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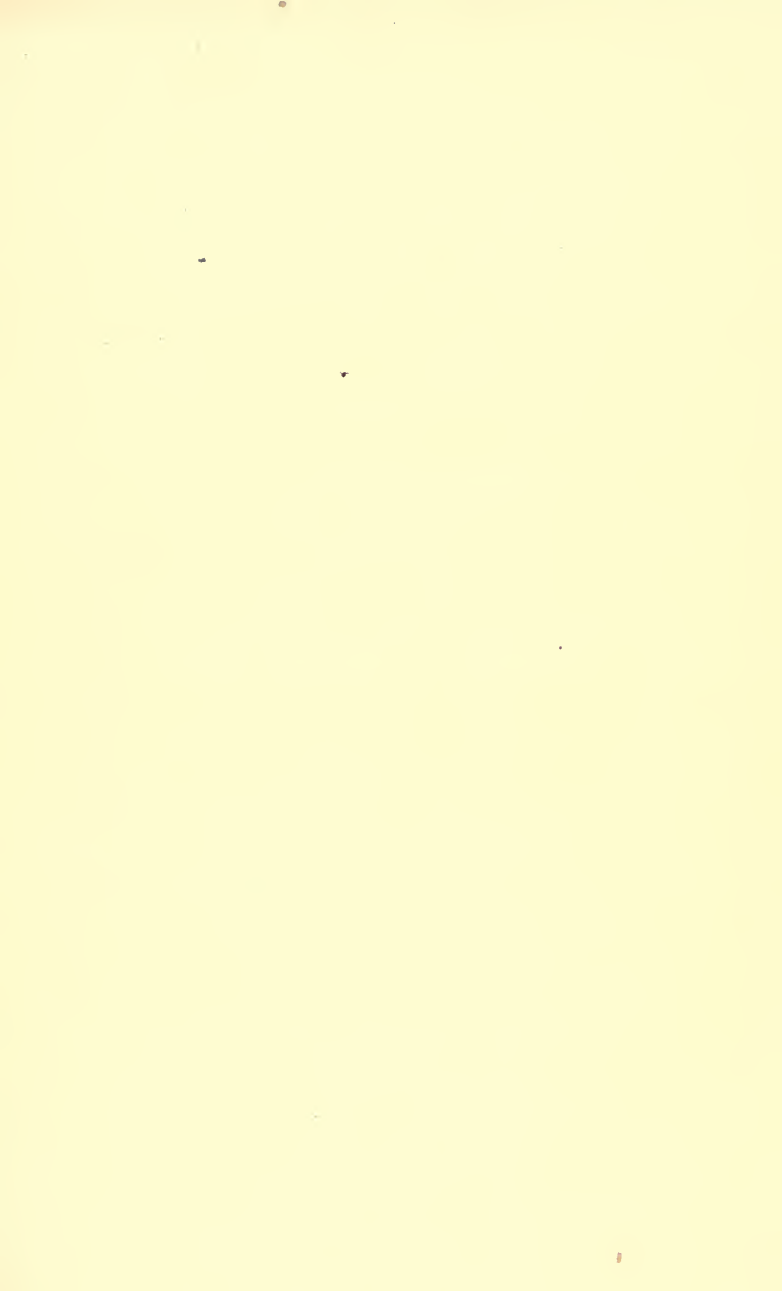


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WORKS  
OF THE  
RIGHT REV. BISHOP HAY





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RIGHT REV. BISHOP HAY

OF EDINBURGH

IN FIVE VOLUMES

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THE  
SINCERE CHRISTIAN

INSTRUCTED IN

THE FAITH OF CHRIST FROM  
THE WRITTEN WORD.

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CHAPTER XXII.

OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

Q. 1. **W**HAT was the end or design for which Christ instituted the holy Eucharist?

A. That it might be the spiritual food and nourishment of our souls, to preserve and increase that life of grace received in baptism, which is completed and perfected in confirmation—according to the words of our Saviour, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever;” and, a little after, “He that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me,” John, vi. 51, 58.

Q. 2. How is this explained?

A. By considering natural life and the wants of the human body; for we see that in the most vigorous and powerful frame strength will soon diminish, vigour fail,

and life itself cease, unless it be preserved by constant food and nourishment. In like manner, owing to our natural corruption and the temptations which surround us, the spiritual life of grace, received in baptism and confirmation, would soon decay and be at last destroyed by mortal sin, if we had not proper food to support and nourish it in the soul. For this reason, our blessed Saviour was pleased to institute the sacrament of the holy Eucharist, in which, under the outward appearances of bread and wine, He gives us His own precious body and blood, to feed and nourish our souls, and to preserve and increase in them the life of grace, by which we live to Him.

Q. 3. In what does the holy Eucharist differ from the other sacraments?

A. In several things: (1.) *In dignity*; for the holy Eucharist is the most excellent of all the sacraments, and shines supereminently above them all, as the sun above the stars. (2.) *In the grace it contains*; for the other sacraments communicate only particular graces, adapted to the ends for which they are instituted; but the holy Eucharist contains Jesus Christ Himself, the fountain and source of all grace. (3.) *In its permanency*; for the other sacraments are sacraments only at the time when they are administered: but the holy Eucharist is a true and perfect sacrament, both at the time we receive it, and when it is not administered to any one, but reserved in our churches.

Q. 4. What is the outward sensible sign in the sacrament of the Eucharist?

A. The appearance of bread and wine, which remain after consecration, and under which our blessed Saviour is received into our souls.

Q. 5. What is the inward grace it contains?

*A.* The body and blood of Jesus Christ, the fountain and author of all grace.

*Q.* 6. Where does it appear that Jesus Christ is the author of this sacrament?

*A.* In the history of its institution related in the Gospel, where we are told that, at the last supper, Jesus Christ, "taking bread, gave thanks, and brake, and gave it to them, saying, This is My body. Do this for a commemoration of Me. In like manner, the chalice also, after He had supped, saying, This is the chalice, the New Testament in My blood which shall be shed for you," Luke, xxii. 19.

*Q.* 7. How is this sacrament a sign of the grace we receive?

*A.* Because as bread and wine are the food and nourishment of the body, and preserve and increase our natural life and strength, so the outward appearances of bread and wine in the holy Eucharist represent the spiritual food and nourishment which our souls receive from the body and blood of Christ, communicated to us under these appearances.

*Q.* 8. What is the matter made use of in consecrating the holy Eucharist?

*A.* Bread made of wheat, and wine of the grape; and no other thing can be used for this purpose, because these were what Christ Himself used, and He commanded His apostles and their successors to do what He had done.

*Q.* 9. What becomes of the bread and wine by the consecration?

*A.* The substance of the bread and wine is changed, by the almighty power of God, into the body and blood of Christ, but the outward appearances of the bread and wine, and all their sensible qualities, remain as before.

*Q.* 10. At what time is this change made?

*A.* About the middle of the Mass, when the priest, taking into his hands first the bread and then the wine, pronounces over each separately the sacred words of consecration. For it is the office of the priest in this, as in all the other sacraments, to perform the outward sensible part; but the inward invisible effect is the work of God, Who changes the substance of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, the very instant that the priest pronounces over them the sacred words of consecration.

*Q.* 11. To whom has Jesus Christ left power to consecrate the holy Eucharist?

*A.* To the bishops and priests of His Church only; and this is one of the most excellent and distinguishing powers annexed to the sacred character of the priesthood, and in which that sacred character properly consists.

*Q.* 12. Is the receiving of this sacrament necessary for salvation?

*A.* The necessity of receiving it is so great, for those who are come to an age capable of discerning our Lord's body, that Jesus Christ Himself says, "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." And on the other hand, "He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day," John, vi. 54.

*Q.* 13. What are the principal things to be established and explained concerning the sacrament of the holy Eucharist?

*A.* These five things—the real presence, transubstantiation, the communion, the communion in one kind, and the sacrifice of the Mass.

## SECTION I.

*Of the Real Presence.*

Q. 14. What does our holy faith teach us concerning the real presence?

A. It teaches us, (1) that after the consecration, our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is truly, really, and substantially contained under the outward appearances of the bread and wine; and (2) that under each kind is contained Jesus Christ, whole and entire, His body and blood, His soul and divinity.—See the *Council of Trent*, Sess. xii., Ch. 1 and 3.

Q. 15. How can it be proved that Christ is truly and really present in the holy Eucharist?

A. The *first* proof is taken from what is related in the sixth chapter of St John's gospel, where we are told, that after the great miracle of feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, our Saviour went over to the other side of the lake, and that the next morning the multitude, missing Him, went over after Him: and when they had found Him, He took occasion, from the impression which that miracle had made upon their minds, to introduce the subject of the heavenly food which He was to give to the world in the holy Eucharist, and said, "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you," ver. 27. Here He declares that the meat He was to give was such as would bring eternal life. Their curiosity being raised to know more about this heavenly food, they asked a sign by which they might believe Him, and inquired if the food He

spoke of was better than the manna which God gave their fathers from heaven in the desert. "Then Jesus said to them, Amen, amen, I say to you, Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven ; for the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world," ver. 32. In which words He shows the supereminent excellency of His bread above the manna, saying, it is the "true bread from heaven," and such as produces the most wonderful effects, so as to "give life to the world."

The Jews, hearing of such wonderful bread, said to Him, "Lord, give us always this bread," ver. 34. Whereupon He replied, "I am the bread of life ;" and then He declares that those who come to Him, and believe in Him, should be fed with this bread, and obtain everlasting life. The Jews hearing this, instead of believing His words, "murmured at Him, because He had said, I am the living bread which came down from heaven," ver. 41. Yet Jesus, instead of explaining away the literal meaning of what He had said, and according to which they had understood Him, showed no surprise at their unbelief, but added that to believe in Him was a gift of God ; for "no man can come to Me," says He, "except My Father, Who hath sent Me, draw him," ver. 44. And then He repeats what He had said before, and shows, in the plainest terms, what His bread is : "I am the bread of life," says He ; "your fathers did eat manna in the desert and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that, if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven ; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever ; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world," ver. 48. Here He repeats again

the excellency of His heavenly bread, declares that He Himself is that living bread, and concludes by assuring us that the bread which He promises is *His flesh*; that very flesh which He gave "for the life of the world." This assertion, in its plain and obvious sense, so clearly establishes His real presence, that it seems impossible to find words to express it more strongly. In fact, the Jews naturally understood Him in this sense, that He meant to give them His real flesh to eat; but as they could not understand how this should be done, and would not, in the simplicity of faith, believe it upon His word, "they strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" ver. 53.

Now, from this text and what follows, we have the most convincing proof of the real presence, and that the literal, plain, and obvious sense of Christ's words, in which the Jews understood Him, was the very sense and meaning which He intended; for it is evident from what the Jews say that they understood Him in the literal sense, as promising to give them His *real flesh* to eat; and it was from His own words that they were induced to so understand Him. If, therefore, the literal sense, signifying the real presence, had not been His true meaning, if He meant the expression only in a figurative sense, then the Jews were mistaken, and He Himself had misled them by the expression He had used. Seeing, therefore, that this mistaken sense of His words scandalised them, He certainly was bound by the most sacred ties to undeceive them, and to take away the scandal given, by explaining His figurative meaning to them. But instead of this, and to show beyond reply that the literal sense in which they had understood Him was exactly what He Himself meant, and that it was His real flesh He promised to give in this heavenly bread, and not a

figure only, He immediately replies, "Amen, amen, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you," ver. 54. By which words He manifestly confirmed them in their idea of His meaning, and assures all mankind that His very flesh and blood is the life-giving food contained in this heavenly bread. Now, would the eternal wisdom of God have acted thus with His creatures if the literal sense had not been His true meaning? Would He who came to seek and to save those that were lost, and to enlighten them who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, have so positively led poor sinners into so gross a mistake, and in a matter of such importance for their salvation? Would He have used such expressions if He had not meant what His words implied? It were certainly the height of blasphemy to suppose it.

But our Saviour, not content with the above strong asseveration of the real presence, and foreseeing the great opposition which the pride of man would make against it in after-ages, goes on in the following verses to repeat it again and again, and to inculcate it in different lights, every one more strongly affirming it than another: "He that eateth My flesh," says He, "and drinketh My blood, hath life everlasting, and I will raise him up at the last day," ver. 55. The body and blood of Christ is alone the true life of our souls, the source of all grace, life, and benediction to us in this world, and of everlasting life in the world to come; consequently the possessing this *life everlasting*, by eating His flesh and drinking His blood, necessarily implies our eating and drinking His real flesh and His real blood; for how could we possess Christ as the everlasting life of our soul if we eat and drink nothing but a figure? And therefore He gives this as the reason of what He last said: "For My flesh,"



says He, "is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." How could this be so if what He gives be nothing but mere bread? Again, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me and I in him," ver. 57. How strongly does this also confirm His real presence!

By giving us His real flesh and blood, He is Himself received within us, and abides in us; and we, living by this food, the spiritual life of grace, abide in Him, are guided and directed by Him. But this text would be evidently false did He give only a figure instead of the reality; for how could He be said to abide in us and we in Him by means of this heavenly food if He be not there? He then proceeds to show the excellency of this food: "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me. This is the bread that came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live for ever," ver. 58. Can common bread be said to be "the bread that came down from heaven"? Can a bare figure be more excellent than the manna, which was a figure of Christ, and admirable in many of its properties? or can common bread, merely taken in remembrance of Christ, be supposed to be a food by which we shall live for ever?

It is manifest, then, that all these texts teach in the plainest terms the real presence of Christ's flesh and blood, and it is certain they were so understood by all then present. Many of His own disciples, not understanding how this could be, but following the example of the unbelieving Jews, were scandalized, and said, "This saying is hard, and who can hear it?" ver. 61. "But Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples murmured at this, said to them, Doth this scandalize you?"

ver. 62. Observe He does not say, *You are mistaken, you misunderstand Me*, which He certainly would have done had He not meant the reality of His presence as they understood Him; but well knowing that they were under no mistake on that point, He endeavoured to convince them of the truth of what scandalized them by proposing another miracle: "If then," says He, "you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where He was before?" ver. 63; and seeing the hardness of their hearts, and their carnal mind, which hindered them from receiving the light of faith which He offered them, He adds, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing," ver. 64. It is the Spirit of God that quickeneth the mind by the gift of faith; but your carnal minds hinder you from profiting by Him. Just as He said above to the Jews, when they refused to believe, and which He adds here also: "Therefore did I say to you, that no man can come to Me unless it be given him by My Father," ver. 66. On this, "many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him," ver. 67. Would Jesus Christ ever have allowed His own disciples to leave Him, and run headlong to perdition, had they been under a mistake as to His meaning, and a mistake which He Himself had occasioned without ever undeceiving them? It would be impious to imagine it. On the contrary, their fault lay in refusing to believe His word, which they understood in His true meaning; and therefore, as "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe" (ver. 65), He permitted them to go without saying a single word to retain them.

When they were gone, "Jesus said to the twelve, Will you also go away?" ver. 68. Here again we have another beautiful proof of the real presence. The twelve had all this time been present, had heard all that passed,

had seen the Jews striving, the disciples murmuring, and leaving their Master; they understood what He said in the same literal sense as the others had done; His words, indeed, could bear no other meaning: but when Jesus put the above question to them, "Simon Peter," in the name of all, "answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed, and have known that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God," ver. 69. Behold the noble simplicity of their faith—without hesitation they believe the words of their Master; they receive them as the words of eternal life; they believe them in the exact sense in which the others had refused to believe them; they accept them as containing a promise that He would give them His real flesh to eat and His real blood to drink: and they believe Him with a firm and sincere faith, for this plain but noble reason, because "He is Christ, the Son of God," who cannot be deceived Himself, is incapable of deceiving His creatures, and whose Almighty power is able to make good His word and perform His promise.

The *second* proof of the real presence is from the words of the institution of the holy Eucharist, as related by three evangelists in their gospels, and by St Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xi. Here we must observe, that the conversation held by our Saviour with the Jews and His disciples, as related by St John, took place before the institution of the blessed sacrament; in it we have seen that the apostles believed the words of their Master, and were persuaded that He then promised to give them a heavenly life-giving bread, and that this Divine bread was His very "flesh for the life of the world;" consequently, from that day forward they lived in expectation of His fulfilling this promise, and of His giving them this heavenly food. In the

mean time, they beheld Him performing miracles of all kinds, and saw that nature was, in everything, obedient to His word. At length, when the days of unleavened bread were come, Jesus sat down with His twelve disciples to eat the Pasch, "and whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to His disciples, and said, Take ye and eat, this is My body. And taking the chalice, He gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for this is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many, for the remission of sins," Mat. xxvi. 26. Now, what impression must this have made on the minds of the apostles? In what light could they possibly consider what our blessed Saviour here did and said, but as the fulfilment of the promise He had made? He had promised to give them a heavenly bread, He had again and again assured them in the strongest terms that this Divine bread was His very flesh and blood; they then firmly believed that it was so, because He, whom they knew to be the Son of God, declared it: when therefore, at the last supper, He fulfilled that promise, they were prepared to receive this heavenly food as His body and blood; they had expected it, and as such from His sacred hands they received it. And though their reason or their senses might have raised difficulties, yet all these were obviated by their belief that He was God, and the miracles they had witnessed must have convinced them that He was able to do what He pleased, and to fulfil whatever He promised.

Q. 16. What reasons are there to think that Christ meant the words of the institution, *This is My body, This is My blood*, in the literal, and not in the figurative sense?

A. There are many reasons of the strongest kind: (1.) When He promised to give this heavenly bread,

He certainly meant, and promised to give in it, His real flesh and blood, that flesh which He gave *for the life of the world*, as we have clearly seen ; therefore, when He performed His promise at the last supper, He actually did so, and spoke these words, *This is My body*, as declaring that what He gave was His real body, His real flesh and blood. (2.) Because His apostles could not possibly understand His words in any other sense, considering what had passed before, and the belief they had of His being God ; and therefore He would have deceived them if He had meant His words in any other sense than that in which He knew they must be taken. (3.) Because His words would have been untrue if what He gave His apostles was not His body, but merely bread, as a figure of His body. (4.) Because if what He gave His apostles was not His body but only bread, then, when He said, *Take, eat, this is My body*, He called bread His body, though He meant it only as a figure. Now this cannot be supposed, for it is contrary to all the usages of men, and the common laws of speech, to call one thing by the name of another, with which it has no resemblance nor connection, and that, too, without giving the persons to whom it is said any intimation, to serve as a key to understand such an extraordinary way of speaking. (5.) No ordinary person would call a thing by a name by which it was never known before, especially if he knew his hearers would be deceived by his expressions. It were impious, therefore, to suppose that the Son of God would have done so with His apostles, to whom He always explained clearly what He had said to the multitudes in parables, and that upon the most solemn occasion when He was making a covenant that was to last to the end of time, instituting a sacrament that was to be frequented by all his followers till His

second coming; yea, making His last will and testament, and in it bequeathing to us an admirable legacy, the last pledge of His love! Is it not impeaching Him of insincerity to suppose He would on such an occasion use deceitful language which would necessarily lead men into error? (6.) Because the figurative sense destroys the belief of the passion and death of our blessed Saviour, which all Christians in the Creed profess to hold; for Jesus Christ said in John, vi. 52, "The bread that I will give is My flesh for the life of the world;" and at the institution He declares, "This is My body, which is given for you," Luke, xxii. 19, or "which shall be delivered for you," 1 Cor. xi. 24; "this is My blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many for the remission of sins," Mat. xxvi. 28. Now it was His real flesh which was given for the life of the world, His real blood which was shed for the remission of sins; consequently, it was His real flesh and blood which he gave in the blessed Eucharist; and if it be said that the blessed Eucharist was only a figure of His flesh and blood, then we must also say that it was only a figure of His flesh which was crucified for us, and a figure of His blood which was shed for the remission of sins, since He expressly declares it was the same in both.

Besides these reasons which evidently show that it is impossible Christ could intend the figurative sense when He spoke the words of the institution, there are others also of a different kind which directly prove the truth of the real presence; for, (1.) It is an uncontested fact that the whole Christian Church for many ages believed the real presence, and rendered Divine worship to Jesus Christ in the holy Eucharist: if this doctrine be false, then the whole Church of Christ was for many ages guilty of superstition and idolatry; and, indeed,

this is the very reason alleged by the first reformers for breaking off from the whole Christian world. Now, if we believe the Scriptures, it is absolutely impossible that the Church of Christ could ever fall into idolatry; for they repeatedly declare that among the followers of Christ "idols should be utterly destroyed," Isa. ii. 18; that God would "cleanse them from their idols," Ezek. xxxvi. 25, "nor shall they be defiled any more with their idols, says God Himself, nor with their abominations, nor with all their iniquities; and I will save them out of all the places in which they have sinned, and I will cleanse them, and they shall be My people, and I will be their God; and My servant David shall be king over them, and they shall have one Shepherd, they shall walk in My judgments, and shall keep My commandments, and shall do them," Ezek. xxxvii. 23. "And I will destroy," says He again, "thy graven things, and thy statues out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt NO MORE adore the work of thy hands," Mic. v. 12. "And I will destroy the names of idols out of the earth, and they shall be remembered no more," Zach. xiii. 2. How can all this stand if the whole Church of Christ had been for many ages guilty of idolatry by the belief of the real presence? therefore the doctrine of the real presence is not false and idolatrous, but the true heavenly doctrine of Jesus Christ. (2.) Let us suppose, contrary to all these promises of God, that it is otherwise, and that the doctrine of the real presence is false, Jesus Christ must have foreseen that His whole Church would for many ages embrace this doctrine, and fall into idolatrous worship in consequence. He must have foreseen that His words and the respect paid to them would occasion this, and appear to men a justification of their error. Can we

suppose Him, then, using such language, without uttering a single word of explanation to prevent such dreadful consequences? (3.) If we suppose the figurative sense was intended by Jesus Christ, and taught by His apostles, then it is simply impossible that the belief of the real presence could ever have prevailed; for had the Christian world in the first ages believed only the figurative presence, when the real presence was first broached, it must have appeared *a new doctrine*, a novelty never before heard of. On this account it must have been considered *false and heretical*, being diametrically opposed to what all the Christian world then held as a revealed truth; it must even have appeared a most *dangerous heresy*, because leading directly to idolatry, and teaching men to adore as God what they and all their predecessors from the time of the apostles believed to be nothing but bread and wine; and it must have been looked upon as altogether *incredible*, because contrary to the testimony of the senses irreconcilable to the light of natural reason, and directly opposed to the faith then held by all Christians. The proposal of such a doctrine must have been shocking to all people of piety and understanding from its novelty and dangerous tendency; it must have been no less so to the more worldly-minded, from its opposition to sense and reason, without any prospect of the smallest advantage. Human nature is the same in all ages, and the same reasons that make the doctrine of the real presence appear incredible to those who disbelieve it now, must have made it appear no less so in any former age, when, on the above supposition, it first appeared. From this we must conclude that a doctrine lying under so many disadvantages could never have been embraced by reasonable creatures except from the full conviction that it was



revealed by God Himself, whose Divine authority alone removes all difficulties ; and this conviction could never have gained ground in the world had it not existed from the beginning, and if the doctrine itself had not been revealed by Jesus Christ, and delivered by Him, with the other revealed truths, to His apostles.

*Q.* 17. What are the other proofs of real presence from Scripture ?

*A.* The *third* proof from Scripture is taken from St Paul, who exhorting the Corinthians to fly all communication with idolatry, and from partaking of things offered to idols, uses this argument, "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" 1 Cor. x. 16. Here he expressly affirms that, in the holy Eucharist, we communicate and partake of the body and blood of Christ ; and he affirms it as a truth well known to them, which none can deny ; and therefore, after showing that "the things which the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God," ver. 20, he immediately concludes, "you cannot drink the chalice of the Lord and the chalice of devils ; you cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord and the table of devils," ver. 21, to show how shocking a crime it must be for those who communicate in the body and blood of Christ, to go and communicate also with the devil. All this argument would be ridiculous if the real presence were not true.

The *fourth* proof from Scripture is taken from the same holy apostle, who, 1 Cor. xi., reproving some abuses that had crept in among the Corinthians at their religious meetings, reminds them of the holy mysteries there celebrated ; and first gives a history of the institution of the blessed Eucharist, which he declares he had received by

immediate revelation from our Lord, and he gives it in the same terms in which it is described in the Gospels, and then adds, "Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," ver. 27. To receive the holy Eucharist unworthily, is to receive it when one is in the state of mortal sin; which the apostle here declares to be a crime of the deepest dye, equal to that of the Jews, who put our Saviour to death in a cruel and barbarous manner. Now, in the belief of the real presence, we see, all at once, the grievous injury done to Jesus Christ by receiving Him into a soul sullied with the guilt of sin, which is an object of horror and abomination in His eyes; but how a person should contract such guilt, by merely eating bread as a figure of Christ's body, is inconceivable; even common sense revolts at such a thought; especially if we reflect that the manna and the paschal lamb were much more lively figures of Jesus Christ than bread, and yet it was never supposed that those who eat the manna or the paschal lamb in the state of sin were guilty of such a crime, or indeed of any crime at all, by doing so. This decision, therefore, of the Holy Ghost manifestly implies, that our blessed Saviour's body and blood are truly and really present, even to the unworthy communicant, and grievously injured by him who receives in such a manner.

What follows confirms this still further; for the apostle adds, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment" (or, as the Protestant translation has it, *damnation*) "to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord," ver. 29. Here we see a most dreadful punishment annexed to the crime of receiving unworthily, and the point in which its guilt consists immediately adjoined. Is not our natural reason shocked to suppose

that a God of infinite justice and mercy would, in a manner, incorporate damnation with a soul for eating, while in a state of sin, bread as a figure of Christ? But we are no longer surprised at such severity, if we believe Jesus Christ to be really present in the holy sacrament, because we know that to receive Him into a soul polluted with mortal sin must be a crime of the most enormous guilt. But why is such a punishment annexed to such a crime? the apostle immediately adds, "not discerning the body of the Lord;" now, how can he discern it, if it be not there? This, then, is their crime, this the source of their guilt, because they do not consider how great, how holy a Being is present in this holy mystery, and treat Him in so unworthy and so injurious a manner.

Q. 18. Is there anything further to be added concerning the Scripture proofs of the real presence?

A. We shall only make one general observation, which is this: In the several passages of Scripture which we have seen, there are about thirteen or fourteen different texts bearing on this subject, and they all affirm in the strongest terms the doctrine of the real presence of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the holy Eucharist; on the other hand, there is not one single text in the whole Scripture that affirms, or even insinuates, the contrary. What, then, are we to believe, or how are we to know the truth in this matter, if not from such strong and express declarations of God's holy Word, so frequently repeated, and so forcibly inculcated? and what can we think of those who pretend to follow plain Scripture as their only rule, and yet go directly against so many plain declarations of Scripture, without one single text of Scripture to justify them in doing so? Our Saviour says, "The bread that I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world;" and they say, *it is not His flesh,*

*but only bread.* Christ says, "This is My body;" and they affirm, *it is not His body.* Which shall we believe?

We may observe, however, that what Catholics believe of the real presence of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, bequeathed by Him in the holy Eucharist to His Church, and what Protestants believe of the figurative presence in their sacrament, are both true. At first sight this may seem a paradox, but it is easily explained. The pastors of the Catholic Church are the undoubted successors of the apostles, and inherit from them, by an uninterrupted transmission of holy orders, the same spiritual powers of the priesthood which they themselves received from our Saviour. Of these powers, that of consecrating bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ is certainly the most eminent. This power He gave to the apostles, at the institution of the holy Eucharist, when He commanded them to do what He had done; and this power the pastors of the Church possess to this day, and will possess to the end of time. Consequently, what they give to the faithful in the blessed Eucharist is the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the same that He gave to His apostles, as all the above testimonies of Scripture clearly affirm. When Luther and his followers broke off from the Catholic Church, they rejected holy orders, and even ridiculed them; they took upon themselves to be the spiritual guides and pastors of their followers; to preach, baptize, and perform the other works of the ministry, without having received any of the priestly powers, or any authority to do so, from those before them; and as they did not possess these powers themselves, they could not transmit them to others. Consequently, their successors to this day have no power to consecrate bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, nor do they even pretend to such power: what

they give, then, to their people in their sacrament, is precisely what they believe it to be, bread and wine, which they may receive as a figure, or any way they please; but then it is not the sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ; it is not the sacred legacy which He bequeathed to His Church; it is a mere human institution.

*Q.* 19. But does not our Saviour, at the very institution of this sacrament, immediately say, "Do this in remembrance of Me?" and does not this expression imply that He is not present? for how can we be desired to remember one that is present with us?

*A.* Whatever this expression may mean, it certainly does not affirm that He is not present; consequently, it can never invalidate the plain sense of so many other texts expressly affirming His real presence; for though we cannot mistake the plain obvious meaning of these other texts, we may easily be mistaken in conjecturing what an obscure text may imply. But to show that these words, "Do this in remembrance of Me," by no means imply His absence, let us only consider another similar expression of the Holy Scripture. The wise man says, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccles. xii. 1. Shall we conclude from this that our Creator is not present with us in the days of our youth? this would be a false and impious conclusion. The meaning of the text is plainly this, that our Creator, though always present with us, "for in Him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts, xvii. 28, is not present in a visible or sensible manner; and in our youth, when the mind is apt to be carried away by the dangerous objects which surround us, we are too ready to forget His presence, and to do what is offensive to Him; therefore the Holy Ghost warns us against this danger, and exhorts us never to forget the Divine presence, but

always to conduct ourselves as remembering that we are exposed and open to His sight. In like manner, though Jesus Christ is truly present in the holy Eucharist, He is not present in a visible manner, but under the sacramental veils ; and as we are in danger of forgetting His presence, and “ of not discerning His body ” there present, so as to receive Him unworthily to our damnation, or fail in the respect and veneration we owe to Him, therefore we are commanded, when we celebrate these holy mysteries, not to forget His presence, but remember that He is there, though not visible, and to conduct ourselves as His Divine presence requires. So that this text, if explained by a similar passage of the Scripture itself, instead of implying His absence, is, on the contrary, a very strong proof of His presence. But St Paul gives us the precise meaning of that expression, as directly intended by our Saviour ; for in the account of the institution of the holy Eucharist, which he received from Christ Himself, after these words, “ Do this in remembrance of Me,” He immediately adds, as the true sense and meaning of them, “ For as often as ye shall eat this bread and drink this chalice, ye shall show the death of our Lord until He come,” 1 Cor. xi. 26, thereby declaring that the remembrance which our Saviour here requires is a remembrance of His passion and death, of which these holy mysteries are a mystical representation, and were instituted by Him to be a continual memorial till His second coming.

*Q.* 20. Does not our Saviour also say, “ It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing ; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life ” ? John, vi. 64. And does not this imply that what He had said before ought to be taken in a spiritual sense ?

*A.* Certainly these words do not declare, in plain

terms, that what He had said about His flesh and blood ought to be taken in any such sense as to exclude His real presence in the holy Eucharist; and equally certain is it that they were not so understood by His disciples, for their sole difficulty was about the reality of His presence; and after these words were spoken, "many of His disciples went back and walked no more with Him," ver. 67, which they certainly would not have done had these words of our Saviour been intended to explain His former expression in a figurative sense, and as signifying only a figure of His presence in the holy Eucharist. It is also evident that these words are obscure, when considered by themselves without the context; and, therefore, can be of no weight against the plain meaning of so many clear and express texts as go before them. It is equally manifest that our Saviour does not speak here of His own flesh; for who will dare to say that the flesh of Christ profiteth us nothing? since it was for us He took flesh, and in His flesh suffered and died for our salvation, and that He gave His flesh "for the life of the world." Therefore we must conclude that this text, far from telling against the real presence, is not even spoken in relation to the holy Sacrament at all, but that its proper meaning is, what we have seen above, that it is God's Holy Spirit which quickeneth our souls, and enables us to believe the mysteries revealed by God; that the flesh opposed to the spirit, the carnal minds of these disciples hindered them from profiting by the graces which that Holy Spirit gave them, for believing the words of Christ, which are, indeed, the spirit and life to those who believe them.

Q. 21. Does not our Saviour say in another text, "I am the vine, I am the door," which must be taken in a figurative sense; and why not the words of the institution also?

*A.* The reason is obvious. In these expressions, "I am the vine," or the like, there is a manifest opposition between the terms of the assertion which makes it absolutely impossible they should be true in the literal sense. The word *I* signifies a human person, the word *vine* signifies a tree; now it is evidently impossible that a human *person* and a *tree* could be literally the same thing. But in the institution, "this is My body," the word *this* signifies nothing of itself, but is equally applicable to anything whatsoever; and in the words of the institution it is applied to nothing till the whole sentence is finished, and then it is applied to Christ's body, which was really present, and given to His apostles; in this expression, therefore, there is not a shadow of contradiction. Besides, in these other expressions, "I am the vine," "I am the door," there is no reason, either from the circumstances in which they were spoken, or from the context, to suppose that they were meant in the literal sense. On the contrary, everything shows that they are parables. But, as we have seen above, there is the most incontestable reason to prove that the words of the institution could not be meant in any other sense than the plain obvious literal sense of the words.

*Q.* 22. Is not the holy Eucharist often called *bread and wine* in the Scripture, even after consecration? and may not this imply that it is nothing else?

*A.* By no means, because we find it is a very common way of speaking in Scripture, to call one thing by the name of a thing which it is not, on two different accounts, both of which are found in the blessed Eucharist, (1.) When it has the external appearance of the thing by the name of which it is called. Thus angels appearing like men are on that account called men in Scripture; so also it is said that "parted tongues, as it were of fire,



appeared, and sat upon the apostles on Pentecost ;” yet it was not fiery tongues, but the Holy Ghost under that appearance. (2.) When it is made from that thing by which it is called. Thus God said to Adam, “Dust thou art,” because he was made of dust. So after Aaron’s rod was turned into a serpent, it is still called a rod, “and Aaron’s rod devoured their rods,” Exod. vii. 12. So also in our case, the Holy Eucharist is called *bread* after consecration, for both these reasons—because it retains all the outward appearances of bread, and because it was bread before consecration ; and we may also add, because this Divine spiritual bread produces the same effects in the soul which natural bread does in the body.

Q. 23. Why did you say above that our Saviour is truly present, whole and entire under each kind, both under the appearance of bread, and under the appearance of wine ?

A. Because though His body be only mentioned at the consecration of the bread, yet His body is not present there alone, as separated from His blood, nor without His soul and divinity ; but Christ is present under the form of bread, whole and entire, and the same under the form of wine.

Q. 24. How is this explained ?

A. To understand this, we must observe that death consists in the separation of the soul from the body. But as the blood is so necessary for life, that without it the soul cannot continue to enliven the body, so when the blood is separated from the body, death necessarily ensues, and the soul can be no longer there. Our Saviour, to show the greatness of His love for us, was pleased to suffer death for our salvation in the most perfect manner, so that not only was his soul separated from His body on the cross, but He also shed, to the

last drop, His precious blood. And at His resurrection, His blood and His soul were again reunited to His body, and He restored to life. Now the Scripture positively declares "that Christ rising again from the dead, dieth now no more ; death shall no more have dominion over Him," Rom. vi. 9. Consequently His body, His blood, and His soul, shall never more be separated from one another ; and as the union of His Divine and human nature can never be broken, so neither can these His two natures, united in His Divine person, be ever separated. From this it necessarily follows that, wherever the body of Christ is, there also His blood, His soul, and His divinity must be ; and wherever His blood is, there also His body, soul, and divinity must be in like manner. Hence, though by the words of consecration His body only is mentioned as present under the form of bread, and His blood under the form of wine, yet, by reason of the indissoluble connection by which His body and blood, His soul and divinity, are united, Jesus Christ, whole and entire, is truly, really, and substantially present under both.

*Q.* 25. What difference, then, is there between the one kind and the other ?

*A.* Not the smallest difference as to what is contained under each kind, which is perfectly the same in both. The only difference is in the outward appearance, which in the one is that of bread, in the other that of wine.

*Q.* 26. But how can the same identical thing appear under two different forms ? Is there any other example to illustrate this ?

*A.* There is a very striking and apposite example in the different forms under which the Holy Ghost was pleased to appear to men ; for at our Saviour's baptism "the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, as a dove

upon Him," Luke, iii. 22. But when He came down on the apostles on Pentecost, "there appeared to them parted tongues, as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them," Acts, ii. 3. Now the appearances of *a dove* and of *a tongue of fire* are exceedingly different; and yet it was the self-same Holy Ghost that appeared under both these forms. In like manner, though the appearance of bread and that of wine be very different, yet it is the self-same Jesus Christ who is contained under each in the Holy Eucharist.

*Q.* 27. Was this doctrine of the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist the constant belief of the Christian world from the beginning?

*A.* It certainly was, as can be shown by the clearest and most express testimonies of the writers of Christianity in every age from the times of the apostles; and besides, it is proved to be the true doctrine of Jesus Christ by the infallible authority of His Holy Catholic Church, which has again and again decidedly declared it to be a truth revealed by God, and to have been handed down from the beginning as such throughout all preceding generations.

## SECTION II.

### *Of Transubstantiation.*

*Q.* 28. What is meant by transubstantiation?

*A.* To understand this, we must observe that in all the material objects around us there are two things to be carefully distinguished—the outward appearances which they exhibit to our senses, such as their colour, shape, taste, smell, and other such sensible qualities; and the inward matter or substance in which all these sensible qualities reside. These qualities of bodies are the pro-

per objects of our knowledge, of which we are certain from the testimony of our senses; but with regard to the inward matter or substance of bodies, or its nature or structure, this is imperceptible to us, and hidden from our eyes. Nay, we cannot so much as form any idea or conception of it. Now, what our holy faith teaches concerning transubstantiation is, "that this inward imperceptible substance of the bread and wine at the consecration is taken away by the almighty power of God, the body and blood of Jesus Christ being substituted in its place; but that the outward sensible qualities of bread and wine remain as before. So that Jesus Christ, now present instead of the bread and wine, exhibits Himself to us under those same outward forms or appearances which the bread and wine had before the change."

Q. 29. How is this shown to be true?

A. From the very words of our Saviour, of which it is a natural consequence; for when He took bread into His hands, it was then bread, but when He gave to His apostles, He expressly declared that what He gave them to eat was His body—"Take, eat," said He, "this is My body;" and as we have seen above, by thus declaring it to be His body, He made it so, as His words could not be false. Now, as that which before consecration was *bread* did, after consecration, become His *body*, the bread must undoubtedly be changed into His body; and as there is no change in the outward sensible qualities, it must be in the inward substance.

Q. 30. Is there any other example of the like effects of the words of Christ in the Holy Scripture?

A. There is a very striking one in the cure of the ruler's son of Capernaum; for when the ruler pressed our Saviour to go down to cure his son, saying, "Sir, come down before that my son die," John, iv. 49, "Jesus

saith to him, Go thy way, thy son liveth," ver. 50. He did not command the son to be cured, as He expressed Himself on other such occasions, but He affirmed that he was cured, and immediately the young man was restored to his health; for "it was the same hour that Jesus said to the ruler, Thy son liveth, that the fever left him," ver. 53. Which shows the almighty power of the words of Christ, that when He affirms a thing to be what it was not before, it immediately becomes what He affirms it to be. So when Jesus took bread into His hands, and affirmed that what He gave His apostles was His body, what before was bread immediately became His body.

*Q.* 31. How is such a change possible?

*A.* It does not become us, weak mortals, to ask how anything is possible to the Almighty God. He who created all things out of nothing by His word alone, can, with the same ease, annihilate them again, or change one thing into another as He pleases. Nor has He failed to dispose the world for the belief of this mystery by performing on various occasions, in a visible manner, what He here does in a manner imperceptible to our senses. He turned the waters of Egypt into blood by the hand of Moses; He changed Moses's dry rod into a living serpent; He changed the water into wine at the marriage of Cana: all this He did in a visible manner, evident to the senses of the beholders, showing that it is perfectly easy for Him to change one thing into another when He pleases. And that it is no less easy for His Almighty power to cause one thing to appear under the outward form of another, is manifest from several instances. Thus angels often appeared to His holy servants of old under the form of young men; spoke, walked, and eat with them. So also the Holy Ghost appeared to men

“under the form of a dove,” Luke, iii. 22, at our Saviour’s baptism, and as “parted tongues of fire” when He came down upon the apostles, Acts, ii. 3: and, indeed, the art of man itself, on many occasions, does in like manner; for how often do cooks, apothecaries, and vintners, composing dishes, drugs, and various wines, representing so exactly what they are not, that the nicest judge cannot distinguish them from what they represent? and shall we deny to the Almighty a power which we find in men? Now, in the blessed Eucharist He changes the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ; and Christ, now really present in the blessed Eucharist, is pleased to appear under the same outward forms which the bread and wine had before.

*Q.* 32. But how can the body of Christ be in so many different places at one and the same time, as this doctrine implies?

*A.* Who are we, to ask such a question? we, who are perfectly ignorant of the nature of a glorified body—for such the body of Christ is—and who know not what is possible or not possible for it to do? From what we have seen, it is evident that the real presence is a Divine truth revealed by God, that our Saviour is actually present in many different places at once; therefore this is certainly possible, though we cannot comprehend how it is so. However, even in this, His infinite goodness has condescended to show us, by an example, that this is nowise impossible; for in the miracle of feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two small fishes, it is declared that the men “sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties,” and that after “blessing the loaves, He gave to His disciples to set before them, and the two fishes He divided among them all; and they all did eat,

and had their fill," Mark, vi. 40. "And when they were filled He said to His disciples, gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost. So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten," John, vi. 12. The same miracle was repeated a second time, when He fed four thousand men with seven loaves and a few small fishes, and gathered up seven baskets of the fragments, after all were filled, Mark, viii. 6. Now from these two miracles it seems highly probable that the power of God may cause bodies, even in their natural state, to be in many different places at one and the same time. For if we suppose, for example's sake, that these five loaves were so large as naturally to suffice to serve one company of fifty men, as there were a hundred such companies, the loaves must have been in a hundred different places at one and the same time while all these hundred companies were partaking of them; the same is to be observed of the two fishes: and still more, after all had eaten, no less than twelve baskets were filled with the fragments, a greater quantity than the five loaves were at the beginning. Now, if Almighty God could so multiply these loaves, even in their natural state, as to be in so many places at one and the same time, there can be no difficulty in the body of Christ, now in a glorified state, being in as many places at the same time as He pleases.

*Q.* 33. But may it not be supposed that on these occasions Christ formed new loaves in the hands of the apostles as they were distributing them to the multitude, or that angels invisibly put other loaves into their hands?

*A.* I know this is the evasion that some use to avoid the force of this miracle; but it must be observed that there is not the smallest ground for saying so—nay,

that it is directly contrary to the express words of the Scripture; for there it is affirmed that "the two fishes He divided among them all," which would be false if He had either formed new fishes or the angels had supplied others invisibly; it is also said that "they filled twelve baskets of the fragments of the five barley loaves that remained over and above to them that had eaten," which also must be false if other loaves had been administered. Besides, Christ Himself, speaking of these very miracles, said to His apostles, "When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say to Him, Twelve. And when the seven loaves among four thousand, how many baskets of fragments took ye up? and they said, Seven," Mark, viii. 19; where He affirms that He broke the five loaves among the five thousand, and the seven loaves among the four thousand, which would have been untrue if the whole five thousand and four thousand men had not partaken of the individual five and seven loaves, but the greater number of them had been fed with other newly-formed or newly-provided loaves.

*Q.* 34. There is yet another difficulty; how can the entire body of Christ be contained in the small compass of a consecrated host?

*A.* The answer to this is the same as in the former case; we know from revelation that it is so, but how it is does not belong to us to inquire. We must remember, however, what our Saviour says in the Gospel, that at the resurrection even our bodies shall become like the angels of God, putting on the properties and qualities of spirits. But spirits are not confined to space, and, if they appear to men in a visible form, may do so in any form or size. Now the body of Christ is a glorified body, not existing in the same gross material manner as ours at



present, and therefore not confined to space or size. Besides, Christ Himself says that with God it is possible to make a camel pass through the eye of a needle.

*Q.* 35. Are not our senses, at least, deceived in this mystery?

*A.* By no means. Were the senses of the saints of old deceived when the angels appeared to them as young men? Were the senses of those deceived who saw the Holy Ghost descending upon our Saviour like a dove? or upon the apostles as fiery tongues? Certainly not; the senses saw what was really there; the appearance and form of young men in the first case, and that of a dove and of fiery tongues in the latter. So, in the holy Eucharist, our senses perceive the appearances of bread and wine, and these appearances are really there, therefore they are by no means deceived.

### SECTION III.

#### *Of the Holy Communion.*

*Q.* 36. What is the holy communion?

*A.* It is the receiving of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the holy Eucharist, for the food and nourishment of our souls.

*Q.* 37. Is it a great happiness to receive this holy sacrament worthily?

*A.* It certainly is a very great happiness, as appears from the admirable effects which it produces in the soul of the worthy receiver.

*Q.* 38. What are these effects?

*A.* They are chiefly these (1.) It increases the sanctification of the soul by an increase of justifying grace;

rendering the soul of the worthy receiver more pure, holy, and agreeable in the eyes of God. (2.) It bestows on the soul an abundant supply of actual grace, for preserving, strengthening, and perfecting her in her spiritual life, by which she advances in the love of God, and is strengthened in His service, according to the words of our Saviour, "he that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me," John, vi. 58. (3.) It is a wholesome and powerful remedy against all the spiritual maladies of the soul, by which the infirmities of our corrupt nature are cured, our evil inclinations rectified, and our attachment to created objects moderated. (4.) It cleanses the soul from all those venial sins and imperfections of which we repent, and preserves us from falling into mortal sin. (5.) It unites us in a most intimate manner with Jesus Christ, who comes in this holy sacrament to dwell in our souls and abide in us. "He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him," John, vi. 57. (6.) It gives us a pledge of a glorious immortality, and brings us at last to the enjoyment of it, if we persevere in grace to the end; "he that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day," John, vi. 55. "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever," John, vi. 52.

*Q.* 39. Is it a great evil to receive the holy communion unworthily?

*A.* It is one of the greatest, both in regard to the guilt which the unworthy communicant incurs, and also on account of the punishment which follows.

*Q.* 40. How does the greatness of the guilt appear?

*A.* (1.) from the nature of the crime committed. To receive the holy communion unworthily, is to receive it when a person knows himself to be in sin—that is, in disgrace with God, and at enmity with Him; for a soul in

sin is loathsome and hideous in the sight of God, as a dead body is in the sight of men. This holy sacrament was designed to unite us with Jesus Christ, that by it He might come and dwell in our souls, for He says, "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood, abides in Me, and I in him." To receive this sacrament in the state of sin, then, is to unite Jesus Christ to a soul which is loathsome and hideous to Him; an object of His horror and detestation; it is to bring the author of life into a polluted soul; to force, in a manner, the Holy of Holies to take up His abode in a place of corruption. What a grievous injury is this to Jesus Christ! what an insult! Nothing will serve better to illustrate this than a torment inflicted upon some of the martyrs by the heathen persecutors, when they stripped the martyr naked and bound him to a putrid corpse, face to face, limb to limb, and then left him to die in that frightful state. (2.) The guilt of an unworthy communion appears also from the sentence passed upon it by the Holy Ghost in Scripture; for there St Paul says, "Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord," 1 Cor. xi. 27. To be guilty of a man's blood is to murder him; and to be guilty of his body, seems capable of no other meaning than to murder him in a cruel and barbarous manner, tormenting his body by a painful and lingering death. This was the crime of the Jews in what they did to Jesus Christ; and this also, says the apostle, is the crime of the unworthy communicant; a hideous crime indeed! a dreadful guilt! The unworthy communicant, like Judas, betrays Jesus Christ into the hands of His enemies, while he brings Him into a soul where Satan reigns as master; and He betrays Him too, with a kiss, whilst in appearance he pretends to honour Him.

The Jews scourged Him, crowned Him with thorns, and crucified Him; but the unworthy communicant does Him an injury more grievous and more afflicting than all these sufferings; for if the Scripture assures us that those who commit any mortal sin after baptism, "crucify again to themselves the Son of God, and make a mockery of Him," Heb. vi. 6, how much more do they who make an unworthy communion, one of the most grievous of all sins? nay, in some respects they are more guilty than the Jews, who treated Him as they did through ignorance, "for if they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory," 1 Cor. ii. 8. But the unworthy communicant knows Him to be the Lord of glory, believes Him to be the Son of God, and yet injures Him in such a manner.

*Q.* 41. How does the evil of an unworthy communion appear from the punishment annexed to it?

*A.* From different considerations, (1.) We find throughout the whole Scripture, that Almighty God, jealous of His honour, and of the respect due to the holy things, never fails to punish sacrilege, which is the profanation of holy things, with a particular severity. Witness the Bethsames for looking into the Ark, 1 Kings, vi. Oza for touching it with profane hands, 2 Kings, vi. Baltasar for profaning the holy vessels, Dan. v., and others. Now, if God so severely punishes the profanation of inanimate creatures which are consecrated to His service, what punishment is to be expected for the unworthy communicant, who profanes the Holy of Holies in so injurious a manner? (2.) St Paul assures us that this is one principal cause of many temporal sufferings; for, after mentioning the greatness of the sin, and the dreadful punishment inflicted for it on the soul, he adds, "therefore are there many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep,"

1 Cor. xi. 30, to show that sickness, infirmities, and untimely deaths are the consequences of this sin. (3.) He declares the punishment of it, with regard to the next life, in these alarming words: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment (or damnation) to himself," 1 Cor. xi. 29. (4.) The example of Judas, the first who made an unworthy communion, is a striking instance; for on his receiving the morsel from the hand of Christ, "Satan entered into him," that is, got full possession of him; and "he immediately went out," and agreed with the chief priests to betray his Master into their hands that night; which he accordingly did, and received the thirty pieces of silver for which he had bargained. Soon after this he was tormented by his guilty conscience, and the next morning went to the chief priests and threw down the money, acknowledging his guilt; but finding no relief, he fell into despair, "and went and hanged himself with a halter," Mat. xxvii. 5, and, "being hanged, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out," Acts, i. 18. Such was the unhappy fate of the first unworthy communicant. A sad and alarming example indeed!

*Q.* 42. What dispositions are required in the receiver to prevent his making an unworthy communion, and to receive it with fruit and benefit?

*A.* Several things are required for this end, particularly these following:—

(1.) That we have a pure intention, not performing that sacred action merely out of custom, because we see others communicating, or to be thought pious or devout by men; but (1.) for the glory of God, and to give supreme honour to Jesus Christ, opening our hearts to Him, and receiving Him into our souls, as our Sovereign Lord and Master, to whom alone we wholly belong.

(2.) To obtain for our souls all the excellent fruits which Jesus Christ bestows upon the worthy receiver. (3.) To commemorate the passion and death of Christ, according to His express command, "Do this in remembrance of Me;" for, says St Paul, "as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He come," 1 Cor. xi. 26. Such are the intentions we ought to have in receiving the holy sacrament.

(2.) That we be fasting from midnight, so as to have taken nothing, from twelve o'clock at night, neither food, drink, nor medicine; and this is required by an express command of the Church, out of respect and reverence to this blessed sacrament, that this spiritual food of the soul may be the first we receive. This command, however, is dispensed with in the case of those who, being in danger of death from sickness, receive the holy communion by way of viaticum, or as a preparation for their last passage; for they may receive it whether fasting or not, on any day, and at any hour.

(3.) That we be in a state of grace and in friendship with God; and this is of indispensable necessity, as the receiving this holy communion, when one is conscious of being in a state of sin, is the very thing in which an unworthy communion consists.

(4.) That our soul be adorned with those holy virtues which are necessary to make it a habitation agreeable to Jesus Christ; particularly these following: (1.) "A lively faith of His Divine presence;" this is the foundation of all, and the more the soul exercises herself in it, the more profitable will be her communion. It is acquired by humble prayer, and frequent acts of faith, considering who He is, our God, our Saviour, and our Judge, &c. (2.) "A profound humility," respect, reverential awe,

and fear, considering His infinite dignity and our unworthiness. Consider what humility Moses showed at the burning bush, and Joshua at the appearance of the angel. Now, Jesus Christ is the King of angels; the four and twenty ancients, and other blessed spirits, show the most profound respect for Him in heaven: how much more ought we, worms of the earth, to humble ourselves before Him? This is acquired by considering who He is, and who we are. St Elizabeth, when the blessed Virgin came to see her, cried out in amazement, “whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?” Luke, i. 43. Our Lord Himself comes to us in the holy Eucharist! (3.) “A great confidence and trust in Him;” He is able to do us all good, He is willing and ready on His part, He invites us to come—“Come to Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you,” Mat. xi. 28. And if God spared not even “His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how hath He not also with Him given us all things?” Rom. viii. 32. The example of the woman with the issue of blood shows the wonderful effects of confidence in Him! she touched but the hem of His garment, and was cured; but we receive Him whole and entire in the holy communion—what may not we expect? Humility and confidence united may obtain anything from Him; witness the example of the good centurion. (4.) *A sincere love of Jesus Christ*; this is the crown of all, includes all good, and renders us most acceptable to Jesus Christ. It is acquired by fervent prayer, often meditating upon His infinite goodness, His infinite love to us, and by frequent and fervent acts of holy love to Him. And this love ought to show itself in an ardent desire to be united to Him, and to receive Him frequently in this holy sacrament, as the effect of love is

to unite us to the beloved object ; and particularly in making us careful to lead innocent lives, and obey His holy commandments, that nothing may prevent this frequent union with Him in the holy communion.

5. That after receiving Him in the blessed Eucharist, we show our respect and gratitude in a becoming manner :—(1.) By spending some time in His blessed company, in profound homage, by acts of faith and adoration, thanksgiving and praise, oblation of ourselves to Him, laying before Him our necessities, and begging such graces for ourselves and others as we and they stand in need of. (2.) By keeping ourselves more recollected than ordinary during the day, often calling to mind Whom we have received, and rendering Him the homage of some acts of holy virtue. (3.) Striving to live by Him ; for “ he that eats this bread,” says He, “ the same shall live by me,” which is done by a continual endeavour to imitate His example and to do His will.

#### SECTION IV.

##### *Of Communion in one kind.*

Q. 43. In what does the sacrament of the holy communion properly consist ?

A. In receiving Jesus Christ, whole and entire, His sacred body, His precious blood, His blessed soul, and His adorable divinity, into our souls ; Who, by His blessed presence within us, communicates to our souls all those heavenly graces which are the effects of the holy communion.

Q. 44. Do we receive the full and perfect sacrament under one kind only ?



*A.* Most certainly ; for, as we have seen above, Jesus Christ, God made man, His body and blood, His soul and divinity are contained whole and entire, both under the form of bread and under the form of wine, and is the selfsame in the one kind as in the other. When we receive the holy communion under the form of bread, therefore, we receive Jesus Christ into our souls, whole and entire, a full and perfect sacrament ; when we receive it under the form of wine, we receive the same ; and though we should receive under both kinds, we would not receive two Christs nor two different sacraments, but the same Jesus Christ and the same sacrament.

*Q.* 45. Can this be illustrated by any example ?

*A.* The example of the Holy Ghost coming down upon the apostles will clearly explain this ; for when He came down upon them in the form of fiery tongues, they received the plenitude of that Divine Spirit with all His gifts and graces ; and if He had come down in the form of a dove they would have received the selfsame Holy Ghost as they did under the form of tongues ; for whatever outward appearance He had been pleased to take could make no difference in that which was contained under it. But let us suppose He had descended in the form both of a dove and of fiery tongues at the same time, would they have received more than they did under the form of tongues alone ? or would they have received two Holy Ghosts ? It is clear they would not ; for though this Divine Spirit had taken ever so many different forms, they would have been no more replenished with His gifts and graces than they were by receiving Him under the form of fiery tongues alone, as it was not the appearance He took, but His Divine presence which replenished them. The application to the holy communion is perfectly obvious.

Q. 46. Did not Jesus Christ command all to receive in both kinds?

A. Jesus Christ commands all to receive His body and blood; because this is what the sacrament of communion essentially requires, and this is perfectly accomplished by receiving in one kind only; but there is no command to be found in the whole Scripture for all to receive in both kinds.

Q. 47. But does not our Saviour say, "Except you eat of the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you?" And does not this expressly command both *eating* and *drinking*, and therefore receiving in both kinds?

A. This indeed expressly commands the receiving both His body and blood; but the stress of the command by no means lies upon the manner of receiving by the separate actions of eating and drinking; and this is explained by Himself a little after, when He says, "He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me," John, vi. 58, and "He that eateth this bread shall live for ever," v. 59. Where we see that eternal life is promised to the eating alone; which evidently shows that by eating only we perfectly fulfil the command given in the former text, where both eating and drinking are mentioned, and obtain that life to our souls which is there spoken of; because, by eating alone, we receive both body and blood.

Q. 48. When He gave the chalice to His apostles, did He not say, "Drink ye all of this"? Mat. xxvi. 27.

A. He did; but who were the *all* here spoken to? The apostles who were present with Him, and to whom He was speaking; and accordingly St Mark tells us that "they all drank of it," Mark, xiv. 23. This, indeed, may imply a command to priests who actually celebrate the

holy mysteries to receive at that time under both kinds ; but it by no means contains a command to all the people, nor even to priests who are not actually celebrating, to do so.

*Q.* 49. Are there any grounds from Scripture to authorise the giving communion in one kind ?

*A.* There are most manifest grounds in Scripture for it : (1.) Because our Saviour Himself assures us that communion in one kind is a full and perfect sacrament, by which eternal life is procured to the soul : “ He that eats this bread shall live for ever.” (2.) Because it is evident from the Scripture that, under either kind, we receive Jesus Christ whole and entire, both His body and blood, in which the essence of the sacrament consists. (3.) Because St Paul says, “ Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of our Lord,” 1 Cor. xi. 27. Where, by saying “ eat or drink,” he manifestly shows that it was the practice in his time to do the one or the other, to receive either by eating or drinking. And the force of this text is so strong in favour of communion in one kind only, that in all the Protestant Bibles the word OR has been changed into AND, contrary to the original Greek from which it is translated. (4.) Because our Saviour Himself, when He discovered Himself to the two disciples going to Emmaus, communicated to them in one kind only ; for on receiving that divine bread from His hands, “ Their eyes were opened, and they knew Him ; and He vanished out of their sight,” Luke, xxiv. 31. Now, that this was the holy communion which He gave them, is clear from the manner in which He gave it them, which was the same as at the Last Supper : “ He took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave to them,” ver. 30. And still more from the effect it pro-

duced in them, of so opening their eyes that they knew Him, which surely common bread could not do. (5.) Because the apostles themselves followed the same practice, as occasion required, as appears both from the text just now cited from St Paul, and also from the account given of the first Christians in the Acts: "And they were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayers," Acts, ii. 42.

*Q.* 50. In what light, then, does the Church look upon this practice?

*A.* She considers the giving communion in one kind only or in both merely as a point of discipline, which may be varied as circumstances may require; and in consequence of this she has, on various occasions, sometimes given in one kind, sometimes in both, as is evident from monuments of antiquity from the earliest ages.

*Q.* 51. But if one kind alone be sufficient for a full and perfect sacrament, and if our Saviour did not intend that all should receive it in both kinds, why did He institute it in both kinds?

*A.* Because this holy mystery was ordained not only as a sacrament, but also as a sacrifice. Now, though one kind alone be sufficient for a true and perfect sacrament, yet both are required for a sacrifice, because the nature of this holy sacrifice consists in representing the death of Jesus Christ, and offering Him up to His eternal Father under the appearance of death, which could not be done but by both kinds, as we shall now see.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## OF THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

Q. 1. **W**HAT do you understand by a sacrifice?  
 A. Sacrifice is an external act of religious worship, which can be given to none but God alone.

Q. 2. In what does *sacrifice* properly consist?

A. In the *oblation* or *offering* of some sensible thing made to God by a *priest* or *lawful minister* to acknowledge, by the *destruction* or other *change* of the thing offered, the sovereign power of God, and His absolute dominion over all creatures, and to render to Him the homage due to His supreme majesty.

Q. 3. Why is it an offering of some *sensible thing*?

A. To distinguish it from the inward sacrifice of the heart, which is performed by the proper acts of all Christian virtues, such as praise, prayer, faith, and the like, and to be an external profession of these inward dispositions of the soul.

Q. 4. Why is it called an offering *made to God*?

A. Because as the nature of sacrifice is to acknowledge the supreme dominion of God over us and all creatures, and to worship Him as God, it therefore can be offered to none but God; for to offer sacrifice to any creature would be the crime of idolatry, and acknowledg-

ing that creature to be God. Hence the Scripture says, "He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord," Exod. xxii. 20.

*Q.* 5. Why is it an offering made by a *lawful minister*?

*A.* Because none can make this offering but those who are properly authorized, in the manner appointed by God Himself, according to that of St Paul, "Neither doth any man take the honour upon himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was," Heb. v. 4. These are called *Priests*, and are the lawful ministers "appointed to offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins," Heb. v. 1.

*Q.* 6. Why must the thing offered be *destroyed, or otherwise changed*?

*A.* Because by this destruction or change of the offering we acknowledge the supreme dominion of Almighty God over all creatures, who, as He made us out of nothing, can again destroy or change us as He pleases. By it we also confess Him to be the sovereign Master of life and death; we profess our total subjection to Him, and our readiness to be treated by Him as He pleases.

*Q.* 7. Is external sacrifice a necessary part of true religion?

*A.* It is, as appears from several reasons:

(1.) We observe that all other outward actions, by which we testify our respect for one another, such as uncovering the head, bowing, kneeling, or the like, are daily used towards men, as well as towards God. Now it accords with right reason that, in the exterior worship of God, there should be some particular form or rite expressing that sovereign homage which we owe to the Deity, and which, therefore, can be given to none but to Him alone; and such is sacrifice.

(2.) We find that all nations, however barbarous and uncivilised, that ever acknowledged a Supreme Being,

whether true or false, have always looked upon sacrifice as the essential worship due to Him ; which shows it to be pointed out, by the light of nature itself, as a necessary part of religion.

