of the civil law; since it had been set aside by Act of Parliament in the reign of Queen Mary, and was not again made a lawful form,

^{*} Mason the reputed adviser and author of the register, says, that Parker was elected in December by the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, in consequence of receiving a Congé d'elire from the queen, and that her majesty then sent her letters patents for his confirmation and consecra-

till six years after the pretended consecration of Matthew Parker; that is the 8th of Elizabeth. I may consequently fairly conclude, that as the Protestant bishops would not receive consecration according to the Catholic form, and could not lawfully receive it according to any other existing form, therefore they were not consecrated at all. *

tion to seven bishops.—Bramhall on the other hand tells us, that Parker being elected on account of a Congé d'elire from the queen, she issued two commissions for his consecration; one dated the 9th of the preceding September, directed to six bishops.—In the queen's letters patents, the suffragan bishop is named Richard, by Mr. Mason he is called John in one place, and Richard in another;—by one, suffragan of Bedford,—by another, suffragan of Dover, as may be seen in Remarks upon Courayer's Defence of the English Ordinations, where this subject is fully treated, as also in the 3d vol. of Dod's Ecclesiastical History.

* As the question of illegality is distinct in itself, and extremely obscure to the generality of persons, I will here endeavour to shew, by a chronological reference to acts of parliaments, how these Protestant ordinations have been reproached with this civil defect. After the parliament had taken the spiritual and ecclesiustical article of clerical ordinary.

But the form moreover is essentially defective in the sacramental point of view,

Stir of Elizabeths

nations into their own lay custody, and had declared what should constitute a lawful bishop of these realms, the prescribed form became binding in the eye of the law, and he that had not complied with the law, wanted a requisite to render him a legal bishop of these realms. The condition was two-fold: 1st, That of receiving ordination from one that was a lawful bishop himself. 2dly, Of receiving it according to that form which the law actually permitted. This constituted and constitutes a legal Protestant bishop in England.

Now the parliament passed an act in the 25th of Henry 8th, soon after his schism with the See of Rome, declaring, " if the person be elected to the office of an archbishop, the king shall by his letters patents signify the said election to one archbishop and two other bishops, or else to four bishops to be assigned by the king, requiring and commanding him or them, to confirm the said election, and to invest and consecrate the said person so elected, to the office and dignity that he is elected unto, and to give and use to him such pall, and all other benedictions and ceremonies, and things requisite for the same. And every person being hereafter elected, invested and consecrated to the dignity and office of any archbishop or bishop, according to the tenor of this act, shall and may be enthroned and enstalled, &c. and shall and may do and execute in every thing and things touching the same, as any archbishop or bishop of

and in the sight of God; and therefore has invalidated that and all their subsequent or-

this realm, (without offending the prerogative royal of the crown and the laws and customs of this realm) might at any time heretofore do."-The principal object of this act therefore was legally to put an end to the canonical institution of the bishops and archbishops of these realms by the Pope, which had continued from their first conversion to Christianity down to this period. With this exception therefore of Papal institution, the Catholic form of consecrating was continued till the new Protestant form of ordination came forth under Edward the 6th, and was made the legal form by an act of parliament of the 5th and 6th of that monarch. It is as follows: "Whereas there hath been a godly order set forth by authority of parliament, for common prayer and administration of sacraments, &c. the king hath by the authority of the Lords and Commons in this parliament assembled, caused the aforesaid order of common service, entitled, The Book of Common Prayer, to be explained and made perfect; and by the aforesaid authority, hath annexed and joined it so explained and perfected, to this present statute, adding also a form and manner of making and consecrating of archbishops and bishops, priests and deacons, to be of like force, authority and value as the same like foresaid Book of Common Prayer."

Now this continued the *legal* form of consecrating bishops till the 1st of Mary, A. D. 1553, when the above act was repealed, and the ancient Catholic worship being restored by parliament, the Catholic rites again became the

dinations. The form of a sacrament consists of those words, which are used to express

legal form, and so remained till the 8th of Elizabeth, or the year 1566, when it was again made the legal form by an act of parliament: the circumstances in which the act was passed were these.—

"On Queen Elizabeth's coming to the government of this kingdom after the death of Mary, she restored the Protestant worship, by repealing that part of the act of the 1st of Mary, which suppressed the Common Prayer-Book. The act is as follows: "Whereas at the death of our sovereign Lord King Edward VI. there remained one uniform order of common service and prayer, and of the administration of sacraments, rites and ceremonies in the Church of England, which was set forth by one book, entitled, The Book of Common Prayer and administration of sacraments and other rites and ceremonies of the Church of England, authorized by act of parliament, between the 5th and 6th years of our said late sovereign, entitled, An Act for the Uniformity of Common Prayer and Administration of Sacraments, the which was repealed by act of parliament in the first year of the reign of our late sovereign Queen Mary, to the great decay of the due honour of God, and discomfort to the professors of the truth of Christ's religion: be it therefore enacted, &c. that the said statute of repeal and every thing therein contained, only concerning the said book, and the service, administration of the sacraments, rites and ceremonies contained or appointed in or by the said book, shall be void, and of none effect, and that the

the mystery or the grace conferred. Thus the minister in baptism says, I baptize thee,

said book, with the order of service, and of the administration of sacraments, rites and ceremonies, with the alterations and additions therein added and appointed by this statute shall stand and be in full force." (1. Eliz. 2.)

By this act therefore, the Common Prayer-Book and the Protestant service only were restored, leaving every other thing unrepealed and existing as in the reign of Mary; among which was the Catholic legal form of consecrating bishops, to which Elizabeth was particularly attached. Within the same year also the Catholic Bishops were driven from their sees by an act of parliament, punishing them with a premunire and the penalty of high treason in case they refused to acknowledge by oath the Queen's assumed ecclesiastical supremacy, as settled by the parliament. Elizabeth, therefore, being in want of bishops for her new Protestant Church, in the second year of her reign issued her letters patents for the consecration of six bishops, as follows: "To the Reverend Fathers, &c. As the Dean and Chapter of our Cathedral and Metropolitan Church of Canterbury have chosen our beloved servant Mr. Matthew Parker to be pastor and archbishop of the said Church, we also have given our royal consent and approbation to the said election, and by these presents we declare, (requiring it by the love and faith that you bear to us, and firmly commanding it) that as far as you or any four of you shall judge right, you shall confirm his election to be archbishop and pastor of the same Church, and shall consecrate him archwhilst he applies the water; in penance, I absolve thee, after the sins have been con-

bishop and pastor of the said Church, and shall do all and every thing else belonging to your pastoral office on this head, according to the form and provisions of the established statutes. And by our royal and supreme authority on the other hand, we will supply whatever is or shall be wanting, either as to yourselves, condition, state, or faculty, for the due execution of our ordinance according to our aforesaid command, in conformity with the statutes of our kingdom, and those ecclesiastical laws necessarily in force for the existing circumstances."

With this mandate all the old Catholic prelates refused compliance, and neither Metropolitan, nor any four bishops, nor any one could be found to execute it. In the meantime, however, the six individuals to whom the letters patents had been granted, Parker and others, took possession of their respective sees, and pretended to have received consecration. This conduct of course gave occasion to much reproach and discussion between the Catholic and Protestant parties, which long continued; and it was in these very circumstances that the Protestant Bishop Horn, in the year 1563, unwisely arraigned the Catholic Bishop Bonner before him, for refusing the oath of supremacy. Bonner demurred in public court that Horn was no legal bishop, never having been legally consecrated. The trial, therefore, as the Protestant historian Dr. Heylin says, " being put off from term to term, at last came to be debated among the judges at Serjeant's-Inn, and it was advised by

fessed; in the eucharist, this is my body, whilst he takes the bread. In the same man-

the judges to Horn, that the decision of the point should rather be referred to the following parliament, for fear such a weighty matter might miscarry by a contrary jury."

In the 8th of Queen Elizabeth, therefore, under these perplexing circumstances, the following post-factum act of parliament was past as the only legal remedy to be applied; entitled, "An Act declaring the making and consecrating of the Archbishops and Bishops of this Realm to be good, lawful and perfect."

" For as much as divers questions, by overmuch boldness of speech and talk amongst many of the common sort of people being unlearned, hath lately grown upon the making and consecrating of archbishops and bishops within this realm, whether the same were and be duly and orderly done according to the law or not, which is much tending to the slander of all the state of the clergy, being one of the great states of this realm: therefore for the avoiding of such slanderous speech, and to the intent that every man that is willing to know the truth, may plainly understand that the same evil speech and talk is not grounded upon any just matter or cause, it is thought convenient hereby partly to touch such authorities as do allow and approve the making and consecrating of the same archbishops and bishops be duly and orderly done according to the laws of this realm, and thereupon further to provide for the more surety thereof, as hereafter shall be expressed."

ner the form of ordination must express the grace and power conferred. Thus, for the or-

"First, it is very well known to all degrees of this realm, that the late King of most famous memory, King Henry the Eighth, as well by all the clergy then of this realm in their several convocations, as also by all the Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons assembled in divers of his parliaments, was justly and rightfully recognized and acknowledged to have the supreme power, jurisdiction, order, rule, and authority over all the estate ecclesiastical of the same, and the same power, jurisdiction and authority did use accordingly-and at the Parliament holden at Westminster in the first year of our Sovereign Lady the Queen's Majesty that now is, by one other act and statute there made, all such jurisdictions, privileges, superiorities, and pre-eminences spiritual and ecclesiastical, as by any spiritual or ecclesiastical power or authority hath heretofore been, or may be lawfully used over the ecclesiastical state of this realm, and the order, reformation, and correction of the same, is fully and absolutely, by the authority of the same parliament, united and annexed to the imperial crown of this realm: and by the same act and statute there is also given to the Queen's Highness, her heirs and successors, kings and queens of this realm, full power and authority, by letters patents under the great seal of England, from time to time to assign, name, and authorize such person or persons as she or they shall think meet and convenient to exercise, use, occupy, and execute under her Highness, all manner of jurisdiction, privileges, predination of a priest it must express the power of offering the sacrifice of the new law and

eminences, and authorities, in any wise touching or concerning any spiritual or ecclesiastical power or jurisdiction within this realm.—And furthermore for the avoiding of all ambiguities and questions that might be objected against the lawful confirmations, investing, and consecrations of the said archbishops and bishops, her Highness in her letters patents under the great seal of England, directed to any archbishop or others, for the confirming, investing, and consecrating of any person elected to the office or dignity of any archbishop or bishop, hath not only used such words and sentences as were accustomed to be used by the late King Henry and King Edward, her majesty's father and brother, in their like letters patents made for such causes: but also hath used and put in her majesty's said letters patents divers other general words and sentences, whereby her highness by her supreme power and authority, hath dispensed with all causes or doubts of any imperfection or disability that can or may in any wise be objected against the same, as by her majesty's said letters patents remaining of record, more plainly appear. So that to all those that will well consider of the effect and true intent of the said laws and statutes, and of the supreme and absolute authority of the Queen's Highness, and which she by her majesty's said letters patents hath used and put in use in and about the making and consecrating of the said archbishops and bishops, it is and may be very evident, that no cause of scruple, ambiguity, or doubt, can or

of forgiving sin; and to the person ordained therefore are delivered the paten and cha-

may justly be objected against the said elections, confirmations, or consecrations, or any other material thing meet to be used or had in or about the same."——

"Wherefore for the more plain declaration of all the premises, &c. to the intent that the same may be better known to every of the Queen's Majesty's subjects, whereby such evil speech as heretofore hath been used against the high state of prelacy may hereafter cease: be it now declared and enacted—that such order and form for the consecrating of archbishops and bishops, and the making of priests, deacons and ministers, as was set forth in the time of the said late King Edward VI. and added to the Book of Common Prayer, and authorized by Parliament in the 5th and 6th year of the late said king, shall stand and be in full force and effect, and shall henceforward be used and observed in all places within this realm."—

"And that all acts and things heretofore had, made, or done, by any person or persons, in or about any consecration, confirmation, or investing of any person or persons elected to the office or dignity of archbishop or bishop within this realm—by virtue of the Queen's Majesty's letters patents or commission since the beginning of her reign, be, and shall be, by authority of this present Parliament, declared, judged, and deemed, at and from every of the several times of the doing thereof, good and perfect to all respects and purposes, any matter or thing that can or

lice as the instruments of the sacrifice. *—
On the other hand, for the consecration of

may be objected to the contrary thereto in any wise notwithstanding."——

"And that all persons that have been or shall be made, ordered, or consecrated archbishops, bishops, priests, ministers of God's holy word and sacraments, or deacons after the form and order prescribed in the said order and form,—should be consecrated, made, and ordered, be in very deed, and also by authority hereof declared and enacted to be, and shall be archbishops, bishops, priests, deacons and ministers, and rightly made, ordered, and consecrated, any statute, law, canon, or thing to the contrary notwithstanding."—

In this manner, by a post factum law, the Parliament endeavoured to provide a remedy for the evil; but to make that be considered as done, which never had been done, was not within the competency of human power, or the omnipotence of Parliament. Though the act made the individuals constitutional bishops, it left them with all their moral disabilities. It might offer the incence of adoration to vice, but it could never convert it into virtue.

Under these disadvantageous circumstances the scheme

* The oil of chrism, an emblem of grace, is also used in administering the ordination of priesthood in the Catholic Church, as Moses by the command of God filled the hands of Auron, and unointed him with holy oil. (Ecclesiastic. xlv. 18.) See moreover the two sermons on the Apostolicity of the Church, vol. 2d.

a bishop, the form must express the power of governing a flock in union with the Church, under the direction of the Holy Ghost. The crozier or pastoral staff, and the ring are therefore delivered to him, with a more solemn imposition of the hands of a bishop.*

of the Lambeth register was conceived, stating that Parker was consecrated at Lambeth Palace in the year 1559, and according to the new form established by Edward the Sixth. But it should have been recollected, that from the accession of Mary down to the 8th of Elizabeth that form was illegal: and as Dr. Heylin observes, (Eccles. Rest. P. ii. page 38.) " All consecrations which had been made according to the ordinance of Edward VI. were declared to be null and void" by act of Parliament. Illegality therefore and nullity characterized the first Protestant consecrations, and yet this is the legitimate stock from which all their subsequent ordinations have emanated. Now what says Jesus Christ?-He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber. And all who adhere to such, participate of the same grievous crime.

* It may be asked what difference there is between a priest and bishop? None in respect to priesthood. But a bishop has the power of conferring priesthood;—which a priest cannot do.—He also holds from the Church a more ample jurisdiction.

Now in the Protestant form all this wanting, or so completely altered, that the form of words used in consecrating Parker, would have equally served in appointing a magistrate or judge. It ran thus; "take the holy scripture and remember that thou stir up the grace of God, which is in thee by the imposition of our hands; for God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and love, and soberness." And it was proved to be so evidently defective, that one hundred years after, the Protestants themselves endeavoured to mend it, by adding these words, "for the office and work of a bishop, in the Church of God, now committed to thee by the imposition of our hands." And they made a similar addition to the form of ordaining a priest. So that we may fairly conclude, that they themselves perceived the invalidity of their original form. But without discussing the validity or invalidity of their present amended ordinal, let them recollect, that if Parker's ordination was null on account of its invalid form, to have real bishops they must not only change the character of the form, but moreover the character of the ordainers, otherwise we shall never allow them to have more than a mere lay, parliamentary hierarchy; for valid ordainers are as necessary as a valid form, to constitute a valid ordination.

I have now then, I conceive, sufficiently proved, that it is neither pique, malice, nor a spirit of revenge, which urge us to deny the validity of Protestant ordinations: our reasons are founded on just and prudent motives; and it is only in unison with the character and fidelity expressed by Jesus Christ of the good Shepherd, that we caution our flock against the pastoral defectiveness of every minister, who has thus forced his way into the sanctuary of Christ's Church. For the sovereign Judge of men has said that he is a thief and a robber;—and the thief cometh not, but for to steal and to kill and to destroy. (John x.

10.) At the same time however, whenever the virtuous and exemplary among the Protestant prelates and clergy, shall manifest a real desire of returning to the fold of the Catholic Church, by embracing her faith and submitting to her authority, I doubt not but a course might be adopted, which would give them a canonical, as well as a civil title to their Sees and livings, and thus qualify them to administer the sacraments to their flocks: an event that would make all heaven rejoice, according to the declaration of our blessed Saviour, that there shall be more joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, than upon ninetynine just who need not penance. (Luke we learn that the very soil became (.7a.vx



Bethsamites were slain in one day, for fail-P

fied from which God delivered his precepts

SERMON XLIX.

ON RESPECT TO THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. (1 Cor. iv. 1.)

IF there be any thing sublimely holy in the Catholic religion,—if there be any thing august in its awful mysteries, sacred indeed must be the character of those appointed to administer them. In Scripture we learn that the very soil became sanctified from which God delivered his precepts to Moses and his people, and the Almighty declared that he would strike with death any of the priesthood or multitude who should presume to approach the borders of the mountain of Sinai. Fifty thousand Bethsamites were slain in one day, for fail-

Oza fell dead before it, for venturing to touch it with a profane hand.

If such was the awful respect exacted by God towards what were only the figures of our institutions, and the mere shadows of the testament, mark the high consideration in which you ought to hold the living priests of the eternal God, the real ministers of Jesus Christ, and the exclusive dispensers of the divine mysteries. (1 Cor. iv. 1.) The angels are holy by their endowments of grace, as well as by the high rank they hold among the creatures of God;but what angel is privileged with more exalted functions than the priests of the eternal Lamb? Like the virgins mentioned in the Apocalypse, they attend him whereever he goes; -they form his royal court upon earth, and the ministry of his throne; -they are the chosen guardians of his person, -possess the deposit of his blood, and hold the mystic keys of his everlasting kingdom. Let the world give honour to

her profane heroes,—let monarchs claim the adulation of their subjects,—in the eyes of faith and in the sight of the Christian, the priest of Jesus Christ is a more exalted character, and more entitled to veneration. He walks among men a miracle of grace,—is the rock that pours forth water to the fainting—the manna that yields bread to the hungry,—the bush that burns without being consumed. He is moreover by chastity an angel upon earth—and his virginity is the image of the unchangeable unity of God.

Now, my Brethren, with the view of meeting that spirit of hostility to the priesthood, infecting the minds of so many at this day, from these undeniable premises, supported by faith, as well as by the language of preceding discourses, I propose to shew you, that the priesthood of the Catholic Church is entitled to the veneration of the faithful on three distinct grounds; first in virtue of the character of their order,—secondly in right of the sublime functions to which

they are consecrated,—and thirdly through the holy examples which their lives exhibit.

And here I must distinctly declare, that I shall not enlarge on this subject with the view of claiming respect for the man, but solely with the design of procuring honour to that character, which he so unworthily bears in Jesus Christ. All his dignity is. interior, and the effect of grace; all without is infirmity and corrupt nature. Under these circumstances then, my Brethren, we will attach no merit to ourselves; we will only ask you to forget the man, and honour Jesus Christ in his minister. And sensible that we are unworthy servants, though the chosen objects of his favour, we will exclaim with the handmaid, our souls do magnify the Lord, and our spirits have rejoiced in God our Saviour. Because he hath regarded the humility of his servants; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call us blessed. Because he that is mighty huth done great things for us, and holy is his name. And his mercy is from generation unto generations, to them that fear him. He hath shewed might in his arm—and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and he hath received his servants, mindful of his mercy, as he spoke to our forefathers, to Abraham and to his seed for ever. (Luke i. 46.)

My Brethren, though familiarity with what is most sacred, will often diminish that respect which the mind has conceived for the object, still the reflecting soul will never hesitate, when called upon, to pay the debt of homage-and the virtuous Christian will shew his readiness, whenever the glory of God, the honour of religion, or the edification of his neighbour require it. Thus, not withstanding a familiar intercourse with the priesthood of the Catholic Church may lessen in some degree that veneration which is due to the sacerdotal character in the Christian law, - and the profane maxims of this licentious age may contribute to confound the ministers of religion

with the general mass of the community, still faith and virtue cannot fail to view them as a distinct order, chosen by Providence for the sublimest functions, and representing in their own persons a succession from the apostles, on which have devolved the same high prerogatives and appointments as were conferred upon those first preachers of the gospel by Jesus Christ.-For ranking in the same order. they are entitled to share the same consideration: - and as their spiritual character as well as their functions distinguish them from the rest of the community, so they are characterized by these as a consecrated race. The priesthood of Aaron was only a shadow like every other part of the old law; -yet God commanded it to be honoured for his sake, and it received every testimony of respect from the Jewish people. Alexander himself, as we read, fell prostrate before the high priest of Jerusalem, and in his person did homage to the God of heaven in the presence of his whole army. If then such respect was paid to the seed of Aaron,—if the type was entitled to such profound homage, though only a shadow of the apostolic Priesthood of the Christian Church,—surely virtue will revere that order in which have centered all the prerogatives of the priesthood of Melchisedech and of the seed of Aaron, -and whom God has chosen to be the depositories of his word, the organs of his law, and the channel of his graces. My Brethren, we are the living branches of the Tree of Life, which descended from heaven, to give life to the world, and whose root is Christ himself. Planted on the two Testaments, it has shot its spreading limbs in every direction; but however far they have extended, we are still the tree, and continue to draw our support from that same source, which so exuberantly nourished the apostles.

Our union, my Brethren, is so intimate with our common stock Jesus Christ, and and our connection so unbroken, that to

distinguish between the Priesthood of the modern and the ancient Church, is to lead the mind into error, and to confound the essence of grace, with those accidental marks of virtue, which necessarily distinguished the first preachers of the gospel: It is fit therefore, that you, my Brethren, should be disabused of this misconception, if it have an existence in your imaginations, and that you should know, that every minister at this day is elevated to the same dignity, rank, and order, as he would have been, had he been consecrated by the hands of St. Paul, in the presence of the other apostles. In quality of Deacon he will rank with St. Stephen, as a Priest with Ananias, and as a Bishop with Timothy, Titus, and others, succeeding the apostles. Constituted therefore of the same order, our priesthood is virtually entitled to that respect which belonged to theirs.

But, my Brethren, whilst the priesthood of the Catholic Church merits the peculiar homage of the faithful in vir-

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tue of their order, they hold another claim to it, in consequence of those sublime functions to which they are exclusively called. To enumerate them, it would be necessary to take a view of all those holy offices, in which they are continually engaged, whilst labouring for the salvation of souls. We may therefore consider them in the arduous duties of preaching, instructing, and reclaiming sinners to a course of virtue and penance. We may behold them busied in administering the sacraments of the Church to the sick and dying, and nourishing their flocks from those living sources of grace. These active duties form the incessant occupations of the Catholic ministry. To them the new born infant is carried, to receive a second birth in Jesus Christ through the laver of baptism; -episcopal hands wait to impart to it the sacrament of confirmation, whilst the same priesthood spreads the table of the Lord for those who are worthy to approach and eat of the bread of angels.

If the soul be disfigured with the leprosy of mortal guilt, their business moreover is to apply to it the healing blood of Jesus Christ, and in the agony of death to seal the departing soul with the holy unction of divine grace.-Whilst daily to appear at the altar of mercy before God, in quality of a mediator between Christians and the Divine Majesty, forms the divine occupation of those who are called to the ministry of the Catholic Church. In short, to encourage the faithful to perseverance-to reclaim sinners, to strengthen the wavering, and to dispense the graces of Jesus Christ, are the holy functions to which our priesthood is specially devoted,

My Brethren, to the reflecting mind this ministry most surely presents something divinely sacred, and appears more worthy the nature of angels, than that of men. It exalts the individuals above all for which human life had designed them, — makes.

them the agents of God, the vicegerents of Jesus Christ, and the saviours of men. (Matt. iv. 19.) In this point of view, it ranks them even above the angelic spirits, and clothes them with the divine character of the Messiah himself. If then respect is attached to office, in proportion to the prerogatives and sublime functions belonging to it, surely no condition of human life can so powerfully command it, as the one before us. Sovereigns are indebted to accidental circumstances for the honours paid to them, and they alternately sink and rise in the scale of opinion with the power they possess. In this respect all is fictitious—and let a prince only descend from the throne on which birth or fortune has seated him, and he will return to the common and undistinguished mass of his fellow creatures. Whereas the sacred character of a Catholic Priest is indelible in his person,—his office and his vocation are inseparable from his existence, and to the eyes of faith he must pass through life as a minister of God, and a dispenser of the mysteries of Christ. (1 Cor. iv. 1.)

These distinctions however, arising from the sacerdotal ministry, exclusively belong to the priesthood of the Catholic Church. For independently of that borrowed character, usurped in the judgment of the Catholic, and suspicious even in the opinion of the Protestant, the reformed minister is called to few of those sacred functions which occupy the lives of the Catholic priesthood. For whilst the priest of the Catholic Church shews himself at the head of his flock, as the real Shepherd of the sheep, and as a true Pastor, both willing and able to relieve all the spiritual necessities of those committed to his charge—the reformed minister appears in the character of a hireling, whose own the sheep are not, and he is content to perform those offices, which any individual lay-man might be hired to discharge. Nay I will ask what function belongs to the ministry of a Protestant clergyman, which a lay-man may not as validly perform? Even priestly and episcopal ordinations might be as reasonably solicited from lay-hands, as from individuals who themselves have no real spiritual character to confer;—according to the maxim, that no one can give to another what himself has not.

But, my Brethren, it is by their virtues that the Catholic priesthood has ever been most eminently distinguished; and since the dignity of their order, and the sublimity of their functions necessarily imply sanctity of life, without a real cause the faithful are not justified in denying them the merit of this illustrious distinction. In advocating however the holy character of the Catholic priesthood, I mean not to close my eyes upon the misconduct of many individuals; for if I speak of them as a body, it can only be in the moral sense of the expression, which will also include numerous exceptions. I am justified therefore in considering them

as a body supereminently distinguished for their virtues; and if we simply examine them by the pure morality of their instructions, we shall find that their lives are more correspondent, with those lessons of perfection, than we had been accustomed to believe; -- and that they truly practise the sublime doctrine they teach. For let us view them at their first entrance into the ecclesiastical state, practically renouncing the world and its most cherished pleasures, to devote themselves, in retirement, to study and monastic rule. Let us see them in the gay season of youth, assuming the dignity of grey-headed age by self-abnegation, and studying to mortify and tame those passions which are opposed to the virtues of their state. Let us mark them as they pass through these years of trial and probation, till, like the flower cultivated with every care, religion plants them in the midst of her children, to shed around the rich odour of edifying example.

In the center of their parishes therefore, let

us contemplate these angelic ministers illustrating in their own persons the sublime maxims they inculcate. Whilst incessantly preaching the mortification of the passions and purity of heart, we may observe these virtues exemplified in a life of constant celibacy, which slander has never dared to asperse nor calumny to insult. I am not here, my Brethren, indulging in wild declamation; the lustre of this angelic virtue of the Catholic priesthood blazes like the sun at meridian day, and sheds a glory over the whole Church, leaving her unrivalled in the midst of sects. For of the many virtues which the lives of the Catholic clergy exhibit, there is none so rarely called in question as that we are speaking of; nay, not only have they embraced this virtue with a cheerfulness truly admirable, but with more than heroic courage have irrevocably renounced for themselves that very liberty which the rest of their species enjoy. They have followed

virtue in its most difficult and highest flight.

In the same manner whilst preaching prayer and a renunciation of the world, they have set a bright example of both in their own conduct. For besides withdrawing from worldly amusements, and interdicting themselves from those resorts of pleasure, whence the spirit of the gospel is banished, they bind themselves to prayer and acts of virtue in humble retirement, only seen by their heavenly Father. And it is a circumstance with which, I believe, few of our Protestant adversaries are acquainted, that every Catholic clergyman is daily bound to discharge the office of canonical prayer, a duty of no trifling labour, and one that he never presumes to dispense with, except where a moral impediment interposes. To these characteristics of real virtue, let us moreover add their acts of self-devotion to the salvation of souls, in the midst of fatigue, danger and sickness, -let us also R

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join their indefatigable and successful labours in foreign missions, always displaying in a life of industry, privation and penance, a bright example of every virtue which their preachings inculcate.

These are the sublime specimens of holiness which the Catholic priesthood every where exhibits, and which exclusively entitle it to the profound veneration of the faithful. Exclusively, for in a comparison, the ministry of the Protestant sects will sink to a low degree in this scale of virtue, and leave the Catholic clergy without a rival even pretending to emulate them.—Yet in the profane language of the age, their sublime and exalted virtues are stigmatized fanaticism and superstition.

It may be objected that the character of the Catholic clergy has not universally corresponded with this description,—and that if we look to that period immediately preceding the Reformation, we shall observe many of them carried away by a licentious spirit of the world, engaged

in simoniacal traffic, and more employed in scandalizing than in edifying the faithful. My Brethren, I will here make but one observation. If this charge be really true, I cannot well conceive any circumstance more unfavourable to the general character of the Protestant reformed religion which grew out of this corruption; Do men, says the scripture, gather grapes off thorns, or figs off thistles? (Matt. vii. 16.)

The fact is, that the relaxation of discipline and neglect of morals which occurred at the period just mentioned, were the sad consequences of that unfortunate schism into which the Church was plunged in the fifteenth century, through the ambition of a few individuals. Where authority is weak, doubtful and contested,—the sanctuary will engender abuses as well as the state: and it was at this moment that the seeds of those subsequent disorders were laid, which creating a corrupt clergy, directly produced, as an immediate consequence, the Protestant reformed religion.

The first reformers indeed were the mere dregs of Catholicity, as their moral characters sufficiently evince; and although their posterity is not to be confounded with those original monsters of iniquity, * yet in a comparison with the Catholic priesthood the public sentiment of Protestants themselves, never fails to do homage to the superior endowments and sublimer virtues of the Catholic hierarchy.

My Brethren, as the great schism was occasioned by the outrageous conduct of the Roman populace during the election of a Pontiff, so in almost every instance corrupt ministers have forced their way into the sanctuary of the Catholic Church through the undue interference or influence of the laity; and scarce an example can be instanced where a dissolute worldly prelate has not been indebted for his promotion to the intrigues and factions of a Court, However, where an irreligious nobility has

^{*} See note vol. 2. page 132.

interposed to resist the superior claims of virtue and modest zeal, in favour of some ambitious and worldly character, those surely are not entitled to fix on others the odium of consequences which themselves have occasioned. In how many instances would the revenues of rich bishoprics have been spent in extending religion and instruction through a diocese, if placed at the disposition of an humble pastor; which through the undue interference of princes, have in other hands only served to spread scandal and disedification among the flock. The irreligious preference of the nobles, in these circumstances becomes the best apology for the Church, and the safest shield that can be opposed to the reproaches of this sarcastic age.

My Brethren, at the period in which we live, impiety assumes a daring effrontery, and daily assails religion through the medium of her clergy. To depreciate them in the public esteem, to treat their character with contempt, and impute the most

unworthy motives to their virtuous zeal, form a part of that system of attack which infidelity is incessantly engaged in carrying on against the Catholic Church; and which whilst it threatens, amongst nations, the rapid extinction of faith, urgently summonses round the altar, her more fervent defendants, and in that quality allow me then, my Brethren, to address myself particularly to you.

My Brethren, since you entertain august and sublime sentiments of the Catholic religion, since you view it as divinely sacred—majestically grand—and awfully venerable—we may naturally presume that your religious deportment, your conduct, your language and expressions, on all occasions, will be the very interpretation of your thoughts; and that in every circumstance, where religion is concerned, we shall perceive traces of that profound veneration, with which you are accustomed to consider it. True, there are numbers, who never forget to pay that respect which religion

claims of them; their conduct is consistently pious and devout—their actions are in unison with their feelings, and the edification they give is sensibly felt and observed.

But, my Brethren, there are certain and particular situations in life, where it is of more special consequence to shew that respectful deference towards religion which I am now recommending; I mean where your conduct is likely to have an influence upon others. There, I can almost say, that every defect becomes a positive scandal-and the omission is an instruction to others to withhold their respect. The assertion may be exemplified in the different conduct of many of our community, -who have acted upon directly opposite principles; and it is to this solely that we are to ascribe those various features of piety, by which it is well known particular families may be distinguished through courses of generations. It is true that they all as Catholics inhale the same faith, and believe the same creed :-but

how unlike is their piety!—how opposite their ideas of virtue! Whilst one class pays every deference to religion—the other shews every deference to the world. The world is ever uppermost in the consideration of the one, religion in the estimation of the other. The force of example is felt in every member; each respects what he has seen respected—and as first impressions are most lasting, these are carried into the public walks of life, and give a general character to the sentiments and actions of men.

Now, my Brethren, to particularize a little upon this subject, I must specially caution you against passing criticisms upon religion, her ministers, or her rites and ceremonies, in the hearing of youth. If you wish these to practice religion, and respect her dictates, beware how you commit her character, in their young but active minds. Their lively imaginations will proceed faster than you can follow, they will familiarize with your reflections, and you will soon

discover that they have assumed the privilege of judging for themselves.

The ministers of religion are a compound of excellence and defectiveness. They are vessels of grace, yet loaded with the weaknesses and infirmities of human nature;—brittle and earthly matter,—yet destined to the most honourable and sublime purposes. It is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things. (Rom. x. 15.)

My Brethren, if you properly respect religion, you will respect it for its own merits independently of every other consideration.* As you pray in a low and hum-

^{*} A Protestant gentleman once having witnessed some indignities passed upon a priest in a Catholic family by the master of the house, asked him, How long it was since he had ceased to believe in transubstantiation. The gentleman, astonished at the question, answered, that he still continued to believe in it. Surely, replied the Protestant, you do not believe that your chaplain can consecrate the body and blood of Jesus Christ! Yes, I do, he replied.

ble oratory with not less fervour and respect than in the stately cathedral, so you should regard the character of the priesthood rather than the faults or the perfections of the man. Religion is too connected with her ministers, not to participate in every respect or affront offered them; either the honour conferred, or the disgrace inflicted, must recoil upon her :and it should be remembered by Catholics, that whatever religion gains or loses, in the public regard and estimation, becomes their individual gain and loss. It is therefore your duty, my Brethren, to honour and respect the virtues of the priesthood:and at the same time beware how you compromise the character of religion, in censuring their faults. The giddy, the ignorant, and the young, are extremely disposed to be censorious of every thing that condemns their stronger passions, and they

Then, answered the Protestant, you are the most inconsistent Christian upon earth, to shew him so little respect.

want but little encouragement to excuse or justify them by retorting against their instructors. They seek for a mote in the priesthood, in order that they may hold it up between themselves and their own criminal habits:—they adduce the defects of nature and education, and the foibles of the man,—as a counterbalance to the sacredness of his character. But nothing can detract from that, the very devils will honour it even in hell. For they must ever be accounted the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God. (1 Cor. iv. 1.)

It cannot be denied, but in all countries, and in all ages, numerous are the examples which might be instanced, of persons who are the scandal of their holy profession. The bad seem constantly to multiply in proportion to the good, that the good may be more thoroughly proved. Yet, my Brethren, the Church already suffers sufficiently from these causes of affliction,—they are bleeding wounds to her, which it would

more become you to close, than to expose;
—into which you should rather pour a
healing balsam, than the acrimony of severe reflection. It is impossible to conceive how virtue often suffers by the expression of unguarded sentiments. The
piety of the young, the weak, and the ignorant, usually splits upon this fatal rock.

It should be your endeavour then, always to speak to the edification of your neighbour, rather than to the defamation of religion; and in these circumstances, to which I am alluding, it would be easy to shew, that in the shining sanctity and sublime virtues of the good, religion has a never-failing defence against every reproach. The comparison, if fairly drawn, I will not fear to say, shall always be favourable to her, and the result will be, to exhibit the triumph of grace over the weakness of nature. For it should be remembered that human nature does not change with the priesthood, and whatever claim that state may have to superior vir-

tue, must be wholly ascribed to the power of divine grace. Though a state of sanctity, it is not a state of security: -though a state which requires perfection, in it, each may fail. Instead of viewing them, therefore, as men subject to the weaknesses of human nature, instead of weighing them by their talents and accomplishments, be fond of regarding them as the sacred ministers of Jesus Christ:-treat them as the dispensers of the holy mysteries, and the delegates of God, commissioned to take away the sins of the world, and consecrate that tremendous oblation which is adored even by the angels. And may you through these mysteries, of which they are the dispensers, come to the possession of eternal happiness.



SERMON L.

ON THE SACRAMENT OF MATRIMONY.

This is a great Sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the Church. (Ephes. v. 32.)

As my object, in treating the sacraments, has been to keep clear of all scholastic disputes, and to confine your attention to the revealed and defined faith of the Catholic Church, it shall be my endeavour in particular on this occasion, to separate from faith every other matter of opinion, and to present the sacrament of matrimony to you in that simple and distinct form in which it exists a constituted essential part of the revealed religion of Jesus Christ. It is true, many questions respecting the ministers of matrimony and the nature of that contract, have long been agitated in the schools of theologians, and

because the Church has never taken upon herself to decide this difference of opinion, which has also occurred on other subjects, without injury to faith, or breach of communion as Brethren, we may conclude that she is willing to leave each party in possession of their respective sentiments:* till the law determine therefore, the field of dispute is open. I shall consequently be silent on these points, and content myself with proving to you that the original institution of marriage has been raised by Jesus Christ to the dignity of a sacrament—and secondly, that the contract can never be dissolved except by death.

^{*} The Council of Trent directs, that after the usual proclamation or bans have been published, the parties shall be married by the parish priest or curate, in the presence of two or three witnesses—and exhorts them to abstain from cohabitation in the same house, till they have received the solemn benediction of the priest in the church. The council likewise exhorts the parties, "that before they enter into the contract of marriage, or at least three days before its consummation, they diligently confess their sins, and devoutly approach to the most holy sacrament of the eucharist." (Sess. 24. c. 1.)

Marriage was instituted by the Almighty at the creation of the world, when after forming the woman from a rib of the first man, he introduced her to Adam, and by his mouth declared, This is bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh; wherefore a man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. (Gen. ii. 23.) Such was the divine institution of marriage; and though in the first ages, by a particular and necessary dispensation of the Creator for peopling the earth, man was not restrained to one woman, yet if we consider the words just used, and compare the lives of all the holy patriarchs, we shall perceive, that from the beginning of the world, and wife were indissolubly united. The Mosaic history of the patriarchs does not furnish a single instance of a woman leaving her husband to become the wife of another man.

This primitive institution was again confirmed by the written commandment of

God, Thou shalt not commit adultery; and afterwards most strongly enforced by Jesus Christ in the new law.-He distinguishes between the institution and the dispensation, - between the law and the abuse, and asserts, that although much had been tolerated by Moses, on account of the hardness of men's hearts, yet it was not so from the beginning. Have ye not read, says he, that he who made man from the beginning, made them male and female? And he said: For this cause shall a man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. Therefore now they are not two but one flesh; what therefore God hath joined, let no man put asunder. (Matt. xix. 4.) As therefore Christianity was to be the perfection of the natural and revealed law, and the gospel was to exhibit a sublimer species of morality, than had even been conceived by Pagans, so our divine Saviour not only restored marriage to the nature of its original institution in paradise.

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but moreover, by the means of grace, elevated the contract to the dignity of a sacrament of the new law.

For his own part indeed he set the example of divine virginity, as the most pure, most holy, and most perfect state.* Yet since to all it could not be given to make themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of God, (Matt. xix. 12.) therefore he was pleased to sanctify by his presence a marriage of his disciples in Cana of Galilee, at which he wrought his first miracle. (John ii.) I have already observed, that the evangelists are extremely backward in speaking of the sacramental institutions, and it is here that we have another instance of that conduct. Not a word does one of the four inspired penmen lay down that can enable feetion of the natural and revealed lay

^{*} The Council of Trent has declared this by the following canon: "If any one shall say, that the conjugal state is to be preferred to the state of virginity, or celibacy, and that it is not better and happier to remain in virginity or celibacy, than to be united in marriage; let him be anathema." (Sess. 24. can. 11)

us to discover that Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of marriage. Yet as St. Paul comes forward to affirm that he did, we are therefore to attribute this silence of the evangelists on the mysteries,* to that viciousness and carnal depravity, into which the understandings of the Jews were sunk,—rather than to any other cause. If they could not endure justice, meekness, and truth, -if they only panted for a paradise of voluptuousness, where they might indulge every sensual passion, how could they comprehend such a thing as a chaste and undefiled heart? How could they imagine a soul proof against the allurements of concupiscence? All men, said Jesus Christ, take not this word, but those only to whom it is given. (Matt. xix. man leave his father and his mother (.bld

It is St. Paul then who has spoken for the evangelists, and has treated the subject of matrimony in a more full and explicit

Indeed, -my .12 . ivx milot as Josus Christ

manner. After laying down every instruction necessary for the conduct of the husband and the wife, he concludes with these words, -This is a great sacrament, but I speak in Christ and in the Church. (Eph. v. 32.) He distinguishes between the original institution, and what it is now become in Christ and in the Church, by the effect of those graces which our Saviour has annexed to this contract among Christians. The apostle draws a comparison between the conjugal union of man and wife, and the mystical union of Christ and his Church, and says, As man and wife are two in one flesh, so Christ and his Church are one: and we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones : - and, quoting the words of Genesis, for this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother; and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh: in short, it is declared by the apostle to be a great sacrament of Christ and the Church.

Indeed, my Friends, as Jesus Christ

contracted the liberty of man, and has exacted more from his disciples than from the rest of mankind, it is only natural to suppose, that he would assist his followers in matrimony with extraordinary graces, and enable them faithfully to discharge the duties of a state, in which virtue perhaps has more difficulties to encounter, than in any other of human life. For surely, since he has called all men to perfection, he would enable them to attain to it, and not leave them to doubt the sauctity of that state so indispensable to the existence of the human race and the designs of providence. Yes, as he has raised man himself by the means of religion and grace, to a supernatural order of things, so he has particularly honoured and ennobled that state in which he was first created, and in which he continues the instrument in the hands of God, to furnish new objects for his mercies and benedictions; and therefore he has made marriage a great Sacrament in his Church. Thus he has helped to extinguish in his followers the spirit of concupiscence so hateful and abominable in his sight,—he even calls matrimony an honourable state,—and views it as the likeness of his own union with his faithful spouse the Catholic Church.

Moreover the faith of the Catholic in the Sacrament of Matrimony, rests upon the tradition and decisions in council of the Universal Church. The general Council of Florence declares as follows; "the seventh is the Sacrament of Matrimony, which is the sign of the union of Christ and the Church according to the apostle: the efficient cause of matrimony, regularly is the mutual consent expressed by words or signs for the present time; that is a promise in futurity, will not suffice." The Council of Trent also affirms, "that since matrimony in the evangelical law, by grace through Christ is more excellent than the ancient marriages, our holy Fathers, councils, and the universal tradition of the Church have always taught that it is deservedly to be reckoned among the sacraments of the new law." *

The testimony of the Greek churches may also be here brought forward to confirm the declaration of these Catholic councils, and to prove that marriage has been held to be a sacrament among Christians in every age and nation of the world. A Greek † writer in his Abridgment of the articles of faith, a work moreover approved by all the Greeks, says on the subject of matrimony; "Marriage is a perfect concord and union between the man and the woman, that they may pass their entire lives together. We say that this union is perfect because this union which is made by the consent of the man, of the woman, and of the Church, cannot be dissolved by any person during their lives, -according to the declaration of Jesus Christ; what God has joined, let no man put asunder. We therefore say, that marriage is a

^{*} Sess. 24 de Matri.

