

H. Hodgson.
1025.



THE
ACCUSATIONS OF HISTORY

AGAINST THE

CHURCH OF ROME

EXAMINED, IN REMARKS ON MANY OF THE PRINCIPAL
OBSERVATIONS IN THE

WORK OF MR. CHARLES BUTLER,

ENTITLED THE

“BOOK OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH.”

THE HOPE TRUST.

BY THE

REV. GEORGE TOWNSEND, M. A.

OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

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ACCESSIONS OF HISTORY

THE

CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN

AND THE HISTORY OF THE

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THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH OF ST. MARTIN

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JOHN GIBSON

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POPERY, in its proper colours, is so unlike Christianity, that it is in vain ever to hope to promote it, if it appears in its own shape. It is necessary, therefore, that this Religion be made to look as orthodox as possible. Some things are denied, others mollified, all disguised; and a double benefit is thereby obtained. Popery is to be received as a very innocent, harmless thing; and the Protestants, especially the ministers and first reformers, are to be represented to the world as a sort of people that have supported themselves by calumny and lies, and made a noise about errors and corruptions which are nowhere to be found but in their own brains or books, but which the Church of Rome detests as well as we.—ARCHBISHOP WAKE.

INTRODUCTION.

THE attention of the public has been again directed to the ancient controversies between the Romanists and the Protestants, by the work of Mr. Southey, entitled "The Book of the Church," and by the reply of Mr. Butler to many of the statements it contains. Being deeply interested in the discussion, as a citizen and as a Christian, I have considered it my duty to peruse both works with much attention. Mr. Southey has unfortunately omitted his references. If, therefore, he has inadvertently, or hastily, made assertions which are not capable of proof, he must defend his own cause. I am neither his accuser, nor his apologist. Mr. Butler has not fallen into this error; but his authorities are partial, and his conclusions questionable; and to his labours I confine my remarks.

When I first heard of that gentleman's publication, I was very anxious to read all that could be urged in reply to the charges which the pages of History have brought against the Church of Rome. I was willing to change my opinions, if my Protestantism could be shewn to be wrong. Whatever zealous attachment to an unpopular creed; whatever sound learning, deep research, a courteous spirit, and powerful language could produce, would now, I imagined, be alleged in favour of that Church, by its approved and eloquent advocate. I have been disappointed. Whether the work be regarded as a defence of his Church, or a more faithful survey of our past controversies; or, even as a reply to the observations of Mr. Southey, it must be considered an entire failure. The acute and learned author appears to have given a false colouring to History; and to have deduced unwarrantable inferences from his peculiar views. This serious charge, under which so many advocates for the Church of Rome seem also to labour, will be substantiated by an impartial examination of the pages of History, to which both parties make their appeal.

No apology can be necessary for any attempt to *elicit the truth of the facts*, upon which alone

the decisions of the Romanist and the Protestant must be founded. The re-action from Infidelity to Belief has begun. The Christian religion, in all its modes, receives again the homage of the civilized world. The former system of opinions, which our fathers rejected, after centuries of controversy, has been successfully revived; and on the Continent of Europe, Christianity is again identified with Romanism. The English Romanist rejoices at the prospect. He believes that his Church is the one only true Church upon earth; and that it is unchanged, and remains unchangeably the same. He believes, that the opposition to this Church began, and was continued—by heresy, rejecting her true doctrines—by covetousness, aiming at her wealth—and by tyranny, jealous of her influence; until ignorance and prejudice excluded from the service of the state, a noble, wealthy, loyal, and deserving people. They now require from an enlightened Legislature, that the errors of our ancestors be cancelled; and the Romanists be again admitted to the privileges and honours, to which they are entitled, by their talent, rank, and possessions.

The Protestant, on the contrary, gives credit to the accusations of history against the Church

of Rome. He believes that, though a true, it is a corrupt Church; and that it obtained a gradual ascendancy over other Churches, by weakness on their part, and usurpation on its own. He believes that to the tyranny of its conduct, and to the corruptions of its institutions, may be attributed the success of those attacks which were made upon it at the Reformation. Much of the opposition of that period may, certainly, be attributed to inferior motives; and these deserve every censure. But the Protestant believes, that hostility to the Church of Rome was, and is, essential to the good of mankind; because he considers that Church to be adverse to the three most invaluable blessings which can be secured to its people by any wise government,—Morality, Religion, and Good Order.

To Morality—because it teaches that the prayers of the living may be beneficial to the dead; and that sins may be pardoned on the payment of money.

To Religion—because it bestows a part of that homage which is due to the one Mediator, the Son of God, to inferior beings, to saints and angels; and enforces various absurdities and errors, which it would be now tedious to enumerate.

To good Order—because it teaches that the head of their Church is entitled to their spiritual allegiance; and the duties arising from a sense of this spiritual allegiance have clashed, and may therefore again clash, with those which arise from their civil allegiance to the temporal Sovereign. And this is more especially urged; because the principal religious dissensions which have agitated this country, uniformly originated in those conscientious scruples; which have always induced the Romanists to prefer, to the laws of the realm, the mandate of a foreign Pontiff.

I am not conscious that I have stated the differences between the Romanist, and the Protestant unfairly. I am anxious to discuss the question with the utmost candour and impartiality. The writers of both parties appeal to history; they are right in so doing. Philosophy, which is our safest companion in the study of history, assures us that the same causes will always produce the same effects; and as the opinions of the Romanists are unaltered, the same results would follow from their more general adoption. The experience of the past, therefore, is the best guide of the present and the future. I trust, in proceeding

through this very interesting inquiry, to maintain the uniform serenity of temper, and undeviating courtesy of expression, which are alike due to the learning and talent, the age and fame, of the eminent controversialist, whose labours are now to be considered.

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PRELIMINARY LETTER.—MR. BUTLER'S DEDICATION
AND INTRODUCTION.

SIR,

The assurances which you may have read in my introduction to these letters, and the principles which are there suggested for the management of the present discussion, are such as, I trust, will meet with your approbation. I consider myself rigidly bound by the rule you have yourself adopted, "That a good Christian is never outdone in good manners." I propose, in this Preliminary Letter, to make a few remarks on some passages in your Dedication and Introduction, which are of a general, not of a personal, nature.

In your Dedication, two points only appear to require notice, your frequent use of the word Roman Catholic, by which you elsewhere tell us* your communion ought to be designated; and your imputing to Mr. Southey two charges, which are unavoidably common to yourself, and to every other controversial writer on this subject.

The word "Roman Catholic" will certainly

* Letter X.

appear to be an improper appellation, if you analyze the term. It signifies, as many have frequently and justly observed, "particular-general." A Protestant cannot consent to use it, unless he is willing to give up one principal tenet of his creed. The term implies that the Romish Church, which we consider to be one among many, is entitled to the epithet "Catholic, or universal;"—that is, that its influence, authority, or dominion, ought to extend over other communions. We believe, as Episcopalian Protestants, that the bond of union in the primitive Church consisted in the mutual sanction, counsel, and agreement, of the several bishops; and not in submission to the Bishop of Rome: each Church being Catholic, as a part of the one Church of Christ. This universal Church received its explanations of Scripture from general councils; at which the Church of Rome, as I hope to prove, maintained no paramount influence. The appellation Roman Catholic describes and insinuates, therefore, unwarrantable pretensions; which are alike contradicted by Scripture, reason, and antiquity. In another part of your book, you object very decidedly to "Popery," "Papal," and "Papist," as words of reproach and hatred. I have no wish to use any expressions that may

offend you. I will avoid these, as well as the epithet Roman Catholic, and use the terms Romanism, Romanist, or Roman.

You proceed to accuse Mr. Southey—of imputing to the general body “ what is only chargeable on individuals,”—and “ estimating the writings or actions of our ancestors in the dark ages, by the notions and manners of the present age.”

Every individual must be considered either as a member of the community at large, or as an associate of some one Church or party. The crimes of an individual can only be charged on the society to which he has united himself, when they are uniformly and evidently proved, by experience, to be the consequence of the opinions which that Church and party, class or sect, have adopted and maintained. Such is the real state of the question, between the Protestant Legislature and the members of the Church of Rome. Various political crimes and errors of the individuals of that communion are demonstrated, by experience, to be the uniform result of the doctrines of their Church, which is, therefore, said to become responsible. Our objections against the Romanists are not so much founded on the *nature* of their errors, as on the conviction of their practical effects on

the conduct of individuals. If the doctrine, for instance, of the spiritual authority of the pope was merely received as a speculative opinion; and, if it was confined to the pages of authors, or the conversation of metaphysicians, (as an opinion on the existence or non-existence of matter might be,) the sentiment would be undoubtedly very innocent; and it would be folly and presumption in any state or people to legislate concerning it. If it had been misinterpreted by some few obscure and unauthorized zealots, who at various times had interrupted the peace of society,—if it had been followed only with that confusion and mutual hatred, which are always attendant on the collision of old and new opinions,—in every such instance, he who imputed to the Church of Rome the crimes and follies of its misguided adherents, might be accused of injustice. But when the great majority of Romanists, and not some few individuals of their communion, can be convicted of permitting their allegiance to a foreign priest to clash with their duty to their natural sovereign—when we know that more assassinations, rebellions, and dissensions, have already arisen from this, than from any other opinion, which has agitated mankind—and when we see the evils which it

still produces, and are asured that this most objectionable and fatal opinion cannot be rescinded,—we are justified in imputing to the Church of Rome itself, the unavoidable consequences of its own decisions.

No Church, party, or Society, in their numerical majority, can be the actors on the great theatre of the world. Every objectionable deed must, in one sense, be performed by individuals. But if the motives which caused the actions we condemn are sanctioned by councils, as in the instance before us; if they are enforced by Popes, received by the many, and are tacitly approved by all the acknowledged authorities which influence or govern the Romish Church; and if they have then been acted upon by those who were required, by station or circumstances, to express, by their actions, the general opinion of their communion,—it must necessarily follow, that the disloyalty, and tumults, and plots, which the Protestants condemn, are not to be imputed to the individuals only, who were more immediately guilty. The victories of Blenheim and of Waterloo may as justly be called the deeds of the military individuals who effected them, instead of the actions of the British Nation. They were national actions; as they were the result

of the principles on which the Sovereign and the Senate had acted, which the multitude approved; and which were performed by that portion of the people, who were required to execute the decisions of the Legislature. On the same principle of reasoning we infer, that, when Thomas à Becket, or any other Romanist, violated his civil duties, on account of his obedience to the Roman Pontiff, his actions are not to be imputed to him as an individual. He is to be esteemed the General only of his ecclesiastical Soldiery, carrying into effect the principles which were sanctioned by his Church, and approved by the majority. His crime is that of the Church of Rome, and not of the individual criminal.

But you observe *, that we are unjust in “estimating the notions of our ancestors in the dark ages, by the notions and manners of the present age.” Are we not right in so doing, if you and your brethren of the Church of Rome still maintain and defend these opinions? Ought not those who have kept pace with the progress of knowledge, and have rejected these errors, to beware lest your present practice be consistent with your present faith, which you

* Page 4.

confess to be that of the dark ages. If the Romish Church were fully possessed of its former power, Protestantism would not be permitted to exist.

You go on to assert that the Romanists have "suffered a defamation of three hundred years," and describe the effects of this defamation. We are about to examine the particulars of this alleged scandal. If it should be proved that many circumstances are well authenticated, which are so monstrous in their guilt, and so peculiar to the Members of the Romish Church, that the nation was struck with consternation at their discovery; it cannot excite surprise that the people easily gave credit to other accusations, which were certainly false. If the plot of Guido Fawkes had not been laid, that of Titus Oates would not have been believed: the inscription on the Monument would never have been engraven.

In allusion to the sentiments you again repeat in this part of your work, I can truly say, I desire to imitate your example. I would avoid every offence against charity, or civility. Though I would write courteously, I would write freely: as a Christian interested in the truth of the religious part of our controversy; and as a citizen of a free country, interested in

the effects of both religious and political inquiries upon the peace and morality, the happiness and prosperity of our great and Protestant nation.

MR. BUTLER'S INTRODUCTION.

I proceed to your Introduction, which first notices the proper style of controversy.

It is true, that both Protestants and Romanists agree in all the fundamental points of Christianity—the Divinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement of our Lord; and generally in the articles of faith expressed in the four first general councils; and I would, if I know myself, willingly suffer much, for the harmony and union of the Churches and individuals who so believe; but while the tenets which you relate at length in your next section remain, there is no possibility of approximation. Mr. M'Dermot, your own advocate, and the divines of the Protestant Church, unite in rejecting the opinion of Mr. Wix; who believed that the Church of Rome could unite with the Protestants of

England. Our controversies, it is true, may be, and ought to be, conducted in an amicable spirit ; but there are some criteria of truth, by which we may decide rightly. Though candour, and liberality, and mildness, and toleration, are great and inestimable blessings, they are not so valuable as truth. Some errors, too, may frequently elicit more forcible language than others.

You declare that, “ what you consider to be truth you must tell ;” but “ I hope to tell it in a manner which will shew sincere respect for those whose different notions it opposes.” I could not have expressed with so much elegance the sentiment I wish to convey. In this style all controversies ought to be conducted, though the evil of the opposite extreme has been sometimes productive of good. As I cannot beg you to receive my compliments on the uniform observance of your own precept, I will follow your rule, while I hope to avoid your deviations. It will not be necessary to take any further notice of your many allusions to the supposed deficiency of courtesy among controversial writers ; and your frequent resolutions to be very courteous. They sadly interrupt the argument. Smiles, and bows, and the conventional phrases of our politeness, are useful

introductions ; but they are very embarrassing, when our conversations become general, and interesting. I shall examine your work, chapter by chapter.

You proceed in your next Sections to the creed of Pope Pius IV., which you submit to the Protestant Public as an " accurate and explicit summary of the Roman Catholic Faith," p. 5 ; and you require, p. 9, " that no doctrine should be ascribed to the Roman Catholics as a body, except such as is an article of their faith." You demand also that your opponents should invariably inquire, " whether any objectionable position," which " may be found in a Catholic writer, is an article of the Catholic faith, or an opinion of the writer." I do not approve of this use of the term Catholic ; but I am willing to quote your own words.

Here, then, at the very commencement of your argument, you plead guilty to the principal charges which Protestants urge against your church. Other articles of your creed may be considered as you defend them, in various parts of your book. Permit me, though it may seem a needless anticipation, to ask you, if Protestants deserve to be considered illiberal, uncandid, and prejudiced, when they meet you on your own principles of reasoning?

Read again the last article but one in the creed of Pope Pius IV.

“ I also profess, and undoubtedly receive, all other things delivered, defined, and declared, by the sacred canons and general councils, particularly by the Holy Council of Trent; and I likewise condemn, reject, and anathematize, all things contrary thereto,” &c.

Among other general councils is included the Council of Constance. The Church of Rome receives all that is delivered and declared by this council. I beg your attention to the decree of the 19th session of that council. You well know to what I refer. “ This present synod declareth, that the safe conduct granted to heretics by an emperor, king, or any other secular prince, shall not prevent any ecclesiastical judge from punishing such heretic, even if they come to the place of judgment relying on such safeguard,” (‘ etiamsi,’ says the original, ‘ de salvo-conductu confisi ad locum venerint iudicii, alias non venturi,’) “ and would not otherwise come thither.” This decree, which the creed of Pope Pius IV. compels every conscientious Romanist to adopt, sanctions, as plainly as words can make it, the doctrine which you reject with so much abhorrence; and which the four foreign universities,

consulted by Mr. Pitt, likewise rejected, "that no faith is to be kept with heretics." Are not unavoidable inferences a part of every creed? Will you endeavour to explain away this terrible doctrine? Will you refer me to the enlightened spirit of the age, and urge the impossibility that such an absurd creed could ever again influence the actions of men? I reply, that if the creed of Pius IV. can be seriously believed, it may again be cruelly acted upon, if power was again given to do so. It is your faith still. We must infer, therefore, that the Church of Rome has not partaken of the supposed illumination of the age in which we live. If you are indeed so enlightened as you would wish us to consider you, call your general council, and let it be publicly declared. Re-examine the creed of Pope Pius*. Repeal the decrees of the Council of Constance, and many absurd and wicked decisions of other councils which disgraced the dark ages—con-

* The Council of Ephesus, decreed that it should not be lawful for any man to compose, or publish another faith or creed, than that which was defined by the Nicene Council. The Romanists, therefore, are at liberty to reject the creed of Pope Pius IV., and so, perhaps, to disembarass themselves of the chains of the Council of Trent. See Bishop Taylor's Works, vol. x, p. 137.

fess that, when the world was in ignorance, the Church of Rome was not uniformly infallible; and we will then believe that the contest with Rome may cease. Till the Protestants are satisfied on these points, the maintainers of the opinions and decrees of the dark ages cannot be intrusted with power, to add to the influence of the rank and wealth which is daily obtaining, even in the present day, proselytes to the darkness of unaltered, and boastingly unalterable error*.

Pardon me, if I inquire, whether some part of your third Section of the Introduction, p. 9, does not deserve a harsh name. You believe “the doctrines of your Church to be unchangeable, your faith is now what it has ever been; but this proposition,” you observe, “is con-

* On the subject of the inconsistent and opposite decrees of various councils, see Bishop Blomfield's Letter to Mr. Butler, p. 21.—“When the Council of Constance had determined that the cup should be taken from the laity, the Bohemians were so much dissatisfied, that the Council of Basle restored it to them. Which council was infallible? Which decree is to be “undoubtedly received?” The Council of Basle in 1431, decreed that a General Council is above the Pope; but the Lateran Council, in 1546, declared this decree to have been the source of corruption and abuse. The Council of Constantinople forbade the worship or reverence paid to images; the second Nicene Council enjoined it; the Council of Frankfort prohibited it; and it was finally re-established by the Council of Trent.

fin'd to the articles of your faith, and no doctrine is of faith, unless it be delivered by Revelation, and is propos'd as such by your Church." You resolve, therefore, all the decisions of Councils, and all the dogmas of Popes, into the authority of Scripture; or you otherwise reject them as doctrines of your faith. If this be your meaning, receive my congratulations; if not, we must look to the formulary of Pope Pius, and the Council of Trent. You no doubt wish to persuade yourself, and us, that Romanism is founded on Scripture; and if your appeal had been to Scripture, I should have been happy to have followed you. Those walks would have been more flowery, and fragrant, and delightful, than the thorny paths of the councils and creeds, which you so strenuously defend.

That we may ascertain whether any doctrine imputed to the Romanists be really propos'd as an article of faith by the Church, you refer us to various books. I confess to you, that I am not willing to rest my conclusions on such authorities. I adopt your former guide, the creed of Pope Pius itself; and look to history for the account of the effects produced by the opinions it teaches. I shall, however, as you require, carefully examine every proposition,

by the principal criterion to which you refer, the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*. It is sanctioned, I perceive, by the highest authority you acknowledge; by the Pope, by the council itself, and by the bishops who submit to their decisions*. *Bossuet's Exposition* contains only the sentiments of a pious individual.—*The Papist Represented and Misrepresented*, was so fully and fairly answered by Bishop Stillingfleet, that I was surprised you should allude to this work; much less that you should recommend it as an authority. *Dr. Challoner's three short Summaries of Catholic Faith and Doctrine*," prefixed to the "*Garden of the Soul*," the last work to which you refer your reader, are too brief and unsatisfactory to be sufficient guides. None of these, however, shall pass altogether unobserved.

In your enumeration of the books, to which you refer the Protestant inquirer concerning your present opinions, I was much surprised to observe, that you mention with approbation, "*The Garden of the Soul*;" which you call the most popular prayer book of the English Catholics. I ask you, whether, if you are a father, a brother, or a husband, you would place in the

* I use the edition printed at Dublin, which is said to be faithfully translated by permission. 8vo. 1816.

hands of any woman, the contents of pages 213 and 214. I must believe that you have not read the book to which you refer: or that these pages are expunged from the copy in your family library, or, at least, on the drawing-room table. The propriety of omitting all self-examination, on the making of images, and the Second Commandment, which forbids this offence, is a question which needs not present discussion.

In the last section of your Introduction, you apply to the divisions among Protestants the rule, " that no error should be alleged against a Church, which the Church itself does not sanction." You define Protestants to be the protesters against the Church of Rome. Including, therefore, all the various sects of Christians under that term, you demand if the Church of England, as a Protestant Church, is accountable for their opposite errors?—Our answer is easy: They are not all members of that Church; neither, if they were so, would they be able to justify their errors from its creed. I admit the justice of the principle you lay down; and acquit the Church of Rome of all the crimes of its members, if they cannot be shewn to be the necessary consequences of the principles she herself inculcates. The Church

of England, and all the sects who depart from her communion, are to be tried by the same criterion.

In the note to the 12th page of your Introduction, you enumerate a great variety of sects, "all of which," you tauntingly observe, "appeal to the Scriptures, and protest against Popery."—Recrimination on such a point would but injure the common cause of religion, which must not be permitted to suffer by our controversies. I could otherwise have selected from the writings of the Romanist divines nearly every doctrinal opinion which is advocated by our jarring sectaries. Arminianism was the doctrine of the Jesuits; Calvinism, of the Jansenists; Quakerism, of the Franciscans; Socinianism, in all its gradations from Arianism to Belshamism, was taught by the authors enumerated in the "*Roma Racoviana*" of Jameson,—the fanaticism of new sects among us was the same with that of new orders among you; yet all these appeal to Popery, and protest against the Scriptures. This recrimination, however, is unworthy of either party.

LETTER I.**GEOGRAPHICAL VIEW OF THE ROMISH CHURCH.**

SIR,

You infer, in your first letter, from the numbers of the Romish Church, “ that it cannot be the prodigious structure of imposture and wickedness, described by many Protestant writers; for then the gates of hell have prevailed against the church.”

Are we discussing the question whether the Romanists are numerous, or whether their Church is corrupt, and its creed erroneous? The promise of God has not failed because his pure Church is reduced to the smaller number. Before the deluge eight persons only composed the visible Church; in the time of Abraham it was confined to one family. In the kingdom of Israel, it contained only seven thousand. At the period of the captivity, it was reduced to a small number—when Christ came upon earth, the true and invisible Church, comprised but few obscure and poor worshippers. The true and visible Church existed at all these periods; its

incense ascended, its altars fumed with victims ; but its purity and spirituality had departed. The promises of God to the Church were fulfilled to the smaller and faithful number.

The exclusion of the Romish nobility and gentry from political power may be considered in a subsequent letter. If the adherents to Rome are as numerous as you represent them, our vigilance must be proportioned to our danger.

LETTER II.

FIRST INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

SIR,

You omit in this letter all notice of the authorities collected by Bishops Stillingfleet, Burgess, and others, to prove that St. Paul preached the gospel in Britain. It is a point of some importance, though I shall not insist upon any argument from this source, as I wish to confine myself as much as possible to your own reasoning,

Because Pope Eleutherius on the application of King Lucius, commissioned Fugatius and

Damianus to preach in England ; and because Pope Gregory sent the monk Augustine on the same mission, you infer the “ Catholic doctrine of the Pope’s supremacy, and his right of general superintendence over the spiritual concerns of the Church of Christ*.” On what principles of reasoning can you conclude that the bestowing of a benefit confers either civil or ecclesiastical power ? Even if this claim were sanctioned by the law of nature, or of nations, we should owe obedience to Scotland, rather than to Rome. Aidan, and Chad, and Diuma, contributed much more than Augustine, to the general or eventual conversion of England. No allegiance was sworn to Rome by the converts ; no submission to the authority of the Pope was required by the missionaries. Rome was the most learned and civilized place, at that time, in the known world ; the corruptions of its Church had made comparatively but little progress, Its bishop was able and willing to send the light of christianity, to every people which requested his assistance. Otaheite has been converted by our missionaries ; have not the Otaheiteans the right of legislating for themselves in all ecclesiastical matters, though their religious opi-

* Page 21, 22.

nions are altered? Does the head of the Church of England claim spiritual allegiance, from the Episcopalians of America or Scotland? It is notorious to all who are but little acquainted with ecclesiastical history, that the universal bishopric of the Pope was not granted till the year 606 *, after the conversion by Augustine; and all attempts to usurp the supremacy, at that time, were strenuously resisted. Neither was it allowed in England more than one hundred years after the arrival of Augustine. When Wilfred, Archbishop of York, appealed to Rome against the synod which governed the Church; and when the Pope had gladly decided in his favour †, the decree of the Pope was resisted by the King: who told the Nuncio, that “ though he honoured them as parents for their grave lives, he could not assent to their legation, because it was against reason, that a person twice condemned by the whole council of English should be restored

* I follow here the general opinion respecting the grant of Phocas. Those who wish to read more on the subject, are referred to Mr. Hallam’s admirable and eloquent chapter on the ecclesiastical power, in the second volume of the *History of the Middle Ages*, and to Mr. Gisbornes’ volume of *Essays*.

† Spelman’s *Concilia An. 705*.

upon the Pope's letter*." Are we not more wise, prudent, and religious, in asserting with our celebrated Alfred, and the greater number of his successors, the independence of the Church of England, than in calmly submitting to the unfounded usurpations of the Church of Rome? Whether St. Peter or Christ was the rock on which the Church was built; or, in what sense the keys were given to the former; and whether the other Apostles were not equally included in our Saviour's address, are questions which we need not now discuss. They are but few of many which require our serious consideration, before we can agree with you and your communion, in the belief of the "supremacy of the Pope, and his superintendency over the spiritual concerns of the Church of Christ."

* Stillingfleet on the Roman Church's Authority. Works, vol. iv. page 396.

LETTER III.

THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

SIR,

You notice in this letter—I. The conversion of the Anglo-Saxons.—II. The conformity of the religion, &c., preached to them, with that of the present Church of Rome.—III. The conduct of the Anglo-Saxon Clergy.—IV. The doctrine taught in the monasteries.—V. The miracles performed in your Church. I shall consider each of these points in their order.

I. On the first of these sections, it is only necessary to observe, that every Christian will agree with you (Sect. 1.) that the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity by Augustine the monk, although its corruptions were now becoming very numerous, was a joyful event. The Christian Religion, under any form, is preferable to Idolatry or Atheism: as the most arbitrary government is preferable to anarchy.

II. You have asserted that the doctrines of the Church of Rome were the same in the days of Augustine, when the Anglo-Saxons

were converted, with those which are now received as established by the Council of Trent. Bishop Milner* too, if he indeed, as you assert, wrote the reply to Mr. Southey, under the name of John Merlin, pages 5, 6, affirms in the most positive manner—"These envoys from Pope Gregory brought with them from Rome, the same Christianity which is professed at the present day; namely, the mass, the real presence, the supremacy of the Pope, prayers to the saints and for the dead, relics, crucifixes, and holy water." Were you both indeed ignorant that it might be proved from the written works of this very Pope, that these assertions were more than a mistake? I refer you to the parallel between the decisions of the Council of Trent, and the doctrines taught by Pope Gregory, and consequently by his missionary Augustine; at the end of the 6th volume of

* The present advocates of the Church of Rome, are justly to be suspected of unworthy artifices in managing the present controversies. Bishop Milner refers to a document in the Lambeth Library, which exists only in his own imagination. See Mr. Todd's introduction, page vii., to his Defence of Cranmer's Doctrine of the Sacrament. To the Student of History, I beg to refer the remarks of Mr. Todd, upon many of Doctor Lingard's observations.

Bishop Stillingfleet's collected works in folio, page 712.

1. *Solitary Masses.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

anathematizes those who say such Masses, wherein the priest only communicates, as unlawful, and to be abrogated.—Sess. 22. Can. 8.

forbids the priest to celebrate alone, and says expressly it ought not to be celebrated by one, because the people are to bear their share.—Greg. lib. Capital, c. 7. apud Cassand. Liturg. c. 33.

2. *Masses for the Dead.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

declares that they are intended for the dead in Christ, not yet fully purged from their sins.—Sess. 22. c. 2.

supposes those to be in a state of bliss, for whom the oblation was made at the altar, as appears from the Sacramentary IV. Kalend Julii, where the oblation is first mentioned, and after follows, Deus qui animæ famuli Leonis eternæ beatitudinis præmia contulisti.

One considers the service as a prayer, the other a thanksgiving.

3. *Transubstantiation, the Real Presence.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

declares the body of Christ to be in the Eucharist, under the species of bread.—Sess. 13. cap. 1. ;

asserts the body of Christ, after his resurrection, to be palpable ; *i. e.* That it may be seen, and felt

and asserts only the species to remain after consecration.—*ib.* c. 4. where it is ; and this he proved against Eutychius, of Constantinople.—Moral. l. 14. c. 31.

He frequently declares that our bodies, as well as our souls, are nourished by the Eucharist, which cannot be done by mere species, for no accidents can produce a substance.—Greg. Sacram. 16. Kal. Mart. in Sexages. Hebd. 3 in Quadrag. Fr. 4.

The doctrine of the real presence was not fully established till the time of the Council of Lateran. “It was late,” said Erasmus, “before the Church defined Transubstantiation* ;” and Scotus† tells us “it was no point of faith before the Council of Lateran, 1215.” The Council of Trent defined the doctrine more clearly, or (as its definition is utterly unintelligible) more obscurely ; and made that an article of faith which had hitherto, both before and since the days of Paschasius Radbert, been the subject of speculation and reverent mystery. Radbert‡ was the first proposer of the

* *Sero Transubstantionem definivit Ecclesia. Diu satis erat credere, sive sub pane consecrato, sive quocunque modo adesse verum corpus Christi.*—Erasmus Annot. in I Cor. 7.

† Apud Hall ; ut sup. 249.

‡ See an Account of Paschasius Radbert, his opinion, and the opposition it first received in Bishop Stillingfleet’s work on the Idolatry of the Church of Rome. Vol. vi. p. 19.

actual change in Transubstantiation ; and it is not probable that the Saxons, or the monks who taught them, had anticipated this wonderful discovery*.

Neither could the Seven Sacraments have been received among the Anglo-Saxons. This number was never decided upon till the Council of Trent; neither was it ever heard or thought of till the time of Hugo de St. Victoire, who lived in the twelfth century, not long before Peter Lombard †.

4. *Supremacy of the Pope.*

The Council of Trent

declared it from beginning to end ; and referred the confirmation of its decrees to the Pope, as supreme head of the Church.

Gregory

declares the headship to be peculiar to Christ,—Registr. Ep. l. 4. Ep. 36, 38., where he speaks not of an essential head, but of the fountain of jurisdiction.

He urges it as an inconvenience. If there were a head of the Church, the Church must err with him.—Epist. 32, 36. Which Bellarmine owns to be a true consequence.—De R. Pont. l. 4. c. 5. He makes it the pride of Lucifer, and the forerunning of Anti-Christ, for one bishop to

* See Jortin's Remarks on Eccles. Hist. Works, svo. Vol. iii. pp. 202, 203.

† Stillingfleet, Vol. vi. p. 493. Hall ut sup. 283.

set himself above the rest.—Ep.
36. Not to be the sole bishop,
but to have all the rest in subjec-
tion to him.

The supremacy of the Pope, I have already shewn, was rejected by Alfred; and we well know that the sixth canon of the Council of Nice expressly condemned the intrusion of any bishop into another's diocese, and mentions the Bishop of Rome as having formerly observed this custom. The third canon of this council is now confessed to be a forgery. The usurpation was always opposed, and was never firmly established among the greater nations. Some years after the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, Pope Gregory paid homage to the Emperor Maurice*.

5. *Prayers to Saints and for the Dead.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

declares that there is a purgatory after this life, out of which souls may be helped by the prayers of the faithful.—Sess. 25

affirms that at the time of death, either the good or evil spirit seizeth upon the soul, and keeps it with it for ever, without any change.—Moral in Job, l. 8, c. 8, Edit. Basil. c. 9, Edit. Novæ.

That in the days of death, the just goes to joy, and the wicked

* *Vobis obedientiam præbere desidero.*—Ap. Hall. Works, Vol. ix. p. 295. Where see many other quotations.

with the apostate angel is reprobated.—Moral in Job, l. 12, c. 4*.

6. Masses for the dead have been considered.

7. The invocation of the Virgin Mary and of the other saints, and prayers for the dead, you allege to have been a doctrine of this early time. You are in this instance correct. The customs of paganism were continued among the nominal converts of Christianity. Some of the fathers of the fourth century exerted themselves to encourage the superstitious veneration and invocation of saints, the love of monkery, and the belief of miracles wrought by monks and relics. At the same time, also, arose religious addresses to martyrs, as saints, patrons, and intercessors. Male and female saints succeeded to the Gods and Goddesses, and even Eusebius contributed to the establishment of the absurdity †.

* The passages in his dialogues which seem to contradict these, do not come up to the Council of Trent's purgatory, for they only speak of a purgation for light and venial sins, and not for the temporal pain of mortal sins, whose guilt is remitted. But in the former places, he plainly denies any change of state after this life; so that the purgation he speaks of must be consistent with a state of joy; and in that very place, he says, persons shall be at the day of judgment as they were when they went out of the world.

† See the Ecclesiastical Histories of this period. Hall,

8. *Scripture and Tradition.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

declares that it receives traditions with an equal veneration with Holy Scriptures.—Sess. 4.

affirms that all things which edify and instruct, are contained in the volume of Scripture.—Hist. in Ezek. l. 1, c. 8. That God's mind is to be found in his words.—Reg. Epist. l. 4, Ep. 40. Preachers are to instruct their people in what they learn out of the Holy Scriptures.—Greg. Sacram. in consec. Episc., with some other quotations to the same effect.

9. *Apocryphal Books.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

reckons the Maccabees among the canonical books.—Sess. 4.

rejects them from the canon; or he excuses taking an example out of them, not being canonical.—Moral in Job, l. 19, c. 13.

10. *Merit of Good Works.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

anathematizes those who deny good works, to be truly meritorious of grace and eternal life.—Sess. 6, Can. 32.

denies that the most sanctified persons procure Divine wisdom by their graces, in Job, l. 18, c. 25. That if he should attain

278. Jortin, vol. 2, p. 162. Bp. Newton (after Mede) on the Prophetesies, where the worship of the Mahuzzim or saints mediators is proved to be one principal token of the predicted apostacy.

to the highest virtue, he should secure eternal life, not by merits, but by pardon.—Moral, l. 9, c. 11.

11. *Auricular Confession.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

declares secret confession of all sins to be necessary, in order to remission, and absolution by the priest.—Sess. 14, c. 6, 7, 8.

speaks of no other confession than what was required to the reconciling those who had undergone public penance.—See Gelasius Sacramentary, p. 63; and Gregory refers to the custom then used in his Sacramentary, p. 225; and there is no form of absolution in either of them, but by way of prayer to God, which is different from the sacramental judicial absolution required by the council of Trent.

12. *Communion in one kind.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

declares against the necessity of communion in both kinds.

affirms it to be the constant practice for the people to receive it in both.

Sacram. in quadrag. Fr. 3.

6 Cal. Julii ad complend.

Heb. 3, in Quad. Sabato.

Miss. Temp. Belli.

Sexages. ad complend.

Domini: in ramis palm.

VI. Non Julii ad complend.

VIII. Kal. Aug. ad complend.

Gelasius in his Sacramentary

declares it sacrilege to do otherwise. He was Gregory's predecessor a short time before.

A learned antiquary of the Diocese of Durham has lately discovered the original rolls of the parish of Norham; which fully prove that the wine for the sacrament was ordered for the people as well as for the priest, in the remoter parts of the kingdom before the reformation. Some remarks on his pamphlet have been published anonymously; in which the primitive practice has been traced to a still higher period, by authentic documents; and the gradual innovations of the Church of Rome upon the scriptural mode of receiving the Eucharist are pointed out*.

13. *Worship of Images.*

The Council of Trent

Gregory

declares not only that images are to be placed in churches, but to be worshipped there.--Sess. 25.

allows their being in temples, but denies any worship to be given to them, for they are placed there only for instruction.—
Registr. Epist. l. 9., Ep. 9., l. 7.,
Ep. 110.

Much more might be added to the same effect. These instances, however, are sufficient to de-

* See Mr. Raine's very interesting pamphlet on this subject, and the remarks by a Protestant.—Rivington, 1825.

monstrate the inaccuracy of the assertion, that the doctrines of Augustine the monk were the same as those of the Council of Trent.

You proceed to the ceremonial of the Anglo Saxons, and assert there was little difference between it and that of your Church at present. I could prove that numerous innovations were ordered in the service, by successive Popes—this is not a matter of much importance.