(3.) From the very beginning of the world sacrifice has always been used by the holy servants of God as an essential part of religion, and accepted by Him as an agreeable homage from their hands ; witness the sacrifice of Abel, Gen. iv. ; of Noah, Gen. viii. ; of Melchisedech, Gen. xiv ; of Abraham, Gen. xv. and xxii. ; and the sacrifices of Job, ch. i. and ch. xlii.

(4.) When Almighty God was pleased to reveal to His chosen people the manner in which He would be worshipped by them, He expressly instituted several kinds of sacrifices as the most holy part of their religion ; which He so strictly claimed as the worship due to Himself alone, that He commanded the person to be utterly destroyed who should dare to give it to any other.

Q. 8. What are the ends for which sacrifice is offered to God ?

A. Chiefly these four :—(1.) To render supreme honour and glory to Almighty God, and to pay Him that homage which justly belongs to Him. (2.) To give Him thanks for the numberless benefits we are continually receiving from Him. (3.) To render Him propitious to us, and to appease His wrath, justly enkindled against us by our sins ; and (4.) To obtain from Him those graces and blessings which we stand in need of.

## SECTION I.

*Of the Sacrifices of the Old Law.*

*Q.* 9. Who instituted the sacrifices of the Old Law?

*A.* God Himself, by His own express command.

*Q.* 10. How many kinds of sacrifice did He there ordain?

*A.* Four:—(1.) The holocaust, or whole burnt-offering. (2.) The thanksgiving offering. (3.) The sin-offering. And, (4.) the peace-offering. Which four different kinds correspond to the four great ends of sacrifice.

*Q.* 11. Why was such a variety of sacrifices commanded in the old law?

*A.* Because, as these sacrifices had no intrinsic value of themselves singly, they were incapable of fulfilling all the ends of sacrifice, therefore it was necessary to have different kinds of sacrifices, corresponding to these different ends.

*Q.* 12. To whom did it belong to offer up these sacrifices?

*A.* To Aaron and his sons alone, who were, in a special manner, called by Almighty God to be His priests, and were solemnly consecrated by Him to that office.

*Q.* 13. What were the things offered in the sacrifices?

*A.* There were two different classes: (1.) Living creatures, such as sheep, lambs, oxen, pigeons, &c.; and these were bloody sacrifices, because the victims were killed, and sometimes entirely burnt upon the altar. (2.) Things without life, such as fine flour, with oil and frankincense, Lev. ii. 1; unleavened cakes, or wafers, Lev.



ii. 4, and the like; and these were either burnt, or otherwise destroyed, upon the altar. To those we may add, (3.) The well-known sacrifice of bread and wine offered by Melchisedech, priest of the Most High God: these two last were unbloody sacrifices.

*Q.* 14. Was the thing offered always destroyed entirely?

*A.* In the holocaust, or whole burnt-offering, the victim was entirely consumed by fire; because this kind being principally intended as an act of supreme homage to God, the total destruction of the victim was necessary to represent, in the most perfect manner, the supreme dominion of God over all creatures, by which He can totally change or destroy them whenever He pleases, as easily as He created them. But in the other three kinds of sacrifice the victim was only consumed in part, and of the rest was made a spiritual banquet or communion for the priest and people. See the book of Leviticus, especially the first seven chapters.

*Q.* 15. Were these sacrifices agreeable to Almighty God, from any virtue in themselves?

*A.* No, they were not; for as God Himself says, "Shall I eat the flesh of bullocks? or shall I drink the blood of goats?" Ps. xlix. 13; and the royal prophet, addressing himself to God, says, "if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would indeed have given it; with burnt-offerings Thou wilt not be delighted," Ps. l. 18.

*Q.* 16. On what account, then, were they agreeable to God?

*A.* For a twofold reason: (1.) As being all types and figures of Jesus Christ, and of His sacrifice in the new law; and, (2.) Inasmuch as they were accompanied with proper dispositions of heart in the offerers.

*Q.* 17. What are these dispositions?

*A.* Humility, repentance, confidence in God, and the like holy virtues, especially faith in the Redeemer, Who was then to come, and of Whom these sacrifices were figures. Hence David says, "A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit; a contrite and humbled heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise," Ps. l. 19.

*Q.* 18. In what manner were these ancient sacrifices figures of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ?

*A.* In two respects, (1.) *With regard to the thing offered*; for when living creatures were sacrificed and slain upon the altar, this was a type and figure of the bloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the cross; and when things without life were used in these sacrifices, they were figures of the unbloody sacrifice of Jesus Christ in the Mass. (2.) *With regard to the manner of offering*; for when the sacrifice was a holocaust, and the victim entirely consumed, this represented the perfect and complete oblation which Jesus Christ made of Himself upon the cross, on which He was entirely, as it were, consumed by death, for the glory of His eternal Father. And in the other sacrifices, where the victims were not wholly consumed, but part of them reserved as a spiritual banquet for the priests and people, was represented the holy sacrifice of Jesus Christ in the Mass, in which both priest and people feed their souls with the adorable victim there offered, the body and blood of their Redeemer.

*Q.* 19. Were these sacrifices intended by Almighty God to continue always?

*A.* No: all these sacrifices of the old law, together with the priesthood of Aaron, which was ordained by God for offering them, being only types and figures of the sacrifice and priesthood of the Redeemer, were to continue only till His coming, and then to cease, and give

way to the perfect sacrifice and priesthood of Jesus Christ, both which, being according to the order of Melchisedech, were to last for ever; "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; Thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech," Ps. cix. 4.

*Q.* 20. How does this appear from Scripture?

*A.* It is expressly taught by St Paul, from the testimony of David, from whom he cites these words, spoken in the person of Christ at His first entrance into the world: "Wherefore, when He cometh into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not, but a body Thou hast fitted to Me; holocaust for sin did not please Thee, then said I, Behold I come, in the head of the book it is written of Me, that I should do Thy will, O God," Heb. x. 5; then the apostle explains these words relating to Christ thus: "In saying before, Sacrifice and oblation, and holocausts for sin Thou wouldst not, neither are they pleasing to Thee, which are offered according to the law: then said I, Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God; He taketh away the first, that He may establish that which followeth: by the which will we are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Christ once," ver. 8.

*Q.* 21. What do you mean by saying that the priesthood of Christ is according to the order of Melchisedech?

*A.* Melchisedech was "priest of the Most High God, the king of Salem," which was afterwards called Jerusalem, and his sacrifice was "bread and wine," Gen. xiv. He also was a remarkable figure of Jesus Christ, "being, by interpretation of his name, king of Justice, and then also king of Salem, that is, king of peace," Heb. vii. 2; and his order of priesthood was to offer up bread and wine; according to which order Christ is declared in

Scripture to be "made a high priest for ever," Heb. vi. 20.

*Q.* 22. Was Christ also a priest according to the order of Aaron?

*A.* He was, and He exercised that order when He offered Himself up in a bloody manner upon the cross, by which He fulfilled and abolished that order of priesthood, which then gave place to the order of Melchisedech; according to which Christ continues a priest for ever, offering up Himself in the holy sacrifice of the Mass under the forms of bread and wine.

## SECTION II.

### *Of the Sacrifice of the New Law.*

*Q.* 23. What is the great sacrifice of the New Law?

*A.* Jesus Christ our Redeemer, who is both our High Priest and victim, who in order to perfect the work of our redemption, and reconcile man with His offended Creator, offered Himself once in a bloody manner upon the cross; and in order to communicate and apply the fruits of His death to our souls, continues to offer Himself daily upon the altar in an unbloody manner, by the ministry of His priest, in the Mass.

*Q.* 24. Is then the sacrifice of the cross and that of the Mass the same, or are they two distinct sacrifices?

*A.* They are one and the same sacrifice; because the victim is the same, *Jesus Christ*; and the *High Priest*, or principal offerer, is the same in both, *Jesus Christ*. It was He that offered Himself upon the cross; it is He that offers Himself upon the altar. The only difference is in the *manner* of offering; because on the cross He

offered Himself in a bloody manner, and *actually* died; in the Mass He offers Himself in an unbloody manner, and dies only *mystically*; that is, His death is represented by the separate consecration of the bread and wine, which denotes the shedding or separation of His sacred blood from His body.

Q. 25. How does the separate consecration of the bread and wine represent the death of Christ?

A. Although our holy faith teaches us that, in the blessed Eucharist, the body and blood of Christ are truly and really present under each kind, which are perfectly the same as to what is contained under them, and differ only in the outward appearance, yet, as the appearance of bread more naturally represents His body, and the appearance of wine more naturally represents His blood, these being separately consecrated, and lying separate upon the altar, represent the real separation of His blood from His body, when He actually died upon the cross. By this means our holy victim is offered up to God, not *actually* dead, but under the appearance of death, according to what was shown to St John, when He says, "I saw, and behold, in the midst of the throne, and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the ancients, a Lamb standing as it were slain," Rev. v. 6; not actually slain, but *as it were slain*, under the appearance of being slain. And hence we see the necessity of instituting the blessed Eucharist in both kinds, in order to be a sacrifice, though one kind alone constitutes a perfect sacrament.

Q. 26. What need was there of the sacrifice of the altar, since we were fully redeemed by the sacrifice of the cross?

A. (1.) That we might have, in the sacrifice of the altar, a standing memorial of the death of Christ. (2.)

That the memory of our Saviour's passion, being thus daily renewed and presented to Almighty God, might be a continual means to draw down His blessing upon us, and to thank Him for His daily favours in a manner worthy of Him, and to obtain pardon for the sins we are daily committing against Him. (3.) That the Christian people might have an efficacious means of approaching daily to God through their Saviour Jesus Christ, Who is the victim here offered. (4.) That they might have, to the end of the world, a visible sacrifice, in which they might join together in offering supreme homage to God, as the servants of God had always done from the beginning of the world. (5.) That all the figures and sacrifices of the old law, and of Melchisedech, might be perfectly fulfilled, according to that of our Saviour: "Amen I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled," Mat. v. 18. (6.) That by the sacrifice of the altar the fruits of His death might daily be applied to our souls.

*Q.* 27. How are the fruits of our Saviour's death applied to our souls by the Mass?

*A.* Jesus Christ died upon the cross for all mankind in general—that is, He offered to God a full and ample satisfaction for the injury done Him by the sins of the whole world. In the Mass, by mystically renewing and presenting to His Father the death He suffered on the cross, He obtains His acceptance of the same for the actual benefit of those in particular for whom the Mass is offered. By this means those graces which He merited for mankind in general by His death are actually applied to, and bestowed upon, our souls, in such measure as our wants require, and our dispositions are capable of receiving.

*Q.* 28. But is not the sacrifice of the Mass injurious or derogatory to the sacrifice of the cross?

*A.* If the Mass were a distinct sacrifice from that of the cross, and designed to supply any supposed deficiency in its value or efficacy, the Mass might justly be said to be injurious to it; but as it is the selfsame sacrifice, and offered only to apply the merits of our Saviour's death to our souls in particular, and for the other sacred ends above mentioned, it is evidently in no way injurious or derogatory to the sacrifice of the cross.

*Q.* 29. How does the sacrifice of the Mass fulfil the four great ends of sacrifice?

*A.* In the most perfect manner: (1.) In it the most perfect homage and sovereign adoration is given to Almighty God; because Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, made man for the salvation of mankind, humbles Himself in this holy sacrifice, taking the form of bread and wine, and offers Himself up, by the hands of the priest, under the appearance of death, that by this humiliation of His humanity, which receives an infinite value from the divinity of His person, He may render the most perfect worship and adoration to His eternal Father for us and with us. When, therefore, we unite our intention with that of our High Priest and Victim, and offer this holy sacrifice to God in acknowledgment of His sovereign dominion over us, and in protestation of our total subjection to Him, we do Him sovereign homage, and give Him the most perfect honour and glory which a creature can render to his Creator.

(2.) Though it is our duty, as Christians, in all things to give thanks to God, both in words and affection, for the numberless benefits we are continually receiving from Him, yet all the thanks we can give Him are of no value in themselves, as proceeding from us, nor in

any degree adequate to what we owe Him. But if we had anything of *real value in the sight of God*, which we could give in return for His many favours, this would render our thanksgiving acceptable. Now, this is what we have in the sacrifice of the Mass; for in it Jesus Christ gives Himself to us, that we may have in Him *a gift of infinite value* to offer to His eternal Father, and He offers Himself in this holy mystery with us and for us; so that here we make to God a return for all His benefits, not only adequate but even superior to every favour we can receive from Him.

(3.) The most essential disposition required in us for obtaining pardon of our sins is *true repentance*, "or an humble and contrite heart, which God will not despise;" yet no repentance on our part could ever have found mercy with God, had not Jesus Christ, by His death upon the cross, blotted out the handwriting that was "against us," and made our peace with His offended Father. Hence all the merit of our repentance flows from the death of Jesus, and the more immediately it is united with His death, the more acceptable it must be in the sight of God. In the sacrifice of the Mass, Jesus Christ offers Himself up under the *mystical appearance* of death, and in memory of His *actual death* upon the cross, to move Almighty God to have mercy upon us, and to receive us into favour, and "mystically sheds His blood for the remission of our sins," as He Himself assures us, Mat. xxvi. 28, when He instituted this holy mystery. Hence, in this divine sacrifice, by offering up this victim of reconciliation, we have a most powerful means to move God to grant us mercy and pardon, which He never will fail to do if we accompany this our offering with the inward sacrifice of "an humble and contrite heart," and true *repentance* for our sins.



(4.) Prayer is undoubtedly a most powerful means to obtain from God every good thing we need ; but it is no less certain that all the efficacy of our prayers flows from the merits of the blood of Jesus, shed for us upon the cross ; hence all the prayers which the Church offers to God end with this conclusion, “through Jesus Christ our Lord ;” because *through Him alone* she expects to be heard. In the sacrifice of the Mass, Jesus Christ offers Himself up to His eternal Father with us and for us, that through the merits of His passion and death, there *mystically represented and renewed*, He may obtain for us all good things for soul and body. When, therefore, we offer up this holy sacrifice in union with this intention of Jesus Christ, this must be, of all others, the most efficacious means to sanctify our prayers, and to obtain from God a favourable hearing to our requests.

Q. 30. What, then, properly speaking, is the sacrifice of the Mass?

A. It is *an offering made to God* of the body and blood of Jesus Christ ; (1.) Under the *visible appearances* of bread and wine by Jesus Christ Himself, our invisible High Priest ; (2.) Through the *ministry of the priests* of His Church, lawfully consecrated and empowered by Him for that office, in which offering the bread and wine are, (3.) by the Almighty power of God really and substantially *changed* into the body and blood of Christ, and by the separate consecration of the two different species of bread and wine, the death of Jesus Christ is mystically represented. By which it is plain that this is a true and real sacrifice according to the definition of sacrifice above given.

Q. 31. What is the proper office of the priest in celebrating the Mass ?

A. St Paul tells us that “every high priest taken from

among men is appointed for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins," Heb. v. 1. Hence the priest is a person separated from among men, and deputed by the special appointment of God to treat with God for the rest of mankind in things appertaining to God, and, in particular, to officiate at the altar of God, as the lawful minister, in offering up gifts and sacrifices for sins.

Q. 32. Is not Jesus Christ the only High Priest that offers this sacrifice?

A. Jesus Christ is our invisible High Priest, and the principal agent in these holy mysteries; because it is He who, by His Almighty power, changes the bread and wine into His own body and blood; it is He who, out of His own infinite goodness, comes to be present upon our altars, and there offer Himself up to His eternal Father. But as the celebration of this sacrifice is an outward act of religion, first performed by Jesus Christ Himself, when He instituted it at the last supper, and as He then commanded, that what He did there should be done in His Church to the end of the world, in order "to show forth His death till His second coming," as St Paul assures us, 1 Cor. xi. 26; it was therefore necessary that besides Jesus Christ, our invisible High Priest, other men should be chosen and ordained to act under Him as His visible substitutes to perform the outward and visible part in these sacred mysteries. These also are justly called *Priests*, because they are the ministers of Jesus Christ, ordained and empowered by Him to perform, in His name and authority, and as representing His person, all the exterior part of this holy sacrifice.

Q. 33. Can this be more fully explained?

A. It can, thus; as in the administration of the sacra-

ments we are carefully to distinguish two things, the outward sensible action, and the inward grace received ; so, in the celebration of the sacrifice of the Mass, we must distinguish the outward visible action performed, and the invisible change made of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ. In both cases the outward action is performed by men, authorised by Jesus Christ for that purpose; but the inward effect produced, both by the sacraments and in the sacrifice, is wholly and solely the work of God.

*Q.* 34. How great is the dignity of this holy sacrifice?

*A.* We observe above that the sacrifices of the old law, being only types and figures of the good things then to come, had no merit, no value in themselves, and were acceptable to God only inasmuch as they proceeded from, and were accompanied with, the interior sacrifice of the hearts of the offerers, and were types of Jesus Christ, and offered through faith in a Redeemer then to come. But with the sacrifice of the Mass the case is quite different ; for this is of such infinite value in itself that it is always most acceptable to Almighty God, independent of the disposition of the offerers. It is true, it will not be agreeable to Him as coming from our hands, unless we offer it with the proper interior dispositions ; nay, if we be ill-disposed at that time, or offer it without due devotion and attention, it will even be a means of provoking His indignation against us for profaning, by our evil dispositions, so sacred a mystery ; but in itself, and as offered by Jesus Christ, our Chief Priest, it is always agreeable to Him. Hence, without all doubt, it is the most sublime and the most august mystery in the Christian religion, and the most Divine action that can possibly be done by man. This will easily appear if we consider the infinite dignity of the

victim offered, the infinite sanctity of the High Priest who offers it, the admirable effects produced by it in giving infinite honour to Almighty God, incredible joy to all the angels and saints in heaven, obtaining innumerable blessings for man, and bringing rest and refreshment to the souls of the faithful departed ; and, *lastly*, if we reflect on the sacred mystery which is celebrated, the passion and death of Jesus Christ there represented, continued, and renewed.

Q. 35. What consequences naturally flow from all this ?

A. (1.) That we ought to have the highest esteem and veneration for this adorable sacrifice. (2.) That we ought frequently to be present at it ; and allow nothing less than real necessity to hinder us from assisting at it upon the days when we are commanded to render this homage to God. (3.) That, when present at it, we ought to conduct ourselves with profound reverence, attention, and devotion. (4.) That we should have the greatest confidence of obtaining every good grace from God, through the merits of this holy mystery. And, (5.) That we ought to be careful to be well instructed in everything that belongs to it with the greatest profit to our souls.

Q. 36. To whom is the sacrifice of the Mass offered ?

A. From what has been said above, it is plain that it can be offered to none but God alone ; and, therefore, when we speak of the Mass of the Blessed Virgin, of St Peter, or the like, we do not mean that the Mass is offered to the Blessed Virgin, or to St Peter, but to God in honour of them ; that is, in thanksgiving for the graces bestowed upon them in this life, and for the glory they now enjoy in His kingdom.

Q. 37. By whom is the Mass offered ?

*A.* (1.) Chiefly and principally by Jesus Christ, who, properly speaking, is alone both our High Priest and Victim. (2.) By the bishops and priests of His Church, who are His ministers and deputies, whom He makes use of for performing the outward and visible celebration of this sacrifice here upon earth in His stead. (3.) By the faithful who are present, who offer it up with the priest, and by his hands, as their common sacrifice. (4.) By the whole Church upon earth, which offers it up also every time it is celebrated; for the priest is the public minister of the Church, and offers up this holy sacrifice in her name, and for her benefit. Hence, at every Mass there is a real spiritual communion of all the faithful upon earth.

*Q.* 38. For whom is the Mass offered?

*A.* The Mass is the common sacrifice of the whole Church, both triumphant, militant, and suffering, and is offered up by Jesus Christ our Head, for His whole body, in these three different states. Joining, therefore, with Christ our Head, we offer it up also for the whole Church in heaven, upon earth, and in purgatory. For those in heaven, in thanksgiving to God for all their happiness; for the Church on earth, according to the four great ends of sacrifice; and for the souls in purgatory, to obtain relief from their sufferings, and a speedy admittance to eternal glory.

### SECTION III.

#### *Proofs from Scripture of the Sacrifice of the Mass.*

*Q.* 39. Can it be proved from Scripture that our Saviour actually instituted the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass?

*A.* Nothing is more clearly laid down, both in the Old and New Testaments; for in the Old Testament it is frequently foretold, that in the Church of Christ there shall never be wanting priests and Levites to offer sacrifice continually, that the converted nations should worship God by sacrifices, and that priests should be taken out of all nations for this purpose, and a pure offering made to God throughout the whole world among the Gentiles. And in the New Testament we find that Jesus Christ instituted and offered this sacrifice Himself, and commanded it to be done by His followers till His second coming.

*Q.* 40. What are the proofs from the Old Testament?

*A.* The *first* is taken from Jeremiah, who says, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform the good word that I have spoken to the house of Israel and to the house of Juda. In those days, and at that time, I will make the bud of Justice to spring forth unto David, and He shall do judgment and justice in the earth. In those days shall Juda be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell securely; and this is the name that they shall call Him—The Lord our just one. For thus saith the Lord, There shall not be cut off from David a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel; neither shall there be cut off from the priests and Levites a man before my face, to offer holocausts, and to burn sacrifice, and to kill victims continually," Jer. xxxiii. 14. On this passage we must observe, (1.) That it evidently relates to the Messiah and His kingdom; for He is the good thing promised to the house of Israel and to Juda from the beginning, and to Him alone apply these titles, "The bud of justice," and "The Lord our just one." (2.) That God here promises that David shall never want a man to sit upon his throne. This is evi-

dently applied to Christ by the angel Gabriel, when he told the blessed Virgin that her Son should "be great, and be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David His Father, and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end," Luke, i. 32. (3.) That God promises that in this spiritual kingdom of Christ the priesthood shall never fail, and that the office of these priests shall be to offer sacrifice continually; and of what kind these sacrifices are we know from the nature of Christ's priesthood, "Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech."

Then the prophet proceeds to show the firmness of this promise, "Thus saith the Lord, If My covenant with the day can be made void and My covenant with the night, that there should not be day and night in their season, then may also My covenant with David My servant be made void, that he should not have a Son to reign upon his throne, and with the priests and Levites his ministers," Jer. xxxiii. 20. Nothing could be said stronger than these words, to show the firmness and perpetuity of this promise made to the Church and to the priesthood. The day and the night shall end before it be broken; besides, it is an absolute promise, without any condition annexed to it; everything in it is certain, fixed, and irrevocable. The prophet then adds, "as the stars of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sands of the sea be measured, so will I multiply the seed of David My servant, and the Levites my ministers," ver. 22. Here we see foretold the vast multitudes of the spiritual children of David, the followers of Christ, and of the priests and Levites of the Christian Church, both of which we find actually verified in fact.

The *second* proof is from Isaiah, who says, "In that

day there shall be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a monument of the Lord at the borders thereof, and it shall be for a sign and for a testimony to the Lord of Hosts in the land of Egypt. For they shall cry to the Lord because of the oppressor, and He shall send them a Saviour and a Defender to deliver them. And the Lord shall be known by Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall worship Him with sacrifices and offerings, and they shall make vows to the Lord and perform them," Isa. xix. 19. Here we see a positive declaration, that the Egyptians, on their conversion to Christ, shall worship the Lord, "with sacrifices and offerings," and have His altar in the midst of them.

The *third* proof is taken from the same holy prophet, chapter lxvi. In this chapter he foretells God's benefits to His Church, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will bring upon her, as it were, a river of peace, and as an overflowing torrent, the glory of the Gentiles," ver. 12; then verses 16 and 17, foretelling how He would destroy the wicked Jews, and call the Gentiles in their room, He says, ver. 18, "I come that I may gather them together with all nations and tongues, and they shall come and shall see My glory; and I will set a sign among them, and I will send of them that shall be saved to the Gentiles unto the sea, into Africa and Lydia, them that draw the bow; into Italy and Greece, to the islands afar off, to them that have not heard of Me, and have not seen My glory. And they shall declare My glory to the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren out of all nations, an offering to the Lord . . . to my holy mountain Jerusalem." Here God foretells, that when He shall destroy the wicked Jews, He will save those among them who were faithful to Him, and will send of



those that are saved to all nations, to declare His glory to them, and bring them to His Church, "His holy mountain Jerusalem." This is more like a history than a prophecy of what was actually done, when the apostles and converted Jews were sent by our Saviour to preach the Gospel to all nations, and unite them in His holy Church. Then, in the following verses the prophet adds: "And I will take from them (*the converted Gentiles*) to be priests and Levites, saith the Lord; for as the new heavens and the new earth which I make to stand before Me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed stand and your name," ver. 21. By which we see that, in the Church of Christ, there shall always be priests and Levites taken out of all nations, whose office, as we have seen above out of Jeremiah, shall be to offer sacrifice to God continually, as long as the heaven and the earth shall stand. St Paul also assures us that the office of priests is "to offer up gifts and sacrifices," Heb. v. 1.

The *fourth* proof is from Malachy, where Almighty God, after reproaching the Jewish priests for their impiety, says: "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of Hosts; and I will not receive a gift of your hand; for, from the rising of the sun, even to the going down, My name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a clean offering; for My name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of Hosts," Mal. i. 10.

In this glorious prophecy three things are to be remarked: (1.) That the sacrifices of the Jews were rejected,—"I will not receive a gift of your hand;" (2.) That in their place a pure offering was to be instituted; and (3.) That this clean offering and sacrifice should be offered among the Gentiles in every place, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, throughout

the whole world. All this points out to us the pure and holy sacrifice of the Mass in the clearest light.

*Q.* 41. What are the proofs for the Mass in the New Testament?

*A.* (1.) From its institution at the last supper, where our blessed Saviour offered up this holy sacrifice with His own hands; for, 1. As we have seen above, the sacrifice of the Mass, properly speaking, consists in the separate consecration of bread and wine, under which forms our Saviour offers Himself up to His eternal Father. Now, at the last supper, our Saviour actually performed this separate consecration; therefore He actually offered up the sacrifice of the Mass at that time. 2. In the original Greek, and in the Protestant translations, St Matthew and St Mark, speaking of the cup, use this expression, "This is My blood of the New Testament which is shed for many;" and St Luke and St Paul use this expression, speaking of the host, "This is My body which is given for you," Luke, xxii. 19; "This is My body which is broken for you," 1 Cor. xi. 24. From these expressions it evidently follows that our Saviour, at that very time, "shed His blood," and "gave His body for the remission of sins," Mat. xxvi. 28. This, however, He did not then do actually by the real effusion of His blood, which was only done in His passion and death; therefore He did it here only mystically—that is, offered Himself up in the sacramental forms, under the appearance of death, to His eternal Father, for the remission of sins, which is the very thing we mean by the sacrifice of the Mass. Now He had no sooner done this than He immediately commanded the pastors of His Church to do the same: "Do this in remembrance of Me;" that is, as St Paul explains it, to "show forth His death till He come."

Thus He both celebrated this holy sacrifice of the Mass Himself, and gave power and command to the pastors of His Church to continue to do the same till His second coming.

(2.) The second proof from the New Testament is taken from the seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, where St Paul, citing this prophecy of David, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech," —urges it to show the excellency of the priesthood of Christ above that of Aaron, and to prove that His priesthood shall never end; whereas that of Aaron, being only a figure of His, was of necessity abolished when His came. Now the same apostle assures us that every high priest "is appointed to offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins," Heb. v. 1; and he repeats it, Heb. viii. 3, and adds, as a consequence of this essential office of a priest, "wherefore it is necessary that he also should have something to offer." Seeing, therefore, that the order of Melchisedech consisted in offering bread and wine, and that the great victim offered by Christ is His own precious body and blood, it is only by offering this under the appearances of bread and wine by the external ministry of His priests that He continues a priest for ever of this order.

(3.) From the expressions of the *table of the Lord*, *altar*, and *priests*, used in different places by St Paul, as proper to the Christian religion, is also proved the existence of the Christian sacrifice, with which these things have an essential connection. See 1 Cor. x. and Heb. xiii. 10, in which latter place the apostle says, "We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat who serve the tabernacle;" where the *altar* necessarily implies the sacrifice offered upon it; and the *eating of*

*the altar* shows the participation of that sacrifice by communion.

To these plain proofs from Scripture, we may add, that the constant tradition of the Christian world, all the most ancient liturgies, the universal testimony of the holy fathers, and the continual use of the names *altar, sacrifice, oblation, priest*, and the like, in all antiquity, show, in the most convincing manner, that this holy sacrifice has been always used as the solemn public worship of God in the Christian Church.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

*Q.* 1. **W**HAT is the end or design of the sacrament of Penance?

*A.* If we were always so happy as not to lose the grace received in Baptism by committing actual sin, there would be no need of the sacrament of Penance; but as we too commonly lose that great treasure by the sins we commit ourselves, and cannot free ourselves from their guilt but by the grace of Jesus Christ—therefore, out of His infinite mercy, in condescension to our weakness and misery, He was pleased to institute the sacrament of Penance, as the means of bestowing His sanctifying grace upon us, to cleanse us from the guilt of those sins which we commit after Baptism.

*Q.* 2. Is Penance a true sacrament?

*A.* It is; because it has all the three things required to make it a sacrament.

*Q.* 3. What is the outward sensible sign used in the sacrament of Penance?

*A.* It is the sentence of absolution pronounced by a priest.

*Q.* 4. What is the inward grace which this brings to the soul?

*A.* The sanctifying grace of God, by which our sins are forgiven and washed away from our souls.

*Q.* 5. Where do we find the institution of this sacrament by Jesus Christ?

*A.* In those parts of the Gospel where Jesus Christ gave to the pastors of His Church, in the persons of His apostles, the power of forgiving and retaining sins, and pledged His sacred word that, when they forgave a penitent's sins, by pronouncing the sentence of absolution, they are actually forgiven—that is, are washed away from his soul by the grace of God then infused into it.

*Q.* 6. How does it appear that Jesus Christ gave the power of forgiving sins to the pastors of His Church?

*A.* From these testimonies: (1.) “And behold they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed. And Jesus, seeing their faith, said to the man sick of the palsy, Son, be of good heart, thy sins are forgiven thee. And behold some of the scribes said within themselves, He blasphemeth. And Jesus seeing their thoughts, said, Why do you think evil in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, then saith He to the man sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house; and he arose and went into his house: and the multitude seeing it feared, and glorified God, who had given such power to men,” Mat. ix. 2. Here we see that our blessed Saviour wrought an evident miracle, with the express intention of proving that “He AS MAN, hath power on earth to forgive sins;” and it had the desired effect on the multitude, who were convinced by the miracle, that He had this power, and “glorified God, who had given such power to men.” Jesus Christ, therefore, even as man, was sent by His Father with this

power. Now, on the very day of His resurrection, when He appeared to His apostles, He said to them, "As My Father hath sent Me, I also send you," John, xx. 21; consequently, with the same powers that I, as man, am sent by My Father, I also send you as My substitutes, as pastors of My Church. And that there might be no doubt that in these words He included the power of forgiving sins—yea, to show that this was particularly included in them—He immediately "breathed upon them and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained," John, xx. 22. Where we see that, in the clearest and most express terms, He gives them the power of forgiving sins in such a manner that, when they, here on earth, exercise this power by passing sentence of forgiveness upon a penitent sinner, their sentence is ratified in heaven, and the sins of the penitent are actually forgiven.

(2.) Upon another occasion, He gives them the same power in the most ample manner, in these words: "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven," Mat. xviii. 18. Upon which St Chrysostom, one of the greatest lights of the Christian world, who lived in the fifth century, writes thus: "To the priests is given a power which God would not give neither to the angels nor arch-angels; for to these it was not said, 'Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven.' Earthly princes have, indeed, their power of binding, but it is only for the body; but the binding of the priests reaches even to the soul, and ascends to the heavens; insomuch that what the priests do below, God

ratifies above ; and the Master confirms the sentence of the servants.”—*On the Priesthood*, B. 3. The same is the language of the holy fathers in all ages, confirmed by the constant uninterrupted belief and practice of the Christian world.

*Q. 7.* Why does our Saviour add in these texts, “whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained ;” and “ whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven” ?

*A.* To show that the power here given to the pastors of the Church is a judicial power, by which they are constituted judges of our souls in regard to our sins, and authorised both to forgive and not to forgive, to loose and not to loose the bonds of sin, according to the merits of the case and the dispositions of the penitents ; so that they are to take full cognisance of the case before they pronounce sentence, that they may act with justice and prudence.

*Q. 8.* May not a priest use this power as he pleases, and either forgive or retain a person’s sins as he chooses?

*A.* By no means : in this commission Jesus Christ puts the pastors of His Church in His own place, and authorises them to do what He Himself would do were He visibly present upon the earth ; hence they act here in His name and authority, and in His person ; as St Paul did when he granted pardon to the incestuous Corinthian, for he declares that “ he did it in the person of Christ,” 2 Cor. ii. 10. The priests, therefore, cannot pronounce sentence at their own pleasure, but must do it according to the rules prescribed to them by Jesus Christ, which they learn from His holy Church.

*Q. 9.* But is it not blasphemous to say *that man can forgive sins* ? Who can forgive sins committed against God, but God Himself?

*A.* Jesus Christ did not so teach when He wrought



the miracle above mentioned, to prove that "the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins." Here the mistake lies in not considering what part belongs to man, and what belongs to God in this matter. To wash away the guilt of sin from the soul, undoubtedly belongs to God alone, is wholly His work; and this being the case, where is there the least appearance of blasphemy, or even impropriety, in saying that Jesus Christ authorises the pastors of His Church, in His name and in His person, to pronounce sentence of forgiveness upon a penitent sinner, and that to the pronouncing of this sentence He attaches the infusing of His grace into that penitent's soul? Is not this what is done in baptism, where the person who baptizes forgives the sins of the person baptized, by performing the outward action, to which the infusion of justifying grace is annexed in that sacrament, as it is to the pronouncing of the sentence of absolution in the sacrament of Penance? In both cases it is God Who cleanses the soul by His grace, and in both man performs the outward action appointed by Christ for that purpose.

Q. 10. How is the outward visible action of the sacrament of Penance a sign of the inward grace received?

A. The words of the sentence which the priest pronounces, *I absolve thee from thy sins*, express in formal terms the nature of the grace received, by which these sins are then actually washed away from the soul.

Q. 11. To whom has Christ left the power of administering this sacrament?

A. To the apostles and their successors, the bishops and priests of His Church; and this is one of the principal powers of the priesthood.

Q. 12. Is this sacrament of Penance necessary for salvation?

*A.* As it is impossible to obtain salvation while we are in the state of sin, and as this sacrament is appointed by Jesus Christ to restore us to the friendship of God, by cleansing us from the guilt of actual sins committed after Baptism, as Baptism itself cleanses us from original sin, and from previous actual sin; therefore, the sacrament of Penance is as absolutely necessary for salvation to those who have lost the grace of God by mortal sin after Baptism, as Baptism itself is to those who have not yet received it. It is true that perfect contrition, arising from a perfect love of God above all things, will always obtain mercy, yet before Baptism this perfect contrition does not free a person from the obligation of being baptized, where Baptism can be had, and, where it cannot, must be accompanied with a desire of the sacrament. In like manner, in regard to mortal sins committed after Baptism, the most perfect contrition does not free the person who has it from the obligation of applying to the sacrament of Penance when he can, and, where that is impossible, his contrition will not find mercy unless it include the desire and the resolution to apply to the sacrament whenever he is able.

*Q.* 13. Why do you speak of this necessity as regarding only mortal sins? Is not the sacrament of Penance equally necessary for obtaining the forgiveness of venial sins?

*A.* No; and the reason is this: the effect of mortal sin is to kill the soul by depriving it of the grace of God, which is its true life; hence mortal sin makes the sinner an enemy to God, an object of His hatred and indignation. On the other hand, venial sin does not kill the soul, nor banish the grace of God from it, but only diminishes the splendour of its beauty and weakens the fervour of its charity, still the person continues a friend

of God. Hence, to restore a soul in mortal sin to the state of grace and to the friendship of God, it is required that there be an infusion of justifying grace into that soul. This change is the pure effect of the mercy of God through the merits of Christ, which no act of the sinner can deserve ; and this justifying grace can be obtained only by the sacrament of Penance, which Christ has been pleased to institute for this very purpose. But when a soul is in the grace and friendship of God, every good action performed in sentiments of sorrow for sin washes away the stains of venial offences, increases the fervour of charity, and augments the treasure of sanctifying grace. Though the sacrament of Penance, then, is the most secure and perfect means of effacing venial guilt, yet venial sins are remitted by other means, such as the devout reception of the other sacraments, fervent prayer, and acts of the love of God ; whereas mortal sin can be remitted only by the sacrament of Penance.

*Q.* 14. What are the effects of the sacrament of Penance ?

*A.* (1.) If the penitent be under the guilt of mortal sin, by this sacrament the grace of justification is poured into his soul, by which the guilt of his sins is washed away, and he is restored to the friendship of God. (2.) If he be already in the state of grace by the sacrament of Penance he receives an increase of sanctifying grace, by which his soul is rendered more holy and beautiful in the sight of God. (3.) He also receives such helps of actual grace as enable him more effectually to avoid sin, and to persevere in the friendship of God. (4.) By cleansing the soul from the guilt of sin, this sacrament also delivers the soul from the eternal punishment due to that guilt ; because it restores the sinner to the grace and friendship of God, and reunites him with Jesus

Christ: now “there is nothing of damnation in those who are in Christ Jesus,” Rom. viii. 1. (5.) It also delivers, in part, from the temporal punishment due to his sin, in proportion to the fervour of the repentance with which he receives it.

*Q.* 15. What are the parts of the sacrament of Penance?

*A.* There are three parts of the sacrament of Penance.—contrition, confession, and satisfaction. By *contrition* is understood the dispositions required in the penitent by which he must be prepared for receiving this sacrament; by *confession* is understood the actual applying to receive it; and by *satisfaction* is meant the performing the Penance which the priest imposes on the sinner when he administers this sacrament to him.

## SECTION I.

### *Of Contrition.*

*Q.* 16. What are the dispositions required in the penitent for receiving the sacrament of Penance?

*A.* They are all contained in a sincere repentance or contrition for his sins, which, as we have seen above, chap. xvii., consists of these three things: (1.) A sincere sorrow for having offended our good God, with a detestation of all our sins; (2.) A firm purpose and resolution to avoid sin, and all the dangerous occasions of it, for the time to come; and (3.) A willing readiness to do penance for past sins in order to satisfy the divine justice for them.

*Q.* 17. Are these three conditions absolutely necessary for receiving the grace of justification in this sacrament?

*A.* They are all absolutely necessary for disposing the soul to receive that grace, as we have seen, chap. xvii., insomuch that if any one of them be wanting, though the sentence of absolution be pronounced upon the sinner by the priest, yet the grace of forgiveness will not be granted by Jesus Christ.

## SECTION II.

### *Of Sacramental Confession.*

*Q.* 18. What is sacramental confession?

*A.* It is the laying open the state of our souls to a priest, by humbly accusing ourselves to him of all our sins, in order to obtain absolution.

*Q.* 19. Is this confession of our sins necessary for obtaining absolution?

*A.* It is ordained by Jesus Christ as a condition absolutely necessary, insomuch that without it the grace of the sacrament of Penance will not be bestowed.

*Q.* 20. How does this necessity appear from Scripture?

*A.* It is included in the very power which Jesus Christ gave to the pastors of the Church of binding and loosing, of remitting and retaining sins. For, by conferring this power, He constituted them judges of our souls in His own stead, the ministers of reconciliation between God and the sinner; consequently it is His will that they should exercise this power with justice and discretion, according to the merits of the case and the dispositions of the penitent. It would be impiety to suppose the contrary. Besides, this is not a tribunal of strict vindictive justice for punishing the offender to the full extent that he deserves, but a tribunal of mercy, where, by the sentence of absolution, the sinner is delivered both from

the guilt of his sins, and from the eternal punishment due to them. The eternal is exchanged for a temporal punishment, which, through the merits of Christ, applied to our souls in this sacrament, both contributes to satisfy the Divine justice, and is wholesome and salutary to the penitent. It is doubtless the will of Jesus Christ, therefore, that the priest, when he exercises the power of binding, and imposes this penance on the penitent, should do so with a just regard to his guilt and dispositions. Now it is evident that the priest can neither act with justice nor prudence in forgiving or retaining sins, nor observe justice in imposing the punishment suitable to the guilt and dispositions of the sinner, unless he know the true state of his soul, both as to his guilt and dispositions. This no one can possibly discover to him but the sinner himself. It manifestly follows, therefore, that the very power of binding and loosing, of forgiving and retaining sins, given by Jesus Christ to the priests of His Church, necessarily includes a strict obligation on sinners to lay open the state of their souls by a humble confession of their sins to a priest, in order to receive the benefit of that power, and to be absolved from their sins by him.

Moreover, the sacrament of Penance is intended not only to free us from the guilt of past sins, but also, and in a particular manner, to be a preservative against sin for the time to come, by applying proper remedies for all the diseases of the soul. Now these remedies are of two kinds—the grace of God, and our co-operation. The grace of God is applied by the sacrament itself, and our pastors are appointed, as the spiritual physicians of our souls, to prescribe to us the necessary co-operation required on our part. This they do, by *pointing out* the means of avoiding and resisting temptations, overcoming

evil habits, and subduing our passions ; by *discovering* to us the delusions of Satan ; by *instructing* us in our duty where we may be ignorant of it ; by *correcting* the mistakes into which our self-love is so apt to lead us ; by *encouraging* us, if faint-hearted in the concerns of our souls ; by *comforting* us, if afflicted with trouble of mind ; and by *giving* us every assistance which the wants of our souls may require. Here, again, it is clear that they could apply none of those remedies unless they knew the true state of our souls ; and as none but ourselves can manifest this to them, the necessity of our doing so is evident.

Q. 21. Are there any other proofs from Scripture of the necessity of confessing our sins ?

A. There are the following : (1.) "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity," 1 John, i. 8. Here we see, in the most express terms, the confession of our sins declared to be the condition of our obtaining forgiveness : "If we confess them, God will forgive them ;" and on the contrary, if we do not confess but conceal them, and "say we have no sin, we only deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." This testimony is so strong and clear for the necessity of confessing our sins, that our adversaries have no means of evading the force of it but by asserting that the apostle means only the confessing our sins privately to God alone. But that this cannot be the apostle's meaning is evident from two strong reasons—first, because *the confessing our sins* is here put in opposition to the *saying we have no sin*: these two are opposed to each other, and therefore certainly relate to the same object. Now, would any one dare to say to God in private that *he has no sin* ? In this part of the sentence, then, the apostle

certainly means saying, *we have no sin before men*; and consequently in the other, when he says, "If we confess our sins," he necessarily means the doing so *before men also*. Besides, the apostle here declares that, if "we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." How comes the fidelity and justice of God to be engaged here? Has He anywhere engaged His promise to pardon those who confess their sins to Him alone? David, indeed, says, "I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord; and Thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin," Ps. xxxi. 5—which shows that, in the old law, when a sinner "with a broken and contrite heart"—that is, with *perfect repentance* for his sins—returned to God, and acknowledged his guilt with sorrow, God, of His infinite goodness, would show mercy to such a repentant sinner. But we do not read anywhere that God ever engaged His fidelity or justice to forgive the sins of any who confessed to Him alone; consequently this cannot be the apostle's meaning in the above text: but from what we have seen above, it is manifest that God has solemnly engaged His fidelity and justice to forgive the sins of those who confess them to the pastors of His Church in the sacrament of Penance, when He declares to these pastors, "Whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The effects of this promise cannot be obtained, as we have seen, unless the sinner confess his sins to his pastor; and when he does so with proper dispositions, then this sacred promise of Jesus Christ engages Him in fidelity and justice to grant the wished-for pardon. We must conclude, therefore, that when the apostle says, "If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," His meaning certainly is, if we confess them *sacramentally*.



(2.) St James says, "Confess your sins one to another, and pray for one another that you may be saved," James, v. 16. Here we see, in express terms, the *confessing our sins to man* laid down as a condition of salvation. The only difficulty in this text is in the meaning of the words *one another*, which may seem to imply the necessity of every one confessing publicly to other men, whether priests or not. But this difficulty will disappear if we reflect that sacramental confession does not necessarily require to be done in private ; for, in the primitive ages, and even in the apostles' time, confessions were sometimes made in public. Thus we read that "many of them that believed came confessing and declaring their deeds," Acts, xix. 18. But whether in public or private it was always considered of obligation, in order to obtain forgiveness by the absolution of the priest. As both ways were then practised, St James uses the above expression of "confessing one to another" to include both, but declares that this confession made to a priest, whether to him alone in private or in presence of others, is a necessary condition of salvation.

(3.) St Paul, speaking of the reconciliation of sinners to God, says : "God hath reconciled us to Himself by Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. For God, indeed, was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself—and He hath placed in us the word of reconciliation ; we are therefore ambassadors for Christ," 2 Cor. v. 18. In these words, the apostle declares that whereas God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, reconciled the world to Himself, He was pleased to appoint the apostles and their successors in office to be the ministers of this reconciliation—that is, to be His substitutes upon earth for applying to the souls of the people the means ordained by Him for communicat-

ing the grace of reconciliation ; and for this purpose, says the apostle, "He placed in us the word of reconciliation," by which means we are "made the ambassadors of Christ." It manifestly follows, then, that if the pastors of the Church be the ministers of our reconciliation with God—if *the word of reconciliation*, the power of pronouncing sentence of absolution upon us, *be placed in them*—it is by their ministry alone that we can obtain this reconciliation. Christ instituted no other means. It is of strict obligation, therefore, to have recourse to them for this benefit by laying open the state of our souls in the sacrament of Penance, that they may apply to us the means of reconciliation in the way appointed.

*Q. 22.* Is not the confession of sins to a priest a novelty introduced into the Church in the later ages ?

*A.* This is what some of the enemies of the Catholic Church allege in order to blind the minds of men, but a more gross or palpable misrepresentation could not be advanced. The confession of sins, far from being a novelty introduced in later ages, is more ancient than Christianity itself, was commanded by God in the old law, is highly commended in the Books of Wisdom, and was practised by the Jews when our Saviour came among them. It was not then, indeed, a sacramental action, as it is now under the Gospel, where it is the last condition required on our part for receiving the forgiveness of our sins by the infusion of justifying grace. But among the Jews it was a profitable penitential work, a proof of the sincerity of their repentance, a help to restrain them from sin, an act of obedience to the command of God, a powerful means to move God to mercy, and to obtain from Him the grace of perfect contrition and repentance. It was also, like the other parts of their religion, a type and figure of the sacrament of

Penance, and of the sacramental confession which Jesus Christ was to institute in His Church.

Q. 23. Where does it appear that confession was commanded in the old law and practised among the Jews?

A. From the following testimonies of Scripture: (1.) "When a man or woman shall have committed any of all the sins that men are wont to commit, and by negligence shall have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, they shall confess their sin, and restore the principal, and a fifth part over and above," Num. v. 6. (2.) "He that hideth his sins shall not prosper; but he that shall confess and forsake them, shall obtain mercy," Prov. xxviii. 13. "Be not ashamed to say the truth for the sake of thy soul; for there is a shame that bringeth sin, and a shame that bringeth glory and grace. . . . Be not ashamed to confess thy sins, but submit not thyself to every man for sin," Eccus. iv. 24, 31. See here how much it is commended. (3.) As for the practice of the Jews when St John the Baptist appeared "in the desert baptizing and preaching the baptism of Penance for the remission of sins, there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all they of Jerusalem, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, CONFESSING THEIR SINS," Mark, i. 5. The same is also attested by St Mat., chap. iii., where we learn from the Word of God itself that this holy practice of confessing our sins is as old as revealed religion, and has no other author but God Himself. Jesus Christ, therefore, knowing that this was already established among the people of God, judged it nowise necessary to make any new, express command of it among His followers, especially as the very institution of the sacrament of Penance, by giving the power of forgiving and retaining sins to the pastors

of His Church, presupposed the necessity of confessing our sins to them, in order to obtain pardon and forgiveness. By the institution of Penance, confession was raised to the dignity of being an essential part of the sacrament, and an effectual means of obtaining pardon for our sins; whereas before it was only a legal observance, useful, indeed, and conducive to the reconciliation of the penitent sinner with God, but not the efficacious and certain means, as it now is, of obtaining that favour.

*Q. 24.* Is there any other reason to show that the duty of confessing our sins is ordained by Jesus Christ?

*A.* The very nature of this duty itself proves it to a demonstration; for as it is contrary to the inclinations of flesh and blood, humbling to our pride, and painful to self-love, it is clear that mankind never could have been induced to practise it by any human authority, or indeed by any other consideration whatsoever, than the full conviction that God Himself required it of them; and this conviction never could have been established had it not been introduced into the world with Christianity itself, and flowed from the same Divine source with it. Let us suppose, for example, that the Christians of the first ages neither knew of this practice, nor believed it necessary to confess their sins,—who would ever have dared in after-ages to introduce so heavy a yoke, or impose upon the faithful such a burden? What opposition must such an attempt have met with? what clamours would have been raised against it? what divisions and dissensions must it not have occasioned? Would not every one have cried out against it as a novelty, an imposition, a heresy, and what not? Suppose any one should attempt to introduce it into a Protestant country at present, would the strongest power on earth be able to establish it? It could have been introduced into the Christian world, then,

only by the command of Almighty God Himself. Besides, all the monuments of antiquity prove that it was universally received and practised in the Christian Church in every country, and in every age. Nor can any other beginning be assigned to it than that of Christianity itself. Add to all this the infallible authority of the Church of Christ, which always did, and to this day does, hold and teach as a truth revealed by Jesus Christ to His apostles, and by them delivered to their followers, that the duty of confessing our sins in the sacrament of Penance is commanded by God Himself, and is His express law to all Christians.

*Q.* 25. Is sacramental confession of any other advantage besides being a necessary means of obtaining pardon of our sins?

*A.* It is, both to the penitent himself and to society; for (1.) with regard to the penitent, it serves to discharge part of the debt of temporal punishment due to his sins, it delivers him from that dreadful confusion which he would have to undergo at the day of judgment, and which beginning then would last for all eternity as one of the greatest torments of hell. It procures him many useful instructions, counsels, directions, and exhortations, for advancing in a life of piety and virtue. It is also a source of comfort and consolation to the soul in her afflictions, particularly under spiritual trials. It affords ease and peace to the soul when oppressed by the load of a guilty conscience; for though confession is distasteful to our self-love and humbling to flesh and blood, yet when the conscience is awakened and the soul touched with a sense of the evil of sin, confession is the resource which nature itself points out for ease and comfort. Of this many examples are seen—examples of persons who, being troubled in conscience, but not being

members of the Catholic Church, do not consider confession a duty required by God, yet have recourse to some friend in whom they can confide, and sometimes even to Catholic priests themselves, on whose secrecy they can better depend, and lay open to them their souls for advice and consolation. (2.) With regard to the state and society, how many evils are remedied in confession which the laws of man could never reach? Injuries done are repaired, injuries received forgiven, enemies reconciled, stolen property restored, unjust contracts dissolved, scandals removed, and many other benefits to society conferred.

Q. 26. What are the qualities necessary for making a good confession?

A. Several conditions are required for a good confession; but they may be all reduced to these following:—

1. It ought to be *humble*. This is so necessary an ingredient in a good confession, that without it we can never expect to find favour with God. The proud Pharisee was one who led a good moral life in the eyes of men, free from any gross crime, and adorned with several virtuous and good actions; yet he was condemned in the sight of God on account of his pride: whereas the poor publican, though loaded with sin, yet approaching to God by humble repentance, was justified, and found mercy. Every sin is accompanied with an act of pride, because in every sin we prefer our own will to the will of our Creator; as repentance, therefore, is the returning to God from sin, it must necessarily be accompanied with humility. The Scripture says, “An humble and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise,” Ps. l. 19. “The Lord is nigh to them that are of a contrite heart, and He will save the humble of spirit,” Ps. xxxiii. 19. “God

resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble," James, iv. 6. Hence we find that all those true penitents who found mercy from God were remarkable for their great humility—such as St Mary Magdalen, the prodigal son, the humble publican, David, &c.; and they showed their humility, both in the outward posture of the bodies, in all they did, and in every word they spoke. To excite this humility in our souls, we need only consider what we are as sinners; what we deserve for our sins; the Majesty of that great God before whom we are going to appear; and the important affair in which we are engaged, in order to regain His favour.

2. Our confession ought to be *sincere*—that is, we must declare our sins sincerely, such as they really are; we must not seek to excuse them by blaming others; we must neither exaggerate nor diminish their malice, neither palliate nor disguise them by expressions calculated to lead our pastor to think less of them than they deserve. Our great interest here is to lay open, as far as we can, the true state of our soul, such as it really is in the sight of God. It is easy to deceive our pastor; but in so doing we would deceive ourselves infinitely more, for we cannot deceive God; and His Holy Word assures us that "the deceitful man God will abhor," Ps. v. 7; that "the Holy Ghost will fly from the deceitful," Wis. i. 5; and therefore "come not to the Lord with a double heart," Eccus. i. 36; for "woe to them that are of a double heart, and to wicked lips, . . . and to the sinner that goeth on the earth two ways," Eccus. ii. 14.

3. It ought to be *simple*—that is, we must, with all simplicity, declare the sins we have been guilty of, without mixing with them any other subject which does not concern the state of our conscience. We must declare (1.) The different sins we have been guilty of; (2.) The

number of times we have been guilty of each sin ; and (3.) Such circumstances as either notably aggravate the guilt of the sin, or change it into another kind of sin. For example, there is a great difference between defrauding our neighbour of twenty shillings, and of twenty pounds ; between stealing a sum of money from a neighbour, and stealing any sacred vessel of equal value, but dedicated to the service of God. In the former case, the greatness of the sum aggravates the injury done, and therefore the guilt of the sin ; in the latter case, the circumstance of stealing a sacred vessel changes the nature of the sin from a simple act of injustice to sacrilege. Now, the simplicity of our confession requires that, having fully declared these three classes, we should stop there without accusing others, making complaints of our troubles and sufferings, speaking of temporal affairs, or the like. This is what is meant by the *simplicity* of confession.

(4.) It ought to be *entire*—that is, we must declare all we have upon our conscience, without concealing, to our knowledge, one single mortal sin. We must not only tell the truth, but all the truth, without concealing anything ; according to that of the wise man, “Be not ashamed to say the truth for thy soul ; for there is a shame that bringeth sin, and there is a shame that bringeth glory and grace,” Eccclus. iv. 25. To blush to do an evil action, is a shame that bringeth glory and grace ; but to be ashamed to confess our sins, is a shame that bringeth a new sin upon the soul.

*Q.* 27. Is it a great evil knowingly to conceal any mortal sin in confession ?

*A.* It is a very great evil : for (1.) To reconcile our souls with God is the end to which all that Christ did, said, and suffered, tended. This is done in the sacrament



of Penance, and the confession of our sins is the part of that work which belongs to us; now the Scripture says, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully," Jer. xlvi. 10. (2.) It is telling a lie to the Holy Ghost, the dreadful guilt of which we see both in Cain and in the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts, v. (3.) It is a grievous sacrilege, by profaning the sacrament, a mockery of God, a profanation of the blood of Christ, and leads to the still greater sacrilege, an unworthy communion. (4.) It renders the whole confession of no avail, prevents the sinner from obtaining pardon of his sins—nay, sullies his soul with another more grievous sin. (5.) It puts him in danger of never again making a good confession, and consequently of dying in his sins, as it excludes the possibility of a cure from man, and renders him unworthy of any extraordinary help from God. (6.) It makes the sinner miserable in his own conscience, and raises a hell upon earth in his soul, as experience itself teaches.

*Q.* 28. When one has unhappily fallen into disgrace with God by mortal sin, is he obliged to return immediately to God by a speedy repentance, and to seek forgiveness of his sins in the sacrament of Penance?

*A.* There is not a more dangerous delusion than to defer repentance after sin, and live on from day to day in disgrace with God, as will appear from the following considerations:—

1. It is the height of folly, and contrary to the prudence which we show in worldly matters; for if we fall, we immediately endeavour to rise; if we be seized with any bodily illness, we make no delay in applying the proper remedies; if we lose a piece of money, we speedily seek to find it. Now a soul in mortal sin has fallen into the lowest depths, is sick to death itself, and de-

prived of the greatest of all treasures, the grace of God. What folly, then, to continue in such a state!

2. It is a grievous injury offered to God to live in disgrace with Him, because it involves,—(1.) A contempt of His commands and earnest invitations to return to His friendship, and preferring the slavery of Satan to the favour of the Most High. (2.) A contempt of the threats by which He seeks to withdraw sinners from their guilt and cause them to return to Him. (3.) An undervaluing of all His gracious promises of pardon and favour; by preferring the husks of swine to the happiness of our Father's house, and all the good things He has prepared for us.

3. The great danger of contracting the habit of sin, and so going on from bad to worse; for this is the fatal effects of sin not speedily repented of, that it gives the devil such a power over us that he easily leads us on to greater sins, till at last they become habitual. Being deprived of the grace of God, we have no defence against the allurements of sin, the violence of passion, the corruption of our own heart, and the repeated temptations to which we are daily exposed.

4. The great danger of a bad habit when contracted, and the great difficulty of overcoming it. Of this the Scripture says, "His bones shall be filled with the vices of his youth, and they shall sleep with him in the dust," Job, xx. 11. "A young man according to his way, even when he is old he will not depart from it," Prov. xxii. 6. "If the Æthiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots; ye also may do well when ye have learned evil," Jer. xiii. 23. A newly-planted tree is easily pulled up, a tender twig easily bent, a disease easily cured in the beginning; but delay changes everything.

5. The declarations of Scripture, "Delay not to be

converted to the Lord, and put not off from day to day ; for His wrath will come on a sudden, and in the day of vengeance He will destroy thee," *Ecclus. v. 8.* "Dost thou despise the riches of His goodness and patience, and long-suffering? knowest thou not that the benignity of God leadeth thee to penance? but according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the just judgment of God," *Rom. ii. 4, 5.* "To-day if you shall hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, according to the day of temptation in the wilderness, where your fathers tempted Me, they proved Me, and saw My works ; . . . so I swore in My wrath, that they shall not enter into My rest," *Ps. xciv. 8. 11.* "Because I called, and ye refused ; I stretched out My hand, and there was none that regarded ; ye have despised all My counsels, and have neglected My reprehensions, I also will laugh in your destruction, and will mock when that shall come on you which ye feared : when sudden calamity shall fall on you, and destruction, as a tempest, shall be at hand ; when tribulation and distress shall come upon you, they shall then call upon Me, and I will not hear, they shall rise in the morning and shall not find Me," *Prov. i. 24.* See also *Isa. lxxv. 12, lxxvi. 4 ; Jer. vii. 12.*

6. The danger of dying in that state, which appears,—  
 (1.) From all these threats from Scripture just mentioned.  
 (2.) From the state in which the sinner is ; for the moment one commits a mortal sin the sentence is passed against him ; the flames of hell are already kindled to receive him : "A fire is kindled in my anger, it shall burn upon you," *Jer. xv. 14* ; the executioners are ready, only waiting the command, and nothing is wanting to plunge him into the bottomless pit but the cutting of the slender

thread of life, by which he is hanging over the abyss. (3.) From the uncertainty of the time, place, and manner when that thread shall be broken, our Saviour warning us that death will come like a thief in the night, when we least expect it, and therefore commands us to be always ready. Remember the foolish virgins. (4.) Sin hastens on death, and cuts off the sinner before his time. "Do not commit iniquity, lest thou die in a time not thy own," Eccles. vii. 18. "The wicked man shall perish before his days be completed," Job, xv. 32. "The wicked are taken away before their time," Job, xxii. 16. "The years of the wicked shall be shortened," Prov. x. 27. "Men of blood and deceitful men shall not live out half their days," Ps. liv. 24. "How are they brought to desolation! they have suddenly ceased to be; they have perished by reason of their iniquity," Ps. lxxii. 19. "They spend their lives in wealth, and in a moment drop down into hell," Job, xxi. 13.

*Q.* 29. What shall we say of those who defer their repentance till the approaches of death itself?

*A.* All the above reasons militate with double force against those who put off their conversion till their death-bed; for such, without all doubt, expose themselves to the utmost danger, if not to a moral certainty of being for ever lost. This will appear if we consider—(1.) The difficulty of sincere repentance and change of heart, even in health. (2.) The violence and force of evil habits, strengthened and confirmed by long indulgence. (3.) The efforts of the devil, who will seek to retain in their last moment those who have been always under his power during life. (4.) The state, both of body and mind, of a dying person, and how little capable he then is of any serious thought. (5.) The being justly deprived of the more abundant grace of God, to enable him

to overcome these obstacles, in just punishment of his past abuse of mercy. (6.) Experience of those who, having recovered from dangerous illness, in which they manifested the strongest signs of sincere repentance, yet immediately on their recovery relapse into all their former habits, clearly showing how false their repentance was, and consequently how little it would have been regarded by God had they then died. (7.) The common sentiments of all the saints of God, who have ever distrusted deathbed conversions.

Q. 30. In what manner must one prepare himself for the sacrament of Penance?

A. There are chiefly two things to be done,—*First*, We must come to the full knowledge of our sins, and recall them all to mind; for if we do not know them, we can neither repent nor confess them. *Secondly*, we must excite ourselves to sincere repentance. Here our principal dependence must be upon God, without whose light and help we can neither see our sins, nor be truly sorry for them; wherefore, when entering on our preparation we must—(1.) Begin by prayer, earnestly begging Almighty God to enlighten our souls with His holy grace, that we may not be blinded by our passions nor deluded by our self-love, but that we may call to mind, in their true colours, all the sins of which we have been guilty, whether in thought, word, or deed, since our last confession. (2.) We must then examine our conscience—that is, call ourselves to a strict account for all the evil we have done against God's holy law—according to the methods laid down in the books of devotion for assisting us to make that examination. When by this means we have called to mind all the sins of which we have been guilty, we must then use our best endeavours to excite ourselves to sincere contrition or repentance for them. Now, this is

done—(1.) By fervent and earnest prayer, begging the grace of true repentance from Almighty God, Who alone can bestow it on us ; (2.) By serious meditation on some of the great evils of sin, in order to excite in our souls a just horror of it ; (3.) By making frequent and fervent acts of sorrow and repentance for having offended God, with firm resolutions, through His grace, never to offend Him more.