[†] Gregory Protosynulle. Vid. Perp. de la Foi, vol. 5. p. 397.

by which man unites himself to the woman for the whole of his temporal life, and that St. Paul has taught us, that it is a sacrament, saying, this is a great sacrament * because it signifies the union of Jesus Christ with his Church."

My Friends, the whole of the oriental Christians, schismatics as well as Catholics, profess this article of the Christian faith. I might also instance the declarations of many of the holy Fathers, but I consider it unnecessary. However as Calvin and other Protestants have had the impudence and effrontery to say, that none before St. Gregory ever mentioned matrimony as a sacrament, I will quote a passage from St. Leo, who preceded the other by one hundred and fifty years, and speaking of marriage calls it both a sacrament and a mystery. "Since wedlock," he says, † "has been so instituted from the beginning that besides the union

^{*} In the Greek text mystery. † Ep. 92.

of the sex, it should contain a sacrament of Christ and the Church, it is certain that a woman has no share in, and belongs not to matrimony, who believes that there is no nuptial mystery."*

* It is particularly incumbent in this discourse, to say something of marriages contracted between Catholic and Protestant parties. 'Though the Church permits these connections in Protestant countries, it must never be supposed that she sanctions them with her approbation. On the contrary, she views them as evils she would willingly prevent, and against which she is eagerly solicitous to caution her children. And could Catholics be made fully acquainted with all the unpleasant consequences to which these mixed marriages are subject, they would undoubtedly be less disposed to consent to them than they are. In the first place, how can happiness long subsist in a family, where there exists such a source of contention and difference, as diversity of religion? How can peace harmonize minds, opposed to each other? Moreover, since marriage is a state with many difficulties, which religion only can relieve, how can the parties look for it in that common bond of charity, which is rather become to them a source of dissension, and the prolific cause of division? So many of our ideas take their form from our religious habits, -- so much of our conduct is dependant upon the feelings of the mind that the great dissemblance between a Catholic and

It now then only remains for me to shew the indissolubility of the bond of marriage

a Protestant would leave them morally disunited, though civilly joined in one flesh.

Where however the Catholic party is impressed with a just sense of the value and importance of his faith, his anxiety for a beloved wife, or helpless offspring, will receive a keener edge, than we are able to conceive, and the bitterness of the reflection will infuse a poison into every comfort of life. As these mixed marriages are therefore decidedly objectionable, such connections should be avoided as much as possible.

It would be difficult however, perhaps impossible, in this kingdom to lay down a general rule for all the community, since individuals must be regulated with reference to their particular circumstances. A man of fortune, or one destined to be the head of an opulent Catholic family, should, be the last to form a Protestant connection; for having it in his power to bestow his preference on a Catholic, an apology could scarcely be found for his rashness in uniting himself to a Protestant. Rashness I say, for independently of the objection that might be made to his introducing Protestantism into the bosom of an established Catholic family, with all its unpleasant consequences,-can he for a moment recollect the free manners of Protestant ladies in high life, together with the undisciplined education which their daughters receive, and not tremble for the future peace of his own mind? Can he read the daily reports of crim. con. trials, and not apprehend that either

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among Christians, for as Jesus Christ has raised the natural contract to the dignity

a wife, or a daughter, may be his shame and disgrace in their turn? Let the young Catholic heir then be upon his guard against the delusive notion that it would be advantageous to his family, for him to make a Protestant connection,-or that Protestant young ladies have had the benefit of a more accomplished education, because the more worldly.-It is not the flirting, forward, high dressed Protestant, that as a wife will afford him half so much happiness, as the more modest, sensible, and religious Catholic. In every circumstance, as a spouse and a mother, the latter will establish her superiority; for when absent from home, he will view her religion as the surest pledge of her virtue, and the strongest test of her fidelity; whilst in the bosom of his family, in the morn as well as in the close of life, she will prove the partner of his thoughts. the trustee of all his affections, and his most amiable companion. She is not the flower of a day! Such are the female excellences which should guide the young Catholic of fortune in the choice of a wife.

But what is so reprovable in an elder son, may nevertheless be entitled to some palliation and excuse in a younger brother, or Catholic young lady; and it is principally in favour of these, that the Church tolerates mixed marriages; since it is often extremely difficult in Protestant countries, for younger children to settle in life otherwise than by forming these connections. It should be observed, however, that a younger son, settles in this man-

of a sacrament by the grace he has annexed to that state, and has chosen the union of

ner more from necessity than choice; and that as he is only a minor branch of his family, Catholicism will still strongly preponderate in it. Nevertheless, even he should be on his guard against marrying a person, set against his religion by prejudice, and invincible antipathy; because in these circumstances, disagreement and unhappiness would be inevitable consequences. There is a wide and essential difference between a Protestant woman's declining to profess the Catholic faith of her husband, and avowing herself the enemy of it; and I conceive it scarcely possible, that a woman can hate a man's religion, and at the same time love the man. Therefore, before the Catholic shall finally, conclude on uniting himself for life, by the ties of wedlock, to a Protestant woman, it will well behove him to ascertain, that she has conceived no antipathy to his religion, and that she can bear to see him and his children in the act of repeating their Catholic prayers, without venting an unfriendly reproach. A kind, sensible and religious husband might, in these circumstances, make a Protestant wife sensible of the value of her acquisition; -but in no other instance could it prove a happy or desirable connection for either party. Let it not moreover be imagined, that strong prejudices, carried into a family, will subside after marriage; -on the contrary, they will rather strengthen with age, as numerous examples have shewn.

As to the Catholic female's uniting herself to a Protestant, this much may be said; that as she quits her own man and wife to be a sign and image of his own spiritual union with his Church, we might safely conclude that a tie so sanctified and cemented could never be dissolved.

Marriage is compared by St. Paul to Christ's union with his Church, and therefore is either a figure of that connection or not. If not, why has St. Paul mentioned it as such? Whereas if it be a figure, then it must be an indissoluble contract, otherwise it would fail in the most essential point of resemblance. But independently of this species of proof, we have

name, so she leaves her own family, and becomes one of another—in which her relations are no otherwise interested, than so far as her individual happiness is concerned:—all which must undoubtedly hinge on the moral character of her husband, and her own personal feelings. Let her, however, observe, that in conscience, and before God, she is solemnly obliged to educate her children in the Catholic religion. And if the question be asked, how far a Catholic female, in such circumstances, is obliged to live up to the exterior practice of her religion? In answer, let her, in every thing, conform, as far as she can, to what her religion requires from her, and never act in opposition to its maxims.—See the latter part of a note in Vol. 2, p. 142.

every evidence from scripture to shew, that even in the cases of adultery and divorce, the marriage contract remains indissoluble, and that neither party can lawfully unite themselves to another during the life of their former partner. These cases of adultery and divorce are the strongest which can be produced, and when established, must necessarily form a rule for determining every other.

My Friends, the dissolution of the marriage contract was permitted by Moses in the particular cases of adultery and divorce, not on the ground of justice or any natural right, but merely because it had grown into a common practice among the Hebrews before the publication of the law, and the evil had then so widely spread among that carnal people, that on account of their hardness of heart, it would have been dangerous to attempt a remedy. Yet even Moses lays down the law on the subject in a way that proves how hateful he knew the practice to be in

the sight of God. If a man, he says, take a wife and have her, and she find not favour in his eyes for some defect; he shall write a bill of divorce and shall give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed and marrieth another husband; and he also hateth her, and hath given her a bill of divorce, and hath sent her out of his house or is dead; the former husband cannot take her again to wife, because she is defiled, and is become abominable before the Lord. (Deut. xxiv. 1, 2, 3, 4.)

Thus the law stood till the arrival of the Messiah, when he annulled this licence and permission as you have seen, and explained to the Jews, why Moses had dispensed with the original obligation. They asked him, Why did Moses command to give a bill of divorce and to put away? He saith to them, Because Moses, by reason of the hardness of your heart, permitted you to put away your wives; but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you, that who soever shall put away his wife, except it be

for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery. (Matt. xix. 7, 8, 9.)

Now there exists an ambiguity in the last text, which many have been inclined to explain in favour of an exception in the case of adultery. But if these persons will only judge by the rule, which should always be adhered to in interpreting scripture, I mean that of collating one passage with another, and will compare this text of St. Matthew with the reading of St. Mark, they will perceive that the force of the exception or permission applies not to the marriage but to the separation; for in the most general terms St. Mark says, Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if the wife shall put away her husband and be married to another she committeth adultery. (Mark x. 11, 12.)

My Friends, the true meaning therefore of the text of St. Matthew is to be discovered in the circumstance in which the question was proposed by the Jews and answered by

our Saviour. The Jews simply asked hint, If it was lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause ? (Matt. xix. 3.) Not a word is said about a second marriage.-Jesus answers; No, it is not lawful for him to put away his wife for any cause except fornication; and he who putteth her away except for fornication, committeth adultery; and he who putteth her away, though it be for fornication, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that shall marry her that is so put away, committeth adultery. (v. 9.) Besides, this is made most absolutely clear and certain by St. Paul. The woman, he says, that hath a husband, WHILST HER HUSBAND LIVETH, is bound to the law; but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. Wherefore WHILST HER HUSBAND LIVETH, she shall be called an adulteress, if she be with any other man. (Rom. vii. 2.) And to the Corinthians he writes, To them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her VOL. IV.

husband, and if she depart, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife. (1 Cor. vii. 2.)

It is conformably with the rule of doctrine I have laid down that the Latin Church has uniformly acted.* Nevertheless it is true, that the laws of the Christian Roman Emperors permitted a second marriage of the parties in cases of divorce and adultery, and this liberty was often taken by Christians in the early ages of the Church, and is still practised by the Greek and Eastern Christians. It is also

^{*} The general Council of Trent, in her 7th canon (sess. 24.) decrees, "if any one shall say, that the Church errs in having taught, or in teaching, according to the scriptural and apostolical doctrine, that the bond of marriage cannot be dissolved on account of the adultery of one of the parties; and that both, or at least the innocent party, that gave no cause for the adultery, cannot contract a new marriage during the life of the other party; and that he commits adultery, who having dismissed the adulteress, takes another wife; and that she does the same, who having dismissed the adulterer, unites herself to another; let him be anothera."

true, that even some bishops and provincial councils have given a sanction to this practice: -but, my Friends, the explanation of this relaxation of the laws is to be found in the circumstances of the times. It had been the law of the Roman empire, before that empire became Christian. That circumstance therefore, joined with the divine permission for the Christians to separate from the society of a pagan husband and wife and to marry another, (1 Cor. vii. 15.) had given occasion to many abuses of this description, which however were severely and universally censured by the Church. The Council of Elvira supposes the custom, yet condemns it as a crime and abuse. In one of its canons it says, "Let not those women be admitted to communion even at the hour of death, who without lawful cause shall have quitted their husbands and have married others. And if a Christian woman leaves her Christian husband, though an adulterer, and seeks to marry another, let her be prevented. And if she

marries him, let her not be allowed to participate of communion till after the death of her first husband, and in case of sickness." The Council of Arles insists, "that young Christian husbands be exhorted as much as possible, not to contract a new marriage during the life-time of their first wives, though they be convicted of adultery."

St. Ambrose addressing himself to husbands, and exhorting them not to avail themselves of that liberty which the civil law then afforded, says, "To separate from a wife, except in the case mentioned in the gospel, is not only to violate the divine precept, but also to destroy the work of God. Can you resolve to see your children in your life-time under a step-father, or to place them in the life-time of their mother under a step-mother? But let it be granted that the woman whom you have put away does not marry:—can you hate a woman who continues faithful to you, though you have proved yourself

unworthy of her by a criminal marriage? and if she marry another does not the crime of her adultery fall upon you, since you have forced her by your injustice to act in that manner?"

But the best and most learned of the very Greeks join with the Latins in preaching this doctrine. A celebrated writer * among them says, "All churches have learnt from the tradition of the apostles, that we are to place honourable matrimony in the number of the sacraments. We call honourable matrimony not that which is common all over the world, by the union of man and wife for the generation of children; for although that has been ordered and blessed by God in his goodness, for the preservation of mankind which had fallen, yet it is no sacrament, since it is common not only to infidels but to the animals; but we mean that which the Church celebrates among the faithful by the benediction contained

^{*} Cyrillas Lucar. See Perpet. de la Foi, Vol. v. p. 395.

in the holy prayers, and concerning which it is said, that marriage is honourable, and the nuptial bed immaculate: moreover which is forbidden to be dissolved on any account whatever, which prohibition has been made by him, who ordained that no more bills of divorce should be given, because it is not permitted for man to separate what God has joined."

Also in the ancient canons attributed to the apostles, it is expressly forbidden * for any man to marry 'another woman during the life time of his divorced wife, under pain of excommunication. In short, though the passions of men have led individuals into these adulterous connections at different periods, yet they have been universally condemned and censured by the Councils and Fathers of the Latin Church, since the 8th century, and in the same decision, the Greeks also coincided at the general Council of Florence, where the expressed declaration of the Universal

Church was, that the bond of marriage subsists until dissolved by death, notwithstanding the most lawful divorce. The Council of Trent opposing the new doctrines of the reformists resolves the question in these terms: "* if any one shall say, that the Church is mistaken, in having taught, and in teaching according to the evangelical and apostolical doctrine, that the bond of marriage cannot be dissolved by the adultery of either of the parties, and that both, or even the innocent party, who gave no cause to the adultery, cannot contract another marriage whilst the other party is alive, and that he is guilty of adultery, who, putting away the adulteress, marries another, as is also she, who, leaving the adulterer, marries another, let him be anathema."

No doubt, my Friends, you are aware that it was a question respecting the indissolubility of marriage which led to a

^{*} Sess. 24. Can. 7.

change of religion in this country, and helped much to establish Protestantism in Germany. The indissolubility of the contract is a point of doctrine so absolutely settled in the Catholic Church, that according to her faith, there exists no power on earth, either temporal, spiritual, or ecclesiastical, capable of dissolving it. On this account King Henry the 8th, whose passions urged him to separate from a woman that had been his faithful wife for five and twenty years, and to marry another, resolved upon the expedient of withdrawing from that Church in which this adulterous connection could not be sanctioned. In the same manner the Prince of Saxony became a Protestant, and rewarded Luther with his protection and support in return for being indulged by that Heresiarch with two wives at the same time. But as I have already enlarged upon these facts in a former discourse, * it is not my intention to do more than notice them at present,

^{*} See Vol. ii. p. 165.

and shall therefore conclude this subject with a few words on the article of the celibacy of the Catholic Clergy.

You say that if the Catholic Church regard the Christian contract of marriage as a sacrament, and a holy act in the sight of God, it is singular that she should forbid it to any of her members, and should absolutely condemn all priests who are married. The objection, my Friends, is too hastily drawn, and wholly incorrect. The Catholic Church forbids marriage to none of her members, who are free to enter that state; neither does she condemn all priests who are married. She merely insists that her members shall not violate a solemn vow made to God, and when they have deliberately pledged themselves to serve him in a single life, in the mortification of the flesh, and all its concupiscences, that they continue faithful to their engagement. As this promise or vow is perfectly voluntary in every one, and by the canons of the Church rendered null if obtained

through compulsion, so when once freely and solemnly made, it is binding for ever. The same was required in the old law. If any man make a vow to the Lord, or bind himself by an oath; he shall not make his word void, but shall fulfil all that he promised. (Num. xxx. 3.)

Now the Latin Church, for the wisest ends, has determined from the earliest ages to admit none to the sacred ministry, but those who make a solemn promise to her before God, of leading a single life. Their answer is, I promise chastity. Surely then. she is authorized to require the fulfilment of this engagement, and to consider the violation as the breach of a sacred contract between them and herself, to which God is witness. In the faithful accomplishment of their vows, she stipulates for what is simply just, holding them to their own offer and agreement. And that this is her ruling principle, is rendered still more evident by what we observe in the conduct of the Latin Church towards the Greeks. As

it has been always customary for the Greek Churches to admit to the ministry married as well as single men, the Latin Church has never objected to this practice, only insisting, that those who are single at the time of their admission shall * not afterwards change to the married state. And therefore, when any subjects of the Greek Churches receive consecration in the Latin territory, they are always asked, if they do not previously wish to embrace the state of marriage, since they must afterwards consider their ordination as a renunciation of that right.

Now the principle on which the Latin Church gives a preference to the single over the married state for her clergy is twofold. First, that they may be more at

^{*} By the same principle of never looking back after having once put our hands to the plough, the discipline of the Catholic Church forbids those to return to the world, who have consecrated themselves to the cloister; and though it permits religious to pass from a mild to a more severe order, it prohibits them from leaving the rigorous for a more lement rule.

liberty to devote themselves to their pastoral functions; and secondly, that they may embrace that state which is the most holy. The cares and obligations annexed to a family form a weighty and grievous charge; and the same may be said of the ministry of the Catholic Church. Therefore it is scarcely possible that one man can properly acquit himself of both. A Catholic clergyman has to attend to his own spiritual duties, to instruct his flock, and administer to them the sacraments. He has to catechize the youth, to visit the sick, and comfort the dying; and has seldom the command of his own time. What opportunity has he then to provide for a family, to attend to a wife, to educate and settle children, without neglecting the important functions of a pastor? It is on this account that Jesus Christ recommends his ministers to be even without gold or silver or scrip, or many garments, or a staff.

Besides the single state is more holy. This we gather from the examples of Jesus

Christ and his holy mother, the declarations of St. Paul, and the universal preference which the Old and New Testament express for the single state over the married. I do not mean to say that it is in the designs of God, that all men should embrace a life of celibacy.-Man is destined to increase and multiply. Yet when chastity is chosen for its own sake, when it is preferred as the most pure and holy state, revelation tells us, that the individual renders himself truly agreeable in the eyes of God and before the whole court of heaven. Honourable marriage shall receive a crown, but perfect chastity shall be honoured with one more brilliant.



SERMON LI.

Circist and lels holy mother the declarase

ON THE INVOCATION OF SAINTS.

And another angel came, and stood before
the altar, having a golden censer; and
there was given to him much incense,
that he should offer of the prayers of all
saints upon the golden altar which
is before the throne of God. And
the smoke of the incense of the prayers
of the saints, ascended up before God,
from the hand of the angel. (Apoc. viii.
3, 4.)

WHEN we observe persons hastily turning on all occasions to the inspired writings, for the immediate solution of the greatest and sublimest questions relative to God and religion, yet controverting obvious and decisive facts, it is difficult to say whether they be most deserving of our pity or contempt. For notwithstanding the

of the sacred scriptures, even when assisted by supereminent learning and commanding talents, if sincerity be one of their characteristics, they must confess, that after all their endeavours, the Bible remains a sealed volume, which none but the inspired of God can open.

Human efforts, acting on the experience of past ages, and combining the ideas and discoveries of others, are no doubt able to effect great achievements in every species and branch of profane science.—They may succeed in measuring the respective distances of the planets, as we measure a mile, --they may as accurately compute the increasing power of nations as we judge of: individual strength,-but should they bedirected to the mysterious pages of that volume, which is the work of divine inspiration, their persevering exertions, their united force, will only avail to prove that they are incompetent without grace to make the smallest advance, and that proud reason

must ultimately submit to be instructed by another. By the text before us, the inspired apostle declares, that in a mystical vision, he beheld an angel standing before the altar having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel. (Apoc. viii. 3, 4.)

My intention is not to enter into any elaborate discussion of this passage of St. John, in favour of the invocation of saints, but having premised these reflections, to leave it upon your minds, whilst I proceed immediately to lay before you the principle of this article of our faith and practice, and shew you the true ground of argument on which it should be defended and maintained.

The practice of invoking the saints in prayer, is the immediate consequence of our belief in a communion of the saints.

For it having been laid down by this article of the apostolic creed, that those who possess the grace of God, which is the sanctifying property of his saints, are really in a communion and fellowship, or to use a common comparison are members of the same household, it necessarily follows that reciprocal love or fraternal charity, which has been so absolutely prescribed by Jesus Christ to his disciples, and which is never separated from divine grace, must be inherent in every individual, and in proportion as each has participated of celestial benedictions, so this charity shall enkindle within him. Charity, my Friends, as you know, is the very soul and essence of Christianity; it is the end of the law, and drew Jesus Christ himself from the bosom of his eternal Father. Wherever you open the New Testament, you perceive the infinite charity of Jesus Christ breathing in all his instructions, it reigns in his cradle, it triumphs on the cross, and seems to have been no where more

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conspicuously displayed than in the institution of the sacrament of the altar. When he gave his disciples a new commandment, it was love one another, as I have loved you:—as I have done to you, so do you also. (John xv. 12. 13. 15.)

Such were the heavenly sentiments which Jesus Christ wished to impress upon his followers, and soon were they exhibited in their conduct. Holy Stephen prayed for those who stoned him, and the blessed St. Paul declared his willingness to become anathema for the salvation of others. Can we then suppose that there is more of charity and this divine virtue among men upon earth, than among the blessed in heaven? and that the very mystery of the incarnation would not inflame them with charity for every object of divine love?

My Friends, since love and charity are so completely interwoven with the essence of God, they must also be the very essence of his blessed elect, who are the reflecting images of his own perfections. As

therefore these happy spirits have entered into the presence of their Creator in quality of the first fruits of the love of Jesus Christ, and know that other members of his Church are struggling to attain to the same felicity, can we hesitate in believing that they supplicate for these, and that such supplications are pleasing to this God of charity, whose own brethren and children we are? whose own flesh and blood is like to ours? No, we are confident that Jesus Christ must take glory and delight in the supplications of the blessed, for objects so dear to him; as we ourselves are pleased with those who take an interest in the welfare of our friends. moreover confident, that in proportion as these blessed spirits participate in the enjoyment of the perfections of God, so the fire of divine charity will burn within them; and the more earnestly will they intercede for those who are to follow them to the same beatitude. There shall be more joy in heaven, said Jesus Christ, over one sinner

who need not penance. (Luke xv. 7.) And after declaring that the joy shall be like the rejoicings and congratulations of men on receiving good tidings, he continues, so I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance. (Luke xv. 10.)

We have also, my Friends, other texts to produce from the sacred writings, clearly establishing this important point of the communion of saints. In the sight of angels, I will sing praise to thee, O Lord, exclaims the Psalmist. (Ps. lxxxvii. 1.) The apostle also affirms, that we are made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. (1 Cor. iv. 9.) But there remains one passage particularly strong in the last chapter of the book of Job; where the Almighty even directed the sinner to beseech his mercy through the prayers of his favorite servant Job. My wrath, said the Lord to Eliphas the Themanite, my wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two friends, because you have not spoken the thing which is right before me, as my serwant Job hath. Take unto thee therefore seven oven and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer for yourselves a holocaust, and my servant Job shall pray for you; his face I will accept, that your folly be not imputed to you. So they went and did as the Lord had spoken to them, and the Lord accepted the face of Job. The Lord was also turned at the penance of Job, when he prayed for his friends. Surely then the just are not less powerful by their prayers in heaven than on earth.

Now, my Friends, it is on this principle, and through this persuasion, that the Catholic Church calls upon God to hear the prayers of his saints supplicating for us, and entreats the divine Redeemer to allow them to interpose between us and his justice. The Catholic Church moreover both individually and collectively sends up her prayers and sighs to heaven, that the saints may continue to pray for us to Jesus

short and simple a manner as possible,

Christ and his eternal Father; and that, in union with their brethren on earth, they may incessantly solicit for every member of Christ, new graces, as the happy fruits of that unlimited redemption, which he purchased for us at the infinite price of his blood.

Thus far then I have proceeded, as I conceive, without risk of opposition on the part of my Protestant Brethren; nay I indulge the hope of their entire approbation of every sentiment I have advanced this day. For in the Augsburgh Protestant Profession of Faith we read, "it is admitted, that as the saints on earth pray for the Universal Church, so also they continue to make in heaven intercession for the Church." If then we are so far perfectly united in faith on the subject of the intercession of saints, what constitutes the ground of difference between us? Whence so much violent outcry, prejudice, and opposition My Friends, it shall be my endeavour to explain the cause in as short and simple a manner as possible.

The Catholic Church, in sending up her prayers and sighs to heaven, that the blessed spirits of God may unite with us in supplicating his mercy, often expresses herself by signs and exclamations, saying, "* Holy Mary, pray for us;"-" All ye holy angels and saints of God, make intercession for us." - Now it is exactly upon this ground that our Protestant Brethren divide against us; declaring it a folly thus to invoke the saints and angels who do not hear us. Truly, my Friends, we are ready to admit, that as the saints and angels have not corporal ears like ourselves, they cannot hear us inthat way in which we hear one another.-

^{*} There is no prayer used by the Church that excites more attention among the Protestants than the Litany of Loretto. On which account, in the Exposition of Liturgy, or Book of Common Prayers, I have given the references of its allusions to different passages and expressions of scripture. In a short note also at the commencement of the Litanies of the Saints, (p. 33.) will be found a useful explanation of the devotion. The Litany of Loretto is a pure metaphorical hymn.

However, this circumstance can no more furnish a ground of argument against the practice of invoking the saints and angels, than the fact of the Almighty himself having neither corporal ears to hear with, nor eyes to see with, can be a reason for maintaining, that he neither sees our actions nor hears our addresses. Spirits of course must communicate with spirits after the manner of spirits; and hence it is that the soul often speaks to her Creator in silence. Yet as men we can also address him in that way which is natural to men; we can praise him with our lips; -we can invoke him as Jesus Christ has commanded us-Our Father who art in heaven. By the same principle, though the saints and angels have neither corporal ears nor eyes, still we can address them after the manner of mortals, and while we speak with the lips of our bodies, they may hear us with the ears of spirits.

My Friends, read particular parts of the book of Daniel and of the other prophets,

consider the conversation of the angel Gabriel with the Virgin Mary, as given in the 2d chapter of St. Luke's Gospel,and you will perceive that celestial spirits take considerable concern in the affairs of mortals, and by special revelation have even knowledge of future events. Indeed it is perfectly likely, that spirits in their own free state of existence, unincumbered by matter and extension, may communicate with our souls, as they communicate with each other; and by looking into the interior of our minds, there, in a way unintelligible to us, distinctly read all our thoughts, desires, and intentions. Nay, there is nothing of improbability in the supposition, that many of our evil thoughts are the suggestions of wicked spirits, and that our pious sentiments are often imparted to us by the good. Witness the example of the angel conduct-This moreover is to be ining Tobias. ferred from the words of Jesus Christ in the gospel, where speaking of the sin of

VOL. IV. Aa scandal, he says; See that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father, who is in heaven. (Matt. xviii. 10.)

However, all this is matter of mere speculation, and must for ever remain a mystery to our understandings. For although revelation has taught us that we hold communion with the saints in heaven, and are benefited by their prayers, yet it is silent as to the manner. And therefore, since the only difference at present between me and my Protestant Brethren relative to this subject, regards the mode of begging the prayers of the saints, I shall now proceed to show the grounds on which we justify the Catholic practice of invoking them. by producing examples from the sacred scriptures; and 2dly, by shewing it to have always been the universal practice of the Church, and recommended by the most ancient fathers.

Vocal prayer, my Brethren, is the sim-

ple sentiment of the soul, the desire of the heart expressed in words. So when Daniel observed that all the works of God, animate and inanimate, contribute to his glory, he at once calls upon them to bless him, and praise him, and exalt him above all for ever:—he names the stars, the sun, the firmament:—he names the angels and all the spirits of God. (chap. iii.) - David in like manner exulting in spirit, bursts into repeated invocations. Praise the Lord, all ye angels, he says, Praise him all ye powers. (Ps. cxlviii. 2.) Isaiah also invocates both heaven and earth; Hear, O ye heavens, he exclaims, and give ear O earth, (chap. i. 2.) whilst I announce the words of the Lord.

Thus, my Friends, these inspired writers hesitated not to express in exact words the sentiments and feelings of their souls. The Church also, in begging the prayers of the saints, has adopted that mode of expression, which is most easy and familiar to us. As she desires their

prayers and intercessions, therefore she directly calls upon them by name to intercede in her behalf. "Holy Mary," she exclaims, "pray for us;" pray for us in quality of "Mother of God;" in quality of "immaculate Virgin;" in quality of "Queen of Saints." Since therefore, my Friends, you may perceive that there subsists no real impropriety in thus apostrophizing in our prayers, I shall proceed to shew that to ask the prayers and intercessions of the saints, is agreeable to the faith and practice of the Universal Church; requesting you at the same time to observe, that the practice of the Church is often an easy clue to her faith; and reciprocally that the faith of the Church is the safest rule for explaining her practice.

Previously, however, to entering upon this task, it may be proper distinctly to declare that the invocation of saints is no ways injurious to the mediatorship of the Son of God, since their intercession derives all its efficacy from that same mediation; and in every

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prayer that the Church offers to her patrons in glory, she universally concludes her petitions with these words, "Through Jesus Christ our Lord." It is a folly then to accuse Catholics of setting aside the infinite mediation of Jesus Christ by an act, in which they proclaim his merits as the ground-work of their hope, and the channel of the graces they solicit. For let it be clearly understood, that Catholics do not acknowledge in the saints any absolute power of relieving their necessities, but consider them only in quality of ministers, appointed to present their supplications at the throne of mercy. The prayers of the saints ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel: (Apoc. viii. 4.) and though the saints intercede in favour of mortals, in presence of the Lamb that was slain, it must be heaven's King that grants the object of their prayer. Indeed, the saints are supplicants like us, and as dependant on the Almighty for every celestial grace, as ourselves on earth rely on his providence for the common blessings we receive. By employing therefore their mediation, and invoking their aid in our behalf, we simply acknowledge our own individual insignificance, and the more powerful patronage of these friends of God, without detracting in any manner from the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ: of whom we never cease to say with the apostle, There is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts iv. 12.)

Having offered this explanation, I shall now proceed to shew that devotion to the saints is conformable with the faith and practice of the Universal Church. The first evidence I shall produce will be from the Acts of the Martyrdom of St. Polycarp. The writer says,* "We collected his bones, more precious than the richest jewels or gold, and deposited them decently in a place at which may God grant

^{*} See Butler's Lives, Jan. 26.

us to assemble with joy to celebrate the birth-day of the martyr." Now the object of Christians assembling at the tomb of a martyr, was always to beg their prayers; as you may learn from a sermon of St. Asterius on the martyrs: "We keep through every age," says he, "their bodies decently enshrined, as most precious pledges; vessels of benediction, the organs of their blessed souls, the tabernacles of their holy minds. We put ourselves under their protection. The martyrs defend the Church as soldiers guard a citadel. The people flock in crowds from all quarters, and keep great festivals to honour their tombs. All who labour under the heavy load of afflictions fly to them for refuge. We employ them as intercessors in our prayers and suffrages *."-He also says, the Gentiles and the Eunomion heretics, condemned the honour paid to martyrs and their relics; to

^{*} See Butler's Lives, Oct. 25.

whom he replies: "We by no means adore the martyrs; but we honour them as the true adorers of God. We lay their bodies in rich shrines and sepulchres, and erect stately tabernacles for their repose, that we may be stirred up to an emulation of their honours. Nor is our devotion to them without its recompense, for we enjoy their patronage with God."-St. Cyprian clearly confirms this by his words to the holy Pope Cornelius .-"Should either of us," he says, "be called upon to lay down our lives, let not our charity subside, but let us persevere to pray for our brethren when in the presence of the Father of Mercies." St. Gregory Nazianzen represents St. Justina "beseeching the Virgin Mary to succour a virgin *." "That we may honour," writes Eusebius, "the friends of God and the real champions of virtue, we daily approach their monuments, and pay our devotion at them as we would to holy men, through whose

^{*} Lib. xiii. c. 7.

intercessions with God, we acknowledge that we are much helped."

As a writer coming very near to the age of the apostles, I will next cite St. Irenæus. Speaking of Eve, he says: "As she was seduced from her obedience to her Creator, so (Mary) became obedient to God, that the Virgin Mary, might be the advocate of the Virgin Eve *." And lastly I will instance the learned St. Gregory Nazianzen, who openly invokes St. Athanasius in this manner: "And thou, cast from heaven a merciful look upon us; and direct this pious people before thee; keep us and preserve us in peace; guide us in the hour of trial; receive us and let us repose with thee."

My Friends, it would be useless for me to quote for you other authorities, though I might produce thousands. However, according to my custom, I will bring to my aid the evidence of modern Greeks,

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that you may perceive how perfectly united they are with the Latins on this subject. "We consider," says a celebrated writer * among them, "all the saints as our mediators and intercessors:-therefore we address our prayers to the saints, to the virgin, and to the angels. To the virgin we say, Most holy Lady, Mother of God, intercede for us sinners. To the angels; All ye celestial powers of angels and archangels, intercede for us. After the same way, we address ourselves to the prophet and precursor St. John the Baptist, to the glorious apostles, to the prophets, to the martyrs, to all the holy pastors and doctors, and to the other saints, that they may intercede for us sinners." To these clear evidences I will even add the testimony of Protestants .

^{*} Jeremie. See Perpet. de la Foi, T. v. p. 491.

[†] The Protestants of the Church of England solicit the intercession of the angels by the following prayer, used in their public Liturgy on the Feast of St. Michael and all the Angels: "O everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful

"I object not," says Luther, writing on the first commandment, "I object not to the saints being prayed to for temporal matters; nay for others more spiritual. The Church says not merely, St. Paul, heal my infirmities; but pray for me. Wherefore recommend thy all to him, to whom thou art most piously affected: first thy sins, next thy necessities, as St. Cecily did at her nuptials, calling upon all the saints in their order for the protection of her chastity before God."

Bishop Montague, though a Protestant, also says, "By the invocation of saints, I grant that Christ is not wronged in his meditation. It is no impiety to say, holy Mary, pray for me! For I see no absurdity in nature, no incongruity unto analogy of faith, no repugnance at all to

order; mercifully grant, that as thy holy angels always do thee service in heaven, so by thy appointment they may succour and detend us on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."——This prayer has been adopted from the Roman Missal.

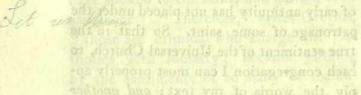
scripture, much less impiety to say, holy angel guardian, pray for me."—He also says, "it is confessed that all the Fathers both of the Greek and Latin churches, have spoken to the saints and desired their assistance." "Therefore," writes Grotius, "those are criminal who charge the Catholics with idolatry; because judging by the sentiments of so many of the ancients, they believe that the martyrs are acquainted with our wants and hear our prayers."*

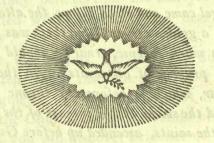
Infine, my Friends, wherever you direct your steps and researches, whether to the fragments of the most ancient liturgies of the Church, or to the tombs of the martyrs, you will discover evidence of this universal devotion to the saints. Without noticing the days consecrated to their honour both in the eastern and western parts, without attending to their images and relicts every where preserved as memorials of their virtue, if you traverse the

^{*} Vide Consult. Cass. t. 4. p. 624.

whole of Asia, Africa and Europe, if you visit the mutilated altars of your own country, the cathedrals of Italy and the Basiliscs of Greece, you will not observe an ancient Christian Church, which the piety of early antiquity has not placed under the patronage of some saint. So that in the true sentiment of the Universal Church, to each congregation I can most properly apply the words of my text; and another angel came and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel. (Apoc. viii. 3, 4.)

My Friends, our churches, dedicated as they are to saints, yet stand amongst you, as lasting monuments to inform the people, that they no longer profess the ancient faith of Christendom;—that innovation has supplanted the religion of their fathers, and that the first apostles of this nation, your Gregorys, your Austins, your Patricks, preached a doctrine which our Protestant countrymen almost exclusively condemn.





they are to saints, yet stand amorbest you, as lasting monuments to inform the proper play that they no longer profess the ancient saith of Christendom,—that innovation has supplanted the religion of their fathers.

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SERMON LII.

ON MORTIFICATION.

If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. (Luke ix. 23.)

IF love of pleasure, disregard of religion, pride of heart, and general corruption of manners are to indicate the near approach of the end of the world, we cannot be very distant from that period. For the latter days spoken of by the apostle seem at length arrived, when men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents; ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, slanderers, incontinent, unmerciful, without friendship; traitors, stubborn, puffed up and lovers of pleasure more than of God: having an appearance indeed of godliness, but denying the power thereof. (2 Tim. iii.)

Could then, my Brethren, the apostle again visit this nether world, such I fear is the description which he would draw of our generation of Christians. Sunk into a state of general corruption, or languishing under total indifference to faith, to virtue and religion, they exist a scandal to the gospel they profess,—and in practice, (I may also add in spirit and in truth) are a contradiction to its pure and heavenly maxims. The gospel is the model after which the true Christian is to form himself; yet might we not safely affirm, when we examine the lives of the young and the old,—when we reflect on the pride of the learned, the propensities of the rich, and the viciousness of the poor, that they have imbibed more of the maxims of the Koran than of the Gospel, and that in heart and principle they stand nearer to Mahomet than to Jesus Christ.

Do not imagine, my Friends, that this is an unfaithful description of the generality of those Christians among whom we live;

it is not overcharged, and I will stand by all I have advanced. But you will ask, do not most Christians profess belief in God, and respect for religion? Do they not frequently attend their house of prayer?— Yes, and all this the Mahometans do. This species of religion is to be found among the Jews, the heathens, and perhaps every class of men. It is not my intention therefore to question in Christians, what is customary to mankind in general: but should you ask me, if their lives, if their virtues, and their vices more agree with the Koran than the Gospel, I will not hesitate to answer in the affirmative. With the exception of the chosen few who walk the narrow road, do we not observe the whole mass of Christians, plunged into the gulph of sensual pleasure? In opposition to every maxim of Jesus Christ and the gospel, is not the indulgence of their carnal appetites more or less the universal employment of their youth and riper years? Is not indecency of dress in the sex,-

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fondness for indelicate conversation, vanity, and immodesty of conduct, the crying sin of your Christian females? Does not a love of self indulgence and riches predominate in all?—have they not totally renounced the life of Christ, his maxims and his precepts, and substituted those of the world.—Yes, these are our followers of Christ, distinguished by the vices of Mahometans, and professing only the virtues of heathens. And can it be said that such characters are to have a share with Christ? It has been declared by the apostle, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his. (Rom. viii. 9.)

My Friends, little can I expect to be able to stem this irreligious torrent which is sweeping both faith and virtue from the face of the earth. Yet, as the minister of Christ, it is my duty to step forward and proclaim to a sinful generation, that penance and the mortification of the flesh are essential to a Christian life. Except you do penance you shall all likewise perish. (Rom. viii. 13.—Luke xiii. 5.)

If any one will take the pains to examine the Scriptures and the Holy Fathers, those depositaries of sacred and revealed knowledge, he will perceive that they universally breathe a spirit of penance and self-denial, and that as long as we preach that gospel which has been committed to us by Jesus Christ and his apostles, this doctrine must necessarily form a part of that heavenly word which it is our duty to unfold to the faithful. This again is not more evident from the sacred writings of the prophets and evangelists, than the example of those earlier ages of Christianity, when virtue naturally flourished in greater purity and vigour, and displayed the fruits of divine and apostolic zeal; when to be a Christian was to declare a war against the inclinations of flesh and blood, and to carry in our members the mortifications of a crucified leader. So that as the apostle writes, the life of Christ was made manifest in their bodies. (2 Cor. iv. 10.)

It was in this spirit, my Brethren, that C c 2 the Church of Christ was formed to the image of her divine spouse, and that virgins and confessors were taught to unite the sanctity of an unspotted innocence, with the labours of the most heroical penance. A penance, I repeat, which was not confined to the interior of the heart, but which shewed itself moreover, according to the words of St. Paul, in much patience, in tribulation, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in prisons, in watchings, in fastings, and in chastity and long suffering. (2 Cor. vi. 4.)

Now, my Brethren, it cannot be necessary for me to go far in quest of proofs to establish these assertions:—your own knowledge of facts should not allow you to dispute them. In reading the divine history of Jesus Christ in the gospel, we perceive that his whole life was one continued act of humility, penance and mortification. Every circumstance in his conduct and actions, every word which he uttered, tends to inform us, that the maxims of the world and the maxims of the gospel, are in direct

contradiction, and that it is impossible to reconcile the spirit of the one and the other. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, says the apostle, and the spirit against the flesh, for these are contrary one to another. (Gal. v. 7.) Whilst the maxims of the world are calculated to flatter the pride and vanity of man,—whilst they teach him to covet the esteem of others, and to consult his own happiness and ease,—the maxims of the gospel tend to humble, to break down and annihilate that spirit which the world admires. Learn of me, said the Saviour, for I am meek and humble of heart. (Matt. xi. 29.)

Whilst the spirit of the world lusteth after pleasures and riches, the state of poverty was that embraced by Jesus Christ, and recommended by him to his followers, as essential to perfect virtue. If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all thou hast, and give it to the poor. (Matt. xix. 21.) The spirit of the world is a love of fashion and ostentation,—a fondness for preference and

independence;—but Jesus chose to be born of an humble virgin in an open stable; he valued the meekness and purity of his mother more than all the grandeur of the house of David; and he tells his disciples, he who humbleth himself shall be exalted. (Matt. xxiii. 12.)

The maxims of the world lead men to the indulgence of all the animal appetites-and teach them to place their delight in good living and every personal comfort. Jesus Christ went into the very opposite extreme; he denied himselfall; and he praised the sanctity of the Baptist, who was clad in camel's skin, inhabited the desart, and fed upon locusts and wild honey. He recommended to his apostles to possess neither gold nor silver, nor many garments, nor a staff. The foxes, said he, have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head. (Matt. viii. 20.) And to pronounce a lasting judgment in favour of every thing opposed to luxury of life,

he stated the parable of the rich glutton, who dying, was buried in hell, while the soul of Lazarus, who sat at his gate covered with leprosy, and subsisting upon alms, was received by angels and carried in triumph to the celestial paradise.

The world is particularly averse to acts of mortification, to privations, sufferings, and pain-yet Jesus Christ recommended to his disciples voluntarily to take up crosses, and to carry them after him. (Matt. xvi. 24.) He distinguishes those disciples as his greatest favorites who should drink the bitter chalice with him, (Matt. xx. 23.); and he pronounces those blessed before his Father, who in the contemplation of the world are most wretched and miserable. Blessed are the poor in spirit-blessed are the meek-blessed are they that mournblessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice-blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake-blessed are ye when they shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all that is evil against you, untruly,

for my sake: be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven. (Matt. v.) Surely, then, my Friends, the maxims of the world and the maxims of the gospel can never tally.

The world, moreover, considers the love of our parents, friends, and connections, paramount to every consideration; -and asserts that men should only live for their friends and the good of society.-Jesus Christ declares that he only is to be the paramount object of the Christian's affection; (Matt. x. 37.) and that if he love father, mother, son, or daughter, more than him, he is not worthy of him. And every one that hath left house or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or lands, for him, shall recive a hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting. (Matt. xix. 29.) The world deems it a folly for men and women to retire from its pleasures into convents and monasteries, to devote themselves more entirely to a life of prayer, penance,

chastity, and self-denial; -but Jesus Christ has declared by the last text, that eternal life shall be their crown, and that where two or three are gathered together in his name, -there he is in the midst of them. (Matt. xviii. 20.)