III. You indignantly repel the charge of imposture which is generally brought against the clergy of that age. Do not all the histories of these times abound with accounts of wonderful actions performed by the clergy, by means of relics? Is it nothing, that when information was increased, these wonderful effects of rags and bones were discontinued? The astonishing miracles recorded by the writers of those times were either wrought by Divine assistance, or they were not—if the former position is asserted the Deity has interposed to contradict his own Scripture, as in the case of the constrained celibacy of the clergy. He has interposed also to confirm the faith of the most credulous and simple ignorance, while the people at the same time were abundantly supplied with clergy. He performed most miracles when they were least required, and under the most

suspicious circumstances. He has withdrawn those powers from an age of infidelity and religious indifference, when they might have been most expected, if the evidences in favour of Christianity were not already amply sufficient.

If these wonderful actions were not wrought by divine assistance, they were effected by human aid only; and are justly rejected by Protestants as frauds and impostures*.

You are angry at the charge of wilful fraud which has been urged against your clergy, and assert from Mr. Alban Butler, that the Church of Rome never, as a body, sanctioned frauds and forgeries, but severely condemned them. It is true that no body of men will publicly defend such monstrous practices as these; neither would the asserted corrupt conduct of the clergy, in an ignorant and superstitious age, become a fair argument in the present instance; if you and your friends would give up that part of your defence of the Church of Rome, which is founded on these surprising circumstances. If, however, you will still believe them, and require us to believe them also, we are right in examining the evidences on which they rest. When this is done, we reject them, and pro-

* See Stillingfleet vol. 5, p. 238.

nounce them frauds, forgeries, and impostures. The inquirers for truth must determine whether your belief or, our decision, is preferable.

IV. *The Doctrine taught in the Monasteries.*

The actual establishment of monkery may be dated from the fourth century; though there had been many, in every preceding age, who had devoted themselves to a life of solitude and retirement. The doctrines taught in the monasteries were the opinions prevalent in their several ages. The monasteries were for a long time the only seats of learning. They were the best places of refuge in barbarous and cruel times; neither can the greater part of the charges, which caused their dissolution, be proved. Whatever were the abuses in the monasteries at a subsequent period, they were, at first, free from suspicion. It was not then remembered, that Christianity is the religion of social life; and that nothing is required of Christians, which they may not perform with more advantage to mankind, and with equal devotion to God, out of the walls of the cloister.

In addition, however, to your account of the doctrines which were taught in the monasteries, you might have related and deplored with

equal candour and effect, the consequences of those doctrines on the lives of the celibates and the people, which are related by authors of undoubted credit. Fifty years after the introduction of the Benedictine order into England, the venerable Bede complained, in a letter to Egbert, Bishop of York, of the luxury and vices of the monks and nuns. Boniface, Bishop of Mentz, wrote about the year 745, to Ethelbald, King of Mercia, and to Cuthbert, Archbishop of Canterbury, to the same effect, in the strongest language. You cannot be ignorant that some of the reproaches which have been urged against the monastics have been fully deserved. I do not insist upon the imputed licentiousness of the monasteries, as an argument against your church; for many of their inmates were good and pious; and their example might equally be urged in your favour. We object to the principle on which all these institutions were founded, as inconsistent with the object and nature of the Christian Religion.

V. *Miracles performed by the Anglo-Saxon Missionaries.*

I should seem to distrust your sincerity, or I would ask you, if you are indeed a believer in the continuance of the miraculous powers, in

the Church of Rome? Would you really give credit to Prince Hohenlohe? Are you, or can you be in earnest, when you object to Mr. Southey, that "he treats the miracles performed by the Romish Church with contempt and ridicule?" Hereafter, if an advocate for the doctrine of the gradual improvement of the human race, shall venture to entertain this opinion, he will be defeated by the inconsistency which you appear, to Protestants, to exhibit; when they see a learned, talented barrister, possessed of all the varied information of a reading and reflecting age, still receiving, and publicly defending, the sentiments you have consented to advocate. The question is important, but it may be briefly discussed.

I. You believe, from four passages of Scripture, which you quote in the margin, that the miraculous powers were always to continue with the Church of Christ. They are now, you believe, confined to the Church of Rome, and, therefore, the Church of Rome is the one universal Church of Christ. Of these four passages, the first, Joel, ii. 29, 30, was fulfilled, as St. Peter asserted, on the day of Pentecost. The second, Acts ii. 39, which announces the fulfilment of the prophecy, declares that the doctrine which was demonstrated by the sud-

den effusion of the miraculous gifts, "was to them and their children," "and to all that were afar off, as many as the Lord should call." St. Peter does not say that the *σημεῖα*, and *τέρατα*, ver. 19, shall be continued to all that are afar off; but the *εὐαγγελία* (v. 39,) which is explained not only by the remainder of v. 39, but by v. 21, to which allusion is evidently made by St. Peter; who thus concludes his address, with the same proposition with which he began.

The third, John xiv. 12, 13, was addressed to the Apostles; of whom only it can be justly said, that some of their miracles were greater than those of our Saviour.

The fourth, Mark xvi. 17, 18, is no less evidently a prediction of the miraculous gifts which were imparted to the Apostles, and to the converts of the apostolic age. They only spake with new tongues, and took up serpents (Acts xxviii.), and performed the other miracles which, in the apostolic age, were essential to the establishment of the new religion.

A Protestant would pay great attention to any proof from Scripture; but these which you have adduced, are utterly irrelevant, and by no means demonstrate what you declare the

Romanists assert with so much confidence ; “ that a promise was given to the Church, that the miraculous powers should continue for ever.” *This promise was never given ;* and, therefore, there is no failure of the promise on God’s part, if we deny that the Church of Rome has been favoured with an uninterrupted power of working miracles. We do solemnly deny it. Yet we believe in the promises of God, and still remain Christians.

2. From the attempt to prove that the uninterrupted succession of miracles is promised to the Church, you proceed to derive an argument in favour of your legendary miracles, from Dr. Middleton’s *Free Enquiry into the Miraculous Powers*. You repeat, and apparently with great triumph, the subtle question, “ What greater right does the testimony we admit, possess above testimony for miracles which we reject ?” I answer—The testimony upon which a Protestant believes a miracle must be greater, and purer, and more free from suspicion, than the testimony which supports the legendary miracles, which he rejects. There are certain criteria by which we judge of the probable truth, or falsehood, of every asserted fact. We believe in the miracles recorded in the New Testament because they were worthy of their author,

as they were performed for a great and important object, instantaneously, and publicly. The senses of the witnesses could easily judge of them. They were independent of second causes. Public monuments and institutions were set up in memory of them, at the very time when the miracles took place ; and these institutions have been continued without interruption, though the miracles have ceased. For these miracles we have the conviction of a great necessity, and undeniable proofs.—They cannot, like the miracles of the Fathers, sometimes be resolved into natural circumstances, as Jortin has shewn may be done in the instances of the death of Polycarp and the cross of Constantine—they were not wrought in countries at a distance from the persons who recorded them—nor in ages of religious ignorance, when the people could not reason on their truth—nor by persons who were venerated by the multitude whom they might wish to deceive. They were not recorded, for the first time, long after they had been accomplished. Their witnesses had no inferior motives to deceive, no wealth to secure, no ambition to gratify. If you demand whether all the miracles recorded by the fathers are to be rejected, I answer, no—by no means, provided they are supported by the same evidence as

those of the Holy Scriptures, Bring me sufficient evidence, and I will believe in St. Dunstan and Prince Hohenlohe, and render homage to the Church of Rome. The error both of Dr. Middleton and of his opponents was this: they considered all the miracles recorded through many ages, in a mass; and reasoned upon the general principle of the probability or improbability of the continuance of the miraculous powers. This mode of reasoning is fallacious. Every circumstance which is said to be miraculous may be believed to be really so, if it be supported by the same evidence as that which demonstrates the truth of the miracles of Scripture. We must not deny that an omnipotent and omnipresent God may always interpose in human affairs. From the unsuspecting nature of the testimony, and the evident fulfilment of a prophecy, I am willing to believe that the Deity interposed to prevent the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem, by Julian. I will not, at least, reject the account as a legend, because it is not in Scripture. But the defeat of this attempt cannot be called a miracle in favour of the Church of Rome. It might demonstrate the truth of Christianity, but not the supremacy of the Pope, or any incipient error, which was established, in after ages, as an

article of faith. It sanctioned no opinion which might be contradicted from Scripture. The evidences of Christianity rest upon a firmer foundation than the legends of the dark ages. Neither can you at all compare the long list of unauthenticated, absurd stories, respecting the Virgin Mary and the Magdalen; St. Dominic and St. Francis; St. Denis and St. Winifred, and the innumerable others which would provoke the smiles and contempt of Protestants, and largely try even the faith of a Romanist—with that sublime collection of well-authenticated miracles, which demonstrates the divine origin of our common faith? You, in fact, resign the Romish Miracles to their fate, when you conclude that no miracles, except those which are related in the Old or New Testament are articles of faith. If all are from God, all are to be received, for all would be undeniable.

You ask if it be just or generous to harass the present Romanists, with the weakness of the ancient writers of your communion, who have advocated many strange legends, which are founded on their belief of the miraculous powers of your Church: and you quote an absurd saying of a Protestant Bishop, to prove that the Reformers also, sometimes entertained and defended opinions, which are now rejected.

It is true that Bishop Jewel complained to Queen Elizabeth, that “witches, and sorcerers wonderfully increased; and your implied inference of our equal absurdity would be just, if the Protestant still believed in witchcraft and sorcery. The Protestant may reject the opinions which reason or Scripture convince him are absurd. The Romanist is permitted to reject nothing, which his Church has once sanctioned. You are still compelled to assert the miraculous powers of your Church; and therefore to allow, that your most absurd legend possibly *may* be true. You dare not resign the miracles of the darkest age to their fate; as we have long since given up our witches, and ghosts, and sorcerers. The undeniable fact is, that the Council of Trent has sanctioned, and confirmed, and strengthened all your past errors. The Council of Trent has fettered your communion with its bonds and chains, and you cannot be free. You are like the imprisoned eagles. You have wings that can soar to heaven, and eyes that would meet the mid-day sun: but your wing droops, and your eye is blinded; for the Council of Trent has legislated in darkness, and the morning is past and the day of knowledge is come, but you may not, you cannot fly, nor gaze. My language is not mere

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declamation. It is related in history, that a Romish Priest, to obtain a certain object, presented himself to a king, with his back and shoulders covered with blood, and waled with stripes; in reply to the monarch's inquiry, by what means he became in this condition, he replied, that St. Peter had appeared to him, and punished him thus severely for abandoning his flock. The king was astonished, and was converted. This story must be either fraud, miracle, or fable; and the communion is suspected of imposture which sanctioned this and similar circumstances, having no proof of their truth. Instead of joining in this opinion, you seek for proofs, that the Church of Rome still possesses the power of working miracles; and you are willing to discredit some, to preserve the rest. Let me remind you of a paragraph in Jortin—

“The ecclesiastical miracles that were wrought after the Church was supported by the state, were usually such as would make fools stare, and wise men suspect. As they were began, so they ended, in vain; establishing nothing, or what was worse than nothing. If false, the tricks of deceitful men; if true, the frolics of fantastic demons.”—*Jortin's Remarks*, vol i. p. 226. 2d. ed.

LETTER IV.

CAUSES WHICH PROMOTED THE SUCCESS OF CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE ANGLO-SAXONS.

IV. 1. *The conduct of the Missionaries.*

SIR,

The success of the Romish missionaries is generally attributed to these united causes ; the little influence of Paganism on the affections of the people, and its consequent discredit—the knowledge that a purer religion had been taught, and was received by some of the people, (Bertha, the wife of Ethelbert, having embraced Christianity before the arrival of Augustine)—and the superior information of the missionaries, who were the master spirits of the age. Though Augustine needlessly offended the Welsh Bishops, he and his friends were generally prudent and politic men, and the change they effected was beneficial—these causes, we believe to be sufficient to produce all their success. You attribute “ the success of the Anglo-Saxon Apostles principally, under Providence, to their correspondence with the graces, and gifts, which it pleased the Almighty to bestow upon

them." I do not fully understand this sentence : we well know that the most opposite creeds have obtained disciples ; and the success or failure of missionaries, since the apostolic age, may be imputed in every instance, to the peculiar circumstances under which their missions were attempted, and generally, to their own conduct. It must, however, be remembered, where miracles have ceased, success or failure is no proof of the truth or falsehood, of the doctrines and opinions of a teacher.

IV. 2. *Unfounded charge brought in this chapter against the Anglo-Saxon Clergy.*

You strongly object to the accusation that "the missionaries were little scrupulous of the measures they employed." They professed to work miracles; unless these supposed miracles are divine, the accusation is just. No man can now venture to defend the means by which the missionaries obtained their influence. Why shall we not condemn them of imposture? Why should you encumber yourself with an apology for such probable deceptions?

IV. 3. *Alleged purer faith of the Welsh.*

So far at least as the doctrine of the supremacy of the Church of Rome was concerned,

the Welsh seem to have professed a purer faith than Augustine established. We may justly infer that if they differed from that church, in a point then considered so material as the proper observance of Easter, they did not profess the same opinions on some others. Augustine, you assert, was rejected as “an *intermediate prelate*, interfering with the discipline of the Church, and every Romish prelate would have acted towards his brother prelates as the Abbot of Bangor to Augustine; for the Welch were in communion with the See of Rome.” Surely you are not aware how much you are liable to the charge of misrepresenting the question. All the Episcopal Churches were at first in communion with each other, till Rome claimed the supremacy and destroyed their mutual charity. Augustine was a delegate from Rome, and the Abbot of Bangor, in reply to his arrogant demands, asserted that he owed no submission to the Bishop of Rome; as he was under the government of the Bishop of Caerleon upon Uske*: and it has been supposed that Dia-noth the Abbot of Bangor, and his monks, were murdered by the Northumbrians, through the influence of Augustine with Ethelbert, because

* I refer you to Spelman’s *Concilia*, p. 108.

they refused to submit to the supremacy of the See of Rome*. Augustine, it is said, had previously excited the war, though he was not alive at the time of the murder. Dr. Lingard† has asserted that the Welsh must have had the same faith as Augustine, for he invited them to assist in converting the Saxons—this is true: but they were not to be permitted to join in this work, unless they first submitted to certain decisions of the Romish Church, which they refused to do, as an unprecedented and monstrous encroachment upon their privileges. In the essentials of their common faith they were agreed; in those points which the absolute authority of Rome had established they differed. May we not infer that, if they had been from the first under the superintendence of Rome, the arbitrary observances would have been first enacted.

* History of Popery, vol. i. p. 56.

† History of England, vol i. p. 84.

LETTER V.

RELIGION OF THE DANES—THEIR CONVERSION.

SIR,

This subject is noticed by you merely to deduce therefrom an argument in favour of the supremacy of the Church of Rome. The Danes, you observe, were converted by Roman missionaries to the Roman faith. They were converted to the Christianity of their day; that is, to much that was good; and to many errors, though not to so many as the Council of Trent sanctioned, in a subsequent age. The good effects of their conversion is a subject of equal satisfaction to Christians of every name; but no proof can fairly be drawn from their adopting the religious opinions of the missionaries, to vindicate the subsequent usurpation of the Roman pontiff.

LETTER VI.

THE ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH—ST. DUNSTAN.

SIR,

You propose in your sixth letter,—1. To defend Dunstan from the charge of ambition and imposture. 2. To represent the sudden falling in of the floor on which his opponents were sitting as an accidental, or merely an extraordinary, circumstance. 3. To vindicate the miracles attendant on his death from the imputation of fraud, because the gift of miracles continues with the Romish Church ; and 4. To defend the doctrine of the enforced celibacy of the clergy.

1. The early years of Dunstan were retired, studious, and devout. The omens of future greatness are generally recorded, after greatness is attained. It is not necessary to inquire if they actually took place before that time, in the present instance. He excelled in all the learning of the age ; and on being introduced by a relation to the court of King Edmund, he interested and pleased the king*. “ Youth-

* Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons, vol. i. p. 380, &c.

ful ambition," says Mr. Turner, "is the parent of much excellence, when its means are honourable." Dunstan was hitherto laudably ambitious and blameless. Persuaded, soon after his first disappointment, to become a monk, his ambition took a new direction, and the means of success were less ambiguous. He made with his own hands a cave or cell, like a grave*, five feet long, and two and a-half wide. His piety was suited to the taste of the age, and secured, if such was his object, that fame and reputation which again introduced him under better auspices to his sovereign, over whom he soon obtained an ascendancy. You are very angry that Protestants should think you believe that the devil was taken by the nose by this eminent saint; it is recorded on as good authority as his other miracles, and is as fully entitled to credit. He obtained by these means the summit of his ambition,—influence over royalty.

2. The history of the meeting of the council which opposed his measures, ought to be his best defence against the charge of imposture. The fraud cannot be proved, you observe, because it is possible that the beams of a floor of a room

* See the original quotation from Osborne. Ap. Turner, vol. i. p. 384.

may give way at one end, while the rest at the opposite side may remain in their positions. This defence would be sufficient, if it were the only circumstance which seemed to imply fraud. But is it an accidental omission on your part, that you have neglected to inform your readers; that at a former council, when Dunstan had attained the supreme power, a crucifix suddenly became vocal, and approved of Dunstan's proceedings; and when the miracle surprised the assembly, the favoured Dunstan exclaimed, "What wish ye more, the divine voice determines the affair*? When you perused the story of the falling in of the floor at the Council of Calne, did you suddenly cease to read before you came to that part which excites the suspicion of a trick; and which, as an honest historian, you would undoubtedly have mentioned,—namely, "that the beams and rafters did not give way till the nobles who refused to yield reproached Dunstan, who thereupon cried out, 'I confess, I am unwilling to be overcome.—I commit the cause of the Church to the decision of Christ.'" When I have brought these facts to your notice, you will possibly confess that Dunstan may be

* Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons, vol. i. p. 485.

suspected of fraud and imposture, even by a Romanist. I know you have not been previously made acquainted with these additional and most suspicious circumstances, because you assert, "that, during the sitting of a council, the floor fell in; many members were thrown into the ruins, and Dunstan remained unhurt, by standing on a beam; and these are the *only* circumstances which history has transmitted to us." If you had been acquainted with all the circumstances, you would certainly have avoided a mode of relating the falling in of the floor at the Council of Calne, which, in the former times of controversy, among our ruder ancestors, would have rendered you obnoxious to some harsher epithets, than I shall condescend either to express or insinuate.

3. You would vindicate the miracles attendant on the death of Dunstan, on the principle already considered, that the miraculous powers of the Apostolic age have been continued to the Romish Church. This opinion has been already considered.

4. The forced celibacy of the clergy was strenuously defended by Dunstan, and is zealously advocated by yourself. If there is one doctrine clearly laid down in Scripture, it is, "that marriage is honourable in all."

We read, “ a bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife”—that St. Paul had power to marry if he pleased. The forbidding to marry, is one of the signs of the predicted apostacy ; and one of the many reasons which induce the Protestants to conclude, that the Church of Rome is the Antichrist, which should corrupt the true Catholic Church of Christ. St. Paul undoubtedly recommended to Christians, that they should not marry in times of persecution ; and many inconveniences may arise to the clergy, from the numerous cares in which they may become involved by marriage. These are not, however, sufficient to authorize the vows of celibacy. If we consider the examples of marriage in the primitive church, we find it there asserted, that St. Paul was married: so we are assured by Ignatius*, Clemens†, Eusebius‡. St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, is said to have consoled his wife at her martyrdom. The Twelve Apostles, says Ambrose§, were all married except St. John. Tertullian|| wrote a book to his own wife,

* Ignatus ad Philadel.

† Clemens Stromat. lib. 7.

‡ Euseb. lib. 3 cap. 30.

§ Ambros, in 2 Cor. 11.

|| Hieron. de Eccles. Script. Regin. in rebus Germanicis.

Hilary* to his daughter Abra; Chrysostom †, Jerome ‡, and Epiphanius §, praise the marriage of priests as memorable and recommendatory. As men and Christians, we grieve that this burden is imposed upon your priesthood. Æneas Silvius ||, afterwards Pope Pius II., deplored the mistaken law which compelled the clergy to celibacy; and I could multiply proofs and arguments, to shew the wickedness, the unreasonableness, and the intolerable consequences to human happiness, arising from this enactment. Virginité, says our great prelate, Bishop Hall, is not more holy than chaste marriage. Yet you believe that God enabled Dunstan to work a miracle, to prove the truth of a doctrine, which is alike contrary, to the Holy Scriptures, to reason, to utility, to the teaching of the Christian Fathers, and to the customs of the early Churches. The remarks on Dunstan's

* Hilary ad Abram filiam.

† Chrysostom in Ep. ad Hebræos, Homil. 7.

‡ Hieron. ad Jovinianum.

§ Epiphanius contra Origenian. Ap. Bp. Jewel's Works vol. ii. page 423.

|| Platina in vit. Pius II., et Sabellicus Ennead. 10, lib. 6. Ap. Bp. Taylor's Works, vol. xiv, p. 120. Bp. Héber's Edit. See particularly Bp. Hall, on the honour of the married clergy.

political conduct do not require further consideration. The cruel or mild character of the Saxon minister must be left to his biographer.

LETTER VII.

CHARGES AGAINST THE MONKS—INVESTITURES—SAINT
ANSELM.

SIR,

Many circumstances concurred to give influence to the monks, which are only resolvable into fraud and imposture; but another basis of their power at this period, was exemplary devotion according to the notions of their day, and we are not justified in condemning them, for their unavoidable ignorance of the more reasonable, and as we believe, more acceptable, modes of worshipping our common God. The monasteries were the public schools of the kingdom; and they were open to all who could send their youth, for the instruction which they alone were able to give. The monks preserved learning, though they sometimes erased a Greek Tragedy, and even the Scriptures

themselves, to write on the parchment a much less valuable composition. The most powerful minds rise but little above the level of their own age; and we can only have expected, that Anselm, Bede, and others, should have been eminent in the manner and to the extent they were. Of Thomas Aquinas, you have indeed reason to boast. I have been frequently delighted with his stange reveries, or imbibed a purer satisfaction from his moral philosophy. His *Secunda Secundæ* is worthy of separate publication. Without the monks, our darkness might not have been half dispersed. Your eulogy, with some strong exceptions, is well deserved. I speak of the monks before time and indolence had rendered them suspected or odious.

7—2. *Investitures.*

We now arrive at the more particular consideration of that opinion of the Romish Church, which has been at once the cause of its greatness and of its decline, the doctrine of the authority of the Pope over the minds of Christians. The allegiance which you believe to be due to the Romish Church and to the Pope, is thus expressed by yourself, from the creed of Pope Pius IV.

“ I acknowledge the Holy Catholic and Apostolical Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all Churches; and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman Bishop, the successor of St. Peter, the prince of the Apostles, and vicar of Jesus Christ.”

To this doctrine, (which is held by the Romish Church as a body, and not by a few individuals of its communion,) may be imputed the jealousy of princes—the divisions among their people—the fury of civil war. To this we may impute all that interference in the temporal polity of states, on the part of the Popes, and the consequent resistance of princes, which has often made the Church of Rome the enemy of the civilized world; and rendered the history of so many ages a continued narrative of tumult, crimes, and bloodshed. You profess only spiritual obedience. The decisions of our judgment, and the principles of our religion, influence our conduct; and the doctrine that allegiance of any kind is due to the Pope, however guarded and limited, explained and palliated it may be, has uniformly been productive of misery, by dividing or alienating the attachment and obedience of the people, from the sovereign and laws of their respective countries.

Your theory is;—"In the early ages, Bishops were elected at a congregation of the clergy and laity of the diocese. One or more of the neighbouring Bishops presided at the election; the whole congregation joined in it, the Bishop consecrated; from the reign of Constantine, the body of the people were wholly excluded. [You will observe there is no supremacy of the Pope in all this.] The Bishops and Clergy then retained their influence; this also insensibly declined. When the monarchs usurped to themselves the exclusive right of nominating to the vacant see*," they executed their power wrongfully, and the Popes interfered.

1. "They contended that the monarch's nomination was an usurpation of the rights of the clergy."

2. "That the delivery by the king of the Ring and Crosier; was a spiritual ceremony, which no layman could perform."

3. "Ecclesiastics ought to be exempted from doing homage."

I am unwilling to discuss, in this place, the long, though not difficult question of the origin, the nature, and the extent of the rights

* On the growth of the authority of Rome, see Stillingfleet. Works, folio, vol. iv. p. 401.

of Christian Princes over all causes in their dominions, ecclesiastical or civil.

In reply to the first point for which the clergy of that age contended, I beg to refer you to Mr. Hallam's admirable chapter on the ecclesiastical power, in the second volume of his *History of the Middle Ages*. Mr. Hallam has shewn that in France the Bishops had generally been nominated by the King, and in England by the Wittenagemot. In Italy, the Popes themselves were confirmed by the Emperors*. I refer you, also, to Bishop Stillingfleet's *Treatise on the Growth of the Authority of Rome*, (Works in folio, vol. iv. p. 401); to Archdeacon Pott's *Charge on the Rights of Sovereignty in Christian States, with Dissertations*: and I might extend the list to some length. It appears to be a sad and melancholy state to which a Protestant of this country is reduced, if he must be compelled, on any account whatever, to defend the supremacy of his temporal sovereign.

* Ivon, Bishop of Chartres, anno 1000, thus concisely expresses the several parties concurring in the creation of a Bishop: *Eligente clero, suffragante populo, dono regis, per manum metropolitam, approbante Romano pontifice*. Du Chesne. *Script. Rerum Gallicarum* Ap. Hallam, vol. ii. cap. 7, p. 254—256.

The practice of giving the ring and the crosier, which is the second point, was first introduced into the Church by a temporal prince, Charlemagne. They were the visible symbols of investiture, by the lord of the country in which the estates of the Bishops lay. The custom of granting the ring and crosier was not only begun; it was continued, also, by the temporal Sovereign for two centuries without scandal, till it was condemned by the usurping Pontiffs of Rome*. So little foundation is there for the assertion, that it was a spiritual ceremony which no layman could perform. The mere ceremonial, however, was a matter of little importance—the real question was, whether the influence of the prelate should support that temporal power of the Pope, which was gradually establishing itself upon the foundation of spiritual allegiance.

The third point demonstrates the truth, which the Protestant asserts, that the perfect obedience of the subject cannot be enforced by the Sovereign, if any foreign influence whatever be permitted to interpose. Then, as now, the Romanist would have granted that homage to

* Hallam's Hist. vol. ii. p. 255.

the Pope, which he refused to his temporal prince.

The evil complained of, was, the conduct of the Sovereign; the remedy proposed, was, the interference of the Pope. A Protestant of the present day would decide, that the remedy should have been found in the law, and by the senate of the country, or that the clergy should have submitted to persecution, as the martyrs of old. The Romanist would decide that the Pope was right, for he was authorized to govern, and his power was merely spiritual. Both theory and experience unite to convince the world, that spiritual allegiance, without temporal power, is an utter impossibility; for it is a motive of conduct, and affects, therefore, the happiness of every individual in the whole community. We will consider in the next letter, whether an impartial inquirer might not have possessed sufficient knowledge, even in the days of Anselm and Becket, to have enabled him to conclude, that the laws of the temporal Sovereign, were more entitled to obedience, than the claims of the Pontiff of Rome.

LETTER VIII.

IMMUNITIES OF THE CHURCH.—ST. THOMAS A BECKET.

SIR,

It is not necessary to follow you through the quotations from Montesquieu and others, on the advantages of an universal acknowledgement of the privileges and jurisdiction of the Pope, and his clergy. Experience is a better instructor than any theory. Experience has taught mankind, that vice, and ignorance, and slavery, increased with the increasing power of the Church of Rome. We are to examine the principles, on which the conduct of Becket, whom you defend, could be justified, or condemned, in his own age.

“To pronounce, you observe, a fair judgment on Becket, we should transport ourselves to the middle of the twelfth century, and to the circumstances of the world at that period: We should then find that the clerical immunities, upon which the contest *in its first stage* turned, made a part of the constitution of every state.”

No Protestant would be unwilling to let the

controversy rest upon this statement, if you had not fallen into the great error of identifying the authority of the Pope with the clerical immunities. The privileges of the clergy ought to have been secured to them, by the same laws of the land which protected the property and rights of other subjects. The foreign Pontiff had no legal authority. You would object to this mode of reasoning, as—"trying Becket by the present constitution, the present laws, and the present manners of Christian states, as well as by our present notions of what is fit and proper." I will examine the conduct of Becket, therefore, by your own criteria; and endeavour to shew that he would have been justified even in the twelfth century, in supporting the cause of his temporal sovereign against the intrusion of the Pontiff. The supremacy of the Bishop of Rome had by no means been fully established. The nations of Europe were separated into two parties, of the Pope and the Emperor, the Guelfs and Ghibelines, the respective advocates of the rights of Princes, and of the authority of the Pope. The clergy themselves also were divided. From Becket's own letters, which were long preserved in the Vatican, and printed some years ago at

Brussels*, it appears that not only the King, and the whole body of the Barons, but even the Bishops, Abbots, and Clergy, openly condemned his behaviour as highly rash and criminal; they charged him with being the sole disturber of the peace of the kingdom†; that while he was making this disturbance about the liberties of the Church, he himself was the chief infringer of them; with many other serious accusations. The Bishops and Clergy of the realm expressly affirm these things in their common letters, not only to the Pope, but to Becket himself; and accuse him of traitorous practices, in endeavouring to excite the King of France to enter into a war against his King and country‡. When he was cited by the King, he refused to appear, because he acknowledged no other

* *Epist. et vit. div. Thomæ*, 2 vol. 4to. Bruxellis, 1682, l. i. ep. 4-43, et vid. l. ii. 94. &c. &c.

† *Ad eundem diem ex precepto regio, archiepiscopi, episcopi, et ceteri ecclesiarum prælati convocantur; constitutâ die Catholici principis conspectui se præsentat regni turbator, et ecclesiæ. Qui de suorum meritorum qualitate non securus, dominicæ crucis armat se vexillo, tanquam ad tyranni præsentiam accessurus. Vid. ibid. l. i. ep. 29.*

‡ *Asserebat Rex, et suorum pars melior, quod idem Archiepiscopus serenissimum Regem Francorum in eum graviter, incitaverat, &c. &c. ib. l. ii. 28, Alexand. Papæ Gulielmus, et Otto Cardinales.*

judge than God, and his Sovereign Vicar on earth, the Pope*.

The question whether allegiance to the King, or obedience to the Pope was the duty of a subject, must have been so fully discussed even in that age of comparative ignorance, that no excuse could be alleged by either party for an erroneous decision. Omitting then all personal motives of gratitude to the Prince, who had elevated him to the Archiepiscopacy, Becket was required,

I. From a regard to the morality of the country—

II. From the precedents arising from the conduct of former princes—

III. From a knowledge of the origin and gradual power of the Popes—to have taken part with his sovereign, in resisting the claims of the Roman Pontiff.

I. A regard to the morality of the country should have influenced the Archbishop to adopt this conduct—the authority of the Pope was worse than useless in this respect. The first care of every magistrate must be the protection of the happiness and peace of the people, and

* *Le Vie de Sanct. Thom. Archeveque de Canterb.* p. 129, Ap. Middleton's letters from Rome, 5th. ed. p. 103.

as these depend upon the morality and religion of a country, the ruler of the people becomes the guardian of these invaluable blessings. The public good is placed under his care; all minor considerations, therefore, all speculative privileges, whether of individuals or public bodies, clerical, legal, corporate, and commercial, must be subservient to this great object. The state of the public morality at this period may be collected from the well authenticated, and usual quotation on the subject from the impartial Rapin:—

“The clergy having acquired an absolute power over their own body, when a clergyman was accused, the matter was tried in the ecclesiastical courts, *from whence lay no appeal*, but the trials were formed with such indulgence, to those whom the court could not but condemn, that the most enormous crimes were punished only with degradation; and others with a short suspension, or easy confinement. The laity could not, contentedly, see themselves subject to the laws for offences which rendered clergymen liable only to some very slight corrections, and complained loudly. The clergy, on the other hand, sure of impunity, daily committed on the laity outrages which they durst not repel, for fear of incurring severe punishment. The abuse increased daily—it was proved to the

King, in the fifth year of his reign, that more than a hundred murders had been committed by ecclesiastics, not one of whom was so much as punished with degradation; which in these cases had been enjoined by the canons. The bishops, instead of repressing these disorders, gloried in their indulgence—the cause of the clergy was considered the cause of God, and they maintained, therefore, the immunities of their clergy, and all their abuses, to the utmost of their power. This monstrous state of things continued till the King remonstrated with Becket for punishing a murder committed by a priest, in the diocese of Sarum, with deprivation of his benefice and confinement to the walls of his monastery: the Archbishop asserted the privileges of the church, and the immunities of the clergy, and affirmed, that an ecclesiastic ought not to be put to death for any crime whatever. The King declared, as he was bound to do, that God had appointed him to administer justice, without distinction, to all his subjects; that it was improbable God would punish priests less severely than laymen, and that murder, robbery, and crimes of *this* nature should be tried, for the future, in the King's courts. From this point the dispute began, and continued; the whole question between Becket and the King was throughout re-

ducible to this, whether the public morality was to be protected by the King or the Pope, and whether the clergy, who had caused the public scandal, should be able to appeal to a foreigner against their own sovereign. The constitution of Clarendon decided that the King was supreme over all causes in his own dominions, and peace would have been restored, and crimes punished, if the Archbishop, after signature, had not recalled his consent, on the plea of a verbal inaccuracy in the description of the articles he had signed—he denied that the constitutions were ‘*the ancient customs*,’ the real fact being, that there were precedents to justify both parties in their former opinions.”

II. Becket was not, however, so much justified by the opposite precedents, as by those which supported the power of the King. They were fewer in number, less decisive, and uniformly varied with the strength or weakness of the temporal Sovereign.

In the Anglo-Saxon times, says Mr. Turner, the Clergy were subject to the common law of the land*.

William I. opposed with boldness and persevering firmness the decrees even of the zealous

* Mr. Butler (p. 84) has quoted one half only of this passage to prove a point, which was confuted by the remainder.

and ambitious Hildebrand, Gregory VII.—he refused to pay him homage, and openly contemned his interference. He governed the clergy like the rest of his subjects, with an absolute sway. If he suffered the Pope's legate to preside at a council, it was only to be freed with more ease from some bishops who gave him disturbance. When he found this synod unwilling to come into all his measures, he exerted his absolute power. By his sole authority he banished or imprisoned the Bishops whom he did not like, without staying for a canonical sentence. While the Pope was thundering out anathemas against the Emperor, and compelling him to dishonourable homage, William peaceably enjoyed the right of investiture; which was the subject of the quarrel between the Emperor and the Court of Rome. He made the church lands liable to the same services with the lay fees. Nothing was transacted in the Church but by his direction, and the synodal constitutions were no longer in force than during his pleasure. He went still further, and set himself in some measure above the Popes, by forbidding his subjects to receive their orders, or acknowledge their authority, without his permission*.

* Eadmer ap. Rapin. Tindal's edit. vol. i. p. 212.

In the reign of Rufus, Anselm was exiled, because he obeyed the Pope without the King's consent.

In the reign of Henry I. the King and Anselm contended about the investiture of the Bishops. The King calls a parliament or great council. The lords and Bishops join with the King. Anselm consented to refer the affair to the parliament at the following Easter, thereby confessing the power of the sovereign in council; for such was the senate of that day.

During Anselm's stay at Rome (Temp. Urban II.) it was decreed, that all ecclesiastics who for the future should receive the investiture of their benefices from a layman, should be excommunicated. In obedience to this decree, Anselm refused to do homage to the King; or to consecrate the Bishops whom the King had appointed. On appealing to the Pope, the conduct of Anselm was justified. The King was resolved to preserve a privilege received from his predecessors. He, therefore, commanded the Archbishop, as a subject of the realm, to obey his sovereign. Anselm refused to violate his conscience; and pleaded that he could not disobey the Pope and the synod in which he had himself voted. "What is this to me?" said the King; "is the synod of Rome to deprive me of the privileges of my predeces-

sors? I will never suffer any person *who refuses me the securities of a subject, to enjoy estates in my dominions.*" Rome, which could lose nothing, at length gained the chief object of dispute by a compromise. The King was to renounce the right of investiture, and the Bishops were permitted by the Pope to do homage for their temporalities.

After yielding to the two Williams, the Church of Rome, says Rapin, struggled a long time with Henry I. But when she saw he was not to be conquered, she contented herself with what she would have scorned in the beginning of the contest. She compounded the matter with that monarch, and consented that the Bishops and Abbots should do him homage; at the very time when *she obstinately refused the same terms to the emperor, whose affairs were not in so prosperous a state**. Stephen submitted to the Pope, and enslaved the kingdom by the double usurpation. The second Henry was the victim of the weakness of Stephen.

III. Becket was not justified in opposing the King, by the claims to supremacy which the Pope may have derived from antiquity.