### SECTION III.

#### *Of Satisfaction, as part of the Sacrament of Penance.*

*Q.* 31. What is sacramental satisfaction ?

*A.* It is the faithful performance of the penance imposed on the penitent by the priest in the sacrament of Penance.

*Q.* 32. Why is the priest obliged to impose this penance on the penitent ?

*A.* For these reasons : (1.) Because in administering the sacrament of Penance, the priest acts as judge, commissioned by Almighty God, so to reconcile sinners with Him, that, while dispensing to the penitent the fruits of the Divine mercy, he do not neglect the interests of the Divine justice. Now the order of justice requires that the guilty criminal be punished in a just proportion to his guilt, and that this punishment be inflicted by the judge. (2.) Because as the pardon granted in the sacrament of Penance delivers the sinner not only from the guilt of his crimes, but also from the eternal punishment due to them, which, through the mercy of God and merits of Christ, is changed into a temporal punishment, that the Divine justice may, in some measure, be satisfied ; therefore, it belongs to the

priest, by whose ministry this change is made, to inflict some temporal punishment on the penitent, to serve in part, at least, for what the Divine justice requires. (3.) Because Jesus Christ, when He gave the pastors of His Church power of loosing the sinner from his sins, with the same breath, gave power to bind him with his penance: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven;" which also shows that the penitent is obliged, in the sight of God, to perform the penance so imposed.

*Q.* 33. Is satisfaction an essential part of the sacrament of Penance?

*A.* We must distinguish between the desire of doing penance in satisfaction to the Divine justice for our sins, and the actual performance of that satisfaction. The desire of satisfying the Divine justice, and repairing as far as we can the injury done to God by sin, is an essential part of true repentance, and therefore an essential disposition for receiving the grace of the sacrament of Penance, as we have seen in the chapter on repentance. But the actual performance of our penance is not an essential part of the sacrament, nor necessary for receiving the grace of the sacrament, but only for its integrity. Without it, therefore, the sacrament would be incomplete, but not invalid. Hence, in administering this sacrament, the penance is enjoined by the priest, and accepted by the penitent, before absolution is given, but the actual performance of the penance is deferred till afterwards. Hence, also, in the case of a dying person absolution may be given without enjoining any penance; because, when a penitent is incapable of performing the penance, God accepts his sincere desire, and looks upon that as done which he sincerely desires to do, but has not the power. From this it follows, also, that the actual

performance of our penance is not required for obtaining the remission of the eternal punishment of sin, for this is remitted along with the sin itself, by the grace of the sacrament. It is necessary only for discharging the debt of temporal punishment, into which the eternal punishment is changed by the grace of the sacrament, and which remains due to the Divine justice after the guilt and eternal punishment are forgiven.

*Q.* 34. How does it appear that when Almighty God forgives the sin, and the eternal punishment due to it, He still exacts from the sinner a proportionate temporal punishment?

*A.* This is manifest from several proofs of Scripture.

(1.) We have seen above, Chap. xvii. *Q.* 15, from the repeated declarations of Holy Scripture, that it is a fixed rule of God's justice never to allow sin to go unpunished, but to render to every one according to his works. Justice itself demands that whoever injures or offends his neighbour should make reparation to him as far as he is able. How much more, then, when we injure and offend God by sin, must justice demand that we should repair His honour to the utmost of our power by penance? Seeing, then, that God has decreed to render to every one according to His works, and that, when the eternal punishment of sin is forgiven, the sinner, not only without injury, but even with profit to himself, can make some reparation by temporal punishments, therefore God justly demands this of him.

(2.) All the proofs from Scripture which we have seen above, Chap. xvii. *Q.* 19, of the necessity of doing penance, show how strictly Almighty God demands this debt of temporal punishment from us.

(3.) All the examples in Scripture of the holy servants of God who had been sinners, and after their repentance



and reconciliation with Him did most severe penance for their former sins, prove the same truth ; for nothing but the full conviction that God required this satisfaction could lead them to a course of life so contrary to the inclinations and desires of human nature. See above, Chap. xvii., Q. 20.

(4.) Moses and Aaron had offended God by their diffidence in striking the rock twice, for which they certainly were forgiven, and continued afterwards to be friends of God ; yet they were both punished by death, and deprived of entering into the promised land, which they so earnestly desired. "And the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, Because ye have not believed Me, to sanctify Me before the children of Israel, ye shall not bring these people into the land which I will give them," Num. xx. 12. "And Aaron shall go to his people ; for he shall not go into the land which I have given to the children of Israel, because he was incredulous to My words at the waters of Contradiction," *Ibid.*, ver. 24 ; and he died accordingly in the wilderness. "And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Go up into this mountain, and see the land ; and when thou art gone up, thou shalt be gathered into thy people, because you trespassed against Me at the waters of Contradiction, and did not sanctify Me before the children of Israel. Thou shalt see the land, but thou shalt not enter it," Deut. xxxii. 49 ; and he went up and died also in the wilderness.

(5.) When the children of Israel fell into that grievous sin of worshipping the golden calf, the Lord said to Moses, "Let Me alone, that My wrath may be kindled against them, and that I may destroy them," Ex. xxxii. 10. But at the earnest prayer of Moses, "The Lord was appeased from doing the evil which He had spoken

against His people," ver. 14; yet, notwithstanding, "There were slain that day about three and twenty thousand men," ver. 28, in punishment of this sin. After this, Moses again had recourse to prayer, "that God might forgive them this trespass," ver. 31; "and Almighty God was appeased, and bid Moses go on, and lead the people whither I have told thee, and My angel shall go before thee;" but He immediately adds, "And in the day of revenge I will visit this sin also of theirs," ver. 34; where we see that the Divine justice was inflexible in demanding satisfaction even after He was reconciled with them for the sin.

(6.) When the people of Israel murmured against God on the return of the spies, and provoked Him so that He threatened to consume them, at the prayers of Moses He was appeased, and said to him, "I have forgiven according to thy word," Num. xiv. 20. Here we see an express declaration from the mouth of God that He had forgiven the people this sin; but as for the temporal punishment, in satisfaction to His offended justice, He immediately adds, "But yet all the men that have seen My majesty, and the signs that I have done in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted Me now ten times, and have not obeyed My voice, shall not see the land for which I swore to their fathers, neither shall any of them that hath detracted Me behold it. Say, therefore, to them, As I live, saith the Lord, according as ye have spoken in My hearing, so will I do to you; in the wilderness shall your carcasses lie. Your children shall wander in the desert forty years, and shall bear your fornication, until the carcasses of their fathers be consumed in the desert," Num. xiv. 22, 28, 33. Behold what a dreadful and long penance the Divine justice demanded from them, even after their sin was pardoned.

(7.) When David unhappily fell into the grievous crimes of adultery and murder, God sent the prophet Nathan to reprove him for his sin ; who, after declaring to him the grievousness of his crime, thus pronounced the temporal punishment which God had resolved to inflict upon him : “Thou hast killed Urias the Hethite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, . . . therefore the sword shall never depart from thy house, because thou hast despised Me. . . . Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house, and I will take thy wives before thy eyes, and give them to thy neighbour ; and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of the sun,” 2 Kings (Samuel), xii. 9. David, upon this entering into himself by a sincere repentance, acknowledged his crime. Then the prophet, by the inspiration of God, declared to him that his sin was forgiven : “The Lord hath also taken away thy sin : thou shalt not die,” ver. 13. But he immediately adds, “Nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing the child that is born to thee shall surely die,” ver. 14. Here we see a most severe sentence of temporal punishment passed upon David, which was executed with the utmost rigour, even though the guilt of his sin was forgiven ; for soon after the child that was born to him died ; one of his sons abused his own sister ; he again was murdered by a brother ; this brother afterwards rose in rebellion against his father, forced him to fly to the wilderness for safety, and taking his father’s wives, abused them before the whole people, as is related in the following chapters.

Q. 35. Can we know what extent of temporal punishment the Divine justice demands from any sinner after his sins are forgiven?

*A.* No; that can be known to none but God alone, and depends upon several circumstances of which we can form no idea; but of this we are certain, that it will always be according to justice, and such as our sins justly deserve. Yet our ignorance of this is of great service to us, and ought to excite us to use every means in our power to discharge this debt as far as possible, by all the various penitential works described above, chap. xvii. § 5, as it is infinitely easier to discharge it ourselves, by doing penance, than to have it exacted from us by God Himself. See chap. xvii. 25, 26.

*Q.* 36. Is not the penance enjoined in the sacrament sufficient for this purpose?

*A.* The sacramental penance undoubtedly contributes very much to this end, more in proportion than any other penance we can do in an equal degree; of which, see above, chap. xvii. *Q.* 35, where also we have seen the strict obligation we lie under of performing our sacramental penance: but this is so far from being sufficient entirely to cancel our whole debt, that the Church of Christ, in a general council, declares that “the whole life of a Christian ought to be a continual penance.” Council of Trent, Sess. xiv. Chapter 9, on Extreme Unction.

*Q.* 37. Has Christ appointed any other means of freeing us from this debt of temporal punishment, but the actual doing of penance?

*A.* Yes, indulgences; the power of granting which He has left in His Church.

## APPENDIX I.

*Of Indulgences.*

Q. 38. What is understood by an indulgence?

A. An indulgence is a relaxation or remission of the debt of temporal punishment, which remains due to the Divine justice for sin, after the sin itself, and the eternal punishment, have been remitted by the sacrament of penance.

Q. 39. Has Jesus Christ given to His Church the power of granting indulgences?

A. He has, as is evident from Holy Scripture; for (1.) He says to St Peter, "Thou art Peter, . . . and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven," Mat. xvi. 19. In which words our Saviour gives to St Peter, as the chief pastor of His Church, whose authority as such extends to all her members, an ample and universal power of conducting the faithful to heaven, by loosing them from everything that might hinder them from going thither, provided always they be properly disposed, and perform the conditions required upon their part. Now, there are only two things that can hinder a soul from going to heaven,—the guilt of sin, and the debt of temporal punishment; for, till that debt be paid, none can enter there; consequently our Saviour saying, "whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven," manifestly includes both, and assures us, that when the chief pastor looses the faithful from their sins in the

sacrament of penance, or from the debt of temporal punishment by granting an indulgence, this sentence is ratified in heaven, and stands good in the sight of God Himself. (2.) On another occasion, declaring, that "he that will not hear the Church," that is, the pastors and rulers of the Church, is to be considered "as a heathen and a publican," He immediately says to all these pastors in the persons of the apostles, "Amen, I say to you, Whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven," Mat. xviii. 17, 18. In which words, by the same reasoning as in the former case, we see the power of granting indulgences conferred on the chief pastors or bishops of the Church, as successors of the apostles. It is given to the head of the Church with regard to all the faithful, and to the bishops of the Church with regard to that portion of the faithful committed to their charge, to be exercised by them under such regulations as the Church herself, in her sacred councils, has judged proper to appoint. (3.) St Paul, though not one of the twelve apostles then present with our Saviour, when this power was given them, both exercised it himself towards the incestuous Corinthian, and recommended to the pastors of that Church to do the same; for having first condemned and bound him to public penance, and "delivered him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved in the day of our Lord," 1 Cor. v. 5; yet afterwards, being informed of his great repentance and vehement sorrow, he writes to that Church, "To him that is such a one, this rebuke is sufficient that is given by many; so that contrariwise, you should rather forgive him . . . and to whom you have forgiven anything, I also. For what I forgave, if I have forgiven

anything, for your sakes have I done it, in the person of Christ," 2 Cor. ii. 6, 10.

*Q.* 40. When the Church grants an indulgence by remitting the debt of temporal punishment due to the Divine justice, does she offer any compensation to the justice of God in place of it?

*A.* Yes, she does ; to understand which we must observe —(1.) That God Almighty has given to His Church the infinite merits and superabundant satisfaction of His Son Jesus, to be applied and dispensed to her children for the good of their souls, according to their wants. Thus St Paul says, "Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present wicked world," Gal. i. 4 ; and God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ," Eph. i. 3, "that he might show in the ages to come the abundant riches of His grace in His bounty towards us in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii. 7 ; for "He that spared not His Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how hath He not also, with Him, given us all things ?" Rom. viii. 32. Now the pastors of the Church are "the dispensers of the mysteries of God," 1 Cor. iv. 1, of all these "spiritual blessings, abundant riches, and graces of Christ," which are the fruits of His infinite merits and satisfactions. These are dispensed to the people, and applied to their souls by the pastors of the Church, when they administer the holy sacraments ; and they are offered to God as a compensation to His Divine justice for the debt of temporal punishment when they grant us a relaxation from that debt by an indulgence. (2.) In the Creed, we are taught to believe that in the Church there is "the communion of saints ;" that is, all the members of the Church have a spiritual communication with one another in holy things, the prayers, sacrifices, penances,

and good works performed by any of the faithful are accepted by Almighty God for the others who put no impediment. The reason is this, because all the members of the Church form but one spiritual body, of which Christ is the Head ; and, therefore, all the faithful, as members of one another, mutually partake of one another's prayers and good works, especially when expressly intended and applied for each other. Nothing is more agreeable to God than that all His followers should live together in unity, charity, and brotherly love, as members of one body, mutually helping one another, especially in spiritual things ; and accordingly we find many examples of His readiness to bestow great favours upon His people in reward of this mutual charity. Thus when Job's friends could find no acceptance with God of themselves, they immediately found it when Job offered up his prayers and sacrifices for them, Job, xlii. How often did the prayers and sacrifices of Moses and Aaron obtain forgiveness for their people, both as to sin and temporal punishment, even when God was so provoked by their crimes that He seemed determined to destroy them? How often does God declare in Scripture that He bears with the people of Israel, that He deals mercifully, bestowing favours upon them for the sake of His faithful servants, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, even long after they had left this world? So also speaking of His care for Jerusalem, " I will protect this city, and will save it for my own sake, and for David my servant's sake," 4 Kings, xix. 34. Here He joins " His own sake and David's " together, as the joint motive of His protecting Jerusalem.

From this same principle St Paul frequently recommends himself to the prayers of the faithful, and when, on a certain occasion, he had met with some great afflictions, he says to the Philippians, " I know that this shall



turn to my salvation through your prayer," Phil. i. 19. Seeing, then, that the prayers, penances, and good works of the faithful, particularly of the saints, are most readily accepted by Almighty God for the benefit of all the members of His Church, especially when, by a spirit of charity, they are offered and applied for that purpose, the Church grants an indulgence to her children, for relieving the debt of temporal punishment due to the Divine justice. She offers, along with the infinite satisfaction of Christ, the prayers, penances, and good works of His holy saints, as an acceptable oblation to the justice of God, in satisfaction or compensation for the indulgence she grants, both in imitation of what God Himself did, when He joined *His own sake and David's sake*, as the joint motive for protecting Jerusalem, and as an exercise of that holy communion of saints which she professes in the Creed; so that, "out of their abundance our wants are supplied," and our debt paid, 2 Cor. viii. 14.

Q. 41. How many kinds of indulgences are there?

A. Two kinds—a plenary indulgence, which, if obtained, would deliver us from all the debt of temporal punishment that we owe for our past sins; and a partial indulgence, which delivers us from it only in part, and is commonly expressed as given for a certain time, as of forty days, a year, or the like. The meaning of which is, that an indulgence is granted for such a proportion of the debt of temporal punishment which we owe to God, as would have been remitted by Him, had the sinner undergone, for that space of time, the severe penitential works prescribed by the primitive Church for his sins.

Q. 42. What things are required for gaining the benefit of an indulgence?

A. Two things, (1.) That a person be in the state of grace, and in friendship with God; for while one con-

tinues in sin, at enmity with God, and deserving eternal punishment, he is incapable of receiving an indulgence. On this account, in all grants of plenary indulgences, the general condition required for gaining them is, that the person apply first to the sacrament of penance, in order to put his soul in the state of grace, without which he cannot receive that benefit. (2.) That the conditions required in the grant of the indulgence be exactly performed ; for indulgences are always granted on certain conditions, to be performed on our part, such as approaching to the holy sacraments, works of charity and mercy, exercises of piety and religion, prayers for the necessities of the Church, and the like. If these conditions be not complied with, we cannot gain the benefit of the indulgence granted. (3.) In order to gain the full benefit of a plenary indulgence, it is also necessary to have a perfect repentance, and sincere detestation of all our sins, even the least venial sin ; because, as the punishment of sin will never be forgiven while the guilt of it remains in the soul, and as a sincere repentance is absolutely required for the remission of the guilt, therefore this sincere repentance must precede the remission of the punishment. Hence we may see how few there are who gain the full effect of a plenary indulgence, as there are few who have a sincere and efficacious repentance for every venial sin, and a firm resolution of avoiding every sin, great or small, with all the occasions of sin. Still, this ought not to hinder us from endeavouring to gain a plenary indulgence when occasion offers ; for though we should not gain the whole effect of it, the more we endeavour, and the better our dispositions are, the more ample benefit will we reap. We can never, indeed, be certain to what extent we gain this benefit, and, from our imperfect dispositions, have too much

reason to fear that we have yet a great debt to pay. Our endeavouring to gain an indulgence, therefore, ought not to render us remiss, but rather encourage us to lead a penitential life; for the more we strive by works, worthy of penance, to satisfy the Divine justice, the better shall we be disposed for gaining the more abundant fruits of an indulgence when the opportunity offers. When we have done our best, it is little to what we ought to have done. Indulgences supply the deficiencies of human infirmity, but can never be supposed to encourage negligence and spiritual sloth.

*Q.* 43. When a person dies in the grace and friendship of God, but before he has discharged the debt of temporal punishment which he owes to the Divine justice, what becomes of him?

*A.* He is thrown into the prison of purgatory, "out of which he shall not come till he pays to the last farthing," Mat. v. 25.

## APPENDIX II.

### *Of Purgatory.*

*Q.* 44. What does our holy faith teach us concerning purgatory?

*A.* That after this life there is a middle state of suffering, to which the souls of those are condemned for a time, who, though dying in the state of grace, and friendship with God, have not fully satisfied the Divine justice for the debt of temporal punishment due for their more grievous sins, the guilt of which has been pardoned in the sacrament of Penance, or who die under the guilt of smaller sins and imperfections.

Q. 45. On what grounds is this doctrine of purgatory founded?

A. On these following: (1.) The justice of God absolutely demands from sinners a reparation for the injury of sin by means of temporal punishments to be undergone after the guilt of mortal sin has been forgiven, and the eternal punishment remitted. This debt of temporal punishment is increased also by daily venial sins, which, being offensive to God, must be punished by Divine justice; for "God will render to every man according to his works, and of every idle word we speak an account will be demanded." There must then be a state or place of temporal punishment for those who, dying in the state of grace, have not discharged their debt in this life, and where they must suffer till they have fully paid it. This place cannot be heaven; for in heaven there can be no suffering. It cannot be hell; for out of hell there is no redemption, and those who die in the state of grace, cannot be condemned for ever; therefore it must be a middle place distinct from both. Referring to this, our Saviour Himself admonishes us in the following words: "Be at agreement with thy adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison: amen, I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou pay the last farthing," Mat. v. 25. Here we see the doctrine of purgatory described in the plainest terms. This present life is everywhere represented in the holy Scriptures as *a way* in which we are travelling towards eternity. Our *adversary* is the Divine justice to which we owe the debt of temporal punishment. God Himself is the *judge*. If, therefore, we do not satisfy our adversary during this life, while we are in the way, when we die, and come

to be presented before the Judge, we shall be condemned to the prison of purgatory, where we must remain, till by our sufferings we have fully satisfied the Divine justice, even to the last farthing.

(2.) We have seen above, Chap. xvi. sect. 2, that though venial sin does not banish grace from the soul, break our friendship with God, nor condemn us to eternal punishments, yet it sullies the purity of the soul, and renders her less agreeable in the Divine eyes. The word of God assures us, that "there shall not enter into heaven any thing defiled," Rev. xxi. 27, and that none "but the clean of heart shall see God," Mat. v. 8. When, therefore, a soul leaves this world in perfect charity, clean and undefiled by the smallest stain of sin, doubtless it will immediately be admitted into the presence and enjoyment of God. If, on the contrary, the soul leaves this world under the guilt of mortal sin, it will undoubtedly be condemned to the eternal torments of hell. But when a soul is sullied with the stains of smaller venial sins, it cannot in that state go to heaven, where "nothing defiled can enter;" neither can it be condemned to hell, because it is in friendship with God, and a living member of Jesus Christ. There must therefore be some middle state, where such a soul is detained for a time, till by suffering it be purified from all those defilements of venial sin, and rendered fit to be admitted to the presence and enjoyment of God. Our blessed Saviour says, "he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come," Mat. xii. 32. In which words He plainly teaches that some sins shall be forgiven in the world to come, otherwise it would be superfluous to say, of the sin against the Holy Ghost in particular, that it shall never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the next.

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To the same purpose the prophet Isaiah says, "The voice of the Lord of hosts was revealed in my ears, Sure this iniquity shall not be forgiven you till you die, saith the Lord God of Hosts," Isa. xxii. 14, which plainly implies that after death it should be forgiven them. Now this truth necessarily establishes a middle state, where some sins shall be forgiven : this place cannot be heaven, for no sin can enter there to be forgiven ; it cannot be hell, for in hell there is no forgiveness ; it must, therefore, be a place distinct from both. Neither can these sins which are forgiven in the next life be mortal sins ; for a soul that dies in mortal sin is immediately condemned to hell, like the rich glutton in the gospel : therefore, only venial sins are purged from the soul in purgatory, as here explained.

(3.) From this it is evident, (1.) That the souls that go to purgatory are only such as die in the state of grace, united to Jesus Christ. (2.) That they are condemned to that place of suffering on account of their imperfect works, which must be there consumed, and their stains purged away, before they can enter heaven. (3.) That, however, they shall at last be saved, and received into eternal bliss, when they have paid the utmost farthing. This is the precise doctrine of the Church concerning purgatory. Now, this doctrine is laid down by St Paul in the plainest terms, as follows:—"For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid ; which is in Christ Jesus :"—that is, none can be saved but such as are united to Jesus Christ by faith, that worketh by charity : "Now, if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work shall be manifest ; for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is."

The building upon this foundation, as here explained, signifies the works that a man performs while united to Jesus Christ; such works as are good and perfect are compared to gold, silver, and precious stones; such as are imperfect and venially sinful, are compared to wood, hay, and stubble. At the day of the Lord, at the particular judgment after death, all these works shall be tried and examined by Him, for then *the fire* of God's judgment shall "try every man's works of what sort it is." If any man's works which he hath built thereupon abide, he shall receive a reward, shall be immediately admitted to the joy of his Lord; "If any man's works burn, he shall suffer loss;" these works being found of no value, he must suffer for them; yet, having built upon the right foundation, by living and dying in the state of grace, and united to Jesus Christ, though with much imperfection, "he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire, being liable to this punishment on account of his many imperfections," 1 Cor. iii. 11. On this text of Scripture St Ambrose says as follows: "Whereas St Paul saith *yet so as by fire*, he showeth indeed that he shall be saved, but yet shall suffer the punishment of fire; that being purged by fire, he may be saved, and not tormented for ever," *Ser.* 20, in Psa. 118.

(4.) The belief of a purgatory and the practice of praying for the souls detained there, is far from being a novelty, introduced in later ages, as the adversaries of the Catholic Church pretend. It is much more ancient than Christianity itself; and we have a most decisive proof of it from Scripture, among the people of God in the time of Judas Maccabeus, about two hundred years before Christ. For, upon a great victory gained by that valiant general over the enemies of their religion, after the battle, in which many of his people had been slain,

“Judas, making a gathering, sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection, . . . and because he considered that they who had fallen asleep, with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is, therefore, a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins,” 2 Mac. xii. 43. In this passage of Holy Writ the following particulars are established: (1.) That the whole people of God, long before Christ, did hold it holy and laudable to pray for the dead. (2.) That they believed this to be a means of benefiting the souls departed, by freeing them from their sins. (3.) That the Word of God declares this to be *holy and wholesome*. If therefore the souls of the faithful departed are benefited by the prayers of those upon earth, this establishes a purgatory beyond contradiction, since those in heaven require no help, and those in hell can receive none. Now, we do not find that our Saviour ever reproved the Jews for this practice, though upon all occasions He censured the Pharisees for the corruptions they had introduced, some of which were even of much less consequence than this, had it been unsound doctrine.

Q. 46. Are the sufferings of the souls in purgatory very severe.

A. They certainly are, much more so than anything we can conceive in this world. (1.) Because the Scripture says, “they shall be saved, yet so as by fire,” 1 Cor. iii. 15. (2.) Because they are wholly in the hands of the Divine justice, and the Scripture says, “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,” Heb. x. 31. And, indeed, even in this life, where His justice is always mixed with mercy, how dreadful are His punish-



ments upon sinners? witness the many examples in Scripture, even for sins which to us would seem small. (3.) Some of the saints of God have not hesitated to think that the torments of purgatory are inferior to those of hell only in duration, being but for a time, whereas those of hell are eternal. (4.) The following passages from the prophets, though addressed to the Jews, are applicable, in their spiritual sense, to show the greatness of the torments of purgatory. "If the Lord shall wash away the filth of the daughters of Sion, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning," Isa. iv. 4; "and He shall sit refining and cleansing the silver, and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and shall refine them as gold, and as silver," Mal. iii. 3.

*Q.* 47. Are the prayers, sacrifices, and other good works of the faithful upon earth, of benefit to the souls in purgatory when offered to God for them?

*A.* Most undoubtedly they are of great service to them, both by relieving their sufferings and shortening the duration of them. Thus, the Scripture expressly says, that "It is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins," 2 Mac. xii. 46. In their situation they can do nothing for themselves, but suffer till they have paid the last farthing. For, as our Saviour assures us, when "the night of death cometh, no man can work," John, ix. 4; and the Holy Ghost exhorts us to be diligent in doing all the good we can at present, for the same reason, "Whatsoever thy hand is able to do, do it earnestly; for neither work, nor reason, nor wisdom, nor knowledge shall be in hell, whither thou art hastening," Eccles. ix. 10, that is in the regions below, in the state of the dead. But though the souls in purgatory can do nothing themselves to shorten their sufferings, yet such is the

goodness of God, that in consideration of the union and charity which He requires among all the members of His Church, the body of Christ, and of that communion of saints which He Himself has established among them, He is pleased to accept the prayers, sacrifices, and good works of the faithful upon the earth, when offered up by them for the souls departed; and on that account relieves their pains, and grants them a more speedy deliverance.

*Q.* 48. Is it, then, a great charity to pray for the souls in purgatory?

*A.* It certainly is so, whether we consider *who they are, what they suffer, or how easily relieved by us*, though they can do nothing for themselves.

*Q.* 49. Is it very profitable to ourselves to pray for the souls in purgatory?

*A.* It is one of the most profitable acts of mercy we can perform; for, (1.) "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy;" and "with the same measure that we mete to others, it shall be measured to us again." This is an established rule of the Divine justice, consequently charity, in affording relief to those who are gone before us, and are now in a state of suffering, is the most effectual means to move Almighty God to excite others to extend the same relief to us, if we ever be so happy as to arrive where they now are; on the contrary, "Judgment without mercy to him that shows no mercy," Jas. ii. 13. (2.) The souls in purgatory are the spouses of Jesus Christ, united to Him by grace, and secure of their eternal salvation. Now, if Christ assures us that a cup of cold water given for His sake in this life shall not lose its reward, though the person to whom we give it may perhaps be at enmity with Him, and exposed to be lost for ever, what reward will He give to those who, for His

sake, confer such a benefit on the souls in purgatory as to relieve their sufferings, and procure for them a more speedy admission to His Divine presence? (3.) These holy souls themselves will sooner or later be admitted to the possession of God, to the clear and full enjoyment of the Divine presence. What a happiness for us if, by our prayers, alms, sacrifices, and other good works, we have been instrumental in procuring them relief, and a more speedy admission to eternal bliss! May we not justly expect that their grateful hearts will remember our services? Will they not be our steadfast friends in heaven, and by their powerful prayers obtain a blessing to our souls? Hence our blessed Saviour says in the gospel, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when ye shall fail they may receive you into everlasting dwellings," Luke, xvi. 9. In this consists the communion we have with these blessed souls in purgatory included in that article of the Creed *the communion of saints*; which extends to all the members of the Church of Christ, whether they be still in this present life, or have departed to another; for we communicate to the souls in purgatory the fruits of our prayers and good works offered up for them, and receive in return, through the mercy of God, these precious rewards of our charity.

Q. 50. What instructions do we learn from this doctrine of purgatory?

A. Chiefly these following: (1.) The strictness and severity of God's justice, which appears in some respects more formidable in purgatory than even in hell itself; for in hell, *whom does He punish?* His enemies, His rebellious creatures, obstinate, ungrateful, impenitent sinners, just objects of His aversion, wrath, and indignation; but in purgatory He punishes His beloved friends, the spouses of His Son, the living members of Jesus

Christ, the objects of His complacency and love. In hell, *how does He punish?* With torments more dreadful than it can enter into the heart of man to conceive. In purgatory He punishes with torments much of the same nature; for the souls there shall be saved, *yet so as by fire*, and perhaps little inferior in intensity, though differing from the torments of hell in duration. In hell, *for what does He punish?* For mortal sin, the greatest outrage that can be offered to His Divine Majesty. In purgatory He punishes smaller sins, venial imperfections, human frailties. If, therefore, He punishes these venial imperfections in His own beloved friends in so severe a manner, how dreadful are His judgments? how severe His justice? how much to be dreaded and feared?

(2.) Purgatory shows us, in the strongest colours, the great evil of venial sin; for God is a God of infinite justice, and, therefore, can never punish any sin more than it deserves; He is also a God of infinite mercy, which so inclines Him to punish sin less than it deserves. If, therefore, a God of infinite justice punishes venial sin in so dreadful a manner in purgatory, we must, of necessity, acknowledge that venial sin justly deserves that punishment; and if so, how great an evil must it be? how pernicious to those who are guilty of it?

(3.) It also shows us the great advantage we may draw from the sufferings of this life, if borne in a penitential spirit; and from endeavouring, by a truly penitential life of self-denial and mortification, to discharge the debt we owe to the Divine justice, and by that means “make agreement with our adversary while we are in the way.” One great reason why souls go to purgatory is, because they have not satisfied the justice of God by sufferings before they die; therefore they must suffer in purgatory till they have paid the last farthing. Now, such is the

goodness of God, that He accepts the penitential works we do in this world, and the sufferings we bear in a penitential spirit here, as payment of that debt ; and as our sufferings here scarcely deserve the name of sufferings, in comparison to the sufferings of purgatory, this shows what a vast advantage we may draw from the afflictions of the present life, and how unwisely we act in neglecting to make the proper use of them.

(4.) We learn also from the same truth the great esteem we ought to have for the indulgences which the Church grants, and how carefully we ought to avail ourselves of every opportunity of gaining them ; seeing that if we be properly disposed, and faithful in performing the prescribed conditions, they will undoubtedly be of the greatest benefit to our souls in discharging our heavy debt, either in whole for what is past, if we be so happy as to gain a plenary indulgence, or, at least to a considerable degree, in proportion to our dispositions.

### APPENDIX III.

#### *Of Public Penances.*

Q. 51. What are the reasons for inflicting public penances ?

A. There are several very strong reasons for inflicting public penances on public sinners. (1.) The express command of the Holy Scripture ; for St Paul, instructing the pastors of the Church in the person of his disciple Timothy in the duties of their state, says, “ Those that sin reprove before all, that the rest also may have fear. I charge thee before God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe those things without prejudice,

doing nothing by declining to either side," 1 Tim. v. 21 ; where we see with what a strong adjuration the apostle enjoins this duty. (2.) The same holy apostle confirms this command by his example; for when he heard of the incestuous Corinthian he excommunicated him, delivering him over to Satan, and kept him in that state of public penance, deprived of all the benefits of religion for nearly an entire year, 1 Cor. v. 5. (3.) The example of the Church of Christ, instructed by the words and example of this apostle, was most rigorous and severe in inflicting public penances, especially on public offenders. The nature and duration of these public penances, in the ages immediately after the apostles, were determined by the bishops, according to the particular circumstances of the case ; but as fervour declined and crimes became more frequent, the Church became more severe and rigorous in the use of these public penances, in order to put some restraint on increasing crime. She established, by her sacred canons, proper regulations determining the nature and duration of penance to be imposed, according to the crime committed ; and some of these penances lasted for one, three, seven, even fifteen years. This practice continued, with some alterations, to be exactly observed for public crimes till about the twelfth century ; after which they began to be changed into other works of piety, so that the use of public penances became less frequent, and in many places fell into disuse. But, (4.) The Council of Trent, taking this into consideration, in order to restore the use of them as being of the greatest benefit to religion in imposing a restraint on sin, decrees as follows :—“The apostle admonishes that those who sin openly are to be corrected publicly. When, therefore, any crime is committed publicly, and before many, by which others will doubtless be offended and scandalized,

a suitable punishment must be publicly imposed on the offender according to the nature of the crime, that those who have been allured by his example to evil may be recalled to their duty by the testimony of his amendment ;” Council of Trent, sess. xxiv. cap. 8. (5.) The Roman Ritual, and many others, expressly forbid those to be admitted to absolution “who have given public scandal, unless they give public satisfaction, and take away the scandal.”

*Q.* 52. These are very strong and express laws indeed ; but what are the reasons upon which these laws proceed ?

*A.* Chiefly these three (1.) For satisfying the Divine justice, which requires that the punishment should always be proportioned to the offence. Hence God Himself says to Noah, “Whosoever shall shed man’s blood, his blood shall be shed,” Gen. ix. 6 ; and our Saviour to St Peter, “All that take the sword, shall perish with the sword,” Mat. xxvi. 52 ; and the Holy Ghost lays down this general rule, “by what things a man sinneth, by the same also he is tormented,” Wisd. xi. 17 ; consequently, public sins require to be punished publicly. (2.) For the salvation of the criminal himself, that, by his public penance, he may be the more sensible of his crime, and by the humiliation and confusion attending it, may be more effectually converted, and become more careful to avoid such sins in future. (3.) For the recovery of those who may have been led into sin by his example ; for nothing is more apt to lead men into sin than bad example, and nothing adds greater force to its pernicious influence than its passing unpunished. On the contrary, nothing more effectually deters others from following it than the public punishment of the offender. (4.) For imprinting in the minds of the ignorant a just sense of the evil of

sin; for when they see sin committed with impunity, they naturally lose the horror they ought to have of it, especially if the offender be in a station above themselves, and better instructed in his duty; for then they naturally say, if it were so great an evil, how would such a one be guilty of it? nor is there anything so effectual to prevent this, to excite and keep up in their minds the just idea they ought to have of the evil of sin, as to see it publicly punished. (5.) To satisfy for the public offence they have given by their public sin.

*Q.* 53. But is it not to be feared that, by public penance, the sin will be made more public, the scandal propagated, and an occasion given to many evil thoughts and ideas?

*A.* To this it is replied, (1.) That St Paul, the Church of Christ, even with the experience of many ages, and the Council of Trent, had no such fear, when they so strongly enjoined, and so strictly practised, the punishing of public offenders by public penances. (2.) There are two ways any sin may be spoken of to others; first, by proposing it in an alluring light, as pleasant, honourable, or useful, by which the hearers are excited to love it and commit it; and, on this account, plays, novels, and romances are the most pernicious and detestable engines the devil makes use of to lead men to sin. Secondly, by proposing it in an odious light, showing its innate malignity, and its fatal consequences both in soul and body, in time and eternity; and in this view, sermons and good books, though they describe sin to the hearers, and show its various kinds, yet are the most powerful means appointed by the Divine Providence to deter men from sin. Now, when a sinner is reproved publicly, his crime is spoken of always in this light, and represented in all its horrors and fatal consequences,



which, joined with the confusion and humiliation which the sinner is undergoing at the time, instead of increasing the scandal, must have quite the contrary effect, and excite sentiments of horror and aversion in the minds of those present. This is the very reason assigned by the apostle for ordering public reproofs, "that the rest also may be afraid;" and this is the very effect it naturally produces, as constant experience shows.

## CHAPTER XXV.

## OF THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

*Q.* 1. What is the end and design of the sacrament of Extreme Unction?

*A.* The Council of Trent declares it in these words: "As our most merciful Redeemer, who desired that His servants should at all times be provided with salutary remedies against the weapons of their enemies, in the other sacraments gives Christians the greatest aids, to enable them to pass their lives in a Christian manner, and free from any grievous spiritual evil, so did He guard the close of life by the sacrament of Extreme Unction, as with a most firm defence. For, though our adversary seeks, and seizes, during our whole life, every opportunity of ruining our souls, yet there is no time wherein he more vehemently exerts all his strength and art to ruin us utterly, and destroy, if possible, our confidence in the mercy of God, than when he sees the last moment of life approaching," Sess. xiv. in doct. de Extr. Unct. By this we see that the intention of our blessed Saviour in instituting this sacrament is, that it may be the means of fortifying our souls against the violent attacks and snares of our spiritual enemies in our last moments, and of enabling us to die a holy death, and secure a happy eternity.

*Q.* 2. Does the devil attack souls with more violence than ordinary in their last moments?

*A.* He certainly does, as this general council declares, and as experience itself assures us; for though at all times he "goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8, yet he redoubles all his force and all his art when we come to our last moments, knowing that, if he can gain us then, we will be his for ever, but if he lose us then, he loses us for ever; according to that of the Revelations, when St John heard a loud voice, saying, "Wo to the earth, and to the sea, because the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time," Rev. xii. 12. When the soul is in her last agony, hovering betwixt time and eternity, upon the point of leaving the body, the devil then redoubles all his assaults against her; for, as another text says, "There are spirits that are created for vengeance; and in the time of destruction they shall pour out their force," Ecclus. xxxix. 33; like a king who, being at war with his enemies, when he comes to a decisive battle, on the event of which his crown depends, calls out all his army, and exerts his utmost power in order to insure victory. Now, when the poor soul comes to this last and dreadful battle, what can she do? If left to herself, she will surely perish. This our blessed Saviour well knowing was pleased to institute the holy sacrament of Extreme Unction, to purify the soul from the remains of sin, and to endow her with power from on high to fight manfully against all the assaults of Satan, and come off victorious.

*Q.* 3. Is Extreme Unction a true and real sacrament of the new law?

*A.* It is, and has all the three things necessary for that purpose.

Q. 4. What is the outward sensible sign used in Extreme Unction?

A. It is the anointing the different organs of our senses with holy oil, blessed in a particular manner by the bishop for this purpose, accompanied by prayer.

Q. 5. What is the inward grace this brings to the soul?

A. Both the sanctifying grace of God, by which any stain of sin that may be in the soul is washed away and pardoned, and also the actual grace of God, by which the soul is strengthened and fortified to resist the assaults of Satan in her last moments. It also sometimes brings health to the body, when Almighty God sees that to be expedient for the soul.

Q. 6. How is this outward action a sign of the inward grace?

A. The oil with which the sick person is anointed represents the grace of God, which is poured into the soul, and the prayer used at the time of anointing expresses the remission of sins thereby granted to the sick person; for the prayer is this: "By this holy unction, and His own most tender mercy, may the Almighty God forgive thee whatever sins thou hast committed *by the sight,*" when the eyes are anointed; *by the hearing,* when the ears are anointed; and so of the other senses.

Q. 7. Where is this sacrament laid down in the Holy Scriptures?

A. It is explained at large in all its parts and commanded to be used by the holy apostle St James in these clear and express terms: "Is any one sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." See here the outward action of the sacrament, *anointing with oil, accompanied with prayer.* The inward grace immediately follows, "and the prayer of faith

shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him," James, v. 14. Our Lord shall raise him up above his own strength, fortifying his soul with His assisting grace; and "If he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him," by the sanctifying grace of God, which will purify his soul from all the stains of sin that may remain in it, so that he may appear with joy before his Lord.

*Q.* 8. What are the effects of this sacrament of Extreme Unction?

*A.* These are evident from what has been said. (1.) It cleanses the soul from all the remains of sin; that is, from that anxiety and disturbance of mind, that fear and disquiet, that tepidity and sloth, which, in some degree or other, sin always leaves in the soul, and which prove particularly dangerous at the hour of death. Hence (2) it calms the mind, and renders the sick person composed and resigned to the will of God, giving him courage and confidence in the Divine mercy. (3.) It washes away the guilt of venial sins which may remain concealed in the soul. (4.) It also cleanses the soul even from the guilt of mortal sin, in certain circumstances, where the sick person cannot have recourse to the sacrament of Penance; for where this sacrament of Penance can be had, it must always be applied to for the remission of mortal sin; but in dying persons it may sometimes happen that this cannot be done. As, for example, if mortal sins were not forgiven in confession from want of proper dispositions, though unknown to the person himself; or were committed after the sacrament of Penance, but had quite escaped his memory; or if, being suddenly deprived of his senses, he could not confess them, but had a sincere sorrow for them. In these, or suchlike cases, even the guilt of mortal sins will be

cleansed from the soul by the grace of Extreme Unction. (5.) It strengthens him to bear with more Christian patience all the pains and sufferings of his sickness. (6.) It fortifies the soul against all the assaults of Satan in her last moments; and (7.) It contributes to restore health to the body, if expedient to the soul.

*Q.* 9. Are all these effects certainly produced by the grace of this sacrament?

*A.* Those which regard the soul never fail to be produced by the grace of this sacrament, unless the sick person put an obstacle by the want of proper dispositions; for the Scripture expressly affirms that, when it is administered, "our Lord shall raise him up, and his sins shall be forgiven him." So that God, Who is faithful to His word, will never fail on His part to bestow these graces on the sick person if he be properly disposed to receive them; and the more perfectly he is disposed, the more abundant portion of them will he receive. But what regards the health of the body is not always granted, being only an accidental effect, not essential to the sacrament, and is given only when the good of the soul requires it.

*Q.* 10. What are the dispositions required for receiving Extreme Unction?

*A.* To receive this sacrament with the full and proper fruit to the soul, it is required, (1.) That the person be free from the known guilt of mortal sin by a previous use of the sacrament of Penance, where that can be done. (2.) If he be conscious of being in the state of sin, but cannot confess, being deprived of speech, for example, though otherwise in his senses that he have a sincere internal sorrow and repentance for these sins. (3.) As repentance is absolutely required for the remission of every sin, great or small, that he also have a

sincere repentance for all his sins in general, whether great or small, known or unknown. (4.) That he also have a great and firm confidence in the mercy of God and the merits of Christ, that by means of this sacrament he will be enabled to die the death of the just, and find favour with his God. (5.) That he join his earnest prayers with those of the Church, while the sacrament is being administered to him ; for this is a sacrament of prayer, and “ the prayer of faith shall save the sick man.”

*Q. 11.* To whom does it belong to give Extreme Unction?

*A.* The Scripture has determined it in express terms : “ let him call in the priests of the Church ; ” this being a part of the priestly office.

*Q. 12.* To whom can this sacrament be given ?

*A.* Only to the members of the Church who are in danger of death and sickness—“ Is any one sick among you ? ” says the Scripture ; and among those only to such as are capable of sinning ; because the design of this sacrament is chiefly to purify the soul from the remains of past sins, and strengthen her against falling into sin again. Hence it cannot be given (1.) To such as are in danger of death, but not from sickness ; as to persons going to battle, to sea in a dangerous voyage, or to be put to death by the order of justice, or the like. (2.) To such as are incapable of having ever sinned, as infants, and those who have been deprived of reason from their infancy. (3.) To those who die impenitent, or in the actual commission of mortal sin ; as a drunk person wounded to death, and dying before he becomes sober.

*Q. 13.* What instructions do we receive from this sacrament?

*A.* We see the infinite love of Jesus Christ, and His earnest desire of our salvation. At our first entrance

into the world, He has provided the holy sacrament of Baptism to unite us to Himself as members of His body. During the course of life He has given the powerful helps of His other sacraments to enable us to persevere in that happy state ; and at death what admirable means has He provided in the sacrament of Extreme Unction to make us His own for ever. (2.) The great happiness of being members of the Church of Christ, where alone this aid is to be found. Consider the importance of dying well ; the dangers to which we shall be exposed, and the aid here provided, which will show the greatness of that happiness. (3.) How careful we ought to be in health, to discharge well all our Christian duties, as that will most powerfully move Almighty God to bestow this last assistance on us at our death ; whereas a negligent and sinful life causes us to be deprived of that benefit when death approaches, as daily experience proves. (4.) That when sickness comes, we be careful to receive this sacrament in due time, and not to delay to the very last, when perhaps we may be deprived of the power to dispose ourselves for receiving it with that devotion on which its blessed effects so much depend.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

## OF THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS.

Q. I. **W**HAT is the meaning of Holy Orders?

A. To understand this properly, we must observe, that as Jesus Christ came into this world to save souls, and to communicate to them all those lights and helps of which they stood in need, for working out their salvation; so He received, for this purpose, from His Father all necessary authority and power. He as man, was sent by His Father "To preach the gospel, to enlighten them that sat in darkness, to forgive sins upon earth," and to do every other thing required for the good of souls—"All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth," Mat. xxviii. 18. Now as the sacred helps, which Christ knew to be necessary for the salvation of souls, were equally required for all mankind, in every age to the end of the world, it was necessary to appoint some means of communicating them to men in all succeeding ages. Therefore, as our blessed Saviour was not to remain in His own person in a visible manner upon earth, to apply these helps to the souls of men Himself, He chose twelve disciples, whom He named Apostles, and to them He communicated all those sacred powers necessary for bringing others to salvation, which He Himself had received from His Father. Moreover, He

gave them power to communicate these powers to others who might succeed them, and preserve the same by a perpetual succession to the end of time. Thus He gave them power to *preach the gospel*, to *teach all nations*, and to *baptize*, before His ascension, as related, Mat. x. 18, Mark, xvi. ; to *consecrate the Holy Eucharist*, and offer up the *sacrifice* of His body and blood, when at the last supper He commanded them to do what He had just done, Luke, xxii. 19 ; to *forgive sins*, when after His resurrection, “He breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost ; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven,” John, xx. 22. And so of all the other sacred powers of the priesthood, which He communicated to His apostles in the most ample manner, and thereby made them priests and pastors of His people, and authorised them, as His own substitutes, to communicate the same powers to others after them, and to continue to the end of the world the great work He had begun for the salvation of souls ; for, as St Paul observes, “Every high priest taken from among men, is appointed for men in things that appertain to God, that He may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins,” Heb. v. 1.

Q. 2. What are we chiefly to observe from these truths ?

A. We must carefully remark the following particulars :  
 (1.) That the sacred powers of the priesthood are not of human institution, but the work of God, and are communicated to those whom He calls to that high office.  
 (2.) That none can possess or exercise these powers, unless he receive them from God, by the means which He has appointed ; for, “Neither doth any man take the honour to himself, but he that is called by God as Aaron was,” Heb. v. 4 ; and “How can they preach unless they be sent ?” Rom. x. 15 ; for, “He that en-

tereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber," saith Jesus Christ Himself," John, x. 1. (3.) That consequently those who intrude themselves into the pastoral office, pretending to teach, preach, and administer the sacraments, without having received proper power from Jesus Christ, are only impostors and deluders of souls, "blind leaders of the blind," who, together with those that follow them, "fall into the pit," Mat. xv. 14. (4.) That these priestly powers, being of different kinds, are separable from one another, and some of them may be communicated without the others, as our Saviour in fact did communicate them at different times, and on different occasions, to His apostles. (5.) That when He communicated these powers to them, He did it in a visible sensible manner, expressing in the words He used the nature of the particular power given. (6.) That by so doing, He showed in what manner the apostles and their successors should communicate the same powers to others—that is, in an outward visible manner, by words and actions, expressing the nature of the power conferred.

*Q.* 3. Did the apostles communicate these sacred powers to others to succeed them in the pastoral office?

*A.* They did, but in different degrees; for when the Christian people increased no one man could administer the effects of all the priestly powers to a multitude of souls; and on the other hand, a number of pastors over the same people, with equal power and authority, and without any subordination among themselves, would have been a source of endless dissension. The apostles, therefore, as instructed by their Divine Master, communicated to some the plenitude of the priestly and pastoral powers, such as they had received from Christ; and these are the

chief pastors of the Church, the successors of the apostles, and are called *Bishops*, constituted by the Holy Ghost to rule and govern His Church, according to St Paul, "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost has placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood," Acts, xx. 28. To others they communicated only a part of these priestly powers, particularly that of consecrating the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and of offering up the holy sacrifice of the altar; and that of administering the sacrament of Penance by the power of binding and loosing, with all the other sacraments except Confirmation and Orders: and these are the pastors of the second order, successors of the seventy-two disciples of our Lord, and are properly called *Priests*; because the essential power of the priesthood consists in offering up sacrifice to God for the sins of the people; "every high priest . . . is appointed, that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins," Heb. v. 1. To others the apostles communicated only the powers of preaching and baptizing, and of assisting the priest at the altar when offering up the holy sacrifice; and these are called *deacons*, or servants, from this last branch of their office. Others they employed in preparing the matter for the sacrifice, and taking charge of the things about the altar, keeping them clean and in proper order; assisting the deacon when serving at the altar, singing the epistle at Mass when celebrated with all its solemnities: and these are the *subdeacons*. All these degrees are called *holy orders*: because, when a person enters them, he is entirely dedicated to the service of God and His Church, and can never again return to the world. Besides these, there are also the four orders, which are employed in the inferior offices of the Church, not immediately connected with the sacrifice,

called *minor* or lesser orders ; because those who enter them have still the option to leave the service of the Church and return to the world. These four are the acolyte, the exorcist, the lector, and the door-keeper.

Q. 4. Why are all these called Orders ?

A. Because they are so many different steps or degrees, laid down in regular order, by which the sacred powers of the priesthood are gradually communicated to him who enters the ecclesiastical state. He must begin with the lowest, or door-keeper, and gradually ascend to the higher degrees, or to a more ample share in these sacred powers, after having spent a proper time in the exercise of the lower orders, and proved that he is worthy to be advanced to those that are higher.

Q. 5. How does it appear that bishops are the chief pastors of the Church, and superior to priests in authority and jurisdiction, as well as in order ?

A. That the bishops are superior to priests, and hold the first rank in the sacred hierarchy of the Church, is an article of Divine faith, declared as such by the Church of Christ in the Council of Trent ; and is founded on the following testimonies of the holy Scripture : (1.) It is evident that the apostles were raised by Jesus Christ to a much higher rank and dignity than the other disciples ; for “ He called to Him His disciples, and He chose twelve of them, whom He also named apostles,” Luke, vi. 13. He kept them always in His own company ; He instructed them in particular “ in all the things He had heard from His Father, as His particular friends,” John, xv. 15. After His resurrection, He said to them only, “ As my Father hath sent Me, I also send you ; whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained,” John, xx. 20. To them in particular He said, “ Go ye unto the whole world, and

preach the Gospel to every creature," Mark, xvi. 15. This shows that they were constituted by Him the chief pastors of His Church. When their number was diminished by the infidelity of Judas, St Peter, calling all the brethren, said, "The Scripture must needs be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost spoke before, by the mouth of David, concerning Judas . . . who was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry . . . for, it is written, *and his bishopric let another take*. Wherefore, of those men who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us . . . one of these must be made with us a witness of His resurrection," Acts, i. 16. Accordingly, two were appointed, and "praying, they said, Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show which of these two Thou hast chosen to take the place of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas hath fallen . . . and they gave them lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles," verse 24. All this proves the superior order of the apostles, and shows that St Matthias, by being numbered among them, was raised to a higher dignity, and to a station superior to what he had before, while only one of the disciples. Now, the bishops are the successors of the apostles, and inherit the plenitude of the priestly powers which Christ communicated to them; whereas the priests are only the successors of the seventy-two disciples, and receive these powers only in part. (2.) St Paul, speaking to the bishops of the Church, says, "Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the Church of God," Acts, xx. 28. To the bishops, the supreme power of ruling the Church is committed by the Holy Ghost. (3.) The same apostle, writing to Timothy, whom he had appointed

bishop of Ephesus, to preserve the purity of the doctrine there, 1 Tim. i. 3, says, "Against a priest receive not an accusation, but under two or three witnesses," 1 Tim. v. 19, which proves to a demonstration that St Timothy had authority and jurisdiction over the priests in receiving accusations against them, and consequently in judging and correcting them. (4.) In like manner, writing to Titus, he says, "For this cause 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," Tit. i. 5. Where we see the supreme authority that Titus had of making regulations in the Church of Crete, and of constituting priests under him in the different cities of that island. (5.) The same truth is manifest, from the constant and uninterrupted practice of the Church of Christ, and from the condemnation of Arius as a heretic in the fourth age for denying this doctrine.

*Q.* 6. How does the superiority of bishops appear from the practice of the Church?

*A.* From several considerations: (1.) Because, from the earliest ages, whenever a bishop was consecrated, a certain portion of the faithful was assigned to him for his particular charge as their pastor; and the place where this charge was given him was called his Diocese; thus, Titus was ordained by St Paul to be bishop of Crete, and Timothy to be bishop of Ephesus. In these dioceses they exercised the full pastoral authority, both in preaching the word, administering the sacraments, and making such laws and regulations as they judged proper for the good of their people. This they did of their own proper authority, independent of any other: whereas priests were always considered only as their vicars or helpers, subject to their laws, and possessing no author-

ity, even to administer the sacraments, but only in as far as they were empowered by their bishop to do so, by receiving faculties from them. These faculties the bishops could give in the measure and proportion they judged proper, or refuse them entirely, if they saw cause; and this has been the constant practice of the Church to this day. (2.) To the bishops alone, as the chief pastors, it belongs to meet in council, and frame laws and constitutions for the whole Church, when the council is general, and for particular portions of the Church when the counsel is not general, as they judge necessary for the good of religion. (3.) To the bishops alone it belongs to meet in general councils, and there, as the only judges of doctrine, to declare and decide concerning the truths of our holy faith, and to condemn false and heretical doctrines. (4.) Because the holy fathers, from the earliest ages, speak in the strongest terms on the obedience and respect which all owe to the episcopal authority. Thus, St Ignatius, the martyr, disciple of the apostles, and successor of St Peter in the see of Antioch, says, "Reverence your bishop as Christ Himself, as the blessed apostles have commanded us . . . for, who is the bishop, but he who has all power and principality over all?" *Epist. ad Trall.* "It becomes you to obey your bishop, and in nothing to resist him; . . . for, as our Lord does nothing without His Father, so neither ought you without your bishop, whether you be priest, deacon, or laic," *Epist. ad Magnes.* St Cyprian says, that heresies and schisms rise from no other cause but disobedience to the chief pastors, *Epist.* 55; and Tertullian writes thus: "the bishop, indeed, has the right to give baptism, and next the priests and deacons, but not without the authority of the bishop," *Lib. de Bapt. c.* 17.

Q. 7. What is meant by the sacrament of Holy Orders?



*A.* It is the actual conferring of these sacred powers of the priesthood upon the person who receives them.

*Q.* 8. Is this a true and real sacrament?

*A.* It is, because it has all the three things required to make it one.

*Q.* 9. What is the outward sensible sign used in ordination?

*A.* It is the imposition of hands, accompanied with prayer, and the delivery of the instruments of that particular power which is communicated.

*Q.* 10. What is the inward grace, or the effects produced in the soul?

*A.* They are these following: (1.) An increase of sanctifying grace in the soul. (2.) The power and authority of exercising the functions of the order received. (3.) The necessary helps of actual grace to enable the person ordained to exercise these functions well. (4.) It also imprints a character on the soul, denoting the order received, which, like those of Baptism and Confirmation, can never be destroyed, and makes it impossible to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders more than once. This, however, is to be understood of the higher, or sacred orders, instituted by Christ Himself; because the lesser, or minor orders, are commonly not reckoned a sacrament, being, properly speaking, instituted only by the Church.

*Q.* 11. How does it appear from Scripture that this outward action of ordination confers these graces on the soul?

*A.* (1.) From the example of Jesus Christ, Who, by an outward action, expressing the sacred powers communicated to the apostles, did actually bestow these powers upon them. (2.) From the example of the apostles, who constituted pastors of the Church by

the same means ; thus, when they ordained the seven deacons, the Scripture says, that “praying, they imposed hands upon them,” Acts, vi. 6. And when Saul and Barnabas were sent to the ministry by a special command of the Holy Ghost, “they, fasting and praying, and laying their hands upon them, sent them away,” Acts, xiii. 3. (3.) From these express declarations of the apostle to Timothy, “Neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, by the imposition of the hands of priesthood,” 1 Tim. iv. 14. “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 for this reason, exhorting him to be cautious whom he admits to this sacrament, he says, “Impose not hands lightly upon any man,” 1 Tim. v. 22.

*Q.* 12. What dispositions are required to receive Holy Orders worthily?

*A.* Chiefly these following : (1.) That the person to be ordained have a vocation from God ; for “No man taketh that honour upon himself, but he that is called by God as Aaron was,” Heb. v. 4. And when Barsabas and Matthias were presented to the apostles that one of them might be chosen to fill the place of Judas, they had recourse to God by fervent prayer, that He might show which of the two He called to that office, Acts, i. 24. (2.) That he have received the sacrament of confirmation. (3.) That he be in the state of grace ; and, (4.) That he observe and fulfil all the other regulations and conditions prescribed by the Church.

*Q.* 13. How shall one know if he have a vocation from God?

*A.* Chiefly by these signs : (1.) If he have led an innocent and holy life before. (2.) If he have a great love and zeal for ecclesiastical discipline. (3.) If he

have a pure intention, and be not animated by ambition or avarice, but by a zeal for promoting the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. (4.) If he be a man given to prayer, and sacred studies.

*Q.* 14. What are the other conditions the Church requires?

*A.* (1.) That he have no canonical impediment: (2.) That he be sufficiently learned and instructed in the duties of the order which he is going to receive. (3.) That he have behaved well during the time required in all the inferior orders before he receives a higher step. (4.) That he be of the proper age required for the order he is going to receive. (5.) That if he be entering into the higher orders, he be resolved to dedicate himself to the service of God by perpetual chastity and celibacy.

*Q.* 15. Does the Church oblige all those in Holy Orders to live single and chaste?

*A.* This she requires in the strictest manner, so as to decree the severest penalties against those who violate this law; having sometimes ordered them to be deposed, sometimes to be excommunicated, sometimes to be imprisoned in monasteries to spend the remainder of their life in penance. The Council of Trent pronounces an anathema upon any one who shall dare to affirm that, notwithstanding this prohibition of the Church, it is lawful for any of them to marry, or that such marriage would be valid in the sight of God, Sess. xxiv., can. 9.

*Q.* 16. On what grounds does the Church proceed in so strictly prohibiting marriage to her clergy?

*A.* On these following, laid down in the holy Scripture: (1.) Because a life of purity and chastity is more excellent, perfect, and acceptable to God than the married state. This is asserted by St Paul in the plainest terms: "Concerning virgins, I have no command-

ment of the Lord, but I give counsel, as having obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife," 1 Cor. vii. 25, 27; and, after several arguments on the subject, he concludes in these words, "wherefore, he that giveth his virgin in marriage doth well, and He that giveth her not doth better," ver. 38. This is also manifest from the special reward promised by our Saviour, and bestowed in heaven upon those who lead a chaste life. Our Saviour says, "Amen, I say to you, There is no man that hath left house or parents—or wife—for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive much more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting," Luke, xviii. 29. And the singular privileges which shall be bestowed on them in heaven are described by St John, "They have the name of the Lamb, and the name of His Father, written on their foreheads," to distinguish them in a special manner from all the other saints; "they sing a new song before the throne of God, which no other can sing but themselves," and "they follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth," always attending His sacred person as His chaste and beloved spouses. And describing those to whom such honour belongs, "these are they," says he, "who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins," Rev. xiv. 1, 3, 4. Seeing, then, the office of the priesthood requires the most angelical purity and the most sublime sanctity in those who are admitted to it, the Church has judged proper to oblige all who enter into that office to embrace the more perfect state of chastity. (2.) St Paul recommends, even to married people, to abstain from the use of marriage "for a time, that they may give themselves to prayer," 1 Cor. vii. 7; which is particularly to be understood when they are preparing themselves for receiving the holy communion;

and afterwards he adds the reason, because "this is for their profit, and is decent," and it will enable them "to attend upon the Lord without impediment," ver. 35. Now, as the very office of priests is daily to attend unto the Lord, "to give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word," Acts, vi. 4; as they are "appointed for men in the things that appertain to God to offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins," Heb. v. 1; therefore, the Church, wisely judging that it is for their profit, and highly becoming, and a means to make them attend to the Lord and to their holy functions without impediment, that they should live continent, obliges them, by a strict and positive command, always to do so. (3.) St Paul, explaining more minutely the advantages of a single life, especially in regard to the concerns of the soul, says, "I would have you to be without solicitude; he that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God; but he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided. And the unmarried woman, and the virgin, thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit; but she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband," 1 Cor. vii. 32. Here again, the Church, wisely considering that the very essential duty of those who enter into the priesthood is to be solicitous only for the things of the Lord, and not for the things of the world; that "they are chosen by Jesus Christ out of the world," John, xv. 19; and "appointed for the things appertaining to God," Heb. v. 1; that, therefore, they ought "not to be divided," but to "be holy both in body and spirit;" on this account obliges all those of the priesthood to live a chaste and single life, as being de-

clared by the apostle to be most proper and conducive to the end of their vocation. (4.) The duties of their state, as pastors of the flock of Jesus Christ, make the married state in a manner incompatible with their vocation; for they are chosen by Jesus Christ, and *separated* from the rest of mankind for the service “of the gospel of God,” Rom. i. 1, that they “may go and bring forth fruit,” in the conversion of souls to God, and that their fruit may remain, John, xv. 16; they are dedicated, by their vocation, to this holy service of God, and His gospel, and are obliged to give their whole attention to the good of their flock; to instruct them, to administer the sacraments to them, to comfort them in their distress, to assist them in their sickness, especially when death approaches; and, for this purpose, to answer their calls at all times, by night or by day, even at the risk of their own life, when the good of their flock requires it. Now, it is evidently incompatible with the cares of a wife and family to discharge all these duties properly; and therefore St Paul says, “No man, being a soldier of God, entangleth himself with worldly business, that he may please Him to whom he hath engaged himself,” 2 Tim. ii. 4. Now, the Church, well knowing that no kind of worldly business so much entangleth a man and withdraweth him from the duties of the pastoral charge as the cares of a wife and family, therefore expressly requires her pastors to abstain from a state so inconsistent with that charge. (5.) In the apostles’ time, when the Church began, there was a necessity for taking married people into the priesthood, because, for want of labourers in the vineyard, there was no room for choice; and, therefore, the apostles did not make any express law against doing so; yet we find the strongest injunctions in their sacred writings, that all who were

admitted into that holy state should live chaste and continent lives. Thus St Paul affirms that “a bishop must be—sober, just, holy, continent,” Tit. i. 8; and, writing to Timothy on the virtues proper for his state as a pastor, he says, “Be thou an example of the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity,” 1 Tim. iv. 12; and again, “I charge thee before God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels—keep thyself chaste,” 1 Tim. v. 21, 23; and giving a catalogue of the virtues belonging to the ministers of Christ, he says, “In all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience—in chastity,” 2 Cor. vi. 4, 6. In consequence, we find, from the earliest monuments of antiquity that, even when married persons were admitted into the sacred ministry, they generally abstained from cohabitation with their wives ever after; and in process of time, when the number of the faithful increased, and there were young persons trained up to the service of the Church, the law was made, for the above reasons, obliging all who entered into the sacred orders to observe perpetual chastity.