The world excuses the vices and excesses of men, viewing them rather as the defects of our nature, than criminal habits ;-but Jesus Christ declares that men shall be judged as to their very thoughts and desires, (Matt. v. 28.) and that every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down, and shall be cast into the fire. (Matt. vii. 19.) 3 2110 000 000 0100 03 20813

I trust, then, my Friends, I have convinced you that the maxims of the gospel are in direct opposition to those of the world, and that to be a true Christian, is to be every thing that the world is not. What the world loves, you are to hate; what the world admires, you are to condemn For, as the apostle writes, Gad hath made toolish the wisdom of this world.

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For it is written, I WILL DESTROY THE WISDOM OF THE WISE; AND THE PRU-DENCE OF THE PRUDENT I WILL REJECT. (1 Cor. xx. 19.) The foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise: and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong: and the base things of the world, and the things that are contemptible, hath God chosen, and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his sight. (1 Cor. i. 20. 19. 27, 28, 29.)

Is it not lawful then, you ask, for Christians to hold the honours and riches of this world? Yes, it is lawful; and there are saints in heaven who have sanctified themselves in every state and condition of life; on the throne as well as in the cloister; in camps as well as in cities. Yes, it is lawful;—but you are to possess them and use them, as if you possessed them and used them not. You are to make them instrumental in producing the virtues Jesus requires from

you. For example, the more frequent the opportunity which men have of indulging themselves, the more frequent is the occasion for practising self-denial: and the higher they are exalted by honour and distinction, the lower will they descend by acts of humility. Indeed Jesus Christ seems evidently to allude to the higher and more opulent class of his followers, when he welcomes them into the kingdom of his Father, saying, for I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; naked, and you covered me; sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me. (Matt. xxv. 35.)

I trust, therefore, my Brethren, that all who venerate the New Testament as the revealed word of God, and view it as the divine rule of a Christian life, are willing to admit, that besides abstaining from positive crime, and every immoral act, the true servant of Christ is instructed to humble himself, and to practise mortifica-

tion and penance. This spirit breathes through the whole gospel, and to question it, is to deny a self-evident truth. It forms the characteristic of the Christian, and is as essential to him, as a belief in Jesus Christ. The recorded sentiments moreover of St. Paul, (Gal. vi. 14.) and the other apostles, as laid down in their epistles, equally contribute to prove, that such was the genuine doctrine of our Redeemer, and that no point were they more earnest in inculcating. Do penance, exclaimed St. Peter to the penitent Jews, (Acts ii. 38); be not satisfied with compunction of heart.

Their immediate disciples therefore, both in their lives, writings, and instructions, all gloried in the cross of Christ, and absolutely ran a race of self abnegation and penance. The very instruments of suffering employed against the martyrs, were seized and embraced by those dying heroes—the desarts soon became peopled with penitents, and Christianity presented to the pagan world the ex-

traordinary spectacle of men and women voluntarily afflicting and mortifying themselves. No one acquainted with sacred history can deny this fact; the decrees of ancient councils and every record bear evidence to it, whilst the Church has never failed to hold forth these characters as examples of true sanctity and sublime virtue. In short, her saints and confessors have all ascended the mount of perfection by the crooked and thorny paths of penance and self-denial; her martyrs have triumphed in proportion to the sufferings they endured for Christ, and if Christians will but fairly and candidly examine the testimony of both religious and profane writers, they will discover that great and extraordinary graces have been exclusively ascribed to those whose lives were pure, mortified, and humble. Indeed, we may gather from the divine words of Jesus Christ to Ananias. that to be preferred by grace, to be made a vessel of election, and to endure suffering, are synonimous. After affirming that he

had chosen Saul to be to him a vessel of election, he adds, for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. (Acts ix. 16.) Which perfectly accords with the answer returned by Jesus Christ to the woman who petitioned for her two sons the glory of being placed near to our Redeemer in heaven. Can you drink, said he, the chalice which I shall drink? (Matt. xx. 22.)

My Brethren, it is not my present purpose to persuade you to embrace this doctrine, but rather to convince you that such is the Christian law; trusting that you will see the necessity of acting upon this, as much as upon any other part of the divine revelation. For as St. James has said, HE who offends in one point, becomes guilty of all. (James ii. 10.) Yet I would not have any imagine that in this instance Jesus Christ preached a doctrine unknown to mankind before the publication of the gospel; since it had been taught by all the prophets as the divine law; and and may be said to be indelibly written

in the human heart .- Did not the sinful publican raise his indignant hand against himself and strike his breast? (Luke xviii. 13.) - Did not David lead a life of penance and self-denial, as the Psalms testify. (Ps. cviii. 22.) - Have we not the memorable instance on record of his refusing to drink in extreme thirst; and of his pouring the water forth before the Lord? (2 Kings xxiii. 16.) Did not the Ninivites do penance in sackcloth and ashes at the preaching of the prophet Jonas? (Jon. iii. 4.) Did not King Manasses do penance exceedingly before the God of his fathers. (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11.)—Is it not written that King Achab rent his garments. and put hair-cloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and slept in sackcloth, and walked with his head cast down. (3 Kings xxi, 27. 29.) And the Almighty spoke to Elias, saying; hast thou not seen Achab humbled before me? Therefore because he has humbled himself for my sake, I will not bring the evil in his days. Did not Job and Judith, who

were both just and virtuous characters, do penance in fasting, sackcloth and ashes? (Job xlii. 6. Judith viii. 8.)—The holy prophet Daniel also says of himself, I set my face to the Lord my God, to pray and make supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes.—I mourned the days of three weeks, I eat no pleasant bread, and neither flesh nor wine entered into my mouth; neither was I anointed with ointment till the days of three weeks were accomplished. (Dan. ix. 3.—x. 2.)

Our Redeemer therefore merely recommended and inforced by his example and authority a doctrine which was already practised by mankind, and may be considered both as a natural and divine law.—
I do not propose, my Friends, to expatiate on the merit and excellence of this moral system, yet there is one objection to which I wish to advert, as it may be considered the leading error of the day. It is stated that man being the work of God, should endeavour to honour the Creator, by setting

a value and esteem upon himself;—that he should carry a free, independent and exalted mind, and labour to glorify the Almighty by crossing the stage of life with dignity and honour;—that consequently the system preached in the gospel, stands self refuted, since it directly tends to humble, debase and degrade human nature, and is calculated to give to the Almighty the character of a tyrannical Being delighting in the misery and sufferings of his creatures.

My Brethren, if this world were any other than a state of probation for a better,—if man were here constituted in his ultimate state of existence,—or if human life were any thing but a journey to our true country, this objection might hold in some degree. But when it is simply stated as an objection that its tendency is to humble, degrade and debase human nature, it should be recollected that the Redeemer humbled, debased and degraded himself for our example, and that no doctrine can be more

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powerfully characteristic of Jesus Christ. Though equal with God, -he debased himself, taking the form of a servant; he humbled himself even to the death of the cross: (Phil. ii. 27.) -and he suffered, that leaving us an example we might follow his steps. (1 Pet. ii. 21.) The true principle of this doctrine is, that as sin enters into the soul by the concupiscence of the flesh, by the concupiscence of the eyes, and by the pride of life, (1 John ii. 10.) so the Deity is pleased with the sacrifice of these to his justice, and makes it the highest virtue in human nature to renounce them for his sake: and because, such temporal renunciation is our eternal gain, and in proportion as we recede from a love of ourselves, the world and the flesh, we draw nearer to God by virtue, and become more like to Jesus Christ.

My Friends, if you desire a more evident reason for the Almighty's hating the maxims of the world, and whatever is according to flesh and blood, go in spirit and look into

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hell, and there behold the dreadful havoc they have occasioned among the creatures of God. It is the world, the flesh, and the pride of life which are daily sweeping thousands into that place of torments. Love, therefore, and jealously have armed the vengeance of God against our nature, and he is incessantly urging us to contradict it, to crucify it and mortify it. For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary one to another .- While the fruit of the spirit is, charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity, -the works of the flesh are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury, idolatry, witchcraft, enmities, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, drunkenness, revelling, and such like.—Therefore they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the vices and concupiscences. (Gal. v. 17, 22, 23, 19, 20, 24.)

In conclusion then, my Brethren, after E e 2 producing such a body of scriptural evidence in support of this article of Catholic doctrine, after again confirming this authority with the practical example of Christ, his apostles and all the saints, it is truly painful to be under the necessity of placing this subject among our controversial questions. The Catholic Church has formally decided on the necessity of her children doing penance, and practising mortification. She announces to them that notwithstanding Jesus Christ has paid an infinite ransom in his own blood, yet true repentance, with works worthy of penance, form the condition for their application of it to the individual. Now this doctrine is directly contradicted by Protestants, who in the 11th of their articles of religion absolutely affirm, "that we are justified by faith only; "an assertion which it is surely inconsistent in them to make, who read the New Testament, and hold all that is contained in the Liturgy of the Common Prayer-Book. I shall not therefore at present detain you by further argument, confident as I am, of having clearly proved to all, that the doctrine of penance was part of the seed of the word of God, sown by Jesus Christ, and which he will expect again to reap.

Thus, my Brethren, Catholics and Protestants seem evidently those different soils on which the seed was to fall. The divine Saviour mentions four different sorts. The way-side -the rocky,-the thorny,-and the good ground. Of these four sorts then the first may express the Protestants and the other three the Catholics. For the Protestants who can read the passages of scripture which I have quoted this day, and deny the necessity of penance, are evidently those who belong to the first class. And they by the way-side, says Jesus Christ, (Luke viii. 12.) are they that hear; then the devil cometh and taketh the word out of their heart, lest believing they should be saved. Now they upon the rock, are they who when they hear, receive the word of God with joy; and

these have no roots, for they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away : and there are many such Catholics. (Matt. vii. 13.) And they that fall among thorns, are they who have heard and going their way are choked with the cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and yield no fruits. And very many such Catholics there are. For wide is the gate and broad the way that leads to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat.—But that on the good ground are they who in a good and very good heart hearing the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience. (Matt. vii. xiii.) And these are few. Many are called but few are chosen. (Matt. xx. 16.) That you, my Brethren, may be of this happy number, is my sincere prayer.



the example of the most illustribus per-

SERMON LIII.

ON THE PRECEPT OF FASTING.

Then came to him the disciples of John saying, why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but thy disciples do not fast? And Jesus said to them, can the children of the Bridegroom mourn as long as the Bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they shall fast. (Matt. ix. 14, 15.)

THE pious and Christian practice of fasting is grounded on so many passages of scripture, that to call in question its utility or excellence is to betray an understanding clouded by prejudice and disturbed by error. It has been so positively commanded by God in the Levitical law, and so universally recommended by

the example of the most illustrious personages in the Old and New Testament, that we defy its sensual adversaries to produce any better argument than ridicule in their but too successful endeavours, to abolish what was instituted by providence to restrain and chastise the impetuosity of our nature. David, Moses, Elias and Daniel, with the rest of the prophets, preached it by word and example. - Judith, Anna, Esther and many others, by their fastings drew down the blessings of heaven on themselves and country, whilst in numerous instances it has obtained mercy for the devoted land of Israel and Juda! Turn to me, says the Almighty by his prophet Joel, with your whole hearts in fasting. (Ch. ii. 12.) But lest you imagine that this law was applicable only to the Jews, I must remind you that it was also common among the Gentiles; that the Ninivites by fasting averted the threatened vengeance of God; and ascending higher in the order of time, you will behold Noah receiving from the

Almighty a command of fasting on his going forth from the ark; while the first precept enjoined our parents in paradise was to abstain from the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

It was in fasting and prayer, as the Acts inform us, that the apostles prepared to execute the designs of God; and as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them, separate me Saul and Barnabas. Then they fasting and praying and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away. (Acts xiii. 23.) And in imitation of the example of our divine Saviour, who for the space of forty days was pleased to abstain from every species of food, the saints in every age have not less distinguished themselves by this penitential practice, than in the exercise of every exalted virtue.

But why you ask are we forbidden to eat? Ah, my Brethren, it was by this simple question that the serpent so artfully se-

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duced our parent Eve. Why has God forbidden you, said he, to eat of the apple?. We yet experience the sad effects of this curious enquiry which has led to all our evils, and which in oftener instances has proved the damnation of millions. I will not then, my Brethren, undertake to answer this question :- I am not the Counsellor of the Lord, neither does it become us to search into his adorable intentions. But if you ask, whether he has imposed such a command upon men?-yes, I reply, and upon all mankind. There is no exception of persons, no distinction of nations, either directly or indirectly every one is obliged to fast, and for the neglect of this precept, they shall answer at the judgment seat of God. But how comes it, you say, if fasting be grounded on such undeniable authorities as the word and example of God and his saints in every age under the natural and revealed law, that it should still be the bugbear of worldlings,

and considered even by some who pretend to morality and a knowledge of scripture, as the effect of superstition and ignorance?

My Brethren, were we to receive the wisdom of the world as the rule and standard of our faith, long since should we have renounced the forms and essence of religion; long since would Christianity have been exploded as irrational and foolish. The world is judged and condemned; its maxims and its counsels are in direct opposition to those of the gospel. Can we wonder then that its decisions should be repugnant to truth? The world blindly judges and blindly decides. But among the vast number of adversaries, who push forward to declare against this precept of the Catholic Church, how few are aware that it is equally applicable to themselves by the articles and tenets of their own religion! Yes by the Common Prayer-Book of the Church of England, it stands confessed the doctrine of scripture, - the practice of past, and Ff9

better ages, and remains to be cleared away by ruder reformists of the 19th century. *

I will not then consider my Protestant Brethren of the Established Church as adsaries upon this question; the retainment of the 40 days of Lent, and the Emberdays at the four seasons, together with the abstinence from flesh meat on the Rogation days and the Fridays of the year, † incon-

* The present race of Protestants, I conceive, will leave very little for their successors to pare away after them.

† Queen Elizabeth enforced the ancient practice of fasting and abstinence from flesh: but then, as a writer observes, it was in a strain altogether human and unevangelical,—by an order of council, directing the archbishops and clergy to declare, "that the same is not required for any liking of popish ceremonies heretofore used, which utterly are detested; but only to maintain the mariners and navy of this land by salting or fishing." "Now," says the Protestant Mr. Collier, * "with submission, to lay the whole stress of embering and abstinence on reasons of state, is somewhat singular. For to say nothing of Ember-weeks,—the fast days of Lent, and those of the Wednesdays and Tridays, reach up to the earliest ages of Christianity. Now this restraint of appetite was always imposed with a prospect on the other world. It was enjoined to reduce the

^{*} Eccles, Hist. vol. ii. p. 588.

are united with Catholics, though in practice they may have varied from the established discipline of the Catholic Church in these countries. I have known some Protestants, and I have no doubt but there are many, who conscientiously practice this duty of their religion. True, there are numbers wholly inattentive to the precept, if not ignorant of it:—but how many such characters are also to be found in the Catholic Church! The proposition I fear is universally founded, that where many are called few are chosen.—There may be fewer

senses and make the mind more absolute. And is it not somewhat of a misfortune, that the apostles, canons, the authority of the Fathers, and the practice of the primitive Church, should be struck out of all consideration? And all this discipline be only for the benefit of navigation! Have we not sins to fast for, and temperance to guard? Are we not bound to distinguish times upon spiritual motives? And prepare for the solemnity of religion? But when secular men prescribe to the Church; when those who are strangers to antiquity give laws for discipline; it is no wonder if they mistake in their devotion."

true Protestants, than true Catholics;—
yet heaven is witness, that in the fold of
the Catholic Church, we have many worthless and unsound sheep. I shall therefore
make no distinction this day between Catholic and Protestant; I shall consider you
all as my flock in Jesus Christ, and my
only endeavour shall be to induce you
faithfully to practise what you profess.

In a late discourse I laboured most earnestly to convince you, that the maxims, precepts, and virtues of Jesus Christ are in direct opposition to those of this world; that humility of heart, self-denial and mortification, are the ground work of Christian sanctity; and that as thy constituted the life of the divime Redeemer upon earth, so they are to characterize all his disciples. From the authorities therefore which I have already produced, you may perceive how acceptable a species of penance fasting is to God. Hence the apostles, as their writings testify, preached it by word and example;

and as we learn from the indubitable testimony of the fathers, and those sacred canons of ecclesiastical discipline which yet exist, in the very first ages of Christianity, the attention of the Church was directed to the regulation of those periodical seasons, when she called upon her children to do penance in fasting and abstinence, and presented for their imitation the 40 days fast of their divine Saviour. St. Ignatius, the illustrious disciple of the apostles St. Peter and St. John, and who gloriously died for the profession of his faith 1600 years ago, in a letter yet extant to the Christians of Philippi, tells them, "to respect the fast of Lent, since it contains an example of the practice of our Lord." And St. Jerom attests, that we observe that penitential custom according to the tradition of the apostles*. I am not unacquainted with the hackneyed objection, that fasting is a part of that slavish code, which we

^{*} Ep. ad Marcell.

are told, it has been the ambitious policy of the Church to establish: but I will now appeal to the candid and enlightened minds of my hearers, who shall determine if it be not of divine institution; and when, in virtue of that authority delegated to the Church for ever by Jesus Christ, by an ecclesiastical law, she ordains the time and manner of its observance, it can be said that she derogates any more from the rights and liberties of men, than when Moses regulated the fasts and festivals of the Jewish Church. It is a most egregious error then to suppose, that fasting is a restraint of modern introduction, unknown to the primitive ages of Christianity: you have but to examine the page of history, and consult the acts or canons of the councils of the Church, when you will perceive, that the nearer we approach to apostolic times, the more multiplied become her penal statutes; which in the four first centuries embraced a discipline so truly rigorous and severe, that it is impossible without astonishment to contemplate it. But as the piety of Christians became less fervent, so their spirit of penance gradually declined; and that same authority which had directed them to the rugged path of self-denial and mortification, now exerted itself to relax and modify those laws, and adapt them to the weakness and infirmities of human nature. But although the discipline of the Church may vary with circumstances and events, the spirit and character of her doctrine must subsist the same in all times and places; and as fasting and penance were preached by Jesus Christ,as fasting and penance were preached by the apostles and their immediate successors, -so fasting and penance can never cease to be preached by all those who announce the gospel of our divine Redeemer. Here, my Brethren, you will observe that wide distinction which is drawn between the doctrine and discipline of the Church. The one, in as much as it involves truth and revelation, can never alter, never change;

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while the other regarding merely its government, and the regulation of rites and ceremonies, is often advantageously suited to local and temporal circumstances.

But whence, you will ask, has the Church derived a power of restraining my liberty, in the use of those blessings which God has provided for me? My Friends, you are ever boasting of that liberty which you have acquired with the gospel—but I fear you are mistaken as to the true nature of your emancipation*. You are made free

*"Civil liberty," writes Archdeacon Paley, "is to do what we will, consistently with the interests of the community to which we belong. That is the only liberty to be desired in a state of civil society."—That is, this is real liberty, whilst every other is false, and mere LICENTIOUSNESS. Now the same distinction is to be made in regard to religious liberty, or that in which morals and revealed religion are concerned. The liberty of doing any thing prejudicial to morals or revealed religion, is not real liberty, but LICENTIOUSNESS. It is necessary, therefore, for every prudent man to mark this distinction, and to observe that the contrast is as striking as the composition of a regular army, and that of a banditti. Infine, that is not liberty, which militates against itself, any more than free-will can give a

in Christ Jesus, and heirs of heaven.—You are freed from the servitude of a law, by

man the right of committing suicide. It is on this account that every popular assembly professing the Catholic Religion must, by a fundamental principle, be precluded from interfering with spiritual matters; because, wherever that liberty exists, religion will, some time or other, be brought under discussion. And it is to be observed, that even small assemblies of a popular description always incline to the destruction of faith and morality, Because, wherever the vanity of man, and his worst passions, are at work, he will either be induced to believe that he can mend what is not wrong, or he will meditate the destruction of that from which he experiences controul. In either case, truth and religion are assailed, and will finally suffer.-Considering therefore comparatively the moral composition of governments, and calculating events by the weight of active influence, true religion must ever regard a monarchy as a natural ally, and every republic as a deadly foe. whilst a monarch will support religion, because he will always find it his interest to do it, since religion will support him, -so on the other hand, a popular assembly, being always urged by the corrupt passions predominating in the mass of mankind, (Matt. vii. 13, 14.) will more or less feel inclined to militate against virtue, because virtue is a restraint; and although the better part may resist successfully for a time, nevertheless, an opportunity of throwing off virtue will sooner or later offer; and where an individual is at liberty to hold out a temptation, the works of which, you could not be justified. (Gal. ii. 16.) But you are not freed

the multitude will most assuredly be led astray. For the multitude are always blind—think others are leagued against them, and are much more inclined to attend to the inflammatory language of a popular declaimer, than to listen to the sage precepts of philosophy.*

If then any imagine that the Catholic Religion is inimical to liberty, they are mistaken: but let them learn to distinguish liberty from licentiousness. In the pursuit of happiness therefore under these circumstances, there is nothing by which the minds of men are more likely to be led astray, than their notions of good government. For in this era of liberty, or rather of unrestrained moral licentiousness, men view every form as tyrannical, save that which is popular. This observation applies to Catholics as well as Protestants: and in this age an Englishman would be thought almost to have forfeited his right senses, were he to call the soundness of the proposition in question. In venturing then to place myself in opposition to this prevailing sentiment, I shall assert my right to discuss the principle, and have no hesitation in engaging to shew the fallacy of many of those positions which are usually considered by my countrymen as incontrovertible.

If then it be a settled principle, and universally admitted, that the *public good* should be the end and object of all government, that of course is the best form, which is the

^{*} Hence the multitude are styled mob, from mobilis.

from the obligation of virtue and good works—you are not freed from the necessi-

most certain to produce this effect. And as a deduction issuing from these premises, it will follow that that form is the most likely to promote the public good, which is most free to act for the public advantage, and which is the least free to do evil. Now it is clear that a limited monarchy is that which is most free to do good, and may be the most easily restrained from doing evil. Because, as one individual is more free to act than a number, when it is proper, so one individual is more easily checked than a number, when to act is improper. Hence a limited monarchy is the most perfect system of government-being the most positive as to all that is good, and the most negative as to all that is evil. It may be here worthy of remark, that this is the real form of the divine government of the Catholic Church; and that hence she is a model for all others, and the nearer they are brought to that model, the nearer they will approach to perfection. I have already shewn in a former note, (p. 408, vol. i.) a striking resemblance between the constitution of the Catholic Church and that of Great Britain; and it is only in as much as the latter departs in principle from the other that it may be considered defective. The constitution of the Catholic Church is a regular monarchy with checks. The constitution of Great Britain is an irregular monarchy, without independence even in doing good. In two points therefore the British Constitution is absolutely defective as a government; first, in as much as it leaves the head of it without the power of acting ty of modelling your lives upon that of Christ.—Do not think, said Jesus to the crowd, that I am come to destroy the law

for the general good without the consent of a third party; secondly, by leaving the monarch occasionally dependent on the passions of the multitude. All this is so true in fact, that were not the first principle of the English Constitution over-ruled, by throwing a weight of influence into the power of the king, against which the popular party is incessantly exclaiming, the machine of government could not possibly proceed; and the country would be at the mercy of a turbulent faction, rather than under the guidance of a sage legislature. In this manner corruption becomes the means of perfecting and preserving the English Constitution. This corrupt influence, as it is well known, is maintained by the distribution of places under government, lucrative offices, bribes, &c. &c. I have herein hinted that the monarch is likely to be the fountain of all that is good and wise, whilst the popular part of the government promotes all that is favourable to the passions; which is what I am also able to prove.

For, it is possible that an individual may be a most virtueous monarch, whilst it is equally certain that the multitude will ever be influenced by their bad passions, if the words of Christ be true in St. Matt. (vii. 13, 14.) Now one good and virtuous monarch is capable of reforming a whole kingdom, if he have the means in his power. Every nation, therefore, would have this chance some time or other under a regular monarchy. But a popular or representative government will infallibly pull in the opposite direction, be-

or the prophets.—I am not come to destroy but to fulfil. (Matt. v. 17.)

Yes, his mission was to perfect, not to destroy; to shew you a law of life, instead of a law of death.—Your liberty is that of the sons of God—that is, heaven is thrown open to you, and it now depends upon yourselves to attain to the high honour of an immortal crown. Such is the glorious freedom of the Gospel, worthy of both Jesus Christ and man.

Returning then to my subject, it is evident from those innumerable passages of Scripture, whereby a supreme and vice-gerent authority is delegated to the Church for ever by Jesus Christ,—but especially

cause it will always be influenced by the baser passions; in proof of which, we have only to notice the characters of the popular favorites. If you consult the evidence of facts moreover, if you compare monarchies and republics, you will observe, that every thing honourable, noble, and dignified, is the appendage of the one, (I include not perfection) whilst every thing wild, ferocious, and vulgar, characterizes the other. This observation will be borne out in religious as well as in political government.

when in the act of delivering over to her the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he made this solemn delaration, and whatsoever shall be bound upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever shall be loosed upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven,it is evident, I say, that she enjoys a plenitude of jurisdiction for the spiritual government and direction of all Christians. Hence immediately from her divine Founder, she derives the power of obliging us to practise the virtues of penance and selfdenial:-but as any authority of this kind must be totally defective, unless she is also enabled to determine and specify the manner, therefore, as a deduction directly issuing from these premises, she has a full and undoubted right to command faithful, at particular seasons, to abstain and fast. - A right which she has exercised from the days of the apostles:-a right which the reformed Churches of the 16th century presumed to claim, and dared to maintain :- a right infine, which has been conceded by all antiquity, declared an article of the Catholic faith by numerous councils, and confirmed by the universal practice of the Eastern Churches.

My Friends, I conceive it unnecessary to instance the long and severe fasts observed by the Greek Christians. I conceive it useless to state, that there is no age or part of the world in which fasting has not been constituted a duty of religion, and the right of regulating it, conceded to the ministers of God. The practice of the Mahometan nations-and the proclamations of our own government, assist to shew, that it is a natural virtue of man, and highly acceptable to the Deity. I exhort you then, my Catholic Brethren, to be particularly attentive to this duty :-- you who are at the head of families, are specially called upon to set an example to your children and domestics. Forget not then, to instruct them in the principle of this religious duty:-teach them continually to recollect, that as the followers and disciples

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of Christ crucified, we are all to practise self-denial and mortification; and must subjugate our wills to the discipline of the Gospel. In this profane and irreligious age, I can imagine but few things more worthy of real commendation, than the spectacle of that family, which sets at nought the scoffs and revilings of the world, and dares to keep the Christian law inviolate; which cheerfully feeds upon the bread of penance for Christ's sake, and carries the yoke of a mortified spirit. I can conceive few things more honourable to human nature and religion, than the example of that young man, who steady to his own principles, yields not to the jests and persuasions of his companions, but boldly practises in the face of men, what he professes before God. This is truly to give testimony of their faith, and their Father who seeth them in secret, will repay them. * (Matt. vi. 6.) is all med someons

^{*} There is nothing to which young Catholics of fashion and fortune are more generally addicted, and against which

It has often been objected, that the practice is silly and superstitious;—and Catho-

it is more necessary to caution them, than the privilege they assume on all occasions of stating their opinions, on matters purely religious. They should recollect how severely St. Paul, in the first chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, expresses himself against the vain wisdom of this world, and ought to be sensible that on subjects which they have only superficially considered, it is both unwise and indelicate in them to speak before others—nay for them to hold an opinion in opposition to learned ecclesiastics and the practice of the Church, according to right reasoning, appears absolutely contemptible. These persons should be informed, that many consequences often result from one act, and that although a measure may appear plausible in one point of view, it may prove extremely detrimental to religion in another. 'This conduct, of which there is such reason to complain, is in general to be ascribed to the free intercourse in which such Catholics live with Protestants; and may almost in every instance be traced to that circumstance. I mean not to censure those Catholics who associate with Protestants, but only recommend to them to do it discreetly, and never to allow themselves to be influenced by their sentiments and opinions on religious topics. Let it be remembered, that at every change of religion which has occurred in the history of the Church, faith has always been the last point that has yielded, and that if that bulwark is to be preserved, the outworks of it must be defended. Far more sensible and lies are frequently described, as paying a greater attention to a distinction of food, than to morality and the commandments of God;—that they even believe a punctual and scrupulous abstinence from fleshmeat on particular days, will supply for charity, faith, and holiness of life, and prove a sure passport to heaven.

I fear that some of our Church have given occasion to our adversaries to make these reproaches, since they are not entirely without foundation. That is, there are many who observe this precept of the Church, and yet run a vicious course. Nevertheless, I will ask these opponents, if it be fair and candid in them, to choose the samples of Catholic virtue from the lowest and most profligate classes in the community. Myself would be ashamed to

creditable, therefore, would it be for lay Catholics to shew a respectful deference to the spiritual authority of the Church, and form a shield of protection to her decisions, than by vain discourses and superficial remarks, thus open the sally-ports to her enemies, and teach them to riot and insult her in the very sanctuary of faith. make the retort upon any of the Protestant sects. If indeed such were the doctrine which these Catholics learnt from their pastors and their catechisms—if such were the instructions to be found in Catholic sermons, and prayer-books, well might the charge be brought against the Catholic religion.

But no; you are told, my Brethren, to sanctify your fasts by prayer, and almsdeeds,-you are taught to attend to the spirit, as well as to the letter of the law;and while you mortify the inclinations of the flesh, you are directed to offer a penitential heart, as the most acceptable sacrifice to God. We tell you, that your fasts are a vain thing, unless at the same time you cultivate every interior virtue of the soul; and that it is the fast of the humble penitent, and not of the proud sinner, which will be regarded by your Father in heaven. We tell you to conceal your fasts from the eyes of men, according to the admonition of Jesus Christ; and when you

fast, said he to his disciples, be not as the hypocrites sad—but when you fast anoint your heads—that you may not appear to men to fast, but to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who seeth you in secret will repay you. (Matt. vi. 16.)

We are also accused of practising fasting through a superstitious and Judaical notion of some meats being unclean on particular days; and notwithstanding the irresistible proofs I have already produced in defence of this article of the Catholic faith, and to which I could also add many more, there are numbers who rejoice in having freed themselves from so unpleasant an obligation. They seem to regard this, with the other practices of religion, as a yoke which in their wisdom they have thrown aside, and bless themselves that they possessed a boldness equal to the attempt. These persons claim the merit of having gloriously triumphed over superstition and hypocrisy! But, my Brethren, what have these freethinkers substituted in the place of these

penitential exercises? Why open impiety, intemperance, luxury, and every species of debauchery. They boast of having delivered the Christian world from tyranny and subjection! and they have learned to sin without shame, nay more, to glory in their vices, and to prove to mankind, that as they can live in iniquity, so they can die without repentance. They wish to persuade us, that the saints and martyrs,—the Pauls, the Austins, the Jeroms, the Teresas, the Clares, and their innumerable followers, have all foolishly erred, in attempting penance for their sins!

Never was penance, however, so necessary as now that it is declared superfluous; never since the preaching of Christianity was God so little known, so little thought of, as in the present age of propriety;—never were his commands so generally slighted, his judgments less feared. The licentiousness of the day has assumed a bold and daring effrontery, unknown to it before; and that

period is at length arrived foretold by St. Austin, when the virtuous man is ashamed of his virtue. Yes, the evil has spread wide, even among those who call themselves Catholics: but I maintain, wherever the pious practice of fasting has been surrendered, virtue has given way to vice, and the road of the cross has been exchanged for scenes of sensuality and debauchery. I might here address these Christians in the words of the learned Erasmus; "What an evangelical generation is this! Nothing was ever seen more licentious, nothing less evangelical! They abrogate fasts! Those, they say, are Pharisaical superstitions! But then they should have put something better in their place; and not turn Epicureans to fly from Judaism. Manners are now neglected, luxury, debauchery, adulteries, increase more than ever." Such was the judgment passed by that learned man. We indeed no longer behold the arm of God visibly exerted to punish the crimes of men, as formerly, when the

vial of his wrath was poured forth upon the guilty inhabitants of Sodom, Ninive, and Tyre; but, my Brethren, his vengeance is deferred, only that it may be the more dreadful and unmerciful hereafter. For the day will come when it shall fall upon them; -and as the scripture expresses it, they shall be drenched with the wine of his fury. You then who rejoice in having divested vourselves of these restraints and crosses which religion imposes, -who glory in that liberty so agreeable to your passions, say, if things shall stand as well with you hereafter. If your consciences answer in the affirmative, I will not become your censurer; -but if your prospect into futurity is black, frightful and uncertain, with St. Austin I will exclaim, here chastize us, here punish us, "here cut, here burn, O Lord, only spare us in eternity."

Having said so much on the excellence of fasting as a divine institution;—and having so clearly proved its necessity in as much as it is an ecclesiastical law, it will

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be but proper to add a few words upon the subject of dispensations. You perceive, my Brethren, from what you have already heard, that penance forms the very essence and spirit of the gospel, and that in obliging us to fast the Church has no other object than our spiritual advantage in this world and the next. She hopes that the mortification of our sensual inclinations and desires will also lead to the sacrifice of every irregular appetite of the soul, and that whilst by self-abnegation we endeavour to appease the anger of an offended God, we may learn that real sorrow and interior compunction, which alone can restore us to his mercy and grace.

When however, through corporal infirmity, age, or any other reasonable impediment, we are unable to abstain, or fast, (a circumstance which so commonly occurs *) far from pressing a compliance,

^{*} For instance, in mothers whilst bearing or suckling children. Wherever there exists an unquestionable reason,

the Church has committed to the pastors a power of relaxing, or totally dispensing with an obligation, which in numerous instances she well knows it is impossible to observe. The right of dispensing, naturally springs from the right of ordaining laws; but as dispensations are never granted without a solid and cogent cause, so none can ever lawfully use them unless the reasons and conditions on which they have been conceded, actually exist.

I am far from wishing to render uneasy the minds of those who, with proper motives, claim indulgences of this nature; I myself would counsel them to apply;—religion asks not the sacrifice of health, nor impossibilities. And therefore let it be clearly understood, that wherever there subsists a real difficulty, the pastors of the Church are forward to release you from the obligation of this precept; but remember that it is only in as much as your excuse is just

(causa gravis et certa) the circumstance itself is a dispensation. and undisguised in the sight of God, that it can be lawful before men. *

The rigid ecclesiastical law of fasting varies by mitigation in different countries. The ancient law limited the faithful to a dinner and a collation; but the established practice of a country, should be considered the rule of precept for the community. In England, custom sanctions the use of tea, coffee or chocolate in the morning, or at any other time of the day, on the principle that liquidum non frangit jejunium. Besides dinner, moreover, at which every article of food may be eaten, which is not positively forbidden, a collation is also allowed, which may be taken either after or before the dinner, as suits the craving calls of nature best, after the bour of twelve.* This collation may equal in quantity a third, more or less, of what we eat at dinner-and may consist of any thing but flesh-meat, fish, eggs, cheese, milk, or butter, unless the latter enter, in very small quantity, into something else, such as piecrust, or cake.-Hence all sorts of vegetable productions, dried fruits, gruels, and likewise honey, are allowed for collation. About an ounce weight of bread, is allowed with the tea or coffee in the morning. As there are a few practical points, however, on which it is extremely desirable that Catholics should have a rule, I will here endeavour to lay down some direction for their conduct. 1st, It is often a question among them, whether fish may be lawfully

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^{*} For which see Bishop Hay in The sincere Christian instructed, Vol. I. c. 15. p. 238.

I will not here undertake to expose the many pretexts individuals frequently employ

eaten by those who have a dispensation from the obligation of abstinence? 2dly, Whether Catholics may lawfully give meat on days of abstinence to Protestant servants? 3dly, Whether Catholics may lawfully eat meat at the tables of Protestant families on days of abstinence? And 4thly, Whether those who engage in hunting and shooting may lawfully break their fast in the morning?

In regard to the first, it is to be observed, that counsel and precept are never to be confounded; and therefore, though it be udvisable in those who act upon a dispensation, to refrain from fish, lest they appear to others only to consult the whims of appetite, and thus occasion disedification,—it, nevertheless, does not hence follow that they would commit any sin in this country by eating it, when their neighbour is not exposed to take scandal from it. Because, independently of the sin of scandal, which must be avoided in every circumstance, but more especially when persons act upon an ecclesiastical dispensation, there is no precept published or received in this country, forbidding the use of fish, when meat is allowed on days of abstinence. The regulations for Lent, annually published, are silent upon it; as likewise every casuist that I have consulted. Therefore as that may be lawfully done, which never has been positively forbidden by authority*, and as a dispensa-

^{*} The Bull of Benedict 14th was never published in this country.

to extort these indulgences;—such persons
I will leave to be judged by their Creator

tion is simply a release from the law, by which the party is restored to his first liberty, and not a commutation (unless so specified) of obligations, so a dispensation from the precept of abstinence leaves a person free to eat or decline at dinner any food he pleases,

In respect to the second case; although it be true that no one can lawfully withdraw from the authority of the Church, nevertheless it is to be observed, that strictly she only pretends to regulate the faithful; considering all others cut off from her communion, and as heathers and publicans. (Matt. xviii. 17.) As therefore Protestants have totally renounced her authority, so we may safely conclude, that the Church would not attempt to regulate those persons who have thus risen up against her, -nor make them objects of a specific law, unless in some more direct manner she acknowledged a communion with them. For by the same principle Protestants would be subject to every other commandment of the Church, which she has never formally asserted, Besides, the submission which the Church claims is always a free and voluntary obedience to her authority; without which, even a compliance, if compulsory, would leave the party charged with guilt. Hence a wife may lawfully provide flesh-meat for her husband, should he insist upon having it; such concurrence being only material on her part-and on the same principle, Catholic masters of families may lawfully provide meat for their Protestant visitors and servants, though they cannot

and their own consciences. In concluding, however, let me disabuse you this day of

direct or encourage them to violate the precept of the Church.

On the third question, whether Catholics may lawfully eat meat at the tables of Protestant families on days of abstinence, I answer; that in some instances they are probably dispensed by the circumstance, though it cannot be admitted as a general principle. Where, therefore, persons foresee that they shall be placed in this difficulty, I would always advise them to apply to an intelligent Confessor, and solicit from the Church, through him, a dispensation for this particular circumstance. The Confessor, as a prudent man, will be aware that in a Protestant country like England, where Catholics find so many obstacles to the practice of religion, the Church is naturally inclined to be lenient; and that, in enforcing her precepts, he must be guided by her intentions. He will recollect, that in binding the faithful to her laws, she designs not to lay an onpressive burthen on their consciences; -that her moral precepts are to be morally interpreted ;-and that she herself sets the example of relaxation in her own laws, in many instances where urbanity requires it:—for example, in the cases of embassadors, and other public characters. As, therefore, an invitation carries with it a certain species of obligation in society, and it is often difficult to decline it without offence, a sensible confessor, taking into considerationall the circumstances of the case in this Protestant country, will have sufficient motives to justify him in grantthe sentiment, that fasting is a precept degrading in its nature, and peculiar to you

ing a dispensation from the precept of abstinence to any penitent, that shall submissively and humbly solicit it for these circumstances. Or he might commute the obligation into an alms, or a lecture, for a quarter or half an hour, in some work of piety.

Finally, on the fourth case, I answer in the negative; since those who are obliged to the end, are also obliged to the means. But, although the circumstance itself will not justify a breach of the precept of fasting, still there are attendant circumstances sufficient to authorize individuals to solicit,—and a prudent confessor to grant a dispensation. The pastor will recollect, that in these Northern climates, men require much more nourishment than under the sultry atmosphere of the South; -that exercise is here necessary to throw off the condensed humours of the body. and that it forms the healthy and natural occupation of our youth .- He will remark moreover, that the low and melancholy character of the nation, sufficiently attests, that we are not on an equality with the fervid regions of the South, where a spare and abstemious diet is at all times necessary, and where the vigorous habits of the Northern tribes are absolutely unknown. He will recollect that the Church is a reasonable mother, capable of distinguishing the circumstances of her children; that it would be absurd to make the customs of Rome and Constantinople a rule for Lapland and the Orknies; and that although she does not think proper to distinguish in her moral precepts,

as Catholics, For so generally does fasting enter into every religious system

nevertheless she authorizes her ministers to use their prudent discretion in applying and interpreting them.

As therefore the laborious exercises of hunting and shooting, are the lawful and favorite pursuits of this country,-and as it would be extremely injurious to health to follow them with a fasting stomach, so those persons who have a prudential reason for engaging in them, may lawfully ask for that dispensation which they require: - and the confessor will be justified in readily granting it to them according to their particular circumstances. Where a great inconvenience occurs, the same course of soliciting a dispensation should be adopted by all those who are on service in the army and navy,by those who happen to be sailing or travelling,-and by such as have not the opportunity of providing for themselves at home. It should be observed, that in all these reflections I have been endeavouring to lay down a rule for those who complaining of difficulties are exposed to the temptations of breaking a precept of the Church, and that I am far from sanctioning a wanton violation of the ecclesiastical ordinance. Some rigorists may be disposed to consider this doctrine too easy, yet I trust that I have produced reasons justifying the advice I have given; and which will be found, if examined, in conformity with the language of the most learned casuists. Rigorism in enforcing the laws of the Church is imprudent, because they are not essential to the practice of virtue, and are only to be esteemed its

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both ancient and modern, that I may preach it to the Jews, as I preach it to the Chrstians;—I may preach it to the Protestants, as I preach it to the Catholics;—infine, I may announce it to all, as the doctrine of revelation, and the practice of Jesus Christ.

auxiliaries, and protectors: and as these exercises of piety defeat their own object, when they become temptations to sin, the prudent pastor will be careful not to advance beyond the law, by confounding a case of counsel, with one of precept :- and thus throw discouragement, rather than help, in the way of religion and virtue. For it should not be forgotten that the difficulties of complying with the precept in this country are often great, and under the humid atmosphere of our climate, where the renewal of the juices of the body, must keep some pace with their rapid destruction, marked by the bilious and lowering character of the national diseases, (and the same is to be observed in Holland and all other humid climates, which satisfactorily explains why so much more animal food is consumed by the inhabitants of these countries, than by other nations, whose more abstemious habits attest a superiority of climate) there is a strong motive for granting a dispensation to those who humbly and submissively ask it. If a dispensation is granted in these circumstances, I would always limit its duration to the following Easter, when it may be renewed if required.

Having therefore taken some pains, and I hope not unsuccessfully, to render this subject clear and intelligible to every one;—having in the first place, drawn your attention to those authorities and examples, which the Old and New Testament furnish,—and 2dly, traced the practice through every age and tribe, to the very first century of the Christian era, I close this discourse with these words of St. John, do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. (Matt. iii. 2.)