* Rapin on the State of the Church, during the reigns of William I. William II. Henry I. and Stephen.—Tindal's Edit. vol. i. p. 212.

We have seen that Pope Gregory *, who sent Augustine the monk to England, disclaimed the title of supreme Pontiff. A man of learning, such as Becket undoubtedly was, ought to have been well acquainted with the gradual usurpation of the Popes over the rights of princes. Let us rapidly glance at the history of some of the successors of Gregory, till the reign of Henry II. and the pontificates of Alexander and Urban II., to whom Anselm and Becket gave the allegiance which was only due to their sovereign.

606. Boniface III. *obtained the title of universal Bishop.* His successor made lay monks equal to priests; and by Boniface V. the right of sanctuary was granted, contrary to the laws of all countries, both to robbers and murderers, who took shelter in churches.

650. Pope Martin excommunicating the patriarch of Constantinople, was cruelly punished by the Emperor Constans, for intruding on the rights of sovereigns in so doing.

His successor, Eugenius, built prisons for the Bishops, to correct more effectually the abuses of the clergy; an act of temporal power remedying spiritual evils.

* Hist. Pop. Pt. ii. 133, &c.

677. Agatho first claimed infallibility. In the reign of his successor, the Emperor Constantine Pogonatus permitted, for the first time, the election of Popes, without the subsequent consent of the Emperor. This had hitherto been necessary. The dependance of the Popes on the Emperors was soon shaken off entirely.

In the pontificate of Constantine I., Ravenna having always been an independent episcopal see, refused to submit to the jurisdiction of the Pope; who incited Justinian to attack and destroy Ravenna, and put out the eyes of Felix the Bishop. The Emperor having met the Pope at Nicomedia, gave to the world the first example of kissing the Pontiff's foot. This act of great personal veneration became the precedent for the continued ceremony.

After the death of this Emperor, the same Pope gave the first example of deposing his successor, for pulling down the images which the Pope had ordered to be put up in churches.

The pontificate of Gregory II. followed. He had the boldness to excommunicate the emperor Leo Isauricus; and set the further example of withdrawing his subjects from their allegiance, and forbidding them to pay tribute. Gregory III. still encroaching on these precedents, deprived the same Emperor, both

of his empire and the communion of the faithful, because he refused to sanction the worship, or, as it is now explained, the veneration of images.

753. Pope Zachary succeeded—and for the first time gave away the crown of a sovereign to a subject; receiving in return the domains of Ravenna from Pepin, which could not have been secured from the degraded Childeric. By his spiritual authority, the Pope deposed a Sovereign who had committed no crime; receiving from the usurper, in return, the temporal jurisdiction. Charlemagne, the son of Pepin, permitted himself to be elected Roman Emperor, and to be crowned, under that title, by the pope; and the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome extended, from this time, as widely as the dominions and conquests of his new protector. The right of investiture, and the presenting the ring and crosier, however, was still continued in Charlemagne; who would not permit any Bishop to be consecrated, who had not first received his approval. The people, according to custom, still nominating the Pope, who was to receive the sanction of the Emperor to his election.

The crowning of Charlemagne at Rome was the origin of the claim of the Popes to transfer

kingdoms at their pleasure. The power of the Popes, however, was not yet considered independent of the sovereign; for, in the year 816, Pope Stephen went to France to do homage to the Emperor Louis,—and Paschal, who succeeded him, sent a humble apology to the Emperor for the irregularity of his election.

In 828, the senate and people of Rome practised, for the first time, the ceremony of saluting the foot of the reigning Pope Valentine. He was succeeded by Pope Gregory IV., who waited till the Emperor's lieutenant should come to Italy, to sanction by his presence his consecration, which would otherwise have been void and illegal; the dependence of the Popes on the Emperor being still acknowledged.

In 844, Pope Sergius ordained that seventy-two witnesses were necessary, to prove a crime against a Bishop.

About 866, Pope Nicholas was the first who ventured to threaten excommunication to Lotharius, King of Lorraine. He forbade also that any secular prince should be present for the future at any synod or council of the clergy.

In the reign of Adrian II. (867), it was decreed that none should speak or write against the Bishop of Rome under pain of anathema; and that no Bishop should alight from his mule

or horse to any secular prince ; but all Princes and Emperors were to consider themselves as their equals : and if any Bishop live poorly or meanly he shall be suspended for one year,— and if the prince of the place be the cause of his poverty, that prince shall be excommunicated for two years.

In the year 872, Pope John IX. conferred the imperial crown on Charles the Bald.

It was in the year 882 that Pope Adrian made a decree, that the Emperor's confirmation of the election of the Popes was no longer to be expected or regarded.

It would be tedious to continue, even in this brief abstract, the crimes, and follies, and contests, of the several Popes who now followed, governing as temporal princes, and debasing the priesthood by their secularities. One of their most powerful advocates, who defends with zeal, learning, talent, and plausible apologies, every custom, and doctrine, and opinion, which could be advocated by the combination of all these, is compelled to confess and deplore the condition of the Christian Church. The description which Baronius has given, in the tenth volume of his *Annals of the State of the Holy See*, is most painful to all who wish well to the happiness of mankind.

To use his own metaphor: "It seemed as if Christ again slept a profound sleep in the ship of his Church, and there wanted disciples in the midst of the storm, to awaken their Lord with their cries." May God grant that the ignorance which submitted, and the tyranny which ruled, may never again return to smite the earth with darkness, and to curse both the prince and people. Never may the sovereigns, of this country at least, forget these enormities. All power, whether of Kings or priests, of States or Churches, is founded upon opinion only. Neither knowledge, nor the sword, can permanently sustain an empire. The opinions of the people, whether right or wrong, give efficacy to the thunders of the Vatican, or the decisions of common sense. If the advocates of the Church of Rome continue to defend the errors of the dark ages, and to convert their thousands and millions at their pleasure; the thrones of princes will be again at the disposal of the Pontiffs, whenever a race of active ruling priests shall once more court the powerful, or terrify the weak.

Let us pass to the days (1073) of Hildebrand, the celebrated Gregory VII., who carried to their greatest height the claims of the Roman See. Though a former Pontiff had

decreed that the interference of the Emperors over the elections of the Popes should cease, their authority was never wholly at an end till this reign. The ring and crosier had been given to the Popes by the Emperors. Hildebrand first decided in the Council of Lateran, "That if any Bishop should receive investiture from any lay person whatever, both he that gave and he that received it should be excommunicated." At the same time, he decreed also the affirmative of the old controversy, the celibacy of the clergy. From this period we may date the more active civil wars which ensued between Kings and Popes, priests and people, and embroiled all Europe till the Reformation. Hildebrand openly claimed the temporal jurisdiction over all princes. Henry, Emperor of Germany, was compelled to wait barefooted, in the depth of winter, till the sentence of absolution was pronounced; though he had already resigned his crown to the Pope, and confessed himself unworthy of that crown, if he should hereafter act contrary to his holiness's pleasure. On his knees the Emperor asked forgiveness. To this day, the claim of the Pope, though compelled to be dormant by the force of public opinion, is the same. "The creed of Pius," you assure us,

“sanctions the decisions of the Council of Lateran, as well as those of Trent.”

A copy of the excommunication is still extant in Baronius, in which all the world are desired to take notice, that the Pope has power to take away empires, and kingdoms, and principalities, and give them to whom he pleases. Yet, even to this Hildebrand, when he claimed homage for this kingdom, the bastard conqueror of England refused to submit, as if it was intended that the founder of the new dynasty should set an example to his successors to oppose the usurpations of Rome; and command for ever the priests of England, to prefer their obedience to the King to their allegiance to the Pope.

After some controversies, Urban II. obtained the pontificate, by means of Hildebrand's party, and renewed the sentence of excommunication against the Emperor in the Council of Placenza. This man ordained too, that it was lawful for subjects to break their oaths of allegiance to all such as were excommunicated by the Pope. He was the contemporary of William Rufus.

Pascal II. succeeded after an interval. Having conquered his rival anti-popes, he renewed the excommunication against the Em-

peror Henry, because he would not go personally on the crusade; and instigated the son to oppose his father, on the pretence that he could not inherit from a heretic. The Emperor had not impugned the doctrines of the Church, he had refused only the right of investiture to the Pope. Being made prisoner by his son, he was reduced to the greatest poverty and misery, and died in wretchedness at Liege, after a reign of fifty years, a martyr to the indignation of the Popes for asserting his rights as a sovereign. He died in the year 1106, in the reign of William Rufus, who resisted successfully the same claims of the Roman Pontiffs.

The overthrow of the Emperor having now secured to the Popes the ascendancy in Italy, Pascal II., without consulting the new Emperor, appointed several Bishops to the vacant Sees. This claim, however, was now successfully resisted, and the right of investiture was surrendered to the Emperor in the year 1111.

It will excite surprise to hear that this grant was revoked and annulled in the following year. The Emperor was again excommunicated, and the controversy was renewed, as at the beginning, till Pascal died 1118.

This Pope was the first who dated his bulls

and letters by the year of his own Popedom, instead of the Emperor's reign, as had been usual.

In the year 1122, the Emperor, wearied out with perpetual contests, yielded to Pope Calixtus the right of investiture; his throne being endangered by the Princes of Germany withdrawing their allegiance, in consequence of the excommunication under which he laboured.

Innocent II., who succeeded Honorius, in the year 1130, made a still further encroachment on the rights of princes, by remonstrating with Roger Earl of Sicily, *for taking possession of his own inheritance*, the Lordship of Apulia, without the Pope's permission. He sanctioned the usurpation of our Stephen.

About the year 1141, it was decreed that no layman should lay violent hands on a priest.

Calixtus II. was the first who was chosen by the cardinals alone; the reason was, that the people had been excommunicated for rebellion, under Pope Innocent.

About this time the Canon Law was fully established over Europe, superseding, in all countries, the civil rights of the sovereigns, over the clergy in all ecclesiastical matters.

After several Popes, of whom nothing remarkable is recorded, we come to the reign of

Adrian IV., who excommunicated the Emperor Frederic Barbarossa, for requiring an oath of allegiance from his own Bishops, whom he commanded not to appeal to Rome; refusing also to receive legates from the Pontiff into Germany. He died in the year 1159; about the time when the disputes between Becket and Henry III. began to attract the general attention of Europe. He was succeeded by Alexander III. to whom Becket appealed against his sovereign. Here we may end this detail, remarking only, that this Pope in the year 1177, actually placed his foot upon a prostrate Emperor, quoting a text of Scripture. This Pope claimed also the right of deciding on the canonization of new saints, and elevated to the calendar of Romish Divinities, Bernard and Thomas à Becket.

Such is the brief outline of those historical facts, the knowledge of which ought to have enabled a wise and patriotic statesman of the twelfth century, to have decided, even in his own age, in favour of his temporal prince, against the usurpations of the Roman Pontiff. The Pope and the King were contending for the Government of England. The public morality—the spirit of the law—the recorded usurpations of the papacy, required of an

English archbishop, that he should subject the clergy to the common laws of the country in which they lived. The former customs of the realm, which gave the authority of the magistrate to the Prince and not to the Pope, were embodied in the constitutions of Clarendon. The verbal differences, the appeals to precedent, the collision between statute, canon, and civil laws; the legal subtleties, and minute definitions; the clashing of authorities, and all other sources of argument by which Becket defended his seditious opposition, originated in the very usurpations which it was his duty to oppose. The general principle, that every temporal state and sovereign is entitled to the obedience of the subject, was the unalterable law of nature and society, long before the ambition of Rome disturbed the peace of the world; and no quibbling sophistries can do it away. Reason, antiquity, and necessity rendered it indispensable to the very existence of the monarchy, that all causes should commence in the king's courts of justice, and not in those of Rome, as the Pope and his coadjutor demanded. If the policy of Hildebrand had ever been completely received, it ought now to have been abandoned, when its effects were demonstrated to be so injurious to

the public welfare. It never had been fully established in England; and Becket was therefore to be doubly condemned for his ingratitude and rebellion. The clergy themselves were divided. The immunities of the Church had sometimes been granted and confirmed, and as frequently cancelled. Enacted and repealed—controverted and opposed—oppressive in their effects—unjust in their principles, they had uniformly produced public evil, and they cannot be fairly represented as the law of the land. Europe was distracted by the convulsions which originated in this code, and by the increasing ambition and demands of the Popes. The very independence of England was threatened. If the claims of the Roman Pontiff had been successful, an universal, ecclesiastical monarchy would have been established over the civilized world. In his admirable summary of the character of Becket, Lord Lyttleton has hesitated to pronounce on the motives by which he was influenced. You, with a bolder spirit, inform us, that “Becket perished (p. 89,) for a faithful adherence to ecclesiastical duty.” To his supposed ecclesiastical duty he certainly might fall the victim. His virtues were the curse of his country, the ruin of his prince, and the honour

of Rome. *You* have reason to be proud of him, and the state has abundant cause to be jealous of a Church, which can thus change a brave, a good, and loyal Englishman into a rebel, from principle, against his sovereign. Spiritual allegiance is the foundation of temporal power. Admit but the principle, the result will ever be the same.

“No Romanist,” you observe, “imagines at this time, that the ecclesiastics were entitled by divine right to the immunity for which Becket contended in the first stage of the controversy.” This ought to be decided by the Popes and their general council. This claim was once made,—and, though it is now dormant, it has never been rescinded. We do not object to the *present exercise* of the claim to supremacy. We object to its existence as a dormant right, which grows with the growth of the political power of the Romish Church. War with the palace, and peace with the cottage, was long the dormant wish of the republicans of France. Jacobinism was comparatively harmless when it was borne down by the superincumbent weight of monarchy. It was the lava of a burning volcano, when it burst from its imprisonment.

When the title of universal bishop was once

bestowed on the Pope, the allegiance demanded and granted was, as you would term it, purely spiritual. But nations and communities, though they may make speculative and metaphysical opinions the foundation of their laws, must enforce those laws by temporal sanctions. The Pope claimed all spiritual allegiance from Becket, the King civil obedience. One enforces his claim by the then terrible power of excommunication: by the power of excluding the man from all the happiness of life, from the rites of kindness, hospitality, and affection: by consigning him to infamy on earth, and exciting a dread of the certainty of eternal punishment. The other enforces his claim by the usual powers of a civil magistrate, the infliction of pain, confiscation, and death. The dominion of the former extended to eternity, of the latter to this life only. A virtuous and rational being will ever prefer the will of God, to the fear of man. In these ages, the will of God and the decree of the Pope were thought to be identified. To refuse absolution was to consign the trembling and expiring sinner to the endless agony of the hell of an excited imagination and of the superstitious ignorance of the age; while to grant absolution was to grant a passport into the

presence of a Saviour, who was adored and loved from the abundant use of images of a bleeding, suffering, and dying man, with feelings of more than human affection. Pain and death are despicable instruments of power, when compared with present infamy, and endless agony. The Pope wielded the keys, the Sovereign the sword. The Pope was the eternal tormentor, the Sovereign the momentary executioner.

You will allege that these were the dark ages. I again answer that the duty of spiritual allegiance to the Bishop of Rome is the opinion of a dark age only; but it is maintained by the Romanists of England at present. If an aspiring and ambitious Pontiff now obtained power by any unforeseen means, the same effects must follow from the same cause. Even when he is weak and apparently harmless, this very opinion has shaken our empire to its centre.

LETTER IX.

I. CESSION BY KING JOHN OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ENGLAND TO POPE INNOCENT III.

II. TEMPORAL POWER OF THE POPE.

THERE is no one transaction in the early History of England, which so much disgusts and shames our countrymen, as the submission of our brave, though weak king, to the dominion of the Pope. The conqueror of the continental powers, now became the conqueror of this island. In your first paragraph, you assert that the king retained his sovereignty:—he might still, it is true, have punished a robber or a murderer, provided the criminal was also a layman; but that magistrate, who holds his crown at the will of another, who renders homage, pays tribute, and swears allegiance, cannot be called a sovereign. You make here, also, certain legal distinctions; but nations are not to be governed, nor kings deposed, by special pleading. The throne was resigned, amidst the suppressed indignation of the English Nobles. The regalia were kept by the legate

five days* ; as a token, livery, seizin and possession of the kingdom, and then restored on conditions. The deed of resignation is still extant.

It might have been expected, that if your detail of the past enormities of the Roman Pontiffs would have kindled one honest feeling of regret and shame, it must have been when you related the degradation of an English king. You do not indeed defend the transaction ; but you endeavour to palliate it by a plea, which almost tempts me to submit to the charge of illiberality, in declaring my belief in all the accusations of Protestants against the fairness and candour of the Church of Rome. I could almost accuse you of insidious jesuitism, when you venture to observe, that the submission of John took place under a national apprehension of a French invasion, and omit to tell us that the Pope was the cause of the danger. Did you not well know that the Pope, after he had published an interdict, which suspended the rites of baptism, marriage, and burial, had excommunicated the king ; then absolved the people from their oaths of allegiance ; then

* See Jo. Serre's Hist. in Phil. Aug. and Matthew Paris, in anno 1213, ap. History of Popery, Vol. I. p. 465.

posed him; and after that commissioned Philip, King of France, to execute the sentence; promising for reward the remission of his sins, together with the crown of England to him and his heirs for ever, when he had once dethroned the present tyrant? Did you not also well know, that every Prince in Christendom was exhorted by the Pope's bull to assist in this enterprize; and that the same privileges were to be conferred, as on those who visited the Holy Sepulchre? Yet you represent the transaction, as if France, actuated only by ambition, or by some motive not connected with the dispute between the King and the Pontiff, was about to invade England; and the English, to secure themselves, placed their kingdom under the dominion of the Pope*.

IX. 2.—*Temporal Power of the Pope.*

You give up all defence in this letter of the Pope's temporal power; and assure us, that no advocate for this opinion can be found at present. "It was rejected in the Gallican Church, in 1682: the rejection was signed by every ecclesiastic, secular or religious, in France; and has been disclaimed upon oath by all the English, Irish, and Scottish Romanists."

* Rapin, 7. John, where see the original references.

Neither your disclaiming the principle, nor all the Romanists unitedly disclaiming it, can be sufficient to justify a Protestant in believing the validity, though he will not doubt the sincerity, of your denial. The power which once claimed universal temporal dominion still exists, and still asserts the truth of the principles on which that claim was founded. You render obedience to this power, and defend the same principle; though you now deny the unavoidable inference. If you believe the Pope to be your ecclesiastical Sovereign, you, as his subjects, cannot at pleasure limit his asserted authority. Your rejection is not a valid security for the allegiance you proffer to the State, unless the Pontiff himself shall resign and deny all his former pretensions, as solemnly and as openly as they were once made. Would the people of Europe have been justified in believing the population of a country, who might unanimously deny a right or pretension of their Sovereign, unless their Sovereign or Government denied it also? I refer not only you, but every student of History, to the simple yet accurate and philosophical article of Rapin, on the state of the Church during the reigns of Henry II., Richard I., John, and his successor. He clearly traces the principles on which the

ecclesiastical power was gradually established ; and demonstrates that the Supremacy of the Pope was the source of every political evil. He shews that mistakes of the meaning of the word Church, and the perversion of the power of excommunication, were the principal foundations of the greatness of the Romish See. Spiritual penalties were to be inflicted ; but if the spiritual penalty could not conquer the sinner, it was necessary for the glory of God, to use temporal punishments, and to separate the excommunicated from all intercourse with the faithful. If the excommunicated person was not then reconciled, the Magistrate was to imprison and confiscate. The same principle and the same conduct extended to Kings and Emperors ; they were to be deprived of their domains, and if they refused obedience, other Sovereigns, the spiritual sons of the Pope, were called in to enforce the duty of refractory brethren. This is the history of the past. If we allude to it when you now demand power, we are said to be illiberal and bigoted. We must be so. The Church of Rome asserts, as strongly as before, its *spiritual* dominion ; if that claim be admitted, we believe that it must be unavoidably attended or followed by temporal authority.

Though you will not defend, much less assert, the continuance of the temporal power of the Romish See, you would palliate its former domination, on the ground of its utility in theory, and universal convention.

To the former we reply;—Experience has demonstrated that many things may be theoretically right, which are politically wrong: to the second; that gradual usurpation, uniformly opposed, though sometimes in part acknowledged, cannot found its claims on universal convention.

LETTER X.

VIEW OF THE ROMISH SYSTEM.

SIR;

On the introduction to your tenth letter, some observations have been already made. We cannot with any propriety call you, as you wish, “Roman Catholics;” and you disclaim the terms, “Popery,” “Papal,” and “Papist,” as appellations of reproach. The epithets, “Roman,” “Romanist,” and “Romish,” have been adopted by both communions.

If any part of your defence would have com-

pelled me to break these rules of courtesy, it might have been found in your view of the Roman system. The temple of knowledge has been long thrown open. We walk in the light of day. The nations must ere now have recovered from the darkness of the past, if the Council of Trent had not blinded the eyes of its votaries. A book lies before me, in which a well-educated, and in other respects, liberal-minded English gentleman, has declared his conviction, that the prayers of the Virgin Mary, and of certain other persons long since dead, many of whom were of pious, but others of doubtful, or more than doubtful character, can procure some favour and assistance to their fellow-creatures who still live. He believes that it is "a good and useful supplication to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers, help, and assistance, to obtain favours from God." He believes further, (I quote his own words) "that due honour and veneration are to be paid to the cross, and to the images, paintings, and relics of the saints;" and that he venerates "*the relics, as portions of their holy bodies, which will be glorified to all eternity.*"

He believes also that there is a purgatory, in which the souls of the dead (X. 2.) are benefitted by the prayers of the faithful on earth ;

in the necessity of confessing sins to a man, (X. 3.) before those sins can be absolved; and that there is a Church which has power on earth to remit the temporal punishment due to sin, partly on the repentance of the sinner, and partly on the performance of secular conditions, imposed by the priest.

He believes also that a priest, by pronouncing over a wafer, certain words procures that the substance, or essence, or properties of that mass of flour and water before him, become changed into the very body and blood of Christ; not sacramentally or spiritually, but substantially and bodily.

He believes also that "full power was delegated to the Bishop of Rome (p. 119,) in the person of St. Peter, to feed, regulate, and govern the universal Church, as expressed in the general councils and canons."

Such is the system which you now receive. I repeat here the accusation of history, that these doctrines are alike contrary to antiquity, scripture, and reason;—that they were gradually introduced among Christians, and (slowly prevailing, till they were made articles of faith) have been productive of the most gross superstition and immorality; of disloyalty to princes, and of the greater part of the miseries which

have desolated Europe, from Alfred to Elizabeth.

X. 1. The invocation of saints and of the Virgin Mary is contrary to the practice of antiquity. It was first introduced by Petrus Gnapheus*, a presbyter of Bithynia, afterwards Bishop of Antioch, about A. D. 470, and it was first received into the public litanies about 130 years after†.

It is contrary to scripture, for “they know not when their own sons come to honour.” Job xiv. 20, 21. “The dead know not any thing, their love, and their hatred, and their envy is perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever, in any thing that is done under the sun.” Eccles. ix. 5, 6.

It is contrary to reason; for how can they hear prayers? God alone is the object of all the worship and veneration which is due to an invisible being.

It produces superstition. “Many Christians,” says the tutor of the first Queen Mary‡, “worship *divos divasque*, the saints of both sexes, no otherwise than God himself.” I could

* Niceph. L. XV. c. 28. ap. Hall's Works. vol. 9. p. 278.

† Jos. Scalig. Notis in Nor.

‡ Ludovicus Vives, in Aug. de Civit. Dei, L. viii., c. ult., ap. Hall.

quote many original authorities from the same source. Shall I repeat the blasphemy, “Christus oravit, Francis exoravit,” Christ prayed, Francis prevailed* ?

X. 2. Purgatory and prayers for the dead are also contrary to antiquity.

Discussions concerning the state of departed spirits, between death and the resurrection, have prevailed in the churches, even from the beginning ; but that the opinions of the fathers were very different from the decisions of the Council of Trent, is well shewn, with numerous proofs, by Bishop Stillingfleet †. This subject is so extensive, that I must be content to refer you to this author, who will enable you to trace the gradations of opinions, and the eventual enactment of the decree of the Council of Trent.

They are contrary to Scripture. The penitent thief was to be that day in Paradise ; and it is the uniform doctrine of the Scriptures, that all sins are forgiven upon our own repentance, through faith and trust in the atonement.

They are contrary to reason. Life is the

* See Bishop Hall, Vol. i., p. 279.

† Rational Grounds of the Protestant Religion, Part iii., chap. 6. Works, folio, Vol. iv.

only state of trial in which man can be prepared for future happiness.

They produce immorality; for the bonds of piety are weakened, if we believe that the money we leave, being *one condition at least* of our pardon, will procure effectual prayers for the removal of deserved punishment.

X. 3. Auricular confession to a priest in private, as the Council of Trent has required, was very different from the open, general, public confession which all Christians receive and practise*.

It is contrary to Scripture.—James v. 16, upon which passage the custom has been principally enforced, refers only to confession in the miraculous cases of sickness, which were inflicted as temporal punishments in the days of the Apostles.

It is contrary to reason—that confession to a man should be demanded as the condition of the forgiveness of sin. Though in some instances the conscience may be relieved by confessing great crimes, and the penitent is therefore moved or

* See the references in Bishop Hall; Erasmus in Annot. Hier. ad Ocean; and Beatus Rhenanus in Notis Test. de pœniten, &c. Hall's Works, Vol. ix., p. 274.

requested to do so in the Church of England, he is not commanded to confess to the priest, as an indispensable condition of the forgiveness of God.

It is contrary to morality.—I refer you for instances to the Chapter on Confession in Bishop Taylor's *Dissuasive from Popery*, vol. xi., page 33, &c.

Indulgences you define to be "remitting the temporal punishment due to sin." This doctrine is contrary to antiquity. The challenge of the learned though neglected Harmonist Clementius* is forgotten, "that no testimony can be produced from any father, or any ancient church, that either such doctrine, or the practice of such indulgences, was known or used, for 1200 years;" that is, till the Council of Lateran, and even then only as a relaxation of canonical penance.

They are against Scripture.—Not a passage can be wrested to support this error: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive," is a prayer to God alone, and no definitions can give it to man.

They are against reason.—Morality must every where be endangered, when a sin can be committed and a pardon sold.

* Exam. Concil. Trident. de Indulg., c. 4.

I must here observe on your most singular defence of the sale of these indulgences. We object to the Romanists, that pardons of sin were sold for money—you answer, “There are some sins so enormous, that in order to raise the greater horror of them, their absolution was reserved to the Holy See, who grants a faculty to the priest to absolve the penitent from them. All this is attended with expense. An office or tribunal is kept up for the purpose, and to defray the expenses attending these applications, a fee is required for the document in which the power of absolution is granted. Thus these sums of money are only fees of office; when the absolute poverty of the party is stated, no fee is required.” I omit your sneer at the amount of a proctor’s bill. It was not made with your usual courtesy; neither was it relative, or necessary.

Such is your palliation of that abominable practice! Could not then the trembling sinner be pardoned for the murder of a priest, for the same fee which is required to expiate the murder of a layman? The prices of the pardons of offences were demanded according to the supposed gradations in the guilt of the criminal. They were paid therefore as fines, on the same principle as in the common law of England a les-

ser sum is demanded by the magistrate for profane swearing; and a larger sum for seduction or defrauding the revenue, neither of which sums are required as fees of office. You must be acquainted with the table of impositions of the chancery of Rome, published by Anthony Egane, the confessor-general of Ireland, after his conversion to Protestantism. Do the parchment and the wax, or do the words of the dispensation cost more, when the pardon of a heretic is charged at 36*l.* 9*s.*, than when the marrying of one wife, after murdering another, is charged at 8*l.* 2*s.* 9*d.*? Protestants either do not know, or they cannot believe, even the possibility, much more the certainty, of the crimes of which your church has been guilty*. Yet this monstrous system of iniquity and soul-murder is palliated and advocated in the nineteenth century!

X. 4. Respecting the opposite opinions of Mr. Southey and yourself on the subject of St. Augustine and Pelagius, it is not necessary to make any remark.

X. 5. The doctrine of transubstantiation,

* See the list and prices of the dispensations in Baron Maseres's occasional tracts, p. 558, and Dr. Hales's Analysis of Chronology, Vol. iii., p. 1019—1022.

which you next consider, is contrary, as I have already shewn, to antiquity. The nature of the institution of the Eucharist was frequently discussed; but the decisions of the Council of Lateran defined and established more entirely, the doctrines which were afterwards made the standard creed at the Council of Trent. Bishop Hall has selected many quotations from the fathers on this point*.

That transubstantiation is not the doctrine of Scripture, appears evident to a Protestant, from the analogy of the language of Scripture, when Christ said, "this is my body," to that of other passages, in which our Lord declares, "I am the door;" &c. and on the other arguments which may be seen in Fulk's Rhemish Testament, Marsh's Comparative View the Protestant Commentators, the Bishop of Durham's charges, Le Mesurier on the Eucharist, and innumerable others. When these words were spoken, Christ's real body was present in the same place. Did the Apostles believe, or could they dream, that Christ then created a new body out of the bread, or that he was taking a part of his own body, and still preserving the form of the bread? The types of the Old Testament sha-

* See Bishop Hall on the Old Religion. Works, Vol. ix., p. 250, &c.

dowed out the doctrines of the Gospel. We learn from the law of Moses, that the people ate the victim, but we never read that the people ate the Priest. Christ is our great High Priest. How can his very body be eaten, every where, and at all times? In short the absurdities of the opinion of transubstantiation are endless.

It is contrary to reason, that man should create his Creator,—that matter should change all its properties, and the senses which are the only judges, not perceive the alteration, and that bread should become the Son of God, &c. &c.

It contributed more than any other error of the Romish Church, to that influence of the priesthood, which became the source of so many evils*.

X. 6. The last doctrine which completes your survey of the Romish system, is politically more important than all the rest. The authority of the Pope, I have already shewn, arose out of the gradual usurpation of many centuries. Let me shew you again briefly, that it was contrary to antiquity.

* See on this subject a treatise of Hobbes, though certainly not the most quotable of writers, in the collection of tracts published by Baron Maseres.

I must beg to refer the reader for the full, and complete, and satisfactory discussion of this question, to Bishop Stillingfleet's unanswered and unanswerable work, "The Rational Account of the Grounds of the Protestant Religion," and content myself with this brief outline.

As Rome was the principal city in the world, which at first governed the Church, the Bishop of Rome, after the fall of Jerusalem, exercised jurisdiction over greater, nobler, wealthier converts than any other bishop of the empire. Appeals in civil matters were usually brought to Rome, and many strangers consequently resorted from all parts. As the Bishop of Rome was enabled to maintain greater state, and possessed more influence than others, the custom of civil appeals was gradually made a precedent for ecclesiastical appeals. When the title of universal bishop, which Gregory the First had rejected, was received by his ambitious successor, these various precedents were made the law over those Churches, which had hitherto preserved their independence. That the various Episcopal Churches were independent of each other, is fully proved by the references in Bingham* ;

* Eccles. Antiq. lib. 2, chap. 6, sect. 5.

and the bond of union among Christians was not the See or Bishop of Rome, but the decisions of the several bishops assembled in council. The Pope was not even the nominal president of either of the four first general councils, which established the earliest creeds, and gave laws to the universal Church. Hosius was president of the Council of Nice. Nectarius of Constantionple, (in which every act of ecclesiastical sovereignty was exercised, without the Pope's consent or sanction.) Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, was president of the Council of Ephesus. Whether the Pope sat as president (by his legate) at the Council of Chalcedon, is more than doubtful*.

The two first attempts to obtain power and authority, on the part of the Church of Rome, are well known, and both excited considerable opposition among the ancient independent Churches. The first is, the attempt of Victor, Bishop of Rome, about the year 195, to enforce the Romish mode of keeping Easter. On this occasion, he excommunicated all the Churches of Asia, and was indignantly reprov'd for so doing by Irenæus, the Metropolitan of France. The next attempt was made on the celebrated

* See Stillingfleet's whole dissertation on the Council of Trent. Works, vol. iv., p. 456-484.

appeal of the Bishops of Africa, who fled to the Pope, on their excommunication for heresy, by their brethren of the African Church. Stephen, the Bishop of Rome, required the African Bishops to receive their brethren again. Upon the arrival of this insolent epistle, they assembled in Synod, and returned an answer, in which they styled him only Bishop of Rome, and peremptorily refused to rescind their sentence as he required. This was in the year 250.

The same conduct was observed some few years afterwards, when two Spanish Bishops, who had been deposed for offering sacrifice to Idols, appealed to Rome. The Bishop of Rome haughtily insisted on their restoration. The Church of Spain refused obedience, and called the Pope "Bishop of Rome" only, and "their colleague."

Not long after, when the same Pope excommunicated the Churches of Africa, because they refused to receive heretics into the Church without re-baptizing, the Eastern Churches agreed in opinion with the Bishop of Rome on the point of discipline; but severely reproved him for his unjustifiable presumption, in pretending to punish independent Episcopal Churches.

It is not necessary to proceed further on this

point. The gradual assumption of titles, power, and authority, from the granting the title of universal Bishop, which the eastern Churches never acknowledged, until the time of the dispute with Becket, and the cession of the crown by John, has been already noticed.

The headship of Rome over other churches is contrary to Scripture.

“Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church,” is the sentence from which it is maintained that our great lawgiver conferred his own power on the chief speaker among his apostles; and the grant is said to have been still further confirmed by the addition of the power of the keys.

These words of our Saviour have been variously interpreted; but not to dispute on them, and even granting that they made Peter the rock on which the Church was to be founded, they seem to have been sufficiently fulfilled by the address of St. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, and its immediate effects, in the admission of the first three thousand converts into the Church; a noble superstructure, raised on the immediate foundation of Peter's words. But they by no means convey a right of primacy to him. That they did not do so is plain, for we read in other passages, that the Church is built upon

the Apostles, and upon Christ himself; where no mention is made of St. Peter as primate, which must have been if this Apostle had succeeded to the High Priest, as head of the visible Church.

When the disciples inquired "who was greatest?" St. Peter was not mentioned.

When St. Paul gave a list of the various offices in the Church, 1st Cor. xii. 28; Ephes. iv. 11, St. Peter is not named as the Primate. The Apostles are enumerated first, as equals in rank, jurisdiction, and authority.

St. Paul asserts, that he was not inferior to the very chiefest Apostle, which could not have been if St. Peter was first.—2d Cor. xi. 5.

Appeal was not made to St. Peter, but to the Church at Jerusalem, when St. Paul and Barnabas disputed; neither did St. Peter decide the question, but St. James, who says, "my sentence is," and that was followed. Acts xv. 2—29.

St. Paul withstood Peter to the face, because he walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel—St. Peter, therefore, was neither supreme nor infallible; Gal. ii. 11—14.

He that is sent is inferior to him who sends; St. Peter was sent as a messenger by the other Apostles; Acts viii. 14.

He who pleads his cause before another cannot be superior to his judges. St. Peter submitted to the judgment of the Apostles assembled in council. Acts xi. 1—4.

If St. Peter had been invested with this authority over the rest of the Apostles, we might have read some one act of power, or some one command, or some instance of imperative language. But, as if the Holy Spirit had foreseen the perverted doctrines of the Romanists, not one circumstance is recorded, in the whole of the New Testament, to warrant the pretensions of the Bishop of Rome.

From the total silence of Scripture on this very important question, I infer, with all the Fathers of the primitive Church, that the primacy of the Bishop of Rome, as the successor of St. Peter, is contrary to Scripture.

The doctrine of the Pope's supremacy and authority being thus denied altogether, the canon of the Council of Florence, upon which you rest the question, can have no weight. If we disbelieve, from all remaining evidence, that "full power was delegated to the Bishop of Rome in the person of St. Peter, to feed, regulate, and govern the universal Church;" it is not necessary to examine the limitations of his power, as they have been discussed by

theologians, and defined by canons. Whether the Romanists are right in granting to the Pope the powers, prerogatives, and privileges you enumerate in your fifth section—whether the Transalpine divines are right in supposing that the spiritual authority of the pope involves the claim to temporal power, for effecting a spiritual good; (Sec. 6!)—or whether the Cisalpine divines be more correct in limiting that power, is of little consequence. We reject the supremacy altogether, as unscriptural and blasphemous; as unreasonable in principle, and intolerable in its consequences. Individuals of your communion may explain, and limit, and define, the prerogatives of the spiritual head of the Church; but the councils and decrees of former times would be again revived with your reviving power; and our only safety until they are publicly repealed, is, to maintain the ancient vigilance, and defend the institutions of our fathers.