*Q.* 17. Is it not a great hardship on human nature to be bound by such a law?

*A.* By no means; for none are obliged to enter into that state but with their own free consent, and none ought to do so but such as “are called by God, as Aaron was.” Now, they know the conditions beforehand, they freely accept them; and as the law is founded, as we have seen, on the clearest and most evident principles of holy Scripture, when God Almighty calls any one to that state, He never refuses the necessary helps of His grace to enable him to accomplish all the obligations annexed to it. Continency is, without doubt, a gift of God; for His holy Word assures us, that “A man cannot otherwise be con-

continent, except God give it," Wis. viii. 21 ; and our Saviour, after enlarging a good deal on this subject, adds, "All men receive not this word, but they to whom it is given," Mat. xix. 11 ; and St Paul, after saying, "I would that all men were even with myself," with regard to their leading a single life, immediately adds, "but every one hath his proper gift from God," 1 Cor. vii. 7. This grace, then, is given to some ; and to whom will God be more ready to give it than to those whom He calls to that state to which His Holy Church, from the principles He Himself has laid down in the sacred writings, has so solemnly annexed this obligation? And, indeed, nothing more admirably shows the finger of God than to see such vast numbers as embrace the ecclesiastical state living in the strictest purity, even amidst the many dangerous occasions to which their necessary communication with the world, in their charge of souls, so frequently exposes them. It is not by the strength of nature or constitution that they live in such purity ; nature is incapable, by its own strength, of practising a virtue which is so opposite to all the most violent inclinations of flesh and blood. It is the grace of Jesus Christ alone which bestows this gift upon them ; and the chaste and continent lives they lead is a manifest proof of the interposition of God, and of His Divine approbation of the conduct of the Church in requiring the faithful observance of this virtue from her ministers.

*Q.* 18. But are there not many of the clergy who transgress this law, notwithstanding their great obligation to observe it?

*A.* Nothing is more unjust than the conduct of mankind on this head. That there have been, and as long as men are men will be examples of bad men among the clergy, is readily granted, because but too true. There



was a Judas among the twelve apostles of Christ ; there was a Nicolaus among the seven deacons ordained by the apostles themselves ; there was an Ananias and Sapphira among the first Christians ; there was an incestuous man among the disciples of St Paul in Corinth ; no wonder, then, that among such great numbers as enter into the ministry of the Church some should be found who are a disgrace to their sacred character. But surely nothing can be more unjust and unreasonable than to condemn that state of life, because some of its members do not live up to the sanctity of it, or to attribute to the whole what is only the fault of a few ; yet such is the judgment of the world. A few, who perhaps have embraced that state, not by a call from God, but from worldly motives, or who have lost the spirit of their vocation by not corresponding to the helps that vocation afforded them, give bad example and public scandal, and immediately all consideration of the great numbers of others who lead the most edifying and exemplary lives is laid aside ; the tongues of men are let loose against the sacred state itself, and all its members are indiscriminately involved in the same condemnation ! But we need not be surprised at this, because our blessed Master Himself says to His apostles, and in them to their successors, “ If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you,” John, xv. 18.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## OF THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE.

Q. 1. **W**HAT is marriage or matrimony?

A. It is an indissoluble union, contracted by mutual consent, between one man and one woman, in a lawful manner, by which they are obliged to live together all the days of their life. It may be considered in three different states :

(1.) As a *natural contract*, conformable to the natural desire of mankind for propagating the human species, and giving the married party a mutual right to each other's bodies, according to that of the Scripture, "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband ; and, in like manner, the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife," 1 Cor. vii. 4. God Himself is the author of this contract, and at the beginning of the world He created both the sexes, male and female, on purpose to be united in it for the propagation of mankind ; thus Christ Himself says, "He Who made man in the beginning, made them male and female ; wherefore they are no more two, but one flesh," Mat. xix. 4, 5.

(2.) As a *civil contract* ; for, upon the multiplication of mankind on the earth, they formed themselves into larger societies, of many families joined in one body, for their mutual protection and defence, and for securing

to individuals the undisturbed possession of their property. For this purpose, it was necessary to make proper laws and regulations by which this security might be obtained. And as nothing contributes more to the good of the state, and the public tranquillity, than to have the natural contract of marriage properly regulated, with regard to the temporal goods and privileges, both of the married couple themselves and of their children, laws were made by the different states for settling these matters. In this view, marriage is a *civil contract*, made according to the laws of the country where the parties dwell, with regard to their temporal concerns, as members of the community.

(3.) As a *Sacrament of the New Law*. The great end of the Christian religion is to lead men to heaven, which presupposes the existence of men upon earth; and as marriage is the natural source from which mankind draw their being, it was necessary that such measures should be taken with respect to marriage among Christians, as to render it conducive to that great end of the Christian religion, the salvation of souls. The trials and afflictions which accompany the married state, “and that tribulation of the flesh,” which St Paul declares shall be the portion of the married people, 1 Cor. vii. 28, are too often, from the corruption of the heart of man, an occasion of the ruin of their souls. The difficulty of avoiding this ruin is not a little increased by the indissolubility of marriage, which our blessed Saviour restored to its original firmness among His followers; and the necessity of bringing up their children, not only as men or as good citizens, but as good Christians, so as one day to become saints in heaven, which Jesus Christ requires, in the strictest manner, of all His followers, lays an additional duty upon Christian parents, which it

requires a particular grace and assistance from heaven to perform. For these reasons our blessed Saviour was pleased to elevate the natural contract of marriage to the dignity of a sacrament among Christians, annexing a particular grace to the lawful celebration of this contract, by which the married persons are enabled to bear, in a Christian manner, all the tribulations incident to that state, to preserve a mutual love and fidelity to one another, and to bring up their children in a Christian manner.

*Q.* 2. Is the marriage of Christians a true sacrament?

*A.* It is; and has all the three things necessary to make it such.

*Q.* 3. What is the outward visible sign used in marriage?

*A.* It is the mutual consent of the parties, expressed by words or other signs, under those conditions which the laws of God and His Church require; which see below, *Q.* 13.

*Q.* 4. What is the inward grace received?

*A.* It is, first, an increase of sanctifying grace; and, secondly, the sacramental grace proper to marriage, by which the parties are enabled to perform all its duties as above explained.

*Q.* 5. Where do we find this laid down in the holy Scripture?

*A.* When the Pharisees put the question to our Saviour, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause?" He declared in His answer, that marriage at the beginning was instituted by God Himself; though, from the hardness of their heart, it had very much declined from its original sanctity. He then restored it to its primitive state by saying, "Therefore they are no more two, but one flesh; what, therefore, God

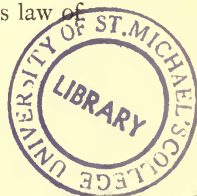
hath joined together let no man put asunder," Mat. xix. 6. And St Paul, repeating the same truth, adds, "This is a great sacrament ; but I speak in Christ and in the Church," Ephes. v. 32. In which words he shows that, in the Church of Christ, marriage is a great sacrament ; and not only a sign of the union and love which is required among Christians in that state, but also of the union and love which subsist inviolably between Christ and His Church.

*Q.* 6. Wherein does the essence of marriage properly consist ?

*A.* In that sacred bond and union between husband and wife, by which they are no longer considered as two distinct persons, but as two joined together in one flesh ; "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be one flesh," Mat. xix. 5.

*Q.* 7. Is this bond of marriage indissoluble ?

*A.* By the indissolubility of marriage is meant that, from the very nature and end of marriage itself, and still more from the institution and ordinance of Almighty God, the bond of union that subsists between married people can in no case, nor upon any account whatsoever, be dissolved by any human power or authority, while both the parties remain in life. So that, though for just causes, and especially for infidelity to the marriage bed, husband and wife may be separated from one another, as to personal cohabitation ; still they continue married people, the bond of marriage subsists in its full force between them, and, if either of them should marry another person, he or she would be guilty of adultery. This indissolubility of marriage arises both from the nature and end of marriage, and from the express law of Almighty God.



*Q.* 8. How does the indissolubility of marriage appear from the nature and end of marriage?

*A.* This is manifest, whether we consider marriage as a natural contract, a civil contract, or a sacrament. The end of marriage, as a natural contract, is, (1.) The propagation of mankind and the proper education of the children. (2.) That the married people united in this bond may be a mutual assistance and comfort to each other during their mortal pilgrimage. God Himself declared at the beginning, "It is not good for man to be alone; let us make him a help like unto himself," Gen. ii. 18, and with this intention the woman was created. Now, it is manifest that on both these accounts the nature of marriage requires that its bond be indissoluble; for man differs from all other creatures, when he first comes into the world, in this, that whereas other animals require little attention from the sire, the mother alone, for the most part, being sufficient to nurture them up till they can provide for themselves, man, on the contrary, in his infancy, requires the whole attention of both father and mother; of the mother to tend and nurse him, and of the father to provide all necessaries both for mother and child. This necessity continues in different degrees for a series of years before the child can do anything for his own sustenance; and when reason begins to dawn, the child then requires the redoubled attention of both parents for educating him properly, whether as a man, a citizen, or a Christian. Now, if the bond of marriage could be dissolved, and it were in any case lawful for married people to become free, the passions of men would never be at a loss to put or suppose themselves in that case; and then a door would be opened, not only to the destruction of children, both as to their subsistence and education, but likewise to debaucheries, and an

universal corruption of morals highly prejudicial to the multiplication of mankind, which is the end of marriage. Besides, what solid comfort could married people have in each other if their marriage were not indissoluble? It is this indissolubility of marriage which makes the parties enter with all their heart into the views of their mutual interest. It is this which unalterably fixes their affections on their common concerns. It is this which gives permanence to their love for one another. In a word, the indissolubility of marriage is the greatest incentive to bear their crosses, and anything disagreeable in each other's temper, as well as to avoid giving any just cause of discontent to one another. But, on the contrary, if the bond of marriage were dissoluble, marriage would differ little from the state of concubinage, and be attended with all its bad consequences.

Again, if we consider marriage as a civil contract, the reasons for its indissolubility are no less manifest; for the good and happiness of the state being the end of marriage as a civil contract, this end could not be attained if the bond of marriage were dissoluble; because children abandoned and neglected, endless dissensions in families, and confusion in the division of property, the natural consequences of the dissolubility of marriage, must necessarily be a source of evil and misery to human society.

*Lastly*, The indissolubility of marriage appears from the idea which the Scriptures give us of it as a sacrament. For the sacrament of marriage among Christians is, by appointment of Jesus Christ, a sacred sign and symbol of His indissoluble union with His Church; and on this account St Paul insists on this as the most powerful motive to engage the married people to love one another; because as their marriage union is a symbol

of the union of Christ with His Church, they ought, therefore, to imitate the conduct of Jesus Christ and His Church in their behaviour to each other. "The husband," says he, "is head of the wife, as Christ is the Head of the Church ; therefore, as the Church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved His Church. . . . So ought also men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself ; for no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church ; for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones : 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. This is a great sacrament ; but I speak in Christ and in His Church," Ephes. v. 23. Now all this reasoning of the apostle would fall to the ground, and have no effect, if marriage, as a sacrament, did not necessarily require to be indissoluble ; as the sacred union between Christ and His Church, of which Christian marriage is the symbol, can never be dissolved. All this is further confirmed from the idea the Scripture gives us of the nature of marriage ; for there we are assured, that married people are "no longer two but one flesh ;" and this the Holy Ghost declared at the beginning by the mouth of Adam. It is repeated again by Christ as the grounds of the indissolubility of marriage, and is used by St Paul for the same purpose, who also declares, that husbands ought "to love their wives as their own bodies ;" that in "loving his wife he loves himself, and cannot hate her without hating his own flesh." All this manifestly shows the indissolubility of marriage from its nature, and from the identity which it produces in married people, making them one flesh.



*Q.* 9. How is the indissolubility of marriage established by the law of God?

*A.* On the most solid testimony of His Holy Word ; for, (1.) This was the original ordinance of God at the beginning, when He instituted marriage in paradise ; for, when He presented Eve to our first father Adam, Adam, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, said, “this now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh . . . wherefore, a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh,” Gen. ii. 23, which words our blessed Saviour brings to prove the indissolubility of marriage by the law of God, at its first institution ; and then He renews the same indissolubility of it among His followers, saying “what, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder,” Mat. xix. 6. Where He plainly declares, both that the bond of marriage is the work of God, and that no man can break what He has so united. And when it was objected to Him on this occasion, that Moses allowed a man to put away his wife and marry another, He replied by declaring that this was merely permitted to the Jews by Almighty God on account of the hardness of their hearts ; but immediately assures us that, “from the beginning it was not so,” verse 8 ; which again proves that marriage, at its original institution, was, by the law of God, indissoluble.

(2.) Jesus Christ being about to raise the contract of marriage to the dignity of a sacrament among His followers, in order to enable them to perform the more sublime and exalted duties which His holy religion required from married people, and to ordain it as a sign of His indissoluble union with His Church, was pleased to abrogate all permission given to the Jews of dissolving marriage, and of marrying again, while their former partners were alive.

He therefore pronounces this law, "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," Mat. xix. 6. After His public conversation with the Pharisees on this subject, "In the house again, His disciples asked Him concerning the same thing, and He said to them," in these general and unlimited terms, "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," verse 10. Which evidently shows that, by the law of the gospel, the bond of marriage can never be dissolved, but that married people, *whosoever they be*, though they may live separate from one another's company, yet can never be loosed from the marriage-tie; and that if either party, so separated from the other, should presume to marry another person whilst the former partner is in life, it would be no marriage before God, but criminal adultery. The same law is more particularly repeated by our Saviour on a different occasion, where, after the parable of the unjust steward, and before He began the history of Lazarus and the rich glutton, He interposes this declaration: "Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery," Luke, xvi. 18. Here we see none are excepted; *every one* includes all; both parties are in the same case; not only he who puts away his wife and marries another, but also he who marries her who is put away, are equally guilty of adultery: which shows to a demonstration, that in whatever circumstances the separation takes place, the bond of marriage still continues undissolved, so that neither party can marry any other without being guilty of that shocking crime. On this clear text St Augustine writes thus: "Who are we then that we should say, one

is guilty of adultery who puts away his wife and marries another ; and another who does the same is not guilty of adultery ? for seeing the gospel says, ‘*every one* commits adultery who does this’ (and consequently *all* who do it), that is, who, putting away his wife, marries another, is guilty of adultery ; without doubt both are included—both he who, for any other cause besides fornication, puts away his wife, and he who puts her away for the cause of fornication,” &c., *Lib. 1, De adult. conjug. cap. 9.*

(3.) St Paul, who is doubtless the most infallible interpreter of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, declares the indissolubility of marriage in the strongest terms : “The woman that hath a husband,” says he, “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 another man ; but if her husband be dead, she is freed from the law of her husband ; so that she is not an adulteress if she be with another man,” Rom. vii. 2. See in what express and general terms, without any exception, he declares that death alone can dissolve the bond of marriage, so as to make it lawful for a married person to marry any other. In the same manner he declares this to be an express command of God Himself : “But to them that are married, not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her 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. 10. And a little after he concludes, “A woman is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth ; but if her husband die, she is at liberty ; let her marry to whom she will, only in the Lord,” ver. 39. Now what he here lays down with regard to the wife is equally binding with

regard to the husband, because the contract is mutual, the bond of marriage equally affects both; and the apostle affirms, that if "the wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; so, in like manner, the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife," 1 Cor. vii. 4.

(4.) Now that the indissolubility of the bond of marriage is the true and genuine interpretation of all the above testimonies of holy writ, and that this is the true sense and meaning of them intended by the Holy Ghost, always has been and is the doctrine of the Church of Christ, as is defined and declared by her in the general Council of Trent, which, laying down the Catholic doctrine concerning marriage, begins with this very point in these words: "The first father of mankind declared the perpetual and indissoluble tie of marriage, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, when he said, *This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; wherefore a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall adhere to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh,*" Sess. xxiv. *in princip.*; and afterwards declares that this always was and is taught by the Church of Christ, according to the doctrine of the Gospel and the apostles; and therefore pronounces *anathema* upon all those who shall say she is mistaken in teaching so: "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 gives 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," Sess. xxiv. can. 7.

Here we see the infallible authority of the Church of Christ declaring the indissolubility of marriage to be the evangelical and apostolical interpretation of all the above texts of Scripture, and condemning all those who teach the contrary.

*Q.* 10. But when Jesus Christ says, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery," Mat. xix. 9, does not this exception seem to insinuate that, by the fornication of either party, the marriage bond is dissoluble, and that at least the innocent party may lawfully marry again?

*A.* In answer to this, we must observe (1.) That St Mark, when relating what passed on this occasion, makes no mention of this exception, but tells us that our Saviour, when in the house with His apostles, declared to them in general terms that "Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her," Mark, x. 11. Which clearly shows that the exception mentioned by St Matthew is not applicable to the husband's marrying again, but to the lawfulness of his putting away his wife for any cause but fornication only. (2.) That this text of St Matthew is very obscure if not compared with the account given by St Mark, which unfolds its true meaning, whereas all the other texts on this subject are clear and decisive. The true meaning, therefore, of the Holy Ghost, is to be sought, not from the ambiguous expression of a single obscure text in opposition to so many plain passages, but its ambiguity is to be explained, and its true sense ascertained, by those other clear and express texts upon the same subject. (3.) If it be supposed lawful for the husband to put away his wife on account of her fornication, and to marry again, as being the innocent party, then either the bond

of marriage is dissolved, or it is not. If it be not dissolved, it can never be lawful, even for the innocent party, to marry ; if it be dissolved, then even the guilty party can lawfully marry, because no less free than the other ; and yet our Saviour expressly says, “ He that shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery,” Mat. xix. 9 ; which manifestly shows that, even when she is put away for her guilt, the marriage-tie remains in its full force. (4.) The Church of Christ has never understood the above exception as implying a dissolution of the bond of marriage, even in the case of fornication, or as in any respect favouring the innocent party, and condemns in the strongest terms those who teach that it does so.

*Q.* 11. What then is the meaning of the above text of St Matthew?

*A.* All these reasons just mentioned demonstrate that it cannot mean that the bond of marriage is dissolved even by the crime of either of the parties, and consequently it proves nothing against the doctrine of the Catholic Church. Its true meaning, then, is to be sought from the circumstances in which Christ spoke, and from the question to which it was the answer. The Pharisees asked our Saviour, “ Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?” Mat. xix. 3. Before He gives a direct answer to the question, He puts them in mind that marriage, at its original institution, was indissoluble, and consequently could not be broken by any cause. He then declares that He, by His supreme authority, restores it to this its primitive perfection, and that the infringement made upon it by the Jews was only a permission on account of the hardness of their hearts. After this preamble He gives a direct answer to their question in these words, “ I say to you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and

shall marry another, committeth adultery." This sentence contains two parts; first, an answer to their question; secondly, a confirmation of what He had said in His preamble of the absolute indissolubility of marriage, which He was pleased to join together. Their question was, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" To this He answers, *No*; it is not lawful to put away his wife for any cause except for fornication; and he who puts her away, "except for fornication, committeth adultery," by being the occasion of her committing adultery; but that none might think that, when he puts her away for fornication, the tie of marriage is broken, and the husband at liberty to marry another, He adds, that even when lawfully put away for fornication, if the husband "shall marry another, he committeth adultery;" and "he that shall marry her that is so put away committeth adultery also."

*Q.* 12. How does it appear that this is our Saviour's true meaning?

*A.* From these reasons, (1.) Because, as we have proved above, by this sentence, the marriage bond is by no means broken, even in the case of fornication; (2.) Because it follows from this, and we have also shown above, that the exception cannot fall upon the indissolubility of marriage, and therefore must fall upon the lawfulness of putting away the wife at all; and (3.) Because, in another place, our Saviour says in express terms, "Whosoever putteth away his wife, excepting the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery," Mat. xix. 9. Where it is manifest that, if the husband putteth away his wife for any other cause except fornication, he is deemed the cause of her future crime, because the reason for which he put her away was

not just ; but if he put her away for fornication, and she marry another, that other is guilty of adultery by marrying another man's wife ; but the husband is free of the guilt, because he had a just and lawful cause for putting her away.

*Q.* 13. What are the conditions which the laws of God and His Church require for the lawful celebration of the sacrament of marriage ?

*A.* They are chiefly these following : (1.) The proclamation of the banns, where the decree for such proclamations is in force ; (2.) The consent of the parents ; (3.) That it be done by their proper pastor, and before witnesses ; (4.) That there be no lawful impediment ; (5.) That they contract marriage with Christian dispositions.

#### SECTION I.

##### *Of the Proclamation of the Banns.*

*Q.* 14. What is meant by the proclamation of the banns ?

*A.* It is that, when two persons intend to marry, their intention be published from the altar by their pastors, during divine service, for three different Sundays or holidays ; and that all who may know of any impediment be called upon in the name of God to declare it.

*Q.* 15. For what reasons is this publication required ?

*A.* The Council of Trent gives this reason in general ; because " The Church of God, for the most just reasons, has always detested and prohibited clandestine or private marriages ; but seeing that these prohibitions, by reason of the disobedience of men, had not the desired effect, and considering the grievous sins which arise from clan-



destine marriages, therefore ordains that, for all time coming, before marriage be contracted, it be three times proclaimed," &c. Wherefore, the particular reasons for ordaining these publications are chiefly these: (1.) To prevent all clandestine marriages, which the Church has always had in abhorrence, on account of the fatal consequences that too often flow from them. (2.) That it may be discovered if any of the parties be otherwise engaged by promise or from any other cause. (3.) That if there be any lawful impediment to the marriage it may be made known; and (4.) That the parents, and all others interested in opposing the marriage, may be advertised of it, and have time to propose their just objections, and so prevent the fatal consequences which might otherwise ensue.

*Q.* 16. Would it be a sin to marry without these publications?

*A.* It certainly would be a very grievous sin of disobedience, both in the pastor who should assist at the marriage and in the parties themselves, because the Church of Christ, with the whole weight of her authority, strictly commands them, in two of her general councils, —first, in the Council of Lateran, held in the year 1215, where the proclamations of marriages are commanded in general terms, all clandestine marriages are strictly forbidden, and no priest allowed to be present at them; and again, in the Council of Trent, where the particular circumstances to be observed in making these proclamations are expressly determined. And besides, the reasons for making the proclamations are so strong, and the consequences of neglecting them so fatal, that even the civil law of almost all Christian states expressly enjoins them, which civil law the subjects of the state are certainly bound in conscience to obey.

*Q.* 17. What are the conditions required by the Council of Trent in making the proclamations?

*A.* (1.) That they be made on three different Sundays or holidays; so that it is not sufficient to make them twice in one day, and much less all three. (2.) That they be made during divine service, when the people are present; so that any other time will not suffice. (3.) When the parties belong to different parishes, that the proclamations be made in both parishes by the proper pastor of each party. (4.) That particular caution be used with those who travel from place to place without any settled habitation, and that no priest be allowed to marry them till the most diligent inquiry be made lest they should have a wife or husband elsewhere.

*Q.* 18. Can the publishing the banns be in no case dispensed with?

*A.* Yes, it can. The Council, considering that there may be cases wherein it is necessary to dispense with one or all of the proclamations, gives power to *Bishops only* to grant such dispensations when they shall see a just and necessary cause for doing so, particularly if there be danger that malicious people would oppose the marriage and create disturbance without any just cause, as the Council itself expressly observes; and also when any great spiritual or even temporal good of the parties requires it.

*Q.* 19. Are those who know of any lawful impediment obliged to disclose it?

*A.* They certainly are; both because the Church expressly commands them, and calls upon them in a public, solemn manner to do so; and also because, if they do not, they become answerable to God for the consequences of their silence.

## SECTION II.

*Of the Consent of Parents.*

*Q.* 20. Why is the consent of parents required for marriage?

*A.* For several strong and weighty reasons. (1.) On account of the respect and obedience which children owe their parents by the law of nature, and the honour which is due to them by the express law of God; which demands that, in an affair of such great consequence to the future happiness both of children and parents, nothing should be concluded without their concurrence. (2.) Experience shows that marriages made against the will of parents, for the most part, prove unfortunate; disquiet in families, dissensions between husband and wife, the bad education of children, are commonly the sad consequences of such marriages. The insult offered to parental authority, and the circumstances attending such marriages—unbridled passions, and sometimes criminal intrigues—banish the Spirit of God, and deprive them of His blessing. (3.) Among the people of God, in the old law, parents had the principal authority in marrying their children; and hence, when Almighty God speaks on this subject, He addresses Himself only to the parents. Thus, when He forbids them to marry with infidel nations, He says, “Thou shalt not give thy daughter to his son, nor take his daughter for thy son,” Deut. vii. 3. And the wise man speaks thus: “Marry thy daughter well, and thou shalt do a great work, and give her to a wise man,” Ecclus. vii. 27. On this account, we find that the servants of God followed this rule of marrying with the advice and consent of their parents; as we read of Isaac,

Jacob, and Samson. Esau is blamed for doing the contrary. (4.) The Church of Christ, in the Council of Trent, declares that she always did detest and prohibit marriages of this kind ; Sess. xxiv. Decr. de Matrim. c. 1. (5.) The civil laws, also, of different states, disapprove of such marriages ; and if the children who marry without the consent of their parents be minors, their marriage is, by the laws of France, declared illegal, and they are deprived of civil advantages on that account.

*Q.* 21. In what cases can parents, in conscience, refuse their consent to the marriage of their children ?

*A.* In several cases : as (1.) If the proposed marriage would disturb the peace of their family, or be a disgrace to them. (2.) If they judged it would prove highly detrimental to their children, who, blinded by passion, did not perceive the fatal consequences. (3.) If it would endanger the loss of their religion, or expose their children to the same danger. (4.) If it were contrary to the civil law of their country.

*Q.* 22. But if the parents, merely through hard-heartedness, or avarice, or temper, should refuse their consent to a reasonable marriage of their children, would they be obliged to abstain from it ?

*A.* Parents who should behave in this manner would commit a sin themselves, in hurting their children without a reasonable cause ; and when the case is evident, and appears so to proper judges, the children are not then obliged to obey them.

## SECTION III.

*Of the Presence of the Pastor and Witnesses.*

Q. 23. What are the regulations of the Church with regard to this point?

A. The Church, in the Council of Trent, considering the great evils that flow from clandestine marriages, and finding, by experience, that the repeated laws made against them had not been sufficient effectually to prevent them, made a solemn decree, in which it is ordained, not only the proclamation of the banns, but also that the marriage itself, should be performed in presence of the proper pastor of the parties, or one commissioned by him, and at least two witnesses. It is declared also, that where this is wanting, the marriage is null and void in the sight of God. In Catholic countries where this decree has been solemnly published, no marriage can be contracted but in the presence of the proper pastor, or one commissioned by him. In other places, where the decree has not been published, it is unlawful to be married by any other than the proper pastor, this being opposed to the spirit and desire of the Church, and to her repeated prohibition of clandestine marriages.

Q. 24. Who is the proper pastor?

A. The bishop is the proper pastor of the whole diocese, and the parish priest or curate is the proper pastor of those immediately under his care. When the parties belong to different parishes, the pastor of either place may marry them, though the common custom is, that it be done by the pastor of the place to which the woman belongs.

## SECTION IV.

*Of the Impediments of Marriage.*

Q. 25. What is meant by the impediments of marriage?

A. As marriage is of such vast importance for the good of individuals, the peace of the state, and the edification of the Church, it is highly necessary to take every precaution that it be established on such a footing as to render it conformable to what propriety and the light of nature prescribe, and to hinder it from being prejudicial, either to the parties themselves, or to Church or state. With this view, the Church has, from the earliest ages, annexed certain conditions to the celebration of this sacrament, without which, either the marriage is rendered null and void, or those who contract it are highly criminal, and commit a grievous sin.

Q. 26. How many kinds of impediments are there?

A. There are two kinds: (1.) Such as render the marriage null and void in the sight of God and His Church; and (2.) Such as render the marriage unlawful and criminal in those who contract it, though valid in itself.

Q. 27. What are the principal impediments that render marriage null?

A. The impediments which render marriage null by making the parties in whom they are found incapable of contracting marriage, are chiefly these following: (1.) The solemn vow of chastity which all those make who enter into any religious order, by which they are solemnly consecrated to God in that state in the face of the Church, and therefore become incapable of con-

tracting marriage ; and the same is the case with those who enter into holy orders, and are thereby solemnly dedicated in the face of the Church to the service of God at His holy altar. (2.) Consanguinity—that is, when the parties are within the prohibited degrees of kindred, of which see above, Chap. xv. Q. 56, and the following. (3.) The crime of adultery, with a mutual promise of marriage in case the innocent party should die. It is with great reason that persons who are guilty of this crime should be rendered incapable of ever contracting marriage, in order to prevent many crimes which might otherwise follow ; particularly the murder of the innocent party, whom one or both of the adulterers might be excited by their passions to remove, were they not by this impediment rendered incapable of marriage ; and if either one or both of them should be so infatuated as to procure the death of the innocent party, this would be an additional impediment. (4.) If either of the parties be already married, and their partner alive, this renders them absolutely incapable of marrying any other, as nature itself dictates.

*Q.* 28. What are the principal impediments which render marriage unlawful?

*A.* Impediments of this kind are such as do not annul the marriage, nor hinder it from being a true and valid marriage, but make it a very great crime in the parties contracting. The chief impediments of this kind are these : (1.) When a person is under a previous promise of marriage ; in this case it would be unlawful and a great sin to marry another, because a manifest injury to the person to whom he was engaged. (2.) When a person has bound himself to God by a simple private vow of chastity, because a breach of the promise made to God. (3.) If one should marry publicly in Advent or

Lent, when the Church, for just reasons, forbids the solemnization of marriage, it would be a grievous sin of disobedience to her commands, an abuse of these holy times set apart for penance and humiliation, and an occasion of great scandal. See above, Chap. xv. Q. 53.

## SECTION V.

*Of the Dispositions for receiving worthily the Sacrament of Marriage.*

Q. 29. What is meant by the dispositions which one ought to be in for entering worthily into the state of marriage.

A. Not only those immediate dispositions which he ought to have at the time he receives this sacrament, but also everything he ought to do which can conduce to make his marriage happy; and these may all be reduced to three general heads: (1.) To procure the favour and direction of God. (2.) To have a right intention. (3.) To choose a proper person.

Q. 30. What must he do to procure the favour and direction of God?

A. There is nothing of more importance than this, though, alas! it is but seldom thought of; yet our holy faith assures that a good wife (and the same may be said of a good husband) is, in a particular manner, the gift of God. "House and riches," says the wise man, "are given by parents, but a prudent wife is properly from the Lord," Prov. xix. 14; also, "He that hath found a good wife hath found a good thing, and shall receive a pleasure from the Lord," Prov. xviii. 22. This the holy patriarch Abraham was very sensible of; for when he



sent his principal servant to his own country to take a wife from among his kindred for his son Isaac, and the servant proposed some difficulties that might occur, Abraham answered him, "The Lord, in whose sight I walk, will send His angel with thee, and will direct thy way, and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my own kindred," Gen. xxiv. 40. And the happy effects of the presence of Jesus Christ at the marriage of Cana are recorded to show us how great a blessing He brings to those marriages which He favours. Now the means to obtain His favour and direction are: (1.) Fervent and frequent prayer; thus Abraham's servant, when he arrived at his master's country, in which he was a stranger, knowing not to whom to apply, began by an earnest prayer to God for His direction, and everything succeeded according to his wish, Gen. xxiv. 12. Sarah also had recourse to the same means of finding the favour of God with regard to a husband, and found it effectual to her great consolation, Tob. iii. (2.) To consult with parents, and other pious friends, and not to be hurried on by passion. This, we have seen above, is what God Himself requires, and therefore He will not fail to bestow His blessing on those who attend to it. (3.) To be diligent in all the duties of a good life, which the Scripture assures us is an effectual means to obtain a good wife from God: "A good wife is a good portion; she shall be given in the portion of them that fear God, to a man for his good deeds," Eccclus. xxvi. 3. But, oh! how miserably deceived are those who expect this happiness by using means which are offensive to God! so far are such means from obtaining this blessing, that the Word of God declares, "All malice is short to the malice of a woman, let the lot of sinners fall upon her," Eccclus. xxv. 26.

*Q.* 31. What intentions ought a Christian to have in marrying?

*A.* Surely, above all things, those which Almighty God had in the institution of marriage. Consequently not to gratify ambition or avarice, and still less carnal desires; such views as these can never be a means of procuring the benediction of Heaven. Wherefore, the intention of Christians in marrying ought to be, (1.) That they be a mutual help to one another. "It is not good," said God, when He instituted marriage, "for man to be alone; let us make him a help like to himself," Gen. ii., to assist him in the government of his family, in the management of his temporal affairs, in the good education of his children, in bearing the pains, cares, and toils of this mortal life, and in securing a happy eternity. (2.) For begetting children; not so much that they may inherit the temporal riches of their parents, as that they may be brought up in the fear of God, increase the number of His faithful servants, and become one day glorious saints in heaven. This is certainly a point of the greatest consequence, and the neglect of attending to it properly is, doubtless, one great cause of unhappy marriages, while people seek more to gratify their sensual lusts than the honour and glory of the God that made them. But let us hear the Scripture on this head. When the angel Raphael counselled Tobias to marry the virtuous Sarah, Tobias said, "I hear that she hath been given to seven husbands, and they all died; moreover, I have heard that a devil killed them. Now I am afraid, lest the same thing should happen to me also." To this the angel replied, "Hear me, and I will show thee who they are over whom the devil can prevail; for they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves and from their mind, and to give them-

selves to their lusts, as the horse and the mule, which have no understanding, over them the devil hath power. But thou, when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and, for three days, keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her : . . . and when the third night is past thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for the love of children than lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing of children," Tob. vi. These advices Tobias and Sarah faithfully followed, and the devil had no power to hurt them, but their marriage was exceedingly happy in every respect. (3.) For a remedy against incontinency ; hence St Paul says, " For fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband ;" for though he declares " to the unmarried and to widows, it is good for them if they so continue, even as I ;" yet he immediately adds, " but if they do not contain, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to be burnt," 1 Cor. vii. 2, 8 ; to show that marriage is also intended as a remedy for those who are free to choose, and have not the gift of continency. On the same grounds, he says again, " I will, therefore, that the younger should marry, bear children, be mistresses of families, give no occasion to the adversary to speak evil," 1 Tim. v. 14—that is, by marriage to prevent the scandal which might otherwise be given by their ill conduct, and the ruin of their own souls, which some had already fallen into ; " for some," says he, " are already turned aside after Satan," ver. 15. Chastity is certainly a most sublime virtue ; and to live a single life of chastity is a more perfect and excellent state than that of marriage, as we have seen above, Chap. xxvi. Q. 16 ; but as the virtue of continency is a particular gift of God, which all do not receive, if a

person who is free from any obligation of living a single life, find that he has not received this gift, and, knowing his weakness, distrust himself, he may lawfully and laudably have recourse to marriage, to preserve himself from the danger of ruining his soul, to which that weakness might otherwise expose him.

Q. 32. What conditions ought a Christian chiefly to have in view in the choice of a wife?

A. There is nothing of more importance than this point for the happiness of the married state; though there is, perhaps, nothing less attended to by the generality of those who enter it. To be of good family, to possess riches, to be beautiful, clever, and the like, are the common considerations which influence many in their choice; but how impossible it is for these qualities alone to render them happy, daily experience shows. A marriage contracted from no other motives can scarcely be called a Christian marriage, seeing that heathens themselves are determined in their choice by the same. When these are only secondary motives, to decide in favour of those in whom more Christian and more essential qualities concur, they are, no doubt, laudable; but to be determined by them alone, where other things are wanting, is to expose one's self to the greatest danger of unhappiness. Wherefore a Christian ought, in the first place, and above all other considerations, to fix upon a person who is—(1.) *Of his own religion*; and (2.) *a virtuous Christian*.

First, that he choose one of his own religion is of the utmost consequence, for several reasons—(1.) *On account of his own salvation*; this is manifest from the testimony of God Himself; for when He introduced His people into the Holy Land, He laid the strictest injunctions upon them never to marry with the people of that country, who were of a false religion, otherwise they would certainly

be seduced by them, and ruin their own souls. "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them," says Almighty God; "thou shalt not give thy daughter to his son, nor take his daughter to thy son; for she will turn away thy son from following Me, that he may serve strange gods; and the wrath of the Lord shall be kindled, and will quickly destroy thee," Deut. vii. 2. And again He says, "Neither shalt thou take of their daughters a wife for thy son, lest after they themselves have committed fornication, they make thy sons also to commit fornication with their gods," Exod. xxxiv. 16. In this last text He mentions only the fear and danger of their being seduced from His true religion; but in the former text He absolutely affirms that they "will be seduced" by such marriages; "for she will turn away thy son from following Me." And, in fact, we find that this was actually the case; for, after the death of Josue, the Scripture declares that "the children of Israel dwelt in the midst of the Chanaanites, &c., and they took their daughters to wives, and they gave their own daughters to their sons, and they served their gods, and they did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they forgot their God," Judg. iii. 6, which was a source of suffering to their whole nation. It is laid to the charge of king Achab, as the height of his crimes, that he married a woman of a false religion, by whom he was also still more perverted. Thus "Achab did evil in the sight of the Lord, above all that were before him. Nor was it enough for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nabat; but he also took to wife Jesabel, daughter of Ethbaal, the king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and adored him," 3 Kings, xvi. 30. Even Solomon himself was ruined by this very means, which brought the greatest misery both upon his family and the kingdom; for "Solomon loved many strange

women . . . of the nations, concerning which the Lord said to the children of Israel, You shall not go into them, neither shall any of them come unto yours ; for they will MOST CERTAINLY turn away your hearts to follow their gods. . . . And when he was now old, his heart was turned away by women to follow strange gods ; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God. . . . And the Lord was angry with Solomon ; because his mind was turned away from the Lord the God of Israel," 3 Kings, xi. 1. After such express declarations of Almighty God, and such striking examples, who shall dare to trust himself, or expose himself to such dangers ? And does not daily experience confirm the truth of this ? All the injunctions laid upon Christians in the New Testament, to avoid dangerous communications with those of a false religion, imply the obligation of not entering into marriage with them ; and although, in certain circumstances, the Church judges it necessary to permit such connections in order to prevent greater evils, yet she has always declared her disapprobation of them, well knowing the fatal seduction that too often flows from them. Experience also shows that, even where there is not an entire seduction from such marriages, yet they seldom fail to occasion in those who contract them a coldness and indifference towards religion, a neglect of Christian duties, a weakening of faith, and other fatal effects most hurtful and pernicious to the soul.

(2.) *On account of the children ;* for, when one of the parents professes a false religion, what is to become of the children ? how are they to be brought up in the true religion of Jesus Christ ? Sometimes, indeed, the zeal and fervour of the believing parent may do much ; but how often do we not find quite the contrary ? And if the faithful parent die when the children are young, they

are then lost entirely; and if this should not be the case, yet what is to be expected from children who hear one thing from one parent and the contrary from the other? who see that what the one approves the other condemns? what the one reverences the other ridicules? What is to be expected in such circumstances, but that the poor children should become cold and indifferent about all religion; or at best, like those unhappy Israelites who halted between the Lord and Baal, halt all their days between the Church of Christ and heresy; and at last, encouraged by worldly motives, either give up the former entirely, or, dying in that unhappy state of uncertainty, fall under the condemnation of those whom our Saviour says, "He that is not with Me is against Me"? Luke, xi. 23. What was the cause of that deluge of wickedness which provoked Almighty God to destroy the whole world by the deluge of waters, but because the sons of God, the generation of the just, married the daughters of men—that is, of wicked men; and their children following the ways of their mothers, the whole world was corrupted? And when the Jews returned from their captivity, Nehemias, full of zeal for the glory of God and the happiness of his people, saw some of the Jews who had married strange women; and what was the consequence? "Their children," says he, "spoke neither the language of father nor mother, but half the one and half the other;" for which reason "Nehemias chid them, and laid his curse upon them," showing them, from the example of Solomon, "the great evil they did, and the danger they run;" and concludes, "shall we also be disobedient to do all this great evil, to transgress against our God, and marry strange women?" 2 Esdras, xiii. 27. How often does experience show that the children of parents who are of different religions speak

neither the language of the one nor of the other in religious matters?

(3.) *On account of their own peace and happiness*; for when the parties are of different religions—one of the true religion, and the other of a false—what a source of dissension and disturbance does this become? How often do not their children prove a subject of contention? How often are not calumnies and slanders against the true religion thrown out? How many sneers against religion is not the believing party often exposed to hear? What difficulty do they not find in observing the rules and practices of their religion? And, though nothing of all this happen, what a heartfelt affliction must it not be to them, if they have any proper feeling of religion, to see the person whom, by the laws of God and nature, they are bound to love above any other creature, living in a way so dangerous to their soul? and how must this affliction be increased if they see their children brought up in a false religion? besides many other trials which attend such connections, but which the world never hears of.

Secondly, that he choose one who is also a good Christian and a virtuous woman is no less necessary, both for his own salvation, the good of his children, and their mutual happiness, than that she be of his own religion. Family, and riches, and beauty, are but feeble helps to happiness, if the temper be bad, the habits extravagant, and the passions violent. The Word of God declares that it is “better to sit in a corner of the housetop than with a brawling woman;” “that it is better to dwell in a wilderness, than with a quarrelsome and passionate woman,” Prov. xxi. 9, 19. On the contrary, how great a blessing it is to have a virtuous and good wife, the same sacred oracle declares in these words, “He that hath found a good wife, hath found a good thing, and shall



receive a pleasure from the Lord," Prov. xviii. 22. "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; the woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised," Prov. xxxi. 30. "Depart not from a wise and good wife, whom thou hast gotten in the fear of the Lord; for the grace of her modesty is above gold," Ecclus. vii. 21. "Blessed is he that dwelleth with a wise woman," Ecclus. xxv. 11. "Happy is the husband of a good wife; for the number of his days is double. A virtuous woman rejoiceth her husband, and shall fulfil the years of his life in peace. A good wife is a good portion, she shall be given in the portion of them that fear God, to a man for his good deeds. Rich or poor, if his heart is good, his countenance shall be cheerful at all times . . . the grace of a diligent woman shall delight her husband, and shall fat his bones; her discipline is the gift of God. Such is a wise and silent woman; and there is nothing so much worth as a well-instructed soul. A holy and shamefaced woman is grace upon grace. As the sun when it riseth to the world in the high places of God, so is the beauty of a good wife an ornament of her house," Ecclus. xxvi. All which is equally to be understood of a pious and virtuous husband.

*Q.* 33. What are the immediate dispositions with which Christians ought to receive the sacrament of Marriage?

*A.* Besides what is above, they ought (1.) To be instructed in the nature and obligations which the law of God has annexed to that state, and be resolved faithfully to discharge them. (2.) To be sufficiently instructed in the Christian doctrine, according to their capacity, without which they are not in a condition to receive that sacrament worthily. (3.) To be in the state of grace, and in friendship with God; otherwise, by profaning the sacrament, if they receive it in the state of sin, they

will bring a malediction upon their marriage instead of a blessing. (4.) To endeavour, by works of charity and mercy, and by approaching worthily the holy sacraments of Penance and Communion, to procure the favour of God, and the presence of Jesus Christ at their marriage, that He may bless it, as He did that of Cana at Galilee.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## OF THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT.

Q. I. **W**HAT is meant by the Church triumphant?

A. The Church of Christ, taken in its most ample signification, consists of all those who belong to Him by faith, of the posterity of Adam, wherever they are, and in whatever state or condition they be. The members of this Church are divided into three classes; the first contains all those who belong to His One Holy Catholic and Apostolical Church here upon earth, and these compose the *Church Militant*; so called because her members are still in the field of battle fighting against the enemies of their souls, and labouring to secure their eternal happiness. The second class contains all those who, being departed out of this life in friendship with God, but not in such purity as to be in a condition for seeing Him, or not having fully satisfied for what they owe to His Divine justice, are in a state of suffering, till having fully paid their debt, and being purified from every stain, they be received into His eternal kingdom; and these compose what is called the *Church Suffering*. The third class contains all those who, being departed out of this life in perfect purity, and having fully satisfied what they owed to the Divine justice, are immediately admitted to the enjoyment of God in heaven, in company with His

holy angels, or have been received into that happy state after being sufficiently purified in purgatory ; and these compose what is called the *Church Triumphant* ; because, having fought manfully, and conquered all the enemies of their souls, they are now the saints of God triumphing in heaven, in the possession of eternal glory. We have already seen what our holy religion teaches us concerning the two first states, it remains only to consider this third.

Q. 2. What are we chiefly to consider concerning the saints and angels in heaven ?

A. (1.) Their state and prerogatives ; (2.) Our communion with them ; (3.) The respect due to their relics and holy images.

#### SECTION I.

##### *Of the State and Prerogatives of the Saints in Heaven.*

Q. 3. How does it appear that the souls of the saints are immediately admitted to the possession of God in heaven, when they depart out of this life ?

A. (1.) From the following clear testimonies of Holy Scripture. “ We know,” says St Paul, “ that if our earthly house of this dwelling be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens ; for in this also we groan, desiring to be clothed over with our dwelling which is from heaven,” 2 Cor. v. 1. Here the apostle declares, that when our earthly house, our body, is dissolved by death, we have a dwelling prepared for us in heaven, and that he groans to be clothed with that heavenly dwelling ; and, therefore, a little after, he adds, “ therefore, having always confidence, knowing that, while we are in the body, we are absent

from the Lord (for we walk by faith, and not by sight); we are confident, I say, and have a good will to be absent rather from the body, and to be present with the Lord," ver. 6, which demonstrates that the beatitude of the saints is not deferred till the resurrection; but that, in the mean time, and whilst they are "absent from the body," their blessed souls are "present with the Lord." Again, in his epistle to the Philippians, he says, "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain; and if to live in the flesh, this is to me the fruit of labour, and what I shall choose I know not. But I am straitened between two, having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, a thing by far the better; but to abide still in the flesh is needful for you," Philip. i. 21. This needs no application; it speaks to the point itself. He is straitened whether he shall choose to live longer, and labour for the good of souls, or to be dissolved and go to enjoy Christ, which is by far the better. Moreover, St John actually saw great multitudes of saints and martyrs in heaven, in company with the Lamb, adoring Him, and saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book, and to open the seal thereof; because Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us to our God a kingdom, and priests," Rev. v. 9; and of the holy virgins he also saw great numbers "who follow the Lamb wherever He goes, and have His name, and the name of His Father, written on their foreheads; and these were purchased from among men, the first fruits to God and to the Lamb," Rev. xiv. 1. (2.) From the constant belief and tradition of the Church of Christ. (3.) From this reason, founded on what Christ Himself declared, that God is certainly more desirous to benefit His creatures than to afflict them. To do good to His creatures is His

first and principal desire ; to afflict them is a constraint upon His goodness which their sins demand from His justice. Now Christ assures us that, when the wicked die, their souls are immediately condemned to hell, as we see in the rich glutton in the gospel. If, therefore, the justice of God inflicts immediate punishment on sinners at their death, much more will His goodness and His justice, combined immediately, reward His holy saints when they leave this world, by admitting their souls into eternal happiness.

*Q.* 4. What is meant by the prerogatives of the saints ?

*A.* Their exalted dignity, their happiness, and their employment.

*Q.* 5. What description does the Scripture give us of the exaltation and dignity of the saints in heaven ?

*A.* That "They stand before the throne, and in the sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands," Rev. vii. 9 ; that "they shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father," Mat. xiii. 43 ; that they "are like the angels of God in heaven," Mat. xxii. 30 ; that they are so highly exalted as to become even like God Himself ; for "we know," says the beloved disciple, "that, when He shall appear, we shall be like to Him, because we shall see Him as he is," 1 John, iii. 2 ; that the blessed company of the inhabitants of heaven is composed of an immense multitude of cherubim and seraphim, and holy angels inflamed with divine love ; thus, "thousands of thousands minister to Him, and ten hundred times a hundred thousand stand before him," Dan. vii. 10 ; of an inconceivable number of holy martyrs, who, having come out of great tribulation, have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and serve Him day and night in His temple," Rev. vii. 14 ; of multitudes of other blessed souls, the

patriarchs and prophets, the apostles of the Lamb, and His holy confessors, who, "having overcome, are clothed in white, and walk with Him because they are worthy," Rev. iii. 4; of the chaste spouses of Jesus Christ, "who have not defiled their souls, but are virgins; in whose mouth there was found no lie, but are without spot before the throne of God," Rev. xiv.; and, above all, the blessed Virgin-Mother of God, the Queen of saints and angels, "clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars," Rev. xii. 1, the symbol of her supereminent dignity above all the rest. Such is the splendour, magnificence, and beauty of these heavenly inhabitants; they are all advanced to the highest dignity that can be conceived, even to a fellowship with the living God, and a partnership with Jesus Christ in His throne; for, "to him that shall overcome," says He, "I will give to sit with Me in My throne," Rev. iii. 21.

*Q.* 6. What account does the Scripture give us of their happiness?

*A.* That the place itself is a dwelling of delight, "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; that in it the throne of God and the Lamb is placed, and His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads, and night shall be no more, and they shall not need the light of the lamp, nor the light of the sun, for the Lord God shall enlighten them, and they shall reign for ever and ever," Rev. xxi. xxii.; that "they shall no more hunger nor thirst, neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall lead them to the living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," Rev. vii. 16; that "they are His people, and God Himself with them

shall be their God, . . . and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away," Rev. xxi. 3. "And they rest in Him, for grace and peace is to His elect," Wis. iii. 9, that "the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come to Sion with praise, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall fly away," Isa. xxxv. 9: that all the riches of heaven shall be their own, those inestimable riches which "neither rust nor moth doth consume, nor thieves break through to steal," Mat. vi. 20; for "he that shall overcome, shall possess these things, and I will be his God, and he shall be My son," Rev. xxi. 7. "I am alpha and omega," says God Himself, "the beginning and the end; to him that thirsteth, I will give of the fountain of the waters of life, cost free," Rev. xxi. 6; hence the Royal Prophet says, "O! how hast Thou multiplied Thy mercy, O God. . . . They shall be inebriated with the plenty of Thy house, and Thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure; for in Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light we shall see light," Ps. xxxv. 8. But what, above everything else, will fill their heart with joy unutterable, is the clear vision and enjoyment of God Himself: "Blessed, *indeed*, are the clean of heart, for they shall see God," Mat. v. 8; "They shall see Him face to face," 1 Cor. xiii. 12; and "God will be gracious to them, and they shall see His face with joy," Job, xxxiii. 26; and "Beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, they are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord," 2 Cor. iii. 18. By this they are intimately united with Jesus Christ, and partakers of His glory; for "The glory which Thou hast given Me," says He to His eternal Father, "I have given them, that they may be



one as We also are one ; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one. . . . Father, I will that where I am they also whom Thou hast given Me may be, that they may see My glory which Thou hast given Me," John, xvii. 22. And the immense happiness and joy which will result from this sight and union with God is thus expressed, "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life ; Thou shalt fill me with joy with Thy countenance, at Thy right hand are delights even to the end," Ps. xv. 11 ; " O ! how great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord ! which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee ! " Ps. xxx. 20 ; " As the hart panteth after the fountains of waters, so my soul panteth after Thee, my God ; my soul hath thirsted after the strong, the living God ; when shall I come and appear before the face of God ? " Ps. xli. 1.

*Q.* 7. What account have we in Scripture of their employment ?

*A.* Their employment is consonant to the blissful state in which they dwell. Immersed in an ocean of inexhaustible delight, they are continually engaged in adoring and praising the Author of their happiness, their hearts overflowing with joy unutterable, can never be satisfied in extolling and magnifying His Holy name ; for still they feel that " He exceeds all their praise, and that His glory and magnificence is wonderful," *Ecclus.* xliii. 32. But their employment in particular is represented under these heads : (1.) As contemplating His infinite Majesty, His Almighty power, magnificence, and grandeur, and rendering Him the most profound homage and adoration on that account : " And behold there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne One sitting ; and He that sat was, to the sight, like the jasper and the sardine stone ; and there was a rainbow round about the

throne, in sight like unto an emerald, . . . and from the throne there proceeded lightnings, and voices, and thunderings ; and there were seven lamps burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God, . . . and round about the throne were four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind, . . . and they rested not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who wast, and Who is, and Who is to come, . . . and the four and twenty ancients fell down before Him that sitteth on the throne, and adored Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory, and honour, and power, because Thou hast created all things, and for Thy will they are and have been created," Rev. iv. "After this, I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne, and in the sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the ancients, and the four living creatures, and they fell down before the throne upon their faces, and adored God, saying, Benediction, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honour, and power, and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen." Rev. vii. 9.

(2.) As contemplating the incomprehensible work of our redemption, and full of charity for their brethren upon earth, and of zeal for their salvation, offering up their prayers to God, and rendering supreme homage and adoration to our great Deliverer. "And the four living creatures and the four and twenty ancients fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps

and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints ; and they sung a new canticle, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book, and open the seals thereof, because Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God in Thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the ancients, and the number of them were thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction," Rev. v. 8. "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," Rev. viii. 3. On this account, when the angel Raphael discovered himself to Tobias and his son, he said, "I discover then the truth unto you, and I will not hide the secret from you. When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner, and hide the dead by day in thy house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayers to the Lord," Tob. xii. 11.

(3.) At other times their delightful employment is, to contemplate the righteous judgment of the Almighty, to praise Him for the rewards He bestows on His faithful servants, and for avenging them of their enemies, and to adore His tremendous justice for the just though dreadful punishment He inflicts on obstinate sinners; exhorting and encouraging one another to praise and

adore Him for His victories over them. "And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass, mingled with fire, and them that had overcome the beast, and His image, and the number of His name, standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and singing the canticle of Moses, the servant of God, and the canticle of the Lamb, saying, Great and wonderful are Thy works, O Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, O King of Ages. Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and magnify Thy name? For Thou only art holy; for all nations shall come, and shall adore in Thy sight, because Thy judgments are manifest," Rev. xv. 2; "and I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was enlightened with his glory, and he cried out with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every unclean spirit, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird—Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath judged your judgment on her," Rev. xviii. 1, 20. "After these things, I heard, as it were, the voice of many multitudes in heaven, saying, Allelujah, salvation, and glory, and power, is to our God: for true and just are His judgments, Who hath judged the great harlot which corrupted the earth with her fornications, and hath revenged the blood of His servants at her hands. And again, they said, Allelujah, and her smoke ascendeth for ever and ever. And the four and twenty ancients, and the four living creatures, fell down and adored God that sitteth upon the throne, saying, Amen, Allelujah. And a voice came out from the throne, saying, Give praise to our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, great and little. And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and

as the voice of great thundering, saying, Allelujah ; for the Lord our God, the Almighty, hath reigned," Rev. xix. 1. "And there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world is become our Lord's and His Christ's, and He shall reign for ever and ever, Amen. We give Thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, Who art, and Who wast, and Who art to come, because Thou hast taken Thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldst render reward to Thy servants the prophets, and to Thy saints, and to them that fear Thy name, little and great, and should destroy them that have corrupted the earth," Rev. xi. 15. Such is the description the Holy Scripture gives us of the glorious and delightful employment of the blessed inhabitants of heaven, where they live and rejoice for ever and ever !

## SECTION II.

### *Of our Communion with the Saints and Angels in Heaven.*

Q. 8. What is meant by our communion with the blessed in heaven ?

A. The communion of the saints, which we profess in the Creed to believe as a truth revealed by God, is not confined to the communication of prayers and other good works which the faithful upon earth have with one another ; but includes also in a particular manner the communion which we have with our Christian brethren who are departed out of this life in the faith and love of Jesus, whether they be as yet detained in purgatory, or are gone to enjoy God in His kingdom. The com-

munion we have with those in purgatory, we have seen above, Ch. xxiv. Q. 49; and it remains to explain here the communion which we have with the saints and angels in heaven. Now the word *communion* signifies a mutual communication of good things; and the *Communion of the Saints* signifies a mutual communication of such good things as relate to our salvation. The saints in heaven are already perfectly happy, secure of their own salvation, and the only good they can receive from us is the pleasure of seeing us praise and glorify God on their account, and our putting it in their power to contribute to our salvation. The good we receive from them is the assistance they procure for us by their holy prayers, to enable us to secure our salvation, which they earnestly desire. So that our communion with them consists, on our part, in praising God for their happiness, paying them that honour and veneration which is due to their dignity, as the friends and favourites of God, and begging a share in their holy prayers; and it consists, on their side, in offering up our prayers to God, and praying for us.

### SECTION III.

#### *Of Honouring the Saints and Angels.*

Q. 9. What is meant by the honour and veneration due to the saints?

A. The words *honour, veneration, worship, adoration,* and the like, all agree in this, that they suppose some dignity, excellence, or merit, in the person to whom they are given; they also suppose that we have an inward esteem, regard, and respect for the person, on account of the perfections we perceive in him. When, therefore,

we know that a person possesses any dignity, excellence, or merit, and, on that account, have an esteem and regard for him; and when we testify this outwardly by words or actions, this is what is meant by honour, veneration, worship, and adoration, in the general acceptance of the term. They differ, however, in some particulars; for *to honour*, signifies properly to testify by outward signs the merits or excellence of the person, whether he be our superior or inferior; thus a king honours a subject when he gives any mark of his royal favour. The other words, besides testifying our respect for the merits of the person, imply at the same time an acknowledgment of our own inferiority to him, at least with regard to those qualifications for which we honour him.

*Veneration* is properly the respect we have for one another, on account of some virtuous or religious excellence we perceive in him; *adoration* most commonly signifies the respect we have for God Himself, and sometimes even for others, for God's sake, as immediately connected with Him; and *worship* is used indiscriminately, to signify both the honour which we pay to God and to holy persons, and also the respect we pay to civil magistrates, who are, on that account, called *worshipful* and *right worshipful*. As, therefore, we have seen that the saints and angels are adorned with many great perfections, and are honoured by God Himself with the most exalted dignity, far superior to anything in this world, they justly deserve the highest esteem and regard; and the honour and veneration which we pay them are paid on that account.

*Q.* 10. Is it lawful to pay this honour and veneration to saints and angels?

*A.* It is not only lawful, but a duty, as appears from several plain reasons; for, (1.) The Word of God com-

mands it, "Render to all men their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, and honour to whom honour," Rom. xiii. 7. (2.) Natural feeling in a manner impels us to it; for no sooner do we perceive any virtuous excellence in another, than we immediately feel respect and veneration arising in our hearts towards him, and a desire to testify the same outwardly by our word and action, when occasion offers. (3.) The feelings of the human heart demand it as a due; for whenever a person is possessed of any dignity, or excellence above others, he expects, as a thing to which he is justly entitled, that others should honour him on that account. Parents expect this from their children, masters from their servants, magistrates from their people, kings from their subjects; and they would think themselves highly injured if the respect due were denied them, or any disrespect shown them. Seeing, therefore, that the saints of God possess so many high excellences above us, they are justly entitled to receive our honour and respect; and to refuse them due veneration, much more to disrespect and dishonour them, would doubtless be a criminal action. Besides, (4.) The feelings of our heart show us that it is impossible to entertain a true love and respect for any person, without feeling at the same time a similar love and respect for everything nearly connected with him: now, the saints and angels of God are most intimately connected with God, and with Jesus Christ; they are His particular friends and favourites, intimately united with Him in grace and glory, highly beloved and honoured by Him. How then can we have a sincere love and respect for God, and for Jesus Christ, without having a proportionate love and respect for those who are so nearly connected with both?



*Q.* 11. Does the Scripture authorise the giving external worship to men, and using the word *worship* to express it?

*A.* It does in numberless places. Thus "Abraham rose up, and bowed down to the people of the land," Gen. xxiii. 7. Jacob, when he met his elder brother, "went forward, and bowed down with his face to the ground seven times," Gen. xxxiii. 4. When Joseph's brethren were presented to him, "they offered him the presents, holding them in their hand, and they bowed down with their face to the ground," Gen. xliii. 26. And when David's nobles came to wait upon him before his death, "all the assembly blessed the Lord, the God of their fathers, and they bowed themselves and worshipped God and the king," 1 Chron. xxix. 20. Here we see that all these outward actions of bowing are termed *worshipping*; and in the same sentence this word is used to signify that external act given both to God and to the king. Now, this external worship, when given to princes and magistrates, is called *civil worship*, because it is given on account of the civil dignity which they possess: and when it is given to holy persons for their sanctity and connection with God, it is called *religious worship*; because the worship paid to such persons is principally an honour paid to God, with whom they are so connected, and whose graces we venerate in them.

*Q.* 12. Does the Scripture authorise giving religious worship to the saints and angels of God, and using the words *worship* or *adoration* to express it?