My Brethren, we are all by nature children of wrath, (Ephes. ii. 3.) and by the just judgments of God, marked out for eternal vengeance; penance is our only alternative. If then we must do penance, surely there is no species which can fall so light and easy, as that which I have recommended to you this day. You can deny yourselves, without reluctance, many comforts for the sake of a rising family;—you can censure your first parents for their foolish disobedience, and notwithstanding,

will you also sacrifice your immortal souls for the sake of an apple, or some similar gratification? But fasting you object once more is really a severe penance! Would you then exchange it for the fiery gridiron of St. Lawrence? the racking wheel of St. Catherine? the butchery of St. Agnes? the cruel death of St. Ignatius slaughtered by savage beasts? Would you prefer to burn alive with St. Polycarp? If you do not, O talk not of the difficuly of fasting; -think of hell and of those eternal sufferings which the damned endure, and soon will you be reconciled to tread in the footsteps of all those who are gone before you to the happy mansions of eternity.



SERMON LIV.

ON INDULGENCES.

Whatsoever thou shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be also loosed in heaven. (Matt. xvi. 19.)

JESUS Christ, in quality of Pastor, Saviour, and Redeemer, lodged the special prerogatives of his ministry in the governors of his Church. All power, said he, is given me in heaven and upon earth.—As my Father sent me, so I send you. (Matt. xxviii. 18.—John xx. 21.) The prerogatives of Jesus, hence became the prerogatives of his Church, and she inherited a power not inferior to that, which the Christ himself had exercised upon earth. Now, my Brethren, after premising this principle, with the view of illustrating one of the great and inherent prerogatives of the Catholic Church, as well as to shew

that omnipotent foundation on which all her privileges are secured, I wish you to observe, that the remission of any capital sentence against a criminal, is no discharge from the hands of justice, and that the delinguent may still be liable to the full expiation of the debt of satisfaction to his injured Lord. This distinction is admitted into every code of civil law, and instances almost daily occur in our common courts of justice. One, for example, is pardoned by a reprieve from the sentence of death,yet is detained in prison, at the will of the sovereign, fined, or transported to a foreign land. To another, is granted that life which he had forfeited for a robbery on the high-way, -yet he is bound to hard labour till he repays to the last farthing of what he had stolen. Thus the forgiveness of the crime, and the remission of the debt of satisfaction, are two distinct points, never to be confounded.

These principles of civil equity have an intimate reference to divine justice, which

acts in perfect conformity towards the creature. Thus the Deity often remits the repentant sinner's guilt; man, says he, thy sins are forgiven thee, (Luke v. 20.) yet at the same time he proclaims the way of salvation, a strait and rugged path, (Matt. vii. 13.) and that the salutary works of his disciples are penance and self-denial: He declares that man's life cannot admit an interval of repose, and that through many tribulations we are to enter into the kingdom of God. (2 Cor. iv. 17.) These are the purifying works of grace, to cancel that debt which the sinner still owes to the divine justice, after his guilt has been washed away in the purifying blood of Jesus Christ. They express that score they are intended to redeem, and which must be paid off, before the just can be admitted into the glorious presence of sanctity.

Hence, though the grace of God, by the means of the sacraments, has justified the sinner, and he is ranked among the peni-

tent servants and disciples of his Divine Master, nevertheless that debt of justice with which he is loaded, still remains to be discharged; and the question with us at present is, can it be remitted? - Can a moral equivalent be offered?—Can the Deity be induced to substitute his mercy for justice, and by an act of grace, either partially or entirely, cancel the debt? My Brethren, we cannot doubt but he may-and moreover that this power has been also lodged in the Church by Jesus Christ. For he said, all power is given to me in heaven and on earth. (Matt. xxviii. 18.) As my Father sent me, I also send you, (John xx. 21.) and whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven. (Matt. xviii. 18.) The Church then has this power, faith teaches it, and the whole evidence of the Gospel confirms it.

My Brethren, I presume you are aware that I am treating the subject of INDUL-

GENCES, which of all others has been the most misrepresented, and is the least understood. It has ever proved a convenient field to Protestants, for discharging their invectives against the Catholic Church, and as such is esteemed by them as one of their most powerful means of defence. In controverting my adversaries therefore, it is far from my intention to prescribe a course, to be pursued by them, -or to limit them to any system of argument they may judge less availing. But I would have them recollect, that truth and justice are the only lawful arms religion sanctions,and that to calumny and false reproach, few will venture to recur, but in default of abler support. Truth indeed is ever simple and genuine, and disdains the proffered alliance of falsehood. *

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^{*} As the studied defamation of the Catholic religion, vile as the expedient is, has proved to Protestants the most useful and potent instrument they could employ in propagating and maintaining their own heretical faith, (and all

The Protestant, moreover, should advert, that since this is a speculative point of re-

heretics, from the days of Tertullian,* have placed their chief reliance upon this offensive weapon) they have successfully endeavoured to set the minds of Protestants in opposition to the Catholic Church, by violently exciting their passions against the inquisition. The inquisition may be defined, An institution partly civil and partly ecclesizstical, designed for the protection of the true faith. Now it is difficult to conceive what an upright Protestant can object to in the principle of such an establishment, if he be sincerely attached to the faith and religion of Jesus Christ. Would he not himself be willing to unite in defending truth against the attacks of error? Would he not assist in holding fast that which is good? "Yes," I conceive he will answer, "but I could not persecute!" As a Catholic then, in this I perfectly agree with him; and if he consults the definition here given of the institution in question, he will find that it is designed for protection and not for persecution. he will ask me to deny if I can, that it has been made at times an instrument of persecution. It may have been-I have no doubt but it has been. But I will propose another question-Our courts of law, civil and ecclesiastical are designed for protection; -but have they never been perverted to persecution? Is all power bad, that is sometimes abused? Has every jury of our own country done its duty in pronouncing on the guilt of a man? Has innocence never

^{*} See Note, Vol. II. page 236.

vealed doctrine, he has as great a stake in the real question as the Catholic; and

suffered amongst ourselves?—The best institutions are liable to abuses—consequently, notwithstanding the admission of abuses, the principle of the inquisition may be correct in itself.

Now the principle of this institution, which exists in several Catholic countries, is to protect the good seed of sound faith, against the attempts of those enemies who would come in the night and sow their cockle amongst the good corn. That is, it is an institution established by both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities of the country to oppose the introduction of heresy. But should the cockle of heresy have got in, and have grown up with the good corn, it is not the principle of this institution to cut it down and persecute; but rather to leave it till the day of harvest: or at most to prevent it from spreading farther amongst the good corn.

Italy, Spain, and Portugal, with their dependencies, are the only countries where the inquisition is found, in which countries there are none but Catholics. Now when we consider the great advantage of one religion in a state,—when we reflect on the broils, wars and disturbances occasioned by a community divided into sects, we cannot be surprised that the governments of these countries should endeavour to protect what they know to be so beneficial: and if other governments refuse to imitate them, it is only because they are less fortunately circumstanced in this regard. In England, however, Holland, Sweden, Switzerland, and where

therefore should never view it but in the most fair and impartial light. For it is

ever the Protestant religion has been established, the governments have aimed at the same uniformity in defiance of their own principle, (because they professed toleration, which the Catholic powers did not) and have convinced the world that they have no dislike to the inquisition in principle. Witness the act for the uniformity of public prayers, the test act, and the whole catalogue of penal acts against Catholics and Dissenters! To be sure, the avowed pretext for these inconsistent acts was self-defence; but in fact it was to impose that uniformity in England, which Catholic sovereigns were merely protecting in other countries. And, moreover, it was to impose it by the most cruel code of persecution that was ever framed and executed upon man. (See a Statement of the Penal Laws in Ireland, and Butler's History of the Penal Laws in England.) Attend also to the extensive powers with which the ecclesiastical courts of prerogative are furnished, and it will be found that the inquisition of Spain and Portugal presents nothing more terrific. I know it will be said, that the British inquisition has never burnt its victims at the stake—has never persecuted a man for his faith. In answer, it has only acted with an hypocritical duplicity that the inquisition of Spain would have scorned. As it professed toleration, it could not venture to persecute under the name of religion—therefore it made the profession of the Catholic religion HIGH TREASON, and condemned its professors, not indeed to be burnt at the stake, but to be drawn upon a hurdle to the place of execution,-to be

worthy of his reflection, that when the Deity, at the last day, shall weigh our re-

there hanged by the neck,—to be cut down before they are dead,—to be ripped up and have their bowels thrown in their faces,—and to have their quarters distributed and hung up in different parts of the kingdom, at the king's command. (See an account of these executions in the Memoirs of the Missionary Priests—also in Dod's Church History.) Now as I am not acquainted with any proper measure for determining the excess of either of these two scales of punishment, I shall leave the decision to others,

"To enumerate," says a modern Protestant authority, (Critical Review, August 1815, p. 139.)" the cruel statutes against Catholics that passed the legislature at that period of our history, (the period of our Charles, the hanging, ripping and quartering acts had been standing some time in the Statute Book, and had been duly executed on more than two hundred victims in the reign of Elizabeth alone, (see Milner's Letters to a Prebendary,) would be an unnecessary, as well as a painful delineation of Protestant intolerance. But as it is connected with our inquiry to shew the character of the times in which those laws were made, we deem it expedient to make some reference to the Statute Book, in order to illustrate and support our observations on that point."

"Amongst the numerous penal statutes to which we have alluded, we shall only at present notice one more, as illustrative of the dark character of the times referred to. The spective motives in the scales of eternal justice, the false balance of insincerity will

statute to which we allude was one which struck at once against the law of God and man, and tore asunder the holy bond which forms the type of every human institution,—the tie of filial and parental affection. By this law it was enacted, that the son of a Catholic parent, by conformity to the Established Church could legally possess himself of the property of his family, and for ever alienate it (when so gained) from the rightful heirs."

"It cannot be necessary to offer any comments on this disgraceful statute. The human heart shudders at the atrocities to which it must have given rise. It is a foul stain upon our annals, that such a law should have emanated from a Protestant Parliament. It clearly shews the ferocious state of men's minds, and that the furious zeal for Proselytism has inhabited the breast of Protestants as securely during the period of religious frenzy, as ever it did those of the Catholics. Throughout these statutes there is a spirit of refined barbarity, a certain vengeance that mocks all defiance. The measures of those times against the Catholics are more agonizing than many inflicted by that sect against the Protestants, because their destructive tendency was equally certain, while it was more protracted. And although, in contradistinction to some of the blacker periods of Catholic bigotry, they seldom deprived the individual of life; yet they did worse when they took away from a numerous and respectable class of people, all that renders life desirable. be then rejected, and our decisions judged by the golden standard of truth. It will

Nothing can so effectually extenuate the misguided zeal of some Catholics in the early history of their proceedings, as a comparison with Protestant zeal at others. We greatly lament that the similarity should be so great between them."

Robertson in his History of America (book 10.) com-

"To the disgrace of Christians, the sacred rights of conscience and private judgment, as well as the charity and mutual forbearance suitable to the mild spirit of the religi gion which they possess, were in that age little understood, Not only the idea of toleration, but even the word itself in the sense now affixed to it, was then unknown. Every church claimed a right to employ the hand of power for the protection of truth and the extirpation of error. The laws of her kingdom armed Elizabeth with ample authority for this purpose, and she was abundantly disposed to exercise it with full vigour. - A new tribunal was established under the title of the High Commission for Ecclesiastical Affairs, whose powers and mode of procedure were hardly less odious or less hostile to the principles of justice than those of the Spanish Inquisition.—The guardians of the people's rights not only obeyed her unconstitutional commands. but consented to an act, by which every person who should absent himself from church during a month was subjected to punishment by fine and imprisonment; and if after conviction he did not, within three months, renounce his

now then be proper to inform my Protestant Friends, that they have never yet con-

erroneous opinions and conform to the laws, he was then obliged to abjure the realm; but if he either refused to comply with this condition, or returned from banishment, he should be put to death as a felon without benefit of clergy." (35 Eliz. c. 1.)——I shall then simply observe, that those who have such houses of glass, should never throw stones.

But I have said, that the principle of the Spanish Inquisition is to protect an old established religion,—whereas the principle of the British Inquisition is to impose a new one. I am not acquainted with an instance of any Protestant or other heretic having been put to death in Spain for being a Protestant or a heretic. The Spanish law simply forbids any person from teaching, preaching, or inculcating, by books or other means, any religion but the Catholic,—and because there is only that one religion in Spain. This is therefore a law of protection, similar to our own laws against smuggling foreign manufactures into the country. This principle has the approbation of La Harpe, and interferes with no man's individual rights. "Every one," writes that philosopher, " is allowed to adopt an absurdity in religion at his own expense, provided he does not preach it to others; because every government in that case has a right to prohibit what tends to disturb the harmony of society; and although an erroneous faith is a personal concern between the individual and his Creator, nevertheless the propagation of error may be dangerous in its consequences, and as such the magistrate has a right

descended to examine the real question between us; but after distorting it into every

to take cognizance of it; especially as it never can be propagated with a good intention. And as every government rests on the religion of the country, he who publicly attacks that religion, which he is fully authorized not to believe or practice, is necessarily a bad subject; and as he rises up against the public authority, he deserves to be punished." (Du Fanaticisme dans la Langue. Par la Harpe, p. 2.) As the Catholic religion, therefore, is the only religion in Spain, the Spanish law is a law of protection against the introduction of error, or any other system of faith. But in this country, and in others where there is a mixture of religion such protection becomes absolute persecution, and stretches in rigour far beyond any thing practised in Spain or Portugal by those Catholic governments.-And it must ever be observed that the inqui sitorial laws of those countries are of the State and not of the Church. I say the law in this country has been absolute persecution, because attended with all the circumstances of a violent and direct aggression on the part of the Protestants. They entered upon our territory, usurped our hereditary rights, and proscribed our religion, as treasonable against themselves, imposing their own upon us. They did all this moreover under the pretext of self-defence, and with the false banners of free toleration. They armed in their own defence! for sooth as every highwayman arms on the highway. In their own defence!! What had they to defend? So the French Republicans attacked and con-

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unnatural shape and form,—after making it a bye-word to the foolish, and a jest to the impious, they have been satisfied with controverting their own slanderous reports and fabrications. Under the article of indulgences, they have charged us with li-

quered all Europe in their own defence! "How are we to designate men," writes La Harpe, speaking of the French Revolutionists, in the work just quoted, p. 44, "who because themselves have chosen to abjure all religions, make it criminal in others to have one; who, in proclaiming that their Republic sanctions all religions, tell you at the same time, renounce yours, or we will take your life!"—The French Revolution was the child of the Reformation, and the perfect copy in politics of what the other had been in religion. Similar characters, similar means, similar pretexts, similar ends are discoverable in both: and both like a raging tempest shall convulse the world, and pass.

Before I conclude this note, however, I should state, that the several histories of the inquisition by Protestants and Jansenists are mere fabrications, designed to vilify and injure the Catholic religion—without an evidence to support their assertions, or a testimony for the reader to refer to. They are of the same stamp as Fox's Marryas, and what a sensible man will be ashamed to own that he has read. An esteemed history of the inquisition has been written by the Abbé Marsollier.

censing crime and injustice—as well as with pretending to vend for base lucre, the sacred merits of Jesus Christ. They have declared that we were become thereby the panders of iniquity,—the prostituted ministers of an idolatrous worship, and the hired dispensers of the mysteries of darkness.

Good God! what is there in the explanation I have offered that can justify such calumnies! Does it contain a single expression authorizing sin? Does it not on the contrary recognize the punishments of sin, and the necessity of penance? Does it not simply imply, that our own exertions in repentance shall not be unrequited?—and that our piety and contrition may merit that extension of divine mercy and bounty, which will completely do away all the consequences and effects of guilt?

My Brethren, there may, no doubt, have been abuses committed by individuals in the exercise of this branch of spiritual jurisdiction, as well as in the dispensation of the other mysteries of religion. But con-

troversy is not in justification of abuses, controversy simply judges of things as they are in themselves, independently of human perversion. Thus the Gospel assures us that the minister shall live by the altar, (1 Cor. ix. 13.) and this is a principle that the controvertist cannot surrender. But does it hence follow that he justifies those Simoniacal acts, which are so common in this, as well as in every other country of the world? On the other hand, would it be right to allow those reasonable perquisites which the Clergyman derives from the duties of his office, to be denominated the price of the graces of religion? The slanderer may confound, and the calumniator may rail at the distinction, but true virtue will mark it, and the man of piety and religion will conscientiously act up to it.

I trust then, my Brethren, you will be disposed to admit, that in the heat of intemperate controversy, the question of indulgences has been too hastily tried, and

prematurely judged. You have imagined them the fruit of corruption, and mere incentives to sin! But if you consult our catechisms, prayer-books, and other works of instruction, the very conditions enjoined, should convince you of mistake in that regard. For surely among the effects of corruption, and the incentives to sin, we are not to reckon, "the confessing our sins with sincere repentance, and a devout receiving of holy communion !"-nor " the distribution of alms to the poor!"-nor "the frequenting of catechisms and sermons!"-nor "visiting and comforting the sick!"-nor "the offering of prayers to God, for the peace and welfare of the Catholic Church throughout the world, -for bringing all souls to the fold of Christ, for the general peace of Christendom, and for the blessing of God upon this nation!" Now assuredly, these are not the works of corruption, yet they are the conditions prescribed for gaining indulgences, as may

be seen by a reference to the instruc-

My Brethren, far from indulgences originating in the gratification of the passions, they are universally dependent on sublime acts of virtue,—such as fervent prayer, sincere contrition, and self-abnegation. They are viewed as the treasures of religion, by which the Church recompenses the ardent piety of the faithful, and encourages her children to redouble their efforts in repairing all the evil consequences of sin. I am aware that our adversaries will not fail to advert to those abuses of which they have sometimes been made an occasion, and will in particular instance their perversion to the purposes of religious war-and ecclesiastical revenue. I am, my Brethren, no ways disposed to deny, that the grant of indulgences has been attended with some abuses. But, my Friends, I will simply ask you to tell

^{*} See the article in the Exposition of Liturgy, p. xxxvii.

me, what men have had the power of abusing, and they have not abused? Have they not profaned by their abuses each and all of the sacraments? Have they not abused every grace and institution in their turn? Have they not prostituted the sanctity of holy orders to the worst of purposes? Have they not often violated the holy pledges of matrimony? Sanctity itself has been profaned in the holy mysteries of the eucharist!—and are we to be astonished that indulgences should be made by the wicked a pretext for rapine and avarice? He is sent, said the prophet, for the redemption and the ruin of Israel, and what he said of the Christ, may be applied to every institution of religion*.

^{*} The Council of Trent, in its eagerness to correct all abuses, decrees as follows: "The holy synod, desirous of removing and correcting those abuses which have taken place in the granting of indulgences, by which an occasion has been given for heretics to speak blasphemously of the very name, has unreservedly ordained by the present decree, that all nefarious profit for procuring them, which

My Brethren, I entreat you to compose the prejudices of your heated imaginations, and not to permit this article to continue destructive of your faith. Recollect the number of holy and virtuous characters who maintain the piety and utility of indulgences, and whom you surely cannot suppose would support a system of corruption, and be the apologists of vice. They are the ornaments of religion—many of them are the voluntary victims of virtue,

has given rise to so many abuses among Christians, shall be entirely abolished. But as for such as are occasioned through superstition, ignorance, irreverence, or in any other manner, and cannot without great difficulty be specially prevented, owing to erroneous notions peculiar to those places or provinces where they are practised-it commands all bishops diligently to collect all such abuses existing in their dioceses, and to make report of them in the first provincial synod: that after taking the opinion of the other bishops, they may be immediately laid before the Sovereign Pontiff, in order that, by his authority and discretion, such steps may be taken as are beneficial to the whole Church; so that the advantages of these holy indulgences may be piously, religiously, and without profit dispensed to all the faithful." (Sess. 25. de Reform. Decret, de Indul.)

and the Catholic Church never felt more honoured than to have them numbered amongst her devout children. Pause then, my Friends, ere you pronounce indulgences an invention of the wicked;—pause ere you maintain that none but the profligate would lend their sanction to them. The most venerable pastors and renowned saints in every age have inculcated the advantage of them, and the Fathers of the Council of Trent solemnly determined, that "The power of Indulgences was left to the Church by Christ, and that the use of them is most advantageous to Christian people." (Sess. 25.)

The great error is, that every one presumes to add some little tribute to the general stock of defined faith,—to unveil the secrets of Providence, and place the results of a fervid imagination on an equality with the truths of the gospel. But let us not contend with a phantom,—let us not waste our strength against a shadow, rather let us confine ourselves to what the Church

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proposes to our faith, and be satisfied in conforming to it. We are not concerned in the private speculations of individuals, since they no ways oblige us to lend them our assent, or approbation. The great Bossuet appears to take a similar view of this subject, and to allude to these expressions of opinion, when in his Exposition of the Doctrines of the Catholic Church, he thus writes: "The Council of Trent proposes nothing else to be believed concerning Indulgences, but that the power to grant them has been given to the Church by Jesus Christ, and that the use of them: is beneficial to salvation; to which this Council also adds, that this power ought to be retained, yet nevertheless used with moderation, lest ecclesiastical discipline should be weakened by an over great facility."

Now surely this explanation contains nothing that can call forth the reprehension of our adversaries; for if strictly considered, it will be found to fall very short of that power and authority daily claimed

and exercised by the Protestant Clergy over their flocks. The Catholic Church simply recognizes in herself and the chief Pastor, a divine authority to relax in certain circumstances her discipline in canonical penance, and to declare the individuals, under special conditions, dispensed from the obligation of compliance. Herein moreover she is only regulated by the particular consideration of the Christian's fervour, or by a regard to some other essential benefit which she hopes religion will derive from this concession. Whereas the Clergy of the Protestant Church presume, and conceive themselves authorized, by one general sweeping act, to abrogate every canonical law of penance, and without distinguishing between the fervent and the tepid,—between the contrite and the hardened sinner, venture to efface every trace of the ancient canonical discipline of the Church. This is truly an INDUL-GENCE, exceeding in extent all those dispensations which the Catholic Church has

ever conceived herself authorized to grant, and this positive fact, whose notoriety cannot be questioned even by Protestants, should prove a fair criterion of the unjust clamour raised against the doctrine of the ancient Church, and shew how little ground the reformists have for reposing confidence in their instructors*.

I am aware that my adversaries begin to feel the risings of astonishment at this new view of the subject, and even hesitate to admit that I have placed it before them in its true light. I will therefore again, appeal, in vindication of myself, to the immortal Bossuet, whose exposition of our doctine has received the honorable applause and sanction of the whole Catholic Church. That inestimable writer says, "that to satisfy this obligation

^{*} Let the members of the Church of England compare their practice with the penitential canons of their religion respecting fasting, in the Common Prayer-Book; and if they do not wish to be charged with the violation of an ecclesiastical precept, let them own, that they profess the principle of indulgences.

of temporal pain, we are subject to some painful works which we must accomplish in the spirit of humility and penance; and it was the necessity of those satisfactory works, which obliged the primitive Church to impose upon penitents those pains called canonical." "When, therefore, she imposes upon sinners painful and laborious works, and they undergo them with humility, this is called satisfaction; and when, regarding the fervour of the penitents, or some other good works which she has prescribed them, she relaxes some part of that pain which is due to them, this is called an indulgence."

Still this explanation, you repeat, by no means includes all that has been asserted by Catholic writers respecting indulgences. My Brethren, it certainly does not. But it comprises all that the Church obliges you to hold as an article of faith. I admit that many persons in the extravagance of their judgments, and in the wanderings of their imaginations, have mingled, in their explanations of indul-

gences, sentiments, that neither Scripture, nor the Fathers, nor the prudent doctrine of the Church would warrant them in doing. This has been productive of much mischief, and the occasion of considerable scandal,—by affording to the watchful enemies of religion, an opportunity of confounding things distinct in their own nature,—and of casting an unmerited reproach upon faith itself.

This evil, however, is not confined to the article of indulgences, it is common to every other, and by the designing, is made to operate most actively in all the questions of civil and political government. As it has been my constant endeavour, therefore, in these discourses, to draw the line of distinction, and to separate the sterling faith of the Church, from the alloy of speculative opinion, so on no point of doctrine is it more necessary to adhere to this prudent principle than in the one we are discussing. With this view, my Brethren, again I call upon you to mark this important principle

of distinction on all occasions, and whenever a question of religion is the subject of discussion, learn to discriminate the limits of defined faith, from the wide and common field of speculative reflection. This will never fail to simplify the controversy, -to shorten those disputes which would be otherwise interminable, and dispose the parties to a happy reconciliation. I will therefore avail myself of this argument at present, to exhort my adversaries to a friendly discussion, in the firm conviction, that it will ultimately lead to harmony and peace. For, my Friends, we are men actuated at least by the common principles of honour and virtue, -we are men enjoying the reputation of common probity, and therefore in your own judgments cannot be so strayed from rectitude, truth, and justice, as your reproaches would lead persons to suppose. In the persuasion also that such a discussion must conduce to an approximation in faith, and a union in charity, I am moreover supported by other writers; among whom the learned Veron, after treating the question, concludes by saying, "that having thus abstracted the doctrine of faith from other matter, those who are gone astray, will readily acquiesce in the doctrine of the Catholic faith on indulgences."

My Catholic Friends, it remains for me to exhort you to prudence and discretion, either in admitting or rejecting indulgences. In all these matters, the wisest course is to listen to the clear voice of the chief pastor, and where he distinctly speaks, do you with grateful humility acquiesce. Pry not with dangerous curiosity into questions above your strength,—judge not the Sovereign Pontiff of Christ's eternal Church, nor be forward to reject what you may one day stand in need of, and exceedingly desire. But rather with pious confidence look up to the inexhaustible store of Jesus Christ's merits, and humbly pray in the

words of the Redeemer, that, what has been loosed upon earth, may be loosed also in heaven, and that the everlasting gates of Paradise may be opened, at the hour of death, to your departing soul. Amen.



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deeds fasting and purper, which are repre-

SERMON LV.

ON THE EVIDENCE OF THE PERPETUAL EXERCISE OF INDULGENCES
IN THE CHURCH.

If I have forgiven any thing, for your sakes have I done it, in the person of Christ. (2 Cor. ii. 10.)

THE doctrine of indulgences is founded on the principle, that all the good works of the just, have a double value in the sight of God—one of merit, and the other of satisfaction. That is, one giving a title to recompense hereafter, the other constituting an equivalent for the temporal punishment of sin. This distinction may be easily proved, from Scripture, by observing the effects, there attributed to almsdeeds, fasting and prayer, which are represented as acts of religion, meritorious of a

future reward, and at the same time compensatory for sin. Alms-deeds, writes the prophet, deliver from all sin and from death. (Job iv. 11.) Water quencheth a flaming fire, and alms resisteth sins. (Eccles. iii. 33.) On the other hand, Jesus Christ marks the recompense of alms, saying, Possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink. (Matt. xxv. 34, 35.)

In like manner we are informed, by the prophet Jonas, that the Ninevites offered in their fasts an acceptable satisfaction to God, and obtained mercy; (Jonas iii. 10.) and Jesus Christ assures his disciples of a reward for fasting, saying, When thou fastest anoint thy head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth thee in secret will repay thee. (Matt. vi. 17, 18.)

In our Lord's Prayer we are in the same manner directed by Jesus Christ to offer prayer as a satisfaction for sin, and to beg that our trespasses may be forgiven us;—and St. Austin affirms, "that the daily prayer of the just, satisfies for those small and daily faults, into which we continually relapse." Whilst prayer is thus declared satisfactory for sin, Jesus Christ also engages to reward it, saying, and when thou shalt pray, enter into thy chamber, and having shut the door, pray to thy Father in secret, and thy Father who seeth thee in secret will repay thee. (Matt. vi. 6.)

Thus every good work has a double claim on the bounty of God,—one in quality of merit, the other in quality of satisfaction: and as the satisfaction arising out of the good works of the Saints, far exceeds their temporal debt to the justice of God, it becomes a balance in favour of the Church, which, through the infinite mercies of Jesus Christ, she is authorized to apply to the exigencies of her other children. Whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, said he, shall be loosed also in heaven.

(Matt. xviii. 18.) Which treasure, derived from the virtues of the saints, through the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ, forms an inexhaustible stock of satisfaction, which the Church and the chief pastor are empowered to apply to the general advantage of the faithful.* Peter, said Jesus Christ to his apostle, and through him to his successors, feed my lambs—feed my sheep. (John xxi.)

This inherent right of transferring satisfaction, is grounded on the principle of charity, and those privileges secured to the Church by the communion of saints. Jesus Christ, in order to encourage his disciples to assist one another by acts of charity, assured them, that whatever should be done to one of his least brethren, should be done to him; (Matt. xxv. 40.) and in this manner he has shewn us how estimable such actions are in the sight of heaven. But as we can-

^{*} This reasoning is only offered as an elucidatory explanation of an article of faith, and not as defined faith, and obligatory on our assent,

not transfer to our neighbour any portion of our title to merit, (for the Deity has declared, that he will render to every one according to his works (Ps. 1xi.), and every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour) (1 Cor. iii. 8.) so it is only by transferring our good works to others, through the superabundant merits and mercies of Jesus Christ, as actions impetratory and satisfactory before God, that we are enabled essentially to serve and assist them. Thus, the penitential lives of the most innocent receive that high recompense which they have merited by offering satisfaction for sin to the justice of God; and mortified innocence taking up the burthen of the sinner, is covered with all the glory of the penitent.

I have now then, my Brethren, shewn you the source of those treasures which the Church claims the right of dispensing, by her indulgences,—and I have marked the principle on which they are transferred. These treasures are the inheritance of the

Church; and she, in quality of faithful spouse of Jesus Christ, dispenses them to the particular and general advantage of the faithful: always mindful of the assurance of her Lord, that whatsoever she shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever she shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven. (Matt. xviii. 18.) It shall now, therefore, be my endeavour to lay before you an historical account of her exercise of this power, thus entrusted to her.

The first and earliest example recorded in the Sacred Writings, is that of St. Paul, releasing the incestuous Corinthian from the excommunication and penance imposed upon him for his crime. Both Theodoret and St. Thomas inform us, that the Corinthians interceded with the apostle in behalf of this penitent, who at their request restored him to the happy society of his brethren, declaring, that in consideration of their indulgence, he also pardoned him. And him, said he, to whom you have par-

doned any thing, and I also. He moreover directs, that in consequence of the penitent's over-much sorrow,—they should rather pardon and comfort him,—lest he be over-reached by the devices of Satan, for he had now made experiment of their obedience in all things.—Wherefore he beseeched them to confirm their charity towards him. At the same time assuring them, that what he had pardoned, he had pardoned for their sakes, and had done it in the person of Christ. (2 Cor. ii. 2.) Such is the first recorded example of an INDULGENCE.

In this dispensation, my Brethren, nothing is wanting to give it the full character of what the Church understands by an Indulgence; which according to the doctrine of divines always requires three conditions: they are, authority in the dispenser,—piety in the motive,—and a state of grace in the receiver. Thus St. Paul, in the person of Christ, releases this penitent from these obligations which sin had brought upon him, and in this he only

exercises on an individual member of the Church that divine jurisdiction, which the Saviour had expressly delegated to his apostles as his immediate vicars upon earth. Because if they have not a title to this character, the question becomes essentially different, but if they are to be recognized as such, it is evident that herein the apostle only discharged a duty of his own divine office, for which he was fully empowered.

The cause moreover was one in which piety was much interested. The excessive repentance of the penitent might have thrown him into a disposition of mind, detrimental to his salvation. In the spirit of perfect charity therefore, the apostle listened to the solicitations of his brethren, and with the view of both assisting and promoting his piety, he indulged them in their petition; knowing at the same time that the individual was worthy of that charitable interference, and by his over-strained grief had made himself deserving of dis-

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vine commiseration. Therefore, said he, have I done it in the person of Christ.

Immediately after the age of the apostles, moreover, we have the evidence of the very earliest writers, to prove, that it was customary to grant dispensations from ecclesiastical penances, at the intercession of the martyrs. Both Tertullian and St. Cyprian refer to these remissions of penance, conceded by the bishops to repentant sinners, at the request of these suffering confessors, which in the life time of the latter, had degenerated into an open abuse, and drew forth remoustrances from that father as well as from the Roman clergy. The true circumstances of the question may be easily collected from the Epistles * of the holy prelate, as also from the written instructions of the See of Rome, in which it was simply contended that prudence and discretion were to be observed by the martyrs in soliciting these Indulgences, and that as

^{*} Epp. 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 23, 29.

true disciples of Jesus Christ they should be careful not to give occasion to any relaxation of canonical discipline. No doubt was ever raised as to the propriety of listening to the entreaties of these resolute champions of the faith, in favour of their less perfect brethren; but as these often solicited where the objects did not appear so worthy,—and as they were often suspected of yielding to improper importunities, they were admonished not to interpose in behalf of any, who had not proved themselves deserving by voluntary acts of penance.

It became also disputed, whether compliance with canonical penance was not necessary to entitle the penitents to these interpositions of the martyrs; but it was at length settled in several councils, by unanimous consent, during the pontificate of Pope Cornelius, that in regard to those, for whom the martyrs had interceded, the Church would be satisfied with that penance to which they had voluntarily submitted during the continuance of persecu-

tion. St. Cyprian explaining himself on this subject, writes, * " If the individual prays with his whole heart, -if he pours forth the tears and lamentations of a penitent,-if by suitable and continual good works he disposes the Lord to forgive his crime, -such a one is deserving the compassion of him, who shewed mercy saying, when in thy conversion thou grievest, thou shalt be saved;—to him may be extended that indulgence, for him may be obtained a mitigation of sentence. To him who is thus engaged in penance, prayer and good works, may be granted a gracious pardon, and in respect to such persons we may consider every thing ratified, that either the martyrs have petitioned or the priesthood has performed." And in regard to others who had obtained these indulgences by improper means, he informs the Roman See by letter, † " that he had published an ordinance to his clergy, wherein he enjoins

^{*} De Laps. + Ep. 15.

them, that, in order to pacify in some measure the irritation of those who had thus obtained these dispensations from the martyrs and were at the point of death, that they should dismiss them to the Lord, with the indulgence promised to them by the martyrs, having first received the confession, and extended over them the hand of penance."

My Brethren, you cannot require me to remind you of the high importance of these examples, to the subject we are treating, since they instruct us in the practice of the Church in its very earliest ages of existence. Tertullian flourished in the second century, and yet speaks of these indulgences, as general, in his time. Whilst St. Cyprian, who within a century after forfeited his life for the sake of Christ, contends that they had become much too common. Had he viewed them however in quality of an innovation, in his endeavours to reform what he considered irregular, he would have naturally appealed to the purer

practice of the apostolic age, and have treated them as an heretical novelty. But his silence on that head proves, that he regarded them in quality of an apostolical tradition, sanctioned by the universal practice of the Church,—and that to regulate them to the advantage and edification of the faithful was the exclusive duty of the pastors. Herein moreover he was uniformly supported by the authority of the Roman clergy, whose learning and orthodox piety at that period, has not even been questioned by the fickle judgments of Protestants. These remissions of temporal satisfaction therefore, termed in the ancient Church, PEACE, and in the modern, IN-DULGENCES, prove the constant uniformity of our faith and doctrine, and that the practice rests upon the example of the purest ages of the Church.

In confirmation of this sentiment, the learned Fleury describing the ancient canonical penances, * writes, "time alone

^{*} Mœurs de Chretieas.

did not determine the duration of penance, which was shortened, where there existed a particular reason, such as extraordinary fervour in the penitent, a mortal distemper or persecution; in which case, special care was taken, that the persons died not without receiving the sacraments. This dispensation, abridging the regular course of penance, was termed an Indulgence, and during the periods of persecution, was often granted at the intercession of the confessors in prison or in exile."

I am aware it may be objected by an adversary, that these Indulgences were granted purely through respect to the martyrs, and confessors, without any reference to the question of substituted satisfaction, now arguing between us.

But, my Brethren, that these Indulgences did imply a substitution of satisfaction, is evident from the circumstance of Tertullian contending against that principle, after he had withdrawn from the communion of the Catholic Church,—thus

denying what himself had previously maintained in his address to the martyrs: when he tells them, * "that it becomes them to keep, foster, and preserve that peace in themselves, that they might be able to impart it to others, -who wanting it in the Church, are accustomed to implore it of the martyrs in prison." These sentiments he subsequently recalled after he had fallen into heresy, and maintained that the martyrs had no superabundant satisfaction to communicate to others. "The martyr," he writes, "may be content to have satisfied for his own sins. would be ingratitude and pride in presuming to divide among others, what he had obtained at so great a price."-"If thou art a sinner thyself, how will the oil of thy lamp besufficient for thyself and me." Which reasoning is by no means founded, since it would be easy to shew that the satisfactory merits of the Mother of God,

St. John the Baptist, the apostles, prophets, as well as many other saints, have far outbalanced their common debt of satisfaction. This answer therefore I leave with the objection, and proceed to state, that the language of this fallen father of the Church, serves abundantly to prove, that a real substitution of satisfaction was intended by these Indulgences granted at the solicitations of the martyrs.

After this period moreover we are assisted by the evidence of both particular and general councils. The first Council of Nice in its twelfth canon, * says, "in all cases it is proper to examine the design and species of penance imposed. For those who with fear, patience, and good works, manifest the sincerity of their conversion, having completed the period of postulation, as enjoined, may be deservedly admitted to the communion of prayers, and it shall be lawful for the Bishop to act with some Indul-

> * See Cabasut. p. 114. Qq

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gence towards them. Whereas let those accomplish the whole time of penance, who have not conducted themselves with the same earnestness."-The same doctrine is also taught by the fifth canon of the Council, of Ancyranus, anterior to the first Council of Nice; as also by the Council of Laodicea, which in its second canon decrees, * "that those who being guilty of different crimes, shall assiduously persevere in prayer, confession and penance, and shall truly turn from their sins, on account of the mercy and goodness of God, shall be admitted to communion, during the time of penance prescribed to them in proportion to their guilt:" which doctrine is moreover upheld by the canonical epistles of St. Basil, who flourished in the fourth century, sog to house sait bestelance

Thave now shewn you, my Brethren, the practice of the Church through the first four centuries of her existence, when, ac-

" See Cabasut. p. 115.

cording to the admission of Protestants, the purity of faith prevailed, and you may observe how strikingly conformable to our present principles it was. The sixth century again furnishes us with fresh evidences of the existence of indulgences, and many grave authors refer to those granted by Pope Gregory the First. this period they are admitted, even by Protestants, to have become common in the Church, and the decrees of every succeeding Pontiff might be produced in proof of their being grounded on the received doctrine of the Catholic world. This is still further established by the testimony of several general councils, in one of which, assembled at Claremont in the 11th century, Pope Urban the Second granted a plenary indulgence to all those who engaged in the crusade to the Holy Land *motel and making Fulgatine itself the seat

^{*} I am aware that many Catholics have questioned in this instance the discretion of the proceeding, judging that war, in no circumstance can be agreeable to God: which though it cast not with my p Q complete, it nevertheless

In the general council of Lateran, held in eleven hundred and sixteen, Pope Paschal

in one sense is undoubtedly true, I mean where war is not waged on the ground of necessity. But surely when these persons have brought to their recollection how the Almighty often led the armies of Israel into battle,-how he instructed her girded chiefs, and assured them of his protection, they will be disposed to believe that war forms one of the means which providence frequently employs to effect his designs, - and that in a just cause it is lawful to unsheath the sword. Now if our own or neighbours defence constitute a lawful object of war, unquestionably there never existed a more just motive for flying to arms, than when the Mahometan bands of Asia threatened to establish themselves in the very heart of Europe. Let it be remembered that the Saracen armies had already completed the conquest of Africa,-had subjected the greatest part of Spain,-were menacing the very shores of Italy, and on the opposite side had pushed their irruptions to the very capital of the Greek empire, Constantinople.-It was under these circumstances that the Christian states of Europe armed and assembled in their own defence, and with the view of checking the further advances of those Mahometans into Europe, as well as with the design of obliging them to recall their forces, determined on making Palestine itself the seat of war.

Without judging this proceeding by military principles, I may be allowed then to observe, that it was the plan of the defence adopted by the Romans in the last Punic war, and though it met not with success as complete, it nevertheless

the Second granted an indulgence of forty days to all who had attended the council;

occasioned the war to fall with such weight on that tender part of the Mahometan power, as effectually restrained the armies of the infidels to a defensive system, and eventually saved the whole of Europe from being reduced to the same deplorable state of servitude as that in which the provinces of ancient Greece at present languish. For it should be observed, that the Mahometan law compels every subject state, either to embrace the religion of the Koran, or bow to the degrading yoke of slavery:—under which circumstance, many Christian countries have now for several centuries been forced to endure all the horrors of Turkish persecution. When therefore the Christian states of Europe determined upon this system of defence,—when they offered to draw the sword in this most just and lawful cause, did it not become the Chief Pastor of the Church, and the common father of Christendom to encourage his children in the struggle by all the means in his power? and to view the Christian's enrolment in such a service, as one of the most useful and meritorious sacrifices to be made in the cause of civilization, virtue and religion?—as one in fine by which all Christendom was to be benefited? Taking therefore into consideration the piety of the object proposed, and the sacrifices made by the renunciation of country, friends and home, as well as by the possible surrender of life, he pronounced it in the face of Europe a HOLY WAR, and promised in the person of Christ, a plenary remission of all further satisfaction to those, who in the true spirit of reli-

and in the thirteenth century, Pope Innocent the Third granted a plenary indul-

gion and with suitable dispositions, thus offered themselves devoted victims for the salvation of the community. This indulgence of course could not extend to others, whose views and motives were of a worldly cast; and inasmuch as it gave the war a religious character, was undoubtedly calculated to act as a check on the gratification of the corrupt passions. Such is the simple apology I feel myself called upon to offer, in answer to the foul calumnies continually lanced against the memory of the Pontiff for this exercise of his jurisdiction, and I trust it will be regarded as a full justification of the proceeding in question. It should moreover be observed, that as St. Bernard supported the acts and intentions of the Pontiff by all the eloquence in his power,—the miracles recorded in the life of that holy man, are a sufficient attestation that heaven itself did not refuse its concurrence. A similar apology might be offered from the life of St. Louis.

Another point here necessary to notice, was the decree of Leo 10th, granting an indulgence to all those who contributed towards the building of St. Peter's Church at Rome. This Pope, whose talents and abilities were of the first order, conceived that the capital of the Christian world still wanted a temple worthy of the august religion it professed, and surpassing in the chasteness of its elegance, majesty, and beauty, all those pagan edifices on which the luxuriant genius of ancient Rome had displayed such efforts. He wisely conceived that such a structure would

gence to all those who joined in the crusade to the Holy Land, and in a most nu-

render honour to the Church and glory to God, by calling forth all the energies of the Christian soul in the service of. religion, and by proving, that the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth were become the instructors of nations, and the Lords of the universe. Actuated by this pious sentiment, the Pontiff called upon the faithful to assist him in the undertaking, and in the firm conviction of its being a holy work, worthy of their zeal, he encouraged them to bring their contributions, by the offer of indulgences. For as alms-deeds and donations in the service of religion had been invariably considered works of satisfaction, so the Pontiff rightly conceived that the Church was justified in admitting them in the place of others, enjoined by her Canons; -and therefore in quality of her organ, and with the jurisdiction of binding and loosing inherited by himfrom Jesus Christ, in favour of those persons, he dispensed. with their observance, and directed the clergy of the order of St. Dominic every where to preach this indulgence. This last circumstance roused the jealousy of the Austin Friars, who themselves expected the honour of this employment, and Luther, one of that body, taking advantage of this dissension, contrived to place himself at the head of a faction, which unhappily terminated in the establishment of the heresies of the reformed religion.