X. 6. Appellations of the Pope.

Many titles of honour, of a very indefensible nature, have been taken by Christian Emperors and Princes. The Pope has been guilty of the same error. You admit that the word God has been applied to him, but deny that it has been used "*potentialiter*," to indicate the Su-

preme Being; p. 126; and in p. 128, refute the charge that the Pope was ever called "our Lord God" the Pope. Permit me to quote a few instances from the *History of Popery*, 2 vols. 4to. which was published in the year 1735.

"The Pope claims a right to domineer over the whole Church; and boasts himself infallible; insomuch that Cardinal Zabar de Schism. Sul. Serm. Scrip. p. 703, speaking of the Popes, affirms, 'Quod omnia possint, quicquid liberet, etiam illicita, et sit plusquam Deus.' That they might do all things they pleased, even things unlawful; and so could do more than even God himself. Dominus noster, Deus papa, Our Lord God the Pope, is the frequent compliment of the canonists. The same title is given him by the Council of Lateran. Sess. 4. Gratian asserts, 'ab illo omnes judicari posse, illum a nemine.' Massonus, Lib. 3. Vit. Johan. IX., tells us, 'Episcopos Romanos ne peccata quidem sine laude committere;' the Bishops of Rome cannot even commit sins without praise." p. 6. You cannot and do not approve these things, and you vindicate the Pope, who refused spiritual homage as a God. But he who is the head of the Christian Church, delegated by Christ, possessing an undefined, or ill-understood infal-

libility: He who regulates the degrees of future punishment, or decides on the salvation of man, sits in the place of God, as the scripture has foretold of the man of sin.

X. 6. Charges against the Romish Church.

Your Church was charged with maintaining,

1. That excommunicated princes might be deposed or murdered.
2. That Popes and Councils are to be obeyed, if they command rebellion, disloyalty, and murder.
3. That the Pope can dispense with an oath.
4. That Perjury and sin may be pardoned by a priest at pleasure.
5. That Faith is not to be kept with heretics.

All these charges were denied.

The universities of Louvain, Douay, Paris, Alcala, Valladolid, and Salamanca, were requested to declare whether these were the opinions of your Church. All unanimously denied them, with modern Romanists.

Let us refer to history, and inquire if these sentiments have been entertained by the Romish Church; and if they have been retracted by the authority which decreed them.

These accusations may be considered as the

brief summing up of the various charges which have been urged against the See of Rome.

The first is confirmed by that part of our history which relates the effects of the sentences of deposition against Henry III. of France, and Queen Elizabeth, by the Popes of their day.

The second is confirmed, not only by former councils, but by that part of the creed of Pope Pius the Fifth, which commands implicit obedience, and which has been obeyed in former ages, even to civil war.

The third has been asserted and defended by the canonists*.

The fourth is demonstrated by the dispensing power in general, and by the testimony of history, that many subjects have been absolved from their oaths of allegiance. The history of the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James the First amply proves the truth of these four charges.

The fifth, which is by far the most important, and into which all the rest resolve themselves, has been confirmed more than all the others, by

* Pontificalis auctoritas a juramento fidelitatis absolvit Decr. p. 2, 15, 9, 6. Alius. Almain de potent. Eccles. et Laica, c. 12, ap. Hall, vol. 9, p. 295, and the other references there.

the celebrated decree of the Council of Constance, before referred to, and by the teaching of numerous divines of your communion. The Bishop of Symancha, c. 45, tells us expressly—“*Hereticis fides a privato data servanda non est:*” and again—“any person is bound to reveal an heretic to the inquisition, notwithstanding his oath.” He makes this a part of a heretic’s punishment.

Thuanus, L. 63, ann. 1577, assures us that the Romish divines in France taught this doctrine publicly from their pulpits. The gloss of the canon law in Gratian (caus. 15, q. 6,) not only asserts but defends the doctrine, and assigns the reason, “That a man is bound to vex a heretic.”

Pope Innocent III. in the year 1213, wrote to Peter of Arragon, to abandon the heretic Waldenses; *non obstante promissione, vel obligatione quâcunque præstita.*

In the year 1538 Pope Pius III. required all Christian princes, whatever had been their oaths, to render no assistance to Henry VIII.; and he absolves them from all vows, oaths, and obligations, which prevent their obedience*.

* History of Popery, vol. 2, p. 196, where many other instances are quoted.

Such is the outline of our substantiation of the charges which you and your communion now reject with so much just indignation and abhorrence. Our Statesmen are justified in not repealing laws which exclude from political privileges the members of a Church, which has not yet publicly retracted doctrines, so subversive of all the ties which benefit and preserve society. These doctrines of the Romish Church have been promulgated by Councils, Popes, and Canonists. They must be rescinded by the same authorities, or they may be again revived. The Pope in council must deny them. We do not, as I have already observed, consult the subjects of an empire, if the laws which they have sworn to obey are right or wrong: we examine the laws themselves, and treat with the legislature which enforces them. Neither the united voice of the Romanists of England, nor of Europe, nor of all their universities, are a sufficient guarantee. The Pope, the Council, the Church of Rome, as we recognise it by its government, must publicly retract the past; and then, and then only, the accusations founded on history will be withdrawn.

LETTER XI.

RISE OF THE REFORMATION. THE MENDICANT ORDERS.
PERSECUTION UNDER THE HOUSE OF LANCASTER.

SIR,

You now proceed to consider the sources of that singular opposition, which has torn the fairest of your provinces from your spiritual empire.

Lamentable indeed was your error of judgment, when you ventured to repeat the scandal of a former age; and to attribute the rise of the reformation to the general diffusion of the opinions of Manes. You ascribe also to the Albigenes, the doctrines of that notorious heresiarch. The reader who is not well acquainted with history, would conclude, from your statement, that the sentiments of the Reformers in the age of Cranmer and Luther, and, consequently, the opinions of the Protestants of the Church of England at present, are the identical errors which are imputed to Manichæus; and which were condemned not only by the Church of Rome, but by all Christians who receive the books of Scripture: while the Manicheans themselves were followed by persecution and hatred

by the first Christian Emperors, and proscribed by name in the first unjustifiable laws which determined who should be accounted heretics, and defined the crime of heresy*. I shall be able to prove to you, by comparing some of the opinions of Manes with those which are now received, both among the Romanists and Protestants, that there is actually more of Manichæism in the Church of Rome, than in the Church of England; and, consequently, that on your own principles, your Church is more erroneous than ours. No controversialist was ever more unfortunate in his argument, than you have unwittingly been, in reviving the exploded notion, that the faith of Protestants was the creed of Manichæus.

When the early Church at Constantinople had been invested by the Emperors with the power of stigmatizing as heretics, and punishing as criminals, those unfortunate or erroneous individuals, whose opinions differed from the general faith, the doctrines of Manes, Mani, or Manichæus, were most prevalent. This man appears to have been a bold impostor, who was put to death by Sapor, King of Persia, for dis-

* See the account of the treatment of heretics before the Council of Chalcedon. Limborch's History of the Inquisition. 4to. p. 8.

missing the physicians of his son, and promising to recover the youth by miracle. On attempting to fulfil this engagement, the child died in his arms*. The opinions which Manes himself taught, like all heterodox systems of that age, were a mixture of heathenish, or natural religion; of Christianity, and Judaism; of tradition and invention. He himself taught (whether from the Greeks or Persians is uncertain) the doctrine of two independent principles; and this opinion has generally been since called Manichæism, from his name. Many of the errors, however, which have been imputed to him, were undoubtedly taught by the Docetæ, the Gnostics, the Marcionites, and other sects, in the first and second centuries. As the name of this heresiarch, or madman, or impostor, (the accounts are very contradictory,) was so well known, when the system of persecuting for opinion began, every heretic was called a follower of Manes; and every novel, or commonly rejected opinion, was called Manichæism. The custom was continued; and the Albigenses were denominated Manichæans, when their

* See Lardner, *Credibility*, part 2, ch. lxxiii., and the original references. Lardner supposes that he was put to death soon after; for his opinions; but all the accounts are confused and uncertain.

opinions began to excite more general attention*. A similar custom always prevails in society. We uniformly give general epithets to large classes of persons, who mutually agree in hostility to one object; though they may widely differ in other instances. The reformers of the Church of England have adopted an express declaration against Manichæism. It is probable that the same accusation was strongly urged by their Romanist adversaries, at the time of the Reformation. Manes taught that there were two principles; and that the Old and New Testament were contrary to each other: the former having been written under the influence of the evil, the latter under the influence of the good, principle. The seventh article of the Church declares, that the Old Testament is not contrary to the New †.

Let me now direct your attention to the various errors which are the offspring of an age of ignorance, which have long been rejected by the Protestants, and which are common to the Manichæans and the Romanists.

The Protestants never make professions or

* See History of Popery, vol. i. p. 419.

† Warburton's Divine Legation, book vi. p. 15. Hurd's edition of Warburton's Works, vol. iii. p. 369.

vows of poverty, of celibacy, of virginity ; these are the customs of the Romanists, they were the customs of the Manichees*.

Protestants make no laws respecting the use of flesh, and eggs, and milk ; such laws are made by the Romanists, and were enacted by the Manichees †.

Protestants are not required to practise certain abstinences, and to humble the body, that they may strengthen the mind ; as the Manichees appear to have been ‡.

The principal men among the Protestants do not change their names when they become eminent, or leaders of the people ; this is done by the Popes of Rome ; it was done by the Manichees ||.

The Protestants pay no particular respect to the number seventy-two, because our Lord sent out that number of disciples : this custom is observed only by the institution of the Col-

* Beausobre. *Hist. de Manich.* t. ii. p. 763, 764, and t. i. p. 17, n. 8, ap. Lardner's *Credib.* ch. lxiii. sec. 1. Lardner's Works, Kippis's edition, 1788, vol. iii. p. 406. I have not the quarto edition by me.

† Lardner *ut supra*, p. 404.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 405.

|| *Ibid.* p. 407.

lege of Cardinals at Rome. It was observed also by the early Manichees*.

The Protestants partake both of the bread and wine, in the Eucharist. The Manichees received the bread only in the Eucharist, and rejected the wine. The pope of that day, St. Leo, about the year 449 actually considered them as heretics, because they refused the Sacrament in both kinds; which proves what was then the custom of the church. Yet this heresy of the Manichæans is the favourite doctrine of the Church of Rome; and is rejected by the Protestants †. Pope Gelasius also condemned the superstition which refused the wine, 490 ‡.

The Protestants reject the Apocryphal Books; the Romanists receive them, as also did the Manichees; and if they added to them the apocryphal writings of some of their own eminent teachers, they did but follow the same conduct as the Romanists, in receiving tradition instead of Scripture §.

* Lardner ut supra, p. 403.

† Bishop Taylor's Works, vol. xiii., p. 24.

‡ Taylor ut supra.

§ Lardner, Sec. vi. p. 535, &c.

It does not therefore appear that the Protestants at present, or the Albigenes formerly, merited the name of Manichees so much as the orthodox Romanists. The candid Lardner himself has observed, that “ the restraints laid among the Manichees, on all the higher order among the elect, with regard to marriage, diet, and secular business, must, I think, have more than equalled all the superstitious usages of the Catholics*.”

I could select many of the opinions of the Manichees respecting the person of Christ, the corruption of the Scriptures, the divinity of Christ, and subjects of this nature ; and shew to you that similar, or as considerable errors, have been entertained by writers in your church. I have now by me a work in which the author has collected an astonishing mass of erroneous opinions on these points †, but I wish to prove my courtesy, by avoiding any needless recriminations. I have sufficiently shewn that the Protestant Church does not deserve the charge of Manichæism so justly as the Romanist. I know

* Lardner, Sec. vi. p. 542.

† The title is *Roma Racoviana et Racovia Romana, id est Papistarum et Socinistarum in plurimis iisque maximi momenti, religionis suæ capitibus, plena, et exacta harmonia, &c. &c.* Auctore, Gul. Jameson, Edinb. 1702.

that in your next edition, you will retract this old accusation against the ancient Albigenses, and the modern Protestants.

As you only insinuate that the political opinions of the Manichæans were the real prelude to the doctrines of liberty and equality, so frightfully propagated in our own time, I shall not enter upon that discussion. The design of the insinuation is obvious, and it is unworthy, indeed it is unworthy, of you.

XI. 1. The Rise of the Reformation—Persecution under the House of Lancaster.

The convulsions of states are generally to be referred to the contentions arising from the tyranny, the misrule, or the weakness of sovereigns, on the one part; or from the licentiousness, restlessness, or infatuation of the people, on the other. These causes may have been combined, to assist the progress of the Reformation; and many unjust laws were enacted by kings, as well as many excesses committed by the people, before that great event could be effected. You have assigned, however, a more powerful, and probable cause in the passage in your History of the British Catholics*, to which you refer your readers: "The diffusion of learning and the mental

* Vol. i. p. 16.

activity which it excited." I have no wish to represent the Protestants of the early days of our Reformation as angelical, and the Church of Rome as diabolical. Both parties were stained with deep faults; and the apologists and partisans who would represent either side as blameless, are unworthy of perusal. But whatever were the faults, or cruelties, or plunderings, by each party, never let the real question be forgotten. The era of the Reformation was the period when the governments and people of Europe were about to take into their consideration, whether their princes or the Pontiff should rule them—whether they should worship images, saints, and relics—whether they should believe in transubstantiation, purgatory, and all the doctrines which had been made articles of faith in the ages, which, to say the least, were more ignorant than that in which learning revived. The Scripture decided the controversy, and the kingdom of error fell.

You quote from Mosheim, that certain erroneous opinions were maintained by many, before the Reformation—it is true, but they were never sanctioned by the reformers of the Church of England. You refuse to judge your Church by the erroneous opinions of individuals or of parties, and you appeal to your creeds. Grant

to us the same privilege. We have sanctioned none of the doctrines to which you have here objected.

You quote from the Monk Walsingham, who seems to have hated Wicliffe, the old accusation, that the insurrections of Wat Tyler originated in the teaching of the Lollards. The hatred of Walsingham against Wicliffe, and the high commendations bestowed on the reformer by the University of Oxford, might be a sufficient answer to this charge: even if his works were not remaining, in which there is nothing to countenance the accusation. He defended the King's jurisdiction and supremacy, civil and ecclesiastical, loyally and learnedly; and was intrusted with the high office of ambassador. The insurrection of Wat Tyler took place when the opinions of Wicliffe began to be prevalent; and the vulgar declamation of the unsettled teachers of the rabble, as well as their rebellious conduct, were falsely imputed to the reformer.

You have repeated also, from the prejudiced Monk Walsingham, the accusation against Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham; that he incited the Lollards to rebellion, and they were to rendezvous in St. Giles's Fields. Pray return to the original record in Fox, who shews the in-

consistency of the accusation. “ Twenty thousand men from different parts of England were to rise privately, completely armed, and meet in St. Giles’s; Sir John was to be declared Regent; the King and his brothers were to be killed”—and so it proceeds, with charges equally probable, as that “ they did so meet, arrayed in a warlike manner, riding traitorously,” &c. &c.

Such is the story related by the Benedictine monk of St. Alban’s. I refer you, for the exposure of its absurdity and impossibility, to the impartial Rapin. The King, who was at Eltham, was privately informed of this meeting and went to the place; there, with a few followers, he apprehended, without resistance, some preachers and about thirty men, who were condemned and executed for treason. The Romanists believe the account of Walsingham, and his follower, Stow, the Chronicler. The Protestants, knowing that Wicliffe was the enemy of the profligate clergy of that day, consider these charges as the exaggeration or inventions of those partial historians*.

* On the uniform loyalty of the descendants of the first Protestants to a Romanist and persecuting king, see Mr. Gilly’s most interesting and eloquent work, *Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piemont*. Let the following

You condemn with becoming indignation, the Writ de heretico comburendo; yet you

extracts suffice to prove that the principles of the Protestants are the best guarantee for the union of loyalty and religion.

“It is by Roman Catholic courtiers that the divine right of kings has been principally asserted, and yet it cannot but have been noticed, that almost all the late revolutionary movements have been in Roman Catholic countries. Protestant subjects are generally less lavish of adulation, but not less faithful in the hour of trial; the truth of which has often been experienced by the Kings of Sardinia. The late King of Sardinia was reminded of this, and requested by a British minister to ameliorate the condition of the Vaudois. He gave a quibbling answer: ‘Do you emancipate the Irish Catholics, and I will emancipate the Vaudois.’ It was rejoined, ‘We only beg of your majesty to concede as much to the Protestants of the valleys as has been conceded to the Roman Catholics of Ireland.’ The King was silent but inexorable.”—P. 62.

Testimony of Louis XII. King of France, A.D. 1498, to the good conduct of his Albigensian and Waldensian subjects.

“Lewis the Twelfth of France at once silenced the importunities of his advisers (when they were pressing him to persecute the remnant of the Albigenses), by exclaiming, in a tone of indignation that put an end to them, ‘By the Holy Mother of God, these heretics, whom you urge me to destroy, are better men than you, or myself, or any of my subjects.’”—P. 157.

Similar testimony of a Roman Catholic archdeacon, in the reign of Francis I., King of France, 1530.

“When the Protestant Vaudois extended into the pro-

seem to insinuate, that Lord Cobham deserved his fate. His opinions were partly true and

vince of Saluzzo, or Marquisate of Saluces, then under the French sovereignty, the governor, Birague, received orders from his court to commence an active search after all such as refused to attend the celebration of mass, and to put them to death. The governor communicated the orders to his council. A Catholic archdeacon, who was present, rose and made the following bold and honest remonstrance in favour of these proscribed victims: "Assuredly his Majesty the King of France must have received some very false and malicious information concerning these people. We must delay the execution of his edict until his majesty can be made acquainted with the real character of this portion of his Italian subjects, who are good and honourable men, well-disposed and faithful in his service, and live peaceably with their Catholic neighbours."

P. 157-8.

Testimony of Louis XIV. to the loyalty of his Protestant subjects, the descendants of the Albigenses and professors of the same faith, contained in a letter to Oliver Cromwell, dated June, 1655.

"I have had cause to applaud their fidelity and zeal for my service, since they have not omitted any opportunity of giving me proof thereof, *even beyond all that can be imagined*, and have contributed in all things to the welfare and advantage of my affairs."—P. 221.

Testimony of Victor Amadeus the Second, to the loyalty of his Vaudois or Waldensian subjects.

"There is still extant in one of the Vaudois families a letter of the Duke of Savoy, dated Sept. 2, 1684, in which the fidelity of his Vaudois subjects, and their inviolable at-

partly false; his prophecy, that he should rise from the dead the third day, was madness. But

attachment to their sovereigns is acknowledged in the very strongest terms.”—P. 54.

“Victor Amadeus had so much reason to be satisfied with the loyalty and extraordinary valour of his Vaudois troops, that he would not suffer them to be intermixed with other regiments. They were brigaded by themselves, and commanded by their own officers, and invariably occupied a distinguished post in every action. But their fidelity did not end here. Successive reverses obliged the Duke to retreat before the French. He even became a fugitive, and where did he take refuge? In the valleys of the Vaudois! The persecutor fled to the persecuted for safety: [Mr. G. is alluding to the horrible massacre of the Vaudois by Victor Amadeus in 1686, after the above letter was written, when their population was reduced in six months from 15,000 to 3000 by imprisonment, fire, and sword, because they would not go to mass], and behind the Pelice, in a secluded spot in the village of Rora, Victor Amadeus found a safe asylum among the very people, whom he had denounced, proscribed, and hunted down, even to torture and death.”—P. 57.

Testimony of Victor Amadeus the Third to the loyalty of the Waldenses to himself and predecessors, contained in a public edict, dated June 4, 1794.

“We have read the memorial presented to us, respecting the desires expressed by our dear and faithful subjects, the Vaudois, relating to their political existence. In consideration of the constant and distinguished proofs *which they have ever given to our royal predecessors, of their attachment and fidelity, and the zeal which they have shewn in pressing into the*

he did not deserve his cruel burning. I rejoice that if the Protestants have sometimes been guilty of cruelty, they are exempted from the accusation of proposing and enacting the laws, which first decreed the punishment of this terrible death for religious opinions.

You observe, that if we condemn the judges, who punished with death those who denied transubstantiation, we must equally condemn the judges who punished in the same manner the unfortunate men who believed in it. This remark, plausible as it is ingenious, is founded on the supposition, that the conduct of both parties was the same, because both were subjected to equal punishment. All history refutes this hypothesis. The believers in transubstantiation asserted the supremacy of a foreign potentate over the dominions of the prince and the conscience of the people. The abjurers of that doctrine had no political errors to reject. When the Protestant martyrs were condemned to death, they suffered for their religious opinions only. Their opponents, as will be shewn in our examination of the reign of Elizabeth,

army for the defeat of our enemies, we are disposed to receive their memorial favourably, and to make them feel from the present moment the effects of our special protection. Signed, VICTOR AMADEUS.—P. 115.

were condemned for traitorous actions, which were defended by their religious and political opinions; and they suffered for their rebellion and treason.

You are incorrect in your assertion, that the Howards, and Stourtons, &c., are excluded from parliament, merely because of their belief in transubstantiation. They are so excluded, because the assertors of this doctrine are said to render imperfect allegiance to their sovereign. Every legislature possesses the power and right to define the qualifications of its senators; and the experience of the past, together with the conviction that their causes have not ceased, are the foundations of our laws of exclusion.

XI. 2. The Mendicant and other religious Orders of the Church of Rome.

It cannot be necessary to follow you through the arguments of this section. Christianity among Protestants is made the religion of social life, regulating, ameliorating, and directing, all our thoughts, words, and actions; and enabling us to live in the world as rational and useful men. To aim at any perfection which withdraws men from the duties of fathers, husbands, sons, and citizens, instead of making them perform these duties well, is inconsistent with the nature and

design of the Christian religion. The monastic orders were generally founded by enthusiastic persons, upon the authority and credit of visions and revelations. This point is proved at length, in the case of the Benedictines, Carthusians, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Jesuits*. Milton has given all their right place :

—————Eremites, and friars,
Black, white, and gray, with all their trumpery.

The Benedictines, however, were useful as transcribers of books, as editors and teachers of youth ; and much good was thus produced by the very perversions of Christianity. The monks made the waters of life turbid and stagnant, and unfit for a Protestant to drink ; but they were still the waters of life, and they fertilized every soil.

Neither the mendicant friars nor their brethren would have received your praises, if you had perused the foolish and extravagant actions related by Bishop Stillingfleet, and collected, with laborious reading, from the original narratives in the *Acta Sanctorum*, &c. &c. Peruse at your leisure these instances of blas-

* Bishop Stillingfleet on the idolatry practised in the Church of Rome. Works, vol. v., p. 100, the first treatise in the volume.

phemy and fanaticism ; they have been collected by him from writers of your own communion, and are therefore beyond your suspicion.

Many things in your book have surprised and grieved me ; but I know not whether to “sigh or smile,” when I discover that you seem to believe in the stigmata of St. Francis. You assure us, it would be no easy matter to nonplus any learned Franciscan, who defended this story. Many Protestant readers, perhaps, do not exactly know the meaning of the stigmata. Possibly, they will be astonished to learn, that the Romish Church believes, “that St. Francis, in one of his visions, on the very day of the exaltation of the cross, had the same bleeding wounds on his hands, feet and side, which Christ had upon the cross, and carried them for two years together before his death.” Lest this remarkable story should be discredited, Pope Alexander IV. declared, in the hearing of St. Buonaventure, that he himself saw them ; and the sixth lesson on St. Francis’s day, in the Roman Breviary, asserts the fact*. I trust your words will bear a different interpretation, and that you have your doubts of the truth of this strange legend.

* Brev. Rom. 4 Octob. sect. 6. Buonav. vit. Francis, c. 18, sect. 9. Ap. Stillingfleet, vol. v., p. 109.

St. Thomas Aquinas has been made the subject of consideration. I agree with you, that he was the most eminent man of his age.

You have written a simple and beautiful account of the serene demeanour of some nuns in the French Revolution, who chanted their hymns to the Virgin, till the sounds ceased only with the execution of the last of their number; amidst the apparent remorse of their cruel murderers. I sympathize with their sufferings. I admire their devotion. Deeply as yourself do I execrate the relentless fanaticism which condemned its innocent victims to the scaffold. Let me not seem harsh, then, when I inquire whether active virtue, as well as passive resignation, would not have been as ornamental to the sufferers, and more useful to society? Would not the cause of virtue, religion, morality, and order, have been more promoted by the good example which these excellent women might have set, as mothers, daughters, and sisters, in social life; than by their learning the litanies of the Virgin in the cloister, and singing them on their way to the scaffold? Our hearts bled, in England, when we read how your clergy were taken and slaughtered. One loud tone of indignation

broke forth from the virtue of the land. It was the earnest of the noble sentiments, and undaunted perseverance, with which we began and continued the defence of the Christian religion, and monarchical liberty, against Deism and anarchy. Might not the storm have been averted from France also, if its monks and nuns had made themselves the leaven of all the classes of society; instead of withdrawing from the world, to be found and slaughtered in the useless and defenceless, though virtuous retirements of the cloister? When the yells of the Jacobin and the infidel were heard in England, the active virtue of our religious and sober country men prepared itself to meet the storm. Our clergy were found at their posts. Not immured within the walls of monasteries, not shackled with useless vows, not defending legends, and reconciling Popes and councils—living among the people, they invited them, from the palace to the cottage, to maintain a pure system of Christianity; to honour the sovereign, to obey the laws; to avoid the moral pestilence that was walking in darkness, and the destruction that was wasting the nations at noon-day. Our women also, by the practice of the social virtues, put to shame the single declaimer of their own

sex, who, pretending to advocate their rights, inculcated the grossest licentiousness*. Lovers of home, exemplary in their domestic relations, our women maintained the dominion of morality and purity, which was taught by their clergy; till the land was preserved, and the republican infidelity of the continent fled. The spirit of religion among the Protestants of England was diffused through all classes, and it leavened the whole lump. The spirit of religion, among the Romanists of France, was withdrawn from the mass of the people, and concentrated in seclusion and solitude. The leaven was useless. The mass was corrupted.

Here, to use your own terms, "You make your *rest*, and strike your balance-sheet." You have endeavoured to defend the principles, palliate the faults, and apologize for the misconduct of the friends of your Church. You now demand, with an expression of triumph, "Are you acquainted with no writers in the middle ages, who while they maintained the infallibility of the Roman Catholic Church in matters of faith, exposed in the strongest terms, and in the most unequivocal language, the corruptions which had found their way even into

* I allude to the almost forgotten publication of Mrs. Mary Wolstonecraft.

her sanctuary?" No man can be ignorant of this fact, who has the least acquaintance with ecclesiastical history; but the remonstrances to which you refer, shew but the inconsistency of the writers, and the pertinacity of the Church of Rome. Did the Church yield to the entreaties, the exhortations, the groanings, of these its best and most faithful friends? Every argument which the tenderest affection could suggest, or the most impassioned eloquence could enforce, was used, and repeated in vain. Satire always exasperates; but if satire could have prevailed, that severe and bitter libel, the letter from Lucifer in hell, to the Pope and Cardinals on earth, thanking them for their success in thronging his dominions, might be added to your list of efforts, to induce a reformation of abuses. The proportion between the vices and virtues of the Church of Rome was destroyed. Evil overbalanced the good. The Church of Rome increased, instead of diminishing every acknowledged evil. Every error was palliated, as it still is. Every abuse was defended—nothing was altered—no error was retracted—no compliance with the popular demand for reformation was made. The Council of Trent has sanctified all the falsehoods and superstitions of ages, which the best friends of

your Church had condemned, and thus erected an insurmountable barrier to truth and union.

Such were the circumstances under which the benefactors of the human race began and completed the Reformation, and restored their rights to mankind. To the people it gave liberty of thought and action ; to the clergy the institution of marriage “which is honourable to all ;” to sovereigns their supremacy ; to Churches the Scriptures ; to all the use of reason ; with every welfare which is consistent with the common privilege, and happiness, and peace.

LETTER XII.**THE REFORMATION.****SIR,**

In proceeding through the history of the progress and establishment of the Reformation, the subject of your remaining letters, we must never forget the real question at issue between the Romanists and the Protestants. We are not inquiring into the merits or demerits of individuals, neither may we identify the cause with the advocate. It is comparatively of little importance whether Eckius and Tetzels, Luther and Melancthon, were just or unjust, moral or immoral. We are not inquiring whether Henry VIII. was sensual, whether Wolsey was ambitious, whether Leo was extravagant, unless their conduct be demonstrated to be the uniform result of their opinions. We are not even interested in the question, whether Cranmer was equally, or more or less, erroneous than Bonner, in condemning an unfortunate victim to the flames. The only real points in debate between us are these—"Are the doctrines of the Church of Rome supported by Scripture and antiquity?"

Shall the Pope or the Monarch be supreme over the people? The Reformation was the decision of the reflecting part of Europe on this important matter.

The effects of any opinion on the *happiness* of mankind cannot, however, be entirely omitted in our criteria of its truth or falsehood. The pretensions of the Church of Rome have been examined by this test; we cannot object therefore to judge of the Reformation by the same proof of its excellence. I shall follow the order of your own inquiry as briefly as possible, and endeavour to ascertain whether England has been benefitted by the Reformation.

1. In temporal happiness.
2. In spiritual wisdom.
3. Or in morals.
4. Whether the revival of letters was owing to the Reformation, or materially promoted by it, &c., &c.

Christianity, not Romanism, extricated us from Paganism. I have proved that the creed of Augustine was not that of the Council of Trent. We certainly owe many useful laws to our ancestors in the ages of papal influence. But are the Act of Habeas Corpus, and the laws which secured to the people their civil and religious liberties at the Revolution, less valuable,

useful, or important than those of our Romanist statesmen? The monasteries are gone; but will not our parochial clergy bear comparison with the monks? "The Nation," you tell us, "formed one fold under one shepherd." If, by the one shepherd, you mean the Pope, the reformers would rather have described them as "one fleeced flock, under one savage wolf." Are our Churches all destroyed, that you mention the existence of a Church in every village, as a proof of the temporal happiness of the people before the Reformation? Or were you serious when, among other proofs of our felicity at the same period, you enumerated "the interruption of the silence of the night by pious psalmody?" when sound sleep would have been more generally useful. Select what proof of temporal happiness you please; whether it be the progress of commerce, improvement in agriculture, skilfulness in the arts of life, or eminence in science and literature: there can be no comparison in all these between the days of our ancestors and the present. The blessings we possessed under our Romanist legislatures we still enjoy to the utmost. We have added to them religion without superstition, and well-defined civil liberty, so pure, so perfect, so suitable to the habits, opinions, and feelings of all classes,

that the simplest description of its inestimable advantages would appear to be the declamation of a sciolist, if experience did not demonstrate its reality. There were formerly no poor laws enacted by Parliament, but the parishioners and the clergy supported the poor in each parish*. This principle of the common law has been made the foundation of the statute law on the subject; and the old custom would have been probably continued, if their revenues had been spared to the clergy. Burthensome and oppressive as these laws have become, they decree protection, and support, and shelter, to all the poor and desolate of our dominions; and the destitute and infirm of our crowded population have reason to be grateful to God, for the religion which ordains, and the policy which enforces them.

XII. 2. You demand if we have improved in spiritual wisdom? If wisdom be the talent by which we choose good, and reject evil, how great is the wisdom which has chosen God as the object of its worship, and rejected the relic and the saint; which prefers scripture to tradition; pardon from God, to forgiveness by man; prayer

* So that none die in default of sustenance.—Blackstone's Commentaries, b. I. ch. ix p. 6.

which is understood, to petitions in a strange language; common sense, to unintelligible doctrines; honourable marriage, to useless celibacy; two sacraments with antiquity, to seven with novelty; and the unlimited freedom of our accountable spirit, to the fetters of the decrees of Councils and Popes?

Why have you condescended to insult the English clergy with the sneer of our infidel historian, and a doubt of their sincerity when they sign the thirty-nine articles. There is no foundation whatever for the charge. We sign them, because we believe them. We are not indifferent to religion; though we will not add to our simple creed a mass of unscriptural opinions, and call them wisdom.*

The havock of Church ornaments, books, and plate, the atrocities which disgraced some, and the savage excess of others of our people at the Reformation, we will neither justify nor palliate. We abhor the mode by which they expressed their opinions. Do you not, however, believe that the religion which threw bones, and rags, and wood into the fire, may have been quite as pure as that, which not only taught the worship

* I could say much more on this part of Mr. Butler's work; but I beg to refer to the judicious pamphlet of the Bishop of Chester.

of these relics of saints, but burnt the wretch who refused to adore them?

XII. 3. History is but a relation of the crimes and follies of contending parties. You have inquired whether the Reformation was attended by a general improvement in morals, and quote many passages affirming the deterioration of the manners of the Reformers. I would not sully my pages with the details which are given by your own writers, of the scandalous state of society, when Romanism most flourished*, from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries. For one hundred and fifty years together, out of fifty Popes, scarcely one can be found who was not notorious for wickedness. I could draw a picture of the manners of the religious of this period, from your own authors, which the present age would hardly credit, though the authorities are most unimpeachable. All great collisions of opinions are attended, for a season, with bad effects upon morals. The weight of public censure is removed from bad practice, to questionable principles. Our own puritanic revolution divided the people into

* See Tillotson's Rule of Faith, p. 716-722. Dr. Cave's *Chartophylax ecclesiasticus*; *Seculum obscurum*, p. 173.

the profligate and austere. The picture which Luther has drawn of his contests with himself is not pleasing; but his conduct was not influenced by his feelings. He describes the state of his mind, not the actions of his life. If you compare the morality of the present day with that of any age preceding the Reformation, we shall not suffer by the comparison. Are France, Spain, Portugal, or other Romanist countries, more or less moral than Protestant England?

XII. 4. You inquire if the revival of letters was owing to the Reformation, or materially forwarded by it? The art of printing was invented between 1440 and 1450. In 1517, Luther began to write against indulgences. Learned men were to be found in every age, and their numbers had much increased, especially in England, in the century before the Reformation. But when the discovery was made that the frost-work of ignorance* melted before the rays of knowledge; and that Romanism could not co-exist with extended information, the spirit of inquiry was instantly checked. Learning was considered to be the source of error; and ignorance to be the mother of devotion. Scholars were regarded with suspicion.

* And fancy's fairy frost-work fades away.

Students were heretics in embryo. Philosophers recanted their discoveries. The very Jesuits, at a later day, who edited the works of Newton, reserved the infallibility of the Pope, when they published the demonstrations of science. Appealing to Scripture, and reason, and learning, the Protestant invites the lowest of the multitude to judge of the truth of his creed. The Romanist (I refer to the work by which you desire to be judged*) is required to look for learned men in monasteries, and learned books in the libraries which they have sanctioned. The common people are to be provided with useful books of instruction and devotion, by those only who are more informed. With us, the stream of knowledge is open, our learned men are of all classes. Our books are for the lowest, who will read. We have no index expurgatorius†; we invite, we entreat all to examine into the truth of every doctrine, which the Church believes, or its ministers enforce.

* Papists represented and misrepresented, p. 81. Keating and Brown, 1820.

† For an account of the expurgatory indices, their origin, and the opinions expunged from the writings of the Fathers, by the Romanist divines, see Bp. Taylor's chapter, Section 6, of the second part of his *Dissuasive from Popery*. Works, Bp. Heber's edition, vol. x. p. 496-506.

Compare the state of knowledge in the countries which are subjected to the influence of Romanism and Protestantism. In which has learning most prevailed since the Reformation? Greek literature revived in Italy; it is now almost extinct. Sacred learning was encouraged in Spain; it has been succeeded by the grossest darkness in that country, and has been but little cultivated by the Romanists elsewhere. "How little the Romish Church," says an eminent prelate of our own day*, "contributes to the cultivation of the original Scriptures, is evident from the depressed state of sacred and ancient literature in the Romish universities; and from this especially, that almost the whole labour of editing and illustrating the Greek text of the New Testament has been confined to the members of the Protestant Church." With us also are the editors of the Hebrew text, the laborious commentators, and the principal illustrators of the Scripture. Paganism itself produced poets and philosophers, and literature is in many respects independent of religion; but, while we boast the names of Bacon, Locke, and Newton, among philosophers, Taylor and Hooker among theologians, Shakspeare and

† Bishop of Durham's Tracts.

Milton among poets, we cannot fear comparison with the most distinguished men of your communion.