*A.* It does in many examples. Thus when the three angels appeared to Abraham, "As soon as he saw them he ran to meet them from the door of his tent, and adored down to the ground," Gen. xviii. 2. When the two angels came to Sodom, "Lot, seeing them, rose up and

went to meet them, and worshipped prostrate to the ground," Gen. xix. 1. When Josue met the angel in the field, "he fell on his face to the ground, and worshipping said, What saith my lord to his servant?" Jos. v. 15. When Abdias met Elias the prophet, "He knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou my lord Elias?" 3 Kings, xviii. 7. When the sons of the prophet saw Eliseus divide the waters of Jordan, "they said, the spirit of Elias hath rested on Eliseus, and coming to meet him, they worshipped him, falling to the ground," 4 Kings, ii. 15. Even the heathen king Nabuchodonosor, when he saw how Daniel was filled with the Spirit of God, by discovering to him his dream, and the interpretation of it, both acknowledged the God of Daniel to be the only true God, "and fell on his face and worshipped Daniel," Dan. ii. 46. So true it is, that even nature itself impels us to worship and venerate those whom we know, or believe to be, friends of God and favourites of heaven.

*Q.* 13. But are we not told that, when St John "fell down before the angel's feet to adore him," the angel said to him, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren who have the testimony of Jesus"? Rev. xix. 10. And when St John a second time "fell down to adore before the feet of the angel," the angel again forbid him, and said, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets," Rev. xxii. 8. Does not this condemn all such worship or adoration of angels?

*A.* This passage is much quoted, and great stress laid upon it, by the adversaries of the Catholic Church, against what she teaches on this head. This, however, they never could do, did they consider her doctrine with any degree of impartiality; for the adoration which St John here offered the angel either was divine worship or it

was not. If it was divine worship, then St John was under a mistake, which could only arise from the glorious manner wherein the angel appeared to him, and which made the apostle suppose him to be either God or Jesus Christ Himself; for we can never suppose that St John would offer divine worship to an angel, knowing him to be an angel. The angel, therefore, justly refused divine worship from the apostle, and informed him of his mistake: "See thou do it not," said he; for "I am, not God, but thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren." In this supposition, it is manifest that this passage tells in no way against the doctrine of the Church, which loudly condemns as idolatry the giving divine adoration to any creature in heaven or earth. If, on the other hand, the worship which St John offered to this angel was not divine worship, then it is evident that his refusing to receive it could not arise from his supposing it to be unlawful; because what was lawful in Abraham and Lot, and Josue, to give to angels, and what was lawful in those angels to receive from them, could not be unlawful in St John to give, or in the angel to receive from him: neither can we suppose that St John would a second time offer an unlawful worship to the angel, after having been already admonished of it.

It is manifest, then, that the worship which St John offered to the angel (if not divine) was not unlawful. Why then did the angel refuse it? From the very words of the angel, it is plain that he refused it out of humility, and out of his singular respect to St John, whom he knew to be a prophet, an apostle, an evangelist, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, and a priest of the most High God. He knew he had been admitted to lean upon the breast of Jesus Christ at the last supper; and therefore would not permit him to lie now prostrate at his feet;

but humbly said, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, who have the testimony of Jesus." And this is the only reason why he should refuse this outward testimony of respect from St John, when other angels received the same from other holy men, but who were far inferior to St John in dignity. Besides, from these last words of the angel, there are very strong grounds to believe that he was not one of the angelical spirits, but some of the prophets or other saints; or, as some have with great reason supposed, St John the Baptist, whom our Saviour calls a prophet, "and more than a prophet; for this is he," says Christ, "of whom it is written, Behold, I send My angel before thy face," Mat. xi. 10. Here, then, we see that the Baptist is a prophet and an angel, and he in a particular manner had the testimony of Jesus, being sent to prepare the way before Him, and to point Him out to the people; and as the angel who appeared to St John in the Revelations said that he was "his fellow-servant, and of his brethren the prophets, who have the testimony of Jesus," it is highly probable that he was St John the Baptist; and if so, no wonder he should, out of humility, refuse the worship offered him by the apostle, though otherwise in itself most lawful.

*Q.* 14. But is it not idolatry to worship saints and angels, seeing they are mere creatures?

*A.* Was it idolatry in David's nobles "to worship the king"? 1 Chron. xxix. 20; or in Abraham, and Lot, and Josue, to worship the angels? or in Abdias to worship Elias the prophet? or in the sons of the prophets to worship Eliseus? See above, *Q.* 12. Or is it idolatry to acknowledge the dignity and excellence of those above us, and to pay them that outward respect and veneration to which they are justly entitled? To accuse the Church of

Christ of idolatry on account of the respect and veneration she pays to the saints and angels of God, is an error which can arise only from ignorance, misconception, or malice. The respect and veneration shown to the saints and angels, far from being an injury to God, is an honour done to Him; because it is only given for His sake, as a just tribute to the graces with which He has adorned them, and a fulfilling of the intentions of God Himself, when He said, "Whosoever shall glorify Me, him will I glorify," 1 Kings, ii. 30; and of our Saviour, Who declares, "If any man minister to Me, him will My Father honour," John, xii. 26.

#### SECTION IV.

##### *Of the Invocation of Saints and Angels.*

Q. 15. What is meant by the invocation of saints and angels?

A. It is the entreating them to present our prayers to the throne of grace, and join their more powerful prayers with ours to obtain the good things we stand in need of, whether for soul or body.

Q. 16. Do the saints and angels know what is doing upon earth, or take any concern in the affairs of men?

A. They certainly do, as appears from many testimonies of Holy Scripture. Thus, (1.) We are told that "Joram the son of Achab reigned over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Josaphat king of Juda," 4 Kings, iii. 1; that very year the king of Moab rebelled against Joram, ver. 5; and Joram and Josaphat made an expedition against Moab, as is related in this chapter. From the account there given, it is evident that Eliseus

was then the prophet among the people; and Elias is spoken of as no more among men: from this it is plain that Elias had been taken away either in or before the eighteenth year of Josaphat king of Juda. "Josaphat reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem," 2 Paral. xx. 31—so that at least seven years of his reign passed after the translation of Elias—and "Joram his son reigned in his stead," 2 Paral. xxi. 1, in Jerusalem. This Joram was a wicked king, for "he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Achab had done, for his wife was a daughter of Achab, and he did evil in the sight of the Lord," 2 Paral. xxi. 6. After some time a letter was brought from Elias the prophet to him, in which it was said, "Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father, because thou hast not walked in the ways of Josaphat thy father, . . . behold, the Lord will strike thee with great plague," &c. 2 Paral. xxi. 12. Here, then, we see that Elias the prophet, more than seven years after he was taken out of this world, knew what was passing among his people, and showed the interest he felt in their welfare by writing this threatening letter to their wicked king. (2.) Our Saviour Himself assures us that "there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner's doing penance," Luke, xv. 10. Now true penance is an interior act of the heart itself, for the outward signs of it are of no value without the change of the heart, and may be performed even by hypocrites; the repentance, therefore, of a sinner is known to the angels of God, and the joy it gives them shows their interest in the good of souls. (3.) When the rich glutton, in hell, "besought Abraham to send Lazarus to his father's house, to testify to his five brethren, lest they should come to the same place of torments; Abraham said to him, they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them; . . . and if they will

not hear them, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead," Luke, xvi. 27. From this it is evident that Abraham knew of Moses and the prophets, though they had been upon the earth several hundred years after his death; he knew also that their books were then extant, and that they were fully as sufficient to convert the rich man's five brethren, as if Lazarus had risen from the dead to warn them. (4.) Our Saviour says to St John, "He that shall overcome and keep My works unto the end, I will give him power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and as the vessel of a potter they shall be broken, as I also have received of my Father," Rev. ii. 26. And the saints about the throne, amidst the praises of their Redeemer, say, "Thou hast made us a kingdom to our God, and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth," Rev. v. 10. The Holy Ghost also, by the wise man, says: "The just shall shine; . . . they shall judge nations, and rule over people, and their Lord shall reign for ever," Wis. iii. 8. Consequently the saints must certainly know what passes upon earth among the nations, and feel particular interest in them, otherwise how could they be said to reign over and to rule them? And, indeed, (5.) if "the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8, and "accuseth us before God day and night," Rev. xii. 10, and consequently knows well what is passing on the earth, how much more must the saints and angels know it, who enjoy the glory of the great God? shall we deny a knowledge in them which the devils possess?

*Q.* 17. But how is it possible that the saints in heaven should know what is doing here upon earth, at such a distance from them?

*A.* All the above testimonies of Scripture show that in fact they do know it, which is the most certain proof that

it is possible ; but, since God has not been pleased to reveal to man the manner in which they know our affairs, it would be presumption to search into it. How did the holy servants of God know the secrets of the hearts of others? how did the prophets know what was passing at a distance from them? how did they know what was to happen in after-ages? That they did know these things is evident from Scripture ; but in what manner they knew them, or how it was possible for them to know them, God has not thought proper to disclose. Surely it would be childish to deny the fact, because we cannot comprehend the manner.

*Q.* 18. Do the saints and angels desire the happiness of men, and pray to God for them?

*A.* They certainly do ; and this also is clearly declared in Scripture. (1.) This is a natural consequence of their ardent love of God, and of their fervent charity. St Paul assures us that charity, or the love of God, and of our neighbour for God's sake, never fails ; faith and hope, and other such virtues, are swallowed up by the enjoyment of God in heaven, but this holy love is then only brought to its highest perfection : the blessed inhabitants of heaven, seeing the Divine Being in all the effulgence of His infinite beauty, are inflamed with love of Him, and the most ardent desire that He should be loved and served by all His creatures ; and, at the same time, sensible of the infinite happiness they enjoy in Him, they are inflamed with an ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, and the most fervent desire that all their brethren upon earth should attain the same happiness. Now, what are all these desires for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, but so many fervent prayers in the sight of God for our salvation? This, then, is their continual employment, to praise and adore God for all His



glories, and for their own bliss, and to pour forth to Him their most earnest prayers, that all their brethren upon earth may be brought to the same happiness. In fact, (2.) We have seen above, Q. 7, No. 2, that this is one principal part of their employment in heaven, offering up the prayers of the saints upon earth, as a most agreeable sacrifice of incense in the sight of God. (3.) The prophet Zacharias relates a fervent prayer that an angel made for the people of God, and for the city of Jerusalem, and that his prayer was graciously heard by God: "And the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts, . . . how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Juda, with which thou hast been angry ? this is now the seventieth year. And the Lord answered the angel that spoke in me, good words, comfortable words," Zach. i. 12. (4.) In the celebrated dream which Judas Macchabeus had first, "Onias who had been high priest . . . holding up his hands prayed for all the people of the Jews. After this there appeared also another man, admirable for age and glory, and environed with great beauty and majesty. Then Onias answering, said, This is a lover of his brethren and the people of Israel, this is he that prayeth much for the people, and for all the holy city, Jeremias the prophet of God," 2 Mac. xv. 12. Now Onias and Jeremias had been dead long before, and as this happened some hundred years before Christ, it manifestly shows that the people of God, even in the old law, firmly believed that the departed saints of God were solicitous for their brethren upon earth, and prayed for them. And, indeed, (5.) If the rich glutton, though in hell-fire, was solicitous for his brethren, and prayed that they might not come to that place of torment, how much more must the saints and angels in heaven do the same ?

*Q.* 19. Is it lawful and laudable to desire the saints and angels to pray for us?

*A.* Most undoubtedly; it can never be unlawful for us to desire them to do what they are actually doing; and it cannot fail to be profitable to desire them to do for us in particular what it is their constant employment to do for all in general. The great employment of the saints is to praise and glorify God, and to pray for the salvation of men, that all may come to praise and glorify Him for ever; and it must be equally laudable in us to desire them to do both parts of this their happy employment. The Scripture is full of prayers to the blessed spirits in heaven, desiring them to praise and glorify God, particularly in the Book of Psalms; which is one great branch of their employment; and surely it cannot be unlawful to desire them also to pray for us, which is the other branch.

*Q.* 20. Is there any express authority in Scripture for this?

*A.* There are these following: (1.) When Jacob wrestled with an angel, he prayed to that angel to bless him, and prayed so earnestly that he said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me;" and the angel did bless him, and then said, "If thou hast been strong against God, how much more shalt thou prevail against men?" Gen. xxxii. 26. The angel says this, because he represented God; and shows the efficacy of Jacob's prayer. And the prophet Osee, speaking of this prayer of Jacob, says, "By his strength he had success with an angel, and he prevailed over the angel, and was strengthened; he wept and made supplication to him," Osee, xii. 3. Here we not only see supplication made to an angel, but the great advantage of it. (2.) When Jacob was old he called Joseph and his two sons to bless them, and,

laying his hands upon their heads, he said, "God, in whose sight my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, God, that feedeth me from my youth until this day, the angel that delivereth me from all evils, bless these boys," Gen. xlviii. 15. Here, in the same sentence, and with the same breath, he prays both to God and his guardian angel to bless his sons. (3.) When the angel conducted Lot out of Sodom, Lot prayed to the angel to spare the city of Segor, and allow him to retire to it: "And the angel said to him, behold also in this city I have heard thy prayers not to destroy the city for which thou hast spoken," Gen. xix. 21. (4.) St John the apostle makes this prayer for the seven churches which are in Asia: "Grace be unto you, and peace from Him that is, and that was, and that is to come, and from the seven spirits that are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness," Rev. i. 4. Here, with the same breath, the apostle prays for grace and peace from God, from the seven spirits that assist before His throne, and from Jesus Christ; and even places these seven spirits before Jesus Christ; than which there cannot be a more express and positive authority for desiring the prayers of the saints and angels in heaven. (5.) It is certainly lawful and profitable to desire the prayers of the servants of God here upon earth; and our prayers for one another are so agreeable to God Almighty, that sometimes when He refuses to hear the prayers of sinners for themselves, on account of their unworthiness, He grants what they need to the prayers of His servants for them. Thus God said to Job's friends, "My wrath is kindled against you, because ye have not spoken the thing that is right before Me, as My servant Job hath; take unto you, therefore, seven oxen and seven rams, and go to My servant Job, and offer for yourself a holo-

caust ; and My servant Job shall pray for you ; his face will I accept, that your folly be not imputed to you ;” and they did so ; “ and the Lord accepted the face of Job,” Job, xliii. 7. And how often did the prayers of Moses obtain mercy for his sinful people ! Hence St Paul frequently desires the prayers of his people ; and when he was in a great affliction, he says to the Philippians, “ I know that this shall turn to my salvation, through your prayers,” Philip. i. 19. Now, if it be lawful and profitable to desire the prayers of the servants of God here upon earth, how much more so must it be to desire their prayers now that they are in glory with God in heaven ? Their charity is there more inflamed ; their desire of our salvation more pure ; their interest with God more powerful ; they desire to help us ; it is even part of their happy employment to pray for us ; and consequently their prayers must be so much the more profitable and advantageous to us. Add to this, (6.) The constant tradition, authority, and practice of the Church of Christ, which, from the earliest ages of Christianity, has authorised this holy practice, as might be shown by numberless testimonies of the holy fathers in all ages.

*Q. 21.* Is it not injurious to the mediation of Christ to desire the saints and angels to pray for us ?

*A.* Was it an injury to the mediation of Christ when St John prayed for grace and peace from the seven spirits that stand before the throne of God ? or is it an injury to the mediation of Christ to desire the prayers of one another ? This objection is owing to a gross misapprehension ; for a person may ask a favour either in his own right, and as a thing which he himself is entitled in justice to obtain ; or he may ask it as a favour, or for the sake of another who has a right. Jesus Christ, through His infinite merits, has a just right to ask and

obtain from His Father anything He pleases, and therefore He is our mediator of redemption ; but neither the saints in heaven nor we on earth have any right or title of ourselves to obtain anything from God. Our claim to be heard is only for the sake of Christ, in and through His infinite merits, and on those merits also do the prayers of the saints in heaven depend. It is evident that the more there are who unite in asking any favour of God, through Christ, and for His sake, the more He is honoured by it; so that our desiring these blessed spirits to pray for us, instead of being injurious to the mediation of Christ, is, in fact, honouring it, because we engage a greater number of holy souls to testify their confidence in Him, through whom alone their prayers are heard.

*Q. 22.* But do we not sometimes ask grace and peace and the like from the saints and angels? and does not this seem as if we expected something more from them than merely to pray for us?

*A.* Even by using such expressions, we do nothing more than St John did when he asked for grace and peace from the seven spirits that stand before the throne of God ; nothing more than Jacob did when he asked the angel to bless himself, and to bless his two grandsons. But the truth is, that whatever expressions of this kind are used, the meaning is that we desire these things only in the way in which we know they can give them—that is, by asking them of God through the merits of Christ. This we are taught from our infancy, in all our catechisms and books of instruction. Indeed, with regard to our angel guardians, we do more than merely ask their prayers ; because we know that they are commissioned by God not only to pray for us, but also to be the instruments in the hand of God to bestow many other benefits upon us, as we shall now see.

## SECTION V.

*Of our Angel Guardians.*

Q. 23. What does the Christian religion teach us concerning our angel guardians?

A. That particular angels are appointed and commanded by God to watch over and protect us, and bestow many benefits upon us, is thus declared in Scripture, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?" Heb. i. 14. To *minister*, is to serve, to guard, to help us. Again, "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways," Ps. xc. 11. Hence our Saviour says, "Take heed that ye 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," Mat. xviii. 10. And when St Peter was delivered out of prison, and came and knocked at the door where the others were gathered together, they, hearing his voice, could not believe it was himself, and said, "It is his angel," Acts, xii. 15. The religion of God is a religion of charity, and tends to unite all its members in the most perfect bonds of charity; and as this can be nourished only by a mutual intercourse of good offices, which is the communion of the saints, hence, according to the spirit of our religion, every one ought to be solicitous for his neighbour's happiness, and ready on all occasions to promote it to the utmost of his power. Indeed, the more inflamed holy men are with the true love of God, the more earnest they are in promoting the good of souls. Now, as the angels are filled with the most

ardent love of God, and desire nothing more than to advance His glory and the salvation of men, so that "the repentance of a sinner fills them with joy;" they are therefore themselves most ready and willing to help us; and God is pleased to employ them for our advantage and service. Besides, as Satan and his wicked angels are daily going about like roaring lions, seeking to devour us, and we, if left to ourselves, would fall a prey to their malice; therefore God, who was pleased to employ his good angels to drive those wicked spirits out of heaven, still continues to employ them in defending us from their assaults, and in arming us against them.

*Q.* 24. What are the services which we receive from our angel guardians?

*A.* Many and most important; but chiefly these: (1.) They direct us to what is good by their holy inspirations, and correct us when we do ill, preserving us from many spiritual dangers. Thus God says to His people, "Behold, I will send My angel who shall go before thee, and keep thee, in thy journey, and bring thee into the place that I have prepared. Take notice of him, and hear his voice, and do not think him one to be contemned; for he will not forgive when thou hast sinned, and My name is in him," Exod. xxiii. 21. When Agar became insolent to her mistress, and fled from her house, her angel appeared to her in the wilderness, and reprov'd her, and said, "Return to thy mistress, and humble thyself under her hand," Gen. xvi. 9, and then comforted her under her affliction. After the death of Josue, when the people fell off from their allegiance to God, and became negligent in His service, the angel of God appeared openly to them, "and reprov'd them for their sins," Judges, ii. 1. Now these outward appearances are recorded for our instruction, to show us in what manner our guardian

angels assist us interiorly in the concerns of our souls, reproving, encouraging, and directing us by their holy inspirations. This the holy Judith was very sensible of; for when, by the particular inspiration of God, she undertook the deliverance of her people, she was doubtless exposed to many dangers in going through so arduous an undertaking; but after she had so gloriously accomplished it, and returned successfully to the city, she attributed all her success, under God, to the assistance of her guardian angel: "Praise ye the Lord our God," says she, "who hath not forsaken them that hope in Him, and by me His handmaid hath fulfilled His mercy. . . . As the same Lord liveth, His angel hath been my keeper, both going hence and abiding there, and returning from thence hither; and the Lord hath not suffered me His handmaid to be defiled, but hath brought me back to you without pollution of sin, rejoicing for His victory, and my escape, and your deliverance," Judith, xiii. 17.

(2.) They assist us in our temporal affairs. Thus, when Agar was at last banished from her mistress's house, with her son, "she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Bersabee. And when the water in the bottle was spent, she cast the boy under one of the trees that were there, and went her way; . . . for she said, I will not see the boy die, and sitting over against him, she lifted up her voice and wept." In this distress the angel of God appeared to her, and comforted her, and showed her a well of water to relieve her, Gen. xxi. 14. When the prophet Elias was in the wilderness, and in utter want of all things, his angel brought him at two different times a cake of bread and a vessel of water to support him, 3 Kings, xix. 5. The saints of God were so sensible of the assistance of their angel guardians in their



temporal affairs, that their confidence in them was a comfort and support to them under their difficulties. Thus when Abraham sent his servant to seek a wife for his son among his own relations, he encouraged him by saying, "The Lord God of heaven will send His angel with thee, and will direct thy way," Gen. xxiv. 7, 40. So likewise when Tobias sent his son on a long journey, to recover some money that was owing to him, he said, "May you have a good journey, and God be with you in your way, and His angel accompany you," Tob. v. 21. And after he was gone, the mother being in great distress for fear of him, Tobias comforted her, saying, "I believe that the good angel of God doth accompany him, and doth order all things well that are done about him; so that he shall return to us with joy," ver. 27.

(3.) They deliver us from dangers and temporal evils, and this is one of the principal ends for which Almighty God commits us to their care; for "He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways; in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," Ps. xc. 11; and "The angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear Him, and shall deliver them," Ps. xxxiii. 8. The famous history of Eliseus, when the city he was in was besieged by an army of Syrians, is well known; for, when his servant expressed his great fear on that account, the prophet said, "Fear not, for there are more with us than with them." And Eliseus prayed, and said, "Lord open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the servant, and he saw, and behold the mountain was full of chariots, and horsemen of fire, round about Eliseus," 4 Kings, vi. 16. The history of Tobias is full of the services done to that good man by the holy angel Raphael; and when St Peter was thrown into

prison, and was to be put to death next day, the angel of the Lord delivered him out of prison in a most wonderful manner, Acts, xii. ; as was also done to the other apostles ; for, when they were " Put in the common prison, an angel of the Lord, by night, opening the doors of the prison, and leading them out, said, Go, and, standing, speak in the temple to the people, all the words of this life," Acts, v. 19. Daniel, too, in the lions' den, when the king came next morning to inquire about him, said, " O king, my God hath sent His angel, and hath shut up the mouths of the lions, and they have not hurt me," Dan. vi. 21.

(4.) They pray for us, and present our prayers to God, as we have seen above, Q. 7, No. 2, and Q. 18.

(5.) Lastly, They take care of our souls at our death, assisting us at that tremendous moment, and when the soul departs from the body conduct her to her rest. Thus our Saviour assures us that, when Lazarus " died, he was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom," Luke, xvi. 22.

Q. 25. But what need is there for employing His holy angels to do all these services to us? Could not God do all this Himself?

A. Most undoubtedly: Almighty God stands in no need of the help of His angels, or of any creature, to do whatever He pleases ; but it ill becomes us to inquire into the reasons of His conduct ; He has been pleased to establish this order among His creatures, and for us that is enough. However, even in this, we see the effects of His infinite goodness, and how much He has in view the happiness of His creatures ; for He disposes things in this manner, to honour His holy angels, by committing to their charge those souls for which Christ died ; to show how much he esteems and loves our souls, by

employing such honourable and sublime beings to watch over us; to increase the union of charity among His intelligent creatures, by the mutual intercourse of good offices between them; to give joy to His angels, by employing them in promoting our good, which they so earnestly desire; for, if they have joy at the repentance of a sinner, how much more will they have, if they themselves contribute to his repentance by their good offices? and, finally, to excite us the more to love, praise, and serve Him, in gratitude for so much goodness.

*Q.* 26. In what manner ought we to behave towards our guardian angels?

*A.* We ought to behave towards them, (1.) With *reverence for their presence.* When we consider who they are, the most sublime of all the works of God, of a nature much superior to ours, the great nobles of the court of heaven, who always see the face of God, the first princes of His kingdom; and then reflect, that wherever we are our angel is always present with us, sees and knows all we do; we easily see with what respect and reverence we ought to behave in the presence of so glorious a being. Consider the behaviour of Abraham, and Josue, and Moses, and Daniel, and all the other holy saints of old, when the angels appeared visibly to them. Our good angel is no less present with us, though invisible to our eyes. Now, this reverence chiefly consists in avoiding all sin, and never daring to do in his presence what we would be ashamed to do in the sight of a man for whom we have a high esteem. Sin displeases the angels of God, is detestable to them, and therefore Almighty God says of our good angel, "Do not think him one to be contemned, for he will not forgive thee when thou hast sinned," *Exod. xxiii. 21.* (2.) With *devotion for their charity.* Devotion towards any one

properly signifies a readiness to obey him, and to do his will. Our angel guardians desire nothing more earnestly than our good; all their inspirations and reproofs tend to this end. This is great charity in them, and therefore we should attend to, and readily comply with, their inspirations, both in doing good and avoiding evil; this is to be truly devout to them; and therefore Almighty God Himself says, "Take notice of him and hear his voice, and do not think him one to be contemned," Exod. xxiii. 21. (3.) *With a confidence in their protection.* When we consider who our angel guardian is, that he is able to help us and most desirous of doing so, and that he has the charge from God to protect and assist us, we cannot doubt of his readiness to execute that charge. This ought certainly to give us great confidence in him under God, and make us frequently have recourse to him, and earnestly recommend ourselves to him, like Jacob, who would not "let the angel go till he had blessed him," Gen. xxxiii. 26.

#### SECTION VI.

##### *Of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

*Q.* 27. What is the honour and veneration which is due to the blessed Virgin?

*A.* We have seen above that the honour and veneration given to the saints in heaven are due to them on account of their great dignity, their connection with Jesus Christ, and the high privileges and excellences which they enjoy. Hence it follows that the more sublime the dignity of any saint is, the more nearly he is connected with Jesus Christ; and the higher and more exalted the

privileges he enjoys, the greater honour and veneration is due to him. Now, as the blessed Virgin Mary is, in all these respects, supereminently above the other saints, and even above the highest angels themselves, it follows as a necessary consequence that the honour and veneration due to her are supereminently greater than that which we owe to all the other saints and angels.

*Q.* 28. What are the high privileges which the blessed Virgin enjoys so far more excellent than those of all the other heavenly inhabitants?

*A.* They are chiefly these following: (1.) That *sublime and inconceivable dignity of being the mother of God*; a dignity so high and so great, that it puts her at once immensely above all other creatures, above everything whatsoever that is less than God. It is true she is still a pure creature, and, of course, infinitely below the Creator, between Whom and every creature there must always be an infinite distance; but, with regard to all other creatures, there is as great a distance between the blessed Virgin and the most sublime seraphim as there is between the dignity of the mother of God and His servants. St Elizabeth was amazed at the sight of this sublime dignity of the blessed Virgin; for when “she heard the salutation of Mary, she was filled with the Holy Ghost, and she cried out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb; and whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?” Luke, i. 41. By particular inspiration of the Holy Ghost she pronounced Mary the most blessed of women, and was confounded and amazed that so great a personage as the mother of God should come to visit her. (2.) *The intimate connection she has with Jesus Christ* by the sacred quality of being His mother. He, indeed, out of His

superabundant goodness, is pleased to consider His faithful servants as His brethren, and to treat them as such ; but they are His brethren, at most, only by adoption ; but the blessed Virgin Mary is His mother by nature, not by adoption, but by the nearest ties of flesh and blood ; He is flesh of her flesh, and bone of her bone ; His sacred body was formed of her flesh, and fed and nourished by her blood ; so that her connection with Him is that of a mother with the son of her womb, than which nothing can possibly be nearer between two persons. How justly, then, is she entitled to the highest veneration, who is so nearly connected with Jesus Christ ? (3.) The *superiority and authority* which He was pleased to give her over Himself, in consequence of her being His mother. An amazing thing it is, no doubt, to see the Creator of heaven and earth depending upon His own creature, the Sovereign Lord of all subject to a woman ; Him, Who provides for all creatures, standing in need of being tended, supported, and nourished by one of them ; and yet this is precisely the case. When God the Son first appeared among men, He was pleased to depend upon His virgin mother for all the innumerable helps that an infant stands in need of at that tender age ; to be tended and supported by her, and nourished with the milk of her breasts. As He grew up, all we know about Him, during His private life, till the thirtieth year of His age, is, that “ He went down to Nazareth, and was subject to her,” Luke, ii. 51. What an amazing idea does this give us of the honour and dignity of this ever-blessed Virgin ! If it be thought so great an honour among men to be the nurse and guardian of a king’s son, how much greater to be the mother, the nurse, and the guardian of the King of kings ? (4.) The *immaculate purity* of this ever-blessed Virgin is a pri-

vilege of an immense value, bestowed only on Mary : “ Behold, they that serve him are not steadfast, and in His angels He found wickedness,” Job, iv. 18 ; but in Mary He found none. She, ever steadfast in His holy service, was, by the special disposition of Divine Providence, from the very first instant of her conception, evermore preserved in innocence, and perfectly unsullied by the smallest stain of sin. She never ceased to be the undefiled temple of God, the chaste and immaculate spouse of the Holy Ghost, and, in consequence, the sacred object of His complacency and love. In her He never found the smallest opposition to His will, but a continual correspondence to and improvement of every grace He bestowed upon her. Hence His infinite goodness, which delights to communicate with the utmost profusion His holy grace to those in whom He finds no obstacle, was continually increasing His sanctifying grace in her soul ; insomuch that, (5.) The angel Gabriel when he appeared to her declared her to be “ full of grace, and that the Lord Himself was with her,” and that, on this account, she was in a particular manner “ blessed among women,” Luke, i. 28. What a high idea does all this give us of the immense dignity to which she is now raised in heaven, above all the other saints, corresponding to her immaculate purity, and the innumerable graces with which her blessed soul was adorned during her mortal state ! (6.) On all these accounts, she herself, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, prophesied the great honour and veneration that should be paid her in the Church of God, till the end of the world, when she said, “ My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God My Saviour, because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid ; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me

blessed ; for He that is mighty hath done great things to me, and holy is His name," Luke, i. 46.

*Q.* 29. Has the blessed Virgin more than ordinary love for our souls, and a great zeal for our salvation ?

*A.* This cannot be called in question ; for, (1.) the love and zeal for souls in any person is always in proportion to his love for God and for Jesus Christ ; because the more ardently he loves God, the more ardently must he desire to see Him loved and honoured by His creatures ; and the more ardently he loves Jesus Christ, the more ardent must be his zeal for the salvation of those for whom Christ died, and which He has so much at heart. Consequently, as there never was any creature whose love to God and Jesus Christ was to be compared with the love which the blessed Virgin has for them, so none of all the heavenly inhabitants can possibly have such a love for souls and such an ardent zeal for their salvation as she has. (2.) Our perfection in this life consists essentially in the conformity and union of our will with the will of God ; and the more we advance in this holy union, the more perfect we are ; but the entire perfection of this union of our will with the will of God is only to be found in heaven ; there the blessed saints have no other will but the will of God, and the greater saints they are the more perfectly are they transformed into this divine will. Consequently the blessed Virgin, being the greatest of all the saints, is the most perfectly united to the will of God, and has the most ardent desire of whatever pleases Him. Now, as Almighty God has a most ardent love for our souls, as He "wills that all men should be saved," 1 Tim. ii. 4 ; as "He wills not that any should perish, but that all should return to penance," 2 Pet. iii. 9 ; as He wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should return and live," Ezech. xxxiii. 11—



who can doubt of the ardent desires that all the saints in heaven have for the salvation of our souls, and especially the blessed Virgin, whose more exalted union with God makes her more ardently desire what is agreeable to Him? (3.) When our blessed Saviour was hanging on the cross for our sins, seeing "His mother and the disciple standing whom He loved, He saith to His mother, Woman, behold Thy son: after He saith to His disciple, Behold thy mother," John, xix. 26. In these words our blessed Saviour, with His last breath, recommends all His followers, in the person of St John, as her spiritual children, to His virgin mother; and recommends her to them to be honoured and respected as their mother: and indeed, if He is pleased to raise us up to the high dignity of being children of His heavenly Father, and His own brethren and co-heirs of His heavenly kingdom, without doubt His blessed mother must consider us as her spiritual children, and we have a just title to look upon her as our spiritual mother. And if so, who can conceive the ardent love she must have for our souls, and her fervent zeal for our salvation? How much must her zeal for our souls exceed that of the other saints, inasmuch as the tender affection of a mother for her children exceeds that of one brother for another? Besides, can she ever forget the last words of Jesus? can she neglect the charge He gave her from the cross?

*Q.* 30. Are the prayers of the blessed Virgin for us more powerful with God than those of other saints?

*A.* Most certainly they are; for, (1.) The more ardent our love for God, the more inflamed our desires for His glory; and the more concern we take in what regards His honour, the more ready He always is to hear our prayers; "He will do the will of them that fear Him; and He will hear their prayer," Ps. cxliv. 19.

“The eyes of the Lord are upon the just, and His ears unto their prayers,” Ps. xxxiii. 16. And when the angel Gabriel was sent from heaven in consequence of the prayers of Daniel, to tell him all he desired to know, he gave this as the reason of his coming, “because,” says he, “thou art a man of desires,” Dan. ix. 23. Now, as none ever feared God with such perfection as Mary did; as she was the most just and perfect of all pure creatures; as no one has such an inflamed desire for the glory of God and the good of souls,—her prayers for our salvation must be the most powerful in the sight of God. (2.) “Take delight in the Lord,” says His sacred Word, “and He will give thee the requests of thy heart,” Ps. xxxvi. 4. Who ever took delight in the Lord with such perfection as Mary? He alone was the object of her love, her joy and delight, every moment of her life; always full of His grace, her only happiness was in Him continually. How ready, then, must He now be to give her the requests of her heart? And what are these requests but her continual and most ardent desires for promoting His glory in the salvation of our souls? (3.) “If ye abide in Me,” says Jesus Christ, “and My words abide in you, ye shall ask whatever ye will, and it shall be done to you,” John, xv. 7. Now, who ever abode in Jesus Christ by holy love, without ever being separated from Him, even for an instant, as the blessed Virgin did? In whom did His sacred words abide with such perfection as they did in her? How powerful, then, must her holy prayers be in obtaining whatever she asketh? especially when we consider that she never can ask anything but what is agreeable to His will; and His holy Word declares, “This is the confidence which we have towards Him, that whatsoever we ask according to His will, He heareth us,” 1 John, v. 14. (4.) “If our heart do not reprehend us,

we have confidence towards God ; and whatsoever we shall ask we shall receive of Him, because we keep His commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in His sight," 1 John, iii. 21. Now, the blessed Virgin was perfectly innocent—no stain of sin ever fell upon her pure soul ; consequently her heart never did, never could reprehend her ; on the contrary, her continual attention was to do His will, and to do in everything what was pleasing in His sight : how powerful, then, must her prayers now be to obtain from His infinite goodness whatsoever she asks from Him ? (5.) Even when here on earth, her power of obtaining what she asked of her blessed Son was exceedingly great : a single hint of what she wished was sufficient to induce Him to work a most stupendous miracle, by changing water into exquisite wine, to supply the wants of those for whom she prayed, John, iv.—even although He observed to her that what she asked was not a thing that belonged to Him or her ; "what is that to you and me?" and besides, though "His hour was not yet come : " He granted her request, and began to perform miracles before His hour at her desire. If, therefore, her prayers were so powerful here on earth, how much more so must they be now that she reigns with Him in glory in His kingdom ? (6.) The sacred dignity she possesses, in being the mother of Christ, and the great regard He pays to her as such, must surely make her requests more agreeable to Him, and of greater weight in His eyes than those of any other of His saints, who, however holy they be, are but His servants, whereas the holiness of the blessed Virgin far exceeds the greatest of them ; and, above all, she is His mother.

*Q.* 31. What is the true devotion we ought to pay to the blessed Virgin ?

*A.* We observed above that devotion to any one pro-

perly signifies a readiness to do what is pleasing and agreeable to him. Now the thing most agreeable we can possibly do to the blessed Virgin, or indeed to any of the saints in heaven, is to live in innocence, to obey the will of God, and to save our own souls. In this way our devotion is equally agreeable to all the saints in general, for they all rejoice at the repentance of sinners and the sanctification of souls. In order, therefore, to render it proper to particular saints, we must so direct our devotion that they may be in a particular manner interested in promoting our salvation. Hence the true devotion which we owe to the blessed Virgin consists (1.) In endeavouring to save our souls by imitating her example in those sacred virtues for which she was most remarkable ; particularly her profound humility, her great purity, her admirable patience and meekness, her ardent love of Jesus Christ, her perfect conformity to the will of God in all her afflictions, and her tender love and compassion for others. (2.) In often meditating on her great virtues, and the sublime reward she has received for them in heaven, encouraging ourselves by that consideration to follow with courage and perseverance her sacred example, with a firm hope in the mercy of God that, through the merits of her blessed Son, we shall one day come to enjoy her blessed company in heaven. (3.) In often thanking and praising God for all the glorious privileges and graces bestowed upon her, and for the great glory she now enjoys in heaven. And (4.) in frequently begging the assistance of her prayers for grace to enable us to imitate her example, with a firm confidence that Almighty God, through the merits of her blessed Son, "will accept her face" for us, as He accepted the face of Job for his three friends, and through her intercession grant us those graces which He may justly refuse to our unworthiness.

## SECTION VII.

*Of the Holy Images and Relics.*

Q. 32. What is meant by holy images?

A. Holy images are representations of Jesus Christ and His saints, or of the historical parts of the Sacred Scripture, representing in a striking manner to the eye what we read of being done or suffered by our Saviour and His holy servants; and they are called *holy* from the relation they bear to the holy persons or things which they represent.

Q. 33. As the command of God says, "Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth; thou shalt not adore them nor serve them; I am the Lord thy God, mighty and jealous," Exod. xx. 4—Does not this absolutely forbid the making or using of holy pictures or images?

A. By no means—as is evident from several reasons; for, (1.) If these words were intended to prohibit the making of images of any kind, as they include everything without exception—"Thou shalt not make to thyself the likeness of anything in heaven or earth, or under the earth"—it would be unlawful to make any picture whatever, because all are included, whether holy or profane; so that it would be a sin to make the picture of a friend, to imprint the king's image upon coin, to paint a horse, a house, or any creature whatsoever, but this no person could ever imagine to be the meaning of that command; consequently, it does not prohibit the

making of images in general. (2.) Neither does it absolutely prohibit the making of holy images, for a very palpable reason: because God Himself absolutely commanded holy images to be made; for He said to Moses, "Thou shalt also make two cherubim of beaten gold on the two sides of the oracle: let one cherub be on the one side, and the other on the other: let them cover both sides of the propitiatory (or mercy-seat), spreading their wings and covering the oracle," Exod. xxv. 18; "And looking the one towards the other," Exod. xxxvii. 9. And when Solomon built the temple, "he graved cherubim on the walls," 2 Chron. iii. 7. Where also are described at large the magnificent manner in which he "made in the house of the Holy of Holies cherubim of image work, and overlaid them with gold," ver. 10—"and they stood upright on their feet, and their faces were turned toward the house without," ver. 13. All this was done by orders of his father King David, who "gave Solomon the purest gold to make the likeness of the chariot of the cherubim, spreading their wings, and covering the ark of the covenant of the Lord. All these things," said he, "came to me written by the hand of the Lord," 1 Chron. xxviii. 18. Also, "The Lord said to Moses, Make a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign; whosoever being struck (*with the fiery serpents*) shall look on it, shall live," Num. xxi. 8. This was a holy image, representing Christ upon the cross, as He Himself assures us, John, iii. 14. Now this shows to a demonstration that the words of the command do not forbid the making of holy images, otherwise God would never, on so many occasions, have commanded them to be made. (3.) Neither does the command forbid to honour holy images, and to use them for religious purposes; for God not only commanded the images of the two cherubim to be

placed upon the mercy-seat, upon the ark of the covenant, which was doing them honour, but He also said to Moses, "Thence will I give orders, and will speak to thee of the propitiatory, and from the midst of the two cherubims," Exod. xxv. 22. What greater honour could be done to these two images than to be the seat of God, the throne on which He should appear and declare His orders to His people? The other two also, which Solomon made by God's command to David, were set with their faces towards the house without, before all the people, who therefore prayed before or towards them. And could any image be used for a more religious purpose than the brazen serpent, which was set up to be an instrument in the hand of God for performing a continual series of the greatest miracles?

*Q.* 34. What then is the meaning of the words of the command?

*A.* The words of the command fully explain their own true meaning; for, after forbidding to make the likeness of anything, &c., it is immediately added, "thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them," which manifestly shows that the command only forbids the making of these things as idols to be adored and served as if they were gods, or could either see, hear, or help us; for this was the crime of idolatry, which had then become so common in the world, and to which the Israelites were extremely prone, as appears from their whole history, and particularly from their worshipping the golden calf, offering sacrifice to it, and saying, "These are thy gods, O Israel, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt," Exod. xxxii. 4, 6. What God immediately adds shows the same truth; for immediately after this prohibition He says, "I am the Lord thy God, strong and jealous," putting them in mind that He only is

their God, and jealous of His honour, Who will severely punish those who serve idols, or any other God but Him. By this it is manifest that the words of the command above cited are only an application and illustration of the former words, "thou shalt have no strange gods before Me," and by no means a command distinct from it.

*Q.* 35. What is meant by holy relics?

*A.* A holy relic is anything that belonged to any saint of God, and now remains with us after the saint is either departed out of this life, or at a distance from us. We may consider three different kinds of relics which fall under this general description: (1.) When the relic is any part of a saint's body which remains with us after his death. This is properly a relic in the strictest sense of the word, and considered as possessing in itself a considerable degree of holiness: because it is a part of that body which was sanctified by the superabundant graces of God, with which its soul was adorned; that body which was the temple of the Holy Ghost, and whose blessed soul, to which it was united, and to which it will again be joined, is now reigning with Christ in glory. (2.) When the relic is not a part of the saint's body, but only something that belonged to him in his lifetime, such as his books, clothes, or the like. This also is esteemed holy, from the connection and relation it had with the saint; such was the rod of Moses, and the mantle of Elias. (3.) Such things as did not even belong to the saints, but only had touched their bodies, either in their lifetimes or after their death; such as the aprons and handkerchiefs that had touched the body of St Paul, and afterwards cured all diseases. This kind is also called a relic, though in a less proper sense of the word than the two former.



Q. 36. What does the Church teach concerning the honour and veneration due to holy images and relics ?

A. With regard to holy images, the Church, in the General Council of Trent, teaches : “ The images of Christ, and of His virgin mother, and of other saints, are to be had and retained, especially in churches, and a due honour and veneration is to be given them : not that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them, for which they are to be honoured, or that any prayer is to be made to them, or that any confidence is to be placed in them, as was formerly done by the heathens, who placed their hopes in idols ; but because the honour which is given them is referred to the originals which they represent ; so that by the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads, or kneel, we adore Christ, and venerate His saints, whose likeness they represent,” Sess. xxv. And with regard to holy relics, the same Council teaches that “ the sacred bodies of the martyrs, and other saints, who are living with Christ, which were the living members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost, and are to be raised up by Him to eternal life, and glorified, are to be held in veneration by the faithful ; by them many benefits are bestowed by God on men,” Ibid.

Q. 37. On what is this veneration of holy images and relics founded ?

A. On three very strong and solid reasons : (1.) *On the very natural disposition and frame of the heart of man.* For when we have a real affection and esteem for any one, our regard is not confined to his person alone, but naturally and forcibly extends itself to everything that belongs to or is intimately connected with him. What esteem and regard do we not constantly pay to the picture of our king, or of any friend whom we sincerely

love? If a mother loses her child by death, how carefully does she keep a lock of its hair, treasuring it as a dear memorial? Examples of this kind are innumerable. If, therefore, we have a sincere affection for Jesus Christ and His holy saints, does not nature itself impel us to have an esteem and regard for their holy images and relics? And is it possible to esteem these things without showing the external signs of this when occasion offers? But is it to these images or relics, considered in themselves, that we show this regard? By no means. No more than the regard we show for the picture of a friend, or the esteem we put upon any memorial of those we love, is paid to these objects as considered in themselves. It is only for the sake of those whom they represent, and for the connection they have with those we love, that we show any regard to them. The outward respect, therefore, which we pay to these things is only a proof of our inward love, esteem, and veneration for those to whom they relate; and on this account it is that all the regard we pay to these things is called *relative honour, relative worship*, and the like.

(2.) *On the authority of God Himself*, who has frequently been pleased to manifest approbation of the respect and veneration paid to holy images and relics. The brazen serpent, set up by His express command in the wilderness, was an image of Jesus Christ upon the cross,—and what numbers of miracles did not God perform by it? for as many as were bitten by the fiery serpents, the bite of which, till that time, was certain death, were immediately healed by only casting their eyes upon the brazen serpent, Num. xxi. 9. When Elias was taken up to heaven, Eliseus, his successor as the prophet of God, “took up the mantle of Elias, that fell from him, and going back, he stood upon the bank of

the Jordan, and he said, Where is now the God of Elias? And he struck the waters with the mantle of Elias, and they were divided hither and thither, and Eliseus passed over," 4 Kings, ii. 13. And after some time this prophet "Eliseus died, and they buried him. And the rovers from Moab came into the land the same year; and some that were burying a man, saw the rovers, and cast the body into the sepulchre of Eliseus; and when it had touched the bones of Eliseus, the man came to life and stood upon his feet," 4 Kings, xiii. 20. If we examine the New Testament, there we find that God wrought by the hand of Paul more than common miracles; so that even "there were brought from his body to the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them," Acts, xix. 11. See here what examples of the greatest benefits bestowed on man, and the most surprising miracles wrought by God, by means of holy images and relics. Could anything more manifestly approve and authorise the respect and veneration due to these things? Let us examine the feelings of our own hearts: Suppose we had in our possession the mantle of Elias, or the aprons and handkerchiefs that had touched the body of St Paul, and saw the same miracles done by them which are recorded in Scripture, would not nature itself dictate to us to put the highest value and esteem upon them?

(3.) *On the advantages which we receive from the use of holy pictures*, even in a natural way—for they are a proper and becoming ornament for the churches of God; they serve for the instruction of the ignorant; they excite love and holy affections towards God and His saints, as the picture of our absent friend recalls him to our remembrance, and revives our love and affection for him; they encourage us to an imitation of their virtues; and

they are a profession of our faith that we believe the doctrine of Christ and His saints.

*Q.* 38. In what manner is due respect paid to holy images and relics?

*A.* Sacrifice, both in its own nature and in the common judgment of mankind, is an external manifestation of our belief in the Divine Being and His infinite perfections, and of that supreme worship and adoration which we give to Him as God. On this account it can be given to none but God alone, and to offer sacrifice to any creature whatever would be gross idolatry. But sacrifice alone excepted, there is no outward sign of respect, whether bowing, uncovering the head, kneeling, or the like, which, either of itself or in the opinion of mankind, signifies any one particular kind of respect more than another. These signs are used not only towards God, but also towards men. They are employed to signify civil and natural homage, as well as religious and Divine worship, according to the object honoured. And as, in fact, we have no other means of showing outwardly our respect and regard, we make use of them also to express the veneration and respect we pay to holy images and relics, as well as to any other object.

*Q.* 39. But does not the affectionate manner in which these outward signs of respect are sometimes used towards crucifixes, holy images, and relics, show that they are really more thought of than they deserve, and give just cause to accuse those who do it of superstition, or even of idolatry?

*A.* This is the argument used by the adversaries of the Catholic Church, to render her odious; but nothing can be more uncharitable, nothing more unjust. All that these external actions naturally signify is this, that we esteem, respect, and venerate the object to which we

direct them. The more ardently and affectionately we perform these actions, the more we show the sincerity of our love and respect for the object. But this does not explain the express nature of the feeling or connection from which our love and esteem proceed. Hypocrisy can imitate all these external signs of the internal affections. They may be used in mockery and ridicule, as they were by the soldiers when they bowed the knee before our Savióur, and saluted Him, *Hail, King of the Jews!* When, therefore, a person performs any of these external acts of respect to a holy image or relic, though he do it in the most affectionate manner, can anything be more *uncharitable* than to conclude from this that he believes the image or relic to be the God that made him? or that he loves it, adores it, and trusts in it as his God? Can anything be more *unjust* than to persist in making this accusation, when the person himself, and all Catholics declare, that they detest such a thought, and that by those acts they intend only to honour the sacred objects which these holy images represent? Protestants themselves show every day outward respect and honour to the pictures of their king and deceased friends. Can anything be more unreasonable than absolutely to condemn what arises from a good and laudable motive, particularly when the act itself is naturally more susceptible of a good than a bad meaning? When Josue saw the angel, “he fell on his face to the ground and worshipped,” Jos. v. 15. Would any man conclude from this that Josue was guilty of superstition or idolatry, and believed this angel to be his God? When David’s nobles “bowed themselves, and worshipped God and the king” (1 Chron. xix. 20), will either justice or charity allow us to conclude that they adored David as their God? When Josue “fell flat on the

ground, before the ark of the Lord, until the evening, both he and all the ancients of Israel, and cast dust upon their heads" (Jos. vii. 6), could anything be more unreasonable than to conclude that they gave Divine adoration to the ark? Besides, with regard to a crucifix, or the image of Christ crucified, how can those who profess themselves Christians be offended at the sight of an image which represents the sufferings of their Redeemer? or how can they believe that it is incumbent on them to have the image of His death always present to their *mind*, and yet not tolerate it before their *eyes*?

Q. 40. But do not the expressions used to the cross of Christ by the Church herself in some of her hymns, show that the cross is believed to be more than a mere creature, and has power to help and save us?

A. This is another shameful misrepresentation and calumny against the Catholic Church. Poetical compositions, such as hymns, have this peculiarity that, without the smallest injury to truth, they use tropes, figures, and warm expressions, which no man ever understands literally; because, in their literal sense, they are false—absolutely absurd. Now, because such expressions are used in some of the Church hymns, is it not uncharitable and unjust in the highest degree to conclude that the Church understands them in their literal sense, in which they are evidently false? Can anything be more unreasonable than to lay so heavy an accusation to her charge upon such slight grounds—an accusation which implies that all her members are fools and idiots?

Q. 41. Are expressions of this kind authorised by the Word of God?

A. They are authorised by the common practice of all mankind, and the Word of God is full of them. Thus, St Paul says, "God forbid I should glory, save in the

cross of our Lord Jesus Christ," Gal. vi. 14, where, as the words stand in their literal sense, the material cross is the only object of St Paul's glory. In another place, if we take his words literally, the material cross was the cause of our reconciliation with God; for he says, "Christ reconciled man unto God in one body by the cross," Eph. ii. 16: nay, he attributes blood to this cross as the price of our reconciliation,—“to reconcile all things to Himself, making peace by the blood of His cross,” Col. i. 20. And when the people of God were beaten by the Philistines, they said, “Let us fetch unto us the ark of the covenant of the Lord from Silo, and let it come in the midst of us, that it may save us from the hand of our enemies,” 1 Kings (Sam.), iv. 3. Would it not be ridiculous to conclude from these expressions that St Paul and the people of God were all idolaters? or that they attributed sense, and a power to help them, to the material wood of the cross and to the ark of the covenant? How, then, can such an argument be used against the Church of Christ, especially when, upon all occasions, and in all her catechisms, books of instruction, and the like, she declares her abhorrence of the crime, and protests her innocence of the slanderous accusation laid to her charge? If calumny and slander be a mortal sin, those who accuse her in this manner have indeed much to answer for.

Q. 42. Is there any other subject of importance to be considered before this treatise be concluded?

A. There yet remain two things of the highest importance which we purposely delayed till now, that these instructions on the faith of Christ might end with them; these are—*Death*, that important passage from time to eternity; and *Hell*, that place of punishment prepared for the wicked in the next world.

## APPENDIX I.

*On Death.*

Q. 43. What is death?

A. Death is the separation of the soul from the body, the dissolution of our mortal existence, which puts an end to our being in this world.

Q. 44. What are the effects of death?

A. (1.) It deprives us of all our possessions in this world—riches, honours, titles, dignities, lands, and goods; and, in doing this, it makes no difference, no distinction between the king and the beggar; rich and poor, wise and foolish, all are reduced in an instant to the same abject state by the all-conquering hand of death. (2.) It deprives us of every bodily and mental qualification; for though a person be ever so accomplished, ever so beautiful—though he have the most retentive memory, the clearest understanding, the most solid judgment, lively wit, agreeable turn of mind, amiable temper, and the most fertile genius,—though all these natural talents have been improved to the utmost by reading, study, conversation, and experience, yet the moment that the fatal hour approaches, all must yield to death, which puts an immediate end to all these qualifications, as if they never had existed. (3.) It deprives us of our very powers, senses, and faculties themselves; the body becomes a lifeless lump of clay, which can neither see, hear, speak, move, nor feel. (4.) It causes an eternal separation from every enjoyment of this life, the light of day, the charms of music, the conversation of our fellow-creatures, the society of men, the company of friends,



relations, and acquaintances, however near or dear they may have been—all these we can never more enjoy in this world. (5.) It deprives us of our time itself, and with it of all further possibility of labouring for the great end of our being, the salvation of our souls, and at once puts a stop to all those schemes about worldly affairs, which so often fill our minds and distract our thoughts with anxious cares, and hinder us from attending, as we ought, to the great concerns of eternity. (6.) It reduces the body to a miserable state of poverty and nakedness, than which nothing can be more dismal and hideous; for it is no better than a stock or stone, a lump of clay, a mass of corruption!

*Q.* 45. What appearance does the body present after death?

*A.* A most dismal and ghastly appearance, for the head sinks, the neck being no longer able to support it; the hair, moist with the sweat of death, lies in disorder from the tossing and struggles of the last agony; the temples become hollow; the ears hang loose and lifeless; the eyes are sunk in the head, and half open, deprived of their wonted brightness, and staring in a ghastly manner; the cheeks fall in; the nose becomes sharp and pointed; the lips pale, and separated from one another; the tongue dry and parched; and the whole body stiff and cold as a piece of marble! What a dismal change! That pleasant smile, which was so agreeable to the beholders, that rosy blush which was wont to adorn the countenance, those lively looks, that cheerful air, which gave such grace to the behaviour—all are now gone, all faded, withered, and changed into such a dismal spectacle, that the most cheerfully disposed person in the world cannot behold it without being filled with thoughts of sadness; all who go near, after looking upon the

corpse for a moment, cover it up again, and immediately withdraw, silent and pensive, carrying about with them in their mind the sad image, and incapable of any pleasure or enjoyment, till by other objects they have put it from their thoughts.

*Q.* 46. What happens in the body itself after death ?

*A.* The corpse, lying in this miserable state, soon begins to corrupt, and to infect the place. Scarce two days are passed since the person expired, and already it is impossible to remain in the room with it ; the windows must be thrown open to admit air, and, as soon as possible, the dead body must be hurried out of the house, carried to a distance, and buried in the earth, lest the air itself should be corrupted by the infection that issues from it. Although a man's children loved him as the best of parents, though his servants revered him as the most indulgent master, though the affection of his wife went even to excess, though every one that knew him was fond of him to distraction, yet now what a change has death produced ! Of all his nearest and dearest friends, not one will now come near him, nor suffer the nauseous smell that issues from him ; but all of them, wife, children, friends, relations, neighbours, servants, acquaintances, all desire to remove him from the house as soon as possible, and hurry him to the grave ! And what a dismal habitation is this ! a place of darkness and obscurity ! a place of horror ! a strait and narrow habitation ! hid from the light of the sun ! filled with bones and dead remains ! with no other company than worms and vermin, to which the corpse is left a prey ! Such is the end of all worldly grandeur !

*Q.* 47. But what happens to the body in the grave ?

*A.* St Augustine tells us that, being at Rome, he was invited to go see the body of an emperor, which had

been buried some time before, and was going to be raised and translated to another place ; and he thus describes what he saw upon this occasion : "I saw," says the saint, "the flesh all black and bluish, falling off by pieces, through rottenness ; his belly was full of worms, which came out and went in by holes which they had gnawed there, just like an ant's hill in a summer's day : among others, two had taken up their nest in the holes of the eyes. His hair was all falling off ; his lips and nose were already consumed, so that all his teeth appeared ; and I saw up his nostrils, even to the skull." What a miserable spectacle ! What a humbling sight to behold ! An emperor ! But the truth is so : scarcely is the body of the most beautiful person shut up in the grave, and covered with the earth, than it immediately begins to change its colour ; and in a short time the whole becomes black from head to foot. It is the prey of worms. It is no more a body, but a mass of corruption. Soon it can no longer be distinguished from the earth in which it lies. Thus the sentence pronounced on man for sin is fulfilled, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return."

*Q.* 48. What are the properties of death ?

*A.* Chiefly these three : (1.) It is absolutely certain that all must die ; for "it is appointed for men once to die," Heb. ix. 27. And indeed, though the Word of God had been silent on this subject, experience itself convinces us of it. Hence even unbelievers who reject the Scriptures, and laugh at all religion, agree in the firm belief that "we all must die." The sentence is universal, and comprehends all the seed of Adam, without exception of condition, state, or dignity. We have heard of many heroes, who have conquered nations, and made the world tremble at their frown ; but all their might

and valour could not conquer death, nor even delay its approach for a moment when their hour was come. Many have been remarkable for their great learning, penetrating genius, and extensive knowledge in all the wonders of nature; but none, even Solomon himself, could ever discover a remedy to preserve himself from death. There are always numbers in the world abounding in riches, and possessing the wealth and opulence of the earth, but they could no more buy a moment's life when death approaches than the poorest beggar. Many have lived to a great age, as we read in the fifth chapter of Genesis, even to several hundreds of years; but, after all, the Scriptures add, "and he died." Even sanctity itself cannot preserve from death. There have been many holy servants of God in the world, many souls most pleasing to the Almighty, many at whose desire He wrought the greatest miracles, and overturned, in a manner, the established laws of nature, but none could ever obtain from Him exemption from the sentence of death pronounced by His Divine justice against all mankind. The blessed Virgin Mary, the most innocent, the most holy, of all pure creatures, underwent this sentence; yea, Jesus Christ Himself, the holy of holies, though any suffering of His was sufficient to redeem ten thousand worlds, yet, as He made Himself a man, and took our nature upon Him, would also undergo the common doom of our nature, by dying on a cross. So that it remains an infallible truth that death is certain; it is the portion of all mankind; we must all die. (2.) The time, place, manner, and all the circumstances of death are no less uncertain than death itself is certain. When shall we die? this day or to-morrow? within a week, or month, or year? or shall we live yet several years? Of all this we are ignorant. How many have gone to

bed seemingly in good health, and were corpses before the morning? How many have risen healthy and well, and before the sun was set, have been in eternity? How many are cut off in childhood, youth, and every stage of life, when they least expect it? When will our time be? As to the place, where shall we die? at home or abroad? in the house or in the fields? by sea or by land? in town or country, &c. Of all this we are no less ignorant than of the time—it is a mystery wholly hidden from our eyes. In what manner shall we die? In our sins, or in favour with our God? Shall we be cut off suddenly, or have time to prepare ourselves? shall we have time to call for and receive the helps of religion, or shall we die without them? shall our death be violent or natural? easy or painful? by sickness or the sword? by fire or water? Of these and a thousand other circumstances, we know nothing. Many are every day carried out of the world by some one or other of these means, but which of them will be our fate is hidden from our eyes. “None knows of this hour but the Father, and He to whom the Father will reveal it;” but this we know, because Jesus Christ has declared it, that “it will come like a thief in the night, when we least expect it;” for “at what hour you know not, the Son of Man will come,” Mat. xxiv. 44; yea, “at what hour you think not, the Son of Man will come,” Luke, xii. 40. (3.) We can die but once, and once dead, we are dead for ever to this world; there is no returning to life to die a second time. A mistake, then, in this affair, is a mistake without remedy.

*Q.* 49. What consequences flow from these properties of death?

*A.* (1.) From the certainty of death it follows as a necessary consequence that we ought to prepare our-

selves in time for that important passage. Little need would there be of preparation for death if all were to end at that hour; but when we die to this world, we only then, properly speaking, begin to live—to live a life that will never end, and will be either a life of eternal bliss or of eternal misery. In one of these we must all end, and the determination of our eternal doom depends upon the state in which we die! Our all is at stake! An eternity is the point in question! How necessary, then, to prepare ourselves while time is for so important a moment! (2.) From the uncertainty of the time and manner of our death, it follows that we ought to be always prepared, and not dare to live a moment in a state in which we would be afraid to die. Who knows but death may seize us in that unprepared moment, and then what must be our misery for ever! None are willing to die unprepared—the very thought appals us. But we vainly flatter ourselves that we have yet a long time to live; hence we put off and delay our necessary preparation till death comes at last, when we do not expect it, and by this delusion hell is filled with souls. Our blessed Saviour, well knowing how apt we are to be deluded by this snare of Satan, warns us against it in the most touching manner. (3.) As we can die but once, and as upon the manner in which we die our eternal doom depends, it follows as a necessary consequence that we ought to consider our preparation for death as the most important affair of our whole life, the only business for which we came into this world, and therefore to be always *well* prepared and ready whenever the call may come. A mistake here is an eternal one; it can never be remedied. When a person has an affair only of minor consequence on hand, he may be indifferent whether he succeed or not, and a little negligence may

be pardonable ; but if his life or whole fortune were at stake, who would pardon his neglect ? If we be undertaking a long and dangerous voyage, what care do we not take to lay in all necessary provisions for it ? If we have a case to be tried before a judge for any important worldly matter, what precautions and pains do we not take to procure a favourable sentence ? Death is a dreadful and dangerous voyage from time to eternity ! After death we have a cause to be tried before a supreme tribunal, and by the sentence passed there our eternal fate is decided !

*Q.* 50. What does our Saviour say on this subject in the Gospel ?

*A.* (1.) He describes the uncertainty of that hour, exhorts us to watch and be always ready. Thus—"Of that day and hour no one knoweth; no, not the angels of heaven, but the Father alone. And as it was in the days of Noah, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they knew not till the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. . . . Watch ye, therefore, because ye know not at what hour your Lord will come. Wherefore be ye also ready, because at what hour ye know not the Son of Man will come," *Mat.* xxiv. 37. "Likewise, as it was in the days of Lot: They ate and drank, they bought and sold, they planted and built: and in the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all; even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall be revealed. . . . Remember Lot's wife," *Luke*, xvii. 28; for "Of that day or hour no man knoweth; neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father. . . . Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not

when the Lord of the house cometh ; at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning : lest coming on a sudden He find you sleeping. And what I say to you I say to all, Watch," Mark, xiii. 32.