Such, my Friends, was the unfortunate origin of our schism, of which by this narrative, you are now as qualified to judge as myself. Perhaps you will say, in an evil hour the enemy came and aversomed his cockle. [Matt. xiii, 25.]

merous general council assembled at Rome in the year 1215, passed several regulations corrective of abuses in the use of these concessions. Now the correction of abuses is an evident proof of the antiquity of the practice, since abuses only exist in those things which have been long in use. A similar reform was urged in the general councils of Lyons and Vienna; and in the general council of Constance, not only the errors of Wickliff were condemned, but in the last session, Pope Martin the Fifth granted a plenary indulgence. In fine, the last general council of Trent also approved of the use of indulgences, and laboured to protect them against abuse. "The power to grant indulgences," says the council, "has been given to the Church by Jesus Christ, and the use of them beneficial to salvation—and the power ought to be retained, yet nevertheless used with moderation, lest ecclesiastical discipline should be weakened by an over great facility." Now although the argument deduced from the authority of so many ge-

neral councils is rejected by our modern heretics, nevertheless, as Bellarmine writes*, it is really most weighty and important. For it must be observed, that the Arians in the same manner paid as little regard to the council of Nice,—the Nestorians to the council of Ephesus,—the Eutychians to the council of Chalcedon, as well as many others to the councils of those particular bishops, by which, at different times, they were condemned: - and yet the Catholic Church has always retained the practice of condemning heresies in council. And as St. Austin writes in his hundred and eighteenth Epistle to Januarius, "there has always existed in the Church the precious authority of her numerous councils."

Finally, indulgences are distinguished by all the signs which characterize the other points of Catholic doctrine:—among which is particularly to be noticed the circumstance of its being impossible to trace either the date or the place of their origin,

^{*} De Indulgentiis.

subsequently to the apostolic age. All heresies date from a particular year, place, or person,—and the records of the cotemporary condemnation have been handed down to us. They are moreover generally named after the individuals by whom the errors were first broached, -and it may be shewn that opposition to the received doctrine of the Church was silent till such an age. Thus Cerinthus, Marcion, and Montanus in the earliest ages of the Church, thus subsequently Arius, Nestorius, and Entyches, and in modern times Sociaus, Luther, and Calvin, all propagated their respective heresies, and became the chiefs of the sects they formed. But who can name the original inventor of indulgences? -who can fix the period when they were first introduced into the Church? Does a single record of condemnation exist? -does opposition appear till the reforming Waldenses of Lyons preached against them in the 12th century, when it was immediately met by the condemnations of several provincial synods, and subsequently by the anathemas of a third general council of Lateran in the year 1179*.

My Brethren, I have now proved the principle of indulgences to be just, safe, and correct, by the evidence of scripture and tradition, as well as by the testimony of general councils. I have done what many of you conceived could not be effected. The only inference I shall therefore draw from what has been collected for your instruction is, that indulgences form a point of doctrine perplexing and intricate, and requiring much knowledge to be well understood. The various proofs introduced into this discourse, shew that the body of the faithful are essentially disqualified from judging of points of doctrine, and that in quality of sheep, in their state of dependence they are to be enlightened by the Shepherd of the flock. Thus none can ever err. But this principle which is assumed for the illiterate vulgar, equally

* See the 22d Canon.

obliges the learned, and compels them to render obedience to the authority placed over them. For in the sight of God there is no distinction of persons—and the sheep are to be fed by the Shepherd as well as the lambs. (John xxi. 16, 17.) Let this principle, my Friends, be once admitted, heresies will cease, schisms will terminate in union, and everlasting peace and charity will uninterruptedly reign on earth, as they eternally do in heaven. Peace, said Jesus Christ to his apostles, I leave with you; my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth. (John xiv. 27.)



SERMON LVI.

ON PURGATORY.

He himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire.
(1 Cor. iii. 15.)

T is far from my wish to say any thing hurtful to the feelings of those who have assumed the characters of Pastors in other communities; but I am certainly justified in protesting against those misrepresentations of Catholic doctrine, in which numbers indulge to the dishonour of their cause, and the disgrace of the religion they profess. Were we permitted to judge by what we hear and what we read, it would appear that the requisites of a good Protestant divine are comprised in the talent of misrepresenting the Catholic; and that the tenets of Protestantism rest not so much on the basis of truth, as on the slander and defamation of Roman Catholic faith. I do not recollect ever to have heard that preacher, or perused that author (and I believe that others will support my assertion) who in discussing Catholic doctrine did not endeavour to triumph by absolute misrepresentation. Are we to consider this as a sign that stronger arguments are kept in reserve, or that our adversaries have none better to produce against us? If the latter be the real circumstance of their cause, you will allow that it has not much to depend on. It is not thus that we argue against them, nor by such means that we even wish to establish the truth of our religion. We do not oppose to them their own worthless and apostate children :-- we do not charge the virtuous with all the iniquities of the most vicious:--we do not produce in evidence a carnal and abandoned clergyman, and hold him up, exclaiming ex uno disce omnes,from one learn the characters of all:-we do not distort their faith into every shape and form, and then ridicule it before the

people, wisely contending that their doctrine is contrary to scripture:—we do not give their words a meaning they were never intended to bear, and which by them is indignantly rejected:—we do not in the controversy glory in a triumph over the simplicity of an ignorant peasant or a drunken mechanic: but charging home upon the noblest foe, we single out their most esteemed champions, challenging them to every species of combat:—and many there are who live to attest their defeat before their country and the world.

Among the different controverted points of doctrine, I know none that has been employed as a more common bugbear by Protestant divines, in their eagerness to excite prejudice against the Catholic faith, than the article of purgatory. This is universally included in their long litany of reproaches, and not a mitred churchman, or pharisaical doctor of the reformed religion, can propose an objection to the faith

of his virtuous ancestors, without dwelling on idolatry, superstition, and purgatory. These are the superior arguments which are supposed to prevail when all others fail; these form the invincible armour of Protestantism. And, my Brethren, without allowing them to be gifted with invincibility, without regarding them as the most dignified and honourable weapons to be employed in such a cause, we may acknowledge their utility, since they act like scarecrows upon the multitude, and serve to drive the unsuspecting victims into the snares of their destroyers. Thus the fowler spreads his net around the treacherous lure, and then with hideous cries, or some terrific sign, scares the affrighted game from friendly cover. My Friends, many of you are now sleeping on your enemy's snares, whilst he fosters you with the smiles of the most deceitful hypocrisy. Ye whited walls! indignation boils within me, as in the breast of St. Paul-God shall

he would be left

strike you. For sit ye to judge us according to your own law, and contrary to your own law ye condemn us? (Acts xxiii. 3)

My Friends, it is a notorious principle of many modern Protestants, whatever may have been professed by the original reformers, that the future punishments of the wicked are not eternal—but that the vengeance of God shall at length be satisfied, and the sufferer admitted into paradise, after discharging in the fire of hell that debt, which divine justice shall exact. This principle is not tolerated by a few, but professed and taught by distinguished doctors of the reformed church, whilst almost every sect of Protestantism is disposed to embrace the sentiment. Works are published every day in defence of this doctrine, and as it is congenial to human wishes, and favourable to the indulgence of the passions, it forms one of those opinions which little require the aid of eloquence to recommend them. Nay the opposite doctrine is become obsolete among them, and

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he would be left with a deserted church, who should be sufficiently indiscreet to insist upon it *.

Now, my Friends, what is the principle thus almost universally adopted by the Protestant Church, recommended by her preachers, and defended by her writers? No other than that which constitutes Catholic Purgatory. They reject our hell, and preach our purgatory. Good God! is there truth in what I have here advanced? Do the Protestants now profess what for two centuries they have made a reproach to the Catholics? Have the

^{*} Independently of the numerous evidences of a hell, from scripture, conscience, and universal tradition, the reflecting mind will discover sufficient reason to admit this truth, in the infinite ransom paid for sin by Jesus Christ. An infinite price is only proportioned to an infinite punishment—but no punishment is infinite that is to enti—therefore our redemption by the incarnate Son of God proves the punishment of hell to be eternal. It is to this endless existence in torment that the prophet seems to refer in these terms, He shall be punished for all that he did, and yet shall not be consumed. (Job xx, 18.)

qualms of conscience suddenly begun to ebb, and roll back in the direction of Catholicity? Have the winds of truth really changed to an opposite quarter of the theological compass? Or shall it be affirmed from this chair of truth, that the Protestant minister breathes hot and cold from the same lips? Yes, it shall—and God shall strike thee, thou whited wall, for sitting to judge us according to thy own law, and contrary to thy own law, thou commandest us to be struck. (Acts xxiii. 3.)

Leaving our adversaries to withdraw as they can from the dilemma into which they have advanced, by refusing a purgatory for the Catholics, and claiming one for themselves, I shall proceed to shew the ground on which it forms an article of faith in the Catholic Church. The proofs by which I shall establish the existence of purgatory are quadruple. First, it is to be discovered in the principles of natural and divine justice. Secondly, it flows immediate

ately as a deduction from all that has been laid down in the discourses on mortification, fasting, and indulgences. Thirdly, it is proved by the authority of sacred scripture:—and fourthly, by the evidence of tradition and general councils.

As there can be no justice where there is not equity, -- nor equity where retribution is not measured out in due proportion to each, so man, in quality of a moral agent capable of sin in all its degrees of guilt, will naturally expect from the hands of God whatever punishment he has deserved. As his rebellious enemy, and one that has perverted the sacred laws of nature, -as an individual that has maliciously set at nought his ordinances, he will be rejected from his presen ce, made an outcast of his kingdom, and consigned for ever to the society of the devils. Such will be the extremity of divine vengeance. But the moral conduct of another may be distinguished by faults of a milder dye; -and inadvertency rather than malice,—irresolution in good, rather

than propensity to evil, may have occasioned him to commit trespasses against virtue and religion. If these then be punishable, they must receive a chastisement proportionable to the extent of the offence, -and consequently one of a temporary nature; which implies a purgatory. For to have imposed a law, without exacting compliance,—and to exact compliance without punishing neglect, would be to sport with authority, and to leave the faithful and disobedient servant upon an equality as to retribution. Would this be justice according to our received principles of equity? Or would it not be order confounded and morality reversed?

It is a fact, that there can be no well ordered society where there are not degrees of punishment proportionable to each offence, —and that any other system of correction proves an encouragement rather than a check to the commission of crime. For if none but the weightier offences be marked out for punishment, men will tranquilly run

through all the intermediate stages of vice, and will little concern themselves about a reformation. Whilst on the other hand, if the lighter faults be visited with the punishments of the greater crimes, after the commission of the first, discouragement, vexation or despair will hurry him on to the perpetration of the latter; and the very law will become an incentive to sin. Yes, my Friends, and hence it has been observed that in those countries, where robbery receives the same punishment as murder, the one is seldom committed without the perpetration of the other. So that a temporary punishment hereafter, as well as an eternal, is founded on the first principle of moral justice.

But, my Friends, what have I been endeavouring to prove in the discourses I have lately preached on mortification, fasting and indulgences? If I have by them established any principle, it is, that penance follows sin, and that we must do penance here, to escape it hereafter. Now the punishment we are to escape hereafter, by penance in this life, is not eternal, for no merit of ours can be balanced against an eternal punishment: it is temporary, therefore, and hence again is implied a purgatory. For if you take away purgatory, you at once remove all motive for penance and reason for indulgences, and leave the Christian preacher to enforce satisfaction without a cause,—and the penitent to afflict himself without an object. - You bring a reproach upon the preachings of the prophets, -by representing their obsequious disciples clad in sackcloth and ashes, as the victims of imposition; and you consign a David, a Daniel, and an Elias, to the class of children and of fools. You blast the memory of the Christian martyrs and confessors who had toiled in the bloody paths of persecution :- you nip the very bud of their hope, and leave them a vain example of folly and misfortune to the Christian world. You dry up one of the great sources of virtue, -- place an enigma in the

gospel, and instead of moral order you present us a system of inexplicable contradictions. Are we to fast?—then why and wherefore? Are we to tread the thorny path of self-denial?—then whither does it lead? Will ye have the effrontery to tell us, that he who runs, as well as he who stands,—that he who labours, as well as he who sleeps, will equally together enter the goal of immortality? Or rather may we not build upon the assurance of the apostle, that in doing all things for the Gospel sake, we are made partakers thereof; -and that though many run in the race, he receiveth the prize to whom it is due: - and that whilst Christians chastise their bodies and bring them into subjection,—they so run not as at an uncertainty, -and so fight not as one beating the air. (1 Cor. ix.)

Yes, my Friends, by such a course, you would at once render inexplicable the voluminous works of the holy fathers, and the penitential decrees of councils:—you would throw confusion over the whole his-

writers and preachers at variance with themselves:—you would stamp all the requiems and funeral services of religion as false, vain and superstitious, and leave her to waste her atonements upon an imaginary phantom.

Yet, my Brethren, is Scripture silent upon this article? Are we only left to conjecture? Or can we discover a clear direction in the sacred text? My Friends, many are the passages inculcating the existence of a purgatory, which our adversaries have chosen to interpret in a different sense, on no other ground, than the desire of appearing consistent. For having risen up against fasting, indulgences, and every species of mortification, they found it necessary to renounce a belief in purgatory, in order to compose the disturbed consciences of their followers—whose better sense led them to believe, that although the period of satisfaction was deferred, the debt was by no means discharged. Thus

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with the view of saving themselves from one difficulty, the reformers plunged into new ones, and prepared themselves for those contradictions noticed in the outset of this discourse.—For ingenuity itself could not save them from the necessity of placing themselves in opposition to the clear and express words of Scripture. St. Paul, alluding to our respective good works, says that every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour; and that the building we thus raise on the foundation which is Christ Jesus, may be compared to the different materials of gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay and stubble, of which every man's work shall be manifest: for in the day of the Lord, the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is—and if any man's work abide, he shall receive a reward-but if any man's work burn, he shall suffer loss-but he himself shall be saved: yet so as by fire. (1 Cor. iii. 15.)

Thus we are distinctly told that every

man's works shall be tried by fire, and that after the dross has been so purged away, he shall enter into the joys of salvation. Now this purgation by fire, after death, or this intermediate state between this life and glory, is what we understand and express by purgatory, and implies the figurative separation and destruction of the wood, hay and stubble, mentioned by the apostle; and moreover, is the purifying of the gold, silver and precious stones, destined to enter into the holy temple of God, which we are. (1 Cor. iii. 17.)

My Brethren, as the figurative style was the common language of the ancients, I do not think that the apostle could have employed a more lively metaphor to express and explain that scrutiny and examination which even our good works will undergo, before they receive their final reward.

This is moreover confirmed by the example adduced by our Saviour, and related in the fifth chapter of St. Matthew. We

are there compared to fellow travellers upon a journey, who may have given cause of offence to a brother. We are therefore directed to settle every disagreement whilst we are on the way together, lest perhaps the adversary deliver us to the judge, and we be cast into prison. Whence he declares, we shall not go, until we have repaid the last farthing. Now the way here spoken of, is undoubtedly the course of our mortal career, -and the prison into which we shall be cast, can only imply that place of punishment, where that debt will be forcibly exacted to the last farthing, which had been left unpaid in this life.—This example forms so just and simple an illustration of the infinite justice of God in judging all our works and defects, that it requires little argument to force it on your attention. Its whole moral is, that till our debt of satisfaction has been paid for sin, we shall not be free to enter into the kingdom of God. To an and the old of

This is again confirmed by what immediately precedes, and where our Saviour himself marks the different species of crimes with the proportionate punishment. Whosoever, says Jesus Christ, is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. And whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire. (Matt. v. 22.) Now our Saviour's words plainly imply, that those who are guilty of the two first offences will not incur the punishment of hell-fire, but a less severe chastisement.

In the supposition therefore that an individual should expire immediately after having committed either of the first sins, can we believe that in the other life he would be on an equality with him who had not been guilty of such offences? Are both to enter the goal together? If so, then justice in heaven is different from justice on earth. Whereas if the individual be detained to

receive a proportionable punishment, behold a Purgatory. *

My Friends, I am sensible that you begin to admit the justice of our principle. But although you observe it to be so well founded, you nevertheless repel the sentiments, that a real material fire exists for the temporal punishment of sin in the other life. My Brethren, though this is undoubtedly the common opinion of divines, founded on the declaration of my text, yet it is not of faith, as Bellarmine remarks; † because the Church has never defined it as such: and in the Council of Florence, the Greeks openly declared, that the existence of fire in purgatory, formed no part of their doctrine; and in the last session of the same council, the existence of purgtaory was defined without mentioning fire. and odw mid disw williams as

^{*} The work of Hermes, cited by St. Athanasius, Origen, Tertullian, &c. speaks of purgatory in more express terms than any modern author.

of De Pung, lib, 2, c. 11, 10 vibal odt it asstol (

The Council of Trent, proceeding in the cautious steps of the Council of Florence, is satisfied, as the great Bossuet * observes, with proposing to our belief the existence of a purgatory, "without determining in what its pains consist, and many other similar questions; concerning which this holy Council demands great moderation, blaming those who divulge what is uncertain or suspected."

Should our adversaries therefore appeal to the evidence of pictures and pious stories often circulated amongst Catholics, as to proofs against my assertion, they should know, that these form no part of the divine faith of Catholics;—that as there are allegorical representations in scripture, so the same may be innocently employed in the language of devotion without injury to religion, and that notwithstanding these sensible descriptions of purgatory, the question of material fire may still be unconceded by the Church.

^{*} See his Exposition.

Now, my Friends, to the above testimony of general councils, I might add a voluminous evidence from the works of the holy Fathers, all of whom describe the departed souls as passing through a state of purgation. Since however it will be necessary to produce their authorities when we treat of prayer for the dead, at present I shall take no further notice of them, but immediately direct your attention to the very admissions of the Protestants.*

Luther himself writes; "I do firmly believe, nay I am bold to say, I know that there is a purgatory; and I am easily persuaded that mention is made thereof in scripture; at the same time I know no

^{*} Dr. King, Protestant Bishop of London, in his Legacy, written to explain the motives of his conversion to the Catholic faith, says; "The Arians (to use St. Augustin's words, Lib. de Hæres. c. 33.) thought it unlawful, orare vel offerre pro mortuis, to pray or offer up sacrifice for the dead, or to observe set days of fast; and hereupon they were condemned for eating flesh in Lent. See how we Calvinists are lineally proseminated and sprung from the loins of Arius, so fully we do reintegrate his heresies.

more of it, than that the souls who suffer therein are to be assisted by our prayers and good works; it being sufficient for us to know that they do suffer, and that their sufferings ought to be alleviated: leave the rest to God."*—And in answer to the papal bull, he says, "I have never denied purgatory, I believe it and have often declared it in writing."† Purgatory was also admitted by the first English reformers, as appears most evidently by the funeral service of their first Common Prayer-Book, quoted into the Exposition of Liturgy.‡

My Friends, after what I have advanced, I cannot do better than conclude this discourse in the language of an English Protestant Bishop. § "Let not the ancient practice," says he, "of praying and making oblations for the dead, received throughout

^{*} See the account of Luther's dispute at Leipsic, chap. de Purg.

[†] Tom. 7, fol. 132.

[‡] See art. Burial of the Dead.

[§] Dr. Forbes,

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the universal Church of Christ, almost, I say absolutely, from the very time of the apostles, be any more rejected by Protestants as unlawful, or vain. Let them reverence the judgment of the primitive Church, and admit a practice strengthened by the uninterrupted profession of so many ages: and let them, as well in public as private, observe this rite, although not as absolutely necessary or commanded by the divine law, yet as lawful, and likewise profitable, and as always approved by the universal Church; that by this means, at length, a peace so earnestly desired by all learned and honest men may be restored to the Christian world." 191190 00 1011000 course in the language of an English Pro-



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SERMON LVII.

ON PRAYER FOR THE DEAD.

It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins. (2 Macch. xii. 46.)

THE Catholic religion, as the reflecting image of the Deity, is modelled after his own inherent perfections. In it we discover all grace, all charity, all harmony, all mystery:—in every feature it displays mercy combined with justice; and whilst it pours forth the prayer of supplication, it holds within itself all the treasures of atonement.—Let philosophy produce a system equally perfect and suited to every circumstance of our nature.—My Brethren, the moral, like the physical world, the work of eternal wisdom, exists free from those breaks and deficiencies which mark every

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feeble effort of man. All is herein connected and uniform, and designed to unfold the perfections of the Deity, as well as to augment the signal glory of the creature. In every cause we mark its attendant effect, and the most beautiful harmony and order reign throughout.

I have already endeavoured to prove to you, that the justice of God, requires satisfaction for sin, even after its guilt has been remitted, and that to this debt every one is bound either in this world or in the next. At the same time however that I endeavoured to impress upon your minds the necessity of rendering this tribute of penance, I likewise laboured to convince you, that mercy might be made to supersede the rights of justice, and that the Deity is more inclined to dispense his graces and indulgences, than rigorous to exact the debt of satisfaction. Infine, that an atonement might be offered, which would be graciously accepted, on account of the inexhaustible merits of Jesus Christ. I have now then moreover to inform you, that as we may ransom our own debt, by prayer, by the sacraments, and the several works of penance, so, by directing our intention, we may likewise discharge the debts of others, through the same means, where no defect of disposition on their part is an obstacle to our charity. We may in short effect for each of the faithful, what we may effect for ourselves, and thus transfer to another member of Jesus Christ, that aid which he so essentially needs-for which we shall not lose our reward. (Matt. x. 42.) For our divine Redeemer has assured us, that as long as we do what he has prescribed to one of his least brethren, WE do it to him. (Matt. xxv. 40.) I shall therefore endeavour to convince my Protestant friends, that by resisting this divine principle of charity, on which prayer for our deceased brethren is founded, they act in violation of all the feelings and affections of human nature, frustrate the merciful intentions of Providence, and place themselves in opposition to the universal language and evidence of revealed religion.

My Brethren, the whole Church of Christ, whether we instance that part now glorious in heaven, or that portion militant upon earth, or that other part suffering in purgatory, forms one united family, communicating together through Jesus Christ. Hence the Church, in one of her solemn professions, proclaims THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS. This is moreover expressed by the apostle under the symbol of the human body. God, says he, hath tempered the body-that there might be no schism in the body, but the members might be mutually careful one for another. And if one member suffer any thing, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member. (1 Cor. xii.)

Thus, my Brethren, we all form parts of the body of Christ, and in quality of parts communicate with each other. The members in glory pray for us militant upon earth, and whilst we address ourselves to those in glory, we also endeavour to relieve our suffering brethren in purgatory. Such is the harmony and connection that Jesus Christ has established between the parts of his body spiritual, the Church. And surely nothing can be more consoling to those who have been associated in life and affection on earth, than to recollect, that they may still communicate through their spiritual head, and mutually help and assist each other. And what a grateful reflection it is, my Friends, for us to know, that we already form one society anticipating our beatific union in immortality, and that death itself cannot dissolve those ties. which are cemented in the blood of Jesus Christ! Thus the saints in heaven, the Church on earth, and the souls of the just detained in their passage to bliss, in the intermediate state of purgation, comprise that eternal kingdom of Christ, over which he shall for ever gloriously reign. I pray.

said Jesus Christ, that my disciples may all be one, as thou Father in me, and I in thee.

(John xvii. 21.)

My Brethren, the proofs on which the efficacy of prayer for the dead is grounded, are too numerous and strong to be opposed by any who do not intend to place themselves in opposition to all evidence. I am willing nevertheless to grant, that the New Testament contains no specific recommendation to Christians to offer up their suffrages for their deceased brethren-yet it presents not a line or expression discountenancing such a practice, which it is incumbent on our adversaries to produce if they intend to justify their opposition to the doctrine of the Catholic Church. For as Scripture only is their guide, where they have not that evidence, they have no rule for decision—and to call upon Catholics to relieve them of the burthen of proving from Scripture, is to forget the ground on which their reformed religion was originally placed; -and would amount to a requisition on Catholics to act by that principle which is purely Protestant. For if prayer for the dead be forbidden by the law of God, it is for Protestants to prove it from Scripture.

My Brethren, though the law of God, as revealed to us in the New Testament, contain nothing demonstrative on this subject, nevertheless the law of God, as it is proposed to us in the Old Testament, affords a clear evidence in its support. For we are there told, that after the death of Saul, and the slaughter of his army, David and his companions afflicted themselves; and they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan his son, and for the people of the Lord, and for the house of Israel, because they were fallen by the sword. (2 Kings i. 12.) This passage may be considered by some as insufficient for the establishment of the principle for which I am contending; yet these penitential acts of David and his companions were necessarily either vain in themselves,

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or beneficial to the persons over whom they mourned, in quality of a suffrage, satisfactory for sin. But to make you sensible that they possessed an availing merit in this particular point of view, it will be only necessary to quote the Book of Machabees, which, whether considered as an inspired composition, or viewed merely in the light of an historical work of record, is still an indubitable testimony of what constituted both the faith and practice of the Jewish Church. The text in the Book of Machabees runs as follows: - Judas the valiant commander. having made a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem, for sacrifice to be offered for sins for the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. For if he had not hoped, that they that were slain, should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead—and because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for

them. It is therefore a wholesome and a holy thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins. (2 Mach. xii. 43, 44, 45, 46.)

Now, my Brethren, it certainly is not in the power of language to declare in clearer terms the established doctrine of the Catholic Church, nor to throw the burthen of proving more decidedly on Protestants. For since the God of the Christians is the same as the God of the Jews, and we are all equally members of Christ, it is necessary for our adversaries to shew, why satisfactory works of penance have ceased to be available to the dead, and on what ground they are become unlawful. Moreover, if any one will attend to the passage just quoted, he will perceive that it was not designed as an accidental allusion, but rather as a statement of a positive fact, controversially introduced in support of another article of religious doctrine, I mean the resurrection of the flesh, and set forth in an argumentative manner, with all the prudence and gravity becoming the subject.

Will you give me credit then, my Friends, when I assert, that, because Protestants could not read this passage of the Catholic Bible without a blush at their own conduct, they have ventured to exclude the Books of Machabees from the canonical list of inspired works? Because they were condemned by scripture, they have had the blasphemous audacity to lay their sacrilegious hands upon the holy volume, and tear away some of its most important pages; - pages to which the apostolic canons * have referred, and which, by the quotations introduced, have honoured the works of Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and many other most ancient doctors † of the Church.—Pages also which were solemnly approved as part of the canon of scripture by the council of Carthage in the fourth

^{*} Canon 84.

[†] Among others, St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, St. Austin, St. Isidore, St. Jerom, St. Clement of Alexandria.

century-and finally by the general council of Trent. My Friends, can you then discern religion in this act? Was it don e in the spirit of piety? No, but in the true spirit of the reformation, whose principle was to reduce the scriptures to the standard of the new religion. My Brethren, it will be unnecessary for me to detain you longer on this point, and therefore I will shew you, that prayer for the dead has been the universal practice of the Catholie Church. St. Clement, who was almost an immediate successor of the apostles, writes, that St. Peter * "taught them, among other works, to bury the dead, and diligently to perform their funeral rites, and also to pray and give alms for them."-Tertullian marks among apostolical traditions, not enforced by the positive words of scripture, "oblations for the dead on the anniversary day."-In his treatise on single marriages, he advises the widow "to pray for the soul of her departed husband, supplicating repose for him, and participation in the first resurrection, and making oblations for him on the anniversary day of his death: which if she neglect, it may truly be said of her, that, as far as in her lies, she has repudiated her husband*."

My Brethren, it will be unnecessary to proceed further with these quotations, or request your attention longer than to state that to pray for the dead has universally been the practice of the Catholic Church, and stands attested by the writings of all the ancient fathers †. In short, the records

^{*} De Monogam. c. 10. p. 955.

[†] St. Cyprian writes, "Our predecessors prudently advised, that no brother, departing this life, should nominate any churchman his executor; and should he do it, that no oblation should be made for him, nor sacrifice offered for his repose; of which we have had a late example, when no oblation was made, nor prayer, in his name, offered in the Church." † In other letters he speaks of the same offerings,—p. 28, 67. "It is one thing," he says, "to be a petitioner for pardon, and another to arrive at glory: one, to be cast into prison, and not go out from thence till the

[‡] De Monogam. c. 10. p. 955.

of history, and the Liturgies of the early ages, yield unquestionable evidence of

last farthing be paid, and another, to receive at once the reward of faith and virtue: one, in punishment of sin, to be purified by long suffering, and purged long by fire; and another, to have expiated all sins by (previous) suffering: one, infine, at the day of judgment, to wait the sentence of the Lord; another to receive an immediate crown from him."

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says, "In the service of the Church, we pray for the holy fathers and the bishops that are dead; and, in short, for all those who are departed this life in our communion; believing that their souls receive very great relief by the prayers that are offered for them, while this holy and tremendous victim lies upon the altar. This we will shew you by an example; for I know there are many who say-What good can it do to a soul which is departed out of this life, whether with sins or without them, to be remembered in this sacrifice? But tell me, I pray you, if a king had sent into banishment some persons that had offended him, and their friends should present him with a crown of great price to appease his anger. might not the king, on that account, shew some favour to the guilty persons? So do we address our prayers to God for those that are dead, though they were sinners; not by presenting to him a crown, but by offering up to him Christ, who was sacrificed for our sins, that so he, who is merciful and good, may become gracious to them, as well as to us."+

* Ep. c. 5. p. 109. + Catech.

such being the established faith and practice of every known nation of the world. Even idolatrous paganism founded many of her superstitious rites on this article of universal tradition.

Nay, at the first rise of Protestantism, the apostles of the reformed church admitted the truth of this Catholic position, and inserted *Prayers for the Dead* in their authorized Liturgy*. What motive Pro-

- * The following prayer was formerly read by them in their funeral service, for which see the Common Prayer-Book of Edward VI.
- "O Lord, with whom do live the spirits of them that are dead, and in whom the souls of them that are elected (after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh) are in love and felicity; grant unto this thy servant that the sins which he committed in this world be not imputed unto him, but that he, escaping the gates of hell and pains of eternal darkness, may ever dwell in the region of light with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacoh, in the place where there is no weeping, sorrow, nor heaviness; and when that dreadful day of the general resurrection shall come, make him to rise also with the just and righteous, and receive this body again to glory, then made pure and incorruptible: set him on the right hand of thy Son Jesus Christ among thy holy

testants then could possibly have had for subsequently reversing their own act, I am at a loss to discover. For by it they have at once rendered unmeaning many of the most common institutions and practices of Christian society,—have broken in upon the tenderest feelings of human nature, and have placed a more dismal voidbetween the living and the dead, than the Deity ordained. St. Paul will not allow us to consider the deceased as separated from us, but only as Brethren that are asleep; -and alluding to the consolation arising from this reflection, writes, We will not have you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that you be not sorrowful, even as others who have no hope. (1 Thess. iv. 12.) Our hope, my Brethren,

elect, that then he may hear with them, these most sweet and comfortable words: Come to me, ye blessed of the Father, possess the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world. Grant this, we beseech thee, most merciful Father, through Jesus Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. Amen."

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is Jesus, and to him we have recourse for our brethren, as if they were still existing amongst us:—for God hath not appointed us unto wrath, but unto the purchasing of salvation, by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us; that whether we watch or sleep, we may live together with him. For which cause comfort one another. (1 Thess. v. 9, 10, 11.)

My Friends, for the instruction of Protestants and Catholics, let us make an application of our respective principles to common life, and in the example of an afflicted Spouse mourning over the bier of her deceased husband, let us examine how far they are in unison with our natural feelings. My Brethren, I will first lead you into the chamber of the expiring Catholic, where you shall behold the dying man in his last moments offering his agonizing soul to God. Around his couch his afflicted children and servants are collected in humble prayer, whilst the pensive wife, watching his last gasp, sees

him expire. Scarcely however do his breathless remains prove that the lamp of life is extinct, than the faithful spouse, retiring within the chamber of her own heart, in a flood of tears deplores all the errors of the life just closed. Invoking all the angels and blessed spirits, she commends to their protection the soul of her deceased lord, prays that they will advocate its cause in the presence of Jesus Christ, and uniting her supplications to those of the Queen of Heaven, the holy apostles, and all the saints, endeavours by alms-deeds and various acts of penance, to pacify the anger of God, and redeem whatever debt of satisfaction he may have left contracted with the divine justice. this manner she is still united to her spouse in Jesus Christ,—and as she will long carry him in her recollection, she has the consolation of knowing that this object of her early affection may yet be benefited by her piety, and that henceforward to give him a share of her prayers is the charitable duty of a Christian widow. In the same disposition of mind, the affectionate relatives and friends assemble before the altar of God, to offer for this departed soul the sacrifice of peace, and by one united suffrage entirely efface the remembrance of his sins in the blood of the Eternal Lamb. (Apoc. v. 6.)

Such is that balm of consolation which religion is able to pour in these circumstances into the wounded breast of the afflicted Catholic,—and in that dismal hour, when the curtain of death is drawn between us and departed friends, neither worldly distractions, nor the soothing language of condoling relatives, will bring half the comfort to the sorrowful heart, as one act of charity done for the deceased in the spirit of penance. In this disposition of mind, and with these enlightened principles of faith, every action in reference to the deceased, will have its due value in our estimation; -and whether we clothe our ourselves in the weeds of mourning,—or follow the corpse to the grave,—whether we join in the pious anthems of the Church,—or in private prayer make the effusion of our piety an echo to the passing-bell, all inspires consolation, and relieves the soul from that oppressive weight of anguish experienced by others who have no hope.—It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins. (2 Machab. xii. 46.)

Whilst religion affords these consolations to the Catholic, how different are the circumstances in which Protestantism leaves her deluded votaries. No sooner has death closed the eyes of an affectionate husband and parent, than all connection with the deceased is broken, and no tie remains but the melancholy recollection of his relatives, that they had been united to him, only to feel more sensibly his loss. His distracted children and wife look upon his lifeless corpse with a species of frantic insensibility, or retire from the world, to

hide their unmeasured grief in gloomy solitude, whilst religion pays her empty honours in the last unmeaning rites of a Protestant funeral service.—Unmeaning; for they neither bring succour to the dead nor consolation to the living. In vain the passing-bell tolls its solemn notes, -no Pater, nor De profundis is said for the deceased. In vain the relatives lay aside the garb of gaiety, to assume that of penitential mourning, -in vain do they conduct the corpse to the Church, and call upon the minister to render a service to the dead,their faith teaches them that they no longer hold communion with the departed spirit, and that the dead can no ways be benefited by any of the actions of the living. Such, my Friends, is the sterile, ungrateful and unconsoling religion which Protestants have created and chosen for themselves, in their opposition to Catholic faith! Often however have we seen the feelings of nature bursting through the obstacles which these principles oppose, and as the corpse

has been lowered into the silent grave, the lips of Protestant attendants have spontaneouly exclaimed,—May the Lord have mercy upon his soul.—Requiescat in Pace.*

My Brethren, in no circumstance does the Catholic religion appear so majestically grand, as in her solemn obsequies for the dead, wherein nature herself appears so sublimely eloquent. In the first place surrounded by her priesthood, she chants her sacred Office, drawn from the holy scriptures, wherein the soul is made to express her feelings in the inspired language of the prophets, whilst the Church assumes

^{*} This moreover appears in the epitaphs of two Protestant Bishops, Drs. Barrow and Thorndike, which they left for themselves: the first is, "Exuviæ Isaaci Asaphonis Episcopi, in manum Domini depositæ, in spem latæ resurrectionis per sola Christi merita. O vos transeuntes in domum Domini! Domum orationis, orate proconservo vestro, ut invenjat misericordiam in die Domini." The second is; "Hie jacet corpus Herberti Thorndike, quondam hujus ecclesiæ præbendarii, qui vivus veram reformandæ ecclesiæ rationem et modum precibus studiisque prosequebatur. Tu lector, requiem ei et beatam in Christo resurrectionem precare."

the character of mediator between her and God. After this rehearsal of the soul's interior sorrows, -the blood of Jesus Christ is mystically poured forth on the altar of the living God, and heaven's most precious victim, like Isaac, laid out as a holocaust to appease the anger of the Sovereign Judge of mortals. Having made this peace offering, the ministers of religion then commit the body to its earthy tomb, near those very altars where the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the new law is daily offered for: the "living and the dead." * Thus whilst the Catholic Church displays the majesty of her rites in order to excite the devotion of the faithful, and every ceremony in the funeral office has it proper meaning, the Protestant obsequies of the reformed, present nothing but the mutilated remains of the religion of their ancestors.

My Friends, I cannot conceive any thing more awful and impressive than to visit those monuments where repose the ashes of

^{*} Conc. Trent, Sess. 22. c. 3.

the Catholic dead, and as we remark the tokens of that common faith in which they expired, to recollect that from their mouldering sepulchres, they yet call upon us to pray for them, and to "despise not their necessities*." In this manner we become associated by charity with generations, which have long slept, and as they exclaim, take pity of us, take pity at least ye, who are our own flesh and blood,—it is a delightful act to pray, that they may be loosed from their sins, and over their neglected ashes to whisper, requiescant in pace.

My Brethren, I may also own the pleasing sensation I myself experience whenever I enter a Catholic Church, and observe a small congregation of fervent Christians collected round an altar, at which the minister of the Most High is offering the tremendous sacrifice of Jesus Christ for some departed soul. Charity will not allow me to refuse the tribute of a

^{*} Anthem to the Litany of Loretto. See Exposit, of Liturgy, p. 423.

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short prayer for this member of our Church, whose history and very name may be to me unknown. Perhaps he breathed his last in some distant land, on the bloody field of battle,—perhaps he had sunk beneath some overwhelming wave into the bosom of the ocean, yet angels and religion will waft our supplications for him to the throne of mercy,—and our Father who heareth us in secret, will repay us. (Matt. vi. 6.)

In conclusion then, O Religion, how amiable art thou, how universally thou reflectest the holiness and charity of Jesus Christ! Where art thou desired, and art not found? Who thirsteth after thee, and is not replenished? Thou art a solace to our sorrows,—strength to our weakness,—and a lamp to our darkness. O mayest thou shoot up like the crocus, blossom like the lily, and like the rose, spread thy sweetness through every nation of the earth; for the happiness of thy faithful clients here, and their eternal glory hereafter.

that breachers often ask, whether

SERMON LVIII.

ON ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION.

Many are called, but few are chosen—He that shall persevere to the end he shall be saved. (Matt. xx. 16.—xxiv. 13.)

IN venturing to expound the mysteries of vocation and predestination, I am aware that I am exposing myself to the charge of rashness and indiscretion; and that a mass of hostility may be the only return to which I may lay myself open. What! some will say, would you unravel a mystery? Certainly not, my Brethren; but I would offer an elucidation of it. Would you then explain what you do not comprehend? Undoubtedly not;—yet I may be allowed to expound what faith teaches. The immortal Bourdaloue, treating the subject of the small number of the elect, observes,

"that preachers often ask whether it be proper to explain this truth to the people, and discuss it in the pulpit, since it is capable of disturbing souls, and of throwing them into discouragement? I would as soon be asked," he says, "if it be proper to explain the gospel to the people, and preach it from the pulpit. On what is the gospel more explicit than on the small number of the elect? What is there that the Saviour of the world in his divine instructions has more authoritatively declared, more frequently repeated, and made us more formally and clearly understand? Many are called, but few are chosen. In this manner he concludes some of his parables. He moreover says, broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat; -strait is the way that leadeth to life, and few there are that find it. (Matt. vii. 13, 14.) Is there any thing more precise than these words?" continues the French orator. "Behold, then, what the Son of God publicly taught, -behold

what he inculcated to his disciples, what he placed before them under a variety of figures, which would occupy too much time in repeating. Are we better instructed than he was, in what is proper or improper to be announced to the faithful? Let us preach the Gospel—and let us preach it without curtailing it, or softening it; let us preach it in its full extent, in all its purity, in all its severity, in all its force. "Woe be to him who shall be scandalized by it—himself only will suffer the punishment of his scandal*."

Such was the sentiment of the illustrious Bourdaloue, and my Brethren, the only objection I can discover to the discussion of this subject, is common to every other mystery of religion, where curiosity is allowed to range too far, and pry with too much familiarity into the secrets of Providence. Mysteries will always retain their inexplicable character,—and even whilst we attempt elucidation, we must not think of presuming to unravel the operations of

^{*} Pensées,

infinity. The mind, for example, may be easily convinced of the creation of this material world,—but who will attempt to shew her the bases on which it was founded: He that is a searcher of majesty, says the wise man, shall be overwhelmed by glory. (Prov. xxv. 27.)

My Brethren, in studying a mystery, our duty is to admit those points which have been clearly revealed, as so many principles or data, in which the mind humbly and fully acquiesces. To adjust them may require physical powers superior to our own; nay, the possibility of effecting it, may involve intermediate links of knowledge, hidden from us, or too vast to be comprehended by man. Acting therefore by these principles, in treating the subject of PREDESTINATION, -and fully acknowledging my inability to penetrate the depths of this mystery, I shall form the subject of this discourse into three divisions. In the first, I shall shew, how all mankind are called by redemption:

many are called. Secondly, I will shew, how all Christians are of the number of the elect: few are chosen. And thirdly, I will shew who those are, who are predestined to glory. He that shall persevere to the end shall be saved.

In regard to the first point then, Jesus Christ, by his sacrifice on the cross, having paid off the entire debt of satisfaction, removed every bar to the operations of grace, and left each individual of the human race capable of being elected to that inheritance purchased by his blood. His atonement was the complete ransom of our original guilt,—qualifying us as so many vessels for the admission of sanctifying grace, and presenting us to the Eternal Father as purchased captives, worthy to be chosen the objects of his bounty. Thus far all mankind are redeemed by the blood of Christ, -and the gates of eternal death, which had been closed upon the whole race, being dashed in pieces by the sacrifice of this Victim, a new day of justice

commenced, in which we are only accountage ble for our own individual acts. There is one Mediator of God and man, writes the apostle, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a redemption for all. (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6.) St. Paul is still more explicit in his Epistle to the Corinthians, where he contends for the existence of original sin, from the very fact of Jesus Christ having died for all. The charity of Christ presseth us, he says; judging this, that if one died for all, then all were dead. And Christ died for all: that they also, who live, may not now live to themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again. (1 Cor. v. 14, 15.)—" Jesus Christ," adds St. John Chrysostom*, referring to this subject of redemption. "would taste death for all, as the grace of God. Not for the faithful only, but for the whole world. For he truly died for all. And what, if all have not believed! He has effected as much as depended on him, and therefore he properly

^{*} Chrysost, in Epis. ad Heb. Hom. 4.

said, that he would taste of death for all. He did not say that he would die; for, so short was the interval, that like one that had only tasted of death, he immediately arose. But by speaking of the sufferings of death, he signified a real death."