Neither may you identify the Protestants who have objected to the distribution of the Bible, without note or comment, to the Romish teachers who would prevent the perusal of the sacred volume by the vulgar. The Protestant of the Church of England is anxious that the poorest, and meanest, and most ignorant, should read the Scriptures. He appeals to the sacred volume as the only standard of his faith. He would but secure to his own Church the influence arising from the distribution of the Bibles, and place the prayer-book in the hands of the receiver of the Scriptures, as the best interpretation of the inspired writings. This is all the highest churchman has desired. He considers that every parish minister has failed in his duty if he has not given the Scriptures to the humblest and poorest of his parishioners who can read. Can this moderate conduct be compared with the decree of the Council of Trent, which appointed (Sess. 18) the Index Expurgatorius; and in its fourth rule forbade the use of the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, without a particular license; and decreed that whoever presumes to offend against that rule is to be de-

nied absolution. You forbid the free use of the Scriptures, by a positive decree of a council, which has among you the force of a law. We appeal to them in the very articles of our Church, and place in the hands of the people both the rule and form of their faith, entreating them to use their reason, and if they approve of our Church, to join our communion.

XII. 5. Of the monasteries enough has been said. The vows of the monks might have been absurd and their influence pernicious, but they had been the preservers of learning. Their houses and wealth were confiscated, partly on account of the crimes of individuals; but principally because the King desired their riches, and thus more injustice and violence were done than the most inveterate enemy of monkery can defend or excuse.

XII. 6. You in vain attempt to palliate the negligence of the Church of Rome in reforming abuses. The diffusion of learning, fifty years before Luther began to write, detected the most glaring errors. Your friends spake in vain, and the Church was reformed from without. Every Scripture truth is with you, but it is overloaded and oppressed, and bent down by the errors of ages. We would not now injure your Churches, or diminish your re-

sources. Remove only your principal corruption, and abjure the Pontiff of Rome, and we should be no longer disunited.

XII. 7. You entitle this section, " Dr. Southey's abuse of former and present Catholic Historical Writers." With personal recrimination, I have no interference.

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LETTER XIII.

EDWARD VI.

SIR,

Few remarks are necessary on this letter. The Sovereign and nation had rejected the supremacy of the Pope ; and the completing of the Reformation became the duty of the legislature. The history of the reign of the infant Edward is a painful detail of the intrigues and factions of the contending parties ; in the midst of which, the Reformation was more firmly established, both by the public law and by general approbation. The characters of individuals cannot justly be esteemed the criterion of the excellence of any public measure ; and you have censured Mr. Southey for attributing to your Church the errors of its advocates. I would otherwise have defended, at some length, the motives, character, and conduct, of our most eminent English Reformer. Cranmer was not faultless ; but there are few more deserving of our admiration for private virtues ; and none, whatever were his supposed weaknesses, is more entitled to the gratitude

and veneration of the members of the English Church*.

We acknowledge your patience, your loyalty, your many virtues; and we confess, with sorrow, the faults of many of the chief friends of the Reformation. Your various excellencies entitle you to every respect; and we would grant you every privilege and all due honour. Political power we cannot grant, because the same history which relates your good qualities as subjects, asserts your opposite qualities as legislators. Your patience under adversity cannot prove that the community would be benefited by your power in prosperity. You wish “that the Protestants and Romanists would abstain from contention, and unite in defence of our common Christianity.”—We dare not abstain from the contention. The tares are mingled with the wheat, and though both must

* Mr. Todd has amply vindicated the character of Archbishop Cranmer against the charges of privately protesting against the action he was proceeding solemnly and publicly to perform; as well as against many other charges, which have been falsely urged against him by the Romanists. The fair fame of Anne Boleyn also, the firm friend of the Reformation, is rescued by the same able champion of the Protestant cause, from the infamous slanders with which it has been assailed. See the Introduction to Archbishop Cranmer’s account of the Sacrament.

grow together till the harvest, the Protestant labourer must encourage the one, and guard against the other. Scarcely is our Christianity common. The Scriptures which teach us, our objects of worship, our seals of faith, our modes of discipline, essentials and non-essentials, all, all are different. We cannot walk together unless we be agreed; we cannot agree unless one be reformed. *Idem velle, et idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia.*

LETTER XIV.

QUEEN MARY.

SIR,

You consider in this letter, 1. The persecution of the Protestants by Queen Mary. 2. Archbishop Cranmer and Latimer. 3. The Queen's general character.

1. Your apology for the persecutions in the reign of Mary, is derived from considering the former conduct of Cranmer, in passing an unjustifiable law, by which he condemned to death the advocates of the Romanist opinions. If it could be shewn that this measure, on the part of Mary, was merely retaliation, your argument would be tenable. We might, in that case, suppose, that as all Christians, at this time, believed persecution to be their duty, we are unjust in condemning the Romanists for the Marian persecution. It is insinuated (p. 209,) that both parties, at that time, were guilty of the same error; both are now convinced of their folly. The past, therefore, may be forgotten, all denominations may unite, and the penal code against the Romanists be abolished. (p. 213.)

The doctrine of persecution, which sometimes

disgraced the Reformers, has long been given up by Protestants. Their faith on this subject is unobjectionable. The Church of Rome alone still teaches the doctrine of persecution for differences in religious opinions. This accusation is repelled by the Romanists with eagerness and scorn, as an atrocious calumny. You will think me guilty of a violation of courtesy when I here repeat the accusation. I impeach the Church of Rome of the crime of still sanctioning persecution, and thereby maintaining a doctrine which is alike hostile to their own petitions for admission to power, and to the common rights and happiness of nations.

The creed of Pope Pius IV. is prefixed to your book, as the summary of the faith and doctrines now received by the Church of Rome. You "there profess, and undoubtedly receive all other things delivered, and defined, and declared by the General Councils, and particularly by the Holy Council of Trent; you likewise condemn, and reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto," &c., &c., &c.

The fourth Council of Lateran is among the number which are sanctioned by this creed. The third canon of this fourth Lateran Council, which was holden by Pope Innocent III., in the year 1215, is entitled *De Hereticis*, and

the extirpation of heresy is its express object. In that canon, the Church of Rome excommunicates and anathematizes every heresy which opposes the faith, which had been established in that Church, and condemns all heretics by whatever name they are called *. The secular legislatures, whatever be their powers or titles, are admonished, and if necessary, are to be compelled, by ecclesiastical censure, as they hope or desire to be considered faithful to the Church, to exert themselves to the utmost to exterminate all those whom the Church defines to be heretics. If the princes to whom this decree of the Church shall come neglect to obey, they are subject to excommunication. If it be notified to the Pope that the contumacy of any prince be continued more than one year, his vassals may be absolved from their allegiance, and his territory be allotted to another, who shall exterminate heretics, and maintain the faith in its purity †.

Such is the unrepealed decision of the Church of Rome, which is sanctioned and confirmed

* *Universos hæreticos, quibuscumque nominibus censeantur.*

† *Concilia Labbæi et Cossartii, Tom. xi., col. 148, ap. Bp. Marsh's Comparative View, p. 218, where this subject is fully discussed.*

by the Council of Trent. Its effects on the rights of princes may be considered in the next letter, when we inquire into the causes of the executions in the reign of Elizabeth.

As all heretics of every name are involved in this censure, the Protestants cannot be excluded. The catechism of the Council of Trent teaches its catechumens that the Church of Rome is infallible. "This one church," it observes, p. 76, "cannot err in the delivery of faith and discipline of manners, as she is governed by the Holy Ghost; it necessarily follows, that all other churches which falsely claim to themselves that name, and being also led by the spirit of the devil, are most dangerously out of the way, both in doctrine and practice." The Council teaches also that the Church of Rome is the mother and mistress of all churches, and it claims, as we have seen, the power of punishing all who have departed from her communion as heretics and schismatics. "It is not to be denied," says the edition of the Catechism published for the use of the Irish, "that they (heretics and schismatics) are in the power of the Church, as those who may be judged by her and condemned with an anathema*."

* The translators of the Catechism, I must here observe,

This doctrine of the Church of Rome is still taught in its colleges and universities; it has been enforced by the army of the Crusaders against the Albigenses, by the establishment of the Inquisition, by the massacre of St. Bartholomew, by the murders of the Protestants in Ireland, the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and by the burnings of the martyrs in the reign of Mary, the more immediate subject of our present discussion. The Protestants must determine whether it will ever be enforced again.

The general doctrine of the Protestants, on the subject of persecution, is found in the Articles of the Church of England. The right of private judgment in religious matters, and the exercise of that right in appealing to the Scriptures is granted, in the Sixth Article, to all. If after the exercise of private judgment, the inquirer becomes a member of the Church of England, he is required to submit to the authority of the Church to which he either begins, or continues, to attach himself. If he does not unite himself to that Church, he is at liberty to

by the sanction of their superiors, have omitted to translate the word *puniantur*; the words of the original are—"Non negandum tamen quin in ecclesiæ potestate sint, ut qui ab eâ in iudicium vocentur, *puniantur*, et anathemate damnentur!" P. 78, Edit. 1587. Semper eadem Roma!!!

reject its authority. The rites and ceremonies which the Church of England decrees, the faith which it professes, the conduct which it enjoins, and the discipline which it enacts, are binding only on him who professes himself to be a member of its communion; and any of its members are at liberty to leave it, without censure or reproach. By granting this permission, the Church of England renounces the doctrine and right of persecution. The claims which many of its friends have made concerning its scriptural discipline and doctrines, and its well-founded demand of the attention, respect, and love of our countrymen, are perfectly compatible with that enlarged and liberal spirit, by which it has enacted laws to protect itself, while it allows this freedom of choice to others. If the members of the Church of Rome choose to submit to the discipline, which the heads of their communion may deem essential to the public good, we have no right to interfere. The Inquisition may govern Spain, or torture and death may restrain all insults to the consecrated wafer, in France. The Protestant demands only permission to withdraw from the profession of opinions so maintained, and so sanctioned. This liberty is refused, and the power of persecution is consequently asserted. The supremacy of your Church is declared by the

councils which you have sworn to uphold, to extend over *all* heretics and schismatics ; that is, over all the citizens of every free state, who cannot believe your creed. You are prevented by the civil magistrate alone from exercising this intolerable assumption. You demand the political power, by which you may eventually be enabled to attain your object. You stigmatize us as illiberal and bigotted, when we would legislate for ourselves, our children, and posterity, and seek to check the increasing arrogance of this intolerable usurpation.

There is then an essential difference between the Romanist and the Protestant. With the former, persecution was and is a principle of religion ; with the latter, it is an error, which has been removed by gradual improvement. With the former it was a law, which the Romanist swears to obey, his obedience being prevented only by the power of the temporal legislature. With the latter, as it never was a law, so has it long ceased to be a custom.

To receive religion with sincerity, and to be convinced that the reception of our faith by others may be one cause of the favour of God, justly excites, in every Christian bosom, a desire to benefit our fellow-men. The same principle, therefore, which now sends out our mis-

sionaries, distributes our Bibles, and forms our religious societies, once hardened the heart of the inquisitor, and nerved the arm of the dragoon. It issued the bloody mandate of the judge, and the savage decree of the Council and the Pope: it built the dungeon: it kindled the flame: it stained the scaffold with the blood of the Martyr. It is not necessary to my argument that I should impute unworthy motives to those who first persecuted their brethren; and I, therefore, attribute to the milder Protestant, and to the intolerant Romanist, the same benevolent intention, that of saving the soul of the sinner. But why should this Christian desire to do good produce the most opposite effects? The Romanist endeavours to convert the world to the creed of an infallible Church, which draws the sword of the magistrate to enforce the lesson of the teacher. The Protestant endeavours to convert the world to the Christianity of Scripture only. The one imagines he cannot err, and, therefore, to doubt is to deserve punishment here, and despair hereafter; the other believes that he may himself be in error, and he dare not force the conscience of his neophyte. The principle of the Romanist involves the necessity of persecution; that of the Protestant destroys it. The teacher

who inculcates the right of private judgment, resigns the power of compulsion; he who denies that right, demands obedience to his own infallibility. Persecution, therefore, has necessarily ceased among Protestants; it still continues to be the result of the claims of your Church over the consciences of men. Intolerance is a dormant right, which slumbers with the weakness, and awakens with the power of Rome.

It does not appear necessary to proceed through the minor details of the irritations and insults of the Protestants against Queen Mary. Their puerile, or dangerous practices, did not require the faggots of Smithfield or Oxford. Fox may have committed errors. Pole and Tunstal may have been guiltless, as they undoubtedly were, of these sanguinary persecutions. The cruelties of Bonner and Gardiner may have been exaggerated, and the death of the latter may have been erroneously recorded by the martyrologist; but all these matters are of little general interest, and require no further notice.

In reply to some of your remarks on the severe language which many of the opponents of your errors have adopted, I beg to submit to you the conclusions of an impartial inquirer.

into the merits of this great controversy *. There can be no peace with Rome, till Rome is altered. Controversy is our bounden duty. Past animosities will revive, so long as the religious and political sentiments which occasioned them are espoused and defended. "We wish for good-humour, forbearance, and charity," and therefore, we oppose the intolerant doctrine of a persecuting Church. The abolition of the penal code has been advocated; but not one of these advocates, no, not one, has proved, by his speeches in Parliament, (so far as they have been reported by the press,) that he was deeply read in the history of the consequences produced by the political doctrines of the Church of Rome. Misled by the seducing cry of liberality and candour, they have mistaken past exclusion from office for present claim to it. They imagine that patience, under necessary disqualification, is a pledge of the future right use of power. You are dangerous only when you are elevated. You have refused to reject the opinions of the dark ages. The effects of those divisions, in producing evil, were slow and gradual, while they were sure and effectual. Can-

* I am compelled to the tautology of those remarks, by the repetition of some of Mr. Butler's previous observations.

not these effects return? Can men never retrograde? If the same opinions again flourished, may we not justly anticipate the same consequences? Are we enemies to your persons, because we would protect the Commonwealth from the possible recurrence of a danger, which once destroyed its happiness and peace? Repeal the acts of your Popes. Confess the fallibility of your Church. Grant to those who differ from you, an exemption from its asserted jurisdiction. Offer your undivided allegiance to your Prince. Annul the decisions of Constance, and Lateran, and Trent; and then, and then only, we may kneel at the same altar, take the same oath, and meet in the same senate.

XIV. 3. Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Latimer.

The rule which you have laid down in the beginning of your work, that we are never to impute to the Church the errors of its individual members, shall be observed by me in considering this section of your letter. I believe that both Archbishop Cranmer and Bishop Latimer may be defended from all the charges you have alleged against them—but I leave

their defence to others*. Their cause is not identified with that of the Reformation. We may not confound the supposed defects of the barrister, with the innocence or guilt of his client.

“Let Protestants,” you observe, “cease to reproach the Romanists with Mary’s fires, and you will be equally silent on Elizabeth’s executions.” This appears to be a fair challenge: the insidious charge has, however, been answered. Mary lighted up the flames, in obedience to the unaltered and unalterable opinions of an infallible Church. Elizabeth, even if she had executed men for religion, which we deny, complied with errors which the perfected Reformation has swept away. The cruelty of Mary was the crime of her Church—the cruelty of Elizabeth the fault of an individual.

XIV. 3. Character of Queen Mary’s reign.

If the good character which the historian, upon whose researches you have relied, be correctly represented, how severely do you con-

* Mr. Todd, as I have already observed, has ably defended the Archbishop. The character of Latimer, I have no doubt, may be amply vindicated also.

demn the religion which could change a "compassionate, liberal, pious, moral, exemplary woman" into a savage, rancorous, bigotted persecutor. Your efforts are vain. The blood of the martyrs is upon her,

“ And History, with its whip of steel,
“ Has stamp'd the characters of shame so deep
“ That not eternity shall wear it out*.”

You quote Sir H. Parnel on the moderation of the Romanists in Ireland when they obtained power—you forget that they waited for the Queen's commission. If they had refused to burn the Protestants when they had received authority to do so, your praises would have been deserved; at present they are unwarranted.

* Randolph's Muse's Looking Glass.

LETTER XV.

QUEEN ELIZABETH.

SIR,

THE Letter which I am now to consider is the most important of all which you have addressed to Mr. Southey. The final establishment of the Protestant Reformation in the reign of Elizabeth, is justly considered, by both our Churches, as the greatest event in our National History. In your examination of the circumstances which accompanied and followed this event, you would almost seem to have demonstrated to your countrymen, that you reserve your talents for your own profession; and your sincerity for the courtesies, of private life. You attempt a long and laborious vindication of the Romanists in the reign of Elizabeth, from the charges of plots and conspiracies against the Queen and her Government. You would then endeavour to prove, that the priests who suffered were executed for religion, and not for treason. In prosecuting your inquiry upon these points, you omit

all consideration of the state of parties ; and of the difficulties in which the Legislature of the day must have been involved, whatever might have been its consequent decisions. You do not tell your reader that civil wars were raging on the Continent, and almost in England, on the subject of religion ; that on the Continent the opposite opinions of the Protestant and Romanist were embodied in the shape of armies ; and that in England their open collision could only be prevented by the most consummate prudence, and by occasional severity.

In examining your previous letters, I have been contented with endeavouring to reply to those of your observations, which appeared to deserve remark, in the order which you had yourself adopted. You must permit me, in the present Letter, to pursue a different plan. I shall first beg you to survey the state of England and of Europe, on Elizabeth's accession to the throne. I shall then proceed to inquire into the occasion of the laws which she enacted, and which you so strongly condemn. I am much mistaken if I shall not be able to demonstrate from the evidence of facts, and dates, and the testimony of writers of your own communion, that your review of the reign of Eliza-

beth, is most indefensible; and that no law was ever passed upon the subject of religion which was not imperiously required by the political actions, and not by the speculative opinions, of the Romanist party.

When we have proceeded through this inquiry, I shall submit to your notice some few observations on the more miscellaneous paragraphs in your present Letter.

I. *State of England on the Accession of Elizabeth.*

When Elizabeth ascended the throne, her first care was to settle the religion of the country. Toleration, in its present sense, could not have been anticipated. If she had decided on preserving the Romanism of her sanguinary sister, the Protestants might have expected that she would have continued to enforce the laws against heresy, though perhaps in a milder degree. If Elizabeth had restored the laws of her father and brother, the Romanists had cause to dread a similar re-action against themselves, to that which had already taken place in their favour, at the commencement of the reign of Mary. We cannot judge of the merits or demerits of Elizabeth, unless we take this view of the question. The

Marian fires had been but lately extinguished. The lightning by which they had been kindled still flamed on the Continent, from the red right hand of the Papacy. The laws of nations, the precedents of the former reigns, the custom of the Romanists, the right of retaliation, would have justified the Queen, at that period, in consigning the disobedient recusants to the fate which they had inflicted upon their Protestant Countrymen. Yet Elizabeth made greater approaches to toleration than any Prince who had hitherto reigned on any throne in Europe. Indulgence, mildness, and forbearance, such as that age had never seen, were freely extended to all: neither were there any violations of this unknown and unthought-of generosity, till repeated acts of treason endangered the safety both of her person and her throne.

The mutual exasperations of the Romanists and Protestants in England were now at their greatest height. The fury of the persecutors was continued to the last. Within a week before the death of Mary, five persons had been burnt at Canterbury; though the mass of the active population appears to have been Protestant. The Queen's first object seems to

have been, to prevent the breaking out of a civil war. She strengthened her government. The majority of her Council was still Romanist; eight Protestants only being added to the thirteen ministers who formed the Cabinet of her sister. Ambassadors were sent to the various Courts of Europe to notify her accession. The ports were secured. New justices and sheriffs were appointed in every county. A Parliament was summoned; and various means, which we should consider highly objectionable, were adopted to procure the return of members who were favourable to the intended reformation. That the Romanists might not be alarmed or offended, the impatience of the Protestants was repressed by a proclamation, which forbade any preaching on controversial subjects, or any change in the Romish service. Several eminent theologians were commissioned to revise the service book of King Edward. The Epistles and Gospels, the Creed, the Liturgy, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments were permitted to be used in English. When the Parliament met, the Keeper of the Great Seal, Sir Nicholas Bacon, was directed, with a moderation which at that time was very unusual, to intreat the members

to re-unite all classes of the people, by avoiding the extremes of both parties. In consequence of this advice, and in accordance with the known wishes of the Queen,—public worship was appointed in the vulgar tongue,—the supremacy of the Queen was restored,—the acts of Edward, concerning religion, were renewed and confirmed. No laws were made to punish the Romanist persecutors of the former reign,—no retaliation was attempted,—no censure was passed,—no disapprobation expressed. Unless the Queen had declared herself a Romanist, and acknowledged the supremacy of the Pope, it seems impossible that greater moderation could have been shewn by the Sovereign, or required by the people.

Whatever were the private opinions of the Queen in religious matters, it is certain therefore that her indulgence to the Romanists must exempt her from the charge of complying with the popular clamour against them, which now began to be prevalent. You agree with Mr. Southey in praising the moderation which induced her to order the omission from the Liturgy, of the petition “From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, O Lord, deliver us!”—You approve also of her

directions, that the sacramental bread should be kept in the form of wafers, and that the language of the article which you believe to have affirmed the real presence, should be framed in ambiguous language, that the pale of the new Church should be as comprehensive as possible. At one period of her life, the Queen is said, by Camden, to have conformed to the unreformed Church. "The Lady Elizabeth," he observes in his Preface, "guiding herself as a ship in tempestuous weather, both heard divine service after the Romish manner, and was frequently confessed; and, at the pressing instances and menaces of Cardinal Pole, through fear of death, professed herself a Roman Catholic."—It is well known, also, that she kept images, a crucifix, and lighted candles, in her closet, to aid her meditations in her private devotions, a custom which would, even now, subject its observer to the charge of attachment to Romanism. The Dissenters, to this day, continue their hereditary sneer against Elizabeth for making the Liturgy of King Edward "less decidedly Protestant, and more palatable to the Romanist*."—The sur-

* See Bogue and Bennett's *History of the Dissenters*, Vol. i.

plice, the cope, and other vestments, rejected by Edward, were recalled by Elizabeth. She prohibited her chaplain from preaching against the sign of the cross. She insulted the married clergy. If the people were exasperated at any severities which were exercised at the beginning of the Queen's reign, it was with those which were shewn, not against the Romanists, but against the Puritans. Crucifixes, painted windows, and monuments, were destroyed by the populace, because they were considered as relics of Popery, which were admired and encouraged by the Queen. Whatever there was of a persecuting spirit in the breast of Elizabeth, was not directed against your communion. The general opinion at present, if I may judge from the agreement of three most opposite authorities, is, that she was a mere politician, who had little regard for religious principle of any kind. You describe her* as probably indifferent to all religions,—but that her taste inclined her to the Roman Catholic, and her interest to the Protestant. Messrs. Bogue and Bennett are of opinion that her life, spent in defiance of the genuine spirit of religion, was closed without

* Page 233, Second Edition.

its consolations*. The Quarterly Reviewer has observed †, Elizabeth effected the work of reformation rather in the spirit of a politician, than with that sincere, and conscientious, and enlightened piety, which directed and sanctified the conduct of Edward. I shall not pause to form another estimate of the Queen's personal religion; Romanist, Dissenter, and Episcopalian are agreed in representing her as bearing no such hatred to your Church, as to render it probable,—that, if any priests of your communion were put to death in her reign, they would have been executed solely on account of their religious opinions.

2. State of Europe at the Accession of Elizabeth.

The federated republic of Europe was divided throughout, between the two parties which harassed England; and, in all the greater states, the Romanists were in possession of political power, which they exercised with unsparing severity. To understand the critical situation in which Elizabeth had placed herself, as the head of the Reformation, by rejecting the supremacy of the Pope, we must more minutely consider the relative condition

* History of Dissenters, Vol. i. p. 67.

† Vol. viii. p. 332.

of these parties, in the first years of her reign, in the several countries of Europe.

The Queen of Scotland aspired to the throne of England, and was supported by the arms of France. She was considered the real heir to the crown. She was the head of the Romanist party, and as such the object of veneration among the partisans of the ancient religion. Scotland was a formidable enemy to England, not only because the Scots had uniformly shewn themselves to be a brave people, but as they were the allies of the King of France; who might assert the right of Mary to the throne of England; and attempt, whether with or without the sanction of the Pope, to seize the kingdom, and unite it, with Scotland and Ireland, to his own monarchy.

In Italy, the Pope, Paul IV., maintained to the utmost the pretensions of the Church of Rome. When Sir Edward Karne notified the accession of Elizabeth to this Pope, he answered, that England was held in fee of the Apostolic see,—that the Queen could not succeed, being illegitimate,—that she was presumptuous in assuming the crown without his consent*. This Pope, when he was dying, re-

* Burnet, Tom. ii. p. 374.

commended the establishment of the Inquisition to the College of Cardinals.

Pius IV., succeeded to the Papacy, and to the hatred of his predecessor against Elizabeth. This Pope summoned the Council of Trent to complete its sittings, which they did on the 4th of December, in the sixth year of Elizabeth. It sanctioned all the obnoxious opinions and intolerant pretensions of the Romish See. It asserted the power of the Church over princes and people. Many of its theologians, as you have observed, pronounced it unlawful for the English Romanists to attend the service of the Church of England*.

In France the council had decided that the Queen of Scots was the lawful Sovereign of England; and the King of France obtained a bull from the Pope, declaring the illegitimacy of Elizabeth. A treaty was made between France and Spain, to extirpate heresy; and the Queen of Scots, then Dauphiness of France, signed it as Queen of England†. The two Guises were at the head of the Administration; and under their auspices courts of justice were erected called Ardentés, to condemn the Protestants to the flames‡.

* Dodd's Church History, vol. ii. p. 24.

† Carte, vol. iii. p. 375.

‡ Rapin vol, ii. p. 57.

In Spain, where the Reformation obtained some adherents, the most relentless cruelties were shewn to the miserable victims of that execrable tribunal, the Inquisition. In the year 1559, the first after the accession of Elizabeth, Philip proceeded to Spain from Flanders, after he had made peace with the French; solely with the purpose of extirpating heresy.* Many had been put to death, without the suspicion of treason, before his arrival. The greater part had been detained in prison, that they might be burnt before this remorseless bigot, at Valladolid and Seville. I have no taste for the savage details, which you have dragged forth from the records of the past. I recoil from them with disgust; or the tale unfolded from the annals of the Inquisition would harrow up the soul, even after its keenest curiosity had been damped by the tragical pages of Fox, or his calumniator Eusebius Andrews. None were spared.—Twenty-eight of the principal nobility in Spain suffered martyrdom. And, as in our own country, the pious and amiable Mary had forbidden the people to console or pity the Protestants, so in Spain, a sigh or a groan were unpardonable symptoms of a tendency to heresy.

* Grimstone's History of the Netherlands.

In Germany, the treaty of Passaw had given to both parties a temporary repose.

In the Low Countries, fifty thousand men had been destroyed for their religion since 1521, under the Emperor Charles V., long before the sanguinary persecutions of the Duke of Alva begun. The Inquisition had been introduced in 1550, and in the year of Elizabeth's accession, the Pope was increasing his usurpation, by the arbitrary erection of new sees; to which Italian Bishops were appointed, who were ignorant of the language of the Country*.

Yet it was evidently the interest of Elizabeth, under these painful circumstances, to avoid giving offence to the Romanist Sovereigns, by retaliating needless persecutions. The unfortunate measures of the late Queen had dismembered the empire. The nation was involved in debt. The treasury was exhausted; and the war with France and Scotland could not be honourably terminated without the assistance of Philip, who offered Her marriage, under the authority of the Pope's dispensation. Ireland was a burden. Half of her subjects were disaffected. Her only hope of safety and of hap-

* Grimstone's History of the Netherlands, p. 341. 343.

piness was in union and peace at home. The supremacy was essential to the independence of the country: union alone could cement the reformation, and make the people one family. She avoided, therefore, all persecution, as the sources of heart-burning hatred among the people, and continued embarrassment to the government. I use your own words*, when I add, her religious reformation “seems to have been conceived on a conciliatory and comprehensive scheme.”

The Laws of Elizabeth respecting Religion†.

HAVING thus endeavoured to ascertain the real condition in which England and Europe were placed at the accession of Elizabeth, the temper of the Queen towards the Romanists and the Protestants, and the nature of the enemy against which she was called upon to exert herself,—we shall more easily and impartially come to right conclusions, when we inquire into the nature, policy, and justice, of the laws concerning religion, which you represent to be so objectionable.

* *Historical Memoirs of English Catholics.* Vol. i. p. 146.

† Page 234, 2nd Edit.

It may be demonstrated by looking to the dates of the several acts of parliament in the reign of Elizabeth, and inquiring into the cotemporary history of the time, that all were passed in consequence of the danger of the State—of some hostile proceeding, on the part of foreign powers; or some discovery of treason, on the part of her own subjects. If this important fact can be established, it will annihilate, at once all your arguments, that the Queen was a persecutor, and wantonly enacted laws against your religion. You object to the laws which were passed in the 1st, 5th, 13th, 23rd, and 27th years of her reign, and to the establishment of the Court of High Commission.

3. *The Laws of the first year of Elizabeth respecting Religion.*

The Act of Supremacy, in the first part of her reign, was essential to the independence of the kingdom. Under the circumstances, which have now been mentioned, the greatest care was taken to prevent the appearance of any assumption of spiritual, as well as political power, on the part of the Queen. You assert the contrary in your History of the Catholics, to prove that the measures of the Queen were un-

justifiable.* Let me remind you, however, that in the very year in which the act enjoining the oath of supremacy was passed, Elizabeth published a body of "Regulations of the discipline and order of the Church," to remove the possibility of this interpretation. In one of these, she professes to notice the misconstructions of her claims to the spiritual Supremacy. She then proceeds to say, "Her Majesty neither doth, nor ever will challenge any other authority than what was challenged, and lately used by her father and brother," that is, "to have under God, the sovereignty and rule over all manner of persons born within these her realms and dominions, so as no power shall or ought to have any superiority over them."

In the 37th article of the Church of England, the Supremacy of the Sovereign is explained: "We give not to our Prince the ministering of God's word, or the sacraments, but that prerogative only, which We see to have been given always, to all godly princes, in holy Scriptures, by God himself," that is, that they should govern all estates and decrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal.

* History of English Catholics. Vol. i. p. 136.

It is well described also in the preamble to the statute for the restraint of appeals, 24 Hen. VIII. c. 12. " It appears from ancient histories and authentic records, that the realm of England is an empire governed by one supreme head, and King, to whom the nation owes a natural and humble obedience ; but the people are divided in terms, and by the names of the spirituality and temporalty. However, that there is sufficient power, authority, and jurisdiction within the realms, to end all causes that arise, without any appeal to a foreign court : the body spiritual, usually called the English Church, judge all such matters as belong to them ; and the laws temporal are for trial of property, and for the preservation of peace and unity *."

As the Supremacy then did not confer on the Queen the power of administering the sacraments, or performing any sacerdotal office, it was evidently confined to that right of administering justice, which was ever considered due to the head of a nation, and was established

* Dissertation on the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.— Bishop Stillingfleet has here discussed, at great length, the question of the Ecclesiastical Supremacy of the temporal Sovereign of a country, and shewn its absolute necessity to the peace of the nation.

by her father. What could be more reasonable than this natural claim, which belongs to every sovereign, to whom the providence of God has committed the care of the peace and happiness of a nation?

All persons, in public employments were obliged to swear in this political sense only, that they acknowledged the Queen to be the supreme governor in all causes, as well ecclesiastical as temporal; that they renounced all foreign jurisdiction, and would bear the Queen true allegiance. Those who refused to take it, were justly suspected of preferring allegiance to the Pope, to the dominion of their temporal Sovereign.

In addition to this oath of Supremacy, the Book of Common Prayer was enjoined. One point must never be forgotten, when we consider this part of the question. Though a Romanist might wish that much was added to the Prayer Book, there was in it nothing to which he objected. The Reformers are reproached by the Puritans for retaining too much of the Romish service. There is much reason to believe, and I am convinced of the fact though I will not assert it as undeniable, that the Pope would have approved the Prayer Book,

if the Queen would have yielded the supremacy*.

The High Commission Court, in after times, abused its power. It was a bad substitute for a worse evil. It broke the sceptre of the Pope; but it gave the fragments to the Queen's commissioners.

After this review of the State of Europe and of England, and considering at the same time the principles of legislation in all differences of religious opinion, we shall be able to appreciate the mildness or severity of the penalties which enforced the oath of supremacy, and the act of uniformity, in the first year of Elizabeth. To refuse the oath of supremacy, which was tendered to few, was to incur the suspicion at least of disaffection. Under circumstances, in which her father, sister, and brother-in-law, would have condemned their subjects to death without mercy, the calumniated Elizabeth became the first sovereign since the revival of learning, who abolished the punishment of death for differences in religious opinions. The impugners of the supremacy were punished, for the first offence, with forfeiture of goods,—

* See this point discussed in F. Courayer's *Defence of the Validity of the English Ordination*, Vol. ii. p. 259. &c.

for the second, with the penalties of pre-munire,—for the third with the penalties of high treason. They were considered guilty of a political offence. Those who without adequate reason absented themselves from Church were supposed to be guilty of a religious offence only. A correspondent difference therefore was made in their punishment. The penalty of death was abolished. They were fined one shilling for each causeless absence. If they staid away for one month, they forfeited twenty pounds. Strange and severe as these laws now must be considered, great progress in liberality had evidently been made by their comparative mildness. This it must be remembered is the only point which it is now necessary to prove. The payment of one shilling, or twenty pounds, was not so terrible as fire and faggot. No Prince in Europe at this time defended or sanctioned the laws respecting religion with penalties so mild as these. Even Calvin at this period could burn heretics. Elizabeth is acquitted by all parties of being a bigotted Protestant; or of being influenced by any feeling of true, or supposed true, religion. Free from the suspicion of needless cruelty, she was calm, sober, reflecting, deliberating. She hated and loved no

opinion ; or she hated the Puritan, and loved the Catholic. The good of her people, her own ambition, the lessons of experience, all united to convince her that the sovereignty of a state depended on the exclusion of all foreign authority. This sovereignty, therefore, she wisely determined to secure. She transferred the supremacy of a foreign Pontiff to the legitimate Magistrate ; and even in assuming that supremacy, she altered as little as possible. She was anxious to guard against the misconstruction of those who contended, that she challenged the authority and power of ministers of divine service ; protesting that she challenged nothing more than the sovereignty and rule, under God, of all her native subjects, ecclesiastical or temporal, of whatsoever class or religious belief*. What more could have been expected or required by the most zealous Romanist, unless he was prepared to defend the authority of the Pope against his natural and temporal Sovereign ?

The next act of Elizabeth to which you object, is that law of her fifth year, which subjected to severer penalties, all who maintained the authority of the Pope, or refused to disavow his authority. Before this act, Eliza-

* Quarterly Review, Vol. xviii. p. 507.

beth, in the year 1561, had manifested her disinclination to persecution, by ordering that all pensions assigned to the Romanist Ecclesiastics, who had been ejected from their abbey, should be paid to the full amount.

Before the act of the fifth of Elizabeth was passed, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine were suspected of promising to Anthony of Bourbon, the King of Navarre, their niece the Queen of Scotland, and to have engaged to put him in possession of the throne of England, by the assistance of the Pope and King of Spain. The wife of this Prince was a heretic; and therefore, says Camden, "She was to be divorced for the same reason that Elizabeth was to be deposed." Sir Henry Sidney was despatched into France to make private inquiries into the particulars. By passing a law against the authority of the Pope at this time, the Queen struck a blow at all who were willing on religious motives to aid the attempts of Mary. The Pope was now uniting himself to the factious party in England. The designs of his Holiness and the conspirators being discovered, the principal ringleaders, Arthur Pole and Sir Anthony Fortescue, were apprehended, and attainted. They

confessed that they were united in a conspiracy with the Duke of Guise, for deposing Elizabeth, by landing an army in Wales. They confessed that they intended to proclaim the Queen of Scots, and make her Queen of England.

During this time the Pope's Nuncio, Abbot Martinengo, was in Flanders, waiting for permission to come into England. The Pope was so generally, and so justly, considered as the encourager of these plots, that the very news of his Nuncio being near, inspired the Romanists with new hope, and agitated the kingdom. On this occasion, the intolerant and persecuting Elizabeth endeavoured to gain the affections of her people by mildness, and freely forgave the conspirators*. For her own security only she passed a law, by which all who maintained this authority of her avowed enemy the Pope, or who refused to deny his authority, while it was endangering the throne and the state, should be declared guilty of treason. Would you have condemned the King and Parliament of England, if they had required the subject to deny the authority of the Pretender,

* See Rapin—Camden—Foulis, *Hist. of Romish Treason.* page 245, &c. &c.

or the Bourbons, or Napoleon, or any other open enemy of the state? Will you say that the Pope governed the consciences only of the Romanists? Their religion, in this instance, was treason, and their faith faction; for the Pope was the political enemy. On the same principles of reasoning, by which you object to this act of Elizabeth, a Jacobin would have objected to a law against the authority of the French Republic. The two cases are parallel. The Jacobin and the Romanist were the avowed enemies of England. Both excited the nations of Europe against its Sovereigns. Both were supported by large numbers of the people; among whom will always be found thousands, and tens of thousands, who hate the existing government, whatever be its form, principles, or excellence*. The practices against which this act was passed were the means by which the Romanist faction corresponded with the enemies of their country. Every Agnus Dei imported into England with the blessing of the Pope, was a token of evil to the existing establishment.