(2.) He shows us the great happiness of being always ready and prepared for death. Thus—"Who, thinkest thou, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath set over his family to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom, when his lord shall come, he shall find so doing. Amen, I say to you, he shall set him over all his goods," Mat. xxiv. 47. "Blessed are those servants, whom the lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Amen, I say to you, that he will gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and passing, will minister to them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or if he shall come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. . . . Be ye then also ready ; for at what hour ye think not, the Son of Man will come," Luke, xii. 37.

(3.) He shows the misery of those who shall be found unprepared when death comes. Thus—"But if the evil servant say in his heart, My lord is long a-coming ; and shall begin to strike his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with drunkards : The lord of that servant shall come in a day that he looked not for him, and at an hour when he knoweth not, and shall separate him and appoint his portion with hypocrites ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mat. xxiv. 48. Then He goes on with the parable of the foolish virgins, to show that all such shall be eternally excluded from the marriage chamber, the eternal joys of heaven ; for when these virgins came and said, "Lord, Lord, open to us,—he answering, said, Amen, I say to you, I know you not ;" and hence our Saviour concludes, "Watch ye, therefore ;



because ye know not the day nor the hour," Mat. xxv. 11. "And the servant that knew the will of his lord, and prepared not himself, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes," Luke, xii. 47. And to those who trust in their riches, and deceive themselves with the hope of a long life, He proposes the example of the rich man, who said to himself, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thy rest, eat, drink, make good cheer. But God said to him, Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee; and whose shall these things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God," Luke, xii. 19.

(4.) He shows in what manner we ought to prepare for death. Thus—1. That we ought to live innocently, and avoid sin: "Take heed to yourselves, lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and the cares of this life; and that day come upon you suddenly; for as a snare shall it come upon all that sit upon the face of the whole earth," Luke, xxi. 34. 2. That we take off our hearts and affections from the perishable things of this life, and place them upon the joys of heaven, and give alms to the poor: "Sell what ye possess, and give alms. Make to yourselves bags which grow not old, a treasure in heaven which faileth not, where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Luke, xii. 33. 3. To adorn our souls with the practice of piety and good works: "Let your loins be girt, and lamps burning in your hands, and you yourselves like men who wait for their Lord, when He shall return from the wedding; that, when He cometh and knocketh, they may open to Him immediately," Luke, xii. 35. And hence another Scripture says, "Blessed are the dead who die in the

Lord. From henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; for their works follow them," Rev. xiv. 13. 4. To join to all this a continual guard and watch over ourselves with fervent prayer to God for His Divine assistance : "Take ye heed ; watch and pray ; for ye know not when the time is," Mark, xiii. 33. "Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times, that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and to stand before the Son of Man," Luke, xxi. 36.

*Q.* 51. What kind of good works are most proper to prepare us for death ?

*A.* (1.) Self-denial and the mortification of our passions, by which our hearts are most effectually taken off from creatures, and rendered free and ready to answer the call, and leave all we have in this world, whenever the hour comes : "O death," says the wise man, "how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that hath peace in his possessions ; to a man that is at rest, and whose ways are prosperous in all things, and that is yet able to take meat !" But, on the contrary, "O death, thy sentence is welcome to the man that is in need, and to him whose strength faileth !" Ecclus. xli. 1. In this sense, St Paul said, "I die daily ;" because, as death is an eternal separation from all the things of this world, he, by daily mortification and self-denial, separated still more and more his heart and affections from them, as the best preparation for the final separation by death. (2.) Works of charity and mercy towards the poor : "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy," Mat. v. 7. "According to thy ability, be merciful. If thou have much, give abundantly ; if thou have little, take care even so to bestow a little willingly ; for thus thou storest up to thyself a good reward for the day of necessity. For alms deliver from all sin, and from death, and will not suffer a

soul to go into darkness. Alms shall be a great confidence before the Most High God, to all that give it," Tob. iv. 8. (3.) Worthily frequenting the holy sacraments, by which the grace of God is more and more communicated to our souls, our confidence in Him increased, our hearts inflamed with His holy love, and strength acquired against the day of trial. (4.) Frequent exercise of the divine virtues of faith, hope, and charity; these are the arms by which we are to quench all the fiery darts of the enemy in our last moments; against these his most violent assaults are commonly made at that hour; and it is by frequent practice that we must make them familiar to us, and be accustomed to use these heavenly arms when the day of battle comes. (5.) Prayer and watching, as recommended above by Jesus Christ Himself.

## APPENDIX II.

*On Hell.*

Q. 52. What account does the Scripture give of hell?

A. It represents it as a place where there is all manner of woes and miseries, without the least mixture of good, and where the unhappy victims of the Divine justice shall be tormented for an endless eternity. (1.) The place itself is thus described: "A land that is dark and covered with the mist of death; a land of misery and darkness, where the shadow of death, and no order but everlasting horror dwelleth," Job, x. 21. "Their land shall be soaked with blood, and their ground with the fat of fat ones. . . . The streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the ground thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch; night and

day it shall not be quenched ; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever," Isa. xxxiv. 7. "For Topheth is prepared from yesterday, prepared by the king, deep and wide ; the nourishment thereof is fire and much wood, and the breath of the Lord as a torrent of brimstone kindleth it," Isa. xxx. 33. And hence that holy prophet cries out to sinners : "The sinners in Sion are afraid, trembling hath seized upon the hypocrites ; which of you can dwell with devouring fire ? which of you can dwell with everlasting burnings ?" Isa. xxxiii. 14. In the Gospel it is emphatically called *a place of torments*, Luke, xvi. 28. And our Saviour says, "At the end of the world, the Son of Man shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mat. xiii. 40. "And he opened the bottomless pit, and the smoke of it arose, as the smoke of a great furnace ; and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke of the pit," Rev. ix. 2. "And the devil, who seduced them, was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone, where both the beast and the false prophet shall be tormented, day and night, for ever and ever," Rev. xx. 9.

(2.) The executioners of the Divine vengeance are thus described : "His zeal shall take armour, and He will arm the creature for the revenge of His enemies. . . . He will sharpen His severe wrath for a spear, and the whole world shall fight with Him against the unwise ; then shafts of lightning shall go directly from the clouds, . . . and thick hail shall be cast upon them from the stone-casting wrath ; the water of the sea shall rage against them, and the rivers shall run together in a terrible manner ; a mighty wind shall stand up against them, and as a whirlwind shall divide them," Wis. v.

18. "There are spirits which are created for vengeance, and in their fury they lay on grievous torments. In the time of destruction they shall pour their force, and they shall appease the wrath of Him that made them: fire, hail, famine, and death, all these were created for vengeance, the teeth of beasts, and scorpions, and serpents, and the sword taking vengeance upon the ungodly unto destruction," *Ecclus. xxxix. 33.* "The Lord shall rain snares upon the wicked; fire and brimstone, and storms of wind, shall be the portion of their cup," *Ps. x. 7.* "For the creature serving the Creator is made fierce against the unjust for their punishment," *Wis. xvi. 24.* "The Lord Almighty will take revenge on them; in the day of judgment He will visit them: for He will give fire and worms into their flesh, that they burn and feel for ever," *Jud. xvi. 20.*

(3.) Their companions in misery: "The devil who seduced them, . . . the beast and the false prophet, . . . and hell and death were cast into the pool of fire," *Rev. xx. 9, 10, 14*; "and the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," *Rev. xxi. 8.* Among these will be Cain who murdered his brother, Judas who betrayed his God, the rich glutton who was clothed with purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, and the great whore of Babylon, of whom the great God says, "Go out from her My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and the Lord hath remembered her iniquities. Render to her as she also hath rendered unto you; and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup wherein she

hath mingled, mingle ye double unto her. As much as she hath glorified herself, and hath been in delicacies, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her; because she hath said in her heart, I sit as a queen, I shall see no mourning; therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, and she shall be burnt with the fire," Rev. xviii. 4. With these will also be all those unhappy "angels who sinned, and kept not their principality, but forsook their own habitation, whom God delivered to infernal ropes drawn down to the lower hell into torments, and reserved under darkness, in everlasting chains, unto the judgment of the great day," 2 Pet. ii. 4, and Jude, ver. 6. The people "of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbouring cities, who, having given themselves over to fornication, and gone after other flesh, were made an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire," Jude, ver. 7. All those "who have gone in the way of Cain, and have poured out themselves after the error of Balaam for reward, and have perished in the gainsaying of Core," Jude, ver. 11. "And all other sinners who did not do penance from their murders, nor from their sorceries, nor from their fornications, nor from their thefts," Rev. ix. 21; "nor from their other crimes," Rev. xvi. 11. A dreadful and hideous company indeed! shocking and horrible state, to be confined with such for all eternity!

(4.) Their torments themselves are also thus laid down in Scripture; and in general it is said, "to them that are contentious, and who obey not the truth, but give credit to iniquity, wrath, and indignation. Tribulation and anguish on every soul of man that worketh evil," Rom. ii. 8. The particulars of this tribulation are,—1. Confusion and reproach: "The Lord shall laugh them to

scorn ; and they shall fall after this without honour, and be a reproach among the dead for ever ; for He shall burst them, puffed up and speechless, and shall shake them from the foundations, and they shall be utterly laid waste ; they shall be in sorrow, and their memory shall perish ; they shall come with fear at the thought of their sins, and their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them," Wis. iv. 18. "Wherefore thou hast also greatly tormented them, who in their life have lived foolishly and unjustly, by the same things which they worshipped ; . . . thou hast sent a judgment upon them, as senseless children to mock them," Wis. xii. 23, 25. "They are confounded and ashamed ; the forgers of error are gone together into confusion," Isa. xlv. 16. "Fear shall cover them, and shame shall be upon every face, and baldness upon all their heads," Ezek. vii. 18 ; for "Behold I come against thee, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will discover thy shame to thy face, and I will show thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to kingdoms ; and I will cast abominations upon thee, and will disgrace thee," Nah. iii. 5. "Thou shalt drink thy sister's cup deep and wide ; thou shalt be had in derision and scorn ; it containeth much. Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow, with the cup of grief and sadness, . . . and thou shalt drink it up even to the dregs, and thou shalt devour the fragments thereof," Ezek. xxiii. 32. Yea, God Himself shall deride them : "I also," saith He, "will laugh in your destruction, and will mock when that shall come upon you which you feared," Prov. i. 26. Then shall they cry out in the words of the Psalmist, "All the day long my shame is before me, and the confusion of my face hath covered me," Ps. xliii. 16. 2. Fire ; for they shall "be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire, where their worm

dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished ; . . . for every one shall be salted with fire, and every victim shall be salted with salt," Mark, ix. 44, 48. Accordingly the sentence of the Judge shall be, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels ; . . . and these shall go into everlasting punishment," Mat. xxv. 41. "For Thou, O Lord, shalt make them as an oven of fire in the time of Thy anger. The Lord shall trouble them in His wrath, and fire shall devour them," Ps. xx. 10. "He shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mingled with pure wine in the cup of His wrath, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the sight of the holy angels, and in the sight of the Lamb ; and the smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever, neither have they rest day or night," Rev. xiv. 10. 3. The cup of the wrath of God : "In the hand of the Lord there is a cup of strong wine full of mixture, . . . the dregs thereof are not emptied ; all the sinners of the earth shall drink," Ps. lxxiv. 9. "Take the cup of wine of this fury at My hand, and thou shalt make all the nations to drink thereof unto which I shall send thee ; and they shall drink, and be troubled, and be mad ; . . . to make them a desolation, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a curse," Jer. xxv. 15. And this dreadful cup of the wrath of God contains all manner of evils : "A fire is kindled in My wrath, and shall burn even to the lowest hell. . . . I will heap evils upon them, and will spend My arrows among them. They shall be consumed with famine, and birds shall devour them with a bitter bite : I will send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the fury of creatures that trail upon the ground, and of serpents. Their grapes are grapes of gall, and their clusters most bitter : their wine is the gall of dragons, and the venom



of asps which is incurable. Are not these things stored up with Me, and sealed up in My treasures? Revenge is Mine, and I will repay them in due time," Deut. xxxii. 22, 32. 4. In the midst of all these dreadful evils no comfort, nor peace, nor ease, "Neither have they rest day or night," Rev. xiv. 11. No ray of light to cheer their disconsolate mind; for that land "is a land of darkness, covered with the mist of death; yea, a land of misery and darkness," Job, x. 21. Hence the sentence pronounced against the wicked servant in the Gospel, "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Mat. xxii. 13; for to them "the storm of darkness is reserved for ever," Jude, ver. 13. Yea, the fire itself which torments them shall be a fire of darkness to them: "Shall not the light of the wicked be extinguished, and the flame of his fire not shine? The light shall be dark in his tabernacle," Job, xviii. 5. No drop of water to cool their parched tongues, burnt and scorched in these tormenting flames. The rich glutton, "lifting up his eyes, when he was in torments, saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; and he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame," Luke, xvi. 23. What is a drop of water to that ocean of fire? and yet this drop of water was denied him. No pleasant sound of music shall be found there to soothe or relieve their pain; for "I will take away from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, and the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the mill and the light of the lamp, and all this land shall be a desolation and an astonishment," Jer. xxv. 10; and "The voice of harpers

and of musicians, and of them that play on the pipe and on the trumpet, shall be no more heard at all," Rev. xviii. 22.

(5.) Their employment in that abyss of misery is thus declared: "There shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth," Mat. viii. 12. "They shall seek death and shall not find it; they shall desire to die and death shall fly from them," Rev. ix. 6. They will torment themselves with bitter but fruitless remorse, "Saying within themselves, repenting, and groaning with anguish of spirit, We have erred from Thy way of truth, and the light of justice hath not shined unto us: we wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity and destruction, and have walked through hard ways, but the way of the Lord we have not known. What hath pride profited us? or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? All these things are passed away like a shadow," Wis. v. 3. But knowing all this is to no purpose, they burst out into rage and despair, "gnawing their tongues for pain, and blaspheming the God of heaven because of their pains and wounds," Rev. xvi. 10.

(6.) The pain of loss, or their eternal separation from God and all good, will be the most dreadful of all their torments; for God is an infinite good in Himself, and the inexhaustible source of all good to us; our hearts are made for Him, and nothing less than God can satisfy the boundless capacity of our souls. Even in this life we partake in numberless ways of His infinite goodness, all the good we enjoy being emanations from the boundless ocean of His Divine goodness. Unhappy sinners are not sensible of this while partaking of His sweetness in this life: blinded by their passions, and occupied with a thousand vain and sensual pursuits, they forget the sovereign source from which all good flows. In hell the

case will be altered. For being loosed from the chains of mortality, sensual objects will no longer bind them. They will then feel that God alone is their sovereign, their universal, their eternal good—that nothing else can possibly afford them comfort. They will feel the most ardent desire of possessing this immense good, but will see, to their inexpressible torment, that this eternal good is eternally lost to them; lost to them in Himself, lost to them in themselves, and lost to them in all His creatures. Their lively sense of this irreparable loss, and of all its fatal consequences, will rack their despairing souls; nor will they be able, for a single moment, to turn away their thoughts from it. Lost to their God, lost to all good, and eternally fixed in an ocean of suffering, they are in a continual state of violence, and all their vehement longings after happiness will only serve to redouble their misery; hence the soul becomes a hell to herself, racked by envy, sadness, hatred, rage, despair. Even in this life, the holy servants of God find the greatest joy and comfort from that small glimpse of the Divine presence which God sometimes communicates to them for their consolation; and nothing gives them so great affliction as when He at times, for their trial, deprives them of it. Thus Job, amidst his other afflictions, complains, in a particular manner, of this as of the most severe of his sufferings: “Why hidest Thou Thy face, and thinkest me Thy enemy?” Job, xiii. 24. When all his other trials came upon him, he was content, and blessed God for them. So long as he enjoyed the Divine presence all was well; but the moment he was deprived of this, he was afflicted indeed, and complained of this loss as the greatest of all. David also was most sensible of this, and expresses the dreadful affliction it occasioned him when he says, “How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget me unto the end?”

How long dost Thou turn away Thy face from me? How long shall I take counsels in my soul, sorrow in my heart all the day?" Ps. xii. 1. "In Thy favour Thou gavest strength to my beauty; Thou didst turn away Thy face from me, and I became troubled," Ps. xxix. 8. God Himself also threatens sinners, to deprive them of His countenance as one of the greatest punishments even in this life, saying to such, "I will cast you away from before My face, as I have cast away all your brethren," Jer. vii. 15. "Because they forsook Me, I have hid My face from them; and I have delivered them into the hands of their enemies. . . . I have dealt with them according to their uncleanness and wickedness, and have hid My face from them," Ezek. xxxix. 23. Then shall "they cry to the Lord, and He will not hear them; and He will hide His face from them at that time, as they have behaved wickedly in their devices," Mich. iii. 4. What, then, will be the case of sinners in hell, when, banished for ever from the face of God, and plunged in an ocean of misery, they shall cry out, in the agonies of despair, Thou hast hid Thy face "from us, and hath crushed us in the hand of our iniquity," Isa. lxiv. 7. And as this will be the most intolerable part of their punishment, so it occupies the first place in the sentence that will be passed against them on the day of judgment: "Depart from Me, ye cursed!" Mat. xxv. 41: "I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity," Mat. vii. 23: I know "not from whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity," Luke, xiii. 27. *Depart from me!* that is the dreadful sentence; and hence St Paul declares that "They shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction, from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of His power," 2 Thess. i. 9. And being thus for ever separated from God, they are of course separated from all

good, banished for ever from the society of His saints, and eternally cut off from the joys of heaven; for “Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liars with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God,” 1 Cor. vi. 9. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest; . . . of which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God,” Gal. v. 19; “For this know and understand, that no fornicator, nor unclean nor covetous person, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God,” Eph. v. 5. “Into that heavenly Jerusalem shall not enter anything defiled, or that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie,” Rev. xxi. 27. “But without are dogs, and sorcerers, and unchaste, and murderers, and servers of idols, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie,” Rev. xxii. 15.

(7.) The duration of their torments shall be for ever, as long as God shall be God, for an endless eternity; as is expressly declared in several of the texts above cited.

*Q.* 53. How can it be reconciled with the goodness of God, to say that He will punish His creatures for all eternity?

*A.* This is a difficulty of which much is made by the freethinkers, who deny all revelation; and on this ground they form their argument against what the Christian revelation teaches concerning the eternity of future punishments. But in this they act irrationally; for it is an evident truth, “that no arguments founded on principles which we cannot comprehend can possibly disprove a proposition already proved on principles that we do understand.” That the Christian revelation is from God, and infallibly true, is proved, beyond reply, by all the motives of credibility, which are arguments of their

own kind, suited to the capacity of every man of common understanding. What is becoming the Divine goodness, how infinite goodness and infinite justice can be reconciled in their respective operations, it is infinitely above any finite understanding to comprehend. As the Christian revelation is from God, every article of it must be infallible truth. Although, therefore, *our finite understandings* should not be able to reconcile any revealed truth with *our imperfect idea* of infinite goodness, yet this can never be any reason, either against the truth of revelation in general, or against any particular truth contained in it. Now, the eternity of hell's torments is a truth revealed by God, a fundamental article of the Christian revelation; consequently, although we cannot reconcile this truth with our *weak and imperfect idea* of the goodness of God, yet this can never have the smallest weight against that truth.

Q. 54. How does it appear that the eternity of hell's torments is a truth revealed by God?

A. From three very strong reasons: (1.) Because the Holy Scriptures everywhere represent these torments as *eternal*, as *never-ending*, as enduring *for ever and ever*; and this appears from numbers of those texts above cited. (2.) Because the Christian world has at all times, and in all places, declared this to be a revealed truth, and has always understood those texts in their literal and obvious sense; nor is it possible to show any other beginning for this belief than that of Christianity itself, as appears from the writings of Christians in all ages, and from the testimony and declaration of the Church of Christ on all occasions. (3.) Because, in the fourth century, when the opposite doctrine was first broached, it was immediately condemned by the whole Christian world as impious, contrary to the sacred Word of God,

and to the faith received from their predecessors. Hence it follows that, in order to disprove the eternity of hell's torments, the deists must show either that the Christian revelation is an imposture, or that this article is not a point of the Christian revelation,—neither of which they have ever been able to do, notwithstanding all their desires and efforts.

*Q.* 55. From whence arises the mistake of those who deny the eternity of hell's torments?

*A.* From the imperfect, false, and unjust idea they form of the malice of sin ; for, blinded by their passions, and inclined by the corruption of their heart to justify everything that is agreeable to their natural inclinations, they shut their eyes to the evil of sin, and the greatness of the injury done to the infinite majesty of God, and on this account endeavour to persuade themselves that, as sin, according to their idea, is but a trifling affair, it is inconsistent with the Divine goodness to punish it with eternal torments. But this is reasoning upon false principles; for if they would argue rationally, they ought to reason thus: “God is infinitely just, and therefore can never punish sin more than it deserves ; He is infinitely good, therefore must rather be inclined to punish it less than it deserves. But this infinitely just and good God has positively declared that He will punish mortal sin, in the next world, with eternal torments; therefore sin must infallibly be an evil of infinite malice, however trifling it may appear to my self-love and corrupt judgment.” This is a just way of reasoning, and founded on incontestable principles. And, would they but allow themselves to consider the malice of sin by the principles of reason itself, and not through the mist of passion, they would both be brought to the same conclusion, and con-

vinced that it justly deserves eternal punishment ; for, even among ourselves, do not the constant feelings of our heart persuade us that an offence, the same in itself as to the action, is always the more grievous the greater distance there is between the offender and the person offended ? Do we not constantly decide that the malice of the injury is always greater the more exalted the person offended is in dignity above the offender ? Seeing, therefore, that there is an infinite distance between the most perfect creature and God the Creator, mortal sin, which is a grievous injury done by the creature to the Creator, must contain infinite malice. Sin, therefore, requires an infinite punishment ; but, as a finite creature could not exist under a punishment infinite in intensity, it therefore must be infinite in its extension or duration—that is, must be eternal.

It must also be considered that God Almighty has forewarned sinners of their danger ; He has told them what they have to expect if they die in their sins. Now, when good and evil, life and death, are placed before their eyes, that they may choose which they please, if they wilfully choose that which God Himself assures them will bring them to eternal suffering, is not this itself too small a punishment for such insolent madness ? The eternal punishment of sinners, instead of derogating from the goodness of God, displays it in an admirable light : for can any man say what satisfaction is due to infinite justice, for the infinite sanctity and mercy of God, abused and blasphemed by wicked men ? To argue by the light of reason, and from what passes among ourselves, an infinite satisfaction would be required ; and if this be the case, what is it but infinite goodness and mercy in God to warn men of their danger, and to tell them beforehand what they have



to expect by sinning, that they may avoid sin, and preserve themselves from falling into endless misery? Nay, we may go a step further, and observe that it is even necessary for the good of mankind, both that the torments of hell should be eternal, and that God should reveal it to the world. For if the corruption of our heart be such, that notwithstanding the belief of the eternity of these torments, wickedness and vice reign so universally, even among those who have that belief; what would be the case if they believed these torments only temporary? If even eternal punishments do not suffice to restrain men from sin, what would be the case if the punishments of sin were to last only for a time, and then to end?

*Q.* 56. After all, what proportion is there between sin, which is the action of a moment, and a punishment which is of eternal duration?

*A.* But who can assure us that sin is the action of a moment? Even though it were, it contains, as we have seen, an infinite malice, because of the infinite dignity of the person of God, who is offended by it, and therefore deserves an infinite punishment. A stab given to a king, with a view to kill him, is only an action of a moment, and yet it is punished with prison, confiscation, tortures, and death, which is a kind of infinite punishment as to this life. But what if the sin itself, in those who die guilty of it, should be eternal? The guilt of sin does not lie precisely in the outward action—which, indeed, is but the act of a moment—but in the malice of the will of the sinner who commits it; and as long as the sinful action is unrepented of, so long the will adheres to it, and continues, as it were, in the virtual commission of it; because all that time it continues averted from God, and adhering to that sinful action by which God is offended. If a sin-

ner dies in this state, it is manifest that as long as he continues in it he must deserve punishment ; and if he continues in it for eternity, he must deserve eternal punishment. Now this is exactly the case. The same Divine revelation which assures us that the pains of hell are eternal, assures us also that after this life there is no repentance ; but that miserable sinners condemned to those pains shall, for all eternity, be employed “in gnawing their tongues for pain, and blaspheming the God of heaven, because of their pains and wounds, and do not repent for their works,” Rev. xvi. 10. “A fire is kindled in My wrath,” says Almighty God, “and shall burn even to the lowest hell ; and I will heap evils upon them, and will spend My arrows among them. Oh that they would be wise, and understand, and provide for their last end !” Deut. xxxii. 22, 29.

## AN INQUIRY,

WHETHER SALVATION CAN BE HAD WITHOUT  
TRUE FAITH, AND OUT OF THE COMMUNION  
OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST ?

*Introduction and State of the Question.*

THERE is nothing in which the great Apostle of the Gentiles seems more to glory than in his ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, and in the sincerity of his heart in delivering to the world the sacred truths of eternity pure and uncorrupted. He was not ashamed of these Divine truths ; he rejoiced when he was called to suffer for them : he had no worldly interest in view in preaching them ; he sought not the esteem and favour of men in delivering them ; his only view was to promote the honour of his blessed Master, and to gain souls to Him, and therefore he had no idea of using flattering words, or of accommodating the doctrine of the Gospel to the humours of men.

He knew that the truths revealed by Jesus Christ are unalterable ; that “heaven and earth shall pass away, but His words shall never pass away ;” and that, therefore, to corrupt these sacred words, though but in one single article, would be “a perverting the Gospel of Christ,” Gal. i. 7,—a sin so grievous, that the Holy Ghost, by his

mouth, pronounces a curse upon any one, though an angel from heaven, who shall dare to be guilty of it. Hence he describes his own conduct in preaching the Gospel as follows: "Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, in what manner I have been with you for all the time . . . How I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have preached it to you, and taught you publicly, and from house to house," Acts, xx. 18, 20. "We had confidence in our God, to speak to you the Gospel of God in much carefulness; . . . not as pleasing men, but God, who proveth our hearts; for neither have we used at any time the speech of flattery, as you know, nor taken occasion of covetousness; God is witness. Nor sought we glory of men, neither of you, nor of others," 1 Thess. ii. 2, 4. "For we are not as many, adulterating the Word of God; but with sincerity, but as from God, in the sight of God, we speak in Christ," 2 Cor. ii. 17. "We renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor adulterating the Word of God, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God; . . . for we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord," 2 Cor. iv. 2, 5. "Do I speak to please men? If I yet pleased men I should not be a servant of Christ," Gal. i. 10. Now "Christ sent me to preach the Gospel, not in wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ should be made void; for the word of the cross to them, indeed, that perish, is foolishness; but to them that are saved, that is, to us, it is the power of God. . . . And it pleased God by the foolishness of our preaching to save them that believe. . . . For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men: . . . and the foolish things of the world God hath chosen, that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath

God chosen that He may confound the strong, . . . that no flesh should glory in His sight," 1 Cor. i. 17. "But I am not ashamed of the Gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," Rom. i. 16. And therefore, "I, when I came among you, came not in loftiness of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of Christ; and my preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in showing of the Spirit, and in power; that your faith might not stand on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God," 1 Cor. ii. 1.

The Church of Christ, animated by the same Divine Spirit of truth which inspired this holy apostle, has at all times regulated her conduct according to the model set before her in his words and example, "earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints," Jude, ver. 3; her continual care is "to keep that which is committed to her trust" pure and undefiled, "avoiding all profane novelties of words," 1 Tim. vi. 20; that the sacred *words* of God, "once put into her mouth, may never depart from her, from henceforth and for ever," Isa. lix. 21. She therefore knows not what it is to temporise in religion, in order to please men, nor to adulterate the Gospel of Christ to humour them; she declares the sacred truths revealed by Jesus Christ in their original simplicity, without seeking to adorn them with the persuasive words of human wisdom, much less to disguise them in a garb not their own. Truth, plain and unadorned, is the only weapon she employs against her adversaries, regardless of their censure or their approbation. "This is the truth," she says, "revealed by God; this ye must embrace, or ye can have no part with Him." If the world look upon what she says as foolishness, she is not surprised, for she knows that "the sensual man

perceiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God ; for it is foolishness to him, and he cannot understand," 1 Cor. ii. 14 ; but that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men ;" and pitying this blindness, she earnestly prays God to enlighten them, "with modesty admonishing them, . . . if, peradventure, God may give them repentance to know the truth," 2 Tim. ii. 25.

If ever there was a time when this conduct of the Church was necessary, the present age seems particularly to demand it. At present the gates of hell seem opened, and infidelity of every kind stalks lawless on the earth ; the sacred truths of religion are reviled and denied, the Gospel adulterated by countless contradictory interpretations ; its original simplicity disfigured by loftiness of speech and the persuasive words of human wisdom. A thousand condescensions and compliances are permitted in the unchangeable doctrines of faith and the pure maxims of morality, and the "narrow way that leads to life" converted into the "broad road that leads to destruction." This observation applies particularly to that latitudinarian opinion so common nowadays, that *a man may be saved in any religion, provided he lives a good moral life according to the light he has* ; for by this the faith of Christ is made void, and the Gospel rendered of no avail. A Jew, a Mahometan, a heathen, a deist, an atheist, are all comprehended in this scheme, and if they live a good moral life, have an equal right to salvation with a Christian ! To be a member of the Church of Christ is no longer necessary ; for whether we belong to her or not, if we live a good moral life, we are in the way of salvation ! What a wide field does this open to human passions ! What licence does it give to the caprice of the human mind ! It is therefore of the utmost consequence to examine the ground of this opinion, to see if

we can safely trust our salvation to it. It is doubtless the interest of atheists and deists to adopt this opinion, to extol it with the highest praises for liberality of sentiment and charity; but a Christian who believes the Gospel will not receive it so readily: he knows that the Scriptures contain the truth of God, and that it is unsafe to trust our soul to any maxim, however specious, which is not grounded on their sacred oracles; and therefore, before he adopts it, he will rigorously scrutinise it by comparing it with what they teach.

To do this is the design of the following inquiry, or rather to show, from the precise declaration of the Word of God, that the above freethinking maxim is diametrically opposed to the light of revelation; for there we learn that the Son of God became man, and appeared among men, in order to instruct them in the knowledge of those Divine truths on which their salvation depends; and therefore that He absolutely requires true faith in Him, and in the sacred truths which He revealed, as a necessary condition of salvation. There also we learn that He instituted a holy Church on earth, to be the depository of these truths, and that He absolutely requires all to be united with that Church in order to be saved. In the belief of these two truths Christian Churches in general agree. The Churches of *England* and *Scotland*, no less than the Catholic Church, solemnly acknowledge them, and hold that, without the true faith of Jesus Christ, and without being a member of His true Church, there is no salvation. They all agree in the belief of these truths, however much they differ in their application. In this inquiry, then, it is the common cause of Christianity which is defended. To which Church the author belongs will easily appear; and if he applies these general truths to his own Church, it is

because he believes it to be the true Church. A member of any other must do the same if he reason consequentially; wherefore, without any further preamble, we shall proceed to the point, and show, in the words of the Confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland, that *out of the Church of Christ there is no ordinary possibility of salvation* (Confession of Faith, chap. xxv.)

Q. 1. How does this appear from the Holy Scriptures?

A. The Holy Scriptures are very plain on this head; but as the various texts propose it under different points of view, we shall, for greater clearness, consider them separately.

#### SECTION I.

##### *Direct Proofs from Scripture.*

(1.) The prophet Isaiah, foretelling the glory of the Church of Christ, says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that resisteth thee in judgment thou shalt condemn," Isa. liv. 17. "For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish," Isa. lx. 12. Here we see declared in express terms that all those who oppose the Church of Christ, and refuse to submit to her authority, shall be condemned by her, and shall perish. Our Saviour declares the same in still stronger terms, when He says to the pastors of His Church, in the persons of His apostles, when he sent them to preach the Gospel, "Whosoever shall not receive you, NOR HEAR YOUR WORDS, going forth out of that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Amen, I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city," Mat. x. 14.



(2.) Our Saviour, after instructing us to admonish our offending brother in private, or before a few witnesses, concludes thus: "If he will not hear them, tell the Church; and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen or a publican," Mat. xviii. 17. The heathens are those who know not the true God, and who worship idols, and the very devils themselves, instead of God. The publicans were a class of people among the Jews odious for their crimes, and looked upon by all as abandoned by God, and given over to a reprobate sense. With these, then, all who obstinately resist the voice of the Church are classed and condemned by the mouth of Jesus Christ Himself.

(3.) Our Saviour, speaking of His Church under the figure of a flock, of which He Himself is the good shepherd, says: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd," John, x. 16. He is here speaking of those who were not then joined in communion with His apostles and other disciples, and He calls them at that time "His sheep;" but to show there was no salvation for them in the state in which they then were, and unless they were united to the fold, He says, "them also I must bring;" which shows that, according to the disposition of the Divine decrees, it was absolutely necessary that all who belong to Jesus Christ, all whom He acknowledges for His sheep, should be brought to, and united in communion with, that *one fold*, which is His Church.

(4.) In consequence of this, we are assured that, when the apostles began to publish the Gospel, "the Lord daily added to their society such as should be saved;" or, as the Protestant translation has it, "The Lord daily added to the Church such as should be saved," Acts,

ii. 47 ; which points out in the strongest manner, by what God actually did, that the being added to the Church is a condition absolutely required by Him in order to be saved ; and if that were so then, it must be so now, and to the end of the world ; for the conditions of salvation, ordained at the beginning and revealed by Jesus Christ, cannot be altered by any other ; and He has never made any new revelation to alter them Himself.

(5.) The Church is the body of Christ, and all who belong to the Church are members of His body, and united with Jesus Christ the head ; but those who are out of the Church are not members of His body, nor are they united with Christ the head. Now, speaking of His Church and her members under the figure of a vine, with its branches, He says, "I am the vine, ye the branches : He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit ; for without Me ye can do nothing. If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast forth as a branch and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth," John, xv. 5. What Christ here says under the figure of a vine is equally true as to the members and the body ; for no member separated from the body can do anything ; it has neither life nor feeling, but falls into corruption : which expressly shows that if we be not united to the Church of Christ, whether we consider this Church as a body consisting of the head and members, or as a vine with its branches, we are not united with Christ, but on the way to perdition.

(6.) These proofs are so strong, so convincing, that the Church of Scotland acknowledges the truth of what we have laid down, and in the very terms in which we have proposed it ; for in her Confession of Faith,

agreed upon by the divines of Westminster, approved by the General Assembly in the year 1647, and ratified by Act of Parliament in 1649, in the chapter on the Church she speaks thus: "The visible Church, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation, as before, under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, and of their children, and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation."—Confession of Faith, chap. xxv.

## SECTION II.

### *Proofs from the Necessity of true Faith.*

(1.) Jesus Christ, addressing Himself to His eternal Father, says, "This is eternal life, that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent," John, xvii. 3. Hence it necessarily follows that all those who do not know Jesus Christ cannot have eternal life. Now, this knowledge of Jesus Christ is not the mere knowledge that such a person existed, but the believing Him to be what He is, the eternal Son of God, made man for the salvation of mankind; and therefore He says again, "God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting," John, iii. 16. Hence the believing in Jesus Christ is one condition positively required by God in order to salvation; so that without this belief there can be no salvation; for, as He Himself again declares, "He that believeth not is already condemned; because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of

God," John, iii. 18 ; and " He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," John, iii. 36. And the beloved disciple adds, " Many seducers are gone out into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh ; this is a seducer and an antichrist," 2 John, 7. By which it is manifest that those who do not know Jesus Christ, and consequently do not believe in Him, and also those who do know that there was such a person, but refuse to believe, and *confess* that He is the Son of God *come in the flesh*, cannot be saved ; and therefore, that the knowing and believing in Jesus Christ is appointed by Almighty God, as an absolute condition of salvation.

(2.) But it is not enough to believe in the person of Jesus Christ ; it is also required to believe His doctrine, His words, those Divine truths which He has revealed ; and, indeed, how can we believe Him to be God if we refuse to believe what He says ? Hence, when He gave the pastors of His Church, in the persons of His apostles, their commission to preach the Gospel, He ordered them to teach the world " to observe all those things whatsoever I have commanded you," Mat. xxviii. 20. And He immediately adds, " He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be condemned," Mark, xvi. 16,—where it is manifest that the belief of His doctrine, the observance, and consequently the belief, of all those things which He commanded His apostles to teach, is a necessary condition of salvation. Nay, He adds in another part, " Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him also the Son of Man shall be ashamed when He shall come in the glory of His Father, with His holy angels," Mark, viii. 38. Now, if being ashamed of His words brings

such a condemnation, what will the denying of them do? It is evident, therefore, that the true faith of Jesus Christ comprehends the belief both of His person and His words—that is, of His doctrine; and that this faith is laid down by Almighty God as a necessary condition of salvation.

(3.) As it is impossible that Jesus Christ could reveal contradictions, or say to one that anything is true, and to another that it is false, the true faith of Jesus Christ cannot contain contradictions; it must be the same everywhere, and in no point contrary to itself. This the Scripture expressly affirms,—“One Lord, one faith, one baptism,” Eph. iv. 5. Now, St Paul positively declares that “without faith it is impossible to please God,” Heb. xi. 6; consequently this one true faith of Jesus Christ is so absolutely required as a condition of salvation, that without it, let a man do what he will, it is impossible to please God, or be saved.

(4.) The Scripture declares that, when the apostles published the truths of the Gospel, “as many as were ordained to eternal life believed,” Acts, xiii. 48; consequently, those who did not believe were not ordained to eternal life; whence it evidently follows that faith is a condition absolutely required by God for obtaining eternal life. For St Paul affirms, “The sure foundation of God standeth firm, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are His,” 2 Tim. ii. 19; that is to say, God, from all eternity, most certainly knows who are His—who those are, who, by obeying His holy grace, will continue faithful to the end, and be happy with Him for ever; and all such He ordains to eternal life. When, therefore, the Scripture affirms that “as many as were ordained to eternal life believed,” it evidently shows that the belief of the truths of the Gospel, or true faith, is

appointed by God as a necessary condition of salvation, as none are so ordained but those who believe.

(5.) Our blessed Saviour, speaking of those who belong to Him says, "I know mine, and mine know Me. . . . My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give them eternal life, and they shall not perish for ever," John, x. 13, 27. Can any words express more clearly that to know Jesus Christ, and to hear His voice, and follow him—that is, to believe and obey Him—are the distinguishing marks of His sheep, to whom He gives eternal life? Consequently, those who do not believe Him are none of His, and therefore will not be saved; as He expressly says to the Jews, "but ye do not believe, because ye are not of My sheep," John, x. 26; "and if ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins," John, viii. 24; which shows to a demonstration that faith in Jesus Christ is expressly appointed by Almighty God as a condition of salvation; "neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," Acts, iv. 12.

(6.) St Paul, expressing that of the Psalmist, "To-day if ye shall hear his voice," &c., says, "And to whom did He swear that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that were incredulous? and we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief," Heb. iii. 18. On this account he exhorts thus: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief to depart from the living God," Heb. iii. 12; and again, "There remaineth a day of rest for the people of God; . . . let us hasten, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall into the same example of unbelief," Heb. iv. 9, 11. In all this passage the main scope of the apostle is to show that unbelievers cannot go to heaven; and this

truth is confirmed by Almighty God even with a solemn oath.

(7.) The Holy Scriptures declare that unbelievers, instead of going to heaven, shall be condemned to hell-fire; and class all such with the worst of criminals. Thus the Almighty Himself declares to St John the apostle, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, they shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," Rev. xxi. 8. If, therefore, Almighty God has sworn that unbelievers shall not enter into His rest, and if He declares that their portion shall be in hell, one must shut his eyes not to see that true belief, true faith in Jesus Christ and His words—namely, that faith, *without which it is impossible to please God*—is absolutely required by Almighty God as a condition of salvation.

(8.) The Word of God assures us that, antecedently to faith in Christ, all mankind are under sin, and that it is impossible to be justified from sin but by faith in Jesus Christ, which is set forth by God as the means of obtaining justification. Thus, "We have charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin, as it is written, There is not any man just," Rom. iii. 9. "But the justice of God is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe in Him; for there is no distinction; for all have sinned and do need the glory of God. Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood," Rom. iii. 22. Also, "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe," Gal. iii. 22.

(9.) These sacred testimonies of the Word of God are so clear and convincing, that the Church of England admits and embraces the Athanasian Creed as containing nothing but Divine truths, and what may *be proved by the most evident texts of Scripture*, as is declared in the 8th of the 39 Articles. Now the Athanasian Creed begins thus: "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith, which faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." Then, after explaining the great mysteries of the Catholic faith concerning the Unity and Trinity of God, and the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ, it concludes in these words: "This is the Catholic faith, which, except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." This speaks plainly indeed, and needs no application.

Now, seeing that the true faith, or the firm belief of those truths which Jesus Christ revealed, is thus absolutely required as a condition of salvation, it follows as a natural consequence that out of the true Church of Christ there is no salvation, because this true faith can be found only in the true Church of Christ; to her the sacred charge of the truths of eternity was committed; the words of Jesus Christ were first put into her mouth, and an express covenant made by God, *That they should never depart from her mouth*. It is therefore from the pastors of the Church alone we can learn the true faith, since they alone are authorised to preach it, and in hearing them we hear Christ Himself. Hence St Paul says, "How shall they believe Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach unless they be sent?" Rom. x. 14. Now, the pastors of the Church were ordained and sent by Jesus Christ to "teach all



nations, and to preach the Gospel to every creature," consequently it is only from them that the truths of the Gospel can be learned.

### SECTION III.

#### *Proofs, with regard to those who are separated from the Church.*

In this section we are to consider what judgment the Scriptures pronounce on all who are separated from the Church of Christ by teaching and believing doctrines contrary to hers ; and, for the greater clearness, we shall consider first those who begin such separation, and teach false doctrine, and then those who follow such leaders. With regard to the former :—

I. Our blessed Saviour, foretelling the coming of false teachers, says, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves ; by their fruits ye shall know them ;" and then He tells us, going on with the similitude of a tree, what shall be the portion of such false prophets. "Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire," Mat. vii. 15, 19. Such is the fate of false teachers, according to Jesus Christ. St Paul describes them in the same light, and exhorts the pastors of the Church to watch against them, that they may prevent the seduction of the flock. "I know that after my departure ravening wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock : and of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them ; therefore watch," Acts, xx. 29. Such is the idea the Word of God gives of all who depart from the doctrine of the Church of Christ, and teach false-

hood; they are *ravenous wolves, seducers of the people*, who *speak perverse things*, and whose end is *hell-fire*.

2. St Paul, concluding his Epistle to the Romans, warns them against such teachers in these words: "Now, I beseech you, brethren, to mark them who cause dissensions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and to avoid them: for they that are such serve not Christ our Lord, but their own belly, and by pleasing speeches and good words seduce the hearts of the innocent," Rom. xvi. 17. Can such as these, who cause dissensions contrary to the ancient doctrine, and seduce the souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus, who are not servants of Christ, but His enemies, and are slaves to their own belly—can these, I say, be in the way of salvation? Alas! the same holy apostle describes their fate in another text, saying "That they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame," Philip. iii. 18.

3. In St Paul's absence some false teachers had come in among the Galatians, and persuaded them that it was *necessary* for salvation to join circumcision with the Gospel; on this account the apostle writes his epistle to correct this error; and though it was but an error on one point, and apparently not of great importance, yet, because it was false doctrine, the holy apostle condemns it: "I wonder how you are so soon removed from him that called you to the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel: which is not another; only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a Gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we said before, I say now again, if any one preach to you a Gospel besides that which ye

have received, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 6. This shows, indeed, the crime and fate of false teachers, though their doctrine was false only on a single point.

4. St Peter describes these unhappy men in the most dreadful colours. "There shall be among you lying teachers, who shall bring sects of perdition" (or, as the Protestant translation has it, *damnable heresies*), "and deny the Lord who bought them, bringing on themselves swift destruction," 2 Pet. ii. 1; and going on to describe them, he says: "Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their destruction slumbereth not," ver. 3. "The Lord knoweth how . . . to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be tormented; and especially them who . . . despise governments, audacious, pleasing themselves, they fear not to bring in sects blaspheming," ver. 9; "leaving the right way, they have gone astray," ver. 15. "These are wells without water, and clouds tossed with whirlwinds, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved," ver. 17. Good God! what a dreadful state to be in!

5. St Paul, speaking of such as are led away by what St Peter calls *damnable heresies*, says, "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid; knowing that he that is such an one is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment," Tit. iii. 10. Other offenders are judged and cast out of the Church by the sentence of the pastors; but heretics, more unhappy, leave the Church of their own accord, and by so doing give judgment and sentence against their own souls.

6. St John brands all such false teachers who go out from the true Church of Christ with the name of Antichrists. "Even now," says he, "there are become many Antichrists. . . . They went out from us, but they were not

of us ; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have remained with us ; but that they may be manifest that they are not all of us," 1 John, ii. 18. And again he says, " Many seducers are gone out into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh ; this is a seducer and an Antichrist," 2 John, ver. 7. And to show that not only those who deny the divinity of Jesus Christ, but also those who do not embrace His doctrine, fall under the same condemnation, he immediately adds, " Whosoever revolteth, and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that continueth in the doctrine, the same hath both the Father and the Son," ver. 9. What stronger terms could be used to show that all who are separated from the Church of Christ, and receive not His sacred doctrine, are out of the way of salvation ?

Now, if all who break off from the Church of Christ, and teach false doctrine, contrary to " the faith once revealed to her, and which shall never depart out of her mouth," are condemned in such strong and severe terms by the Holy Ghost in His Holy Scriptures, in what condition must those be who follow these false teachers, and hold such pernicious doctrine ? Is there the smallest reason to suppose that salvation can possibly be found among " ravenous wolves, seducers of the flock, speakers of perverse things " ? Is it possible to be saved in " pernicious sects, damnable heresies, false doctrines, dissensions, and offences contrary to the doctrine received from the apostles " ? Can those be safe guides to heaven whom the Word of God declares to be " enemies of the cross of Christ," and " Antichrists, whose end is destruction," who fall under the curse of the apostle, " to whom the mist of darkness is reserved " ? But let us hear the Scripture itself for the answer to these questions.

(1.) St Paul, in the black catalogue he gives of the works of the flesh, reckons *sects*, or, as the Protestant translation has it, *heresies*, as one of them; and, classing this with *idolatry*, *witchcraft*, and *dissensions*, he concludes in these words,—“Of which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God,” Gal. v. 20.

(2.) Our Saviour, foretelling the evils of the latter times, says, “And many false prophets shall arise, and shall seduce many . . . but he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved,” Mat. xxiv. 11, 13. Is it not evident from this that those who are seduced by these false prophets shall not be saved? and that salvation will be the happy lot only of those who persevere in the faith and love of Christ to the end?

(3.) St Peter, foretelling that “there shall be lying teachers, who shall bring in damnable heresies, and bring upon themselves swift destruction,” immediately adds, “and many shall follow their riotousness” (or, as the Protestant translation has it, *their pernicious ways*), “through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of,” 2 Pet. ii. 2. Now, to whom are these ways pernicious but to those who follow them?

(4.) The whole Epistle of St Jude contains a description of all those who follow these pernicious ways, and of their miserable fate, and says, “That they are raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own confusion; wandering stars, to whom the storm of darkness is reserved for ever,” ver. 13.

(5.) St Paul declares, “That in the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, and having their consciences seared,” 1 Tim. iv. 1. Can any one imagine salvation possible to those who follow

the spirit of error as their guide, and embrace the doctrine of devils?

(6.) The same holy apostle, giving an ample description of heretics, says, among other things, that they have "an appearance of godliness, but deny the power thereof; . . . ever learning, and never attaining the knowledge of the truth: . . . that they are men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith: . . . and that being evil men and seducers, they grow worse and worse; erring, and driving into error," 2 Tim. iii. 5. What grounds can such as these have to expect salvation?

(7.) But our blessed Saviour in one short sentence clearly shows the miserable fate of all those who follow these teachers when He says, "They are blind leaders of the blind; and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the pit," Mat. xv. 14; which evidently shows that the lot of both shall be the same, and that all the above condemnations of false teachers equally apply to such as follow them.

(8.) These testimonies of Scripture are so strong and convincing that the Church of England fairly acknowledges the truth of what they contain, and in the eighteenth of her Thirty-nine Articles declares, "That those ARE TO BE HAD ACCURSED that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature; for the Holy Scripture doth set out to us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby man must be saved." And we have evidently seen above that salvation can never be had in Him without believing the sacred doctrine which He revealed to the world.

(9.) We shall add one proof more with regard to Jews, Mahometans, heathens, and idolaters, and all who

know not the true God, nor Jesus Christ His Son, and who do not obey His Gospel. Of these the Scripture says: "The Gentiles have stuck fast in the destruction which they prepared. . . . The wicked shall be turned into hell, and the nations that forget God," Ps. ix. 16, 18. "The Lord shall reign to eternity; yea, for ever and ever. Ye Gentiles" (*the heathens*) "shall perish from His land," Ps. x. 16. But particularly what follows:—"Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with the angels of His power in a flame of fire, yielding vengeance to them who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction from the face of our Lord, and from the glory of His power," 2 Thes. i. 7. This is no less clear and precise than it is dreadful and terrible, and cuts off all ground of evasion, as it declares in express terms that all who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel of Christ, shall be lost for ever; which evidently shows that the knowledge and belief of God, and of Jesus Christ, and obedience to His Gospel, are absolutely required by Him as essential conditions of salvation.

Q. 2. These proofs are all very strong indeed, but what is the result of all these reasonings and Scripture testimonies?

A. The consequence is self-evident that, since salvation cannot be had in any sect separated in faith from the Church of Christ, and teaching false doctrine, therefore the Church of Christ is the only way appointed by Almighty God in which we can be saved, and that out of her communion there is no *ordinary possibility of salvation*.

Q. 3. Why do you say *ordinary possibility of salvation*? Is there any reason to suppose that God has reserved any extraordinary means of salvation for some who are not

joined in communion with the Church of Christ by the true faith?

*A.* No doubt it is (absolutely speaking) *possible* for God to save men by any means He pleases; and He could have saved all mankind through the merits of any one thing that Jesus Christ did or suffered, without requiring such a severe sacrifice from Him as His death upon the cross. But what God can do in this respect is nothing to our purpose: the great question is what He has done. Now we see from the whole tenor of revelation that God has appointed true faith in Jesus Christ, and the being a member of His Church, as conditions of salvation; that He has appointed them as essential conditions, so that none *will* or *can* be saved without them; that the Word of God points out no other possible means; that whatever extraordinary means He may sometimes use to bring people to His Church, yet, according to what He has said in the above texts, it is impossible He can have reserved any *extraordinary* means of salvation for those who live and die not joined in communion with the Church of Christ by true faith, otherwise He would contradict Himself, which is impossible. For instance, these two express declarations of Scripture, "The Lord daily added to the Church such as should be saved," and "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," would not be true if there was any possibility for those to be saved who were not added to the Church, or did not believe. The same is equally true of the other texts, as will appear on considering them.

*Q.* 4. Is it not a very uncharitable doctrine, to say that none can be saved out of the Church, or who do not believe as the Church does?

*A.* If this doctrine were a mere human opinion, or the result indeed of human reasoning, it might be called



uncharitable ; but it is a doctrine into which mere human reason does not enter. It is a point which depends solely on the will of the Almighty ; and the only question is to know what He has been pleased to decide concerning it. Now His Holy Scriptures declare in the plainest terms that He has been pleased to ordain that none shall be saved out of the Church of Christ, or without the true faith ; and who shall dare to say, *a doctrine* taught and declared by God is *uncharitable* ? But the mistake into which many fall arises from not reflecting that God is not obliged to save any one. He pursued the fallen angels with the utmost rigour of justice, and He could justly have treated man in the same manner. If, therefore, He is pleased to offer salvation to mankind through the merits of Jesus Christ, this is the effect of His infinite mercy ; and as He is perfect master of His own gifts, He is at full liberty to require whatever conditions He pleases for bestowing them upon us. Now the whole tenor of His revealed will declares that He requires our being members of His Church, and having the true faith of Jesus Christ, as indispensable conditions of salvation ; and who shall dare to find fault with Him for doing so ? or who shall say it is uncharitable to think and believe what He has so expressly and so repeatedly declared in His Holy Scriptures ?

Observe further, that it is not the Catholic Church alone that holds this doctrine. We have seen that the founders of the Protestant Church of Scotland hold, in express terms, that “out of the true Church of Christ there is no ordinary possibility of salvation,” and have inserted it as an article of their faith in the public authentic standard of their religion, the ‘Confession of Faith,’ which all her ministers must subscribe. The Church of England also, in the same manner, declares,

as an article of her Creed, "That except a man do keep the Catholic faith whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly;" and assures her members that this Creed can be proved by the most evident texts of Holy Scripture; which, therefore, all her ministers must subscribe. Moreover, she affirms that "those are to be had accursed who presume to say that every man (*even though he be not in the true faith of Jesus Christ*) shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth." If, therefore, this doctrine be deemed uncharitable, the Churches both of England and Scotland must evidently fall under the condemnation. It is true, indeed, that, though the founders of these Churches, convinced by the repeated and evident testimonies of the Word of God, professed this truth, and inserted it in the public standards of their religion, yet their posterity now disclaim it, and accuse the Catholic Church of being uncharitable for holding it; but this only shows their inconsistency, and proves that they are devoid of all certainty in what they believe; for if it was a Divine truth, when these religions were founded, that *out of the true Church, and without the Catholic faith, there is no salvation*, it must be so still; and if their first founders were mistaken on this point, what security can their followers now have for any other thing they taught? But the Catholic Church, always consistent and uniform in her doctrine, always preserving the *words once put in her mouth* by her Divine Master, at all times and in all ages has believed and taught the same doctrine as a truth revealed by God, that "out of the true Church of Christ, and without His true faith, there is no possibility of salvation;" and the most authentic public testimony of her enemies proves that this is the doctrine of Jesus, and of His holy Gospel, whatever private persons, from selfish and interested

motives, may say to the contrary. Neither is she afraid of being thought uncharitable on this account. On the contrary, she considers it the height of charity to warn men of their danger, in an affair of such immense importance as is that of their eternal salvation; and, with compassion for their situation, she uses every means in her power, particularly fervent prayer to God, for the conversion of all who are out of the true way, that they may be brought to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved. This is true charity; for charity is a virtue of the heart, which causes a man to love his neighbour's soul, and endeavour to promote his salvation; and only that opinion deserves to be called charitable which tends to excite and promote this disposition; whereas the contrary, which renders a man careless and indifferent about his neighbour's soul, is truly uncharitable. It is plain, therefore, that the charge of being uncharitable is only misrepresentation and slander, employed to render the Catholic Church and her doctrine odious. Her enemies saw that want of charity was a crime shocking to every well-disposed mind, and must excite odium and aversion, if charged on her. They knew their followers, who were ever ready to believe anything against her, would take no pains to examine the grounds for such a charge—would take it for granted that she was guilty upon their bold assertion; and the result has verified their opinion. But the smallest attention must show that her conduct is the effect of genuine charity. Was St Paul uncharitable when he declared that “neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers,” &c., “shall possess the kingdom of God”? 1 Cor. vi. 9; or when he pronounced “a curse upon any one, though an angel from heaven, who should preach any other Gospel than what he had preached”? Gal. i. 8. Quite the contrary:

it was his ardent charity and zeal for their salvation which made him so earnest in warning them of their danger. How then can the Catholic Church be deemed uncharitable for only saying what he declares, and from the same charitable motive? An unfavourable opinion she certainly has of all those who are not of her communion; but to call this uncharitable, is a mere imposition on the unreflecting.

*Q.* 5. But if a man act according to the dictates of his conscience, and follow exactly the light of reason which God has implanted in him for his guide, is not that sufficient to bring him to salvation?

*A.* This is, indeed, a specious proposition; but a fallacy lurks under it. When man was created, his reason was then an enlightened reason. Illuminated by the grace of original righteousness, with which his soul was adorned, reason and conscience were safe guides to conduct him in the way of salvation. But by sin this light was miserably darkened, and his reason clouded by ignorance and error. It was not, indeed, entirely extinguished; it still clearly teaches him many great truths, but it is at present so influenced by pride, passion, prejudice, and other such corrupt motives, that in many instances it serves only to confirm him in error, by giving an appearance of reason to the suggestions of self-love and passion. This is too commonly the case, even in natural things; but in the supernatural, in things relating to God and eternity, our reason, if left to itself, is miserably blind. To remedy this, God has given us the light of faith as a sure and safe guide to conduct us to salvation, appointing His holy Church the guardian and depository of this heavenly light; consequently, though a man may pretend to act according to reason and conscience, and even flatter himself that he does so,

yet reason and conscience, if not enlightened and guided by true faith, can never bring him to salvation.

*Q.* 6. Does the Holy Scripture give any light in this matter?

*A.* Nothing can be more striking than the words of Holy Scripture. "There is a way," says the wise man, "that seemeth right to a man, but the ends thereof lead to death," Prov. xiv. 12. This is repeated, Prov. xvi. 25. What can be more plain than this, to show that a man may act according to what he thinks the light of reason and conscience, persuaded he is doing right, and yet, in fact, be only running on in the way to perdition? And do not all those who are seduced by false prophets, and false teachers, think they are in the right way? Is it not under the pretext of acting according to conscience that they are seduced? and yet the mouth of truth itself has declared, that "if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the pit," Mat. xv. 14. In order to show us to what excess of wickedness man may go under the pretence of following his conscience, the same Eternal Truth says to His apostles, "The hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God a service," John, xvi. 2; but observe what He adds,—"And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father nor Me," ver. 3. Which shows that if one has not the true knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, which can be obtained only through true faith, there is no enormity of which he is not capable while thinking he is acting according to reason and conscience. Had we only the light of reason to direct us, we would be justified in following it; but as God has given us an external guide in His holy Church, to assist and correct our blinded reason by the light of faith, our reason alone, unassisted by this guide, can never be sufficient for salvation.

Nothing will set this in a clearer light than a few examples. Conscience tells a heathen that it is not only lawful but a duty to worship and offer sacrifice to idols, the work of men's hands. Will his doing so, according to his conscience, save him? or will these acts of idolatry be innocent or agreeable in the sight of God, because they are performed according to conscience? See above, sec. 3, No. 9, the answer which the Word of God gives to this question; to which add that of the wise man,—“The idol that is made by hands is cursed, as well as he that made it; . . . for that which is made, together with him that made it, shall suffer torments,” Wis. xiv. 8, 10; also, “He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord,” Exod. xxii. 20. In like manner, a Jew's conscience tells him that he may lawfully and meritoriously blaspheme Jesus Christ, and approve the conduct of his forefathers in putting Him to death upon a tree. Will such blasphemy save him, because it is according to the dictates of his conscience? The Holy Ghost by the mouth of St Paul says, “If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema,” that is, “accursed,” 1 Cor. xvi. 22. A Mahometan is taught by his conscience that it would be a crime to believe in Jesus Christ, and not believe in Mahomet; will this impious conscience save him? The Scripture assures us that “there is no other name given to men under heaven by which we can be saved,” but the name of Jesus only; and “he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remaineth on him.” All the various sects which have been separated from the true Church, in every age, have uniformly calumniated and slandered her, speaking evil of the truth professed by her, believing in their conscience that this was not only lawful, but highly meritorious. Will calum-

nies and slanders against the Church of Jesus Christ save them because of their approving conscience? The Word of God declares, "That the nation and the kingdom that will not serve her shall perish;" and "there shall be lying teachers who shall bring in damnable heresies, bringing upon themselves swift destruction, . . . through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of," 2 Pet. ii. 1. In all these, and similar cases, their conscience is their greatest crime, and shows to what a height of impiety conscience and reason can lead us, when under the influence of pride, passion, prejudice, and self-love. Conscience and reason, therefore, can never be safe guides to salvation, unless directed by the sacred light of revealed truth.

Q. 7. But suppose a person to be *invincibly ignorant* of the faith of Jesus Christ and His Church, will not this *invincible ignorance* save him?

A. This is also a very specious proposition, and I am afraid that from not being properly considered it is an occasion of dangerous mistake to many; we shall therefore endeavour to examine it thoroughly. And here we must observe, that two different questions are commonly mixed together when people speak of invincible ignorance: the first is, *Will a person who is invincibly ignorant of the true faith or Church of Christ be condemned precisely on account of that ignorance?* that is, *will that ignorance be imputed to him as a crime?* or will this *his invincible ignorance excuse him from the guilt of not believing?* To this I reply, that as no man can be guilty of a sin in not doing what is absolutely out of his power, therefore a person who is invincibly ignorant of the true faith and Church of Christ will not be condemned on account of that ignorance; such ignorance will not be imputed to him as a crime, but will undoubtedly excuse him from

the guilt of disbelief: in this all divines agree without doubt or hesitation. A heathen, for example, who never heard of Jesus Christ, will not be condemned as criminal precisely for want of faith in Him; a heretic who has never had any knowledge of the true Church of Christ will not be condemned as guilty because he is not joined in communion with that Church. So far the first question admits of no dispute. The second question is this, *Can a person invincibly ignorant of the true faith or Church of Jesus, and living and dying in that state, be saved?* This is a highly important but a very different question from the former, though too frequently confounded with it. Now, to answer this question clearly and distinctly, we must consider two different cases: first, that of Mahometans, Jews, and heathens, who, never having heard of Jesus Christ or of His religion, are invincibly ignorant of it; and, secondly, that of all the different sects of Christians who are separated from the true Church of Christ by heresy.

*Q. 8.* What then is to be said of all those Mahometans, Jews, and heathens, who, never having heard of Jesus Christ or of His religion, are therefore invincibly ignorant of both? can they be saved, if they live and die in that state?