I will now speak to the second point. The Eternal Father having thus from all eternity the whole human race before him, redeemed by the blood of his only Son,was pleased in his divine bounty to select a few, to be more particular objects of extraordinary graces, and the trophies of that sacrifice, which a MAN-GOD should offer for the sins of the world. They were to be the eternal monuments of his triumph over sin and death,—the adopted children of his Father, -and the predestined heirs to his glory. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, writes the apostle, chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in his sight in charity. Who hath predestinated us unto the adoption

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of children through Jesus Christ unto himself; according to the purposes of his will. (Ephes. i. 3, 4, 5, 7.)

My Brethren, the predestination of some amongst mankind to be, by grace, the adopted children of God, many are called, but few are chosen, forms one of those impenetrable mysteries, which the human mind is forbidden to fathom. O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! exclaims St. Paul; how incomprehensible are his judgments, and how unsearchable his ways! (Rom. xi. 33.) At every point the restless enquirer will meet with an abyss that his vain understanding can never measure, nor reason search:yet, says the Psalmist, all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth, -and his justice remaineth for ever. (Ps. xxiv. 10.-cxi. 3.) Strengthening our faith then with the consideration of these assurances, it becomes us to rely on Providence, and to suppress all inquisitive curiosity on a matter neither conducive to the attainment of

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useful knowledge, nor tending to the encouragement of virtue. Humility and filial confidence are more suited to our dependent condition.

After premising these reflections, I may now confidently declare to you, my Brethren, that as CHRISTIANS, all the predestinated objects of the divine election of the Eternal Father, and chosen to be his adopted children. We rank in that character in the creation, and according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, as St. Peter writes, (1 Ep. i. 2.) are unto the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. It is true, that Jesus Christ died for all, and that he offered for all the price of his blood; but the particular application of his precious blood has not been equally made to all*; which takes

^{* &#}x27;The Council of Trent says, Sess. 6. c. 3. "Although it be true that he died for all, all do not however receive the benefit of his death, but only those to whom the merit of his passion is communicated. For as it is certain, that

place with the administration of the sacraments, and by the infusion of actual and sanctifying grace into the soul. All indeed participate, and by a faithful correspondence, might come, through it, to the possession of eternal life:—for this is a con-

unless men were born propagated of the seed of Adam, they would not be born unjust :- for since with that propagation they contract their own injustice whilst they are conceived of that seed; so, unless they are born again in Christ, they can never be justified; since that regeneration through the merit of his passion, is communicated to them by the grace with which they are justified. For this benefit the apostle exhorts us constantly to give thanks to the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partukers of the lot of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of durkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins. (Coloss. i. 12, 13, 14.)—There is one passage of scripture which appears to me a lively represent tation of the mystery contained in this quotation from the council of Trent, and seems strikingly to illustrate the proceeding of the Deity. The pond of Bethsaida, described in the fifth chapter of St. John, is a figure of that blood which Jesus has shed by dying for all men; whilst the descending angel represents that grace which is necessary to apply the merit of Christ's passion to our souls, that they may be regenerated in him.

sequence of the goodness and justice of God, who never created any one to be lost: As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. (Ezech. xxxiii. 11.)

My position, therefore, is, that election to the grace of Christianity involves in it a more abundant sprinkling of the blood of Christ. For by the sacrament of regeneration, every Christian is so washed in the blood of the Divine Lamb, and original guilt, with every other stain contracted previously to the conferring of that sacred ceremony, is so entirely effaced, that he is no longer accountable to the divine justice for what till then stood against him. There is now therefore, writes the apostle, no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus. (Rom. viii. 1.) Moreover, in contemplating the grace of election, besides the happy effects of this sprinkling of the blood of Christ, -- besides the infusion of sanctifying grace into his soul, -besides the glorious

qualities of child of God, member of Jesus Christ, and living temple of the Holy Ghost, bestowed upon him with every kind of supernatural endowment, proportioned to these illustrious qualities, -in this first sprinkling, the Christian receives a pledge of all those graces which he requires for worthily supporting the dignity of a Christian; - for discharging the duties of that character; - and for finally reaching the port of eternal bliss. Nay, it gives him a kind of right to an effusion of this precious blood, which, if I may be so allowed to express myself, is to be continually renewed, that it may incessantly produce new fruits of salvation.

Here, my Brethren, I am aware that I shall be expected to shew, by what principle of justice God has been pleased to make a few the objects of his special predilection and bounty. Are not all mankind his creatures?—Yes, but all are not his adopted children in Jesus Christ. My Brethren, the Deity is not more responsible to justice, in

multiplying his graces, than you would be in bestowing a gift; justice always implying some right, obligation, or debt in the parties.—Who then is to hold the balance against the Creator? Is not every one a creditor rather than a debtor? In the parable of the householder, hiring labourers into his vineyard, we have an example of this dissatisfaction met by a just reproof. Friend, said the master of the house to one that repined, I do thee no wrong, did I not agree with thee ? take what is thine, and go thy way: -is it not lawful for me do what I will? Is thy eye evil, because I am good?—Many are called but few are chosen. (Matt. xx. 13.)

My Brethren, as all the graces of God are perfectly gratuitous on his part, and are distributed to us from his pure bounty and generosity, dividing to every one according to his will, (1 Cor. xii. 11.) it would be impossible to establish a complaint against his justice, on the ground that all his creatures have not been equally

favoured. Because, where no claim exists. no wrong is done to any, and consequently no principle of justice violated. Neither is this particular election made with reference to any distinction of persons by the Redeemer, since Jesus Christ paid down, in his blood, the ransom of all;he gave himself a redemption for all, says the scripture, and his will is, that all men be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Tim. ii. 4.) Why then, perhaps you will ask, are not all men particularly elected to extraordinary grace? My Brethren, though it is to be inferred from the last text, that all men are called, that is, enabled to make themselves deserving of those particular graces which are in store, vet the foreknowledge of God might discern in them that which has rendered them unworthy of being absolutely elected to them. And in this sense those who are not of the number of the elect, may have even been treated with more mercy than others, who having become impeni-

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undergo the punishment of their aggravated guilt. And in the strength of this sentiment Jesus Christ declared, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for the cities of Judea, wherein were done most of his miracles, for that they had not done penance. (Matt. xi. 24, 20.)

My Brethren, I have thrown out these hints, as so many helps to the wandering imagination, in the confidence that they may prove useful in guiding your thoughts. At the same time, however, I presume not to penetrate the dark veil of eternity, or shew what has never yet been revealed to man. When human pride attempts to soar above the sphere of mortals, let it beware, lest it be dashed from the height to which its daring presumption would aspire. Without pretending therefore to unbosom the mysterious depths of infinity,—without indulging in the flights of wild speculation, I have hitherto pursued this subject, as the tra-

knowledge which may be acquired from the revealed word, and leaving every other point unheeded. I have now then enabled you to observe how far every individual is absolutely predestined by providence, and how far all Christians are to be ranked in the number of the chosen few. Many are called, but few are chosen. (Matt. xx. 16.) We will now therefore proceed to the third point.

You are not to imagine then, my Brethren, that this absolute predestination to grace, to which I have just alluded, involves an absolute predestination to glory. For though all Christians are absolutely predestined to grace, being marked out, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, unto the sanctification of the spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, (1 Peter i. 2.) nevertheless they are not thence predestined to glory otherwise than conditionally; that is, in the event of their keeping the command-

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ments to the end. He that shall persevere tothe end, said Jesus Christ, he shall be saved. (Matt. xxiv. 13.) And the same apostle lately quoted, in the very next verse declares, that our Lord Jesus Christ, according to his great mercy hath regenerated us unto a lively hope, unto an inheritance incorruptible; on which the Council of Trent bids us remark, that we are regenerated unto the hope of glory, and not to glory itself. * And hence St. Peter in his instructions, directs you to labour the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election. (2 Ep. i. 10.) Yes, the Eternal Father hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children through Jesus Christ, but heaven is to be the reward of fidelity, the recompense of virtue. If thou wilt enter into life, he says, keep the commandments. (Matt. xix. 17.) The aids mislages of the and

My Brethren, if we look into the scriptures, innumerable are the passages which

^{*} Coun. Trent, Sess. 6. c. 13.

remind us of our insecurity, and that final predestination to glory, will depend on our co-operation with the grace that is offered. We are there warned by the apostle, when we think we stand,—to take heed lest we fall; (1 Cor. x. 12.) and we are directed by him, with fear and trembling to work out our salvation,—in labours, in watchings, in fastings, and in charity; (Phil. ii. 12.—2 Cor. vi. 5.) and we are reminded, that if we live according to the flesh we shall die; but if by the spirit, we mortify the deeds of the flesh, we shall live. (Rom. viii. 13.)

Infine, my Brethren, whilst many are called, and few are chosen, those only who persevere to the end, are predestined to glory. (Matt. xx. 16.—xxiv. 13.) Which exposition of divine election and predestination is again confirmed by the beautiful parable of the wedding feast employed by Christ himself to explain this very mystery to his disciples. The kingdom of heaven, he says, is like to a king who made a marriage for his son; and he sent his servants to call them

that were invited to the marriage: and they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, tell them that were invited, come ye to the marriage. But they neglected, and went their ways.—Then he saith to his servants: the marriage indeed is ready; but they that were invited were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as you shall find call to the marriage. And his servants going forth into the highways, gathered together all that they found, both bad and good: and the marriage was filled with guests. And the king went in to see the guests: and he saw there was a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he saith to him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?-Then the king said, bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the exterior darkness:-for many are called, but few are chosen. (Matt. xxii.)

This mystery moreover is again beautifully illustrated by the simple parable of the fig-tree and the pruner of the vineyard,

in which the Sovereign Creator is characterized as the proprietor of the fig-tree, which is emblematical of the Christian; whilst the Divine Saviour is drawn under the lively figure of the dresser of the vineyard. A certain man, says the scripture, had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit from it, and he And he said to the dresser found none. of the vineyard: behold for these three years I come seeking fruit on this figtree, and I find none. Cut it down therefore, why cumbereth it the ground. But he answering said to him: Lord let it alone this year also, until I dig about it and dung it. And if happily it bear fruit: but if not, then after thou shalt cut it down. * (Luke xiii. 6.)

^{*} Although it would be idle to attempt to fathom the depth of God's unsearchable wisdom in this orany other mystery of the Christian dispensation, the obscure passages of St. Paul upon this subject, may be reconciled to our reason in this manner.—God is an absolute,—man, a relative agent. God therefore offers, gives, and increases

My Brethren, after treating the three points of this discourse as I propos-

that supernatural help to free-will, called grace, forfeited in Adam and recovered in Jesus Christ; with which the creature merely corresponds; or as it is expressed in scripture, by faith and good works he makes his calling and election sure. (2 Peter i. 10.) Hence as we cannot name the Lord Jesus with any supernatural effect and merit without the aid of the Holy Spirit, predestination may so far be said to be absolute and independent of works; because God is herein the sole agent. Thus election is positive,—and in this sense the saints are predestined to happiness.

On the other hand, reprobation is negative on the part of God; because man herein is the sole agent. That is, God urges, asks, importunes, and solicits man to accept salvation in various ways: but should free-will resist and finally refuse to co-operate with grace, God merely permits the consequence; and, as the scripture expresses it, Thy perdition is thy own, O Israel. (Osea xiii. 9.)

The Catholic controversies of the schools may in the same manner be easily reconciled. For as we owe every thing in the order of grace and salvation to Jesus Christ,—our election, predestination and perseverance, in this sense, are absolute, antecedent to, and independent of works.—But since regenerated man can, not only hourly merit through Jesus Christ,—but hourly resist his graces, nay forfeit his election, through the perversion of free-will,—and as reward is subsequent to desert,—so fore-knowledge of our good works (according to our mode of

ed. I cannot conclude it better, than by loudly protesting against that absurd and fanatical principle advanced by Calvin, and admitted by others among the reformers, that righteousness is imputed to men, independently of their works, and that faith is the only clue of distinction. I should indeed have thought that a principle so subversive of the moral system of social order, and so absolutely calculated to demoralize the whole human race, by setting aside the fear of punishment and hope of reward, would at once convince every reflecting mind that it could never have emanated from an all-wise and perfect being, whose essence is justice,—who delights in virtue and abominates crime, -who descended

conceiving the operations of God) precedes the foreknow-ledge of our predestination, final perseverance, and correspondence with grace. The scripture is decisive on this head: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Go ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matt. xxv. 34, 41.)

from the highest heavens to give an example of moral perfection, and call man to the practice of his law with the assurance of a retribution.

Passion then, my Brethren, has taken the ascendency of reason in these deluded persons; and trusting to a few misapplied broken expressions of scripture, they consign individuals to reprobation, or seal them for happiness, with a confidence and tranquillity, that either mark a disordered imagination, a vicious soul, or an excess of heretical delusion. It would be difficult for me to expose the horrors to which this principle gives daily occasion, and how misery, profligacy, and despair, follow in its train of consequences;—how it sears the conscience of guilt, and by establishing a pharisaical piety, leaves men the shadow of religion without the substance. It is a species of disgusting idol, which the conceited imagination of man sets up in preference to the just and holy law of the VOL. IV. 3 C

Creator, and to it he sacrifices every noble sentiment worthy of himself and God. In just punishment of this criminal pride however, he is necessarily handed over to the tyranny of his own mind; and he that refused obedience to an INFINITE INTEL-LIGENCE, becomes the degraded slave of his own thoughts, and after renouncing that reasonable homage which faith required, the deluded understanding eagerly embraces the grossest moral absurdities, and most revolting inconsistencies. Such is the inevitable alternative, into which all are forced to plunge, who, having rejected that obscure yet sufficient light, which divine revelation affords, rush into utter darkness, and in the shades of heresy, commence that eternal night on which the sun of faith shall never break. From which may God deliver you, my Friends; and by giving you humility of spirit, and docility of understanding here, may be direct you by the lamp of revelation to the bright day of

eternity, in which there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: nor hidden that shall not be known. (Luke xii. 2.) He that perseveres to the end he shall be crowned. (Matt. xxiv. 13.)

When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the mained, the lame, and the blinds, And thous shall be blessed, because they have



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SERMON LIX.

ON WORKS OF SUPEREROGATION.

When thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind. And thou shalt be blessed, because they have not wherewith to make thee recompense: for recompense shall be made thee at the resurrection of the just. (Luke xiv. 13, 14.)

THE judgments of men are oftener in conformity with the bias of their own views, than the fair results of inquiry; passion examining only on that side most favourable to herself. Thus our adversaries regarding the Catholic faith through the medium of Protestant prejudices, and haunted at every point by the unpopular articles of confession, penance, and subjection to authority, hastily pronounce it a slavish code, calculated to de-

They view it as one of those extraordinary curses with which Providence has chosen to afflict some of the most civilized nations of the world, and either treatit as the work of the most refined policy, or the dark contrivance of the infernal powers. It is the standard of Antichrist, the house of Belzebub!

But, my Brethren, before I offer any remarks, permit me to remind you, that the same reproaches were made to our Saviour's doctrine; and as he exposed the inconsistency of Satan's kingdom being divided against itself, so I may also appeal to the doctrine, language, and history of the Catholic Church, to shew, that as the world has been drawn out of pagan idolatry by her preachers, and during eighteen centuries has been instructed by her confessors in all the holy truths and maxims of the gospel, Satan must have been exceedingly over-reached by events, if he founded such a kingdom for the tri-

umph of his own empire. For could he propose to succeed by confession, by penance and mortification? Could he hope for victory through chastity, poverty, and obedience, exemplified in the lives of the Catholic monks, rather than through the sensualities of Hindoo and Mahometan priests? If then the Catholic Church preach against these, in whose name does she preach? For if Satan cast out Satan, said Jesus Christ, he is divided against himself; how then shall his king dom stand? (Matt. xii. 26.)

Let our adversaries pause then, ere they so hastily make their prejudices a medium for judging of the moral tendency of the Catholic faith; three centuries are surely sufficient to enable Protestantism to give proofs of her superiority, and in the evidence of facts, we shall have the true means of forming a comparative estimation. Let us then examine the causes by their effects; let us distinguish the trees by the fruits they have already produced;

and let us appeal to the general character of the Catholic and Protestant communities, to determine the nature of that influence, which their religions respectively exercise over the human mind*. The result will be found highly favourable to the Catholic.

As all the commandments of God may be reduced to two, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour, so the whole of that divine system of religion, revealed to man by Jesus Christ, has but two objects, the glory of God, and the moral good of our neighbour. To these points, all the virtues and heavenly maxims inculcated by Jesus Christ, infallibly tend:—they are exemplified in his life and death, and form the end of every sacred institution he bequeathed to man. They are therefore necessarily essential to the religion of Chris-

^{*} In drawing the comparison of the two religions, as one fact is worth a volume of assertions, let any candid Protestant answer this simple but comprehensive question—

If heaven suffer violence, and the violent only bear it away,
(Matt. xi. 12.) what violence must a Catholic offer to himself to become Protestant?

tians, and must ever constitute a distinctive character of the true Church.

In this point of view, the Catholic Church stands singularly prominent, and through that religion which she unfolds to her children, presses all the powers of the human mind into the service of the Deity. This she effects, by exacting that tribute of faith to his power, and that homage of submission to his authority, which places the creature in his proper relation with the Creator, and makes him a worthy object of divine bounty, charity, and condescension. In those mysteries, moreover, which the Church exhibits to his faith, she shews how human nature has been exalted, and in what manner God will eternally draw glory from all his works:—and that in seconding the views and designs of God, the soul is only discharging the homage of a just service to her Creator. On the other hand, as the views of the Deity towards the species, are proposed to her as the basis and rule of the

moral conduct of the faithful between man and man, -and as the Church declares, on the authority of the Redeemer, that a just retribution shall hereafter reward the efforts of each individual, these principles at once open such a field to exertion, and so forcibly stimulate the dormant powers of the soul to unfold themselves in a cause where the glory of God and the good of our neighbour are the immediate objects, that they naturally as well as directly lead to the production of those works of supererogation, and devoted acts of religion, which ever have, and ever will supereminently distinguish the community of the Catholic faithful. By works of supererogation I mean, those great achievements of piety, which outstripping precept, and destined to promote the noble ends to which I have just alluded, present themselves to the Christian's attention in every country, and attest how universal has been the influence of this principle, and how powerfully and beneficially it has operated on the human

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soul.* I will now exhibit a few of them to you as they stand in the great theatre of public life.

My Brethren, if we take a cursory view of those institutions and works of religion which existed in our own country at the period of the reformation, and compare them with such as have since been produced by Reformists in this or any of the other Protestant states of Europe, we shall scarcely discover one amongst the latter that is not in some manner indebted to Catholic spoils for its existence:—at best the advocates of Protestantism will be constrained to acknowledge, that where Catho-

^{*}Witness a recent example which I extract from a public journal. "The present bishop of Oporto, upon being appointed vicar-general of the diocese of Lisbon, directed that the income arising from the former bishopric (amounting to nearly ten thousand pounds sterling) should be entirely appropriated to the purpose of founding a seminary for the education of young persons for the ecclesiastical state.—This benevolent and pious undertaking is already nearly completed."—I ask, how this income would have been disposed of, had the bishop been married?

licism has not been made the instrument, the efforts of the reformed have proved weak, mean and contemptible. Nay it may be shewn, that those springs of genius and talent, which have a co-existence with the animated faith of Catholics, are now dried up in their sources; and the mind of the Reformist is become incapable of even conceiving those prodigies of talent and exertion which have ever distinguished the bold and perseverant piety of Catholics. In vain in these modern times, shall we look for the counterpart of those noble structures which grace the ancient cities of our ancestors, -in vain shall we seek in any of our newly-populous districts and towns, one example of a Church built and endowed by Protestant liberality, and worthy to be ranked with the cathedrals of the Catholic Church:—at most we shall dis-COVER SOME CHAPEL OF EASE OF MEETING. HOUSE, whose hideous forms and tasteless proportions prove it to be the work of selfish avarice and religious instability. In vain shall we look for massive columns and well-turned arches, types of the eternal Church; in vain shall we seek those altars of marble and jasper on which the Lamb is slain,—meanness and puritannical wretchedness reign throughout these conventicles, and Protestant zeal is absolutely exhausted when it has provided a daily pittance for some adulating preacher.

Yet can we be surprised at this contrast, or that Protestantism should yield no fruits, whilst the Catholic Church is so rich in her harvest of good works? Protestantism has dried up the very sources of them, by her declaration, that such works are entitled to no recompense hereafter. To regard works of supererogation as a delusion, or as moral acts that have no moral consequences, is an absurd sentiment worthy of Protestant inconsistency—and as much opposed to the letter of the Scripture as to the first principles impressed upon the human mind. Has not our divine Saviour declared, that not even a cup of cold

water, given in the name of a disciple, shall lose its reward? (Matt. x. 42.) Has not the blessed apostle moreover assured us, that our labours, patience, and long sufferings work an exceeding weight of glory? (2 Cor. iv. 17.) Has not the divine Jesus again told us, that at the last day the Sovereign Judge will measure out our recompense with reference to the extent of our moral actions? Come, he shall say to the just, Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess ye the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; naked and you covered me. I was in prison and you came to me. (Matt. xxv. 34, 35, 36.)

Now, my Brethren, it is this assurance of Jesus Christ that constitutes the great charter of Catholic faith on the subject of GOOD WORKS, and that contributes so forcibly to expand all the energies of the soul when the honour of God and the glory

of his religion invite us to exert those talents entrusted to us. These principles act so steadily upon the Catholic mind, that we have continually before us the bright example of individuals who sacrifice every worldly interest to this object, and devote themselves to it with a determination truly heroical. We have seen them in the decline of life generously commencing and prosecuting enterprises, that posterity only could have the glory of completing. They laboured in the confidence of receiving their recompense from the hands of God, and left to generations a precious example of disinterested virtue.*

^{*} In these discourses I have hitherto said nothing on the article of tythes, under which head, I mean the just revenues of the Catholic clergy: and were it not for the reproaches continually brought against the priesthood in this anti-religious age, I should still be silent. Many Catholics, as well as Protestants, appear to have forgotten that to contribute to the support of the pastors of the Church is an ecclesiastical and divine law. It stands among the soleinn precepts of the Church, and is enforced by St. Paul. (1 Cor. ix. 18.) But the enormity of the receipts of the Clergy!

It is to this noble feeling of devotion and piety, that we owe those renowned

It does not appear probable that this charge can be brought home to the present labouring Catholic clergy in England—they are poor, and my prayer is that they may continue virtuous and independent. That will be sufficient for themselves and their flocks. But if I am to speak of the enormous receipts of Churchmen, I shall be authorized in marking this distinction between Protestants and Catholics. On account of the prodigious increase of cultivation in this country, the Protestant clergy are in the receipt of a far greater revenue than ever fell to the hands of their Catholic predecessors. Yet their Catholic predecessors supported all the poor, and left the kingdom unburdened with poor rates, actually levied to the amount of upwards of five millions, perhaps seven, independently of other supplies, in voluntary contributions. True, the rents of the ancient Catholic clergy in England were great-but they spent it not upon themselves. A living was then usually divided into four quarters. One was for the support of the poor of the parish, another for the officers and assistants, another for beautifying the Church and repairing the parsonage, and another for the pastor's own respectable support; with the implied obligation of distributing the overplus to the poor. All which, besides pew-money, (which is a Protestant innovation) is now actually expended upon dressing a wife, and maintaing a family. And if the poor are to be supplied, a church enlarged, or a parsonage repaired, the parish is immediately saddled with the neceswhich under the title of UNIVERSITIES are spread over Catholic Europe. In these institutions we discover every thing great, solid and magnificent. Calculated to advance the glory of religion, and at the same time to promote the happiness of

sary rates. So much for the charge of avarice against the Catholic clergy!

But the Catholic priests are continually reproached by Protestants with enjoying and exercising an absolute controul over the purses as well as over the consciences of their flocks. Both these charges are in contradiction with fact; and Protestant jealousy seems principally to give occasion to them. If the reformed minister lies under a disadvantage in this respect, it is not on account of any renunciation on his part. In answer to the complaint then, I shall simply observe, that if much is so easily exacted and obtained, there must be some reciprocity of sentiment in the other party, who may possibly believe that much is fairly due and properly bestowed. Be assured that in both instances, to wit, in the cases of the Protestant and Catholic pastors, there is a balance of accounts. Considerable sums may be often paid to Catholic clergymen, of which not one farthing is for themselves. To receive and distribute them, accord ing to the intention of the donor, is that to exact -- or only to execute one of the offices of a pastor?

preme tribunal to which alone he is amenable for his faith and morals, those re-

them; and since they appeal, as well as ourselves, to the Bible alone, we cannot, according to Chillingworth's own definition, refuse them the title of Protestants." (Inquiry, pp. 10-21.) An authority speaking of the Protestant preachers in India, writes, "Are then the differences between those who believe that Christ is "very God of very God," and such as contend that he was a mere man, the son of Joseph as well as Mary: between those who believe that "his soul was made an offering for sin," and such as contend that he died only to bear testimony to the truth of his doctrine; between those who believe that he died for the sins of the whole world, and such as contend that he died only for a chosen few; are these differences so very insignificant, that a converted Hindoo (or any man) cannot well understand them? Nay, is it a matter of so little importance that such a convert cannot contemplate it, whether the sacraments of its institution, which appear from holy scripture to be generally necessary to salvation, be administered by those who derive authority for such administration from Christ himself, or from a congregation of mere believers? Is it a matter of indifference whether the glad tidings of the Gospel be first carried to heathen nations (or to our own people) by those who on every important article of faith and practice. " all speak the same thing, and having no divisions among themselves, are all perfectly joined together in the same faith, and in the same judgment;" or by those who, on almost every article of faith, speak different things, and

formists opened a wide and unbounded field for error, extravagance, and fanaticism, and the result is, that every one has assumed the privilege of teaching, believing, and acting as he chooses. Men are at once introduced into what is termed the liberty of the Gospel, and the question is now no longer, whether the Protestant or the Catholic has truth on his side, but whether Jesus Christ is God or an impostor—whether any credit is due to revelation, or the whole to be condemned as delusion, knavery, and deceit. These are now considered fair subjects for con-

represent the Gospel as a farago of contradictions, and therefore unworthy of the acceptation of those to whom it is preached."

"Our heterogeneous missionaries may indeed in India live together as friends, for fear of the heathen powers by whom they are surrounded, and carefully avoid all discussions which might endanger the public peace, and with it their own individual lives; but in that case they must conceal from the natives every topic about which they differ among themselves, and thus, if they be sincere in their respective opinions, they must be aware that they are "handling the word of God deceitfully."—British Critic, vol. XXXVIII. p. 584.

versation and discussion, and the Deist or anti-christian worldling is heard in society with no less attention, interest, and respect, than might be claimed by the wisest and most virtuous senator in the land. Nay more, the very luminaries of the established church have been known to profess their disbelief in that reformed doctrine which they taught—and whilst they preached the mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation, have been heard to declare themselves disciples of Socinus and Hoadley'*.

* "After all, the greatest benefit derived to religion by the efforts of the Reformers, is that doctrine which they so often disallowed to others, but which they found so convenient to themselves, of acknowledging the unrestrained right of private judgment in matters of faith; and there is little risk in asserting, that whoever proposes any contrary terms or articles of union as necessary to be admitted, violates one of the leading and fundamental principles of the Protestant Reformation. "But this would lead to downright Socinianism, as the Catholics charge upon us." May be so—the charge is not without foundation, notwithstanding what some excellent Protestants have written on the subject. This dreadful consequence may follow: it is a lamentable case; but there is no way to pre-

In Prussia indeed, and the North of Germany, where reformation had shot a deeper root than in any other part, its disciples have already sunk into the depth of infidelity; and universities, in which virtue had once flourished as well as learning, no longer embrace the professors of Christianity. At this event, however, we have no reason to be astonished, since it follows as an effect from its cause. And I candidly avow, that were I to exchange the Catholic rule of faith to-day for the verdict of human reason, or private judgment, I must declare myself an infidel to-morrow. In the first place, I should absolutely deny original sin, and 2dly,

vent it while you allow the principle. You may issue your orders of Synods, Convocations, Conferences, and Acts of Uniformity—you may enlarge or curtail your Thirty-nine Articles—you may even pronounce sentence of "God's wrath and everlasting damnation" against heretics and schismatics; as long as you admit that ground-work of the Reformation, the right of private judgment, though you spend your strength in fulminations, and your skill in devising new terms of salvation, you will only be laughed at by the discerning Christian as inconsistent and intolerant." (Nightingale's Cath. Port. p. 134.)

all priestly or ministerial power of forgiving sin, either in extreme unction, confession, or baptism; hecause reason and sense comprehend not such doctrine; 3dly, I should disbelieve the real existence and presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, because repugnant to the evidence of my senses; 4thly, for the same reason I would deny the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ; and next Christianity itself and the Trinity as absurdities—and who would have the privilege of objecting, if my right to judge, and consequently to decide, be an indefeasible right, paramount to every other motive?-In conclusion, then, and reverting to the subject which has been discussed this day, you may observe, that to none of these petty sects of Protestantism can you owe the homage of submission, since none have a just claim upon you for it. Reposing themselves upon the ruins of authority, the principle of dissolution is woven in their texture, -and consequently it is neither apostacy, nor

schism, nor rebellion, to separate from them.—Even the Church of England, which is the eldest of her heretical sister-hood, is a schismatical branch, a dead limb of the true vine, a rebellious child. On what foundation then can she ground her interdictions from schism? On what can she establish her title to authority, when she was the first to resist authority and become schismatical?

If any thing however, which has fallen from me this day, be thought to reflect too severely upon others, the apology I offer, and which I hope will be accepted, is, that I call God to witness, it was not spoken to their confusion, but instruction. It is the great interest I take in their eternal happiness which has induced me to think of them, like the good shepherd in the Gospel, who having lost the hundredth sheep, leaves the ninety-nine in the desert, and goes in quest of it till he finds it. That we may all meet and rejoice together in the glorious day of eternity, is my earnest wish and constant prayer.

SERMON XIII.

ON THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

And upon this rock, I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall never prevail against it. (Matt. xvi. 18.)

IN passing from the consideration of Protestantism to the review of the Catholic Church, I should premise, that surrounded as you are by numerous sects of Protestants, each professing to lead you to the desired term, that is a happy eternity, though each pursue a different course, some choosing a path in which there are fewer difficulties to encounter, whilst others attempt to arrive at those regions of bliss by fatal tracts, to which their own fancy allures them,—you may perhaps imagine, that the Catholic Church is of the same description, and if other fabrics be not raised on the solid

basis of a rock, she also can only depend upon a moveable quicksand. These I fear are the sentiments of many, and therefore I wish to conduct you this day to that venerable temple, which exhibits to the reflecting Christian such evident marks of being the Church of Christ. In speaking however on this and other interesting points of religion, I have to offer one observation, that where minds are so various and opinions so opposite, it is often difficult, not to say impossible, so to reveal this light of truth, that whilst to all we display a sufficiency, it may not spread a glare too dazzling for the feeble sight of some. This is an unavoidable consequence. But surely in the cultivated and enlightened understanding the objection must yield to the superior advantage offered in the discovery and diffusion of truth. For to suppose a man averse to hear the truth would be to insult him in heart and mind: - and to impose silence upon truth, would be to dry up the springs

of knowledge and instruction,—to crush that reason which is the noblest faculty of man.

To lead you then into a knowledge of the Catholic Church by a correct conception of the word CHURCH, we may define it a congregation of persons, united by the profession of the same Christian faith, and participating in the same sacraments under the guidance of lawful pastors. This is a definition against which I believe few can possibly object, since in it nothing is included, which most Christian societies are not eager to proclaim to themselves. *

In the first place then, it is a congregation of persons, united by the profession of the same Christian faith. This, I believe, will hardly need an explanation For as God is the author of all revealed doctrine, which is the object of faith, each revealed article

^{*} This definition perfectly accords with the principles professed by Protestants of the Established Church; and particularly with those of the celebrated author of Church Union. See Sermon XI.

must be grounded on his authority. Indeed it would be blasphemous to suppose, that the God of truth, of sanctity and justice, would command us to assent to a contradiction—which must necessarily be the case however, if the sum of our belief be not one and uniform.

The word Church, 2dly, implies a participation of the same sacraments, which were instituted as channels to convey to the soul those special graces or moral helps necessary for moral life. - Thus baptism, was instituted to confer the grace of sanctification, - penance the remission of sin, -and the sacrament of the altar grace to withstand temptations, and new helps to advance in every species of virtue. But as these and the rest of the sacraments derive all their efficacy from the merits and passion of the Son of God, applied in this manner to the soul, they must all have received their institution, in the first instance, from Jesus Christ.—Consequently a distinction of sacraments would be so

essential a distinction of faith, as would necessarily argue a real distinction in the Church; and therefore a distinct Church;

The third and last requisite to form a Church, is subjection to lawful pastors. Pastors are as essential to a Church, as magistrates and ministers are to a civil government. They are the ministers of God accredited to his people, and empowered by him to discharge those sacred offices of religion, which no natural or civil authority can enable them to perform. It is not to the men, then, but rather to the authority with which they are invested, and the channels by which it has descended to them, that we are principally to direct our attention. - For Pastors without a lawful commission from God, would be no pastors at all. The commission of planting a church and preaching the Gospel to others, was exclusively conferred by Jesus Christ on the Apostles and their lineal successors. All power, said he, is given to me in heaven and on earth:

going therefore teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. (Matt. xxviii. 18.) Most criminally presumptuous, therefore, would any one be, who should assume a character, to which neither fortune, talents, nor virtue, can give him a title.—He would be no other than the wolf in sheep's cloathing.-For if those who have been entrusted by heaven with this divine commission can only expect to succeed in executing it, through the promised assistance of the Holy Ghost, surely such as have grasped the crook without divine appointment, will lead their followers into the jaws of the wolf, and with them perish through their impious temerity.

pose, that because a man has assumed a particular dress, because he has devoted

himself to a certain course of studies, he can thence claim the privilege of guiding as shepherd the sheep of Christ. Noyou must first receive your commission from him-it must be handed down to you by the Apostles and their successors; how can they preach, writes St. Paul, unless they be sent? (Rom. x. 15.) Thus, my Brethren, you see the necessity of lawful Pastors in a Church.—Without them, a Church must cease to exist; and at this moment, were that long chain of Pastors in the Catholic Church to be broken, which so wonderfully connects heaven and earth, God and his people, the Deity must reveal to us new means of gaining heaven, otherwise salvation would be unattainable.

I have now shewn you, my Friends, what are the requisites to form a Church; and you understand it to be a congregation of persons, united by the profession of the same Christian faith, and participat-

ing in the same sacraments, under the guidance of lawful Pastors.-If, then, you add these words, especially of Bishops, united to the Bishop of Rome as head of the whole Church, you will completely have the definition of the CATHOLIC Church. By the commission which Jesus Christ gave the Apostles, of preaching the Gospel to all nations, by his promise of abiding with them, and teaching them all truth to the end of the world, it evidently follows, that these words were not only addressed to the Apostles, but also to their successors. Since therefore, the Bishops have at all times been considered the successors of the Apostles, to them has been entrusted the sacred deposit of doctrine and faith, and by addressing to them these words, who hears you, hears me, (Luke xvi. 16.) our divine Saviour has explicitly engaged to stand by them: nay is so bound, not only in justice to you, but to himself, whose honour demands that the general body of those, whom he has really chosen to be the spiritual guides of others, should speak no language but such as flows from God himself—should lay down no principle but what is founded on the unalterable basis of truth.

Confiding, therefore, in the pledge which Jesus Christ has given, that this sacred trust will never be betrayed to the powers of darkness, or the enemies of his Church, every Catholic regards their canonical decision upon any contested article of faith, as the voice of God; and mindful of the warning of our blessed Saviour, he that despiseth you, despiseth me, (Luke xvi. 16.) as far as religion is concerned, in humility submits to be directed by them. Among these, the Bishop of Rome, as Lord and Primate of the episcopal order, bears in his hands the emblems of jurisdiction and authority, (Matt. xvi. 19.) and governs the Church as the Successor of St. Peter and Vicar of Jesus Christ.

Scarce any part of the Catholic doctrine has more opponents to encounter, than this recognition which the Church has made in all ages, of a primacy of jurisdiction, extending over the whole Christian Church, residing in the Bishop of Rome. That a man seated in St. Peter's Chair, to whom have been divinely entrusted the keys of the kingdom of heaven, should thence assume the right of calling upon the most powerful potentates to acknowledge his authority in those very territories over which they preside with uncontrouled power as lawful sovereigns, appears perfectly ridiculous. But that Britains, so justly jealous of their liberties and independence, should ever stoop to that degree of baseness as to own themselves the vassals of a foreigner, one that they could crush with the very finger of their might, is an idea which none but the insane could ever expect to see verified.

This is the language, my Brethren, you are accustomed to hold, and that, in which I and every well informed Catholic join, when speaking of a temporal superiority. Why then, you will probably ask, call upon us to admit an authority which yourself disclaims? Here, my Brethren, we misunderstand one another. Contending for rights which in their own nature are purely spiritual, as a British Catholic I abjure and protest against every attempt, direct or indirect, in a Pope, to establish a power over the temporal rights and properties of others. However, at the same time, that as a Catholic, acquainted with his faith, I would oppose every extravagant pretension of a Pope to raise a temporal dominion on the basis of his spiritual authority, I do not hesitate to acknowledge in him a pastoral jurisdiction, co-extensive with the whole church of Christ*. Whereas, guiding yourselves by a

^{*}All Catholics recognize in the Pope the spiritual character of Chief-Bishop, Head-Shepherd, and Pastor of Christ's

distinct principle, because you justly spurn at the idea of submitting your temporal in-

Church; but surely that is easily distinguished from the character of a sovereign-a prince-a soldier-a civil legislator. The Catholics also admit a spiritual brotherhood and fellowship between themselves and the Catholics of other countries; for instance those of France; and believe that even those who die in arms against us, as children of the same spiritual mother, are entitled to, and benefited by our prayers; which in the true spirit of charity are offered for our enemies as well as our friends. But did any one ever hear, that this religious principle has led to confusion in battle; and that the right of church fellowship was pleaded to persuade Catholics not to fight and kill their Catholic opponents? Has a British general ever found by experience, that his Catholic soldiers were influenced in their duty by this religious maxim? Let Protestants, therefore, be assured, that as it is easy for the man in battle to distinguish between the character of a soldier and of a spiritual brother, so it is easy for Catholics to distinguish between the temporal and spiritual authorities of Popes and Councils, and to act upon the principle of that distinction. Till the year 1471, all Scotland was subject to the metropolitan sec of York+:-yet bloody wars had frequently been waged between the Scotch and English.—And during the Heptarchy, the authority of the see of Canterbury was acknowledged in many hostile

[†] See Wilkin's Councils, vol. III. p. 606.

dependance to a foreigner, therefore you refuse, by a conversion of argument, to submit in religion to a stranger—erroneously supposing, that ecclesiastical jurisdiction is to terminate at, and depend

kingdoms, without any inconvenience to the temporal authorities: and such continually is the circumstance of the cities and provinces of Europe, owing to the events of war; in which an extra-territorial spiritual authority is often recognized, where no temporal authority is acknowledged. If a prototype of this distinction from the old law can be considered as an illustration of the fact in the new. I will refer my readers to the 19th chapter of the 2d book of Chronicles. " Every cause," said Josaphat to the judges, "that shall come to you of your brethren that dwell in their cities, between kindred and kindred, wheresoever there is question concerning the LAW, THE COMMANDMENT, THE CEREMONIAL, THE JUSTIFICATIONS, shew it them, that they may not sin against the Lord, and that wrath may not come upon you and your brethren: and so doing you shall not sin.

And Amarias the priest, your high priest, shall be chief in the things which regard God: and Zabadias, the son of Ismahel, who is ruler in the house of Juda, shall be over those matters which belong to the king's office: and you have before you the Levites for masters, take courage, and do diligently, and the Lord will be with you in good things. (vv. 10, 11.)

upon those frontier lines of territory which princes may fix to-day and change to-morrow.

Here however it is impossible to argue by comparison, for the kingdom of Christ is one, whereas many are the kingdoms of this world, and there exists not more resemblance between the spiritual authority he conferred upon his Church, and that authority belonging to the temporal Governments of states, than between the dominion of Christ and that of any sovereign of Europe. My kingdom, said he, is not of this world. (John xviii. 36.) And it would be as great a folly in us to renounce the pastoral jurisdiction of a Pope, because his supreme patriarchal See lies without the territory of England, as to reject the religion of Jesus Christ, because it originated in Judea. Neither is it our business to question the propriety of Christ's having thus bestowed upon an individual a supremacy of jurisdiction, the utility of which must be evident to every reflecting

mind, as it connects by a bond of union the whole fold of Christ. It is for us only carefully and impartially to examine if such a power reside upon earth, and if it really exists to acknowledge it.

When our Saviour to reward the great ardour and love of his apostle Simon, had raised him to the dignity of chief of the apostles, he addressed him in these words: Thou art Peter, (that is rock) and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall never prevail against it. And I will give to thee the KEYS of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatever thou shall loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven. (Matt. xvi. 18.) Thus he received from God himself, that supremacy of character and power which raised him above the rest of the apostles, and made him head of the Church, and Vicar of the Messiah. - And in the twenty-first chapter of St. John, after the resurrec-

tion of our Redeemer, Peter not only received a confirmation of that spiritual supremacy, but moreover an injunction to feed the sheep, as well as the lambs that is, by another figurative expression, a language common to the Asiatic nations, was confirmed supreme Pastor and Shepherd of the whole fold of Christ. Now as the authority conferred upon the apostles was intended for the benefit of the Church, in all after ages, even to the consummation of the world, (Matt. xxviii. 20.) the divine and unlimited jurisdiction, with which St. Peter was invested, necessarily descended to his successors, and exists in the present Bishop of Rome.

You learn from history that for one thousand eight hundred years, there has been an uninterrupted succession of Pontiffs, — and that amidst wars, pestilence and persecutions, or the intervening disorders of states and empires, the Church has always had a representative of St. Peter: — facts which not only mark the

special importance she has ever paid to this branch of her hierarchy, but which should also convince us that it has been divinely protected.

I will not here attempt to refute those idle and disgusting applications which heretics have made from the Apocalypse to the Bishops of Rome. - Suffice it to say, that these persons have all proved themselves false prophets: - that Antichrist there prefigured is one personage, and can therefore have no reference to the number who have successively borne the crook of Peter:-that far from his chair being the seat of iniquity, with a few exceptions, the illustrious characters which therein have directed the fold of Christ, have shone the brightest ornaments of religion, and have even received the homage of the admiration of heretics. Consequently as every city divided against itself shall not stand, (Matt. xii. 25.) too ridiculous and absurd is it to suppose, that men, who have grown grey in the practice of virtue—men who have laid down their lives for the faith of Christ, as numbers have done, should have been the emissaries of Satan and the enemies of the Gospel.