The Act of the thirteenth of Elizabeth, which

* Αει, τοις υπηκοοις το παρον βαρυ—says Thucydides in his first book.

was passed in the year 1571, declared that all who denied the title of Elizabeth to the throne, and all who brought, or received, bulls, briefs, or absolutions, from the Pope, were guilty of high treason—those who concealed such offenders were guilty of misprision of Treason. The political events of the few preceding years will enable us to conclude, whether the passing of this law also was an act of religious persecution.

In your history of the Catholics of England, Scotland, &c. &c., you freely acknowledge that “During the first ten years, to avoid the rigour of these laws, the greater number of the English Catholics assisted at the divine service, and in the Protestant churches*.” The lawfulness of their “so doing was questioned by many of their divines, and the practice being condemned by some of the theologians of the Council of Trent, such occasional conformity was condemned. This decision was inculcated by the Missionary Priests, and was *soon*,” you remark, “universally acquiesced in by the laity.” The word *soon* would imply that the conformity was discontinued in consequence of the teaching of the priests; but this was not the fact.

* Vol. i. page 166.

There was nothing in the prayer-book to which they objected; for it only did not include all their opinions. The Romanists generally frequented their parish churches, till they were forbidden to do so by the same bull which deposed their sovereign. "They were ordered not to obey the mandates, laws, and monitions, of the Queen; because she was deprived of her authority by the Pope." This is expressly asserted in the preamble of the Act of the 13th of Elizabeth. In consequence of this bull, it observes, "hath grown great disobedience and boldness in many, not only to withdraw and absent themselves from divine service, now most godly set forth, and used within this realm, but also have thought themselves discharged of all obedience." Now began the suspicion of treason. If the people of England, or any part of them, could obey one part of the Pope's bull, because they considered their obedience to him an act of religion; on what principle could the Queen and her government infer, that her subjects would not obey also the other part of the bull? If, to please God, to preserve their religious peace, and to obey the Pope, they absented themselves from their parish churches; why should

they hesitate to put in force the sentence of deposition which was commanded by the same authority? Hitherto the recusancy of the Puritan and Romanists was a civil offence; they rejected only the conformity in religious matters which the Queen wished to establish. Now their recusancy became a political crime, for they openly obeyed the public enemy of the Queen and the government.

In 1569, Dr. Morton was sent to England to absolve the people from their allegiance; and to teach that the Queen's right to govern was lost by her heresy*.

In the same year, the conspiracy of the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland took place, "to restore the religion of their ancestors, and to remove evil counsellors."

The insurrection of the two Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, to depose the Queen, and restore Romanism, was sanctioned by the Pope. This fact is rendered undeniable, by the answer of the Pope to their letters; in which † he exhorts "them to persevere in

* Sanders de visib. Eccles. Monarch. Wittiburgi, 1592, page 706.

† Pii. 5, Epist. Apost. page 290, &c. &c. Antwerp, 1640, ex officina Plantinianâ, Ed. F. Coubau, ap. Tracts against Popery, vol. iii. tit. 13, page 149.

the work, not doubting but that God would grant them assistance—and that if they should die in asserting the Catholic faith, and the authority of the See of Rome, it were better for them, with the advantage of a glorious death, to purchase eternal life, than by ignominiously living with the loss of their souls, shamefully obey the will of an ungovernable woman.”—He bids them to “imitate the example of Thomas à Becket, and neither for threatenings nor dangers to desist.” He concludes with promising arms and money*.

Soon after this exhortation to rebellion, the Pope, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Elizabeth, fulminated the bull of excommunication “out of the fulness of his apostolic power; declaring the Queen to be a heretic, and a favourer of heretics.” “We declare her,” said the Pope, (I quote your own translation†,) “to be deprived of her pretended title

* Catena says, this Pope at the same time wrote a letter to the same effect to the Duke of Norfolk,—*Che stesse di buono animo, &c. &c.* That he should want no kind of succours, &c. That he had written also to the Queen of France, and to Philip II. King of Spain, to assist them, and to exhort them to join in a Catholic league against the Queen, and her heretical subjects.—*Vide ut supra.*

† Historical Memoirs of the English Catholics, vol. i. page 187.

to the kingdom aforesaid, and of all dominion, dignity, and privilege whatever; and also the nobility, subjects, and people of the said kingdoms, and all which have in any sort sworn unto her, to be for ever absolved from every such oath, and all manner of duty, of dominion, allegiance, and obedience. We also command and interdict all and every the noblemen, subjects, and people aforesaid, that they presume not to obey her, or her monitions, mandates, and laws; and those which shall do to the contrary, We do likewise anathematize."

Well may you exclaim, with just, and loyal, and virtuous indignation against this presumptuous and scandalous decree. You would not have attempted to execute one part of the mandate. Thousands of loyal Romanists would have come to your resolution; but there were found, as there would again be, men who were ready to disclaim every tie, and sacrifice life itself, in obedience to the supposed will of God, in submission to their Priesthood and to their spiritual Lord the Pope. The Bull was affixed soon after to the gate of the Bishop of London; and the patient zealot who obeyed the Pope rejoiced to suffer for conscience' sake. Against this bull the act of

self-preservation was passed, in the thirteenth year of her reign, declaring it to be high treason to affirm that Elizabeth was not a lawful Sovereign, or to bring bulls, indulgences, or absolutions from the Pope.

I am making no vain assertions. I refer you to the life of Pope Pius V., by Catena and Gabutius, residents at Rome, whose books were published by authority in that city. Catena's work was given to the world in the year 1588, when the Queen's danger from the Spaniards, and from her other enemies, was most imminent. After he has given an account of the object of the Pope's bull, that it was to declare the Queen a heretic; deprive her of her kingdom; absolve her subjects from their allegiance; excommunicate her; and give power to any one to rebel against her; he proceeds to add, that the Pope procured a gentleman of Florence to move her subjects to a rebellion against her, for her destruction*: and the Pope thought it would be of so much benefit to Christendom that she should be destroyed, that he was ready to aid in person, to spend the whole revenue of the See Apostolic,

* Il quale muovesse gli animi al sollevamento per distruzione d'Elisabetta, p. 113.—*Taylor's Works*, vol. vi. p. 587.

all the chalices and crosses of the Church, and even his very clothes, to procure the destruction of Queen Elizabeth *.

Gabutijs tells the same story †. “The design of the *Pope*,” he says, “was to take away her life if she would not become a Romanist;” as no legate could come into England, nor any messenger from the Apostolic See, he employed a Florentine merchant, to excite her subjects to rebellion ‡.

The effect of the Pope’s bulls on the minds of the conscientious Romanists may be seen in the proclamation of Don Juan de l’Aquila to the Irish, dated September, 1601. The High Church Romanists, if I may use a well-known appellation, adhered to the cause of the Pope; the Low Church adhered to Elizabeth. The same divisions still exist among the Romanists. Don Juan complains with much bitterness of the latter; because they do not, with their brethren, consider Elizabeth an excommunicated heretic, and that they cannot fight in

* L’andare in persona, impegna tutte le sostanze della sede apostolica, e calice, e i proprii vestimenti, p. 117.

† De Vita et gestis Pii. v. Lib. iii. c. 9.

‡ Qui incolarum animos ad Elizabethæ perditionem, rebellionem facta, commoveret. See the account in Bishop Taylor, ut supra, p. 588.

her cause, without incurring themselves the charge of heresy *. After lavishing the fairest promises on the Irish gentry if they will abandon the Queen, Don Juan concludes, by declaring, that if they will obstinately persist in supporting the cause of an excommunicated heretic, he will be compelled to treat them as incorrigible heretics themselves, and to persecute them to death, *usque ad necem*.

Was it not justly said in the bill of indictment against the Duke of Norfolk, January 1571: "Whereas Pius Quintus, sometime Bishop of Rome, was, and is known to be a deadly and public enemy to our said Lady Queen Elizabeth and her kingdom of England, the said Duke consented, &c. and procured Robert Riddolph to send to the Bishop of Rome, to Philip King of Spain, and to the Duke of Alva, to obtain of the said Bishop certain sums of money towards the raising and maintaining of an army to invade this kingdom of England, and to make war, &c. &c."

* *Neminem persuadere conamur, ut debitam servitutem, secundum Dei legem, deneget suo Principi: sed bene nostis, ante multos annos, ipsam Elizabetham privatam esse regno, subditos omnes absolutos esse a juramento fidelitatis per summum pontificem, &c. &c.* Dr. O'Connor's Historical Address, Part. i. p. 12.

The object of this conspiracy was proved to be, to make open war against Elizabeth; to take out of custody Mary Queen of Scots, and to depose Elizabeth from the Government. Yet the act of Elizabeth, which you entitle so objectionable, was not yet passed; though the most serious apprehensions were unavoidably excited by the power of the Pope, by the confederacy of the Romish Princes, and by the divided allegiance of the people. The Duke was found guilty, and executed.

The whole of the plot of the Duke of Norfolk, 1570, was fully disclosed many years after, at Rome, by the author of the life of Pope Pius V. Gabutius has there inserted several letters to the King of Spain, to Catherine, Queen Mother of France, and to the Duke of Alva, to send their assistance to the Duke of Norfolk, &c., to enter into a confederacy against the Queen of England, p. 302. These letters are to be seen also in p. 247, and 326 of Catena's life of the same Pope.

Let me now ask, if you are still of opinion, that this act of the 13th of Elizabeth can be considered as a religious persecution? Was not the Queen justified in passing severe laws against those who asserted she was not a lawful Sovereign, and who arrayed against her

the religious principles of one-half of her people? Were not those who brought in the bulls or mandates of this avowed political enemy of England, rightly condemned of high treason? When the bull of deposition can be called a religious action, then may the self-defence of Elizabeth be denominated persecution: then only may the defenders of the bull be justly said to suffer for religion*.

We, the simple, the bigotted, and illiberal Protestants, who still believe that our ancestors were men of wisdom, and had sufficient reason to pass their various enactments against the Romanists, are curious to know what epithet is applied by a modern, candid, liberal, unbigoed Romanist to these bulls. The effects of the Pope's decrees would have been to plunge the country into the most fierce and sanguinary civil war, which this or any country had ever witnessed. They deposed the Sove-

* It is affirmed by Bzovius, the great champion of the Papacy, that all the priests who suffered in the reign of Elizabeth taught the doctrine, that the Pope could depose kings. Bzovius de Rom. Pontif. c. 46. p. 621. Ap. Tracts ut Sup.

Thuanus assures us, that the Pope Pius V., before he published the famous bull, which began with, "Damnatio et excommunicatio Eliz. &c. &c.", had craftily and treacherously conspired against the Queen. Thuaani hist. vol i. lib. 46. p. 151. Frankf. 1625. Ap. Tracts ut sup.

reign, and excited treason in the subject. They substituted rebellion for loyalty, and Romanism for religion. The Protestant would, perhaps, use strange and uncourteous epithets against them; they would appear to him, savage, shameful, abominable, detestable. But the liberal Romanist avoids all these bigoted phrases, and calls the bulls, *illaudable*: yes, they are *illaudable!!!* They cannot be quite approved, on the contrary, they perhaps deserved censure. Oh! spirits of the martyrs!

The next severe act of Elizabeth, which incurs your censure, was passed in the twenty-third year. By this, all persons pretending to have power to withdraw her Majesty's subjects from their allegiance, or from the established religion, or moving them to promise obedience to the See of Rome, or any other Potentate, are declared guilty of high treason. All who hear, or say mass, were to be severely fined, and imprisoned.

During the ten years which elapsed between the passing of this and the former act, which you condemn, so many circumstances occurred to excite the general indignation of the people against the Romanists, and to call for the ceaseless vigilance of the Government, that we may rather wonder at the lenity, than at the

severity of the present enactment. The principal circumstances were;

1st. The massacre of St. Bartholomew, 1572.

2nd. The designs of Don John of Austria against England and Ireland; and with him of the Romanist power in general, 1578.

3rd. The dangerous principles of the Jesuits, and their establishment in seminaries, for the purpose of returning to England in the same year.

4th. The attempt of Philip II., to excite rebellion in Ireland, 1580.

I can add but little to the beautiful and accurate account which Mr. Southey has given of the massacre at Paris. The same cruelties, it was firmly believed in England, would have been inflicted upon the Queen, and all protestants, wherever they were to be found, if the Romish Church had possessed power to accomplish its object. You endeavour to prove that this intolerable disgrace must be considered as the act of individuals, and the punishment of treason. It was a deed of blood by the Romanists, for it was sanctioned by the principles which they then acknowledged. It was approved by the Pope, whom they obeyed. It was executed by the adherents to his creed,

in obedience to their priests. It was celebrated as an act of religion in Rome, and justified as a holy deed by the partisans of the Romish opinions. You inquire if the order given by the Episcopalian Government of Scotland, to massacre the non-conforming Presbyterians; the massacre at Glencoe, Munster, &c. &c., prove the principle of assassination to be the principle of the Protestant Church? Certainly not, for this doctrine was never taught by our councils and our creeds. Your Church, in the ages of darkness, called upon Princes to destroy Heretics; you embodied that tenet in your creeds, you refuse even now to wash out the "damned spot," because your Church is infallible. You tell us this opinion is obsolete. At this moment you are weak, and it may be so, it will be so, till you have universal power to restore the practices of the ages whose opinions you defend. But why is it not expunged altogether from your creeds? Why do you still claim for the clouds and darkness of the middle ages the titles of light, and perfect infallibility? You disown this opinion as individuals, and we believe you to be sincere, but it still remains an article of your faith, because it was taught by the Council of Lateran, and sanctioned by the

Creed of Pope Pius ; and you dare not expunge it, because you must assert the infallibility of Rome.

Medals were struck in memory of the massacre of St. Bartholomew. On one side, the King was represented sitting on a throne, and treading on dead bodies, with the motto, "Virtus in rebelles"—on the reverse, were the arms of France, crowned between two columns; the motto "Pietas excitavit justitiam."—24 Augusti, 1572.*

The massacre of St. Bartholomew was called a remedy by De Gondi, the French ambassador in England.†

The solemn thanksgiving made at Rome, was accompanied with a jubilee to all Christendom: for which one of the reasons was, that they should thank God for the slaughter of the enemies of the Church lately executed in France. The Pope sent Cardinal Ursin his legate to France, to thank the King for so great service done to the Church; and to desire him to go on, and extirpate heresy, root and branch. As the legate passed through France to Paris,

* See a print of the medal in P. Daniel, Tom. 8. p. 786, ap. Rapin.

† Camden.

he gave a plenary absolution to all who had been actors in the massacre.

I have now before me, says Dr. Middleton, an oration of Antony Muretus, in praise of Charles IX., pronounced at Rome, before Pope Gregory XIII., in which he blesses that memorable night, in which this accursed slaughter was committed. He extols the King, the Queen, and the Royal Family for their share in the transaction. He calls the Pope himself, most blessed Father, for his going in procession to return thanks to God and St. Louis for the welcome news when brought to him. Oh! noctem illam memorabilem, &c.*

In 1572, after the massacre of Paris, Walsingham wrote to Sir Thomas Smith, that the French King intended to sell all the Huguenot lands; the produce of which was to be employed in attacking Protestant Countries. He wrote also to the Queen, that the Duke of Guise had frequent private conferences with the advocates of Mary. Many circumstances

* Muret. Orat. vol. p. 197, 198, Edit. Lubec. Letters from Rome, p. 312. Dr. Lingard, with the utmost unfairness, takes no notice of the approbation which his party gave to this massacre, when they supposed it to be a religious action.

occurred also to excite alarm, which may be seen detailed by the impartial Rapin. Elizabeth, however, took no additional precautions, and commenced no persecutions. Her evident policy was to avoid force; and to secure her government by discovering and surpassing the deep dissimulation of her enemies.

In the year 1577, before any executions of the Romanist Priests had taken place in England, Don John of Austria, an active and ambitious prince, came to the Low Countries, to subdue the Netherlands, and extirpate there the reformed religion. His next object was to marry the Queen of Scots, and become master of England and Scotland. Camden affirms, that he was informed of this project by Antonio Percy; who added that Pope Gregory XIII. approved of the project. The same account of the intentions of Don John is given by Strada in his history*.

While the Queen was thus endangered abroad, Philip of Spain endeavoured to excite rebellion in Ireland. Then was inflicted the curse upon that unfortunate and misguided

* See the references in Rapin.—This historian asserts that Gregory XIII. sent a Nuncio to Don John with fifty-thousand crowns, to be employed in the expedition against England.

country, under which she still seems destined to labour. Hitherto the divisions of Ireland had been chiefly political. The ancient enmity to the English had begun to subside. Now the torch of religious dissension was thrown on that unhappy land, and it kindled a still burning flame*. Trusting to the bull of excommunication published by Pope Pius V. in which the Queen was denominated "pretended Queen of England, and the servant of wickedness," Pope Gregory designed to place one of his nephews on the throne of Ireland; and actually exercised by anticipation the rights of sovereignty, by creating the adventurer Stukely, the adviser of the plan, Earl of Wexford and Caterlough, Viscount Morough, and Baron of Ross†.

Morryson refers the first religious war be-

* O Sullivan, a chief agent in the events of this period, is my authority for this assertion—*Memorable bellum scripturus, a multis Hibernis cum Elizabetha Angliæ Regina pro Catholicæ religionis libertate, a principio anni 1588 ad annum 1603, per annos fere 15 gestum, quo non modo Hibernia tota fuit penitus devastata et excisa, sed etiam Anglicæ nobilitatis flos deletus, magnisque viribus, sed odiis majoribus dimicatum.* *Hist. Cathol. Ulyssiponæ, 1621. fol. 113. ap. Dr. O'Connor's historical address to the Irish.* Printed by Seeley, Buckingham.

† See Ward on the Law of Nations, vol. 2. p. 473.

tween the Irish Protestant and the Irish Romanist to 1591, and that then, for the first time, the name of religion was made use of as a cloak for treason*.

Here we may conclude our survey of the state of Europe, before the executions of the Romanist Priests. We cannot, however, do entire justice to the question, unless we consider the opinions which were inculcated by the advocates of the Romish Church at this time †. Whether they were the real opinions of that Church, is not now the question. If certain doctrines were then taught by the Priests, and believed by the people, which tended to excite the multitude to political crimes, those Priests justly became objects of apprehension, and vigilance.

The Portuguese Jesuit, Emanuel de Sa, published at Venice a work entitled *Aphorismi Confessariorum*. He affirms in this book that it is lawful to kill a king who rules with tyranny, when the Pope has sentenced him to death ‡.

Mariana, the Spanish Jesuit, who flourished

* Morryson's *Irel.* 1591. fol. p. 11.

† See more on this subject in the next letter.

‡ The original Latin is quoted by Bishop Taylor—Bp. Heber's *Edit.* vol. 6. p. 581. This book was the ordinary manual of the fathers confessors of the Jesuits' order.

in the reign of Elizabeth, in his work *De Rege, et R. Institut.* lib. 1. c. 6. not only inculcates the same doctrine, but teaches the best way of committing the murder. He does not think that the dissatisfied subject should always wait for the decree of the Pope; but it is sufficient if a few seditious men, provided they are men of learning, are of opinion that the Sovereign is a tyrant.—*Postquam a paucis seditiosis sed doctis, cœperit tyrannus appellari**.

In the year 1610, an apology was published in Italy, *permissu superiorum*, “that all were enemies of the holy name of Jesus who condemned Mariana for his doctrine.” This Father had not defended the opinion, that assassination was lawful in general terms,—but justified the practice in a particular instance; namely, that of James Clement, the young monk, who murdered Henry III. of France. Bishop Taylor mentions the names of several Jesuits who had publicly commended the book; and Stephen Hoyeda, the visitor, and Peter Onna, the provincial of Toledo, approved and sanctioned it. It was printed with a special commission by Claudius Aquaviva, the general of the order, and inserted into the catalogues of their books by Petrus Ribadineira.

* Bishop Taylor, *ut supra*.

Again, then, I ask, had not the Queen sufficient reason to pass severe laws against the priests who taught such principles, and advanced the cause of the foreign enemy? Where was any treason in the known world, if it was not among the Romanists, in the reign of Elizabeth?

The severest act of the reign of Elizabeth was that of her twenty-seventh year. By this the Jesuits, who taught these opinions, were deservedly banished as traitors, and forbade to return under the penalty of death. All who harboured priests were subject to the punishment of fine and imprisonment.

This act was passed in the year 1585, the time of the Queen's greatest political danger*. Let us inquire what were the measures which induced the indignant parliament to come to an unanimous resolution to protect the Queen's person, and to pass this severe law. It will be found that this act also was the offspring of treason and precaution, and not of religious speculations and intolerance.

In the year 1581, we learn from Camden, that great numbers of Priests, Jesuits, and other Romanists, came into England. They supposed themselves safe on account of the

* See Rapin.

signing of the marriage articles between Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou. Some of them confessed that they had come into England with power to absolve every man, in particular from his oath of allegiance, from which Pope Pius' bull had absolved the whole nation in general*.

1582. The Queen was informed by Henry III. that the Duke of Guise was plotting in favour of Mary; and that the troops, then about to embark in Normandy, were not intended for Flanders, as the Duke had given out, but for England or Scotland †.

In 1584, Throckmorton's conspiracy was discovered. This man first confessed, then denied his guilt,—then retracted his denial, and lastly denied again all he had confessed. His treason was rendered undeniable, by the evidence of his own letters to the Queen of Scots. The Spanish ambassador, contrary to the principles of the law of nations, was implicated in the conspiracy, and was ordered to leave the kingdom. In Throckmorton's cabinets were found two catalogues,—one, of the most convenient ports at which to land troops,

* Camden ap. Rapin.

† Camden. Strypes' Annals, vol. iii.

the other, of Romanist gentlemen who might be depended upon. He confessed that he had often discussed with the English fugitives the best way of invading England,—that the Catholic Princes had formed a design to release the Queen of Scots, and to employ the Duke of Guise for that purpose,—and that the Spanish ambassador was freely consulted, because his public character made him free from suspicion*.

In this year the Protestant Prince of Orange, having been excommunicated, was assassinated by a Romanist.

In this year, also, the Duke of Guise was endeavouring to obtain the throne of France, because the heir to the crown, Henry of Bourbon, King of Navarre, professed the reformed religion*.

In 1585, Parry was condemned and executed for a conspiracy against the Queen. You endeavour to prove that this was the mere failure of an intrigue on the part of Parry to implicate others. Even if this was so, the fact is proved, that Elizabeth was in continued danger from a party which could be influenced by a book, in which he maintained that

† See the references in Rapin.

it was lawful and honourable to kill excommunicated Princes. Parry declared that he had read Cardinal Allen's work, and was persuaded by it, that it was right to murder the Queen.

After these circumstances, the indignant parliament unanimously resolved to take care of the Queen's person, and passed the act of banishment against the priests who had taught these detestable principles, and excited so much misery.

You attempt to exculpate the seminary priests from the charge of exciting these rebellions. You would acquit them of treason altogether. I am compelled to believe them guilty, from the testimony of Camden, Stow, Rapin, Taylor, as well as that of their own Romanist countrymen, who expressed their detestation of their opinions and doctrines, and accused them of ruining the cause of the Catholics. I believe it upon the confession of many who were executed, and by their equivocating or refusing to express their allegiance to the Queen.

Both Stow and Camden, says Rapin, have shewn, that the four first priests who were executed in England were condemned and executed for publicly maintaining that the Queen was lawfully deposed.

This statute against the priests was not passed, says Bishop Taylor*, “till after much evidence, both by the confession of the same priests themselves and divers lay persons, that many of them, at least, came into England to instigate the loyal to the execution of that bull. This appears from the trial of Mayne, the Jesuit, and M. Tregion, who were executed at Launceston for the same matter.”

A beautiful tract was published in the reign of Elizabeth by the Romanists themselves, against the Jesuits, entitled, “Important Considerations which should induce all true Catholics, who are not wholly jesuited, to acknowledge the mildness of her Majesty’s proceedings, &c. &c †.”

That these Seminarists were executed for treason, and not for religion, see the admirable tract of Lord Burleigh, printed in Bishop Gibson’s collection ‡.

For an account of the refusal of the priests to profess their allegiance to the Queen; which was, in fact, declaring their allegiance to the Pope and his party, I refer to your own narrative in the first vol. of the History of the

* Works, vol. vi. ut sup.

† Tracts against popery, tit. 13. p. 158.

‡ Vol. iii. tit. 13. p. 177.

Catholics of England ; and to the third vol. of Tracts against Popery.

Let us now put these circumstances together. It will appear that the severe act of the 27th of Elizabeth was absolutely necessary to the safety of the Queen, and the repose of the kingdom. It was passed at the time of the Queen's greatest political danger. She had been accused of punishing the Jesuits for their religion, and had anxiously defended herself against the charge. She now forbade the torture of the rack ; but banished the priests, on the discovery of a plot framed by the Pope, the King of Spain, and the Duke of Guise, to invade England. The religious Romanists were still taught that the Queen was a deposed heretic ; and the reality of the danger was demonstrated by the preparations of Philip. The Prince of Orange had been assassinated, and attempts were made by the Duke of Guise, the head of the Romanist party in France, to obtain the throne of that kingdom ; under the pretence that the lawful heir was a Huguonot, and could not inherit. If this had been effected, all Europe would have been united, from the Tiber to the Scheldt, under an ambitious and powerful Pope, against the religion and monarchy of England. Under these cir-

cumstances, a gentleman of Wales was found guilty of an attempt to assassinate the Queen; and urged in his defence, that he was induced to do so, from the arguments of a Cardinal, an Englishman by birth; who had proved to his satisfaction, that it was lawful and honourable to kill a sovereign deposed by the Pope. A general association was formed to protect the Queen's person, and the severe statutes were then enacted, which you describe as religious persecution. It is true, that the Romanists, by the exile of their priests, would be left without the ministers of religion; but the kingdom would lose its disturbers, and the Queen her traitors. Which alternative was the government to prefer? The conduct of the priests had reduced the Queen to this cruel dilemma. The sentence of exile was preferable to proscription, or a general massacre: to one of which dreadful alternatives the conduct of the Romanist party seemed to be in danger of reducing the government.

You have rightly mentioned, in your History of the Irish Catholics, that the Queen granted a delay of forty days, to enable the Romanists to leave the kingdom with convenience. You have, however, by some strange want of memory, omitted to relate this fact, in this letter

in your present work, in which you enumerate the Queen's acts towards her Romanist subjects. The reader, who is unacquainted with the common histories, would imagine from your present account, that the priests were sent away without due notice or warning. The truth is, that the Queen especially shewed her unwillingness to persecute, by the manner in which they were dismissed. To provide for her own safety, she banished them. The act of their banishment was done with so much lenity and moderation, says Bishop Taylor, that it seemed as if the Queen purposed to return good for evil, while she provided for her safety. She gave them forty days of preparation for their journey; and imposed no penalty for their longer stay, if any were sick, or the weather bad, or the wind foul—provided that they gave security for their due obedience to the laws, and attempted nothing against her person or government*.

Thus have I endeavoured to prove, that the establishment of our reformed Church was not effected by any cruel persecution of the Romanists. The sanguinary atrocities which at that time disgraced the partisans of Rome were not retaliated. It seemed as if the Pro-

* See also the account in Rapin.

vidence of God peculiarly protected the Protestants of England from the disgrace which would have attached to them ; not in their own, but in after ages, if they had condescended to needless cruelty and bloodshed. Some drops of blood have spotted the white robe of the Church of England ; but its garments are not dyed with the blood of its slain. No savage indiscriminate massacres ; no fierce decrees against large classes of our brethren, disgrace its history. It was built upon the solid foundation of truth. It is supported by usefulness. It is adorned by moderation and learning. It will flourish as long as the Scripture is rightly interpreted, and common sense is united with religion.

The Acts of the thirty-fifth and other years, were passed after the attempt of the Armada ; the discovery of other plots, and on account of the general state of parties with respect to religion, this also might be shewn to have been necessary under the peculiar circumstances of the time, though many of their enactments cannot receive the approbation of Protestants.

4. *The Execution of the Jesuit, Father Campian.*

We now come to your account of the Jesuit, Father Campian, who was cruelly executed

under the law against the Seminary Priests. I impute your omission of the former part of the History of this sufferer to a pardonable lapse of memory. From the revolting detail of the cruelties which were inflicted on this criminal, you would infer, as before, that both parties were alike sanguinary; and it is therefore disingenuous to impute that fault exclusively to the Romanists, which was common to them and their opponents.

I now quote from one of your former works some particulars of Father Campian previous to his apprehension *.

“After having taken deacon’s orders in the Church of England, he became a convert to the Catholic religion, and entered into the Society of Jesus. He was ordained priest, and taught for some time in the University of Prague. In all these situations he was much respected and beloved for his eminent learning and piety, and for his mild and pleasing manners. He returned to England, in order to exercise his missionary functions.” Having said this, you proceed to give in your book of the Roman Catholic Church, the very same account, which you have transcribed from the

* History of the English Catholics, vol. i. p. 178.

History of the English Catholics*. From this account we might infer that Campian came into the country as an innocent merchant and traveller, and was arrested and condemned solely because he was a priest, and believed in transubstantiation and purgatory. How great will be the astonishment of the reader, who has depended upon your *apparent* fairness and impartiality in your book of the Roman Catholic Church; when he hears, that Father Campian not only came into England at the very time when the doctrine of the power of the Pope to dethrone princes, and to absolve their subjects from their allegiance, was everywhere taught, both by himself and by the Jesuits†—when foreign princes were leagued with the Pope against the Protestant cause in general,—and when the nation was in danger of a civil war; but he came as the emissary of the Pope, to execute the bull of deposition under the sanction of a papal dispensation, which permitted him to obey the Queen under existing circumstances, the bull being still binding upon their Sovereign, and

* See twenty references to passages in the several works of as many writers collected by Bishop Taylor, vol. vi. p. 605. Bishop Heber's Edition.

† See the next letter.

her heretical subjects*. In your Book of the Roman Catholic Church you omit this. In your History of the Catholics of England you mention it. What other inference can be deduced from the conduct of Father Campian than this, that he believed the Pope to be right, and the subject to be bound to obey the temporal sovereign, till such time only as the Pope had power to enforce the decree, when she was to be deposed as the Pope commanded. This was a religious opinion. Are we to suppose that a zealous conscientious Romanist would have hesitated to instruct others in the same doctrine? He came into England to render service to religion. Rebellion to the Queen was a part of that religion. He had the dispensation of the Pope for temporary loyalty. If he should have chanced to have spoken with a heretic whom he believed to be still under the Pope's power, is it not probable he would have taught that heretic, that his duty was obedience to the Pope, and not to the Queen? If Campian had been accused of inconsistency, his reply would have been, "I have a dispensation for my pretended loyalty; you have none. You

* Taylor, vol. vi. p. 589.

are bound therefore to endeavour to depose the Queen. I am permitted to act loyally, till a proper opportunity presents itself to act otherwise, or till the Pope's dispensation is retracted." What State could be safe when its subjects might be loyal or disloyal at the command of a priest, who was supposed to be able to destroy both body and soul in hell*?

It is not a matter either of curiosity or of exultation to me, or to any Protestant, to observe the deplorable attempts which you have so uselessly made to reconcile this petition of Father Campian, and the dispensation for his temporary obedience, with the asserted perfect loyalty of the Romanists of this period. I quote your own words, and reply to them but briefly.

Finally, (you say, after relating some ques-

* *Petatur a summo Domino nostro, explicatio Bullæ declaratoriæ per Pium Quintum, contra Elizabetham, et ei adhærentes, quam Catholici cupiunt intelligi hoc modo, ut obligat semper, illam, et hæreticos; Catholicos nullo modo obliget, rebus sic stantibus, sed tum demum, quando publica ejusdem Bullæ executio fieri poterit, &c. &c. &c.*

Has prædictas gratias concessit Summus Pontifex Patri Roberto Parsonio, et Edmundo Campiano in Angliam profecturis. Die 14 Aprilis, 1580. *Tracts, &c. vol. iii. tit. 13. p. 171.*

tions proposed to Campian on his trial,) came the overwhelming charge, "You refuse," said the Counsel for the Crown, "to swear to the oath of supremacy."—"I acknowledge," says Campian, "her Highness as my governess and Sovereign; I acknowledge her, *de facto, et de jure*, to be my Queen, &c. As for excommunicating her Majesty," he proceeds, "it was exacted of me. Whether this excommunication discharged me of my allegiance or not, *is no part of my indictment*, neither is it given in evidence; neither is it fit to be discussed in the King's Bench. These things are no matters of fact, they are not in the trial of the country. The Jury ought not to take any notice of them."

Ought this defence to have been sufficient to have acquitted men, who refused to take the oath of supremacy, when they had come into the country, against an express act of parliament, and whose very loyalty to their temporal sovereign was an act of guilt to a foreign Pontiff for which they had requested pardon? Can the plea of religion be admitted to palliate the danger of such principles? Campian, you will say, was a pious man, and could have intended no evil. It is true: he was a zealous, well-intentioned, pious, virtuous man. So much

more to be dreaded therefore must that religion be, which could change virtue into vice, and make the duty of the heart to God a motive for rebellion, and a constant source of treason. The pious, the honourable, and the virtuous, those who feared God and loved religion, were made, by the *bull* of the Pope, the most dangerous of the Queen's enemies. Their devotion to God was identified with obedience to his earthly vicar.

5. I shall proceed to notice some of the miscellaneous observations in your present letter.

Mr. Hume avers "that sedition, rebellion, sometimes assassination, were the expedients, by which the seminarists intended to effect their purpose against their Queen." You deny the charge generally, by what you call seven unquestionable facts.

1st. Of two hundred sufferers, *one* only impugned her title.

Do you mean that they denied the authority of the Pope's bull? The mere fact of their receiving and acknowledging the bull was to deny her title.

2nd. They all persisted to the last to deny their guilt, except the mere exercise of their functions.

Was not teaching obedience to a foreign enemy, that is, to the Pope, a part of their function?

3rd. Their accusers were uniformly persons of bad lives, and of the lowest character.

They were necessarily discovered by spies, or betrayed by servants or accomplices, who are generally of this description.

4th. The torture never produced a confession of guilt.

They confessed that they had violated the law of England by obeying the Pope; this, under the existing circumstances, was unavoidable treason.

5th. Their trials were barbarously irregular.

They were unjustifiable in many instances; but not uniformly so.

6th. Even these produced no evidence of legal treason, only the exercise of their missionary functions.

The question is, as before said, whether these functions, under the circumstances, did not imply treason.

7th. The exercise of their missionary functions was seldom proved by competent evidence.

They generally confessed themselves missionaries.

With a great appearance of fairness, you request our candid opinion, if there is now any ground for the charge of disloyalty against the Seminarists?

With the same candour I answer, what do you here mean by disloyalty? Could the Romanist priest, if he was a conscientious man, be truly loyal to her against whom his spiritual father had armed all Europe? If the Romanists had been invested at this period with the power and authority of the state, would they not have obeyed the mandate of the Roman Pontiff? They had not the power to depose Elizabeth. They were loyal, inasmuch as they fought, and would fight bravely for the country of their birth; but the Sovereign of that country would have been changed by them, if the vigilance of the Queen had not prevented it. The democrat pretended to love France as much as an aristocrat, while he hated the Sovereign. Their love of England would have been the same, if the Queen of Scots had governed them. Their loyalty to their Sovereign would then only have been without suspicion.

2nd. You quote with triumph the answer of the Duke of Guise to the Huguenot assassin:—
“Your religion taught you to murder me; mine teaches me to pardon you.”—This answer

would have been more appropriate, if it had come from other lips than those which are said to have ordered the soldiers to fire on the wretched victims, who endeavoured to escape by the roof when the barn was in flames.

3rd. The Prince of Orange, you say, had been tried as a rebel, and condemned for contumacy; and his assassination was a political, not a religious, measure. It may be urged in reply, that his crime was Protestantism, and resistance to savage persecution. I am not anxious to prove that this assassination was the result of the religious principles of his enemies. Such is the general opinion; and there are many reasons on which that opinion may be defended.

4th. You deny that "the fanatics, who undertook to murder Elizabeth, were encouraged by a plenary remission of sins, granted for this especial service." Mr. Southey has omitted his references. I have not yet discovered an error when I have been compelled to inquire into the probability of his facts.