*A.* The plain answer to this is, That they cannot be saved; that not one of these “can enter into the kingdom of God.” It is true, as we have seen above, they will not be condemned precisely because they have not the faith of Christ, of which they are invincibly ignorant. But the faith of Christ, though an essential condition of salvation, is but one condition; others also are required. And though invincible ignorance will certainly save a man from sin, in not knowing that of which he is invincibly ignorant, yet it is impossible to suppose that this in-



vincible ignorance on one point will supply the want of all other conditions required. Now all those we here speak of are in the state of original sin, "aliens from God, and children of wrath," being unbaptized; and it is an article of Christian faith, that, unless original sin be washed away by the grace of baptism, there is no salvation; for Christ Himself expressly declares, "Amen, amen, I say to thee, except a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John, iii. 5. And, indeed, if even the children of Christian parents, who die without baptism, cannot go to heaven, how much less can those who, besides being unbaptized, live and die in ignorance of the true God, of Jesus Christ and His faith, and, on that account, may be supposed to have also committed many actual sins. Nay, to imagine that heathens, Mahometans, or Jews who live and die in that state can be saved, is to suppose that ignorance will save worshippers of idols, of Mahomet, and blasphemers of Jesus Christ, in the guilt of actual as well as original sin; which is putting them upon a better footing than Christians themselves and their children. The fate of all such the Scripture decides as follows: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with the angel of His power, in a flame of fire, yielding vengeance to them who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction, from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His power," 2 Thess. i. 7. This is precise, indeed—a clear and decisive answer to the present question.

Q. 9. What judgment does the Scripture pass on all those Christians who are separated from the Church by heresy? Can they be saved if they be in invincible

ignorance, and live and die in their state of separation from the true Church of Christ?

*A.* These are in a very different state from Mahometans, Jews, and heathens, provided they have true baptism among them; for if they either have no baptism, or have altered the form of giving it ordained by Christ, then they are in no better state as to the possibility of their salvation than heathens, though they may assume the name of Christians. But if they have valid baptism, then they are, by it, made true members of the Church of Christ, and those who die young, in their baptismal innocence, shall undoubtedly be saved. But as to those among them who come to the years of discretion, are educated in a false faith, and live and die in a state of separation from the communion of the Church of Christ, we also must distinguish between two different cases. The first is that of those who either live among Catholics or have Catholics living in the same country with them; who know there are such persons, and often hear of them. The second regards those who have no such knowledge, and who seldom or never hear Catholics spoken of except in a false and odious light.

*Q.* 10. What is to be said of those who live among Catholics? If they be in invincible ignorance, and die in their state of separation, can they be saved?

*A.* It is next impossible for any one of this class to be in a state of invincible ignorance; for, to be invincibly ignorant, three things are necessarily required,—*first*, that *a person have a real and sincere desire of knowing the truth*; for if he be cold and indifferent about an affair of such importance as his eternal salvation; if he be careless whether he be in the right way or not; if, enslaved to this present life, he take no concern about the next, it

is manifest that an ignorance arising from this disposition is *voluntary ignorance*, and therefore highly culpable in the sight of God. It will be still more so if a person be positively unwilling to seek the truth from the fear of worldly inconvenience, and therefore avoid every opportunity of knowing it. Of these the Scripture says, "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell; who have said to God, Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways," Job, xxi. 13. *Secondly*, In order that one be invincibly ignorant, it is required, *That he be sincerely resolved to embrace the truth wherever he may find it, and whatever it may cost him.* For if he be not fully resolved to follow the will of God, wherever it shall appear in all things necessary to salvation; if, on the contrary, he be so disposed that he rather would neglect his duty and hazard his soul than offend his friends or expose himself to some temporal loss or disadvantage, his ignorance is culpable, and can never excuse him before His Creator. Of this our Saviour says, "He that loveth father or mother, or son or daughter, more than Me, is not worthy of Me," Mat. x. 37. The *third* thing necessary for a person to be in invincible ignorance is, *That he sincerely use his best endeavours to know his duty, and particularly, that he recommend the matter earnestly to Almighty God, and pray for light and direction from Him.* For, whatever desire he may have of knowing the truth, if he do not use the proper means of finding it, his ignorance is *not invincible*, but *voluntary*. Ignorance is invincible only when a person has a sincere desire to know the truth, with a full resolution to embrace it, but either has no possible means of knowing it, or, after using his best endeavours, is unable to discover it. Therefore, if a person be deficient in seeking to know his duty, his

ignorance is not invincible—it is his own fault that he does not know it; and if inattention, indifference, worldly motives, or unjust prejudices influence his judgment, and cause it to yield to the bias of education, he has neither *invincible ignorance* nor *the fear of God*. Now it is inconsistent with the goodness and promises of God, that a person brought up in a false religion, but who is in the state supposed by these three conditions, and uses his best endeavours to know the truth, should be left in invincible ignorance of it; but if, from his attachment to the world, to sensual or selfish objects, he be not so disposed, and neglect the proper means for arriving at the truth, then his ignorance is *voluntary and culpable*, not *invincible*.

Q. 11. But what if doubt never rise in his mind, and he go on, *bona fide*, in the way in which he was brought up?

A. It is a mistake to suppose that a formal doubt is necessary to render one's ignorance of his duty voluntary and culpable; it is enough that there be sufficient reason for doubting, though from his unjust prejudices, obstinacy, pride, or other evil dispositions of the heart, he hinder these reasons from exciting a formal doubt in his mind. Saul had no doubt when he offered sacrifice before the prophet Samuel came; on the contrary, he was persuaded that he had the strongest reasons for doing so, yet he was condemned for that very action, and himself and his family rejected by Almighty God. The Jews believed that they were acting well when they put our Saviour to death; nay, their high priest declared in full council that it was expedient for the good and safety of the nation that they should do so. They were grossly mistaken, indeed, and sadly ignorant of their duty; but their ignorance was culpable, and they were severely con-

demned for what they did, though it was done in ignorance. And, indeed, all who act from a false and erroneous conscience are highly blamable for having such a conscience, though they have never entertained any formal doubt. Nay, their not having such a doubt when they have just and solid grounds for doubting, rather renders them the more guilty, because it shows greater corruption of the heart, greater depravity of disposition. A person brought up in a false faith which the Scripture calls *sects of perdition, doctrines of devils, perverse things, lies and hypocrisy*—and who has heard of the true Church of Christ, which condemns all these sects, and sees their divisions and dissensions—has always before his eyes the strongest reason to doubt the safety of his own state. If he make any examination with sincere dispositions of heart, he must be convinced that he is in the wrong; and the more he examines, the more clearly will he see it,—for this plain reason, that it is simply impossible that *false doctrine, lies, and hypocrisy* should ever be supported by solid arguments sufficient to satisfy a reasonable person, who sincerely seeks the truth, and begs light from God to direct him in the search. Hence, if such a person never doubt, but go on, as is supposed, *bona fide*, in his own way, notwithstanding the strong grounds of doubt which he daily has before his eyes, this evidently shows either that he is supinely negligent in the concerns of his soul, or that his heart is totally blinded by passion and prejudice. There were many such persons among the Jews and heathens in the time of the apostles, who, notwithstanding the splendid light of truth which these holy preachers everywhere displayed, and which was the most powerful reason for leading them to doubt of their superstitions, were so far from having such doubts, that they thought by killing the

apostles they did God a service. Whence did this arise? St Paul himself informs us: "We renounce," says he, "the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor adulterating the Word of God, but, by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Here he describes the strange light of the truth which he preached; yet this light was hidden to great numbers, and he immediately gives the reason: "And if our Gospel be also hid," "it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers, that the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, Who is the image of God, should not shine upon them," 2 Cor. iv. 2. Behold the real cause of their incredulity: they are so enslaved to the things of this world by the depravity of their heart, and the devil so blinds them that they cannot see the light; but ignorance arising from such depraved dispositions is a guilty, a voluntary ignorance, and therefore never can excuse them.

*Q. 12.* Are not the members of the Church of Christ, also, when of sufficient age, obliged to examine whether they be in the right way or not, as well as those who are brought up in any sect separated from the true Church?

*A.* There is nothing which the Church of Christ has more earnestly desired, than that her children should be thoroughly instructed in their religion, and in the grounds of it, as far as they are capable. For this end she strictly commands her pastors to be assiduous in instructing their people from their earliest years, well knowing that the more they know of their religion, the more they must be attached to it. The true Church of Christ is the work of God, the doctrine she teaches contains the truths of God; now, the more attentively truth

is examined, the more illustrious it must appear; and Almighty God has given such splendid testimony to the truth of His religion, that the more it is examined with sincerity, the more it convinces and delights. Here, then, lies the difference: when a member of the Church of Christ considers his religion, he cannot have any reasonable grounds of doubt concerning it, and the more he examines, the more convinced he must be of its truth. But one brought up in a false religion, if he think at all, cannot fail to perceive the strongest grounds of doubt; and the more he examines, the more its falsehood must appear, for falsehood can never bear the light of unbiassed and impartial examination.

*Q.* 13. But how comes it that we see many good men and men of learning among all sects of Christians, some of which must undoubtedly be false, as they contradict and condemn one another?

*A.* To understand this we must observe that the Word of God declares that God wills "all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 4. In consequence of this sincere desire God never fails to give to all such outward helps and inward graces as He sees sufficient to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, if they co-operate with them; but if they shut their eyes against His light—if, from the corruption of their heart, they pay no regard to His graces—then they remain in their ignorance; but their ignorance is voluntary in its cause, and a just punishment of their own fault. Now, though many of those who are brought up in a false religion may live good lives as to moral honesty in the eyes of the world, yet they may be very blamable in the sight of God, and, by their secret passions and attachments to the things of this life, may put an effectual obstacle to His merciful design of bringing them to

the knowledge of His truth. The proud Pharisee was a just man in the eyes of the world, and yet he was condemned by Almighty God for the secret pride of his heart. And as to men of learning who are to be found in a false religion, their learning does not exempt them from pride and passion ; nay, the Word of God assures us that “knowledge puffeth up,” 1 Cor. viii. 1 ; and, generally speaking, where there is not true humility and the love of God, the more learning there is, the more pride, self-conceit, desire of glory, and obstinacy of heart, and consequently the more opposition to faith ; for Jesus Christ Himself says to the Jews, whose hardened hearts resisted all the evidence of His doctrine and miracles, “How can ye believe who receive glory from one another, and the glory which is from God alone ye do not seek ?” John, v. 44. There were, no doubt, many learned people both among the Jews and Gentiles when the Gospel was first preached by the apostles, and yet, notwithstanding the numberless miracles which they wrought in proof of its being from God, St Paul expressly tells us that it was “to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness,” 1 Cor. i. 23 ; because, notwithstanding all their learning, their pride, passions, and prejudices *so blinded their minds, that the light of the Gospel shone upon them in vain.* It is no matter of surprise, therefore, to see learned men in a false religion, especially as their learning is commonly of a worldly kind, for *faith is a gift of God* ; and it is not the knowledge of the head, but humility and sincerity of the heart, which disposes a soul to receive that gift from Him ; yea, Christ Himself expressly says, “that God hides these things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them to little ones,” Mat. xi. 25. We must conclude, then, that among those who are brought up in a



false religion, and separated from the Church of Christ, but who know that there is a Church which declares herself to be the only true Church of Christ, who have the opportunity of hearing of her, and of being acquainted with those of her communion, it is highly improbable *invincible ignorance* can have any place. But if any should be found among them invincibly ignorant, their state will be the same as that of persons who have never had an opportunity of knowing any other than the false religion they are in.

Q. 14. What, then, is to be said of those who, being brought up in a false religion, have no opportunity of hearing of the true Church and faith of Christ, or who hear of it only in a false and odious light? Can such as these be saved if they live and die in their separation from the communion of the Church of Christ, and in invincible ignorance of the truth?

A. The learned author of the book called 'Charity and Truth,' who seems willing to go as far as possible in favour of those who are not joined in the communion of the Church of Christ, candidly owns, that it is quite uncertain if any such shall be saved, even though in invincible ignorance; for, in laying down the true state of the question, he says, "The meaning is, that no one is saved unless he be in the Catholic communion either actually or virtually, either in fact or in desire; and that we are not sure, generally speaking, that any one is saved out of the Catholic Church, who is invincibly ignorant of the true Church, and of the true religion," Ch. I. Q. 3. The fact is, there is not one single testimony of the Holy Scripture which gives reason to think that any one will be saved out of that communion; but there are many, as we have seen above, which very strongly declare the contrary. All the reasons which are brought in favour of

those who are out of the Church, are taken from imaginary cases and from our imperfect ideas of the goodness of God, or from the idea which some form to themselves of what is meant by being a member of the true Church; and those people of whom we speak in the present question afford the principal grounds of these reasonings. This is the line of argument. Suppose a man born and baptized in a heretical sect, and afterwards, when he comes of age, to be placed in such circumstances as prevent his ever hearing of the true religion, except in such false and odious terms as serve only to make him detest it, and to make him more and more attached to his own way, and, on this account, to be in invincible ignorance of the truth: it is acknowledged by all, that this man, by baptism, is made a member of the Church of Christ, and that, if he die before he comes to the use of reason, he will certainly be saved in his baptismal innocence. Let us now suppose further, that, when he comes to age, he continues to live an innocent life, and, co-operating with the graces which God bestows upon him, perseveres in his innocence, and does his best, according to his knowledge, and would do better if he knew it: is it not inconsistent with the goodness of God to suppose that such a man, living and dying in this state, would be lost? Is he not, in the sight of God, a real member of the Church of Christ, though not joined in her communion? And, if he die in his innocence, must he not be saved? Such is the argument proposed; and it has a specious appearance. But it must be observed, that there is the strongest reason to doubt if there ever was, or ever shall be, such a case. (1.) There is not the smallest ground in Scripture to suppose it. (2.) As it is impossible for man, in his present fallen state, to preserve his

baptismal innocence for any space of time, much less to persevere in it to the end of life, without a special and extraordinary grace from God; and, as a grace of this kind is justly esteemed one of the most singular favours given by God to His faithful servants, who are members of His Church, and enjoy all the powerful helps that are only to be found in her communion, to enable them to do so;—is it to be supposed that He will bestow this priceless favour upon any one who is out of her communion, and consequently deprived of all these helps? And if it be supposed that he loses his baptismal innocence by committing a mortal sin, but recovers the grace of justification by a sincere repentance, the difficulty still increases. For a repentance without the help of the sacraments sufficient to obtain the grace of justification includes a perfect contrition, founded on the love of God above all things; a favour so seldom granted to sinners, even in the Church itself, that the sacrament of Penance is appointed by Jesus Christ as the standing means of supplying our deficiency in that respect. Now, what likelihood is there that Almighty God will bestow so very singular a favour upon one who has lost his innocence, and is not in the communion of His Church to obtain the helps which she affords for recovering it? But, (3.) Let us suppose the case to happen as proposed, and that Almighty God gives this man these extraordinary graces by which he preserves his baptismal innocence to the last, dies in the grace of God, and goes to heaven,—would not this be making God contradict Himself, and act directly contrary to the whole tenor of His revealed will? All the testimonies of Scripture concur to prove, that God has appointed true faith in Jesus Christ, and the being in communion with the Church of Christ,

as necessary conditions of salvation ; and yet, in the present case, the person would be saved who had not had the true faith in Jesus Christ, had not been in communion with His Church, but who had lived and died in a heretical communion. There is therefore the greatest reason to believe that such a case will never happen, but that a person brought up in heresy, and invincibly ignorant of the truth, being deprived of the helps and graces which are the consequences of the true faith, and which are only found in the true Church, will not preserve his innocence, but, continuing in heresy, shall die in his sins, and be lost ; not precisely because he had not the true faith, of which he is supposed to be invincibly ignorant, but for the other sins of which he dies guilty.

*Q.* 15. But can none who are in heresy, and in invincible ignorance of the truth, be saved ?

*A.* God forbid we should say so ! all the above reasons only prove that if they live and die in that state they shall not be saved, and that according to the present providence they cannot be saved ; but the great God is able to take them out of that state, to cure even their ignorance though invincible to them in their present situation, to bring them to the knowledge of the true faith, to the communion of His holy Church, and to salvation : and we further add, that if He be pleased, of His infinite mercy, to save any who are at present in invincible ignorance of the truth, in order to act consistently with Himself, and with His holy Word, He will undoubtedly bring them to the union of His holy Church for that purpose before they die.

*Q.* 16. Are there any grounds in Scripture for this doctrine ?

*A.* This doctrine is founded upon the most positive

declarations of Scripture. For the Scripture lays down this fundamental truth, "The sure foundation of God standeth firm, having this seal; The Lord knoweth who are His," 2 Tim. ii. 19. That is, God, from all eternity, knows those who, by co-operating with the graces He shall bestow upon them, will persevere to the end in His faith and love, and be happy with Him for ever. Now to all mankind, without exception, and in whatever state, heathen, Mahometan, Jew, or heretic, in *vincible* or in *invincible* ignorance, God, through the merits of Christ, and for His sake, gives such graces as He sees proper for their present state, with a view to their eternal salvation; if they comply with those He gives, and co-operate with them, He will then give them more and greater, till He brings them at last to that happy end; but if they resist and abuse those graces they receive, no more will be given them, and they will be left to their own ways, as the just punishment of their ingratitude. Those, therefore, whom Almighty God foresees will make a proper use of His graces, and be saved, those He ordains to eternal life; and all such the Scripture assures us He will in His own good time, and in the way and manner He sees proper, bring to the knowledge of the true faith, and to the communion of His holy Church. Thus, "The Lord daily added to the Church such as should be saved," Acts, ii. 47. Now, what the Lord daily did in the time of the apostles, He daily will continue to do till the end of the world; and as none could be saved who were not added to the Church in those days, so neither can any afterwards be; for there is no new revelation since the apostles' time, discovering a different way to salvation. Again the Scripture says, that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," Acts, xiii. 48—that is, were brought to the true faith which the apostles

preached: the same then will be done ever afterwards; for as then none were ordained to eternal life who did not believe, so neither will there be any afterwards.

Our Saviour Himself decides this point in the clearest terms when He says, "Other sheep I have who are not of this fold, them also I MUST BRING, and they SHALL hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd," John, x. 16. Here He manifestly speaks of those who had not as yet heard His voice, but were either Jews or heathens, and not united in the fold of His apostles and other disciples; yet He calls them His sheep, because "the Lord knoweth who are His," and He foreknew who would co-operate with His grace and follow His voice; now He expressly declares, "them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice." It was not enough for their salvation that they were ready in the disposition of their hearts to answer His call, and to do better if they knew better; it was necessary they should actually be brought to the communion of His own fold, "them also I must bring;" it was necessary they should have the true faith of Christ, "and they shall hear My voice," in order to secure their salvation; for, as He says a little after, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me, and I give them eternal life, and they shall not perish for ever, and no man shall snatch them out of My hand," John, x. 27.

This will still further appear from the account which St Paul gives of the several steps of Divine Providence in the salvation of the elect, and of the principal graces bestowed upon them for that great end; "for whom He foreknew," says He, "He also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son; and whom He predestinated, them He also called; and whom He called,

them He also justified ; and whom He justified, them He also glorified," Rom. viii. 29. *First*, He lays down the "sure foundation of God," above mentioned, "which has this seal, The Lord knoweth who are His," 2 Tim. ii. 19. God, from all eternity, foreknew who would improve the talents He should in time bestow upon them, and who, persevering to the end, should be His for ever. Now, says the apostle, "whom" He thus "foreknew He also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of His Son ;" that is, He preordained that all His elect should resemble Jesus Christ, by "putting off the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new, . . . according to the image of Him that created him," Col. iii. 9. To procure this conformity with Jesus Christ, the next step He takes is *to call them* ; for, "whom He predestinated, them He also called"—namely, to the knowledge and faith of Jesus Christ, and to the communion of His holy Church ; that is, He gives them such internal graces, and so disposes all external circumstances, as effectually to bring them to this great happiness ; and *whom He thus called to the true faith*, "them He also justified"—that is, being brought to the true faith, "without which it is impossible to please God," He continues to bestow still farther graces upon them, of fear, hope, love of God, and sorrow for their sins, with which they, co-operating, are brought by means of His holy sacraments to the grace of justification. Greater and greater graces are bestowed upon them, and they, persevering to the end in their co-operation, are received at last into eternal glory ; for "whom He justified, them He also glorified." Here it is manifest that our being called to the faith and Church of Jesus Christ is ordained by Almighty God as an essential step in the affair of salvation, a necessary condition to be performed, even before we can be justi-

fied from the guilt of our sins, and consequently, that without true faith, and out of the communion of the Church of Christ, there is no possibility of salvation. It is no less manifest that, let a person be in any state whatsoever—heathen, Mahometan, Jew, or heretic—if Almighty God foreknows that this person will co-operate with those graces which from all eternity He had resolved to bestow upon him, and continue faithful to the end, He will by no means permit him to live and die in his present state, but will so order matters out of the treasures of His Divine wisdom, that sooner or later he shall be brought to the union of the Church of Christ, out of which He has ordained that salvation cannot be found.

*Q.* 17. This is without doubt an unanswerable proof, if it be certain, that by our calling or vocation, mentioned in the above passage of St Paul, is meant our vocation to the faith and Church of Christ; but how can this be proved?

*A.* Nothing is more evident from the whole tenor of the New Testament; for, wherever the object of our calling or vocation is spoken of, it is always declared to be the faith and Church of Christ. Thus St Paul, speaking of his own vocation, says: “It pleased Him who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son to me,” Gal. i. 15. So, exhorting us to walk worthy of the vocation in which we are called, by humility and charity, he immediately adds the objects of our vocation as a most powerful motive for us to do so: “One body,” says he, “one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism,” Eph. iv. 4. Again, “Let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts, wherein also ye are called in one body,” Col. iii. 15. Also, “We testified to every one of you that ye would walk worthy



of God, Who hath called you to His kingdom and glory," 1 Thess. ii. 12; to His kingdom here, and to His glory hereafter. The object, therefore, of our vocation is the *one faith* of Christ; the *body* of Christ, and the *kingdom* of Christ, which is His Church. Hence the same holy apostle says in another place, "But ye are come to Mount Sion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the company of many thousands of angels, and to the Church of the first-born who are written in heaven," Heb. xii. 22. See here the object of our vocation, the Church of Christ; and St Peter says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people, that ye may declare His virtues Who hath called you out of darkness into His admirable light," 1 Pet. ii. 9. To be a member, then, of this *holy nation*, to be one of this *purchased people*, to be brought to this *admirable light* of the true faith, is the great end to which our calling brings us.

Q. 18. But how can we reconcile this with the infinite goodness of God, that none shall be saved without the true faith of Christ, and without being in the communion of His Church, since according to it by far the greater part of mankind must be lost, seeing that the number of those who have not the faith, and are not in the communion of His Church, always greatly exceeds the number of those who are?

A. That the greater number of mankind will be lost is a truth which Christ Himself declares when He says that "many are called, but few are chosen," and that "many walk in the broad road to destruction, but few there are that find the narrow way to life." The difficulty of reconciling this with the goodness of God will disappear if we consider what the Christian revelation teaches; for by it we learn that man, by the voluntary abuse of his

free-will, having forfeited that happy state in which God had created him, rendered himself unworthy of any favour or mercy from God; so that God, with the greatest justice, could, if He pleased, have left him without remedy to that misery which his sins deserved, as He actually did leave the fallen angels. It was therefore the effect of His infinite goodness alone that God was pleased to show any mercy to man; and still more so, to provide so unheard-of a remedy for his evils. "God so loved the world," says our blessed Saviour, "that He gave His only begotten Son," to seek and save those that were lost by dying upon a cross for them. But as man, by the voluntary abuse of his free-will, had lost the favour of his God, therefore God decreed that none who come to the full use of their reason should reap the benefit of the redemption of Christ but by a voluntary performance of the conditions which He requires from them; for Christ "is become the cause of eternal salvation to all that obey Him," Heb. v. 9.

Man, by the miserable corruption of his nature by sin, was absolutely incapable of himself of performing these conditions, therefore God, out of the riches of His goodness, and the desire that all should be saved, through the merits of Jesus Christ, gives to all mankind such supernatural helps of His grace as He sees proper for their present state, with a view to their salvation. God by these graces moves men to do good and avoid evil; and if they co-operate with His favours, He will give them new and greater graces. If they continue to correspond He will give them still more, till He brings them at last to the true faith and Church of Christ, and to a happy end; but if they resist His graces, if they abuse them and act contrary to them, if they reject these calls and offers of mercy, God bears with them

for a time, but at length He stops the continuance of such undeserved favours, and leaves them to perish in their ingratitude and obstinacy. Hence if the greater part of mankind be lost, it is wholly owing to themselves in abusing the goodness of God, and resisting the means He uses for their salvation; so that our salvation is only from the goodness of God, and our perdition wholly from ourselves, according to what He says by His prophet, "Destruction is thine, O Israel; thy help is only in Me," Hosea, xiii. 9.

*Q.* 19. This is, indeed, a full vindication of the Divine goodness; but there are some parts of it which need to be explained; and first, How does it appear from Scripture that God gives to all mankind the graces here mentioned with a view to their salvation?

*A.* This is manifest from three strong reasons recorded in Scripture: *First*, The Scripture assures us that God wills all men to be saved, and that none should be lost. Thus, "As I live," saith the Lord God, "I will not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live," Ezech. xxxiii. 11. So our Saviour declares, "It is not the will of our Father Who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish," Mat. xviii. 14. "God dealeth patiently for your sake," says St Peter, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should return to penance," 2 Pet. iii. 9. And St Paul affirms it in express terms: "God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 4. He wills all men to be saved, and He wills them to come to the knowledge of the truth, as an essential condition of salvation. Now, from this sincere will of God for the salvation of all men, it follows as a necessary consequence that He gives to all men such helps of His grace as are sufficient, if they make a good use of them, to bring them

both to the knowledge of the truth and to salvation ; for as they are absolutely incapable of taking any step towards this end without his aid, if He wills the end, He must also apply the means in such a manner that, if the end be not accomplished, it is not owing to Him. If God did not do so, we could not conceive Him affirming that He wills all men to be saved, and that He wills not the death of the wicked.

*adly*, The Scripture declares that Jesus Christ died for the redemption of all mankind, without exception. Thus, "Jesus Christ gave Himself a redemption for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6. "If one died for all, then all are dead, and Christ died for all," 2 Cor. v. 15. "We hope in the living God, Who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful," 1 Tim. iv. 10. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just, and He is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world," 1 John, ii. 1. Hence St John the Baptist said of him, "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who taketh away the sins of the world," John, i. 29. And He Himself says, "The bread that I will give is My flesh, for the life of the world," John, vi. 52. Again, "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost," Luke, xix. 10 ; and "I come not to judge the world, but to save the world," John, xii. 47 ; and St Paul says of Him, "A faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. But as all were lost, as all without exception were sinners, therefore Jesus Christ came to seek and to save all. Now from this it also follows, as a necessary consequence, that all, without exception, must receive, in some degree or other, such fruits and benefits of His redemption, either directly or indirectly, mediately or immediately, as are sufficient to procure

their salvation, if they co-operate with them. If any one, then, be not actually saved, this cannot be owing to any deficiency on the part of Jesus Christ, but to their own abuse of His graces ; for it would be trifling to say that He is the Saviour of all, if all did not receive the fruits of His redemption with a view to their salvation.

*3dly*, The Scriptures assure us that all men do actually receive from God, in that degree, manner, and proportion which He sees proper, according to their present state, such helps of His graces as would enable them to secure their salvation, if they co-operated with them. For, in the *first* place, Almighty God, out of His sincere desire for the salvation of all, “sent His Son into the world, that the world might be saved by Him,” John, iii. 17. From which St Paul draws this plain argument : “He that spared not even His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how hath He not also with Him given us all things ?” Rom. viii. 32 ; at least all things absolutely necessary for our salvation, and without which it would never be in our power to attain it ? Now, as He delivered His Son for all, without exception, and with this very view, “that the world,” that is, all mankind, “might be saved by Him :” therefore, to all without exception He gives with Him such helps and graces as, either mediately or immediately, directly or indirectly, put it in their power to be saved. *Secondly*, The Scripture declares that Christ “is the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world,” John, i. 9. Consequently every man that cometh into this world partaketh of His light in such degree and proportion as He sees proper to give, and in such time, place, and manner as He thinks fit. For, *thirdly*, “To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ,” Ephes. iv. 7 ; and “the grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men,” Tit. ii. 11. *Fourthly*, The

goodness and mercy of God to all mankind is thus displayed in Scripture: "Thou hast mercy upon all, because Thou canst do all things, and overlookest the sins of men for the sake of repentance; for Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which Thou hast made: for Thou didst not appoint or make anything hating it; . . . but Thou sparest all because they are Thine, O Lord, Who lovest souls," Wis. xi. 24. Now, how could He be said "to spare all," and to "have mercy on all," for the sake of repentance, if He did not give to all such graces at least as are absolutely necessary to help them and bring them to repentance? *Lastly*, Our Saviour Himself says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man shall hear My voice, and open to Me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me; and to him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with Me in My throne," Rev. iii. 20. He knocks at every door, at every heart, by the motions of His holy grace; and if any man whatsoever shall open and co-operate with His grace, so as to overcome, all will be well. From this it is manifest that all men, without exception, in whatever state they may be, at some time or other receive graces from God, as the fruits of the redemption of Jesus, with a view to their eternal salvation, and which, either mediately or immediately, would bring them to that end, if they made a proper use of them; if, therefore, they be not saved, the fault is entirely their own. Graces, indeed, are not given in the same degree and proportion to all, but "according to the measure of the giving of Christ;" for "every one has his proper gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that," 1 Cor. vii. 7. In the distribution of the talents, one received five, another two, and another only one—for God being master of His

own gifts, may give more abundantly to one than to another, as He pleases ; but what every one receives is sufficient for his present purpose, and he who received only one talent had it fully in his power to obtain the same reward as the other two, had he improved his talent as they did ; but as he was negligent and unprofitable, he was justly condemned for his sloth.

*Q.* 20. How can it be shown that if a man co-operate with those graces which God bestows, he will always receive more and more from Him ?

*A.* This is evident, (1.) From the very end which God has in giving them ; for all the graces which God bestows on man, through the merits of Christ, are given with a view to his salvation, and from the desire of saving him. If man, therefore, put no obstacle on his part, but improves the present grace, the same gracious desire which God has of his salvation, and which moved Him to give the first, must also move Him to give a second, a third, and so on, till He perfect the great work for which He gives them ; and hence the Scripture says, “ Being confident of this very thing, that He Who had begun the good work in you will perfect it unto the day of Christ Jesus,” Philip. i. 6. It is an undoubted truth, then, that God will never fail on His part to give us all further necessary helps, if we make a good use of those He has already given ; for He will never abandon us, if we do not first forsake Him. Hence the same holy apostle exhorts us, “ With fear and trembling to work out our own salvation ; for it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will,” Philip. ii. 12—showing us that God will not be wanting if we do our part, and work, with fear and trembling, according to the graces He bestows. Hence, also, the frequent exhortations of the same apostle, “ Not to

neglect the grace of God," 1 Tim. iv. 14; "To stir up the grace of God that is in us," 2 Tim. i. 6; "Not to receive the grace of God in vain," 2 Cor. vi. 1; and "to look diligently that no man be wanting to the grace of God," Heb. xii. 15.

The same truth appears (2.) From those testimonies of Scripture where we are assured that if we serve God and obey Him we shall advance in His love and in union with Him; for to serve and obey Him is to make a good use of the graces He gives us; and to be more loved by Him and united to Him is to receive from Him still greater graces. Thus our Saviour says, "If any man love Me, he will keep My word" (that is, do My will, correspond with My grace), "and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make Our abode with him," John, xiv. 23. So also St James says, "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. . . . Be humbled in the sight of the Lord, and He will exalt you," James, iv. 8, 10. Hence St Peter exhorts us "to take heed not to fall from our own steadfastness, but to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. iii. 17; because the continuing steadfast in His service, by corresponding with His grace, is the sure way to obtain more from Him.

It is proved (3.) By the express declaration of Jesus Christ, Who says, "I am the vine, and My Father is the husbandman: . . . every branch in Me that beareth fruit He will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit," John, xv. 1. Also in the parable of the pounds, He ordered the pound to be taken from the unprofitable servant, and given to the other that had ten pounds, and then adds, "I say unto you, that to every one that hath shall be given, and he shall abound," Luke, xix.



26 : that is, to every one that hath, and makes a good use of what he hath ; for when the master went away he gave one pound to each of his servants, “ and said to them, trade till I come,” ver. 13. And when he came back he found that one had gained ten pounds, but the slothful servant none at all, for he had kept the pound he had received laid up in a napkin ; so that the only difference between these two was, that one had improved what he had received from his master, and the other had not ; and therefore to the one who had improved his pound, more and more was given, that he might abound. The same expression is repeated by our Saviour on different occasions, but particularly Mark, iv. 24, where, considering the great grace bestowed on the Jews, in communicating to them His holy Word, He exhorts them to be careful to make an ample return to God, by improving that grace, and promises if they do so that more shall be given them : “ Take heed,” says He to them, “ what ye hear: with what measure ye shall mete, it shall be measured to you again ; and more shall be given to you ;” and then He immediately adds, as a general rule, “ for he that hath, to him shall be given,” ver. 25. In like manner, Almighty God says to all sinners whose hearts He touches with His reproofs, and the check of their conscience, “ Turn ye at My reproof ; behold I will utter My spirit to you, and I will show you My words,” Prov. i. 23. If they co-operate with the grace of His reproof, and turn, He will bestow greater favours upon them.

*Q.* 21. How is it shown that if a man resist or neglect the graces of God, they shall be taken from him ? and that if he be lost the fault is his own ?

*A.* This also is manifest throughout the whole Scripture ; but that this point may be fully understood, we

must consider the different fatal consequences that flow from an obstinate abuse of these graces. (1.) These graces are withdrawn from them ; not, indeed, at once, for God, of His infinite mercy, waits patiently for sinners, and repeats His endeavours for their conversion ; but if they still resist or abuse His graces, they are diminished, and given seldomer. Thus our Saviour says of the unprofitable servant, "Take the pound away from him ; . . . for from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him," Luke, xix. 24, 26. How so? *If he hath not*, how can anything at all be *taken from him*? The sense is, he that hath not improved what he hath, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him. The same is repeated on several other occasions.

(2.) The more the graces of God are weakened or withdrawn from sinners by their repeated abuse of them, the more their passions are strengthened in their hearts, acquiring the greater mastery over them, till at last they become their miserable slaves ; "My people heard not My voice," says Almighty God ; "Israel hearkened not to Me : so I let them go according to the desires of their heart ; they shall walk in their own inventions," Ps. lxxx. 12. And St Paul assures us that whereas the wise men among the heathen nations, by the light of reason itself, came to a clear knowledge of the existence of God, and of His power and divinity, but, "because when they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God," by a correspondence with the light He gave them, but continued in their idolatry, therefore "God gave them up to the desires of their hearts. . . . God delivered them up to shameful affections, . . . and delivered them up to a reprobate sense," Rom. i. 21.

(3.) If their obstinacy still increase, and they go on shutting their eyes against the light of truth which God

offers them, He then permits them to be seduced by falsehood, to "give heed to spirits of error and doctrines of devils," 1 Tim. iv. 1. Thus, "Because they received not the love of truth that they might be saved, therefore God shall send them the operation of error, to believe lying, that all may be judged" (or, as the Protestant translation has it, *that all may be damned*) "who have not believed the truth, but have consented to iniquity," 2 Thess. ii. 10. This strong text clearly shows two great truths; *first*, That God offers the truth to all; and, *secondly*, That the source of their damnation is entirely from themselves, in refusing to receive it.

(4.) If, therefore, they still continue in their perversity, and die in their sins, a dreadful condemnation shall be their portion for ever; to them "God swears in His wrath that they shall not enter into His rest," Ps. xciv. 11. On them He pronounces that dreadful sentence, "Because I called and ye refused, I stretched out My hand and there was none that regarded; ye have despised all My counsel, and have neglected My reprehensions; I also will laugh at your destruction, and will mock when that which ye feared shall fall upon you. When sudden calamity shall fall upon you, and destruction, like a tempest, shall be at hand; when tribulation and distress shall come upon you; then shall they call upon Me, and I will not hear, they shall rise in the morning, and they shall not find Me: because they have hated instruction, and received not the fear of the Lord, nor consented to My counsel, but despised all My reproof, therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and shall be filled with their own devices," Prov. i. 24. Their condemnation is prefigured in that of Jerusalem, which had been rebellious to all the calls of God, and over the fate of which our Saviour laments in these affecting words: "O Jeru-

salem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered together thy children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldest not! Behold, your house shall be left to you desolate," Mat. xxiii. 37. "I would, and thou wouldest not!" This is their great crime. I sent you My prophets and servants, My graces, and lights, and holy motions, but these ye killed and destroyed, and gave no ear to them! The miserable fate of all such unhappy sinners, prefigured in Jerusalem, drew tears from the eyes of Jesus, when He wept over that city, and said, "If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are for thy peace; but now they are hidden from thy eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, and thy enemies . . . shall beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee; and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone," Luke, xix. 42. These are they who, having been invited to the marriage-supper of the great King, rejected His invitation, and killed His servants; for which reason "He sent His armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city," Mat. xxii. 7, declaring that "not one of them should taste of His supper."

*Q.* 22. What is the result of all these truths?

*A.* The result is very plain—namely, Though God Almighty has been pleased to ordain that none shall be saved who have not the true faith of Jesus Christ, and are not in communion with His holy Church, yet this is no way inconsistent with the infinite goodness of God, because He gives to all sufficient graces, by which they may, if they correspond with them, be brought to the true faith and Church of Christ; and that, if any are lost, it is not owing to any want of goodness in God, but to

their own abuse of the graces bestowed upon them. On some, indeed, He bestows these graces more abundantly, giving them five talents—to others He gave more sparingly, to some two, and to some only one; but He gives to all sufficient for their present wants, and will give more if those be improved, till at last He brings them to the knowledge of His truth and to salvation.

*Q.* 23. But suppose a person in the wilds of Tartary or America, where the name of Christ has never been heard: suppose also, that this person should attend to the dictates of conscience, enlightened by such graces as God is pleased to give him, and constantly comply with them;—yet, how is it possible that he could be brought to the knowledge and faith of Jesus Christ?

*A.* This case is certainly possible; and if it should happen, it is not to be doubted but God Almighty would, from the treasures of His infinite wisdom, provide some means to bring such a person to the knowledge of the truth, even though He should send an angel from heaven to instruct him. “The hand of the Lord is not shortened, that He cannot save,” in whatever difficulties a poor soul may be; He has, in former times, done wonderful things in cases of this kind, and He is no less able to do the same again: and since He has so clearly ordained, that out of the true Church, and without true faith in Christ, there is no salvation, there can be no doubt but that, in the case proposed, He would take care effectually to bring such a person to that happiness.

*Q.* 24. Is there any authority from Scripture to prove this?

*A.* There can be no stronger proof from Scripture than some facts there related. We have in Scripture two beautiful examples of God’s acting in this manner in similar

cases, which shows that He would do the same again, if any case should require it. The one is that of the eunuch of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia : He, following the lights that God gave him, though living at a great distance from Jerusalem, became acquainted with the worship of the true God, and was accustomed to go from time to time to Jerusalem to adore Him. When, however, the Gospel began to be published, the Jewish religion could no longer save him ; but being well disposed, by fidelity to the graces he had hitherto received, he was not forsaken by Almighty God ; for when he was returning to his own country from Jerusalem, the Lord sent a message by an angel to St Philip to meet and instruct him in the faith of Christ, and baptize him, Acts, viii. 26. The other example is that of Cornelius, who was an officer of the Roman army of the Italic band, and brought up in idolatry. In the course of events, his regiment coming to Judea, he saw there a religion different from his own,—the worship of one only God. Grace moving his heart, he believed in this God, and following the further motions of Divine grace, he gave much alms to the poor, and prayed earnestly to this God to direct him what to do. Did God abandon him ? By no means ; He sent an angel from heaven to tell him to whom to apply in order to be fully instructed in the knowledge and faith of Jesus Christ, and to be received into His Church by baptism. Now, what God did in these two cases He is no less able to do in all others, and has a thousand ways in His wisdom to conduct souls who are truly in earnest to the knowledge of the truth, and to salvation. And though such a soul were in the remotest wilds of the world, God could send a Philip, or an angel from heaven, to instruct him, or by the superabundance of His internal grace, or by number-

less other ways unknown to us, could infuse into his soul the knowledge of the truth. The great affair is, that we carefully do our part in complying with what He gives us ; for of this we are certain, that if we be not wanting to Him, He will never be wanting to us, but as He begins the good work in us, will also perfect it, if we be careful to correspond and to put no hindrance to His designs.

*Q.* 25. Are none brought to the faith and Church of Christ but those who correspond as they ought with the graces received before?

*A.* God forbid ; for, though it be certain that God will never fail to bring all those to the faith and Church of Christ who faithfully correspond with the graces He bestows upon them, yet He has nowhere bound Himself to bestow that singular mercy on no other. Were this the case, how few indeed would receive it ! But God, to show the infinite riches of His goodness and mercy, bestows it on many of the most undeserving ; He bestowed it even upon many of the hardened Jews who crucified Jesus Christ, and of the priests who persecuted Him to death, even though they had obstinately opposed all the means He had previously used by His doctrine and miracles to convert them. In this He acts as Lord and Master, and as a free disposer of His own gifts ; He gives to all the helps necessary and sufficient for their present state ; to those who co-operate with these helps He never fails to give more abundantly ; and in order to show the riches of His mercy, on numbers of the most undeserving He bestows His most singular favours for their conversion. Hence none have cause to complain ; all ought to be solicitous to co-operate with what they have ; none ought to despair on account of their past ingratitude, but be assured that God, Who is rich in mercy, will yet have mercy on them, if

they return to Him. Those only ought to fear and tremble who remain obstinate in their evil ways, who continue to resist the calls of His mercy, and put off their conversion from day to day. For, though His infinite mercy knows no bounds in pardoning sins, however numerous and grievous, if we repent, yet the offers of His mercy are limited, and if we exceed these limits by our obstinacy, there will be no more mercy for us. The time of mercy is fixed for every one, and if we fail to embrace its offers within that time, the gates of mercy will be closed against us. When the bridegroom has once entered into the marriage-chamber the doors are shut, and the foolish virgins who were unprepared are for ever excluded, with this dreadful reproach from Jesus Christ, — *I know ye not ; depart from Me, ye workers of iniquity.* Seeing, therefore, that no man knows how long the time of mercy will last for him, he ought not to delay a moment ; if he neglect the present offer, it may be the last. That hour will come like a thief in the night, when we least expect it, as Christ Himself assures us, and therefore He commands us to be always ready.

*Q.* 26. What opinion, then, may be formed of the salvation of any one, in particular, who is out of the true Church of Christ, and lives in a false religion ?

*A.* In answer to this, I may ask another question : What opinion would you form of the salvation of one who is living in the open state of mortal sin, such as adultery, robbery, impurity, or the like ? No one could presume to say that that man will certainly be lost ; but every one may say that, if he die in that state, without repentance, he cannot be saved. If it be the will of God positively to save him, He will, before he die, give him the grace of sincere repentance ; because God Almighty expressly requires from sinners a sincere repent-



ance as a condition without which they cannot be saved : “ Except ye repent,” says He, “ ye shall all likewise perish,” Luke, xiii. 3. The same is to be said of a person who is out of the true Church, and lives in a false religion. If he die in that state he cannot be saved ; and if it be the will of God actually to save him, He will undoubtedly bring him to the true faith, and make him a member of the Church of Christ before he leaves this world ; and the reason is the same as in the other case. God, as we have seen above, requires all men to be united to the Church by true faith as a condition of salvation, and therefore daily “ adds to the Church such as shall be saved,” Acts, ii. 47. Now, though a man be ever so great an adversary to the Church of Christ at present, or ever so great a sinner though a member of the Church, yet, as no man can know what God may be pleased to do for either before he die, so no man can pronounce and say that either the one or the other will be lost ; for, if God please, He may give the light of true faith to the one, and the grace of true repentance to the other, even at their last moments, and save them.

*Q. 27.* But suppose a person live in a false religion, and die without being reunited to the communion of the Church of Christ, can it be said of such an one that he is certainly lost ?

*A.* I must here put another question. Suppose a great sinner continues to live in his sins, and dies without any appearance of repentance, could you say of such an one that he is certainly lost ? Certainly not ; because no man knows, or can know, what may have passed between God and his soul in his last moments ; all that can be said is, that if he has actually died without repentance, he certainly is lost ; but if God, of His infinite goodness, has given him the grace of a perfect repent-

ance, and he has corresponded on his part with so great a favour, he will be saved. In like manner, suppose a person living in a false religion dies without giving any sign of embracing the true faith, or without being reconciled to the Church of Christ, we can never say of such an one with certainty that he is lost; all that we can say must be under the same condition as in the other case: if he has actually died as he lived, separated from the true Church of Christ, and without the true faith of Christ, he cannot be saved. But if God, of His great mercy, has given him in his last moments light and grace to see and embrace the true faith, and he has corresponded with so great a favour as God requires, he will be saved. Now, as no man knows, or can know, what may have passed in the soul of either the one or the other at their last moments, so no man can pronounce of either that he is lost with certainty.

*Q.* 28. But, in the case proposed, if a person, in his last moments, shall receive the light of faith from God, and embrace it with all his heart, would this suffice to make him a member of the true Church in the sight of God?

*A.* Most undoubtedly; the case is the same in this as in that of baptism. Though Jesus Christ expressly says, "Except a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John, iii. 5, which establishes the absolute necessity of baptism for salvation; yet, suppose a heathen should be instructed in the faith of Christ, and embrace it with all his heart, but die suddenly without baptism, or be taken away by infidel friends, or put in absolute impossibility of receiving baptism, and die in the above dispositions with sincere repentance and a desire of baptism, this person will undoubtedly receive all the fruits of baptism

from God, and therefore is said to be baptized in desire. In like manner, suppose a person brought up in a false religion embraces with all his heart the light of the true faith, which God gives him in his last moments,—as it is absolutely impossible for him in that state to join the external communion of the Church in the eyes of men, yet he certainly will be considered united to her in the sight of God, by means of the true faith which he embraces, and his desire of being united to the Church, were it in his power.

*Q.* 29. Is there any reason to believe that God Almighty often bestows the light of faith, or the grace of repentance, at the hour of death, upon those who have lived all their lives in heresy, or in sin?

*A.* That God can in an instant convert the most obdurate heart, either to the true faith, or to repentance, is manifest from the examples of St Paul, Zacheus the publican, St Matthew the apostle, and many others; and, in particular, of St Peter, to whom in an instant He revealed the divinity of Jesus Christ, Who said to him on that account, “Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but My Father Who is in heaven,” Mat. xvi. 17. That He can do this at the hour of death, as easily as at any time in life, cannot be doubted, as we see in the good thief upon the cross: He is the same all-powerful God at all times. But it must be owned that there is very little reason to think that this is frequently the case. There certainly are not the smallest grounds from revelation to think so. Nay, the Scripture, as we have seen above, threatens the contrary. All that can be said is, that as God is able, He can do it; and as He is merciful, He may do it: and the possibility of this is sufficient to hinder us from passing judgment upon the state of any soul who has

left this world : but it would certainly be the height of madness, and a manifest tempting of God, for a person to go on in an evil way in hopes of finding such mercy at the last.

*Q.* 30. Do we not see, even among false religions, many serious, well-disposed people, who live good lives, and are even devout and pious in their own way ; is it not hard to think that such persons will not be saved ?

*A.* But is it not much more reasonable in itself, as well as more conformable to the whole tenor of what God has revealed, to say, that if they be truly such before God as they appear in the eyes of men, and such as He knows will continue to correspond with the graces He gives them, He will not allow them to die in their false religion, but will undoubtedly bring them to the true faith before they die ? The door of salvation is by no means closed against such people by anything here advanced ; the only difficulty is about the way they can arrive at it. By supposing they can reach it, though they die in their false religion, is supposing God to act contrary to Himself, and in opposition to everything He has revealed to men upon this matter ; but by adhering to His holy Word, and firmly believing that God “adds daily to the Church such as shall be saved,” and will most undoubtedly add those here spoken of to her, if they be of that happy number, we do not make their salvation more difficult either to themselves or to God ; and we avoid the dreadful consequence of supposing God to act contrary to Himself and to His own revealed will. If these people be really such in the eyes of God as they appear to men ; and if Jesus Christ, foreseeing their perseverance in improving the graces He bestows upon them, acknowledges them among the number of His sheep, “to whom He gives eternal life,”

—then it is evident they are in the state of those of whom He says in the Gospel, “Other sheep I have who are not of this fold,” John, x. 16 : both the one and the other are considered as belonging to Him, according to His foreknowledge of their salvation ; but neither of them are joined in the visible communion of His Church. Now of these last He immediately adds, “Them also must I bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd.” It was not enough for their salvation to be acknowledged to be His sheep ; but because they were so, it was necessary that they should be united to the fold to which they did not then belong. The same then must be the case of those we here speak of : they are sheep of Jesus Christ, because He foresees they will at last be saved ; but as they are not at present within the fold of His Church, in order to secure their salvation, “them also He must bring,” before they die, that there may be “one fold and one shepherd.”

*Q.* 31. This is very strong indeed. But as this is a case on which many pretend to lay a great stress, whence arises the weight it seems to have with them in favour of those who even die in a false religion ?

*A.* Their mistake arises from the idea which they form to themselves of good works, and from their not observing the vast difference there is between natural good moral actions, and supernatural Christian good works, which alone will bring a man to heaven. However corrupted our nature is by sin, yet there are few or none of the seed of Adam who have not certain good natural dispositions, some being more inclined to one virtue, some to another. Thus some are of a humane, benevolent disposition ; some tender-hearted and compassionate towards others in distress ; some just and upright in their

dealings ; some temperate and sober ; some mild and patient ; some also have natural feelings of devotion, and of reverence for the Supreme Being. Now, all such good natural dispositions of themselves are far from being Christian virtues, and are altogether incapable of bringing a man to heaven. They indeed make him who has them agreeable to men, and procure him esteem and regard from those with whom he lives ; but they are of no avail before God with regard to eternity. To be convinced of this we need only observe, that good natural dispositions of this kind are found in Mahometans, Jews, and heathens, as well as among Christians ; yet no Christian can suppose that a Mahometan, Jew, or heathen, who dies in that state, will obtain the kingdom of heaven by means of these virtues.

The Pharisees, among the people of God, were remarkable for many such virtues ; they had a great veneration for the law of God ; they made open profession of piety and devotion ; gave large alms to the poor ; fasted and prayed much ; were assiduous in all the public observances of religion ; were remarkable for their strict observance of the Sabbath, and had an abhorrence of all profanation of the holy name of God ; yet Jesus Christ Himself expressly declares, “ Except your righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,” Mat. v. 20. We are told that one of their number went up to the temple to pray, who was in the eyes of the world a very good man, led an innocent life, free from those grosser crimes which are so common among men, fasted twice a-week, and give tithes of all he possessed ; yet Christ himself assures us that he was condemned in the sight of God. All this proves that none of the above good dispositions of nature are capable in themselves of bringing any man to heaven. And the reason is, because “ there is no other name given

to men under heaven by which we can be saved, but the name of Jesus only," Acts, iv. 12; therefore no good works whatsoever, performed through the good dispositions of nature only, can ever be crowned by God with eternal happiness. To obtain this glorious reward our good works must be sanctified by the blood of Jesus, and become Christian virtues. Now, if we search the Holy Scriptures, we find two conditions absolutely required to make our good works agreeable to God, and conducive to our salvation. *First*, that we be united to Jesus Christ by true faith, which is the root and foundation of all Christian virtues; for St Paul expressly says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6. Observe the word *impossible*; he does not say it is difficult, but that it is *impossible*. Let, therefore, a man have ever so many good natural dispositions, and be as charitable, devout, and mortified as the Pharisees were, yet if he have not true faith in Jesus Christ, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. They refused to believe in Him, and therefore all their works were good for nothing as to their salvation; and unless our righteousness exceed theirs in this point, as Christ Himself assures us, we shall never enter into His heavenly kingdom. But even true faith itself, however necessary, is not sufficient alone to make our good works available to salvation; for it is necessary, in the *second* place, that we be in charity with God, in His friendship and grace, without which even true faith itself will never save us. To be convinced of this, let us only give ear to St Paul, who says, "Though I should have all faith, so as to remove mountains, though I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, though I should give my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. 2. So that let a man be ever so peaceable, regular, inoffensive, and

religious in his way, charitable to the poor, and what else you please, yet if he have not the true faith of Jesus Christ, and be not in charity with God, all his apparent virtues go for nothing ; it is impossible for him to please God by them ; and if he live and die in that state, they will profit him nothing. Hence it is manifest that those who die in a false religion, however unexceptionable may be their moral conduct in the eyes of men, yet, as they have not the true faith of Christ, and are not in charity with Him, they are not in the way of salvation ; for nothing can avail us in Christ but “faith that works by charity,” Gal. v. 6.

Q. 32. But as all this is so evident, how comes it that some nowadays, who profess themselves members of the Church of Christ, seem to call this truth in question by continually pleading in favour of those who are not of their communion, proposing excuses for them, and using all their endeavours to prove a possibility of salvation for those who live and die in a false religion ?

A. This is one of those devices which the enemy of souls makes use of in these unhappy times to promote his own cause, and which there are grounds to fear has, from various reasons, found its way even among those who belong to the fold of Christ ; for, (1.) As they live among those who are of false religions, and often have the most intimate connections with them, they naturally and most laudably contract a love and affection for them. This makes them at first unwilling to think their friends should be out of the way of salvation. Then they proceed to wish and hope they may not be so. Hence they come to call in question their being so ; and from this the step is easy to grasp at every pretext to persuade themselves they are not so. (2.) Latitudinarian principles are to be found everywhere in these our days ; an



uncovenanted mercy, forsooth, is found to be in God for Mahometans, Jews, and infidels, which had never been heard of among Christians. This is gilded over with the specious character of a liberal way of thinking and generous sentiments ; and it is become the fashion to think and speak in this manner. Now fashion is a most powerful persuasive, against which even good people are not always proof ; and when one hears those sentiments every day resounding in his ears, and anything that seems contrary to them ridiculed and condemned, he naturally yields to the delusion, and turns away his mind from so much as wishing to examine the strength of these sentiments from fear of finding out their falsehood. When, from fear of being despised, we wish anything to be true, the translation is very easy to believe it to be true, and without further examination every sophistical show of reason in its favour is adopted as conclusive.

(3.) Worldly interest also very often concurs with its overbearing influence to produce the same end. A member of the Church of Christ sees his separated friend in power and credit in the world, and capable of being of great service to him, and knows, should he embrace the true faith, he would lose all his influence, and become unable to serve him. This makes him cool in wishing his conversion ; but the thought that his friend is not in the way of salvation pains him ; he therefore begins to wish he *could* be saved as he is in his own religion. Hence he comes to hope but that *he may*, and gladly adopts any show of proof to make him think that *he will*. It is true, indeed, all these reasons would have little influence with a sincere member of the Church of Christ, who understands his religion, and has a just sense of what it teaches him on this head. But the great misfortune of many who adopt these loose ways of thinking

and speaking is, (4.) That they are ignorant of the grounds of their religion; they do not examine the matter thoroughly, and if once they be infected by the spirit of the day, they are unwilling to examine; they even take it amiss if any zealous friend should attempt to undeceive them, and grasping at those miserable sophisms which are alleged in favour of their loose way of thinking, refuse to open their eyes to the truth, or even to look at the reasons which support it.

*Q.* 33. What are those sophistical arguments by which they are so much deceived?

*A.* We have seen them above, and fully confuted them one by one. But their great mistake arises from their erroneous ideas of invincible ignorance and the conditions required to be a member of the Church of Christ. For as they must either deny their own faith, or allow this general proposition, that “without faith it is impossible to please God,” whilst they admit the truth of this, they pretend that, as invincible ignorance will excuse a man before God in all other cases, so it must excuse him in this also; and therefore, that though a man have not the true faith, “invincible ignorance will save him”—not adverted to the two senses which these words contain, one of which is certainly true, and the other no less certainly false. Invincible ignorance will indeed save him from the guilt of having a false faith, and of not having the true faith: this is certainly true. But to say that invincible ignorance will save him—that is, will bring him to salvation—is certainly false, as all we have seen above fully proves.

Again, whilst they admit this other general proposition, that “out of the true Church of Christ there is no salvation,” which they must acknowledge, or give up their own religion, they suppose that a man may be a member of

the true Church in the sight of God though not joined with her in communion, as all baptized children are, though born in heresy, at least till they come to the age of judging for themselves. Their mistake lies in not reflecting that all adults in a false religion can be members of the Church in the sight of God in no other sense than those were of whom our Saviour says, "Other sheep I have who are not of this fold." But as He expressly declared that it was necessary to bring even those to the communion of His Church, this evidently shows that they and all such are not members of the Church in such a way that they can be saved in their present state without being joined in her communion.

Q. 34. But is it not laudable and praiseworthy to show all indulgence and condescension to those who are without, and to behave towards them with all lenity and mildness?

A. Most undoubtedly: it is not only laudable, but a strict duty, as far as truth can go. But to betray the truth with any such view must be grievous crime, and highly prejudicial to both parties. Experience, in fact, shows that the loose way of thinking and speaking, which some members of the true Church have *of late* adopted, is productive of the worst consequences, both to themselves and to those whom they desire to favour.

(1.) Those who are separated from the Church of Christ well know that she constantly professes, as an article of her creed, that without the true faith, and out of her communion, there is no salvation. When, therefore, they see the members of that Church talking doubtfully on this point, seeming to question the truth of the doctrine, and even alleging pretexts and excuses to explain it away, what can they think? What effect must this have upon their minds? Must it not tend to extinguish

any desire of inquiring after the truth which God may have given them, and to shut their hearts against any such good thought? Self-love never fails eagerly to lay hold of every thing that favours its wishes; and if once they find this truth called in question, even by those who profess to believe it, they will consider it as a mere school dispute, and think no more about the matter.

(2.) This way of thinking and speaking naturally tends to extinguish all zeal for the salvation of souls in the hearts of those who adopt it; for whilst they persuade themselves that there is a possibility of salvation for those who die in a false faith, and out of the Church of Christ, self-love will easily incline them not to give themselves any trouble about their conversion; nay, it has sometimes even gone so far as to make some think it more advisable not to endeavour to undeceive them, lest it should change their present *excusable ignorance*, as they call it, into a *culpable obstinacy*; not reflecting that, by their pious and zealous endeavours, they may be brought to the knowledge of the truth, and save their souls, whereas, through their uncharitable neglect, they may be deprived of so great a happiness. Woe to the world, indeed, if the first preachers of Christianity had been of such unchristian sentiments!

(3.) It is no less prejudicial to the members of the Church themselves to embrace such ways of thinking; for it cannot fail to cool their zeal and esteem for religion, to make them more careless of preserving their faith, ready for worldly motives to expose it to danger, and in time of temptation to forsake it entirely. In fact, if a man be thoroughly persuaded of the truth of his holy religion, and of the necessity of being a member of the Church of Christ, how is it possible he should ever expose himself to any occasion of losing so great a treasure, or

for any worldly fear or favour to abandon it? Since experience shows then that many, for some trifling worldly advantage, do expose themselves to such danger, by going to places where they cannot practise their religion, but find every inducement to leave it, or, by engaging in employments inconsistent with their duty, expose their children to the same dangerous occasions, this can arise only from want of a just idea of the importance of their religion; and, upon a strict examination, it is always found that some degree or other of the above latitudinarian sentiments is the radical cause. (4.) Besides, if a person once begin to hesitate about the importance of his religion, what esteem or regard can he have for the laws, rules, or practices of it? Self-love, always attentive to its own satisfaction, will soon tell him that, if it be not absolutely necessary to be of that religion, much less necessary must it be to submit to all its regulations; hence liberties are taken in practice, the commands of the Church are despised, the exercises of devotion neglected, and a shadow of religion introduced under the show of liberal sentiments, to the destruction of all solid virtue and piety.

*Q.* 35. What shall we say of those members of the Church of Christ who actually abandon their religion, and renounce their faith?

*A.* As God Himself has given a full and distinct answer to this question in three different places of His Holy Scriptures, it would be presumption to answer it in any other words than His own. First, He says, by the mouth of His holy apostle St Paul, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, have tasted also the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have, moreover, tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and are fallen

away, to be renewed again into penance, crucifying again to themselves the Son of God, and making a mockery of Him. For the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh often upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is tilled, receiveth blessing from God : but that which bringeth forth thorns and briars is rejected, and very near to a curse, whose end is to be burnt," Heb. vi. 4. On which passage the late learned and pious publisher of the Rheims New Testament says, in the note, " that it is impossible for such as have fallen after baptism to be again baptized ; and very hard for such as have apostatised from the faith, after having received many graces, to return again to the happy state from which they fell." Again, " If we sin wilfully," says the same holy apostle, "after having received the knowledge of the truth, there is left no sacrifice for sins, but a certain dreadful expectation of judgment, and the rage of a fire which shall consume the adversaries," Heb. x. 26 : on which the same learned author says,—“ He speaks of the sin of wilful apostasy from the known truth ; after which, as we cannot be baptized again, we cannot expect to have that abundant remission of sins, which Christ purchased by His death, applied to our souls in that ample manner as it is in baptism ; but we have rather all manner of reason to look for a dreadful judgment ; the more because apostates from the known truth seldom or never have the grace to return to it.” *Lastly*, By the mouth of the holy apostle St Peter, God thus declares the state of such people : “ For, if fleeing from the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they be again entangled in them, and overcome, their latter state is become to them worse than the former. For it had been better for them never to have known the way of justice, than after they

have known it, to turn back from that holy commandment which was delivered to them. For that of the true proverb hath happened to them : The dog is returned to his own vomit, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire," 2 Pet. ii. 20.

*Q.* 36. You said above that it is *only of late* that this loose way of thinking and speaking about the necessity of true faith, and of being in communion with the Church of Christ, which we have been examining, has appeared among the members of the Church ; was not the same language held by Christians in all former ages ?