Recapitulating therefore the definition I have given you of the Catholic Church, it is a congregation of persons united in the profession of the same Christian faith, and participating in the same sacraments, under the guidance of lawful pastors; more especially of Bishops, and of the Bishop of Rome, or successor of St. Peter, as head of the whole Church; on which account she is synonymously styled ROMAN CATHOLIC. *Simple in its structure, but well calculat-

^{*} The Constitution of the Catholic Church seems to have been the prototype of the British Constitution; and when we contemplate the high veneration in which our Saxon ancestors held religion, it is not surprising that they should have considered the Constitution of the Church as the standard of legislative perfection, and consequently have endeavoured to model their own government upon it. It is well known that Alfred, who is honoured as the founder of the British Constitution, was assisted in all his

ed to effect all the designs of God, this is that Church, my Brethren, of which

great designs by the advice, the learning, and the experience of the most able of the Catholic Clergy, who it is to be presumed would recommend that which they considered BEST. For it should be observed, that at the expulsion of the Danes, ALFRED remained in sole and full possession of a monarchy. Now as he afterwards voluntarily conceded a share of this authority to his nobles, (an act so contrary to what we know of human nature, that a motive must be assigned for it) and thus established a mixed government, we have reason to conclude that it was done with the design of forming the Government of the State on the model of the Government of the Church. -For certainly there exists too great a similitude, to allow any to suppose that it could have been the result of chance. I do not mean to affirm that the Saxon copy was as perfect and as finished as our Constitution at present; but it must be acknowledged that a rough draft was drawn by ALFRED, that his conception was simple, bold, and grand; and that it only required time, and the experience of ages, to render it what it actually is.

- 1. The King is the first Magistrate of the Realm, and has his own exclusive Prerogatives as Sovereign of the whole British Empire.
- 2. The word King is derived from the Teutonic
- 1. The Pope is the first Minister of God, and has his own exclusive prerogatives as Successor of St. Peter, and Head of the whole Catholic Church.
- 2. The word Pope is derived from the Greek word

you have the inestimable happiness to form a part-in which, with peace of mind, ease, and safety, you may secure the sal-

Powerful.

- 3. Whoever lawfully fills the Throne of England, is King of Great Britain and Ireland, and Sovereign of Rome, is Pope, or Chiefthe British Empire.
- 4. He is a temporal Sovereign, ruling in the power of the sword committed to him, and his kingdom is wholly of this world.
- 5. The principle of his government is unity and strength.
- 6. He is the common Magistrate of all his People, and they are his Subjects under God.
- 7. His office is to watch over the whole Empire;
- 8. To assemble and preside in Parliament;
- 9. To see that all his subjects are duly protected;
- 10. And that the laws and statutes of Parliament are inforced;

word Cyninge, and signifies PAPPAS, signifying Father.

- 3. Whoever canonically fills the Apostolical Chair of St. Peter, as Bishop of Bishop and Primate of Christ's Catholic Church.
- 4. He is a spiritual Sovereign, ruling in the power of the keys committed to him, and his kingdom is none of this world.
- 5. The principle of his government is unity and truth.
- 6. He is the common Father of all Christians, and they are all his common Children in Christ.
- 7. His office is to watch over the whole Church ;
- 8. To assemble and preside in General Councils;
- 9. To see that all the faithful are duly instructed;
- 10. And that the precepts and canons of the Church are observed;

vation of your souls, if you comply with her precepts and practice her doctrine.

- 11. And to exercise his just prerogatives of mercy in dispensing with the penal execution of the law, when a just cause calls for his Royal indulgence.
- 12. He is to govern according to the laws.
- 13. As he is also the depository of the executive authority, his power extends to every part of the Empire.
- 14. And on just grounds he suspends any magistrate from his civil functions.
- 15. He also plants new colonies, and appoints Governors over them.
- 16. The magistrate only rules and directs by the power of the sword committed to him by the State.
 - 17. Though every magis-

- 11. And to exercise the just prerogatives of his indulging authority, by dispensing with their penitential observance when a good cause requires such indulgence.
- 12. He is to govern according to the canons.
- 13. As he is also the depository and fountain of spiritual jurisdiction*, his authority extends to every part of the Church.
- 14. And on just grounds he suspends any minister from his pastoral functions.
- 15. He also founds new Churches, and appoints Bishops to govern them.
- 16. The minister of religion only rules and directs by the power of the keys committed to him by the Church.
- 17. Though every minister
- * Preseinding from the point of faith we here simply refer to the actual discipline of the Church.

I allow, that when viewed within the narrow and confined circle which surrounds

trate is the representative of God, yet the throne is the channel and source of authority.

18. The King declares war and proposes terms of peace; and places the refractory and rebellious subjects out of the protection of the law.

 The King is represented by his ambassadors, who act with a delegated authority.

20. Under him also in the Empire there are Viceroys, Lord-Lieutenants, and Governors, who rule over Empires, Kingdoms, and Provinces.

21. The Empire is divided into Kingdoms, Provinces, and Counties; the officer of each having a local jurisdiction.

22. Under these also are Sheriffs, Mayors, and Conof religion is the representative of God, yet the Papal Chair is the channel and source of authority*.

absolutely on the schismatical and heretical character of persons, of books and writings; and places obstinate members out of the communion of the Church.

19. The Pope is represented by his legates, who act with a delegated authority.

20. Inferior to the Pope also in the Church, there are Patriarchs, Archbishops, and Bishops, who govern Patriarchates, Archbishoprics, and Bishoprics.

21. The Church is divided into Patriarchal, Arch-Episcopal, and Episcopal Dioceses; the Prelate of each having a local jurisdiction.

22. Under these also are Arch-deans, Deans, and Cu-

^{*} See the note in the last page.

us in Britain, she offers little of that majestic splendour and venerable state, in

stables, each having charge of a particular district.

23. The King is the link of union to all the governments of the empire.

24. The King has also his privy Counsellors, who are his constant advisers.

25. With their advice he issues proclamations and orders of council.

26. With their advice he also ratifies the constitutional acts of national and provincial assemblies, in the distant provinces of the empire.

27. Every statute law must have passed in parliament, and received the royal assen[†]

28. Without the sanction of both no act can become the binding law of the land.

29. The law of the land consists of statute and common law.

30. The one is derived from immemorial tradition;

rates, each having charge of a particular district.

23. The Pope is the link of union to all the congregations of the Church.

24. The Pope has also his Cardinals, who form his perpetual chapter.

25. With their advice he issues bulls and decrees.

26. With their advice he also ratifies the canonical acts of national and provincial synods, in the remotest dioceses of the Church.

27. Every defined article of faith must have been defined in a general council, and have been approved by the Pope.

28. Without the approbation of both no decision is a defined article of faith.

29. Every article of faithis founded on the word of God, written or unwritten.

30. The one is derived from immemorial tradition;

which I should wish you to contemplate her: but to form some conception of her

by the other we understand the decrees and ordinances of parliament.

- 31. Parliament is divided into two orders, or chambers; the Peers and the Commons.
- 32. The Peers represent their Baronies.
- 33. The Peers alone form a judicial tribunal, and they give judgment by an here-ditary right.
- 34. The law may be read, but its interpretation must be taken from the proper judges.
- 35. The nation decisively speaks by the voice of its Parliament.
- 36. The King and Parliament are the highest authority in the empire, and from their decision there lies no appeal.
- 37. A wilful breach of any imperative law of Parliament, is the crime of Feonly,

by the other we understand the scriptures and the decrees of general councils.

- 31. The hierarchy of the Church consists principally of two orders—Bishops and Priests.
- 32. The Bishops represent their Sees.
- 33. The Bishops alone form a judicial tribunal, and they give judgment by divine right.
- 34. The sacred scriptures may be read, but their interpretation must be taken from the proper judges.
- 35. The Church definitively speaks by the voice of her councils.
- 36. The Pope and general Council are the highest authority in the Church, and from their decision there lies no appeal.
- S7. An obstinate opposition to any article of defined faith, is the crime of Heresy.

real lustre and universality, you must recollect that her faith is the ancient faith of
your island—that from the hands of her
ministers your ancestors received the precious gift of Christianity, and for above
a thousand years, under their zealous care,
walked peaceably and happily in the paths
of virtue and religion.—That in every
church of the land, and in almost every
mouldering ruin, you behold a sacred
monument of the Catholic piety of your
forefathers, where the same religious service was performed, and the same doctrine delivered, which you attend to at
this day.

Independently of every other consideration, this alone should call forth the homage of that respect and veneration for every thing Catholic which it is so natural to feel, and usual to express for the ancient manners and customs of those from

^{38.} A rebellious opposition to the authority of the ecclesiastical authority, is State, is the crime of Treathe crime of Schism.

whom we derive our origin. But, my Brethren, direct your views beyond the narrow limits of Britain, where undoubtedly the Catholic Church is rather to be admired for her firmness than courted for her prosperity, and see her extended over the rest of the world, with no other bounds than the earth. Traverse the Catholic empires of Europe, stretch across the Atlantic ocean, and contemplate her doctrine, now preached to nations in the vast tracts of America upon the ruins of idolatry and superstition. Penetrate, if you can, into the remotest corners of India-observe in every part the unity of her faith, and the similarity of her discipline. Explore the extensive and populous regions of China, in every province of which the Catholic faith is making a rapid conquest of souls to Christ, and adore that wonderful providence of God, which has ordained that like the ocean which abandons one part to carry its waters to another shore, the Catholic Church, ever fruitful in good

works, shall never fail to see her faith, which has been expelled from one clime, planted in another, by the labours of her preachers and the blood of her martyrs.

In this light, my Brethren, I would have you consider the Catholic Church, not as a sect of Christians peculiar to one country-or one of those numerous little societies which we see every where established, but as the massy pile erected by Jesus Christ himself upon a rock never to be overthrown. Against her the gates of hell shall never prevail. (Matt. xvi. 18.) Widely, however, as she is diffused, and numerous as are her members, (and within her pale she embraces infinitely more than any sect or society whatever,) still could she claim but a few centúries of existence never would I attempt to present her to you as the real Church of Christ. coeval with Christianity, the very word CATHOLIC, inserted in the Apostles' creed, proves the antiquity of her faith, and the purity of her doctrine. Indeed by professing that YOU BELIEVE THE HOLY

CATHOLIC CHURCH, you give her a priority over all others, and solemnly acknowledge that as you have received her from the Apostles, so you look to her for the treasures of grace and the doctrine of the Gospel. Through the long course of eighteen hundred years she has never ceased to be the joy of her affectionate children. In prosperity she has appeared beautiful as the sun, fair as the moon,—and in persecutions has shewn all the dignified firmness of her divine Master, thus proving herself worthy to share his illustrious triumphs.

Venerable as she is for her antiquity, not less distinguished has she been in all ages, by the eminence of her saints and the blood of her martyrs. So conspicuous indeed has been her sanctity—with such lustre has it incessantly shone forth in millions of her members, and such heroic examples have they displayed of self abnegation and sublime virtue, that her most violent enemies and unwearied calumniators have been forced to confess

the unrivalled efficacy of that religion, which can thus triumph over the weakness of human nature, and exalt man above himself.

The next point I am to speak upon is the dignity of her ritual service. I admit that no worship, no devotion can be acceptable to God, but such as springs from the heart,—and with holy David I will grant that the prayer of a contrite and humble soul is more pleasing to heaven than the incense that rises from holocausts and victims. - Jesus Christ himself has told us, that the humble acknowledgement of the publican met with favour in the sight of God, whilst the ostentatious prayer of the pharisee became his very condemnation. But while you justly observe, my Brethren, that only the act which springs from the heart-that only the prayer which is formed in the soul, and has God for its object, can be pleasing and acceptable to him; you are not to conclude that an exterior splendor,

added to our religious worship of God, is any way inconsistent with those passages of Scripture I have just noticed.—It is not an exterior grandeur, when joined with real devotion and piety, that is there condemned, for the ceremonies in the old law were appointed by God himself, as you may observe by your Bible. (Exod. cc. xxv.-xxx.) No, it is exterior pomp and state when void and divested of true devotion, that our Saviour so justly reprobates. You all know and feel the sensations which affect the soul, when any exterior object strikes the senses-how majesty and grandeur impress it with awe and respecthow the harmony of music influences the whole frame. - On this account the Almighty, in the law which he revealed to the Israelites, paid such particular attention to the exterior dignity and ceremonial part of the Jewish worship, that it exceeded all other religions in pomp and magnificence, and from all nations did persons come to witness the grandeur of

their temple, and the splendid solemnity of their religious service.

The Catholic Church in the same manner, sensible of the majesty of that God she adores, and willing to give the homage she pays him all the solemnity in her power, has omitted nothing in the regulation of her service and the order of her ceremonies, which can add dignity to that august worship, and infuse into the breasts of her children a holy fear and respect for their Creator*. You must ac-

[&]quot;The absurd rigorists in religion," says Diderot, quoted by the Author of Sermons after Pentecost, "know nothing of the effect of external ceremonies on the minds of the people. They create an enthusiasm which I sometimes feel myself. I never witness the ceremony of a procession—the long line of Priests in sacerdotal habits; the crowds which precede and follow them in religious silence; the multitude prostrate on the ground;—I never hear their grave and pathetic music, without the strongest sensations of devotion, and without the tribute of a tear. I knew a Protestant Painter in Rome, who used to allow, that he never saw the Sovereign Pontiff officiate in St. Peter's, but he became a Catholic (sans devenir Catholique,") and adds the Philosopher, "if you suppress

knowledge, my Brethren, something singularly grand and striking in the holy sacrifice of the Mass. You need not be told, that it carries with it all the appearance of a sacred solemn act of religion :and you are aware, that it often excites sentiments of great devotion, even in those who are not of our communion. And if the same may be asserted of every part of her service, how impressive, how dignified would you not own it, were you to witness the splendor with which it is attended in Catholic countries, and as it once was in your favoured island of Britain. With the Psalmist you would exclaim in the affections of your souls, How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts, how happy are they who dwell in thy house! (Ps. lxxxiii. 2.)

The service which was then conducted with all the solemnity, that the orders of her hierarchy—the magnificence of her

the sensible symbols, the rest becomes a metaphysical gallimatia, as varied as the variety of men's imaginations." Essais sur la Peinture. Cathedrals, *, the richness of her ornaments and sacred vessels could give it,

* "The religious structures, (writes Nightingalet,) that remain to testify the piety and magnificence of former ages, were erected in the unrestrained spirit of religious enthusiasm, conscious of extensive resources, and animated to exertion by every motive of temporal ambition, and of future hope; and directed by a lofty ardour of conceptions, accordant with the character of the Catholic worship."

"The observer who compares the magnitude, the number, and the magnificence of the structures erected within the compass of three hundred years (between A. D. 1000 and A. D. 1400) with the progress of Ecclesiastical Architecture in England since the accession of Elizabeth, will find no hesitation in admitting, that within any twenty years of that period, a greater amount of architectural taste, and of wealth and enthusiasm to render that taste effectual, was called into action, than during the whole of the 17th or 18th centuries. The labours of Sir Christopher Wren, unremitted and extensive as they were, scarcely effected so great a progress in Ecclesiastical Architecture, as was conceived and executed by men whose names are now forgotten. The very conception of Henry the VIIth's Chapel demonstrates an enthusiasm of feeling and a confidence in the limitless extent of his resources, that at once exalts the character of the architect, and evinces the spirit of the age, as operated upon by the

you now behold performed among yourselves in a more simple and plain manner,

character of its religion. Whatever may be the ultimate decision of men of taste on the comparative excellencies of Grecian and Gothic architecture, it must be admitted, that in England the productions of the admirers of the ancients bear no comparison, even as works of genius and taste, with those of the Catholic artists. Even St. Paul's, the greatest effort of English Protestantism, would not have existed but for the model and the example afforded by Catholic enthusiasm. And what comparison can even this structure, and many of the most celebrated efforts of the same architecture sustain, with the classical structures that, beneath the sway of Catholicism, have exalted modern Rome into the rival of its parent?"

"The religious enthusiasm of the people of Italy, and the peculiar bias of the Catholic Religion in that portion of Europe, were restrained and directed, by the models of ancient architecture continually occurring to their view, and operating with imperceptible influence on their architectural taste; but the northern nations, having no models to imitate, yet excited by the same devotional feelings, struck out a new path of architectural science, and by the united force of piety and genius, accomplished the creation of those mighty and picturesque structures, which strike the vulgar with awe and the judicious with admiration. Every form of grace is exhibited in these wonderful fabrics, ennobled by the most lofty magnificence, and varied by the most exhaust-

though not less pleasing and grateful to the Almighty. As Abraham's and Jacob's

less ingenuity. To him who estimates the excellence of a building by the rule and compass, or admits nothing to be excellent that was not invented by the Greeks and admired by the Romans; the beauty and magnificence of Gothic architecture may be invisible; but by all who possess susceptibility of feeling, or in whom a cultivated taste directs, rather than represses, the enthusiasm of sentiment, the productions of Gothic art must excite the most lively sensations of pleasure, astonishment, and veneration."

"It would appear, therefore, that the natural consequence of the Reformation has been to deprave our taste for Grecian architecture, to reduce the Protestants, even as the imitators of the classical models, beneath the level of their Catholic predecessors and contemporaries, to circumscribe the operation of that small portion of taste which actually remained, and to render their efforts even less successful and less extensive. It has also tended to retard the progress, and prevent the arrival at perfection of that style of Gothic architecture, which is in its present state so worthy of our admiration, and which, had the same stimulus to its pursuit, and the same means of advancing it continued to exist, would have, probably, been modified into a perfect system, as regular in its laws and proportions as effective in its combinations."

"The unfavourable influence of the Reformation on the arts, may be regarded, however, as more than counterbalanced by its propitious effect on the world of literature. sacrifices on a stone in the open air were as acceptable in the sight of God, as the rich

That its tendency, indeed, was exclusively beneficial to the interests of learning, or the belles lettres, cannot be admitted; and that many of the revolutions in poetical taste, and on general science, must be ascribed to causes that would have operated had the reformation never been effected, it does not become the candour or the honesty of a Protestant writer to deny. The history of poetry, and the other departments of elegant literature, does not justify us in supposing, that its immediate operation was in any degree favourable to refinement of taste, or to the successful flights of poetical genius. The most celebrated poets and historians of modern Europe-men whose genius was only equalled by their learning and their taste-Tasso, Guarini, Metestasio, Ariosto, and Boccacio, were natives of Italy, and sincere Catholics."-" The solemn and lofty character of the Catholic worship is chiefly observable when it ennobles their images, and exalts their sentiments. It would appear à priori, indeed, that the influence of the reformation on the poetical taste of the continental converts, must have been in some degree injurious. It dissipated the habits and the emotions that must have been impressed and excited by the frequent contemplation of Catholic magnificence, and by the frequent participation of the awful and magnificent ceremonies of the Church. In place of these it substituted an austerity of manner, which characterized even those individuals who had no regard to strictness of conduct, and taught even the most enlightened Protestants to regard and numerous victims of Solomon in the gorgeous temple of Jerusalem, so your form of worship, my Friends, is as agreeable to heaven, as that which is paid to the Deity in the superb and noble fabric of St. Peter's, accompanied with the pomp and state of the Bishop of Rome. Which admission should suffice to convince all, that the Catholic Church in her religious service, does not confine her worship to exterior rites and ceremonies—her homage is pure and holy, and if any part appears otherwise to you, it is because you misunderstand it.

Having as briefly as possible spoken

every description of tasteful illusion, or splendid display, as partaking of sinfulness and idolatry. Those pleasing associations which are the offspring of superstition, contribute to the excellence of every production of fancy, and animate and assist the strains of legitimate poetry. From the use of many allusions and images, also, of essential consequence to poetical effect, the continental Protestants were excluded; and even in England a large proportion of the community regarded the "holy anthem sounding from afar," and the "full drawn tone of the organ," as relics of the most detestable idolatry."

of the public worship of the Catholic Church, I wish time would permit to say something on the excellence of her discipline: but I must pass on to consider the unity of her faith, which undoubtedly claims your admiration in a high degree. That faith which the apostles received from Jesus Christ, and which they transmitted to their successors, she in all ages has held fast, uncorrupted by error and unchanged by novelty. That faith which she here unfolds to you, is the same that she teaches in the wilds of America, and on the shores of India-so that from whatever clime a man may come, if he tells you that he is a member of the Catholic Church, you have an exact knowledge of what he believes. Which, wonderful as it may appear, is no more than the necessary consequence of true doctrine.-For since whatever is taught is founded on the authority of God, who will not and cannot deceive, it is impossible that any truth,

which he has revealed to his Church, should not be the same in the one part of the world as in another—the same in your understandings as in mine.

Relying therefore on the promise of Christ, that he will abide with his Church, and teach her all truth to the end of the world, (Matt. xxviii. 20.) a Catholic finds not more difficulty in assenting to any truth she proposes to him as an article of faith, than he would in admitting the oral testimony of God himself. And this is a submission which the Church requires from all her children, grounded on the sentence of Jesus Christ, he that will not hear the Church, let him be considered as a heathen or a publican. (Matt. xvii. 17.) You are no way constrained to be members of the Catholic Church; she disdains compulsion, and as you were free to enter within her sanctuary, you are at full liberty to depart. Your number can make no perceptible decrease in the fold of Christ, it would not be more missed in the

multitude than a few drops of water taken from the ocean. Remember then, it is in vain to pretend to belong to the Catholic Church, unless you profess her faith .-As I set out with this proposition, that a Church is a congregation of persons united by the profession of the same faith, so a difference of faith will indicate a distinction of churches, and resistance to her authority in one single point, separate you from her communion, according to the declaration of St. Paul: him after the first and second admonition avoid, knowing that such a one sinneth and is subverted, being condemned by his own judgment. (Tit. iii. 10.)

By having invariably pursued from the beginning this line of conduct, the Catholic Church has preserved her faith unaltered, and effectually secured it against all changes for the time to come. Her enemies may multiply around her; but firmly established upon a rock, with the eternal promise of Christ, that the gates

of hell shall never prevail against her, she remains unshaken amidst a host of foes, and through the protection of the Holy Ghost, who shall teach her all truth,—and abide with her for ever, (John xvi. 13.xiv. 16.) placed beyond the access of error and corruption, she can never need Raised aloft upon her im-REFORM. moveable basis, she is visible to the whole world; (Matt. v. 14.)—her unity in head and faith is the link of connection to all her members;—the living authority of her Bishops is their rule of doctrine, whilst the treasures of her sacraments flow incessantly through the channels of her Priesthood to multitudes innumerable, and conduct her millions to the mansions of eternal bliss.



SERMON XIV.

ON THE FALSE GROUNDS, ON WHICH PROTESTANTS BUILD THE JUSTIFICATION OF THEIR SCHISMATICAL SEPARATION FROM THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God. (John, Ep. 1. iv. 1.)

IN nothing, my Brethren, is greater caution requisite than in permitting our judgments to be determined by the impressions we have received in early education. At that period the young and tender mind is easily biassed—engraft but the sentiment, it will root itself, and grow up with the vigour of man. On this account, with great reason, many parents are extremely anxious that the first sentiments and ideas which are communicated

to their offspring should be honourable and virtuous, because, it is almost certain they will give a character to their thoughts and actions through the remainder of their lives. If then our conduct and judgments are liable to be influenced by the early impressions of infancy, how much does it become us, when advanced to maturity, to be circumspect in confiding to them, and to beware that our understandings are not made the sport of youthful prejudice. However, although this caution will meet the approbation of every prudent man, it is not generally noticed as particularly necessary on the score of religion. For, my Brethren, it is not less true than extraordinary, that the ideas men imbibe on religion during the period of their childhood and education, commonly constitute the sentiments they profess on that subject through the remainder of their lives; and that to a manly and instructive enquiry they seldom or never afterwards proceed. Whether it be, that

they prefer talking to thinking on religion, or conclude that no new information can be obtained on the subject, I will not pretend to decide. But certain it is, that as almost all determine without examination, so almost all must rashly judge by the impressions which have been first implanted in them. Now of all impressions, those of a religious nature are the most dangerous to act upon; since, by interesting the passions, they often delude the judgment. The matter too intimately concerns us ever to be viewed with indifference; and from being zealous it is easy to become rash; and often the mind vehemently defends, because the heart vehemently covets.

If for a while we consider the temper of men's minds on religion amongst ourselves, is it probable, nay is it possible, that any correct judgment can be formed of one Christian by the impressions which are taken from the heated imagination of another, of a different denomination?

Must not every such decision be, in the highest degree, both precipitate and unjust? Yes, undoubtedly; this candour itself will acknowledge. Nevertheless it is, I repeat, from these sources that men usually draw their information on religion, and it is of these materials that, for the most part, they compose those sentiments which are to give a character to the human heart. Prejudice, then, and not reason, must rule it in such circumstances, and to that should we principally ascribe those erroneous and suborned judgments which are so often given, and so violently urged against Catholics in this land. People indeed frequently express their astonishment at the prejudices which exist against them; but, for my part, I cannot help declaring my surprise that they are not more strong. For if it be true, as I have asserted, that these conclusions are generally formed without examination from impressions received from others, particularly those implanted in them during the course of

their education, it is impossible that Catholics should not be objects of execration and alarm. Ideas of this kind the very child draws in with his milk :- even before the light of reason has shot into his soul, he is taught to believe that the Catholies, invidiously called Papists, are a class of monsters. Is not every old nurse provided with a history of their abominations and bloody deeds, with which, for his entertainment, she diversifies her stories about witches and ghosts? Cannot she recount the horrid impieties they have committed, tell the thousands of heretics they have slain; in short, has not she learnt to talk of the Gunpowder-Plot, and repeat the long catalogue of Fox's Martyrs *? To the ominous matron succeeds

^{*} The Gun-Powder-Plot was the scheme of a Protestant Minister to bring odium and reproach upon the whole body of English Catholics; and hence King James the First, in whose reign it happened, always called it Cecil's Plot. Though it appears that only nine persons were acquainted with the design of blowing up the Parliament House, viz. Catesby, Piercy, Fawkes, Winter, Keys, Bates, Tresham, and two of the name of Wright,

the reverend instructor, who loses no time in strengthening the pious dispositi-

yet the character of the whole Catholic body, has been since made responsible for the misconduct of men, who in the King's Proclamation were described in these terms: "Whereas Thomas Piercy and some other confederates, being of lewd life, insolent dispositions, and for the most part of desperate estates"-This trick had succeeded so well in fixing reproach and suspicion on the Catholics, that malicious as it was, it was again resorted to in the reign of Charles the Second by another minister of state, who contrived to make a fictitious plot, of one Titus Oates and a few accomplices, pass for the real design and act of all the English Catholics. (See Echard's History of England.) --- As to Fox's Book of Martyrs, there never was a work that exhibited more internal evidence of being dictated by the spirit of darkness. His heroes in the first instance, seem all to have been taken into custody for riotous and turbulent conduct .- 2dly, At the risk of their souls as well as their bodies, they gave answers on questions much above their understandings, with a pertness, an insolence, and a sacrilegious profaneness, which marked that they possessed more of fanaticism than virtue, and that to HUMILITY, the ground-work of piety, they were utter strangers. The whole work is a mass of FALSEHOODS: and I do not hesitate to declare, that it reflects both on the sense as well as the virtue of Protestants, to admire either the lives or deaths described in these unauthenticated accounts of Fox's fanatics *.

ons of enmity to Popery, which his pupil, unless he be a backward genius indeed, will certainly manifest. Every book put into his hands will be more or less excellent, in proportion as it can expose its deformity; and the virtue of the youth, and his value to society, will be sure to keep pace with his hatred to Catholics. His playmates have all their strange histories to tell him on that subject, and if he do but enter a church or a meeting-house, to hear the word of God, the sound of Papist, Popish Superstition, and Romish Idolatry, so incessantly ring upon his ears, that his imagination becomes fired, and he concludes the whole of his religion must consist in hating them *. And how ma-

^{*} We cannot be surprised at the hatred which Protestants bear to what they conceive to be the Catholic religion, when not a book is ever put into the hands of a youth, to instruct him in English history, which does not misrepresent and traduce the Catholics. I have heard it asserted, (and if any one will read "Whitaker's Life of Mary Queen of Scots vindicated," I believe he will allow the assertion to rest upon a good foundation) that when

many thousands are there, who have never received any other religious instruction from their tutors and parents, if it may be so called, than what I have just mentioned?

Mr. Hume carried his manuscript History of England to the bookseller, with a draft of Queen Elizabeth's character, widely differing from the description he has since drawn of that sovereign, the bookseller informed him, that his portrait, though faithful, was so very unlike what the English were accustomed to believe of their VIRGIN QUEEN, that it would occasion a difference of five hundred pounds in the sale of his work, and absolutely shake his claim to popularity as an historian. Mr. Hume took the hint, carried his manuscript home, and wrote a second account of that princess, in which every feature is described with the pencil of a flatterer, instead of being faithfully drawn by the pen of the historian. But Whitaker has the immortal honour of tearing off the veil, and of exposing her genuine character in the hideous nakedness of its real deformity. Love of popularity, I fear, is a feeling which has influenced a great many of this country in their writings, and what in another state they will surely have to answer for, under the head of calumny. Even that Book, which every Protestant carries in his hand with him, into the presence of his Creator, The Book of Common Prayer, pronounces the Catholic worship IDOLATROUS !!!

Such, therefore, being the impressions which persons generally bring with them into public life, we should no longer be astonished at the prejudices of many enlightened characters in the state, whose ideas respecting Catholics, usually betray such gross ignorance, and misconception, that we cannot help laughing at the portraits they pretend to draw, whilst we lament that men who can rise so great on one subject, should become so little on another. The whole tenor of their thoughts and actions proves that, like persons who have been frightened with the direful tales of spectres, they are haunted with the terrors of their own imaginations; and as the one can never think of a churchyard, or uninhabited castle, without perceiving walking ghosts and spirits; so the other can never separate the ideas of Catholic, bloodshed and superstition. Now, as this undoubtedly is not a very pleasant and Christian like temper of mind for men to indulge, and always occasioned by a

neglect of inquiry, so in a fair examination an effectual remedy will be found.— For I am not afraid to affirm, that, in spite of this mass of prejudice, Catholics are only disliked by those who know them not, and I never found the Protestant who was personally familiar with any, whether priests or laymen, who did not esteem them. Nay I have witnessed the most hereditary and deep rooted dislike converted into the strongest attachment.

Soliciting your kind attention, it is now, therefore, my wish to notice some of these charges, as the grounds on which many have pretended to justify their separation from the Catholic Church, or their breach of communion with the See of Rome: that is, in other words, to discuss the merits of that pretended reformation, which so unfortunately terminated in a schism between Protestants and Catholics.

The accusations brought against the Church of Rome, may, I believe, be reduced to these heads: universal corruption

amongst her members—superstition in her worship—and a systematic plan of making religion subservient to the passions of men—and lastly, I might add, the most heinous crime of idolatry.

Now, to get rid, as soon as possible, of this last grave and abominable assertion, that the Church of Rome is idolatrous, and which I know not on what principle of charity or justice, stands charged against her in the Common Prayer Book of the Church of England, I will only ask in what it is that her idolatry does consist? If by a leading article of our religion, we profess to worship and adore one only God, the Creator and Sovereign Lord of all things, who for ever lives in an indivisible Trinity of Persons; -neither in the heavens above, nor in the earth beneath, nor in the waters under the earth, is there any object that can share the homage we pay to him. If we offer our adoration to the body of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar, as we should do, was he carnally

present to us, under the shape of man, is it not wholly and solely directed to Jesus, the eternal Son of the living God, who is exalted in the glory of his Father? His merits alone, we believe, constitute the source of our justification; and by his blood only our sins are washed away. Our faith teaches that no other mediation is available to appease the justice of our injured God; and that not the joint prayers of saints and angels, not all the good works of men, will suffice to cover from his anger the smallest sin. God, therefore, in three persons, is the sole object of our worship, and Jesus Christ our only Mediator.

It would be unnecessary here to advert to the saints and angels, were not something perhaps particularly expected, on which account I shall simply state, that we honour them as the friends and favourites of God, through respect to him; whilst their relics and images are only valued because they are memorials of them.

Yet both in this and every other subor dinate gradation of relative respect, our minds and affections are immoveably fixed on that Supreme Being, who gave them existence. The charge of idolatry, then, which has been urged, contains a calumny of the blackest die; and consequently can be no just motive for separating from the Catholic Church. For Thorndike, a distinguished Protestant divine of the Church of England, justly maintains that whoever employs a pretext for leaving a Church is guilty of schism, and concludes the very first chapter of his Just Weights, by declaring that "all those, who justified the Reformation, by charging the Pope to be Antichrist, and the Papists idolaters, make themselves thereby schismatics before God."

The next accusation we will examine shall be, that the Church of Rome is superstitious in her worship. Trusting that we are all agreed about the object and end of religion, which is the honour and wor-

ship of God alone, I believe the only difference of opinion will be respecting the most proper mode of rendering this homage to him. Persons, who criticise the style of worship in the Catholic Church, should reflect that it is not of modern date, nor according to European forms, but like all antiquated fashions, carries with it its own apology. Had the Church of Rome sprung up in the last century among the Protestant sects, undoubtedly the phlegm of northern temper would have given a different character to her devotion and piety; she would not have clothed her service in so much show and parade, nor have been so fond of gaudy magnificence.

But whilst we prudently distinguish between European and Asiatic notions of taste, and advert to the manners of those countries, where Christianity originated, we also must remember, that 1800 years have made a great change in the world *.—When the Christian religion

^{*} It is never more necessary to be cautious than in censuring and condemning the prejudices of others. Pre-

was first planted on the ruins of Paganism, the minds of men were so filled with the

judice is common to human nature—a consequence of education-a habit of mind.-In censuring therefore the prejudices of others, we often do it purely thro' our own prejudices, to which we are blinded. Prejudice must always be indifferent and harmless in itself, unless it controul and mislead reason - indeed this quality of the mind does not deserve the name of prejudice, until it thus improperly disturbs that faculty. It would be more becomingly styled PREFERENCE OF TASTE. Since, therefore, taste is simply a relative AFFECTION of the mind, dependant on the causes by which it is excited, we act against reason, if we refuse to others that right of preference which we claim ourselves; or if we presume to condemn the prejudices of others, merely because they are in opposition to those of our own choice. Upon this principle it follows, that we are not authorized to pass a judgment on the prejudices of other nations and times; for we should always recollect, that these dislikes and censures must be reciprocal, and that we can never condemn them, without being condemned in our turn. "Among the Chinese books, containing the rules of civility," says a distinguished writer, "there is one which has upwards of three thousand, every thing being set down at large. The common salutations, the visits, the presents, the feasts, and whatever is done in public or private, are rather so many standing laws, than fashions gradually introduced by custom. Almost the whole of these public ccremonies may be reduced to the manner of bowing,

religious rites paid to their heathen deities, that when this coincided with the ordinances of God to Moses, it was judged proper by similar ceremonies and pomp to direct their attention to the true God*. The

kneeling down, and prostrating one or more times, according to the occasion, place, age, or quality of the persons; especially in visiting, making presents, or treating friends."

"Foreigners who are obliged to conform to these fatiguing ceremonies, are frightened with them at first, whereas the Chinese, who are brought up to them from their infancy, instead of being discouraged, are pleased with them, and believe that for the want of the like education, other nations are become barbarous. And that the observation of these customs may not wear out in time, there is a tribunal at Peking, whose principal business is to preserve the ceremonies of the empire, wherein it is so strict that it will not exempt even strangers from the obligation: for which reason, before the embassadors are introduced at court, the custom is to instruct them privately forty days together, and exercise them in the ceremonies of the country; much after the same manner as our comedians practice before they come to act their parts on the stage." Du Halde's History of China .--See also the Preface to the Liturgy, or Book of Common Prayers.

^{*} See Challoner's Preface to the Catholic Christian.

incense which had been previously offered to idols, was now burnt in honour of him whom the heavens adore. The ornaments which had clothed the Pagan Priests, hereafter became the sacred vestments of the Priests of Jesus Christ. temples profaned by idolatrous worship, were converted into Christian churches; and so far from considering this mode of spreading religion superstitious, I should rather pronounce them superstitious who object to it. In the same sentiment the Protestant Thorndike perfectly agrees; for, blaming those whose unbending tempers will suffer them to conform to nothing, he says, "I shall prefer the wisdom of St. Gregory of Rome, by whom this nation received Christianity; ordering the Pagan festivals of our ancestors to he converted into the assemblies of Christians *."-" For the service of God accord-

^{* &}quot;In the change of religion," writes the judicious Burke, "care was taken to render the transition from falsehood to truth as little violent as possible. Though

ing to Christianity sanctifieth all times, all places, all gestures, all circumstances, that can pretend to express, to procure, to advance that attention of mind, that devotion of soul, wherewith Christians

the first proselytes were kings, it does not appear that there was any persecution. It was a precept of Pope Gregory, under whose auspices the mission was conducted, that the heathen temples should not be destroyed, especially where they were well built; but that first removing the idols, they should be consecrated anew by holier rites and to better purposest, in order that the prejudices of the people might not be too rudely shocked by a declared profanation of what they had so long held sacred, and that every where beholding the same places, to which they had formerly resorted for religious comfort, they might be gradually reconciled to the new doctrines and ceremonies, which were there introduced; and as the sacrifices used in the Pagan worship were always attended with feasting, and consequently were highly grateful to the multitude, the Pope ordered that oxen should as usual be slaughtered near the church, and the people indulged in their ancient festivity. Whatever popular customs of heathenism were found to be absolutely not incompatible with Christianity, were retained, and some of them were continued to a very late period. Deer were at a certain season brought into St. Paul's church in London, and laid

[†] Bed. Hist. Eccle. 1. 1. c. 30. ‡ Ibid.

profess to worship God, in spirit and in truth."

Having now pointed to the origin of these ceremonies in the Church, I must add, she has perpetuated them from two particular motives: first, because they make a great impression, by adding a sensible dignity to religion: and, secondly, on account of her decided aversion to every species of innovation. Her ruling principle has always been: quod acceptum, hoc traditum; what has been delivered to us, that we transmit to others. The business of reform is easily begun, but who can say where it shall end? Of this, I

on the altar; * and this custom subsisted until the Reformation. The names of some of the Church festivals were, with a similar design, taken from those of the heathen, which had been celebrated at the same time of the year. Nothing could have been more prudent than these regulations; they were indeed formed upon a perfect understanding of human nature."

Abridgement of Eng. Hist. c. 2.

^{*} Dugdale's Hist. of St. Paul's.

think, events in politics, as well as in religion, leave us little to doubt. Since, therefore, such is the public worship of the Catholic Church, the only question is, is it superstitious, or is it not? I answer most positively in the negative. For not only are these ceremonies and rites the mere means employed of outwardly expressing to God the interior piety and homage of the heart, but were any of them superstitious, they would place us in contradiction with our own doctrinal principles, which declare every species of superstition to be highly criminal and unlawful, as our Catechisms and books of instruction will shew. Should persons then object to the public service and religious rites of the Church of Rome, merely because they are not exactly agreeable to their sentiments, let them coolly reflect how difficult it is to meet the opinions of a number on any one subject. Let them prudently examine into them, and not conclude that they must be superstitious,

as ignorant savages suppose—a mathematical instrument designed for witchcraft. The charge of superstition, therefore, is groundless and slanderous. In saying this, however, I merely allude to those Christians who are instructed and acquainted with their religion; for ignorance and superstition, like pride and weakness, will be found associated in every class of men*.

* There is no word more often used in an indefinite and improper sense than Superstition. In its true signification it implies that false worship, which sorcerers and magicians pay to secondary agents, and which terminate at them.—It also implies that mistaken worship and religious dread, which men of ignorant minds or deluded imaginations shew to particular objects, places, and occurrences, which, however, is less criminal than the former. But superstition is also a term very frequently but most improperly used, to express that worship which is paid to God, by religious rites and ceremonies. Superstition I have defined to be a false or mistaken worship, which is not referred to God. Whereas if all divine worship expressed by rites and ceremonies, be superstition, then the whole ritual and ceremonial law of Moses would be a system of superstition, prescribed by God himself. In the Catholic Church I know of no rite or ceremony which has not the sanction of a divine ordinance either in the old or the new law

The next point on which I am equally ready to meet an adversary, is, that the Church of Rome has adopted a systematic plan of making religion subservient to the passions of men. This is a weighty accusation no doubt, my Brethren, but it is a calumny completely unfounded. In fact, the religion we profess, far from being a system incentive to the passions, must appear to those acquainted with it, wholly calculated to restrain them. Independent of its faith and doctrine, which are purely scriptural, embracing the most rigid precepts and sublime virtues of the Gospel, the discipline and government of the Church, in as much as they affect every order and rank of her members, from the highest to the lowest, have been regulated in her General Councils, with such wisdom and precision, that if men would but rule themselves and others by those canons and sacred decrees, the interests of religion and the state could never clash; on the contrary, happiness and virtue would

unite*. But we are men, and as such, shall always be faulty. It is not always the individual who carries the mitre, whose lamp burns with the oil of sanctity—It is not always he who has the law before him, who regards it. Those corrupted passions with which we are all born, will often make their appearance where virtue only should dwell, and the most holy ordinance will often be perverted to the vilest abuse. How frequently have we seen this observation verified in the history of the Jewish Church; I could instance the sons of Heli, I could instance the Pharisees: on which account Jesus Christ has chalked out for us the line of conduct to be pursued in these circumstances. All things therefore, says he, whatsoever they shall say to you, observe and do. But according to their works do ye not, for they say and do

^{*} I conceive it is only necessary for a person to read the decrees and decisions of the Council of Trent, to admire the wisdom, care, and precision with which they are drawn;—they are models for legislative enactments.

not. (Matt. xxiii. 3.) That imitators of the Pharisees have been found among ourselves, nay that living examples may be produced, I am willing to admit; but they are evils the Church has always deplored. Much is she constrained to tolerate, when the remedy is dangerous, and not unfrequently impossible. It is necessary, says our Divine Saviour, that scandals come; that is according to the course of human things they must come.

I have at this moment in my mind many of these abuses, as they exist either amongst ourselves, or in Catholic countries; and deeply lament and deplore their existence. But do they originate in religion, or in the bad passions of its professors? Most assuredly not in the former, —most undoubtedly in the latter. Can that religion which counsels the renunciation of all things, be favourable to avarice? Can that system which prescribes continual warfare against the world, the flesh and all their concupiscences, which

continually preaches the mortifications and humiliations of the Cross, be friendly to worldly pride or sensual gratifications? But you ask, why are not men such as they should be? I conceive that those who have asked this question are themselves full able to answer it. Should secret pride, however, prevent them, I believe I can assist them with these few words-"It is because they are like yourselves,"-and subject to the same passions, often follow their dictates in preference to those of religion and virtue. Undoubtedly, my friends, this is lamentable; it is distressing to see men preferring the kingdom of this world to the kingdom of eternity. But such is our moral condition, -not less defective than the physical: and to expect a different result, we must change the nature of man :- we must banish from his heart those relics of original guilt; those traces of early prevarication; and we must give him a mind and a conscience

that needed not a Saviour. I am not, said he, come to call the just, but SINNERS to repentance. (Mark ii. 17.)