5th. You make a solemn appeal to Mr. Southey, in which you compare the persecutions by Protestants to those by the Romanists, and again leave us to infer that, both being once equally guilty, our mutual reproaches on this

head ought to cease. I answer as solemnly as you address us. *We* have no infallibility to defend. We have no principle of persecution to resign. You have both; and, unless the decree of the Council of Lateran, or the article in the Council of Trent, which sanctions all former councils, be repealed, the Protestant nation which confers power upon the Romanists, is guilty of a dereliction of its first duty.

6th. Your reference to Ireland deserves the severest reprobation. Its miseries proceed, you tell us, from the grand schism which has been the bane and pestilence of Ireland, and rendered her a blank among the nations of Europe.

Every effort which a wise and good government can make for Ireland is now in progress. The blessings of peace and repose would be secured to that part of our empire, if the agitators who declaim, and the assassins who murder and burn, would permit the population to improve the natural advantages of the country, and to reap the benefit intended by the British legislature. Ireland is no more a blank among nations than a limb of the body or a talent of the mind can be a blank in the person of an individual. It is as much an integral

part of our empire as Kent or Yorkshire. If the great schism can be cured only by the ascendancy of the Romish Church, and by granting political power to its adherents, the grand schism must be continued. If it can be cured by religious toleration—a paternal government—equal law—liberal principles of commerce—the gradual progress of knowledge—the prevention of absurd declamation by demagogues and political fanatics—if all these united can render Ireland happy, and heal the great schism, we are justified in anticipating the day when this great object will be accomplished, and Ireland be as peaceful and contented as every other province of the empire.

7th. The Spanish Armada. The Romanists of England, you remind us, armed in defence of the country against Philip, though his armada was blest by the Pope.

When the throne of George III. was endangered by the progress of jacobinical opinions, and the first revolutionary war broke out after the murder of Louis XVI., the gentlemen of England, who usually opposed the measures of the minister of the day, were as desirous to enrol themselves in the army and navy, and in volunteer, and militia, and yeomanry corps, as those who approved from the beginning of the

principles upon which the war was declared. Would you, therefore, infer that the government and the nation were not endangered by the prevalence of jacobinical principles, when thousands of the people would have hailed the sanguinary Jacobins as their deliverers? So it was with the war with Spain in the reign of Elizabeth. The Romanist noblemen and gentlemen would not see their country ravaged by the Spaniards; and the address which they published at that time is one of the most beautiful, though neglected, compositions of the age. Yet there was still danger to the country, when thousands would have welcomed the Spaniards, with their thumb-screws, and instruments of torture.

You exclaim against the injustice of passing severer laws against the Romanists when the Armada was defeated. The parallel may continue. Our precautions against Jacobinism were redoubled after our success. The Romanists were not unanimous in opposing Philip. Many gentlemen, among whom were Catesby, and others of the fifth of November conspirators, were committed for safety to Wisbeach Castle. And others were required to give security for their good conduct. So, also, many who were known to approve of French

principles at the beginning of the war, were arrested without trial, and others were vigilantly observed. In times of public danger, when the common safety is the great object, some discretionary power must be granted to a government, which may consequently oppress individuals while it preserves the state.

Thus have I concluded all I now think it necessary to observe on the reign of Elizabeth. It is the most important chapter in your book. It is written with more disingenuousness and sophistry than I should have anticipated, from your apparently manly way of generally meeting an argument. You have omitted to observe in it the state of England and of Europe,—the convulsions between the two parties over all the world,—and the danger of the Protestants. Your design seems to be to degrade the character, and disapprove the measures, of Elizabeth. You see only severe laws and oppressed Romanists. Your mode of reasoning reminds me of the manner in which our late venerable and amiable Sovereign was proved to have been an enemy to liberty. The Habeas Corpus Act, it was said, was necessary to the liberty of the subject; but George III. suspended the Habeas Corpus Act,—therefore, George III. was the enemy to liberty. So is Elizabeth

proved to be a sanguinary persecutor. Restrictive laws concerning religion are contrary to toleration ; but Elizabeth passed such laws ; therefore Elizabeth was a bigot, and a persecutor. In the former instance, the character of the Jacobin—the union of Revolutionary France with the populace of all countries—the disaffection of the people at home—and all the dangers of the peaceful and well-disposed community are forgotten, for the sake of the suspected and disaffected Jacobins, who were arrested on suspicion, for the safety of the state. In the latter instance, the sanguinary character of the Romanist partisan—the union of the Romish party with the common people throughout Europe—the discontent of the lower classes, who had been supported by the monasteries—and all the terrors of the sober and conscientious Protestant, are forgotten for the sake of the suspected Jesuit, and the disaffected priests, who were arrested for the preservation of the public peace. George the Third and Queen Elizabeth, two of our best, greatest, wisest, and firmest sovereigns ; two of the most deserving of the love and veneration of England since the days of Alfred ; are degraded by the misrepresentations of two opposite factions, among the basest and worst.

LETTER XVII.

JAMES THE FIRST.

SIR,

Before you proceed to consider the Gunpowder Plot, you would palliate the guilt of the conspirators who were engaged in it, by reminding us of the fair words and promises of James to his Romanist subjects, on their repeated declarations of loyalty and allegiance.

Where are these fair words and promises to be found? After an attentive perusal of your narrative of the transactions to which you refer*, I am unable to discover any sufficient evidence, that one explicit promise was ever made. Your great authority, the Jesuit Father More, has given us assertions, instead of facts and references. When we remember that the King, on his way from Scotland to England, released all prisoners, but those confined for papistry and murder; and that the dislike of the people to the Romanists made them rejoice

* *History of the Catholics of England, &c., &c., vol. iii.*
p. 228.

in this strange conduct ; an obscure intimation that the Romanists should enjoy a free exercise of their religion was not sufficient to justify either the hopes of the Catholics, at the commencement of his reign, or their subsequent accusation, that the royal word had been violated. Much less can it be pleaded, as an apology for the despair which you describe as so generally prevalent among them ; when the mediation of the Kings of France, Spain, and Poland, as well as of the Constable of Castile, was rejected ; and when peace was made without any “ stipulation in favour of your Communion, or any secret understanding that they were to be relieved in the slightest manner from the severities of the Penal Code*.” The King and Parliament would have acted a very unwise part, if they had permitted the foreign powers to lay down conditions for their conduct to those Romanists by whom the war had been encouraged and fomented.

The secret instructions which you suppose to have been given † by James, before the death of Elizabeth, to Drummond, were denied by him. He declares only, that his Majesty

* History of the Catholics of England, &c., &c., vol. iii. p. 228.

† Ibid. Page 271.

had never exercised any cruelty against the Catholics for religion ; and though he would persevere in his own religion, he was not so devoid of charity, that he could not think well of all Christians who continued in their duty to God and the King.

You refer to Winwood*, and to the declaration of Sir Everard Digby, on his trial, for proofs that " Secretary Cecil, in a conversation with some Catholics of distinction, had assured them that the King would not frustrate their expectations." The promises which are implied in these fair words of courtesy and kindness, were too vague and indefinite to justify the hopes of which they were made the foundation. The evident duty of Cecil was, to speak to the Romanists in the most general terms only, whatever might have been the wishes of the King. The universal jealousy on the part of the Protestants, and the events which took place at the commencement of the King's reign, rendered it impossible to repeal the laws against which the Romanists so loudly complained.

James came to the throne in 1602, after the kingdom had been agitated through the whole

* History of the Catholics of England, &c., &c., vol. iii, p. 278.

reign of Elizabeth with one continued plot, one civil war between the Catholics and Protestants. In the preceding year, thirteen Romanist priests had presented to the Queen a protestation of allegiance; "declaring their acknowledgment of her full authority, &c. &c. their determination to defend her Majesty against all, even of their own communion who should devise her death, or disturb the peace of the realm; to detect and reveal all plots whatever; and their resolution not to obey the Pope, if he commanded them not to defend their prince and country. They acknowledged the Pope to be only their spiritual Father, to whom obedience was due as to the Apostle of God."

It might have been supposed, that this declaration, after all their sufferings, would have been universally and willingly signed by the whole body of Romanists. It was delivered to the Lords in Council; and it satisfied both the Council and the Queen. How great will be the astonishment of those who have not perused your history of the English Catholics, when they learn, that this protestation was opposed by a most powerful party; that it was disapproved by the divines of Louvaine, and retracted by one of the signers. Even the

Pope approved of the oath; as in a later day he approved of the veto by the Crown, on the appointment of the Irish Bishops; but the more zealous agitators refused in both instances to comply with the wish of their spiritual Father, and renewed the distrust of the Government and the hatred of the people. So insecure and so doubtful is the allegiance of a zealous Romanist. It was evident that the object of one large party, at least, was ascendancy; and they refused, as they have uniformly done, even in our own age, the security of loyalty to the temporal sovereign*.

This circumstance, however, which was in itself amply sufficient to justify the veteran statesmen of Elizabeth, in their refusal to sanction any promises which their new sovereign might have made to the Romanists, was by no means the only event which revived their former jealousy.

Towards the conclusion of the reign of Elizabeth, the Pope sent to his nuncio D'Ossat; then in the Low Countries, three briefs, which were to be kept secret till he should be informed of her death. They were then to be

* History of the Catholics of Ireland, &c. &c, vol. iii., p. 232—240.

forwarded to England ; one to the clergy, one to the nobility, one to the commons. By these bulls, the three estates of England were exhorted to bind themselves to receive a Catholic king, whom the Pope should propose, for the honour of God, the restoration of the Catholic religion, and the salvation of their souls. The Cardinal, supposing that James would profess the religion of his mother, wrote to him an account of these briefs. James derided the project ; but learned to dread the pretension of Lady Arabella Stuart, the next heir to the throne, who was a Romanist. The people were exhorted not to permit any sovereign to govern them who would not promote Romanism to the utmost of his power, and engage himself by oath to do so, according to the custom of his ancestors in former days. It must be remembered also, that a book had been already published against the king's title to the throne ; and the mysterious and strange conspiracy of Sir Walter Raleigh, Lord Cobham, and the two priests, Watson and Clarke, in favour of Lady Arabella, took place immediately after the King's accession. These circumstances, when considered together, as they ought to be, will certainly justify the temporary delay both of James and his Ministers in

granting further concessions to the Romanist party.* There can be little doubt that the plots and intrigues of that portion of the Romanist party who had connected themselves with Spain, as well as the conduct of the Jesuits, were known to Cecil, by means of his numerous spies, and were developed to the pusillanimous Sovereign. It was probably shewn to the King by this experienced statesman, that if he had made unguarded promises to this party, the observance of those promises would be

* See Lord Coke's speech on Garnet's trial. Trial of Sir Walter Raleigh, Ap. Hargrave's State Trials, fol. edit. Butler's History of the Roman Catholics, vols. i. and iii. Rapin, and the State Papers referring to Garnet, lately discovered by Mr. Lemon. This gentleman, the Deputy Keeper of State Papers, has discovered and arranged a most valuable and interesting collection of original documents, relating to the Gunpowder Plot. With considerable labour, he has placed them in their regular chronological order; beginning with the original agreement between Percy and Ferrers for the hire of the vaults, May 24, 1604, under the Parliament House, and ending with the examination of the Earl of Northumberland, in June, 1606. From this invaluable collection, Mr. Lemon has compiled a very accurate descriptive Calendar, comprising the substance of each paper; and also an Index of Persons, with double references to the Calendar and to the documents themselves. This authentic and useful collection ought to be made public.

contrary to the laws of the realm, objectionable to the majority of the people, and injurious to the safety of the Sovereign.

With respect to the King's declaration, that he would persecute the Catholics, I may conclude that you refer to his assurance in the February following his accession, "that he never had an intention of granting toleration to the Papists; that he would wish the throne translated from his son to his daughter, if his son condescended to such a course; and that he had fortified the laws, and made them stronger," &c. ; for soon after this assurance a proclamation was issued, commanding all seminary priests to leave the kingdom, and never to return, upon pain of the utmost penalty of the law. This enactment, however, was the most lenient measure he could adopt; for so great was the prejudice at this time in England, that many condemned the King for not ordering the execution of the priests, who were only banished*.

The Gunpowder Plot.

In your history of the Catholics of England, &c., you quote, with seeming approbation,

* History of the English Catholics, vol. iii. p. 288.

various obscure writers, who have attempted to prove that the Gunpowder Plot was the invention of Lord Salisbury. You candidly acknowledge, indeed, that no single FACT has been discovered by you which could lead you to this conclusion; but you seem unwilling that the reluctant conviction of your own mind should influence your reader. It might have been expected, that before you had perused the documents concerning this event, which have been lately found in the State-paper Office, you would have adopted this hypothesis; but that you should have perused, in the original papers, the full confirmation of the most atrocious circumstances of this conspiracy, and still affirm, that “the result of your researches *has been favourable to the Catholic cause,*” has excited in many the most painful impressions. I shall follow your inquiry, first:—How far the whole body of the Romanists may be said to be implicated in this disgraceful conspiracy; and next;—The conduct, character, and death, of Father Garnet; whose name is still venerated by the members of his own communion.

I. That the guilt of this plot must be charged upon the Romanist party in general, will appear evident, if we consider that,

1. It was justified upon the principles taught by their Church ;
2. Upon the principles which were preached by their Instructors ;
3. Approved by their superiors ;
4. And executed by their Agents.—

(1.) It was justified by the principles taught by their Church.

The Council and Canon, which compelled all Romanists to destroy heretics, as a part of their most solemn duty, has been already quoted. It is the third Canon of the fourth Lateran Council; which has been sanctioned, among the other decrees, by the Council of Trent. This decree was certainly not considered as useless or obsolete, at the period of which we are speaking; though it would not be now openly defended by any Romanist in these kingdoms, who has received it as an article of faith.

(2.) These principles were taught in the reign of James, by the Priests, or Jesuits, or Instructors of the Romanists; to such an extent, at least, if not universally, as to justify the suspicions and jealousy of the existing governments.

That it is lawful to depose a prince who is a heretic, was taught by Emanuel Sa, by Bellar-

mine, and a host of theologians quoted by Bishops Hall and Taylor.

Eudæmon Johannes, who published an Apology for Father Garnet, is highly indignant with Sir Edward Coke, for asserting that this doctrine of the lawfulness of deposing princes was taught only by the Jesuits. “Non est Jesuitarum propria, sed ut Garnettus respondit, totius ecclesiæ; et quidem ab antiquissimis temporibus, consensione, recepta doctrina nostra est*.” And he enumerates twenty-seven authors, who are of the same opinion.

Creswell, the Jesuit, who taught about this time, tells us †, “Hinc etiam infert universa theologorum, et juris-consultorum ecclesiasticorum scholia, et est certum, et de fide quemcumque principem Christianum, si a Religione Catholicâ manifesta deflexerit, et alios avocare voluerit, excidere statim omni potestate ac dignitate, ex ipsâ vi juris, tum humani, tum divini ‡. The Canon Law also tells us expressly, “Dominus Papa principem secularem deponere potest, propter hæresim §.”

Not only was the doctrine taught that they

* Apol. pro Garnet. c. iii.

† Philopator. Num. 157, ap. Taylor, vol. vi. page 600.

‡ Philop. page 110. n. 162.

§ Gl. cap. Excommunicamus. tit de Heret. lib. 5.

may be deposed; the Romanists were instructed, that it was their bounden duty, on peril of their souls, not to suffer an heretical prince to rule over them. “*Certe non tantam licet,*” says Creswell*; “*sed summâ etiam juris divini necessitate ac præcepto, imo conscientiæ vinculo arctissimo, et extremo animarum suarum periculo, ac discrimine Christianis omnibus hoc ipsum incumbit, si præstare rem possint.*”

The duty of deposing a king, upon whom sentence of deposition had been passed by the Pope, implied also the necessity of killing him, if the decree of the Pope cannot otherwise be accomplished. That I may not appear to be deducing an inference which is unwarranted, I will add here, all the references which Bishop Taylor (who in the early part of his life may be called the cotemporary of those who were well acquainted with the plot) has given to the works of the authors who taught this doctrine. He has been proving that the Jesuits taught, when the Pope has passed the sentence of deposition, “it is lawful for a private man to kill him.” “That I say true,” says this most eloquent of all our Protestant Bishops, “I appeal

* Philop. page 110. n. 162.

to Gregory de Valentia *, Tolet †, Bellarmine ‡, Suarez §, Salmeron ||, Serarius ¶, Molina **, Emmanuel Sa ††, Azorius ††, Martinus Delrius §§, Lessius |||, Gretzer ¶¶, Becanus ***, Sebastian Heissius †††, Richeome †††, Eudæmon Johannes §§§, Salianus ||||, Filliucius ¶¶¶, Adam Tanner *, and the great Thomas Aquinas †. All these, and many more, teach the lawfulness of killing kings after public sentence. *Yet they deny that they commit regicide in so doing; because*

* Tom. iii. disp. 5, 9, 8. punct. 3.

† In suum. lib. v. c. 6.

‡ Apologia ad R. Angl. c. 13.

§ Defens. Fidei, lib. vii. c. 4.

|| In 13 cap. ad Rom. disp. 5.

¶ Quest. p. in c. 3. Jud.

** De just. et jure, tom. iv. tr. 3, d. 6.

†† Aphoris verb. tyrannus.

†† Instit. Moral. ii. p. lib. xi. c. 5. q. 10.

§§ In Hercul. furent.

|| De Instit. et jure, c. ix. dub. 4.

¶¶ Chauvesauris potit.

*** In resp. ad aphoris. Calvinistarum.

††† Contra Calvinist Aphorism. c. 3. ad Aphor.

††† In expostul. ad Henric. reg. pro societate.

§§§ In apolog. pro Henrico Garnetto.

|||| Ad Ann. Mund. 2669. v. 7.

¶¶¶ Tract 29. p. 2. de quinto præcepto Decal. n. 12.

* Tom. iii. disp. 4. q. 8. dub. 3. N. 32.

† Opusc. 20, et lib 1. de regim. præcip. c. 6.

the Pope having deposed the Prince whom they murder, they kill a private individual, and not a King.*

Father Campian, the manner of whose death you so much deplore, had long before taught, that all the Jesuits in the world had entered into a league, any way to destroy all heretical Kings; nor did they despair of doing it effectually, so long as any one Jesuit remained in the world †.

Neither can we be surprised that these doctrines should be taught. The consciences of many revolted at such opinions; but the Jesuit had surrendered *his* conscience to the govern-

* Bishop Taylor's Works, vol. vi. p. 605.

† *Jesuitas omnes in universo terrarum orbe foedus, ad reges Hæreticos quovis modo tollendos jam pridem iniisse. Quod (inquit) ad societatem nostram attinet, velim scias, omnes nos, qui sumus de Societate Jesu, per totum terrarum orbem longe, lateque diffusi, sanctum foedus, iniisse, vestras machinas facile superaturos, quam diu, vel unus quispiam e nobis supererit.*

Ita Campianus Jesuita, in Epist. ad consiliarios Angliæ Reginæ, Treveris excuss, Ann. 1583, p. 22, ap. Hospin Hist. Jesuit., p. 246.

Coventry's introduction to his tracts, quoted in the Introduction to a work, containing a collection of Tracts on the Gunpowder Plot, licensed by Mr. Secretary Coventry, December 12, 1678, page 42. This collection is rare. The copy, from which I make this extract, belongs to Mr. Lemon, the Deputy Keeper of State Papers.

ment of his Church, and had sworn to consider that black, which his own eyes saw to be white, if the Church so declared it to be*.

(3.) The principles on which the Gunpowder Plot was planned, were sanctioned by the Superiors of the Romanists, and by the Popes, whom they venerated. I have already mentioned the rejoicings at Rome, on the massacre of St. Bartholomew's day. A later instance, of the approbation of the murder of a Sovereign, had been afforded by the Pope. Henry the Third, of France, was assassinated, after excommunication, by a monk, in the very year in which the Spanish Armada sailed against England, with the blessing of the same Pope, with whom the Romanists were in open correspondence, and when the general conspiracy of the Romanists against the Protestants was at its height. Sixtus

* *Sublato omni judicio proprio, tenendus est semper paratus animus, ad obediendum veræ ecclesiæ; ut ipsi Ecclesiæ Catholicæ omnino unanimes conformesque: simus, siquid, quod oculis nostris apparet esse, album, nigrum, esse illa definient, debemus itidem quot sit nigrum pronuntiare;—* if the Church call that black, which our own eyes see white, we are bound to pronounce it black.

Exercitia Spiritualia Ignatii Loyolæ, Antwerp: 1635, page 238, et ibid.; regulas aliquot servandas ut cum ecclesiâ verè sentiamur. 5 Regul. 1 and 13, p. 138 and 141, quoted in the same introduction.

the Fifth was Pope; instead of censuring the action, he approved and commended the assassination, in a long, public, and official oration. That a monk has slain a King in the midst of his people, he considers “*Rarum insigne, et memorabile facinus. Facinus non sine Dei optini maximi particulari Providentiâ, et dispositione, &c.* ;” and then he goes on to say, that it was not only done with the special providence and appointment of God, but by the suggestions and assistance of his Holy Spirit; a greater work than Judith slaying Holofernes*.

(4.) The conspiracy must be imputed to the Romanists of that day, as a body; because it was the inference from the principles generally taught by the Jesuits, and intended to be carried into effect, as a religious duty, by the members of the Romish Church only. No political evil was a subject of complaint, which might have united other classes of the King’s subjects in the effort to remove the grievance. It was a deliberate act, to which the principal leader, “*Catesby*, was resolved, by the Jesuits, that it was both lawful and meritorious; and herewith, says Lord Coke, he persuaded, and

* See Sir Edward Coke’s speech at the trial of the conspirators. Hargrave’s State Trials, vol. i. fol. edit.

settled the rest, as any seemed to make doubt." They took an oath of secrecy, which was administered by the Jesuits Gerrard and Greenwell; and received the Sacrament, to make that oath more solemn.

What additional proof, that the Gunpowder Plot must be considered as the act of the general body of the Romanists, can be required? Can any society or body of men become responsible for their conduct to the government of a country, if they be not judged on such principles? Must *all* the individuals, who compose a sect or party, give their consent to every action, before we attribute to that sect or party, in general terms, praise or censure? When we see, therefore, that the deposition, and consequent assassination of Princes, was taught by the Canons of the Church, enforced by its teachers, sanctioned and applauded by its ruler, and practised by its laymen, we are justified in asserting that the Gunpowder Plot was a crime of the Church of Rome, and that its guilt must be imputed to the general body of the Romanists in England.

You would rest one part of your palliation of the treason on the small number of those who were actually concerned in the Plot. Sixteen only, at the most, you assert, were engaged

in it; and nine only of these were privy to the more atrocious intention. You then quote, with approbation, a coteemporary writer, who declares “that the conspirators were a few wicked and desperate wretches.”

I will not stop to inquire if this appellation can rightly designate Sir Everard Digby, one of the most mild, amiable, and respectable gentlemen of his age, and a favourite even of Elizabeth, whose only crime was a religion which taught him treason;—or Percy, who held an office in the court, and was of the family of the Earl of Northumberland;—or Wintour, who appears to have been blameless in other respects. I will beg only to remind you of the evidence which you confess to have read before the publication of your book.

The design of the conspirators, strange and foolish as it must now appear to have been, was to excite a general insurrection among the Romanists, immediately that the blow was struck. Wintour confessed that the meeting was to take place at Dunchurch*, by Catesby’s appointment. The day after the Plot had taken effect, the principal gentlemen of the Romanist party

* See the Confession in Collection of Tracts, licenced by Secretary Coventry.

were to meet at Sir Everard Digby's, under the usual pretence of a hunting match. When the discovery of the conspiracy was known, a gentleman, of the name of Grant, who was not in London when the Plot was discovered, associated with him several active partisans, and broke into a stable at Warwick, taking with them seven or eight horses, and made their way to Dunchurch. When they arrived there, and knew that all had become public, they resolved at once to assemble in arms, and make an open appeal to their party. They were joined by fourscore or a hundred horse, and were hotly pursued by Sir Richard Verney and Sir Richard Walsh, and others, till the whole party were killed or taken, at Holbeach, the house of Sir Stephen Lyttleton, in Staffordshire. If their Plot had succeeded in London, they would, probably, have been joined by the general body of the Romanists. For the extent of the Plot, and the particulars I have mentioned, I refer you to the State Papers Nos. 26 and 35, in which Sir Richard Verney, the sheriff of Warwickshire, gives an account of the number who had joined them, and the examination of the servants. In No. 42, you have read the seizure of three trunks of armour at Sir Everard Dig-

by's; as well as Sir Richard Verney's account, that the conspirators had increased to two hundred horse. In No. 55, you have read that Sir Richard Walsh, the sheriff of Worcestershire, informs the Lords of the Council, that the conspirators were in open rebellion, armed at all points, at Wintour's house, at Huddington: that they had gone on to Lord Windsor's, where they had taken some armour and artillery, (fire-arms,) and had proceeded thence to Sir Stephen Lyttleton's house, at Holbeach, where they had been overtaken, and Catesby killed.

Such are the evidences of the extent of the conspiracy, which you profess to have seen; and for the perusals of the originals of which you return your public thanks to the present Secretary of State. In your history of the English Catholics,* you quote from Mr. Hume these words;—"the conspirators with all their attendants never exceeded the number of eighty persons;" yet you have so entirely forgotten your own former quotation, as well as the later perusal, which elicited your very complimentary gratitude to the Secretary of State, that you assert;—"sixteen Catholics, at the most, were privy to the Gunpowder Plot;" and

* Vol. I. p. 257.

insinuate, that “ these were a few wicked and desperate wretches.”

You conclude* the Plot to be improbable, because the Romanist, as well as the Protestant Peers, would have been its victims.

Here again, either your memory has proved treacherous, or your reading has been less extensive than your friends could have desired. It is asserted by Lord Coke that this difficulty was foreseen by Catesby, who consulted Father Garnet, the superior of the Jesuits, “ if it were lawful to promote the good of the Romish cause against heretics, by destroying some innocent among many guilty.” Garnet answered—If the advantage to the Catholic cause, were greater by destroying some innocent with many guilty, it was certainly lawful to kill and destroy them all. He supported his argument by comparing this case to that of a besieged town. If at the time of taking the town there happened to be a few friends in it, they must undergo the general and common destruction.

II. *Case of Father Garnet.*

“ The melancholy story of Father Garnet,” which you have related with so much feeling

* P. 250. 2nd Edit.

and eloquence, in your history of the English Catholics*, has always appeared to me to present the most solemn warning to every Protestant Government; of the effect of the principles of Romanism on the most honourable and virtuous minds. Few men have been so eminently gifted as Father Garnet, with every accomplishment which could attract admiration and love. I use the words of the Jesuit More, which you have yourself quoted, p. 297, when I express the opinion which was universally entertained for this amiable and excellent man, by his cotemporaries;—"He was honoured by his acquaintance, loved by strangers, admired by all. There were indeed in him a penetrating genius, a keen and solid judgment, a knowledge of many subjects, a ready counsel, and singular ability; to these were added experience, that mistress of prudence, and, what are rarely united to these, simplicity of manners, and an open unsuspecting mind. Even in his trial, his adversaries could not refrain from praising him; they confessed that he was not only held in great esteem and favour among the Catholics; but even adorned by God and nature with many gifts; noble by birth, of no ordinary talents, improved by cultivation, and skilled in many

* Vol. iii. p. 288, &c.

languages."—He was honoured with the highest eulogiums of Bellarmine, Lord Northampton, and Lord Salisbury. Even the uncourteous Sir Edward Coke treated him with the utmost respect at his trial; and his own party venerated him as a Martyr. Such was the man who would have been, at any other period, the ornament of his Country; but who was now rendered, by an erroneous and sanguinary creed alone—I. The friend of the foreign enemy; II. a conspirator against his Sovereign; III. and an equivocating and perjured traitor.

I. Garnet was the friend of the foreign enemy.

This charge is proved from his correspondence with the Spaniards, the most powerful, open, and inveterate foe to England at that period. This correspondence is acknowledged in the state paper, No. 205. Garnet there confesses that the motion concerning Spain was begun in 1601, the year before Elizabeth died, at Whitewebb's, between Christmas and Candlemas. You will remember that hostilities were going on at that time between the two countries,—peace with Spain not having been concluded till April, 1604.

“This motion concerning Spain” is related by Sir Edward Coke, in his opening speech

at Garnet's trial; and likewise in that of the rest of the conspirators. In December, 1601, "Garnet and Desmond, the Jesuits, Catesby, Tresham, and others, send Wintour into Spain to invite the King of Spain to send over an army to England, which should be joined by the united forces of the Romanists in England. As the greatest difficulty arose from the transportation of horses, they engaged to have 1500 or 2000 horses in readiness against any occasion or enterprise. It was agreed that the Spanish troops should be landed, in the spring of the ensuing year. Cresswell, the Jesuit, was in Spain to forward the negotiation;" and Garnet confesses, in this same paper, that he corresponded on the subject with Cresswell.

Not only did Garnet thus treat with that foreign and powerful enemy, who was in arms against his country; he extended his plans to the head of his Church, another avowed enemy, also, of his Sovereign, and received from the Pope the three briefs which have been already mentioned,—which, in the event of the death of the Queen, were directed to the Romanists, exhorting them to obey none who refused to maintain and establish the ancient faith. In a detached paper, which has been lately discovered, and which you have not perhaps seen,

Garnet confesses that he had once these briefs in his possession, but that he had destroyed them. The paper, which I beg you to examine, is the original supplementary examination of Garnet, and is dated April 25, 1606.

Sir Edward Coke asserts that the correspondence respecting the landing of the Spanish forces was continued between Garnet and Cresswell after the Queen's death; but it is not necessary to proceed further in this part of the inquiry.

II. Garnet was a conspirator against his Sovereign.

As the documents on the Gunpowder Plot, which have already been discovered in the State Paper Office, confirm all the assertions of the Attorney-General on those points to which they refer, we may conclude from this fact, that the other parts of his speech, at the trial of the conspirators, were founded upon good evidence. If this inference be correct, we may assert that Garnet, even if he had received the first information of the Plot, in confession, as he repeatedly and strenuously asserted, was present in June, 1604, with Catesby and Tresham, at a conference concerning the strength of the Romanist party in England; and then the question was discussed, whether

the Pope should be informed,—and in August, Garnet appointed Sir Edward Baynham to proceed on a mission to Rome. In September, Father Parsons wrote to Garnet, to learn the particulars of the Plot. In October, the conspirators met at Caughton, in Warwickshire. On the first of November, Garnet openly prayed for the good success of the great action, about to happen at the commencement of the parliament. Such is Sir Edward's statement of the proofs that Garnet was well and long acquainted with the conspiracy. It is not impossible that other papers may be discovered which shall prove or disprove all these assertions.

It must not be forgotten that Garnet, in the first year of James, had taken out a pardon under the great seal, according to the King's Proclamation, for all the treasons he had already committed; he was bound, therefore, by the common laws of honour and gratitude to abstain from all conspiracies*.

Let us examine the defence of Garnet on this point. It is said that he cannot justly be called a conspirator; for he received his knowledge of the Plot in confession, and his religion forbade him to violate the secret, and reveal the treason.

* Speech of Sir Edward Coke.

Confession in the Church of Rome is generally considered, by Protestants, to be that declaration of an action done, or a crime committed, which requires absolution from the priest, to whom the confession is made. The Church is said to require the most inviolable secrecy from both parties. When Garnet urged in his defence that he received his first intelligence of the Plot in his capacity as confessor, the account was discredited; and he was further examined, whether it was revealed to him strictly under the seal of sacramental confession. I refer you for his reply to the same detached paper of the supplementary examination, dated 25th April, 1606, and endorsed, "The examination of Henry Garnet at the Tower."—I will extract the passage:

"Being now demanded upon his priesthood to affirm sincerely, notwithstanding anything heretofore said, whether he took Greenwell's discovery (of the Plot) to be in confession or no?"

"He answered, that it was *not in confession*, but by way of confession, which may be done in conference of great points or need of study, or want of time, though it be a good while after."

Being asked, how often they conferred of this?

“ He sayth, so often as they mett he would ask, being careful of the matter, but new question he did ask him none.”—25th April, 1606.

From this statement it appears, that Garnet merely conferred with Greenwell upon the subject at different periods; that Greenwell did not confess the conspiracy as a sinful action, which had been already committed, but as a plan which was about to be executed.

Even however if it be supposed that Garnet was consulted as a confessor, he was permitted, according to the opinions of many learned men of his own Church, to reveal the intended crime; and in not doing so, he forfeited his character as a priest, and became the mere conspirator. “ If a sinful intention,” says Bishop Taylor, “ of committing a grievous crime, be revealed in confession, and the person confessing cannot desist from, or will not alter his purpose, that the seal of confession may be then broken,” is affirmed by Alexander of Ales*, by the Summa Angelica†, which also reckons five cases more in which it is lawful to reveal confessions. The same also is

* Par. 4. q. 28. mem. 2. art. 2. in respons.

† Confessio ult. num. 7.

taught by Panormitan*, by Hostiensis †, the Summa Sylvestrina ‡, and by Pope Innocent himself§. Such is the assertion of Bishop Taylor, and such are the references by which it is supported ||.

The life of a king, and of the whole senate, depended upon the conduct of Garnet. If he did not reveal the secret, he was guilty of treason. If his concealment of the Plot be defended upon the pretence usually adduced, the world ought to know that Romanism is consistent with murder and treason. If the error be that of the individual, we must cease to accuse his religion; and then you will retract your praises, and confess that Farther Garnet deserved his fate as a traitor. Either his religion, or the individual, was execrable. Which will you resign to its fate?

* Cap. omnis de Pœnit. et Remiss. num. 34.

† Super 5. cap. omnis.

‡ In confess. 3. num. 2.

§ In cap. omnis verb. prod.

|| See Bishop Taylor's Works. Bishop Heber's Edit. vol. ii. p. 6, on the seal of confession. See also De Soto, who was one of the Council of Trent, and other references, ap. Bp. Taylor, vol. iv. p. 615. Non enim inducitur obligatio Sigilli in confessione, quam quis facit, sine ullo animo accipiendi absolutionem, ad solum petendi causâ.

III. Garnet was an equivocating and perjured traitor.

You would palliate though you will not justify the equivocation of Garnet*; because you consider it an extreme case †.

Garnet had positively asserted, on his priesthood, that he had no correspondence with Greenwell, the Jesuit, since they had met at Caughton, in Warwickshire ‡. It appears from the papers, that the Lords, when they asked this question, had the letters which Garnet had written since that meeting in their possession. Not knowing this, he persisted in his denial: the document to which I refer you, thus concludes—

“He saith, all that which is here above written, he protesteth to be spoken without equivocation.”

The passage is signed by himself, and countersigned by Nottingham, Suffolk, E. Worcester, H. Northampton, Salisbury.

I next refer you to the document in Mr. Lemon's folio arrangement of the papers relating to the Gunpowder Plot, No. 218. From which it appears, that subsequently to this

* *History of the English Catholics*, vol i. and iii.

† Detached paper, dated April 25, 1606.

denial of his correspondence with Greenwell, his own letters had been shewn him. He was then asked, proceeds the paper, if it were well done of him upon his priesthood to deny before the Lords, and to set his hand to it, that he did not send message nor write to Tesmond alias Greenwell, the Jesuit, since he met him at Caughton, knowing it was false. He replied, He had done what he might lawfully do, and they were not justified in asking him, and to urge him upon his priesthood, when they had his letters; for he would not have denied his letters if he had seen them; but supposing the Lords had not his letters, he did deny them, as he would in all cases, as "he might lawfully do."

When this declaration excited surprise, he was requested to write down his deliberate opinion on the subject, which he did in the following terms:—

"This I acknowledge to be according to my opinion, and the opinion of all the schoolmen; and our reason is, for that in cases of lawfull equivocation, the speech by equivocation being saved from a lye, the same speech may be, without perjury, confirmed by oath, or by any

other usual way, though it were by receiving the sacrament, if just necessity so require.

“HENRY GARNET*.”

This, however was not the only instance of the fatal effects of the doctrine of equivocation which was taught at this time by Garnet himself, as Superior of the Jesuits, and of course by the pupils whom he instructed. Francis Tresham had confessed that he had corresponded with Garnet, who had also made the same confession. Tresham died in the Tower; and dictated to his servant Vavasor, when at the very point of death, a recantation of that confession, which his Superior had acknowledged to be true †. Garnet was asked what could be meant by this conduct on the part of Tresham. To which he coolly replied; “I suppose he meant to equivocate.”

Some time before the death of Elizabeth, a book was published, entitled, “Treatise on Equivocation.” This book was patronised by Garnet, who, without altering the contents of the work, erased the title, and wrote another; this was, “A Treatise against Lying and Fraudulent Dissimulation;” whereas it was, in fact,

* The name is spelt indifferently.