*A.* Far from it ; and this is one of the greatest grounds of its condemnation. It is a novelty, it is a new doctrine ; it was unheard of from the beginning ; nay, it is directly opposite to the uniform doctrine of all the great lights of the Church in all former ages. These great and holy men, the most unexceptionable witnesses of the Christian faith in their days, knew no other language on this subject but what they saw spoken before them by Christ and His apostles ; they knew their Divine Master had declared, " He that believeth not shall be condemned ;" they heard His apostle proclaiming a dreadful anathema against any one, though an angel from heaven, who should dare to alter the Gospel He had preached, Gal. i. 8 ; they heard Him affirming in express terms, that " without faith it is impossible to please God ;" and they constantly held the same language. And as they saw not the smallest ground in Scripture for thinking that those who were out of the Church could be saved by invincible ignorance, that deceptive evasion is not so much as once to be met with in all their writings.

*Q.* 37. In what manner, then, do these holy saints express themselves on this subject ?

*A.* It would be endless to collect all their testimonies ;

the few that follow may suffice as a sample of the whole. St Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, and disciple of the apostles, in his epistle to the Philadelphians, says, "Those who make a separation shall not inherit the kingdom of God." St Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, and martyr in the second age says, "The Church is the gate of life, but all the others are thieves and robbers, and therefore to be avoided," *De Hær.*, lib. i. c. 3. St Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and martyr about the middle of the third age, says, "The house of God is but one, and no one can have salvation but in the Church," *Epist.* 62, *alias* 4. And in his book on the unity of the Church, he says, "He cannot have God for his father who has not the Church for his mother. If any one could escape who was out of the ark of Noah, then he who is out of the Church may also escape." So much for these most primitive fathers.

In the fourth century, St Chrysostom speaks thus: "We know that salvation belongs to the Church ALONE, and that no one can partake of Christ, nor be saved, out of the Catholic Church and the Catholic faith," *Hom.* i. *in Pasch.*

St Augustine, in the same age, says, "The Catholic Church alone is the body of Christ; the Holy Ghost gives life to no one who is out of this body," *Epist.* 185, § 50, *Edit. Bened.* And in another place, "Salvation no one can have but in the Catholic Church. Out of the Catholic Church he may have anything but salvation. He may have honour, he may have baptism, he may have the Gospel, he may both believe and preach in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but he can find salvation nowhere but in the Catholic Church," *Serm. ad Cæsariens de Emerit.* Again: "In the Catholic Church," says he, "there are both good



and bad. But those that are separated from her, as long as their opinions are opposite to hers, cannot be good. For though the conversation of some of them appears commendable, yet their very separation from the Church makes them bad, according to that of our Saviour, Luke, xi. 23, 'He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathers not with Me scattereth.'"  
—*Epist. 209, ad Feliciam.*

Lactantius, another great light of the fourth age, says, "It is the Catholic Church only which retains the true worship. This Church is the fountain of truth, it is the house of faith, it is the temple of God. If any one either comes not into this Church, or departs from it, his eternal salvation is desperate. No one must flatter himself obstinately, for his soul and salvation are at stake."—*Divin. Instit.*, lib. iv. c. 30.

St Fulgentius, in the sixth century, speaks thus: "Hold most firmly, and without any doubt, that no one who is baptized out of the Catholic Church can partake of eternal life, if, before the end of this life, he be not restored to the Catholic Church and incorporated therein," *Lib. de Fid.*, c. 37. These are sufficient to show the faith of the Christian world in all preceding ages; for all the holy writers of Christianity, in every age, speak on this subject in the same strain.

Q. 38. These testimonies are strong, and speak plainly to the purpose; but after such proofs, is it not matter of surprise that anybody should call this point in question?

A. This, indeed, can be accounted for only by the general spirit of worldliness and disregard of all religion which now so universally prevails; for the first Reformers and some of their followers, seeing the strong proofs from Scripture for this doctrine, and not finding the

smallest foundation in these sacred writings to support the contrary, have fairly acknowledged it, however much it made against themselves. We have seen how the divines at Westminster speak on this matter in the Confession of Faith, used to this day by the Church of Scotland, and which was ratified and adopted by the General Assembly in the year 1647, as the standard of their religion. But their predecessors in the preceding century, when the Presbyterian religion first began in Scotland, speak no less clearly on the same subject; for in their Confession of Faith, authorised by Parliament in the year 1560, "as a doctrine grounded upon the infallible Word of God," they speak thus, Article xvi.: "As we believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so we do most constantly believe, that from the beginning there hath been, and now is, and to the end of the world shall be, one Kirk—that is to say, one company and multitude of men, chosen by God, who rightly worship and embrace Him by true faith in Jesus Christ; . . . which Kirk is Catholic—that is, universal; because it containeth the elect of all ages, &c. ; out of which Kirk there is neither life nor eternal felicity: and therefore we utterly abhor the blasphemy of them that affirm that men which live according to equity and justice shall be saved, what religion soever they have professed." This confession of the original Kirk of Scotland was reprinted and published in Glasgow in the year 1771, from which this passage is taken. Calvin himself confesses the same truth, in these words, speaking of the visible Church: "Out of its bosom," says he, "no remission of sins, no salvation is to be hoped for, according to Isaiah, Joel, and Ezekiel; . . . so that it is always highly pernicious to depart from the Church;" and this he affirms in his Institutions themselves, B. iv. c. 1 § 4.

We shall add one testimony more which is particularly strong ; it is of Dr Pearson, a bishop of the Church of England, in his exposition of the Creed, edit. 1669, where he says, “The necessity of believing the Catholic Church appeared, *first*, in this, that Christ hath appointed it as the only way to eternal life. We read at the first, Acts, ii. 47, ‘That the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved ;’ and what was then daily done hath been done since continually. Christ never appointed two ways to heaven ; nor did He build a Church to save some, and make another institution for other men’s salvation—Acts, iv. 12, ‘There is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus ;’ and that name is no otherwise given under heaven than in the Church. As none were saved from the deluge but such as were within the ark of Noah, framed for their reception by the command of God ; as none of the first-born of Egypt lived but such as were within those habitations whose door-posts were sprinkled with blood, by the appointment of God, for their preservation ; as none of the inhabitants of Jericho could escape the fire or sword but such as were within the house of Rahab, for whose protection a covenant was made ;—so NONE shall ever escape the eternal wrath of God who belong not to the Church of God.” Behold how far the force of truth prevailed among the most eminent members of the Reformation before latitudinarian principles had crept in among them ! What a reproach must this be before the judgment-seat of God to those members of the Church of Christ who call in question or seek to invalidate this great and fundamental truth, the very fence and barrier of the true religion : which is so repeatedly declared by God in His Holy Scriptures, professed by the Church of Christ in all ages,

attested in the strongest terms by the most eminent lights of Christianity, and candidly acknowledged by the most celebrated writers and divines of the Reformation ! Will not every attempt to weaken the importance of this Divine truth be considered by the great God as betraying His cause and the interests of His holy faith ? and will those who do so be able to plead even their favourite *invincible ignorance* in their own defence before Him ?

Q. 39. What are the proper sentiments and dispositions which this great truth ought to produce in the hearts and conduct of those who are members of the Church of Christ ?

A. Nothing can contribute more effectually to produce the most necessary and salutary dispositions in their hearts, both towards God, towards one another, and towards those who are separated from their communion, than the frequent and serious consideration of their vocation to the faith of Christ, and to the communion of that Church out of which there is no salvation.

(1.) With regard to God, it cannot fail to inspire them with the most tender sentiments of affection, love, and gratitude towards Him, to see themselves so highly favoured by His infinite goodness, without any merit on their part, and in preference to so many thousands of others who are left in ignorance and error. They ought never to cease praising and adoring Him for so great and inestimable a favour, and ought to be assiduous in giving proof of the sincerity of their gratitude and love to Him, by a continual obedience to His commandments. How agreeable such things are to Almighty God, and how much He requires them from those whom He has so highly favoured, is evident from His own Divine Word, where we are frequently put in mind of the greatness of

the grace of our vocation, and pressingly commanded to make a proper return to God for it, by these holy virtues. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," says St Paul, "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ, as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in His sight in charity. . . . Wherefore I cease not to make commemoration of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom, and of revelation in the knowledge of Him; the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power towards us, who believe according to the operation of the might of His power which He wrought in Christ," Eph. i. 3. Behold how ardently he desires that we may have a proper sense of that great mercy! And a little after, describing the greatness of this favour, and the return it requires from us, he says, "By Him (Christ) we have access in one Spirit to the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints and domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone," Eph. ii. 18. "For you were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord. Walk ye as the children of light; for the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice, and truth; proving what is well-pleasing to God: and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," Eph. v. 8. In another place he says, "That ye may walk worthy of God in all things pleasing, . . . giving thanks to God the Father, Who hath made us worthy to

be partakers of the lot of the saints in light ; Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us to the kingdom of His beloved Son," Col. i. 10. And again, writing to Titus, he says, "It is a faithful saying, and these things I will have thee affirm constantly, that they who believe in God may be careful to excel in good works," Tit. iii. 8. Lastly, to show the absolute necessity of this grateful correspondence on our part with the great goodness of God towards us, he assures us that it is only on condition of our persevering in our holy faith, and in the hope of our calling, that we can expect the eternal reward of being presented spotless before God : "Whereas," says he, "ye were sometimes alienated, and enemies in mind, in evil works ; yet now He hath reconciled you in the body of His flesh, to present you holy, and unspotted, and blameless before Him, if so ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and immovable from the Gospel which ye have heard, which is preached in all the creation which is under heaven," Col. i. 21. St Peter also describes the grace of our vocation in the most beautiful terms, and assures us that the very design of God in calling us was, that we might make a suitable return to Him by declaring His praises. "Ye are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people, that ye may declare the virtues (or praises) of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His admirable light," 1 Pet. ii. 9. How great an obligation does all this lay us under of living good lives, and studying in all things to do the will of God, especially when Christ Himself expressly says, "So let your light shine before men, that they seeing your good works, may glorify your Father Who is in heaven" !

Q. 40. What are the dispositions and behaviour which

this inestimable goodness of God requires in the members of His Church towards one another?

A. St Paul describes them to us in a very strong light as follows: "I, therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation in which ye are called with all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity; careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body, one spirit, as ye are called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, Who is above all, and through all, and in us all," Eph. iv. 1. See here in what strong colours he shows that humility, meekness, and brotherly love, are virtues essential to our vocation, and that everything belonging to our holy religion requires that we should live in the constant practice of them; that we are all united in *one body*, the Church of Christ—animated by *one spirit*, the spirit of Jesus, which guides and conducts that body into all truth; that we are called to *one hope of our calling*, the possession of God Himself in eternal glory; that we all serve *one Lord*, our Lord Jesus Christ; that we all profess *one faith*, that holy faith which He revealed to mankind, *without which it is impossible to please God*; that we are all sanctified by *one baptism*; that we all serve *one God*; that we are all children of *one Father*; and that this heavenly Father is ever present with us, and our whole conduct is naked and open before Him. How unbecoming, then, must it be in the eyes of this our Father, to see us entertaining discords or ill-will among ourselves! and how unworthy of our vocation, and dishonourable to our religion, if, being members of the same body, servants of the same master, and children of the same father, united together in so many strong ties of religion, we should live in animosity and enmity with each other!

In another place, the same holy apostle, describing the dispositions necessary for those whom God has called, as His elect, to the inestimable grace of being members of His holy Church, says: "Put ye on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another: if any one have a complaint against another, even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so do ye also," Col. iii. 12. And the contrary behaviour is so unbecoming and so unworthy of our vocation, that St James declares it to be even diabolical. "If ye have bitter zeal and contentions in your heart, glory not, and be not liars against the truth; for this is not wisdom descending from above, but earthly, sensual, devilish," James, iii. 14. All this is drawn from the express doctrine of our great Master Himself, Who not only commands all His followers to live in brotherly love and union among themselves, but declares this to be so connected with their vocation, that it is the distinguishing sign of their belonging to Him: "By this shall all men know," says He, "that ye are My disciples, if ye love one another," John, xiii. 35.

*Q.* 41. What are the dispositions which the members of the Church of Christ ought to have, and what line of conduct should they follow towards those who are separated from their communion?

*A.* It is impossible to have a real and sincere love of God, without also loving everything that is connected with Him; and the more nearly anything is connected with God, the greater must our love be towards it. Now, all those who are in a false religion, though separated from the communion of the Church, yet have in many other respects a very near connection with God, for they are *His creatures*, the work of His hands, made for His



glory ; they are *His images*, made after the likeness and similitude of God ; they are *redeemed* by the blood of Jesus who died for mankind ; they are created to be *eternally happy* with Him in heaven ; for God wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn and live. All these considerations show that we are bound to have a sincere and fervent love for them, and a charitable zeal for their eternal salvation, and consequently to have the most tender sympathy and compassion for them, considering the danger in which their souls are ; and this is the radical and essential disposition of our hearts, which we are bound to have towards all mankind, without exception. Of this we have a beautiful example in St Paul, who thus expresses the dispositions of his heart towards his brethren, the unbelieving Jews : “ I speak the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great sadness and sorrow in my heart : for I wished myself to be anathema ” (that is, *a curse*) “ from Christ, for my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh,” Rom. ix. 1.

Now this sincere love and zeal for their salvation ought to show itself principally in these following points : (1.) “ To be always ready to satisfy every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us,” 1 Pet. iii. 15—that is, to be always willing and ready to explain our holy faith to them, and to show them the grounds upon which our faith is built, whenever any of them ask us to do so. This should be done with all modesty and mildness towards them, not entering into idle disputes, nor keeping up contentions with heat and acrimony, even though they should be ever so unreasonable in what they say against us, but giving an account of the hope that is in us with mildness and charity, and leaving the rest to the dispositions of Divine Providence ;

for the Scripture says, "Avoid foolish questions, knowing that they beget strifes; but the servant of the Lord must not wrangle, but be mild towards all men, apt to teach, patient, with modesty admonishing them that resist the truth, if peradventure God may give them repentance to know the truth, and they may recover themselves from the snares of the devil, by whom they are held captive at will," 2 Tim. ii. 23; and "to walk with wisdom towards them that are without; so that your speech be always in grace seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man," Col. iv. 5.

(2.) To be earnest in praying to God for their conversion and salvation, is as expressly commanded in Scripture: "I desire, therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings, be made for all men, . . . for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 1. We have a beautiful example of this in the same holy apostle, who, full of charity for the salvation of the Jews, pities their mistaken zeal for their own errors, and pours forth the prayers of his heart for them: "Brethren," says he, "the will of my heart, indeed, and my prayer to God, is for them unto salvation; for I bear them witness that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge," Rom. x. 1.

(3.) To give them good example, by the exercise of good works, and the practice of all Christian virtues. Nothing is of greater efficacy to give others a favourable opinion of our holy religion than a good life. This is a living argument which teaches the most ignorant and convinces the most obstinate. And hence we find this repeatedly commanded in the Scriptures on purpose to give edification to those who are without, and to excite

them to glorify God. "So let your light shine," says Jesus Christ Himself, "before men, that they seeing your good works, may glorify your heavenly Father," Mat. v. 16. And St Peter expresses himself thus, on this important duty: "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, to refrain yourselves from carnal desires which war against your soul, having your conversation good among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, considering you by your good works, they may give glory to God in the day of visitation; . . . for so is the will of God, that by doing well ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," 1 Pet. ii. 11, 15. St Paul also requires the same thing, saying, "In all things show thyself an example of good works, in doctrine, in integrity, in gravity; thy speech sound that cannot be blamed, that he who is on the contrary part may be afraid, having no evil to say of us," Tit. ii. 7.

But (4.) *Lastly*, If, notwithstanding such pious and edifying behaviour, persecutions and trials should be permitted by the Divine Providence to come upon us for His own wise and just purposes, if we should be evil spoken of falsely, if the truths of our holy religion should be calumniated, and our doctrine misrepresented, we must not be surprised nor disheartened; but remember that this is the way the world treated our Lord and Master Himself, Who foretold that His faithful followers should be treated in the same manner. St Peter also assures us that this is one of the signs of those who follow sects of perdition, to speak evil of the truth, "through whom," says he, "the way of truth shall be evil spoken of," 2 Pet. ii. 2; and St Jude adds, "that they blaspheme whatever things they know not," Jude, 10. Neither ought such trials to diminish, even in the

smallest degree, our sincere charity for them, and our desire of their salvation ; but rather increase our pity and compassion for their poor souls, and make us more earnest in praying for them, imitating our blessed Saviour, Who, on the cross itself, prayed for His persecutors : " Father," said He, " forgive them, for they know not what they are doing." Above all things, we must never entertain the least thought of revenge, " not rendering evil for evil, not railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing ; for unto this ye are called, that ye may inherit a blessing," 1 Pet. iii. 9. On the contrary, looking on our trials as all disposed and ordered by the hand of God, " without whom not a hair of our head can fall to the ground," we must " rejoice to be counted worthy to suffer ignominy for the sake of Christ," Acts, v. 41. For " if also ye suffer anything for justice' sake, blessed are ye ; . . . for it is better doing well (*if such be the will of God*) to suffer, than doing ill," 1 Pet. iii. 14, 17. And therefore, " Dearly beloved, think not strange the burning heat that is to try you, as if some new thing happened to you ; but if ye partake of the sufferings of Christ, rejoice that, when His glory shall be revealed, ye may also be glad with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, ye shall be happy ; for that which is of the honour, glory, and power of God, and that which is His Spirit, resteth upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a railer, or a coveter of other men's things ; but if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed ; but let him glorify God in this name," 1 Pet. iv. 12—always remembering the words of our Lord : " Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all that is evil against you falsely, for My sake : be glad, and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven," Mat. v. 11.

## APPENDIX.

ON COMMUNICATING IN RELIGION WITH THOSE  
WHO ARE SEPARATED FROM THE CHURCH  
OF CHRIST.

WHOEVER seriously considers what has been shown in the preceding inquiry, and the light in which the sacred Scriptures represent all false religions, will have no difficulty in drawing this conclusion, that all communication with such, in religious matters, must be highly criminal in the sight of God; because such communication implies an approbation of their false doctrine, and is, as St John expresses it, “a communicating with their wicked works,” 2 John, 11. It might seem unnecessary, therefore, to advance anything further on this head; but as the licentiousness of the heart of man, fostered by the latitudinarian maxims so current in the world, is too apt, under some specious pretence or other, to take liberties in practice, which a bare conclusion from other principles might prove too weak to restrain; and as the spirit of God has been pleased to explain our duty on this point in the plainest terms, in His sacred Scriptures, it cannot, therefore, but be agreeable to all sincere disciples of Jesus Christ to know fully what their holy religion teaches them concerning it. This will serve for their own satisfaction in knowing their duty and the grounds of it,

and will also arm them against the “cunning craftiness of such as may go about to deceive them.” This appendix, therefore, is added to show, from the most incontestable authority, that it is altogether unlawful for the members of the true Church of Christ to hold any religious communication even in appearance only, with those who are separated from her communion ; and that the vain pretexts which may be brought to authorise such communication are mere delusions, and, as St Paul justly calls them, “impositions of philosophy, vain deceit, according to the rudiments of the world, and not according to Christ,” Col. ii. 8. This will manifestly appear by what the sacred Word of God declares upon this subject.

#### SECTION I.

##### *Principles premised from the Holy Scriptures.*

Q. 1. Are we obliged to confess our holy faith outwardly, acknowledging ourselves to be members of the Church of Christ?

A. We are strictly obliged to do so, when either God's honour or the good of our neighbour's soul requires it ; because the Scriptures make this an express condition of salvation. Thus, (1.) “This is the word of faith which we preach ; that if thou confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God raised Him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved ; for with the heart we believe unto justice, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,” Rom. x. 9. In which words the apostle declares, that it is an article of Divine faith, revealed by God, and preached as His word by the apostles, that if we confess Jesus outwardly, and believe Him in

our hearts, we shall be saved ; for though the internal faith of the heart is sufficient for our justification—that is, for being reconciled with God through repentance—yet, if occasion be given, we are also bound to confess outwardly, both by words and actions, without shame, or fear of the world, the faith which we believe in our hearts, in order to obtain salvation. And it is with great reason that St Paul affirms this to be a revealed truth ; for, (2.) Jesus Christ Himself declares it to His holy apostles in these words : “ Whosoever, therefore, shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven,” Mat. x. 32 ; and in another place He repeats it with an asseveration, saying : “ And I say unto you, whosoever shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God,” Luke, xii. 8. In these words, the necessity of confessing our faith in Jesus Christ is revealed by Him ; which, therefore, St Paul in the former text calls *the word of faith*. Now, by confessing Jesus Christ is not only meant confessing our belief in His person, but also in His doctrine, and consequently in His Church, in which alone His true doctrine is preserved ; for of St Paul, before his conversion, it is said that “ He breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord,” Acts, ix. 1—that is, against the Church of Christ, as he himself declares, saying, “ Beyond measure I persecuted the Church of God, and wasted it,” Gal. i. 13 ; and yet, when Christ appeared to him by the way going to Damascus, He said to him, “ Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? . . . I am Jesus whom thou persecutest,” Acts, ix. 4 ; where it is manifest that persecuting Christ and persecuting His Church is the same thing ; and consequently, confessing Christ and confessing His Church is the same thing also, according to His own

words to the pastors of His Church,—“He that hears you hears Me; and he that despises you despises Me.”

Q. 2. Is it a grievous sin to deny Christ, or His faith and Church?

A. It is of its own nature a grievous sin of the deepest dye; for Christ Himself says, “Whosoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father Who is in heaven,” Mat. x. 33; and again,—“He that shall deny Me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God,” Luke, xii. 9. On this authority St Paul declares the same truth as *a faithful saying*, and commands his disciple Timothy, and in him all the pastors of God’s Church, to preach and inculcate the same to their people: “A faithful saying. . . . If we deny Him, He will deny us; if we believe not, He continueth faithful, He cannot deny Himself; of these things put them in mind, charging them before the Lord,” 2 Tim. ii. 11; where it is manifest that, to deny Jesus Christ, and consequently to deny His faith or Church, is a deadly sin, which, at the great day, will bring upon us that dreadful sentence, “I know you not whence ye are; depart from Me, all ye workers of iniquity,” Luke, xiii. 27.

Q. 3. How does it appear that denying the faith or Church of Christ is included in these texts, and is the same as denying Christ Himself?

A. This is manifest, both from the reason given above, and also from the following express declaration of Christ Himself, saying, “Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also will be ashamed of him, when He shall come in the glory of His Father, with the holy angels,” Mark, viii. 38; where it is evident



that to be ashamed, not only of Christ, but also of His words—that is, of His doctrine, of His faith, and consequently of His Church, the depositary of His faith—is a mortal sin of its own nature ; and if the *being ashamed* of these is a mortal sin, how much more the *denying them* ?

Q. 4. But is it not allowable to deny our faith outwardly, whilst we keep it firmly in our hearts, in order to escape some great evil, such as the loss of all our goods, our liberty, or of life itself ?

A. No : it is never allowable, even in appearance, either by words, or signs, or actions, to deny our faith, though it were to gain the whole world, or to escape the greatest evils ; for, (1.) This is exactly what Christ condemns in express terms, when He says, “Whosoever shall deny Me before men”—that is, outwardly in appearance, in the eyes of the world—“I will also deny him before My Father Who is in heaven.” (2.) Because He makes the losing our life for His sake, and for the sake of His Gospel, when called to the test, a condition of salvation. “Whosoever,” says He, “shall lose his life for My sake, and for the Gospel, shall save it ; for what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul ? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul ? For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of My words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also shall be ashamed of him, when He shall come in the glory of His Father,” Mark, viii. 35 ; where it is evident that even the being ashamed of *His Gospel*—that is, of *His words*—even though it were to save our life, or gain the whole world, is a crime which will destroy the soul ; how much more to deny it ? whereas if we lose our life for His holy faith, we save our souls, and gain eternal happiness. (3.) Because to deny

our faith, only in appearance, is, of *its own nature*, a mortal sin, and therefore never can be allowable on any consideration.

Q. 5. Did the primitive Christians understand these texts in this manner?

A. There cannot be a stronger proof of the belief of the primitive Church in this matter than the noble behaviour of thousands and thousands of her members, who laid down their lives in the midst of the most cruel torments, rather than do the smallest thing that could have even the appearance of denying their holy religion. It was not always required of these blessed martyrs openly to renounce their faith, or to abandon it entirely. Merely saying certain words, or doing some action, which was to be interpreted as a disavowal of their religion, or an approbation of the then established religion of the country, was frequently all that was required of them to save goods, liberty, and life. To be present at a heathen sacrifice, though their heart took no share in what was there done, was sufficient; and had they complied with this but once, they would seldom have again been sought after, but allowed to follow what religion they pleased; yet they persevered resolutely, choosing to forfeit all that was near and dear to them in this world, and to undergo the most exquisite torments, rather than do the smallest action contrary to the allegiance which they owed to Jesus Christ, or, in appearance only, seem to be ashamed of Him and of His sacred words. Surely, nothing but the most perfect conviction of the unlawfulness of the thing could have caused so many of both sexes, and often of the most tender age, to reject with horror such a compliance. Their all was at stake—life, liberty, goods, children, and everything they possessed; by compliance they would have secured all

those things which men are taught to regard as the most valuable in this world, and, moreover, were often promised riches and honours, and the favour of the emperors. By non-compliance they forfeited all, and were condemned to die in the most excruciating manner ; yet, convinced that such compliance was unlawful, an injury to God, a dishonour to His holy faith, and a scandal to their brethren, they cheerfully embraced death in all its horrors, rather than be guilty of such a crime. What shows still more plainly the ideas of the primitive Church on this point is her treatment of certain weak brethren, who, to avoid these tortures, procured, for money, an attestation from the magistrates that they had complied with what the persecuting laws required, though in reality they had not. They were regarded by the Church as traitors to their God and to their religion, they were dealt with as such, and not admitted to the participation of the sacred mysteries, till, by long and severe public penance, they had endeavoured to expiate their crime, and repair the scandal they had given.

*Q.* 6. Wherein does the malice of the sin consist when one, either by words, or signs, or actions, denies his faith, though only in appearance, whilst he still retains it in his heart ?

*A.* The malice of this sin is manifold. (1.) It is a grievous lie, in a matter of the highest importance, when one professes outwardly that the truths of God are false which he knows in his heart to be true ; and if this profession be accompanied with an oath, it is perjury, and one of the grossest insults that can be offered to Almighty God, because it is calling Himself to witness that the Divine truths revealed by Him are false. (2.) It is giving the lie to God before men ; for, as he “ that believeth not

the Son maketh God a liar, because he believeth not the testimony which He hath testified of His Son," 1 John, v. 10; so he that denieth any truth revealed by Jesus Christ maketh Him a liar, because he acknowledges before men that His Divine faith is not true. Hence, (3.) All acts of this kind are most dishonourable to Almighty God, and contain a grievous contempt of His infinite majesty, of which He says, "They that despise Me shall be despised," 1 Kings (Sam.), ii. 30. (4.) They are also grievously injurious to Divine charity, and show that we love the world, our possessions, or our life much more than God, when, from fear of losing them, we deny Him and His holy faith. (5.) They also contain the malice of grievous scandal, for they give the enemies of our holy faith occasion to think slightly of it, and to be the more confirmed in their own errors. The bad example also of such actions naturally induces weak brethren to follow it, and to lose the esteem they ought to have for their holy religion, to the ruin and destruction of their souls.

## SECTION II.

### *Consequences that necessarily follow from these Scripture Principles.*

Q. 7. What are the consequences which flow from these Scripture principles?

A. Chiefly these following: 1. That when a person is called upon by public authority to give an account of his religion, he is obliged in conscience openly to declare his faith, because the honour of God then requires him to do so, and obliges him not to be *ashamed of Christ nor of His words*, even though his doing so should cost him all

he has in this world, even life itself. Hence the holy martyrs, when examined before their persecuting judges, openly confessed their faith in Jesus Christ, and rejoiced, with the apostles, to suffer for His name's sake.

2. When we hear wicked men speaking impious things against the Gospel, or ridiculing the sacred truths it teaches, and have grounds to hope that our defending them would either check their impiety or prevent others present from being hurt by it, it is our duty to profess our esteem and veneration for the Gospel, because then both the good of our neighbour and the honour of God call upon us to do so. And is it not surprising that, if we hear our friend, father, or prince spoken evil of, we think ourselves obliged to take their part and defend them, and yet that we should be cold and backward to defend the cause of the great God, when we hear His divine truths blasphemed, or ashamed to show ourselves Christians, lest we should be ridiculed by men? Have we not reason to dread that Christ will be ashamed of us at the great day? This was not the case with the royal prophet, that man according to God's own heart, who said to God, "I spoke of Thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed," Ps. cxviii. 46; nor with St Paul, who said, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel," Rom. i. 16.

3. That it is always criminal to seem to approve of or profess any false religion, whether this be done by words, signs, or actions; because to approve a false religion, even in appearance, or before men, is a tacit condemnation of the true, is a dangerous lie, dishonourable to God, and a scandal to our neighbour. Hence, when the persecuting heathen king required the venerable Eleazar to eat swine's flesh, contrary to the law, as a sign of his denying his religion, "he, choosing rather a most

glorious death than a hateful life, went forward of his own accord to the torment;" and when some of his friends, moved with a false compassion, proposed to bring him other flesh which the law allowed, that he might appear to have eaten swine's flesh in obedience to the king, and so save his life, "he answered without delay, . . . saying he would rather be sent into the other world; for it doth not become our age, said he, to dissemble, whereby many young persons, . . . through my dissimulation, and for a little time of a corruptible life, should be deceived, and thereby I should bring a stain and a curse upon my old age; for though for the present time I should be delivered from the punishment of men, yet should I not escape the hand of the Almighty, neither alive nor dead; . . . and he was forthwith carried to execution," 2 Mac. vi. 19.

4. That when a person living among those of a false religion conceals his faith, though he keep it in his heart, and in order to conceal it neglects all its external duties, and even transgresses the sacred laws and precepts of the Church lest he should be discovered, and meet with some temporal loss or inconvenience, he is guilty of a sin, because he is ashamed of the faith of Christ, disobeys His holy Church, and prefers his own worldly ease and interest to the glory of God and the honour of His holy Gospel.

5. That if this person, the more effectually to conceal his religion, not only neglects its duties, but even joins in acts of the false religion of those with whom he dwells by being present at their prayers, or going to their churches, his sin is still more grievous, because he positively professes a false religion, denies the true religion of Jesus Christ before men, and therefore must expect to be denied by Him at the great day. Of such as these

the Scripture says, "When they worship the Lord they serve also their idols," 4 Kings, xvii. 33, 41. And their great misery is, that they conceal their worship of the Lord, being ashamed or afraid to show it, and worship openly their idols, their worldly interests, and the favour of men.

6. That if any outward action or dress, or the like, be either of its own nature, by the laws of the country, or the custom of the place, considered a distinctive sign of a false religion, it is always unlawful and a sin in any member of the Church of Christ to do that action or wear that dress, whatever may be his private intention in doing so; because in the eyes of the world it is an open profession of that false religion, nor does it depend upon his private intention to make it otherwise. Hence the Church severely condemned the practice of some Christians living among Mahometans, who, while they privately attended their Christian duties, took Turkish names, and used the Turkish dress, that, passing for Mahometans, they might enjoy certain privileges in trade, and be freed from certain taxes which Christians were obliged to pay. All such dissimulation in religion is detestable in the sight of God, not only for the reasons given above, but also because of the injury it does to His holy religion itself; for when it is discovered, as it seldom fails sooner or later to be, it gives the enemies of our holy faith cause to believe that it approves such dissimulation, and increases their hatred and aversion to it.

7. Every action or way of speaking which either includes, or seems to include, a contempt and disapprobation of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, or an approbation of what is contrary thereto, and which scandalises weak brethren, or tends to lead them into error or sin, is still more detestable in the eyes of God; as, besides all the

evils above mentioned, it also tends to the ruin of those souls for which Christ died. We have seen how this consideration weighed with that holy servant of God Eleazar, to keep him from doing a thing lawful in itself, but which, having the appearance of evil, would have proved a scandal to others; and St Paul, in the strongest manner, shows us the greatness of the crime of giving scandal in things that regard religion above all others.

Q. 8. What is the doctrine delivered by St Paul on this head?

A. It consists of several most necessary points: for (1.) He lays down three different kinds of injury we may do to our neighbour's soul, by giving bad example of any kind, but especially in what regards our religion; *first, To scandalise him*—that is, to encourage our neighbour to do evil, or to be the cause of inducing him to sin; *secondly, To offend him*—that is, to give him pain and trouble of mind, on seeing our evil deeds; *thirdly, To make him weak*—that is, to weaken his esteem and zeal for his religion, by seeing or hearing us do or say anything slighting of it. Now all these things he exhorts us to avoid, by abstaining even from the most innocent actions, if our neighbour through weakness take offence at them. "It is good," says he, "not to eat flesh, and not to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother is offended, or scandalised, or made weak," Rom. xiv. 21. "Put not a stumbling-block or a scandal in your brother's way; . . . but if, because of thy meat, thy brother be grieved, thou walkest not now according to charity. Destroy not him with thy meat for whom Christ died," Rom. xiv. 13, 15.

(2.) He declares that when a person thinks anything a sin which is not so in itself, and commits it, he be-



comes guilty, by acting against his conscience. "All things," says he, "are clean, but it is an evil for that man who eateth with offence; . . . for he that discerneth" (that is, *thinks some meats clean and some unclean*), "if he eat, is condemned, because not of faith"—that is, not according to but against his conscience, Rom. xiv. 20, 23.

(3.) He affirms that, if we do a thing innocent in itself, but which has the appearance of evil, and much more so if it be evil, by which our brother is encouraged or otherwise induced to do it, believing it to be evil, or knowing it to be such, we commit a grievous sin, by ruining our brother's soul, and sinning against Christ, who died for our salvation. Meats offered to idols, in reality contract no uncleanness on that account, because an idol is nothing, and therefore in themselves they may be eaten without any scruple; yet all are not of that opinion, and "if any one eats with the conscience of the idol" (that is, *thinking it unlawful to do so*), "his conscience, being weak, is defiled." Now, though another who has knowledge may lawfully eat such meat, yet, if his doing so induces his weak brother to do the same, he is guilty of the ruin of his brother. "Take heed," says he, "lest perhaps this your liberty become a stumbling-block to the weak; for if a man see him that hath knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not his conscience, being weak, be emboldened to eat those things which are sacrificed to idols? and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish for whom Christ died? Now, when ye sin thus against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ," 1 Cor. viii. 9.

Wherefore, (4.) He concludes, that for his part, "if meat scandalise my brother, I will never taste flesh, lest

I should scandalise my brother," 1 Cor. viii. 13. And a little after he gives this general command to all, "Give no offence to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God," 1 Cor. x. 32. From this it is manifest that every word or action including or seeming to include a contempt of religion, by which our brethren may "be offended, or scandalised, or made weak," is very offensive in the sight of God, from this consideration alone, that it tends to make "them perish for whom Christ died, wounds their weak conscience," and through them is a "sin against Christ." And how severe a judgment Christ will pass against all those who scandalise their weak brethren appears from His own words, when He says, "He that shall scandalise one of those little ones that believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of scandals; for it must needs be that scandals come; but, nevertheless, woe to that man by whom scandal cometh," Mat. xviii. 6. And the holy Eleazar declared that, had he been guilty of that crime, though by an action which was in itself lawful, and to save his own life, yet "neither alive nor dead should he escape the hand of the Almighty," 2 Mac. vi. 26.

8. *Lastly*, That it is always criminal to expose one's self without necessity to the probable danger of losing one's faith, or being corrupted in one's religion; for the Scripture declares that "He that loveth the danger shall perish in it," Eccles. iii. 27. And our Saviour commands us to pluck out our eye, or cut off a hand or foot, and throw it from us, if it be a scandal to us—that is, to fly from, separate ourselves from, and avoid every person, thing, or employment, which puts us in the dangerous occasion of ruining our souls, though as near and dear or

useful to us as an eye, a hand, or a foot ; and He adds this cogent reason, "For it is better," says He, "for thee that one of thy members should perish, than that thy whole body should be cast into hell-fire," Mat. v. 29. And again: "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed and lame, than, having two hands and two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire," Mat. xviii. 8.

Q. 9. What is the conclusion to be drawn from all these Scripture truths ?

A. The conclusion is manifest, namely—"That all communication in matters of religion with those separated from the Church of Christ, which either is in itself, or is esteemed in the eyes of men to be, a defection from the true faith, or a profession or approbation of their false tenets, or is a distinctive sign of belonging to their sect, or an occasion of offence and scandal to the faithful, or an exposing of one's self to the probable danger of seduction, is a very great crime in the sight of God, and strictly forbidden by His holy law, as being intrinsically evil in its own nature."

Q. 10. Is there any positive law of God expressly forbidding all communication with those of a false religion ?

A. There are several very strong and clear commands for this purpose, some of which contain an unlimited prohibition of all such communication in general, and others enforce this prohibition by assigning particular reasons for it.

### SECTION III.

*General Laws of God, forbidding all Communication in Religion with those of a false Religion.*

Q. 11. What are those laws which prohibit this in general ?

A. They are principally these following :—

(I.) The first is grounded upon the light in which all false religions are considered in the Holy Scripture ; for there we are assured that they arise from *false teachers*, who are called *seducers of the people, ravenous wolves, false prophets*, who *speaking perverse things*: that they are *anti-christs*, and *enemies of the cross of Christ* ; that, *departing from the true faith of Christ*, they *give heed to the spirits of error* ; that their doctrines are the *doctrines of devils, speaking lies* ; that their *ways are pernicious*, their *heresies damnable*, and the like. In consequence of which, this general command of avoiding all communication with them in religion is given by the apostle : “ Bear not the yoke together with unbelievers ; for what participation hath justice with injustice ? or what fellowship hath light with darkness ? and what concord hath Christ with Belial ? or what part hath the faithful with the unbelievers ? or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols ? For ye are the temple of the living God,” 2 Cor. vi. 14. Now it is the true religion of Jesus Christ, the true doctrine of His gospel, which is justice and light ; all false doctrines are injustice and darkness : it is by our holy faith that we belong to Christ, and are temples of the living God ; all false religions flow from the father of lies, and make those who embrace them unbelievers ; therefore all participation, all fellowship, all communication with false religions, is here expressly forbidden by the Word of God. We have seen above that we are obliged to love the persons of those who are engaged in false religions, to wish them well, and to do them good ; but here we are expressly forbidden all communication in their religion—that is, in their false tenets and worship. Hence the learned and pious English divines who published at Rheims their translation of the New

Testament, in their note upon this passage, say : “ Generally, here is forbidden conversation and dealing with unbelievers in prayers, or meetings at their schismatical service, or other divine office whatsoever ; which the apostle here uttereth in more particular terms, that Christian people may take the better heed of it.”

(2.) The next general command to avoid all religious communication with those who are heretics, or have a false religion, is this,—“ A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, AVOID ; knowing that he that is such an one is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment,” Tit. iii. 10. Here we see another general command to avoid all such—that is, to flee from them, to have no communication with them. But in what are we commanded to flee from them? not as to their persons, or the necessary communications of society ; for then, as the same holy apostle says upon a similar occasion, “ You must needs go out of the world,” 1 Cor. v. 10. Not as to the offices of Christian charity ; for these we are commanded by Christ Himself, in the person of the good Samaritan, to give to all mankind, whatever their religion be : therefore, in the most restricted and limited sense which the words can bear, the thing in which we are commanded to avoid them is in all matters of religion ; in that in which they themselves are subverted and sin ; in things relating to God and His service. In these they err, in these they are subverted, in these they are condemned ; therefore in these we must avoid them. Hence the pious translators of the Rheims New Testament, in their note on this text, say : “ Heretics, therefore, must not wonder if we warn all Catholics, by the words of the apostle in this place, to take heed of them, and to shun their preachings, books, and conventicles.”

(3.) A third general command on this subject is manifestly included in this zealous injunction of the apostle : "We charge you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother walking disorderly, and not according to the tradition which they have received from us," 2 Thess. iii. 6. In this passage all the different sects of false religions are particularly pointed out ; for, however they may differ in other respects, they generally agree in this, of rejecting apostolical traditions handed down to us by the Church of Christ ; all such the apostle here charges us, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to avoid—to withdraw ourselves from them. Now it is evident that the most limited sense in which this command, so warmly laid on us by the apostle, can be taken, is to withdraw ourselves from them in everything relating to religion,—from their sacraments, prayers, preachings, religious meetings, and the like. It is in these things that they "do not walk according to the tradition received from the apostles." In these things, then, we are here commanded, in the name of Christ Himself, "to withdraw ourselves from them."

Seeing, therefore, that the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of this holy apostle, has so often, and in such strong terms, forbidden all manner of fellowship in religion with those who are out of His holy Church, let us not be deceived by the specious but vain sophistry of cunning men, who lie in wait to deceive ; let us not offend our God, by transgressing these His express commands, by joining in the prayers or going to the meetings of such as are separated from His holy Church, lest He should withdraw His holy grace from us, and as we expose ourselves to the danger, leave us to perish in it. Let us hear and follow the advice and command of the

same holy apostle: "As therefore ye have received Jesus Christ the Lord, walk ye in Him; rooted and built up in Him, and confirmed in the faith; as also ye have learned, abounding in Him in thanksgiving. Beware lest any man impose upon you by philosophy and vain deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the rudiments of the world, and not according to Christ," Col. ii. 6. Wherefore, to all those arguments which may be brought from human, worldly, or interested motives, to induce us to join in or to partake of any religious duty with those of a false religion, though in appearance only, we ought to oppose this one,—“God has expressly forbidden it, therefore no human power can make it lawful.”

#### SECTION IV.

*Particular Laws of God forbidding all Communication with false Religions, and assigning Reasons for it.*

Q. 12. What are the particular laws on this subject?

A. In the three general commands above mentioned, God Almighty speaks, by the mouth of His holy apostle, as Lord and Master, and lays His orders upon us absolutely. In what follows, He unites the merciful Saviour to the Sovereign; and whilst He no less strictly commands us to avoid all religious communication with those who are separated from His holy faith and Church, He at the same time condescends to engage our obedience, by showing us the strongest reasons for it.

(1.) “Beware of false prophets,” says our blessed Master, “who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves,” Mat. vii. 15. Here

Jesus Christ commands His followers to “beware of false prophets”—that is, to flee from them, to be on their guard against them; and He adds this powerful motive, Lest ye be seduced and ruined by them; for, whatever appearance of godliness they may put on, though they come to you in the clothing of sheep, yet within they are ravenous wolves, and seek only to slay and to destroy. To the same purpose He says in another place, “Take heed that no man seduce you; for many will come in My name, saying, I am Christ, and they will seduce many,” Mat. xxiv. 4. “And many false prophets shall arise and seduce many,” ver. 11. Here He foretells the cunning of false teachers, and the danger of being seduced by them, and commands us to take care of ourselves, that such be not our fate. But how shall we escape from them? He afterwards tells us *how*: do not believe them, have nothing to do with them, have no communication with them. “Then,” He says, “if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, do not believe him. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if it is possible) even the elect. Behold, I have told it you beforehand. If, therefore, they shall say to you, Behold He is in the desert, go ye not out; behold He is in the closet, believe it not,” Mat. xxiv. 23. Can there be a more powerful reason to enforce the observance of His command, or a stronger motive to induce His followers to have no religious communication with such false teachers? Many will be certainly seduced by them; and so will you, if you expose yourself to the danger.

(2.) St Peter, considering the great mercy bestowed upon us by the grace of our vocation to the true faith of Christ, says, that it is our duty to “declare the praises



and virtues of Him Who hath called us out of darkness into His admirable light," 1 Pet. ii. 9. St Paul also exhorts us to "give thanks to God the Father, Who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light, Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His beloved Son," Col. i. 12; where it is manifest that as the true faith of Jesus Christ is the only light that conducts to salvation, and that it is only in His kingdom—that is, in His Church—where that heavenly light is to be found, so all false religions are darkness; and that to be separated from the kingdom of Christ is to be in darkness as to the great affair of eternity. And indeed what greater or more miserable darkness can a soul be in than to be led away by seducing spirits, and "departing from the faith of Christ, give heed to the doctrine of devils," 1 Tim. iv. 1. St Paul, deploring the state of such souls, says that they "have their understandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts," Eph. iv. 18. On this account the same holy apostle exhorts us in the most pressing manner to take care not to be seduced from the light of our holy faith by the vain words and seducing speeches of false teachers, by which we would certainly incur the anger of God; and, to prevent so great a misery, he not only exhorts us to walk as children of the light in the practice of all holy virtues, but expressly commands us to avoid all communication in religion with those who walk in the darkness of error. "Let no man deceive you with vain words, for because of these things cometh the anger of God upon the children of unbelief; be ye not, therefore, partakers with them. For ye were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord; walk ye as the children of the light, . . . and

have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," Eph. v. 6. Here, then, we have an express command, not only not to partake with the unfruitful works of darkness—that is, not to join in any false religion, or partake of its rites or sacraments—but also, not to have any fellowship with its professors, not to be present at their meetings or sermons, or any other of their religious offices, lest we be deceived by them, and incur the anger of the Almighty, provoke Him to withdraw His assistance from us, and leave us to ourselves, in punishment of our disobedience.

(3.) St Paul, full of zeal for the good of souls, and solicitous to preserve us from all danger of losing our holy faith, the groundwork of our salvation, renews the same command in his Epistle to the Romans, by way of entreaty, beseeching us to avoid all such communication with those of a false religion. He also shows us by what sign we should discover them, and points out the source of our danger from them: "Now I beseech you, brethren, to mark them who cause dissensions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and to avoid them; for they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly, and by pleasing speeches and good words seduce the hearts of the innocent," Rom. xvi. 17. See here whom we are to avoid—"those that cause dissensions contrary to the ancient doctrine;" all those who, having left the true faith and doctrine which they had learned, and which has been handed down to us from the beginning by the Church of Christ, follow strange doctrines, and make divisions and dissensions in the Christian world. And why are we to avoid them? because they are not servants of Christ, but slaves to their own belly, whose hearts are placed upon the enjoyments of this world, and who, by "pleasing speeches and good words, seduce the hearts of the innocent"—that is,

do not bring good reasons or solid arguments to seduce people to their evil ways, so as to convince the understanding, for that is impossible; but practise upon their hearts and passions, relaxing the laws of the Gospel, granting liberties to the inclinations of flesh and blood, laying aside the sacred rules of mortification of the passions and of self-denial, promising worldly wealth, and ease, and honours, and, by pleasing speeches of this kind, seducing the heart, and engaging people to their ways.

(4.) The same argument and command the apostle repeats in his epistle to his beloved disciple Timothy, where he gives a sad picture, indeed, of all false teachers, telling us that they put on an outward show of piety the better to deceive, "having an appearance, indeed, of godliness, but denying the power thereof;" then he immediately gives this command: "Now these avoid: for of this sort are they that creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, who are led away with divers desires;" and adds this sign by which they may be known, that, not having the true faith of Christ, and being out of His holy Church—the only sure rule for knowing the truth—they are never settled, but are always altering and changing their opinions, "ever learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth;" because, as he adds, "they resist the truth, being corrupted in their mind, and reprobate concerning the faith," 2 Tim. iii. 5. Here it is to be observed that, though the apostle says that silly weak people, and especially women, are most apt to be deceived by such false teachers, yet he gives the command of avoiding all communication with them in their evil ways, to all without exception, even to Timothy himself; for the epistle is directed particularly to him, and to him he says, as well as to all others, "Now these avoid," though he was a pastor of the Church, and

fully instructed by the apostle himself in all the truths of religion ; because, besides the danger of seduction, which none can escape who voluntarily expose themselves to it, all such communication is evil in itself, and therefore to be avoided by all, and especially by pastors, whose example would be more prejudicial to others.

(5.) *Lastly*, The beloved disciple St John renews the same command in the strongest terms, and adds another reason, which regards all without exception, and especially those who are best instructed in their duty : “ Look to yourselves,” says he, “ that ye lose not the things that ye have wrought, but that you may receive a full reward. Whosoever revolteth, and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that continueth in the doctrine, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any man come to you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, nor say to him, God speed you : for he that saith to him, God speed you, communicateth with his wicked works,” 2 John, ver. 8. Here, then, it is manifest, that all fellowship with those who have not the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which is “ a communication in their evil works ”—that is, in their false tenets, or worship, or in any act of religion—is strictly forbidden, under pain of losing the “ things we have wrought, the reward of our labours, the salvation of our souls.” And if this holy apostle declares that the very saying *God speed* to such people is a communication with their wicked works, what would he have said of going to their places of worship, of hearing their sermons, joining in their prayers, or the like? From this passage the learned translators of the Rheims New Testament, in their note, justly observe, “ That, in matters of religion, in praying, hearing their sermons, presence at their service, partaking of their sacraments, and all other communicating with them in

spiritual things, it is a great and damnable sin to deal with them." And if this be the case with all in general, how much more with those who are well instructed and better versed in their religion than others? for their doing any of these things must be a much greater crime than in ignorant people, because they know their duty better.

Q. 13. These laws are very clear and strong; but has the Christian Church always observed and enforced the observance of them?

A. The Spirit of Christ, which dictated the Holy Scriptures, and the Spirit which animates and guides the Church of Christ, *and teaches her all truth*, is the same; and therefore in all ages her conduct on this point has been uniformly the same as what the Holy Scripture teaches. She has constantly forbidden her children to hold any communication, in religious matters, with those who are separated from her communion; and this she has sometimes done under the most severe penalties. In the apostolical canons, which are of very ancient standing, and for the most part handed down from the apostolical age, it is thus decreed: "If any bishop, or priest, or deacon, shall join in prayers with heretics, let him be suspended from communion," Can. 44. Also, "If any clergyman or laic shall go into the synagogue of the Jews, or the meetings of heretics, to join in prayer with them, let him be deposed, and deprived of communion," Can. 63. So also, in one of her most respected councils, held in the year 398, at which the great St Augustine was present, she speaks thus: "None must either pray or sing psalms with heretics; and whosoever shall communicate with those who are cut off from the communion of the Church, whether clergyman or laic, let him be excommunicated," Coun. Carth. iv. 72 and 73. The same is her language in all ages; and in this she shows herself

to be the true mother, who will not suffer her children to be divided. She knows her heavenly spouse has declared that "no man can serve two masters; we cannot serve God and Mammon;" and therefore she must either have them to be hers entirely, or she cannot acknowledge them as such. She knows His holy apostle has protested that there can be no "participation, no fellowship, no concord, no part, no agreement between the faithful and the unbeliever;" and therefore she never can allow any of her faithful children to have any religious communication with those of a false religion and corrupted faith.

*Q.* 14. Are there any other particular reasons for avoiding all communication with those who are separated from the Church, in those countries where the number of the faithful is small, and where they live amidst multitudes who are of different religions?

*A.* Yes, there are, and very strong reasons. For, (1.) In these countries, if any of the faithful appear in the public places of worship, whether the established or those permitted by law, their doing so is generally looked upon as a defection from their own faith, and a joining with those who are separated from it, which is denying their faith before men. (2.) When a member of the Church goes to such religious meetings, whether to be present at their service or to hear their sermons, he never fails to give the greatest scandal; his going is a matter of triumph, and sometimes of derision, to those out of the Church, and causes affliction and offence to the faithful. It is an encouragement to the weak to do the same, lessens their esteem and respect for their holy faith, and gives those who are without occasion to bring such unhappy examples as a motive to induce others to do the same, as experience itself teaches. (3.) It can seldom or never be done, especially

among the more unlearned, without evident danger of seduction, as is found also from experience. These considerations, as we have seen above, render all communication with those of a false religion doubly criminal, and strictly forbidden by the law of Jesus Christ, even though done in appearance only, and without any internal joining of the mind. (4.) There are also certain particular laws of the Church, expressly forbidding the faithful to hold any religious communication in these circumstances with those of a different religion.

Q. 15. What are these particular laws of the Church ?

A. I shall only mention the two following : the first is a rescript of the head of the Church, Pope Paul IV. to the Catholics in England, at a time when the most severe persecutions were raised against them, unless they agreed to go from time to time to the public churches : " Great," says the holy Father, " has been the grief of our mind for the tribulations and calamities ye have constantly undergone for your adherence to the Catholic faith ; and as we understand that these trials are become more severe at present, our affliction is increased exceedingly. For we are informed that ye are compelled, under the most grievous penalties, to go to the churches of heretics, to frequent their meetings, and be present at their sermons. Indeed we are fully persuaded that ye who, with so much fortitude and constancy, have hitherto undergone almost infinite miseries, *that ye might walk without stain in the law of the Lord*, will never consent to be defiled by communicating with those who have forsaken the Divine law. Nevertheless, urged by the zeal of our pastoral duty, and from paternal solicitude with which we daily labour for the salvation of your souls, we are forced to admonish and conjure you, that *on no account you go to the churches of heretics, or hear their sermons,*

*or join in their rites, lest ye incur the wrath of God; for it is not lawful for you to do such things, without dishonouring God, and hurting your own souls."* In consequence of which authoritative decision, the Catholic pastors there have most strictly prohibited all such communication, by their special regulations.

The second is taken from the regulations made by the Catholic pastors in Scotland, which were approved and confirmed by the Holy See; in which it is expressly ordained, "That if any of the faithful shall be present at the service of those of a different religion, or go to hear their sermons, they shall be obliged to do public penance for the scandal so given, and that they all be expressly forbidden to be present even at their private prayers;" and then it is added,—“Certain it is, that all communication in holy things with heretics has at all times been condemned by the Church with the greatest detestation. And in Scotland the distinctive sign of the faithful from others is, that Catholics do not go to their churches; and for the most part nothing else is required of Catholics as a profession that they have forsaken their own Church than to go to the meetings of others, which, if they do, they are no longer esteemed Catholics, but apostates from their faith.” Which last words show that in Scotland it is particularly criminal to go to such places, as including a denial of their holy faith, in the estimation of the world and in the eye of the law, and on that account, also, must be attended with greater offence and scandal to all the faithful.

Q. 16. After such strong prohibitions, both by the Holy Scriptures, the general laws of the Church, and the statutes of particular Churches, where occasion requires it, one is at a loss to imagine what any man could say to the contrary: can any kind of authority be brought



from Scripture to favour the liberty of going to such places?

*A.* That is impossible; the Scripture can never contradict itself, and we see that the whole tenor of the Scripture forbids it in the strictest terms. Nor is it in the New Testament alone that all religious communication is forbidden with those of a false religion. The conduct of Divine providence, in this point, was uniformly the same from the beginning; and the people of God, in the old law, were forbidden all such communication, under the severest penalties, as appears from many parts of the Old Testament. Neither, indeed, is it so much as pretended that a single text of Scripture can be produced to authorise such liberty. This very circumstance alone is its greatest condemnation; while we see so many of the most clear and evident texts forbidding it, and not so much as one to favour it. The constant practice of the Church also shows that any attempt to authorise or excuse such liberty falls under the curse pronounced by St Paul on all novelty in religion, and is contrary to the Gospel which has been preached from the beginning, and handed down from the holy apostles.

*Q.* 17. But is it not allowed in some countries to go to hear the sermons of those who are separated from the Church; and if in some, why not in others?

*A.* It is not allowed in any country, for no power on earth can make that allowable which the law of God forbids; and to say that because several actually do it in some countries without being censured, and that therefore it is allowable, is the same as to say, great numbers curse and swear and lie in every country without being censured, therefore these crimes are everywhere allowed. Among large numbers of men

many are always found who transgress the most sacred laws both of God and His Church, and in many cases it is impossible to censure and punish them for so doing; yet this by no means alters the nature of the law, which will stand at the great day as a testimony against them, and though here they escape the censure of men, they will not escape the just punishment of their transgression at the tribunal of God.

*Q.* 18. May it be said that the above texts of Scripture only forbid communicating with those out of the Church, but not the going out of curiosity to hear and see what passes at their religious-meetings?

*A.* Whatever is a sin to do is a sin to appear to do; and it is evident that whoever goes to such places, appears to join with what is done there, whatever be in his own mind; and Jesus Christ not only condemns those who deny Him in their hearts, but also all those who deny Him before men, whatever be the inward dispositions of their hearts. Besides, the very going to such places is commonly looked upon in the eyes of the world, and in some countries in the eye of the law itself, as a joining of that communion; hence it never fails to give great offence and scandal to the faithful wherever it is known. All these are real evils, and render every action criminal which causes them. But if we consider the texts of Scripture themselves, we shall find that they forbid even the very going to such places; for do not these texts command us to avoid them? and can one be said to avoid them who goes to them, whatever be his intention? Does not the Scripture say that there is no fellowship, no participation, no concord, no part, no agreement between the faithful and the unbeliever? and can this be said of one who goes to their religious meet-

ings, is present at their service, and listens to their preaching? Does not the Scripture expressly affirm that he who says *God speed them*, communicateth in their wicked works? how much more he who honours their meetings with his presence? Lastly, does not the Scripture say, *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness?* and does not this include all kind of union with them in their evil ways? As for the motive of *curiosity to see and hear what they do and say*, it is certainly a disgrace to a Christian, or even to a reasonable person, to have recourse to such an excuse for doing a thing forbidden by lawful authority, but much more for doing what is so frequently, so severely, and for such important reasons forbidden by the law of God, and of His Church. Whatever useful purposes curiosity may serve in the acquisition of knowledge, however blameless it may be when employed about innocent objects, yet curiosity is, without doubt, a great sin in itself, when, to gratify it, a person either does what is criminal or prohibited by lawful authority, or exposes himself to the danger of doing so.

Q. 19. But if a person be properly instructed and thoroughly grounded in his religion, does not this take away the danger of being seduced from the faith? and may not such a one go to see and hear what passes among them?

A. In answer to this, we must observe—(1.) That though such a person would run no hazard himself of losing his faith, yet this would only be avoiding one of those reasons for which the going to such places is forbidden; it would not hinder his going there from being a communication, at least in the eyes of the world, with a false religion, a seeming approbation of it, a transgression of

an express command of God and His Church, and a grievous scandal to the faithful. Nay, the scandal arising from the example of such learned people must be much greater than from that of others, because every one of the faithful well knows that it is a sin to go to such places, and therefore all must be much more offended by seeing a person who ought to know his duty better than others acting so contrary to it, and the weaker will be much more influenced by his example.

(2.) If we consider what our holy religion teaches, we shall see that even the most learned cannot answer for themselves when they culpably expose themselves to danger. St Paul assures us that "by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God," Eph. ii. 8. Our faith, then, being a gift of God, our perseverance in it is no less so. If, therefore, a person, however learned, shall offend Almighty God in doing what is dishonourable to his holy faith, is not this provoking God to withdraw from him that gift of which, by his disobedience, he renders himself unworthy? And do not examples of the most learned men who have lost themselves by this means effectually prove that this is frequently the case? In the primitive ages, Tertullian and Tatian were most learned men, great champions of the Christian faith, having written many excellent things in defence of it, yet, by exposing themselves to these very dangers, they were miserably seduced, lost their faith, and fell into the most unreasonable heresies. How many instances have there been in the world even of clergymen who perfectly well knew their religion, and yet lost their faith, and were seduced by exposing themselves to these or similar dangers? Their learning in such cases is of no service for their preservation; it is the heart that is

seduced, and then their knowledge makes them only the more guilty in the sight of God. Hence the Scripture declares that it is "by pleasing speeches and good words" that false teachers "seduce the hearts of the innocent," Rom. xvi. 18. It is impossible there should be any reason in favour of falsehood capable of convincing the understanding of a person who is well instructed in the faith of Jesus Christ; but the most learned and best instructed are not proof against their own passions and the seduction of the heart, and therefore can have no security against these if they culpably expose themselves to danger, by which they offend God and provoke Him to withdraw His grace from them, leaving them a prey to their passions, which we have seen has frequently occurred. On this account we find that the command of avoiding all fellowship with false teachers is given to all without exception; to the learned as well as the unlearned, to the pastors as well as to the people. It was to His very apostles that our Lord Himself said, "Take heed that no man seduce you. If they say to you, Lo, here is Christ, do not believe them. If they shall say to you, Behold He is in the desert, go not out. Have nothing to do with them." And it was to Timothy, a pastor himself of the Church, and his own disciple, that St Paul, after describing false teachers, gave this command, "*Now these avoid.*" It was also to Titus, another of his disciples, instructed by himself, and a pastor of the Church, that he gave the same command, Tit. iii. 10. Who can trust himself if these pillars and first pastors of the Church were so strictly cautioned to beware of the danger?

Q. 20. But if a person well instructed should go to such meetings to see and hear their teaching, that he

might be the better able to refute it, would not this be lawful?

*A.* This case is the same, as to the danger, with that of reading bad books with the design of refuting them. To read bad books is forbidden by the law of nature and by the law of God, as well as by the positive law of the Church, precisely on account of the danger of being seduced by them to evil. Now, suppose a person to be thoroughly learned, and in no probable danger of being seduced by them, yet he cannot read them with a safe conscience, unless he have received permission from his spiritual superiors to do so, even though with the design of refuting them. If he read them without such leave, notwithstanding all his learning, he exposes himself to the danger of being injured by them in punishment of his disobedience to what the laws of God require of him. But if he have such permission, and read with an intention of refuting them, he may then do it lawfully, and has every reason to hope that God will preserve him from danger. In like manner, if a learned person, by permission of his lawful superiors, should go to the meetings of those of a false religion to learn their doctrine, that he may be able the better to refute it, this will take away the sin as to this one point of exposing himself to the danger; but then even this will not excuse the other evils of his doing so—namely, an apparent communication with a false religion, a seeming approbation of it, and a cause of offence to the faithful, who, not knowing either of the permission he has received or the intention with which he goes, cannot fail to be scandalised by it. So that, except in such circumstances where all these evils can be prevented, such permission could not be granted; and though granted, would not, I fear, give him full security

before the tribunal of God ; especially when it is considered that there seldom or never can be a necessity for granting such permission, since the tenets and doctrines of all false religions can easily be known from their books, or from the accounts of others, without doing a thing so detrimental to the honour of the true religion, and so obnoxious in the eyes of all pious members of the Church of Christ.

END OF THE SINCERE CHRISTIAN.









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