We are now to consider the last charge adduced against the Church of Rome, as a ground of separation, -universal corruption amongst her members. But, as I cannot take this expression in its full latitude, since even Protestants must allow that there are exceptions, it will be necessary, my Friends, for you to distinguish between the individuals, who may be vicious, and the Church itself, or the whole community. Therefore, although I am ready to admit that the bad ever have, and ever will form a considerable proportion in the Catholic Church, nevertheless this partial corruption amongst her members, can never be charged against herself, whilst it is not in conformity to, but exists in defiance of her doctrine, her precepts, and her exhortations.-The obduracy and sinful deportment of these, have ever been bewailed by the better

part, and at no period were there wanting characters, whose lives edified them with the examples of the most unblemished virtue. The lamp of holiness has never ceased to burn within her; and though numbers of her children have strayed into the walks of impure life, yet multitudes also have kept the ways of innocence and grace. Nay, in these very same walks of life, where many have scandalized their neighbour, the virtue of others has shone with peculiar lustre; and directed by that same religion, they have attained to a perfection of disinterested piety and character, of which we have no other examples in the history of the world. Many are called, said Jesus Christ, but few are chosen. (Matt. xxii. 14.)

So far, then, from condemning the Catholic religion, because the great majority of its professors are corrupt, that religion could not be recognised as divine were it otherwise—because it would either want an essential characteristic, pourtray-

ed by Christ himself, or would rest upon authorities evidently false, and God would want an attribute essential to his existence, that of TRUTH. For if many are not called where few only are chosen,—or if the bulk of Christians were not to follow the open road which terminates in perdition, Jesus Christ would not have foreseen with the eyes of God. Granted, then, that there was a great corruption among men at the period of the Reformation; granted that, at this day, in many Catholic cities and provinces, depravity of morals is more generally diffused than amongst ourselves, though God knows we observe too much: has the Church ever altered the tone of her doctrine? has she relaxed in the spirit of her precepts? But to bring the question home, I ask any one in this assembly, what should be done in these circumstances? Why they will answer, REFORM-REFORM, most undoubtedly, but touch not faith in reforming morals.—We all wish to REFORM, but to

effect this general reformation is the difficulty. If men are seldom so far blinded as not to see their own faults and errors, I ask not any adversary to point to the evil, but to shew us an effectual remedy. The work to be done is simple and obvious: it is to make the libertine chaste, the proud man humble, the voluptuous penitent, the covetous just; the Pastor attentive to his flock: but, I repeat, the difficulty is to effect all this. Though the way be straight, can you always force the stubborn animal forward? Jesus Christ laboured in vain with the Jews; St. Paul often laboured in vain with the primitive Christians: so did the other Apostles, and so have all their successors in the ministry. Broad is the road, and wide the gate that leads to perdition, and many there are who go in thereat. (Matt. vii, 13.) Extended corruption, therefore, was a vain excuse, an empty pretext for breaking communion with the Catholic Church.

Such, I believe, is the faithful and cor-

rect representation of things as they have stood from the beginning of Christianity in the Catholic Church; and no period in her history can be named with which it will not be found distinctly to accord. It bears some near resemblance to a beautiful fabric, which displays the grandeur of ancient magnificence, but whose sculptured walls and cornished roof lodge the dust of ages and the spider's web. So stood the Church of Christ in the year 1517, when this circumstance drew the attention of a bold and aspiring man, whose impetuous soul would have been greater had it not been rash. This man was Luther. Contemplating the fair structure, he exclaimed with a well ordered zeal, "Is it not a reproach that such a noble edifice should be thus disfigured with cobwebs and soil?" and immediately conceived the mighty plan of clearing it away.

But however praise-worthy the design, in the attempt he failed. Some parts were placed beyond the reach of ac-

cess, in others the raised work itself presented an impediment. Impatient and furious with disappointment, he at once lays the axe to the foundation, and determines to level the whole with the ground. Here the real master and guardian interferes, and exposing to him those pontifical keys which marked both possession and authority, commanded him to desist; at the same time upbraiding him with the impiety and folly of destroying a fabric, because he could not, as he intended, remove the dust which it harboured. he impiously persisted; nay, in part succeeded, and with the materials collected from the old, formed that shapeless edifice of Protestantism, which afterwards became the contested inheritance of his associates.

This is a short but faithful sketch of what has been acted in the pretended Reformation, in which every thing was carried by violence and passion. When the imagination becomes inflamed, reason is little heard. I have already admitted

were placed beyond the reach of ac-

that at the period to which we allude there were undoubtedly some grievances in the discipline of the Church, which called loudly for a remedy; especially on the subject of its ministers, and the abuse of indulgences*, which admission may be

* That the Church wished to correct these and all other abuses, is evident from the following decisions of the Council of Trent.

" It is to be wished that those who become Bishops should know what is required of them, and understand that they have not been called to that office for their own benefit, nor that they might live in riches and luxury, but s that they might seek and labour for the glory of God. Neither is it doubtful, that the rest of the faithful will be more easily excited to religion and innocence, when they observe those who are placed over them, intent on the kingdom of God and the salvation of souls, instead of worldly concerns. As the holy Synod sees this to be particularly essential to the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline, it admonishes all Bishops frequently to reflect upon it, and in every work and action of life (which may be considered a species of instruction) to comport themselves in a manner worthy of their vocation: but first, let them so regulate their whole conduct, that others may discover in them examples of frugality, modesty, and chastity, and what renders us so pleasing to God, of humility. This holy Synod also decrees, that what has been said respecting Bishops, is addressed not only to

applicable in part at this very day, to particular provinces and countries. I have

those who hold ecclesiastical benefices, whether secular or regular, whatever be their rank, but also to the Cardinals of the holy Roman Church: for as the government of the whole Church rests upon them, in quality of counsellors of his Holiness the Pope, they would be very culpable, were they not to shine by their lives and virtues, who by their station have the eyes of all directed upon them." (Sess. xxv. de Ref. c. 1.)

" The holy Synod, desirous of removing and correcting those abuses which have taken place in the granting of indulgences, by which an occasion has been given for heretics to speak blasphemously of the very name, has unreservedly ordained by the present decree, that all nefarious profit for procuring them, which has given rise to so many abuses among Christians, shall be entirely abolished. But as to such as are occasioned through superstition, ignorance, irreverence, or in any other manner, and cannot without great difficulty be specially prevented, owing to erroneous notions peculiar to those places or provinces where they are practised—it commands all Bishops diligently to collect all such abuses existing in their dioceses, and to make report of them in the first provincial Synod: that after taking the opinion of the other Bishops, they may be immediately laid before the Sovereign Pontiff, in order that, by his authority and discretion, such steps may be taken as are beneficial to the whole Church: so that the advantages of these holy indulgences may be piously, religiously, and without profit dispensed to all the faithful." (Sess. xxv. de Reform. Decret. de Indul.)

moreover acknowledged, that where a laudable zeal for the honour of God's Church, and the good of souls, first prompted Luther and his associates to labour in the correction of these abuses, they are deserving of that praise which I will refuse the good intentions of none. But it is their want of humility, their pride of soul which we must condemn; for when they perceived that their exertions were not crowned with the merited success, they should not have suffered indignation and passion to hurry them on to the extravagant idea of destroying what they had intended to improve. it should never be forgotten, that Luther and his associates came forward in the business of Reform without any divine commission: they had no testimonials of credit to produce, no miracles to bear witness to their unauthorized assumption of power. But self commissioned, selfdelegated, they thrust their sickles into another man's harvest, and with the rebellious spirits of Dathan and Abiron (Num. xvi.) protested against the interference of authority.

The restoration of ancient discipline by the correction of all abuses, is an event which, as I first observed, has always been desired. "Who will grant me," cries St. Bernard, "to see before I die, the Church of God, such as it was in primitive times." (Ep. ad Pap. Eug.) But when we observe men setting aside all decency and regard to truth, when we behold them with rage and malice wantonly attacking the faith of the Church, and renouncing all submission to her authority, oh! if this is to be a reformation, verily the cure is worse than the disease *. It is far from my wish to

To give some notion of the temper of mind, with which they prosecuted their imaginary reformation, I will quote some passages from Luther's own works. "If Carlostadius," says he, "or any man else, could, five years ago, have convinced me, that there is nothing in the sacrament but bread and wine, he would have wonderfully obliged me; for I was examining this point with wonderful anxiety, and laboured with all my force to get clear of the difficulty;

speak a language of retaliation: but I will ask, since so much has been said against abuses in the Church of Rome, is the Protestant reformed religion immaculate and pure? Are there no vices and abominations amongst any of her members? How has it come to pass that reformation has begotten reformation, and division has again issued from division?

Concluding this discourse I once again advert to the strong prejudices existing against the Catholic Church, and caution all who value their salvation, to suspend

because by this means I know very well I should terribly incommode the Papacy. But I find myself without hope of escaping, for the text of the Gospel is so clear and strong, that it would not easily admit of a misconstruction." (Tom. 5. fol. 502.)—Hear him again determining the question of discipline respecting the marriage of the clergy. "If a Council," says he, "should grant Churchmen liberty to marry, I would think that man more in God's grace, who during his life kept three concubines, than he who married pursuant to the Council's decree; and that I would command, under pain of damnation, that no man should marry by the permission of such a Council, but should live chastely, or if that were impossible, not to despair though he kept a concubine." (Tom 2. fol. 421.)

their judgments until, by the light of inquiry, they can discern the truth. Dearly beloved, says St. John, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God. (1 Ep. iv. 1.) Learn to make the proper distinction, between the faith and doctrine of the Church, and the corrupt practices of individuals; between what is fact and what is calumny. Loudly has the Church protested against the imputations of her enemies; with the royal prophet, she daily exclaims in the 43d psalm, Judge me, oh God! and distinguish my cause from the people that is not holy, deliver me from the unjust and deceitful man. Though vilified and made a term of reproach, though persecuted and become an outcast, she looks forward to the day of her exaltation with Jesus in heaven, because with him she has drank of the chalice of affliction. Remember my words, says Jesus Christ, that I have spoken to you, the servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute painthough he seek a concentrate." (Tom 2)

you. If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you. (John xv. 20. 18.) These things I have spoken to you that you may not be scandalized. (John xvi. 1.)—Rejoice, (therefore), for behold your reward is great in heaven. (Luke vi. 23.)



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SERMON XV.

ON THE CHARGE OF IDOLATRY AND SUPERSTITION IN THE VENERATION OF PICTURES, IMAGES, RELICS, AND THE USE OF HOLY WATER.

Blessed is he, who shall not be scandalized in me. (Luke vii. 23.)

IT frequently happens, in the heat of argument and dispute, that persons more attentive to the solidity of their own reasoning, than to the conclusions of their adversaries, prolong a mighty war of words, conceiving themselves opponents, whilst, in reality, they are of the same mind and of the same sentiment. Since that unfortunate division of the old and new Church, which was brought about in the sixteenth century, such has been the warmth with which every question has been argued, that I am inclined to believe the parties seldom pro-

perly understood each other. Indeed, I am convinced, from observation, that a great portion of Protestants perfectly agree with Catholics on many points, on which they are supposed to differ, and could they but settle the terms, or words, in which they are to express their faith, it would be found very nearly resembling, if not exactly the same. Between the Catholic and the Protestant established churches, the partition is but thin, and, perhaps, with time, would have grown still thinner, had it not been for the ambitious and interested policy of a few, who laboured to foment discord, when peace should have been their offering, -who, instead of closing the wound, irritated the parts with every acrimonious application. God be thanked, however, it seems those days of religious animosity are fast disappearing, and I have reason to hope the time is not far distant, when we shall see the Protestant and the Catholic bury their past faults in a mutual love and esteem for

revelation must still divide them, charity will be found where unity is wanting. At present we often contend like enemies, because we conceive ourselves foes, when perhaps the point in dispute is conceded by all. But when interest and injury shall no longer attend to inflame the passions, our respective arguments will be proposed with temper, and weighed in the balance of equity.

There may be many who feel a degree of astonishment at the language just spoken, when I affirmed that on some points the Catholic and the Protestant were nearly if not perfectly agreed. But my Brethren, on the question I am going to treat this day, that which relates to sacred images and the ceremonies of religion,—a subject on which the contending parties have expended so much argument and labour, and which has been disputed at times with the greatest intemperance and abuse, our doctrine will be found in per-

fect unison. My object therefore this day will be to give that exposition of our doctrine respecting images, pictures, and the ceremonies of religion, which shall be intelligible to the humblest understanding; repeating as my text, blessed is he, who shall not be scandalized in me. (Luke vii. 23.)

There are three points of doctrine which are continually urged upon us by our adversaries, with a vehemence more than common to other subjects of dispute, and on which, many even ground the justification of their separation from the communion of the Catholic Church. They say, in the first place, that religion can never sanction or tolerate any superstitious practice: -2dly, that it is impious to give to any saint or graven thing any part of that honour which is due to God only: -3dly, that true religion does not consist in rites and ceremonies. These three propositions, as every one knows, have re-echoed from the pulpit and press, with a vast deal of noise through the kingdom, and have been directed so pointedly at Catholics, that it is impossible, but the generality of our countrymen must suppose, we really maintain the opposite opinion. Their astonishment therefore should be very great when I affirm, and am ready to prove, that Catholics believe exactly the same thing: that we reprobate and condemn, with our adversaries, the contrary doctrine, as Antichristian, superstitious, and impious. We challenge them openly to examine our catechisms and books of instruction, our prayer-books, our sermons, our controversies, and to produce a single sentence of any Catholic writer, which authorizes such diabolical principles *.

^{*} The holy Council of Trent declares, "that images of Christ, of the Mother of God, and of other saints, ought to be had and retained in churches, and that due honour and veneration is to be given to them: not however through a belief that there is any virtue or divinity in them, on account of which they are to be worshipped; or that any thing is to be asked of them; or that any trust is to be reposed in the images, as formerly was customary with the Gentiles, who placed their confidence in idols; but because the honour paid to them is referred

Here then a great mystery lurks, some will say.—No mystery at all, my Brethren.

to the prototypes they represent. So that by the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads and prostrate, we adore Christ, and venerate the saints,

whose images they are. Which is sanctioned by the decrees which councils have passed against the opponents of images, and especially by the decrees of the second

council of Nice."

" Let the Bishops however diligently show, that through the description of the mysteries of our redemption, given by pictures and other images, the people are instructed and assisted in retaining and assiduously observing the articles of faith:-that great advantage is derived from holy images, not only because the people are reminded of what has been done for them by Christ; but also because through the saints of God, miracles and edifying examples are brought within the notice of the faithful, so that they may return thanks to God, for them, and form their lives and conduct to an imitation of the saints, and be excited to prayer and the love of God, and the cultivation of piety."--- "Where any abuses however have crept into these holy and beneficial practices, the holy council earnestly desires that they may be corrected; so that no representation of what is false in doctrine, or calculated to mislead the ignorant into a dangerous error, be ever exhibited. Moreover let all superstition in the invocation of saints, the veneration of relics, or the pious use of images be abolished."-" The holy council also ordains, that it is not permitted to a person in any place, even in

The fact is, it was necessary to deceive, and the attempt has been completely suc-The Protestants have become the dupes of their own instructors, and we have suffered in our character, through their credulity. I am far from believing, however, that, now a days, many are to be found in the upper circles of life, who lean to such illiberal sentiments. Good sense has taught them to discard these prejudices, and a personal acquaintance with Catholics, has enabled them to see the falsehood of such infamous calumnies. Yet numbers there are in the middle and lower ranks, who comparing what they hear with the exterior aspect of our reli-

the most private chapel, to fix an unusual image, or to keep it with that intention, unless it be sanctioned by the Bishop: nor are new miracles to be admitted, nor relics to be received, without his approbation and consent; as soon as he has any notice of which, after assembling in council his divines and other pious persons, he shall determine as shall be most becoming truth and piety."——(Sess. xxv. De venerat. Sanct. et Imag.)

gion, hastily conclude, in spite of the most solemn and formal protestations, that we teach and profess the doctrines which have been falsely attributed to us, by our designing enemies. The reflections, then, which I have collected on this subject, for the sake of perspicuity, I shall divide under two heads. The first will include all I mean to say of pictures, images, and relics; - the 2d will contain an explanation of the rites and ceremonies of religion. In giving this exposition of our doctrine, I have no other object than the justification and instruction of my flock; and an earnest desire to remove a cause of scandal to many of my fellow-creatures: and in my unfeigned endeavours to discharge this duty, I trust I shall merit the approbation of every candid and enlightened Christian.

The Church has two motives for sanctioning the use of pictures, images, and relics; first, because they are instructive, 2dly, because they are venerable.

Every one knows, but particularly the more illiterate, how easy it is to form a just idea of an event, when they have seen it represented in a picture. Language itself is not so accurate, so intelligible as the eloquence of shades and colours. Let the ablest orator recount the fury of combatants in battle. let him tell the distresses of the shipwrecked mariner, he will not do it with half the effect, as he who describes it on canvass. There, nature appears in no borrowed dress; she is seen, she is known to all. She speaks in all languages, and neither study nor talents are requisite to understand her. Pictures, therefore, are the books of the ignorant, and often of the wisest; for in difficult sciences they are frequently employed to effect what language cannot so distinctly; and the mechanic, the mathematician and the philosopher will bear testimony to the aid they derive from them.

Like histories, moreover, they serve to deliver down to posterity the memory of

events, and every one will be ready to concede, that till the art of printing was discovered, and the people instructed to read, (and the last is a happy circumstance of very late date) they presented the most easy and effectual means of diffusing knowledge. Can any then feel surprised that the Catholic Church, which is as ancient as Christianity, should have adopted this method of spreading instruction among the faithful, and of teaching them the great mysteries of our holy religion? Can any be astonished that a Catholic Pastor, with this design, should hang up in his church a picture of the Nativity, Crucifixion and Ascension? If he does, it may be equally a matter of surprise, that these subjects should be explained to the flock from the pulpit. No, my Brethren, you must allow they speak movingly to the senses; and whether they represent any mystery of our Saviour's life, or direct our attention to the virtues of a saint, nothing can be better calculated to diffuse instruction and devotion among the faithful. Hence the reason is evident why the Church has ordained that the Crucifix should be placed on our altars. It is not for adoration, but for the instruction of the people.

It is impossible that any one can behold the Crucifix, and not admit that it offers a a lively representation of the great mystery of our redemption. There is no preacher, no language that can instruct you so well. Protestants frequently tell us, they don't understand the mass, - let them look at the Crucifix,—there it is all explained. The Mass is the repetition of the sacrifice of Mount Calvary, represented by the Crucifix. What I have here said respecting pictures and images, may also be applied to relics of saints, which we can never regard without calling to mind the great virtues which had distinguished their persons, and for which they are held up to the faithful as models for imitation. Let us now proceed to examine why they are venerable.

My Brethren, you will allow with me, it is proper to shew respect where respect is due. If therefore I can prove that such objects are deserving of veneration, you will not refuse to admit that we are right in giving it. Pictures, images, and the remains of distinguished personages, have such an intimate connection, with the objects to which they relate, that it is impossible but any insult or injury offered to them, must immediately reflect on the person to whom they refer.

To bring the question home at once to every man's understanding, by an example familiar to all, had an insult been offered to the image, or the remains of some valiant man, for instance, the Conqueror of Trafalgar, who so gloriously fell in his country's service, would not the indignity have reverted upon the hero?—Certainly it would in the general opinion of men, and if it be doubted by any, let them make the experiment in the presence of those who followed their chief to battle.

It is not likely that they would attempt it twice. On the other hand, whatever honour or respect is paid to these objects, devolves ultimately upon the persons who have merited such testimonies. Every thing connected with them acquires a relative value; and in proportion as it interested them, we esteem it. Thus it was in the hero just mentioned? Was there any honour or respect which his remains could receive, and they did not? Did not the very ball by which he met his death become a treasure from that circumstance? But let us turn from the field of arms to the theatre of religion.

If then such be the tribute which is paid to valour, surely virtue and sanctity are entitled to those honours which religion can bestow. Sanctity is every way venerable, as connected with God. If therefore sanctity be deserving of veneration, we are right in expressing it in the best manner we are able; and consequently when the Church proposes to our admiration the virtues of a

saint, now triumphant in heaven, it is just to give some honour to his remains; since it is naturally reflected upon the person who displayed these qualities, and must ultimately render glory to God. We honour the relics of saints, because it is one of the means of outwardly expressing honour to the saint himself; but it is that species of honour we should not have refused his merit when living among us. Might I not here instance the common custom of preserving the hair of particular friends? But you will ask, if any example can be produced from Scripture to justify such veneration? Yes, my Brethren, there are several. In the Old Testament we read that the remains of Joseph were carried by the Jews to the land of promise, through respect to that holy patriarch. (Exod. xiii. 19.) The Ark of God, the Rod of Aaron were held sacred, and Oza was struck dead for venturing to touch the former when in danger of falling. I might also mention the cloak of Elias, and the bones of

the saintly prophet Eliseus, which having touched the dead body of a young man, instantly restored it to life. In the New Testament we find a woman was cured of a bloody flux by touching the hem of our Saviour's garment. And the 19th chapter of the Acts informs us, that there were brought from the body of St. Paul to the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them. Here then is the example of the very first Christians.

From all that has been said, you may understand the honour we pay to images, pictures, and relics, is referred to what they represent. We render them not one atom of divine worship: it is a tribute of simple veneration which reason and religion approve. From the ceremony of kissing the Cross, therefore, on Good-Friday, will any be foolish enough to take scandal? Will they display such a want of discernment as to say the practice is idolatrous?

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The Cross, as the instrument of our redemption, is dear to us; -as the altar on which a man God was sacrificed, venerable and holy. All that we desire, therefore, is to express our gratitude to Jesus Christ for having redeemed us by the infamy of the Cross. We kneel down before the Cross, but we honour him who died upon it. We kiss the image, as a child kisses the picture of its absent parent, or benefactor; -but our affections embrace him who was wounded for the sins of the world. So ancient is this practice, that we are told by Tertullian* and Origint, who flourished in the beginning of the third century of the Church, that the Christians were reproached by the Pagans with worshipping the Cross, an evident proof they signalized their veneration for it by some exterior expressions of honourt. This charge is

^{*} Apolog. c. 16. † Contra Cels.

[‡] In the fourth century, Julian the Apostate renewed the same reproach—a reproach which, were I a Protestant. I should be ashamed to learn from the enemy of Christ.

often repeated to prejudice the minds of the ignorant against Catholics; but it is a charge repelled with indignation, and deserving of no better name than the foulest slander and most barefaced calumny. Fools, indeed, should we be, to think of adoring a piece of wood, for the act would be idolatrous and impious. Such calumnies, however, have often been thrown out against us, by those, from whom we had expected proofs of wisdom; yet they have displayed all the folly and the ignorance of the vulgar. It is an old threadbare tale of those, who pretend to give an account of travels; and when Rome becomes the subject of their faithless pens,

[&]quot;You adore," said he, "the wood of the Cross, you makethis sign upon your foreheads, and you engrave it upon the doors of your houses." St. Cyril, in his answer to him, tells him, that Jesus Christ by dying on the Cross, has ransomed, converted, and sanctified the world: "the Cross," he says, "puts us in mind of it; we honour it therefore, because it reminds us that we ought to live for him who has died for us." Contra Julian, lib. 6. p. 194.

there every thing is placed in the shade of black superstition and idolatry.

At one time we are told the Pope was seen praying in secret to his idol, meaning the Crucifix;—at another, that he was worshipping a favourite image. Truly this is converting Rome into Babylon, and soon might we expect to be told, that the horns of the beast already appear. But certainly these persons themselves must be acquainted with the magic art, otherwise I know not how they can pretend to tell me what a Pope is doing in the secret of his soul.— His silent prayer is always what they refer to: for when he prays aloud, he is found to address himself to God. Shall I then say this language is incorrect, or that the persons are mistaken? I wish this conduct was not deserving of a harsher qualification. But surely it is passing strange, that at their time of life and at this time of day, they should yet have to learn what every Catholic child is acquainted withyet such must be their unlucky cast of

circumstances, unless their ignorance be tinctured with malice, and we are to think they spread their slanders inspite of better information.—But, my Brethren, is it not common in the ceremonies of courts, to kneel before the throne and the person of royalty? Should we not laugh at the man who would refuse to conform to such a practice, thro' a scruple of idolatry?

I believe an improper translation of the Latin word adoro has given no little occasion for the reproach cast upon us; which however proves the wisdom and utility of confining the public service of the Church to one language. The Latin word adoro does not always express worship in English; its proper acceptation being in the sense of to respect or venerate. Do not the Scriptures inform us that Abraham and Lot prostrated themselves before angels and adored them. (Gen. xviii. 2. 9. 1.) Yet they were not accused of idolatry? But if merely an exposition of images about a Church is an indication of idola-

trous practices, I might bring the charge against almost every Protestant congregation in the country, since so many churches display them. Might not I also accuse +/ the whole city of London of idolatry and superstition when the Cross stands aloft on its very Cathedral of St. Paul's, to the honour I affirm it, and not to the disgrace of the Established Church? On the other hand, have they not cause to blush, who have been known to pull down the Cross of Christ from their spires, and rear in its place a dragon, the emblem of the devil? Surely this may be called a diabolical piety. As to pictures, they are now found at least to be harmless, if not useful, and there are few churches of consequence which do not contain them. Indeed. opinions seem much changed upon this subject, and when a representation of the Crucifixion was fixing in the Abbey Church of Westminster, a Protestant clergyman was heard to make this sensible remark:-" Well, I now perceive we are no

longer ashamed of our redemption." Let us now proceed to the ceremonies of the Church.

The Catholic Church, in multiplying her ceremonies, had no other object in view, than the instruction of the faithful and the dignity of religion. We readily admit that true worship consists in bowing down all the powers of the soul before God, and employing them in loving him and adoring him. It is not necessary that any of the senses or members of the body be brought into action, the soul is the only part of us that converses with our Creator; hence however it would not be just to infer the inutility of prostrating ourselves in prayer, or expressing the affections of our heart in words; there is such a close connection between the body and the soul, that it is impossible but the one must be sensible to the feelings and dispositions of the other, and what makes an impression on the senses of the body will also excite sensations in the faculties of the soul*. It was on this account, my Brethren, that Moses paid such particular at-

* "That one thought is often suggested to the mind by another; and that the sight of an external object recalls former occurrences, and revives former feelings, are facts, which are perfectly familiar, even to those who are the least disposed to speculate concerning the principles of their nature. In passing a long road which we have formerly travelled in the company of a friend, the particulars of a conversation in which we were then engaged, are frequently suggested to us by the objects we meet with. In such a scene, we recollect that a particular subject was started: and in passing the different houses, and plantations, and rivers, the arguments we were discussing when we last saw them, recur spontaneously to the me-The connection which is formed in the mind between the words of a language and the ideas they denote; the connection which is formed between the different words of a discouuse we have committed to memory; the connection between the different notes of a piece of music in the mind of the musician, are all obvious instances of the same general law of our nature."

"The influence of perceptible objects in reviving former thoughts, and former feelings, is more particularly remarkable.—After time has, in some degree, reconciled us to the death of a friend, how wonderfully are we affected the first time we enter the house where he lived! Every thing we see, the apartment where he studied, the chair upon which he sat, recall to us the happiness we have enjoyed together; and we should feel it a sort of

tention to the exterior splendor of the Jewish worship, and clothed that religion, which was holy and sacred in itself, in so much pomp and magnificence, that Pagans beheld it with admiration, and Alexander himself prostrated before the High-Priest of God.

In the same manner, my Brethren, the Catholic Church has been singularly at-

violation of that respect we owe to his memory, to engage in any light or indifferent discourse which are before us. In the case, too, of these remarkable scenes which interest the curiosity, from the memorable persons, or transactions which we have been accustomed to connect with them in the course of our studies, the fancy is more awakened by the actual perception of the scene itself, than by the mere conception or imagination of it. Hence the pleasure we enjoy in visiting classical ground; in beholding retreats which inspired the genius of our favourite author, or the fields which have been dignified by exertions of heroic virtue. How feeble are the emotions produced by the liveliest conception of modern Italy, to what the poet felt, when, amidst the ruins of Rome;"

[&]quot; He drew th' inspiring breath of ancient arts,

[&]quot; ____And trod the sacred walks

[&]quot;Where at each step, imagination burns!"

Stewart on the Human Mind, p. 278.

tentive so to regulate her rites and ceremonies, that they might be explicative of what they represent, and throw dignity on the mysteries which are operating. She well knew that piety and devotion are affected by sensible objects, and, therefore, employed those helps which were most likely to excite it. I will leave it for any one, who enters a Catholic church or chapel, to say, if he does not feel a greater veneration for religion, than when he visits a meeting-house or chapel of ease. Does not her solemn service, in a manner, form the soul to devotion, and raise sensations which are produced by no other mode of worship? I could bring many eminent Protestants to confirm this assertion, who all admit, and seem pleased with the effect, but dislike the cause. Now this is a distinction which really I am at a loss to explain, unless they imagine, that we give more importance to ceremonies than they deserve. If any persons believe that we therein place the essence of religion they

are much mistaken. We tell you these ceremonies are employed as helps to religion, and that the understanding is never to confound them with it. Religion is the homage which the heart renders to God; ceremonies are the forms by which it is exteriorly expressed. I can explain this to you by a very easy comparison: Every one knows that royalty resides in the person of the king, and not in his crown and robes; yet no one can pretend to say, that he would appear more like a king without the latter: or that such appendages do not contribute dignity to his person, and impress respect on those who behold him.

My Brethren, I am convinced that on this subject, the Protestant and the Catholic are perfectly agreed, if we can make ourselves understood by each other. For there is no one ceremony in the Catholic Church, that we regard as essential to religion, if we except those which Jesus Christ himself ordained, in the institution of the Sacraments. For instance, the

using of water in baptism, or imposing hands in the administration of orders. After what I have said, will any then hereafter pretend to charge the Catholic worship with superstition, or empty pageantry? Some will ask, what then is the purport of all that fuss about crossing and holy water? There are many men who make a particular account of these ceremonies, whilst they are vicious in their lives and totally ignorant of religion, and the maxims of the Gospel. To these interrogators I reply, by imploring a little justice, and a little candour. We are told these persons are ignorant of the maxims of the Gospel:-be assured also, my Friends, they are likewise unacquainted with the principles of their own religion. There is a want of liberality in covering the characters of the virtuous and enlightened with the infamy and ignorance of the vulgar. They are not the data on which any one can form a correct judgment, and every

such decision must be the verdict of a subordined and prejudiced mind.

The sign of the Cross and the use of blessed water, are of such high antiquity in the Church, that there is every reason to believe they derive their origin from the apostles *. This, however, is not of any

* " At every action," writes Tertullian, a father of the second century, " when we enter the house, or go out, in dressing, in washing, at table, when we retire to rest, or during conversation, we impress upon our foreheads the sign of the cross.-Should you ask for the scripture authority for this and such like practices: I answer there is none; but there is a tradition that authorizes it, custom that confirms it, submission that observes it." (De Corona Mil. c. iii. iv. p. 289.)-Origen, (Select. in Exech. c. 9.) declares the same thing.—St. Cyril of Jerusalem recommends this practice to the faithful, (Catech. 4.) St. Bazil, (L. de Spiritu Sancto, c. 27. n. 66.) calls it an apostolical tradition .- "In the sacrifice of the Mass, in the administration of the sacraments, in the benediction, in the whole of her exterior worship, the Church incessantly repeats the sign of the cross. Which is to teach and convince us, that there is no practice, no ceremony able to produce any effect but the virtue of the merits and death of Jesus Christ; and that all the graces of God, which we have, come to us through the sufferings of this divine Saviour, and the blood which he has spilt for us on the Cross."-

absolute consequence; they are numbered among the rites and ceremonies of the Ca-

That Protestants have not wholly renounced the sign of the Cross, will appear from the Liturgy or Book of Common Prayers, notes pp. 2. 203.—In contemplating the ceremonies of religion, as well as in studying the canons of councils, it is absolutely necessary to advert to the particular circumstances in which they originated. When Christianity was first preached, the world was immerged in every species of superstition; and the Pagans believed that the evil spirits or demons, had acquired such a power over the whole of the inanimate, as well as the animate creation, that they lived in the greatest dread of this influence, and supposed it could not be controuled by any human endeavour or precaution. Hence they were continually recurring to every kind of superstition, which the art of magicians and sorcerers could invent as a safeguard, always imagining that to be relieved from one evil spirit, it was necessary to seek the protection of one more powerful. Such was the abject state of slavery to Satan, into which nearly all mankind had fallen previously to the coming of Christ: and such was almost the universal feeling of men, when Christianity was first preached to them. Their religion, their laws, their customs, their writers all prove the fact, as I have stated it. When the Gospel of Jesus Christ was first announced to them, therefore, as the preachers found it a much easier task to instruct the understandings, than to conquer the fears of their hearers, it became absolutely necessary to change this false and

tholic Church. The first we regard as a profession of faith; the second is simply

impious superstition into an action both innocent and holy. They were, therefore, directed in all their temptations, doubts, and fears, to place their confidence in Jesus, who came into this world, by the sacrifice of the *Cross* to crush the power of Lucifer; and hence, as Tertullian has told us, it became a continual habitamong the first Christians, in proceeding to any action, to make the sign of the Cross.

The practice of exorcising persons and things seems to have had a similar origin; and to have been designed by the Church to draw mankind out of those general habits of superstition, which had become almost natural to the species. Even the Jews, as we learn from the New Testament, appear to have been strongly inclined to fear the power of the devils; and were continually bringing persons to Jesus Christ and the apostles, whom they believed to be possessed. Impressed with these notions, the new convertafrom Paganism were continually recurring to their old magical rites and incantations, by which they still imagined they could expel the evil spirits .- " Nothing," writes a distinguished author, " is more frequent in the homelies of the fathers, than violent declamation against those who used fillets and charms for the cure of diseases-as also against some ridiculous amusements during the calenda of January-against handsels-against vows also to fountains, to trees, and other species of superstitions, for which the councils, as well as the Greek and Latin penitentiaries, appointed particular penances.-It was therefore with a view of drawing the Christians from those

an act of faith. In making the sign of the cross, all that we intend is, openly to

abuses, that prayers and benedictions were multiplied, as we observe in the most ancient works. The saintly Bishops permitted some innocent practices without wholly approving of them, in order to extirpate others which were criminal. Thus St. Augustin preferred, that those who had a head-ach should apply the Gospel to it, rather than make use of fillets. "I commend you," he says, "when you have a head-ach for placing a Gospel upon it, instead of having recourse to a fillet. For as human weakness is such, we are easy when a man confined to his bed and suffering with a violent fever, has no other reliance but in the application of a Gospel to his head; not that it was designed for that use, but because he has preferred it to fillets." (In Joan.)—These remains of Pagan superstition in the converts, therefore, were loudly censured and condemned by their instructors, who told them, that as Jesus came to put down the power of Satan, at his name every knee should bend, of those that are in heaven, on earth, or under the earth, (Philip. ii. 10.) and that by solemnly invocating him, they would put all their spiritual enemies to flight, The Church therefore made this action one of her ceremonies, which she directed her ministers to perform. It was styled an Exorcism, which word according to Le Brun, signifies adjuring or commanding; and it was also viewed as a blessing; and water, over which these exorcisms had been pronounced, was called blessed or holywater. The people carried it home to their houses, profess our belief in one God and three persons; and, that Jesus Christ died upon

sprinkled their persons and effects with it, and the Church used it publicly in preparing for the service of God. Tertullian alludes to these exorcisms and benedictions, when he says, the waters are sanctified by the invocation of God. (De Bapt. c. 4.) St. Cyprian more distinctly says, that the water must be purified and sanctified by the priest. (Ep. 70.) And St. Ambrose speaks in detail of the exorcism, of the invocation, and of the signs of the cross. (De Initiandis, c. 5.) St. Basil places these benedictions among the apostolic traditions. (De Spir. Sanc. c. 27.) And their virtue is noticed by St. Cyril of Jerusalem, (Catech. 3.) by St. Gregory of Nyssa, (in Bap. Christ.); and in the Apostolical Canons, as they were arranged at the end of the 4th century, it is spoken of as instrumental in expiating sin, and driving away Satan. In her exorcisms on water, the Church also makes use of salt; as one is the emblem of purity, the other of incorruption. Whilst using it, she also puts into the mouths of her children these words of the Psalmist, thou shalt sprinkle me, O Lord, with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow, (Ps. 50.) which should be considered as a clear instruction to the faithful, to put their trust in God and not in the water; which being mere matter, independently of faith and the prayers of the Church, can be of no avail. The custom of placing this holy-water at the entrances of churches is of the very highest antiquity.-Eusebius speaks of the practice, (Hist. Eccles. l. 10. c. 4.) and says that Paulinus ordered

a Cross for our salvation. The Cross is the sacred emblem of Christ: let me only

a fountain to be placed at the entrance of the Church of Tyre, as a symbol of a sacred expiation. St. John Chrysostom reprehends those who, in entering into churches, wash their hands and not their hearts. (Hom. 71.) Holy-water is yet in general use among all the Eastern Christians. - From what has been said, therefore, it appears that the blessing and use of holy-water is a practice of the very highest antiquity in the Church; -and secondly, that it was orginally designed to wean and draw the people from sinful superstition. We, therefore, express some surprise that Protestants should not venerate with Catholics so ancient a practice,—or that they should consider that as superstition, which was intended and instituted to extirpate the remains of pagan superstition. " Most Protestant writers," continues the distinguished author quoted before, "have laboured, very uselessly, to prove that almost all our ceremonies have been copied from those in use among the Pagans and the Jews: in which endeavour numbers have made a great ostentation of their learning, particularly such as were distinguished by an acquaintance with the Hebrew language: whilst others have confined themselves to what they discovered in the Greek and Latin authors. It was very easy in this manner to impose upon the vulgar, who were ignorant that the chief of the Pagan ceremonies were imitations of what constituted the real worship of the true God, and had been taken from the Hebrews, whose law was more anglory in the Cross, writes St. Paul. (Gal. vi. 14.) Hence we are accustomed to

cient than the most ancient part of the Pagan worship: whilst the remainder of the heathen worship was composed of the most gross and abominable superstition. That which would have been very proper, if referred to God, such as their offerings, first fruits, tenths, libations, and such like practices, was not what the Christians had imitated from the Pagans, for the custom was established among the Jews; and that which had any reference to idolatry was held in horror, and never tolerated among the Christians, as appears from the numerous ancient canons against the most trifling practices which seemed to originate in it. But it was no superstition, to change those practices which might be suspected to have thus originated, and to substitute others which had nothing in them but what was pious. Thus a Christian purified by the sign of the cross and by prayer, that which otherwise might have been defiled by Pagan ceremonies. Now the idolaters employed many practices, which were real magical operations, by which they assailed the Christians; and owing to those notions which the prejudices of education had occasioned, they were sufficient to disturb weak minds. The remedies applied in these cases were prayers and benedictions, which were frequently followed (in the beginning of the Church) by miraculous effects, to which the most respectable authors of antiquity bear testimony, and who are, it must be owned, more deserving of credit than many of the wicked of these days, who affect to view them as weak and contemptible. Such is the origin

commence and terminate our religious duties with this sign, which moreover serves to distinguish the true Christian from the enemies of his divinity, and unbelievers.-Holy or blessed water * is used by Catholics, and placed in their churches, to denote with what clean hands and pure hearts they should go into the presence of their Creator. There is also a grace or blessing attached to the use of holy water; but this is derived, not from the water, but the prayers of the Church, offered up when the water is blessed; which blessing must again depend upon the faith and the dispositions of the person using the water; for it is only when such practices are joined with faith and sincere piety, that they are productive of any spiritual advantage.

of all the particular benedictions which the Church has approved, and through which the remains of a superstition spread over the whole world, have been extirpated." (Perpetuité de la Foi, tom. 5. l. 7. c. 6.)

^{*} For the order and manner of blessing holy-water, see the Catholic Christian.

Here I must caution the more ignorant and uninformed part of my Brethren against those silly and ridiculous demonstrations of religion to which they seem so partial, and which are the sure marks of gross delusion: I mean, a variety of gestures at prayer; beating their breasts, frequent repetitions of the sign of the cross, and the mistaken notions they appear to have of holy water: by thus abusing these practices, you bring them into contempt, and expose your Church to that ridicule and censure which you so justly draw upon yourselves. My Brethren, I believe I can render this subject more intelligible, by placing it in the same light with the ceremony of blessing the standards or colours of a regiment; a rite which is common to the Protestant as well as to the Catholic Church*. The blessing is the effect of

^{*} The Protestants of our Established Church seem to have rejected all benedictions except the following:

^{1.} The blessing of children by their parents and instructors.

those prayers which are offered up to God in the name of his Church, that he would be pleased to protect those who should fight under these colours, and give them victory over their enemies. Now, would any one say, that it was superstitious to fight under these ensigns? He certainly would betray great ignorance, who should imagine he was to be defended by them, or that they could arrest the bullet in its course to his heart: yet undoubtedly, in the day of battle, he might recollect those

- 2. Grace at meals.
- 3. Churching of women.
- 4. Blessing of a church-yard or burying-ground.
- 5. Blessing, commonly called laying the first stone of a house or church.
 - 6. Consecrating of military colours.
 - 7. Coronation of the King.
 - 8. Burial of the dead with prayer.

In the last of these benedictions, the Protestants carry their love of ceremony and show as far as the Catholic Church in any of her most solemn rites or processions. Why, however, these exceptions should be admitted by Protestants, we have yet to learn. Oh! what mischief has ensued from prejudice, the offspring of ignorance and pride!!!

prayers which the Church had offered in his behalf, and by placing his trust in the God of armies, merit that protection which had been implored for him. What I have said on this head will also apply to the practice of blessing ashes, palms, and other things; but I must remind you, they impose no absolute obligation on any one.

I trust this explanation which I have given of our doctrine will not prove unsatisfactory to my readers. In it, I believe, nothing will be found repugnant to good sense, and the ideas of the enlightened Christian, whether Catholic or Protestant. It must convince every one at least of the folly of attempting to learn truth from those, who through prejudice, want of knowledge, or some other motive, are interested in corrupting or disguising it. If persons who wish to be acquainted with the Catholic faith, would consent to learn it from Catholics, who might be supposed to understand their own religion, they would save themselves a

vast deal of trouble and perplexity, and avoid the disgrace of betraying that ignorance and confined information, for which they become objects of ridicule and contempt to the Catholic world. Let such persons always be aware that the Catholic faith being that of some of the largest and most ancient empires in Christendom, embraces thousands of the most enlightened characters, who would never continue in her communion, was she such as she is often represented. I conclude as I began, with the words of Jesus Christ, Blessed is he who shall not be scandalized in me. (Luke vii. 23.)

END OF VOL. I.

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The Author himself having been prevented from bestowing a regular Attention on the Press, is under the necessity of calling the Reader's Attention to the following

ERRATA.

Page	13, note,	line 6, for Boyle read Bayle.
2	17,	- 24, for parts read arts.
-	23,	- 8, for uncivilized read civilized
-	40, note,	- 6, for giive read give,
-	70,	- 9, for imaginary read imagination.
diamen	72,	- 14, for gaul read gall.
	85,	- 9, for religion can read religion alone can.
	93,	- 7, for production read prediction.
-	122,	- 18, for Jesus Christ read Christ.
	126,	- 17, for the read thee.
-	139,	- 11, for comprehending read comprehended.
-	141.	- 7, for this read that.
	150,	- 21, for friend read friends.

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