† See State Paper, No. 211.

a defence of both. Blackwell, who had been elected Arch-priest or Principal, to decide the differences which might at any time arise among the Romanists, adds his approbation to the book in the following terms :

“ Tractatus iste, valde doctus, et vere pius, et Catholicus est. Certe S. S. Scripturarum, Patrum, Doctorum, Scholasticorum, Canonistarum. et optimarum rationum præsiidiis plenissime firmat æquitatem equivocationis. Ideoque dignissimus est qui typis propagetur ad consolationem afflictorum Catholicorum, et omnium piorum instructionem.”

The book which was thus intended to prove the lawfulness of equivocation, was found in Tresham's desk, after his death. I refer you to State Paper, No. 208, and to Sir Edward Coke's just remarks on this subject;—“ This,” he observes, “ is the fruit of equivocation, (the book whereof was found in Tresham's desk,) to affirm manifest falsehoods, upon his salvation, in ipso articulo mortis. It is true no man may judge in this case; but it is the most fearful example that I ever knew, to be made so evident as this is.” The paper is addressed to Lord Salisbury, and is dated, March 24, 1605—6.

After this conduct on the part of an inferior, we

cannot be surprised that Garnet himself should be guilty of the same sort of equivocation at his last moments. Something of the kind seems to have been anticipated; for the King had commanded the Recorder to attend.

When he was led out for execution, he again asserted that he knew the particulars of the plot in confession; the Recorder reminded him that his own hand-writing proved;

1. That Greenway told him of the conspiracy not as a fault of which he had intelligence, but by way of consultation.

2. That Catesby and Greenway came to Garnet to be resolved.

3. That Tesmond the Jesuit and himself had conferred on the particulars of the plot in Essex.

4. That the appointment of a Protector was to be deferred till after the blow had been struck.

These, said the Recorder, prove that it was not merely in confession that you obtained your information respecting the conspiracy. Garnet then acknowledged that whatever was under his own hand was true; and he was justly condemned because he had not disclosed the treason: for this, and for this only he asked forgiveness of his Majesty.—Such is the account

in the state trials. Your (or Father More's) narrative,* is somewhat different. He asserted, you say; "I am now dying, because I did not reveal a circumstance told me in the sacrament of confession, in which though I sinned against God, yet I seem to most people to have offended against the king, &c."

"Some person then objected to him, that Catesby had discovered his intentions to him out of confession, and had said that he had the hand-writing of Garnet himself as a proof of that fact. Shew me the hand-writing, said Garnet; if it be really my writing I will not deny it; I am however sure that you can produce nothing of this kind;—the person who interrupted him said: He had left the paper at home." Garnet then again asserted, that he was free from every thought of this kind;—that is, that he had heard of the plot only in confession." The truth probably was, that the paper was among the official documents of the examination; and this person could not have had Garnet's account of his conferences with his accomplice, unless he had been deputed by the court to take them. This circumstance was so improbable, that Garnet, anxious to preserve the

* History of the English Catholics, vol. iii. p. 342.

credit of his Church, might venture, in perfect safety, to assert, even at this moment, that he received the knowledge of the plot in sacramental confession.

From a review of all the circumstances, we are justified in asserting that the declaration of Garnet, that he received the knowledge of the Gunpowder Plot in sacramental confession, was false. No crime was confessed, no absolution required, no secrecy demanded, as a religious duty. The conspiracy was considered a good action, and the conferences with the conspirators cannot be palliated with this excuse. Repeated consultations on an intended crime cannot be interpreted as a confession of guilt, requiring absolution. If the Church of Rome or its adherents will defend this monstrous proposition, it is worse than the most jealous of its opponents have hitherto imagined. The dying assertions of Garnet must be considered, like the dying recantation of his brother conspirator Tresham, an act of equivocation for the benefit of his Church. The great object with Garnet uniformly seems to have been, to save, if possible, his own life; and next, to avoid any confession which might be supposed to reflect the least censure on his communion. When he was

prisoner in the Tower, permission was granted him to write to his acquaintance and friends. Availing himself of this privilege, he wrote to a person, apparently about a trifling want; the note was very short, and was written on a large piece of paper. The contrast between the brevity of the note, and the quantity of paper, excited suspicion. It was examined; and then it was found he had written with lemon juice, that directions should be given to his Romanist friends to deny the truth of the charges which he had already confessed. He said he hoped to escape from the charge of being one of the gunpowder conspirators, from want of proof*.

Such as he had thus proved himself to be during the continuance of his imprisonment, such he remained to the last. I pity you, indeed I pity you, when I read your laboured and useless apology for the conduct of this man †. You dare not censure the Church under whose sanction he acted; it is your own infallible communion. You dare not cen-

* This paper was referred to by Lord Coke. It is now in the State Paper Office, and was shewn to me by Mr. Lemon, whose son has very skilfully, and carefully deciphered the characters; which were evidently hastily written, and are in some instances almost illegible.

† History of the Catholics of England, vol. iii. p. 354.

sure the Jesuit himself; he is venerated as the confessor and martyr for Rome. No expression of indignation, no phrase of contempt for his doctrine of equivocation, escapes you, when you attempt in vain to justify his conduct, and to apologize for his principles or motives. "He might justly be found guilty," you tell us, "by a court of law, while a court of honour would think gently of his case." A court of honour!!! Did it never occur to you that he should be tried by a still higher tribunal than these? Take your friend to the bar of Christianity. Demand that he be judged by the infallible Scriptures. There plead his cause. Open the accusation; urge his defence; say that your Christian brother and instructor, the Jesuit Garnet, was cruelly imprisoned and condemned to die, because he was intrusted with the design to murder the Prince and Senate of a whole people, and he refused to reveal the secret,—for he was the servant of God. Relate his equivocation; tell how he confessed his guilt, and then desired his friends to deny it. Enforce his dying confession,—that he would have regretted the success of a conspiracy, which he might have prevented but would not; for he was a minister of the Church of Him, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again!—Hear the decision of the

law, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Listen to the sentence of Christianity on your equivocations and your Gunpowder Plots;— "Who hath required this at your hands?" Your apologies, your palliations for Garnet, are made in vain. He died with a lie in his mouth. He died asserting a falsehood. He died the traitor to his King, the foe to his country, the hater of its laws, the friend of its enemies. He died peacefully and piously, supporting the legends of his Church with his last breath; and gaining strength from the superstition which venerated the wood of the cross, instead of the Holy One who bled upon it. He died not the death of a hypocrite; for his falsehood was justified by his faith, and he might have believed it to be sanctioned by his Church. By wickedness he would have served God; by equivocation he would have supported religion. He died a martyr, a liar, and a traitor.

Are we not justified in regarding with suspicion, an unalterable, and unaltered religion like this? When did a Protestant thus die? When our loyalty was inconsistent with our duty to God, we peacefully and openly resisted our Sovereign, as the laws of our land and the chartered rights of our institutions per-

mitted. When Hough won his "unsullied mitre," by appealing from the King's commissioners to his Majesty in his Majesty's courts of justice, no falsehood, no treason disgraced the firm yet courteous advocate of the privileges of his College and his Church. The time has been, and the time may again arrive, when the sanction of the state shall be withdrawn from our episcopacy. Other Kings than James may endeavour to dispense with our laws. Other successful and unprincipled statesmen than Cromwell, may be borne on to power with a popular clamour, against the hierarchy of the Established Church. The experience of the past will then be the precedent for the future. Falsehood shall not disgrace us. No gathering vapours shall dim the splendour of the mitre. Our clergy may suffer as martyrs, but never as traitors and liars.

IV. The oath of allegiance required by James I. from the English Romanists, after the Gunpowder Plot.

So great was the indignation of the people upon the discovery of this disgraceful treason, that Sir William Waad wrote to Lord Salisbury, to request the assistance of a guard for the protection of the Spanish ambassador and his

suite. The attachment of the people to the King was not only shewn in the most decided manner by their joy at his escape—their agitation on the report of another conspiracy was such, that a proclamation was published to quiet their fears. The hatred towards the Romanists increased in proportion; and the parliament, to tranquillize the Protestants, and to distinguish the large party among the Romanists from that lesser though more active number, who excited prejudice against the whole body, enjoined a new oath of allegiance, which might be taken without scruple by every loyal and well-disposed subject. The King had already declared that he was not disinclined to the persons of the Romanists; he required only security for the peaceful ordering of his government. The King, as Mr. D'Israeli has fully shewn, was by no means deficient in talent or information, though want of judgment and some pedantry lessened his general esteem. His estimate of the objectionable opinions maintained by the Romanists, and of their consequences upon the peace of the kingdom, may be still mentioned with approbation.

“For the part of the Romanist Priests,” he says, in his first speech from the throne, “I must directly say, that as long as they main-

tain one special point of their doctrine, and another point in their practice; they are no way sufferable to remain in this kingdom. Their point of doctrine is, that arrogant and ambitious supremacy of their head the Pope; whereby he not only claims to be spiritual head of all Christians, but also to have an imperial, civil power, over all kings and emperors; dethroning and decrowning princes, and dispensing and deposing kingdoms. Their point of practice is, the assassination of princes; thinking it no sin, but rather a matter of salvation, to do all actions of rebellion and hostility against their natural sovereign, if he be once cursed; his subjects discharged of their fidelity, and his kingdom given a prey by that three-crowned Monarch, their head.—Yet if they would leave, and be ashamed of their new and gross corruptions, those only which they themselves cannot maintain, and deny not to be worthy of reformation, I would be content to meet them half way, &c. &c.”

Pursuant to these declarations, he shewed as much favour to the Romanists before the Plot, as the well-grounded dislike of the people permitted; and he appealed to this conduct in his subsequent address to the Kings of Europe, to prove that he was not a persecutor.

After the treason, he adopted the same line of proceeding, "to the end." He says, "that I might make a separation, not only between all my good subjects in general, and unfaithful traitors, that intend to withdraw themselves from my obedience; but especially to make a separation between so many of my subjects, who, though they were otherwise Popishly affected, yet retained, in their hearts, the print of their natural duty to their sovereign *." And the oath was so drawn up, that you freely confess, no Romanists at the present day would refuse to take it. It disclaimed, you observe, (p. 286, 2nd edit.) the Pope's deposing power absolutely, and without any qualification; and abjured as impious and heretical the damnable doctrine, that princes excommunicated, or deprived by the Pope, might be deposed or murdered by their subjects, or any other whatsoever. I extract the oath, as it is given by you, at length, in the History of the Catholics of England †. The modern Protestant will be more able to judge of the disposition of the King and Government to conciliate the great body of the Romanists.

* Butler's Hist. of the Catholics, vol. i. p. 268.

† Hist. &c. vol. i. p. 273.

“ I, A. B., do truly and sincerely acknowledge, profess, testify, and declare, in my conscience, before God, and the world, that our Sovereign Lord, King James, is lawful and rightful King of this realm, and all other his Majesty’s dominions and countries; and that the Pope, neither of himself, nor by any authority of the Church, or See of Rome, or by any other means, with any other, hath any power or authority, to depose the King, or to dispose of any of his Majesty’s kingdoms, or dominions, or to authorize any foreign Prince to invade, or annoy him, or his countries; or to discharge any of his subjects of their allegiance, and obedience to his Majesty; or to give licence or leave to any of them to bear arms, raise tumults, or to offer violence, or hurt, to his Majesty’s royal person, state, or government, or to any of his Majesty’s subjects within his Majesty’s dominions.

“ Also, I do swear from my heart, that notwithstanding any declaration or sentence of excommunication, or deprivation, made or granted, or to be made or granted, by the Pope or his successors, or by any authority derived, or pretended to be derived, from him or his See, against the said King, his heirs, or successors, or any absolution of the said subjects

from their obedience; I will bear faith and true allegiance to his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, and him and them will defend to the uttermost of my power, against all conspiracies and attempts whatsoever, which shall be made against his or their persons, their crown and dignity, by reason or colour of any such sentence, or declaration, or otherwise; and will do my best endeavour to disclose, and make known, unto his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, all treasons, and traitorous conspiracies, which I shall know, or hear of, to be against him, or any of them.

“ And I do further swear, that I do from my heart abhor, detest, and abjure, as impious and heretical, this damnable doctrine and position; —That Princes, which be excommunicated, or deprived, by the Pope, may be deposed, or murdered, by their subjects, or any other whatsoever.

“ And I do believe, and in my conscience am resolved, that neither the Pope, nor any other person whatsoever, hath power to absolve me of this oath, or any part thereof, which I acknowledge by good and full authority, to be lawfully ministered unto me; and do renounce all pardons and dispensations to the contrary.

“ And all these things I do plainly, and sin-

cerely acknowledge, and swear, according to these express words, by me spoken; and, according to the plain and common sense and understanding of the same words; without any equivocation, or mental evasion, or secret reservation, whatsoever; And I do make this recognition and acknowledgment, heartily, willingly, and truly, upon the true faith of a Christian.

“ So help me God.”

Such was the oath required by the Protestant government of England, (in an age when toleration was not taught,) of a class of subjects, who were suspected of being generally concerned in the most atrocious and sanguinary treason, which had ever disgraced the annals of this country. Were the Romanists willing to take it? The great majority took it gladly. They were happy to return to their allegiance, and to throw off the suspicions under which they were so oppressed. The Arch-Priest Blackwell, who had been appointed by the Pope, instead of a Bishop, to superintend their affairs, and to communicate with Rome, encouraged them to take it; and set himself the example. When the Commons wished to insert a clause, “ that the Pope had no power to ex-

communicate the King; James forbade its insertion; he wished only for his own security. Why then was there further jealousy? Now was the opportunity afforded for an entire oblivion of the past; at the moment when the Protestants were in power, and might be expected to take revenge for the conspiracy, and when the Romanists too were most unprotected, and feared persecution. The wounds of the nation might have been healed, for the overture proceeded from the stronger party—but the Pope forbade the banns, and the marriage of the parties was prevented for ever. Blackwell was deposed for his loyalty*. The first brief which the Pope had sent over, was supposed to be a forgery; so improbable, so impossible did it appear to the Romanists, that he could be so decidedly the enemy both of the peace of the kingdom, and the tranquillity of the Romanists of England. They imagined, says Rapin, that it was a forgery of their enemies, to draw them into a non-compliance with their duty. In the following year, however, a second brief commanded them to abjure the oath, on pain of forfeiting their salvation. A

* Butler's History, &c., vol. iii. p. 411. Mr. Butler's own statement appears to warrant all Mr. Southey's assertions.

long controversy began among the Romanists on the extent of the deposing power; but the result was, that the foreign Pontiff was obeyed. Obedience to the temporal sovereign was decided to be inconsistent with religious duty. The jealousy of the two parties was made permanent, and the nation is divided by the means of the Pope only, even till the present moment. The King of England condescended to publish to the whole world, a fair and candid account of his motives, and wishes, and conduct; and the guilt of the national disunion remained with the Romanist party. The same kind of oath is still required. Objections of the same nature are still urged. The divisions of opinion among the Romanists themselves, and the impossibility of uniting even our opponents in their petitions, still continue. Never, I again, therefore, assert, never can there be peace among our people—harmony in our councils,—or union of our energies and resources, unless the authority of the Pope of Rome, whether spiritual or temporal, be utterly and finally abjured. We may palliate, define, defend, and explain, as we please, the nature of spiritual dominion; but, wherever it may exist, and whatever it may be, it is uniformly identified with political power; and the believer

in the dominion of the Pope offers divided allegiance to his Sovereign.

With this event, the great contest between the Protestants and Romanists may be said to terminate. In the reign of Henry the Eighth, their power was equally balanced. The King became possessed of unlimited authority, because either party feared to offend him, lest the royal sanction should be given to their opponents. Under Edward, the cause of the Protestants triumphed. No fires burned in Smithfield; no sanguinary persecutions disgraced the Protestant ascendancy. Under Mary, the cause of the Romanists was successful. Her usual designation reminds us of the consequence. With Elizabeth, commenced the reign of precautions and treasons; of plots and conspiracies; of jealousies and penalties; which terminated with the Gunpowder Treason, and the rejection of the Oath of Allegiance, to an indulgent Sovereign, at the mandate of the ancient enemy of the realm. The storm raged no longer; but the billows were not hushed to repose, till the voice of the nation, at the Revolution, commanded peace. One hundred and forty years of religious and political tranquillity attest the wisdom of the most solemn national compact which the people and sove-

reign of a great country ever yet established. If the vessel of the state is again beginning to be agitated by the sound of the distant storm; the same principles which directed our fathers, can alone preserve us in the danger.

LETTER XVII.

CHARLES I.

SIR,

THE state of the Catholics and Protestants has been so uniformly the same, from the time when the oath of allegiance was rejected in the last reign, that little remains to be added on the subject. Their mutual jealousies have continued to the present hour, on account of the refusal on the part of the Romanists to give those securities, which the Protestant Government requires, for the right performance of the duties of subjects, and of the consequent suspicions on the part of the Protestants arising from the maintenance of *unaltered* principles, and the profession of

altered conduct. Neither can any effectual plan be proposed to reconcile the subjects of our Empire; but the entire abjuration of foreign interference, with the thoughts, words, or actions, of the individuals of England and Ireland. I shall glance but very briefly over the sections of your remaining letters.

You notice in the reign of Charles I. the conduct of the people to the Romanists—their sufferings and loyalty.

The reins of royal authority were relaxed, and the deep-rooted prejudices, and hatred of the people, to the members of your communion, appeared more plainly. The people remembered their equivocation, and their treason, their correspondence with Spain, and the Gunpowder Plot. They loathed the name of a Romanist, as the enemy of God and man. They saw their Queen of that hated religion, and they feared the future. We do not defend the cruel and savage executions of the unfortunate men who were condemned to death for a religion which was thus considered treason. They were the recrimination of the People, unrestrained by royal power. But let it be remembered that there was no article of the Protestant Church, no public decree, no canon nor council among us to justify any persecu-

tion. All were acts which were produced by the alarm, and fear, and hatred, with which an exasperated people were stimulated from the experience of the past.

You comment on the loyalty of the Romanists. With whom could they take part in the civil commotions of the age? They could not adopt an infamous neutrality. They were unable to espouse the cause of the Puritans, who scorned their religion, and detested their persons. They defended the cause of their King, who, at least, desired to serve them. The Crown, in the preceding reign, would have been their protector; but the Pope had forbidden their allegiance, and thereby destroyed the hope of their reviving influence. The unfortunate Charles dared not, and the weak Pontiff could not, shelter them from the popular indignation. Their bodies were the servants of the Prince; their consciences were still obedient to the Pope, who had not directed them to forsake the standard of their Sovereign. The Queen was a Romanist; her defenders were of the same communion. They were brave and loyal. If the Queen had not been of their Church, and if the Pope had directed them to remain tranquil, the list of noblemen and gentlemen who fell in the ser-

vice of the unfortunate Charles, might have been much diminished. Neither is loyalty to the Stuarts any criterion of loyalty to the reigning family. The loyalty of the Romanists was not conspicuous in behalf of the Brunswick dynasty, either in 1715, or in 1745. The Pope had not blessed the cause of the House of Hanover, and the Romanists were not found in the ranks of its defenders.

LETTER XVIII.

CHARLES II.

SIR,

If my view of the causes of the general dislike to the members of your communion, which prevailed through the whole of the last reign, as well as that which we are now to consider, has been correct, there is little necessity that I should delay you much longer with any observations on the particular points of your present letter. They are seven:

1. Charles's violation of his promise on his accession to the Crown.

2. The criminations of the Romanists by Mr. Southey.

3. The Corporation and Test Acts.

4. The act of the thirtieth of Charles II. disabling the Romanist Peers and Commons from sitting in Parliament.

5. Oates's plot.

6. James II. Bill of Rights ; Act of Settlement.

7. Superstition and Idolatry of the Church of Rome.

1. Charles was unable to perform his promises without the consent of his Parliament. If you consider the national dislike to the Romanists at this period, it may not seem improbable that he would have rendered himself insecure on his throne, if he had ventured to make any exertions in favour of the friends of your Church. There is abundant reason to believe that he was always privately attached to your faith, and did not dare to avow it. Burnet tells us, that he sometimes communicated in the Romish and Protestant chapels, in the same day. Nothing prevented him from declaring his faith, but his fear of the people. Surely then he cannot be accused of violating his promise, when the Parliament, by means of which alone he was to keep his word,

rendered him fearful of professing his own creed.

You compare the promises which were made by Charles with the expectations which were held out to the Irish Romanists, at the period of the union.

If Mr. Pitt and his friends made such a promise, Mr. Pitt and his friends have endeavoured to redeem it. The people of England do not, and I trust will not, give their consent that the Romanists should be restored to political power. They are willing to grant you every religious privilege which is consistent with the safety of the state. But they believe that their ancestors, who excluded you from the senate, were neither unwise nor capricious men. They inquire into the reasons why the laws of exclusion were past; and when they see that the Romanist frequently became the friend of the foreigner, because his religious duty compelled him so to serve God, they concluded that his allegiance to his Sovereign, and his love to his country, were alike imperfect. Their descendants observe, that the Romanists of the present age are tenacious of the same opinions of their fathers. They believe, therefore, that the causes of the enactment of these laws continue, and consequently that the laws them-

selves ought not to be repealed. Laws ought only to cease with the causes for which they are enacted. The people and the parliament have hitherto maintained this opinion; and the eloquence of Pitt, of Burke, and Canning, and of the most able of our senatorial debaters, has not yet removed the conviction which has been produced by the evidence of history. I will not,—I do not, I hope, offend you, when I say, that my fervent prayer to God is, that the laws of our fathers be not repealed, and that the fearful experiment be not again tried, of reviving in the slightest degree the influence of Romanism in England.

2. Mr. Southey is able, and probably will be willing, to defend himself against the charges you have brought against him in this section. I have little doubt that the members of your communion will regret, that even their highly-talented advocate, Mr. Butler, has ventured to challenge this able writer, in the present important discussion.

3. The merits of the Corporation Act must be discussed by others. Its advantages appear to have been the perpetual preservation of the public peace, and this exclusion of all religious dissensions in the corporate bodies to which it is applicable.

The Test Act was certainly passed under the apprehension, then generally entertained, of a Romanist successor to the throne. You consider it now to be inapplicable. We, on the contrary, believe it is more than ever essential to the public quiet. In conventional and political language, when we talk of a King, we do not only mean the individual person who fills the throne, but the magistrate who preserves and protects the commonwealth, by ruling, on certain immutable principles, every department of the state. It is the individual, or the council which is responsible to the laws, in the manner which the law has appointed, and Himself has sanctioned. We require that this responsible magistrate must be a Protestant. As the political person of the King is to be found in his ministers of state, and in the heads of the church, of the army, of the navy, of the law,—we require that all these must be Protestant, or the law is evaded. The Test Law, therefore, is still essential to the maintenance of the constitution of England.

4. The act which excludes the Romanists from the senate.

The oath which excludes them is that against transubstantiation and the invocation of saints. These are declared to be idolatrous and super-

stitious. You vehemently object to these epithets, and attempt to prove that no Protestant is justified in making this assertion. I refer you rather to the discussion of these points by Bishop Stillingfleet, who seems to me to have demonstrated, that it is both idolatrous and superstitious to bow down to a wafer, or an image; or to *venerate* a saint, even if we observe the distinction of your Church, and do not actually *worship* them. With respect to transubstantiation, we have no other words than these to express our opinion of him who kneels down to a thin bread-cake after the priest has blessed it, believing that the palpable substance is the very and material blood and bones of Him who is in Heaven. If we had more expressive terms than these we would use them, to describe our opinion of him, “ who taketh flour, and with part thereof he maketh bread, he eateth, and is satisfied; with part thereof he maketh a god, he falleth down, yea, he worshippeth it.” What shall we say? We may not assert that all this is idolatrous and superstitious! Oh, no! we must repel the thought as blasphemy! Kneel on, then, and cry aloud, for it is a god; for the flour was good—and the water was good—and the priest was rightly ordained—and the worshipper be-

believes not his senses, nor his understanding, nor his reason, nor the Scriptures.

5. Oates's Plot.

I have already said, if the Gunpowder Plot had never been planned, that of Titus Oates would never have been believed. At this time the Act was passed, which excluded you from Parliament; and you attribute your exclusion to popular clamour. In one sense, it might be so; it was certainly the immediate cause. The national hatred which had been occasioned by centuries of contest, and mutual exasperation, and not by the fears and jealousies of that period only, were the real and positive causes of that useful and necessary measure.

6. The Bill of Rights.—The Act of Settlement.

Of the measures of James II. which closed the long contest between the Romanist and the Protestant, by that great and solemn national act, which called another dynasty to the throne of these realms, you observe—“In theory, *his* (James II.) *project for effecting a general religious toleration* was entitled to praise; but as the public mind was not disposed to receive it favourably, it was unwise; and the means which he adopted for carrying it into

execution were unconstitutional. None disapproved of his measures more than the Romanists." You endeavour to prove that the object of the national measure which brought in William, was the exclusion from the throne of all Roman Catholic Kings, and their heirs, and that only ; and, therefore, any grant to the Romanists, except the throne, is permitted by the Bill of Rights, and the Act of Settlement.

What credit can be given to the advocates of your Communion, when they read in the pages of the most candid and accomplished of their number, the declaration of his opinion, that the measures of James II. may be denominated a "*project for effecting a general religious toleration.*" The Protestants call *the actions of King James an attempt to effect those measures which the Romanists still desire to accomplish*, but which the present age, adhering to the wisdom of their fathers, have hitherto successfully resisted. Let us examine his general toleration in the Army and the Navy, the Council and the State, the Law and the Church. It will then be seen that the innovations which excluded him from the throne, were principally those which you, and your party, are daily and yearly calling upon the King and the Parliament to repeat.

The Army was remodelled by the bestowing of commissions upon Irish Romanist officers. The forces of Lord Tyrconnel were entirely Romanist. The army, in England, was filled with more difficulty ; and the singular spectacle was presented, of their laying down their arms, by whole regiments, in the presence of their infatuated Sovereign.

The Navy was ready to mutiny, in consequence of an order that Mass should be said in the ships ; and the Priests were threatened with personal violence.

In the Council, Father Petre, a Romanist Priest, was admitted to their consultations, on the benefit of the Church and State, with Protestant Lords and Bishops, who had sworn their abjuration of his political and religious principles.

The State was convulsed with the general attack on the civil liberties of the subject, by the violation or suspension of charters ; and by the intrusion of Romanists into places of confidence and authority.

The Laws were dispensed with at pleasure ; the King tampered privately with his Judges, till they consented to defend his usurpation.

The Church, the principal and hated enemy of the crimes and follies, the errors and the

conduct of his Communion, was the chief object of his arbitrary violence. Placed, as it must always be, in the van of the chartered defenders of the civil and religious liberties of England, it felt all the weight of his power.

Four new officers; four foreign Romanist Bishops, under the title of Vicars Apostolical, were invested with powers hitherto assigned to the Protestant Bishops of the Church of England. Licenses to teach in public schools, that is, to place Jesuit masters at Eton, Westminster, &c., were granted to professed Romanists. The Archbishopric of York was kept vacant longer than precedent permitted, as was reasonably supposed, till an opportunity presented of giving it to Father Petre. A new court of Ecclesiastical Commission was invested with general and *undefined* power. A Protestant Bishop was commanded to punish a Clergyman for the faithful discharge of his sworn duty, according to the existing laws. An ambassador was sent to the Pope, to revive and restore the influence of the ancient enemy of the peace and religion of England. The privileges of the Universities were violated; the adherents of the Romish faith being thrust into the places of Protestants. Contrary to the existing laws, the Nuncio of the Pope was publicly received, and went with

the King to Mass. The very teachers of passive obedience and non-resistance were provoked to remonstrate, and were sent to the Tower for presenting petitions according to the law of the land. Such were his offences; yet we have lived to hear the tyranny and bigotry of this infatuated King, denominated a project for general religious toleration.

Even the open-heartedness of the sailor, the character in which the King had been so much beloved by the people, was subdued and annihilated, by the pernicious influence of his religious opinions. When a report arrived that the fleet of the Prince of Orange was dispersed, the revocation of the edict which displaced the President of Magdalen College was cancelled. When the news was proved to be erroneous, he was again recalled to the office to which he had been legally elected, the public confidence vanished with the conviction of the royal insincerity. The throne was vacated, the kingdom abandoned, and the Protestant religion restored. The theories of speculative politicians were realized for the first time in the history of mankind, when the people assembled in their free and Protestant Senate, and deliberately assigned the throne to their deliverer. The express as well as im-

plied condition of this solemn act was, that the power and influence of the assertors of the corruptions of the Church of Rome be for ever banished from the Government of this country. A Protestant was called to the throne, that the fountain of honour might flow purely through all the departments of the royal authority:

b You would limit this sacred compact to the individual possessor of the throne. Do you really believe, that the people would have permitted the Prince of Orange to have surrounded his throne with Romanist Councillors; to have filled his Army and his Navy, the Church and the Law, the Council and the Senate, with the partisans of that religion which James had espoused; and which the Prince of Orange had been invited to depose from all influence in the Government? It is indeed a mockery to talk of a Protestant Sovereign, and Romanist Councillors. If the heads of departments may be Romanist, and if the subordinate officers may be so likewise, why must the Sovereign be limited in his choice of a religion? When the Commons voted, "that it had been found by experience to be inconsistent with the peace of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a Popish Prince," could it be supposed that they did not include the condemnation of a Ro-

manist Council, in their meaning of the word Prince? The learned casuists of your communion can reconcile all difficulties of this nature. They can teach the killing of a king, and condemn regicide; because the King must not be killed till he is excommunicated and deposed by the Pope, and then he is a private individual. And when murder may be reconciled with the sixth commandment, the admission of a Romanist to political power in England may be reconciled with the exclusion of James, and the election of William to the throne.

When the Protestant line of the Stuarts failed, the inestimable blessings which this great revolution had secured to the people were perpetuated by a renewal of the national charter of Protestant civil and religious freedom, in the calling to the throne the House of Brunswick. Should the royal head of that house ever be tempted to sanction the enactment which restores to the Romanists the privileges which they enjoyed under James II., would not the compact between the people and the king be broken? Would not the throne belong to the House of Savoy? The Senate might be guilty of the breach of faith; but would the principle which made *him* the Sovereign of England still exist? Would not the

Protestant cause be shorn of its locks of strength, and be again delivered, bound hand and foot to its Philistine enemies? Do you say we dread your power, and needlessly tremble? We do not dread your *power*. We dread the breaking out of the old controversies. We dread the violation of the public peace, and the weakening of the national councils, on all points connected with the religion and morality of the country. We dread the surrendering of the Protestant ascendancy, and the resignation of that most solemn principle, which has secured to us, for a century and a half, a state of unexampled public quiet, and liberty, and greatness.

Since the solemn compact at the Revolution, we have rescinded many unjust laws against the members of your communion. What has been the consequence? When the Government was severe, you gave us no disturbance. In the same proportion as we have repealed the ancient, obnoxious, and severe statutes, you have increased in presumption, till you now threaten, or cajole, or insult the Legislature. With every concession you have demanded more. You were oppressed, and you petitioned for relief. From relief you proceeded to demand toleration. From toleration you required a

participation of the elective franchise, admission to the bar, honour in the army and in the navy. You required protection for your religion, education for your Clergy, the removal of proscription ; all have been granted. You have obtained influence ; you now demand power.

Your English countrymen are not a capricious people ; they are not cruel, they are not deficient in judgment. We have refused to rescind the decisions of our ancestors at the Revolution, because you remind us that you maintain the same opinions, and offer the same divided allegiance to a Protestant Prince, and the same perfect allegiance only to a Romanist Sovereign. That your possession of power is incompatible with the happiness of a Protestant people, is the lesson we learn from history ; and while we have still reason to believe this, though we will grant you every honour, happiness, blessing, and privilege which a wise government can bestow—though we bid you worship your God as you please—obtain wealth—live respected and in peace—we will not grant you political power. If England admits you to its Senate, a new impulse will be given to religious error over the whole world. If the Church of Rome again obtains possession of

political power in this country, that Church will again become formidable to the liberties and religion of mankind.

7. On Mr. Southey's repeated charges of Superstition and Idolatry against the Romanists.

You shrink so painfully from these charges, that I fear I should but offend you, were I to attempt to prove, that Mr. Southey's opinion is defensible; and that I am compelled to agree with him, and with the great majority of Protestants, in the justice of these accusations.

I conclude with a few words on your insinuation respecting those who revile, and those who advocate the Catholic cause. The former appear to you to be very uncourteous, and ungentlemanlike; the latter are much more kind, and dignified. You quote, for the third time, the expression of the amiable and conscientious opponent of your petitions, the Earl of Liverpool:—"I have heard allusions to doctrines, which I do hope no man now believes the Romanists to entertain; nor is there any ground that the question is opposed upon any such pretence."

What may be the grounds on which it may please this enlightened and distinguished statesman, to oppose or support your petitions,

is not now the subject of our discussion. I look to your articles of faith, to ascertain the doctrines which you did believe when you rendered our free and religious ancestors, jealous of your civil and ecclesiastical ascendancy; and I am assured by you, and by every advocate of your communion, that you are unchanged and unchangeable. The re-action of opinion from infidelity has begun; and it has gone to the opposite extreme of Romanism; instead of resting in the true medium, Protestant Christianity. The unchangeableness of your creed, and the revival of your influence, compel me to believe, that the laws which our ancestors enacted ought not to be repealed. Deducing my conclusions from such premises; anxious as a Christian for the progress of truth, and as a citizen of a great and free nation, for the success of that civil liberty, which is the uniform attendant of Protestantism, I am not anxious to inquire the sentiments of modern statesmen; neither am I influenced by the most eminent names. Will you allow me to recommend you, in your next edition, to expunge the frequent argument, which is rather insinuated than expressed, arising from the use of such names as Pitt, Burke, Fox, Grattan, Canning, the Earl of Liverpool, and many others. Believe me, they

have no weight with him who desires facts ; and rests his argument on this solid foundation.

You add that the decent and the polished always wish to consult your feelings. I shall be grieved if my plain and unvarnished statements have caused pain to the humblest of your party ; but the grief which I should feel on the occasion, would not render me insensible to the claims of truth, nor prevent me from the discharge of an imperious Protestant duty.

“ In the most solemn manner,” you conclude, “ we have protested against all intemperate language, all rancorous and illiberal invective, all harsh and insulting expressions. We bear no animosity to individuals of any communion, nor of any party ; we embrace all our countrymen and fellow-subjects as friends and brethren, and most earnestly desire to be united in the participation of every right and blessing which we solicit for ourselves.”

I am grieved that you apply this eloquent language to the accusation which my judgment, after some deliberate inquiry, believes to be well founded ; namely, that the members of your communion are idolatrous and superstitious. The application of these words, to designate the worshippers in your church, may seem harsh, intemperate, and illiberal. I can-

not consent to retract them. I know well it is the fashion of the day to stigmatize as intolerant, and uncandid, the more anxious Protestants, who oppose the petitions, or resist the claims of their Romanist fellow-subjects to political power. I am acquainted with many, infinitely more able than I can be, to advocate the Protestant cause, whose nerves have been unstrung, with the apprehension of the popular clamour. I desire only to seek and to serve truth; and provided that her fair cause may prosper, I trust I am indifferent whether I am dragged as a victim at her chariot wheels, or ride in triumph by her side. I am not one who will be bowed out of his religion; nor complimented from his firmness; nor flattered from his resistance to error. By adopting such language as that of the paragraph to which I refer, you would represent the Romanists as an oppressed, patient, liberal, supplicating, body; unstained with the imputations of history, unworthy of the jealousy with which you have been treated. I have represented you differently, for I have believed you to entertain opinions which eventually will be alike injurious to civil liberty and true religion, if your petitions for political power be granted. I know not whether I feel most scorn, or in-

dignation, or contempt, for the popular charges of bigotry, illiberality, and intolerance, which are diverted from the Romanist to the Protestant; and are intended to "fright the *Church* from its propriety."

The latter part of your courteous wish cannot be accomplished. When all our countrymen and fellow-subjects can proffer undivided allegiance to their Prince; when they can offer perfect security to the Legislature, for participation in every blessing which you solicit, your prayer may be answered. You describe your petition for political power improperly, when you term it your "right." You have no rights in a state of society, but those which the law gives you.

I have thus proceeded through those portions of your work which appeared most worthy of notice. I shall be sorry if I have said any thing which can give you just offence; and I beg you, as well as those of my personal friends who are of your communion, to accept my apologies if I have done so. Courtesy is not inconsistent with our supposed duty, either as Christians or as citizens. The manly avowal of our sentiments ought rather to be a bond of union, than a cause of dislike.

I conclude with begging you to accept my thanks for the pleasure I have derived from the perusal of many of your former publications.

I have the honour to be,

With the greatest respect,

Your faithful and obedient Servant,

GEORGE TOWNSEND.

London, April 7th, 1825.

THE END.

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