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POPERY CONDEMNED

BY

SCRIPTURE

AND

THE FATHERS.



POPERY CONDEMNED

BY

SCRIPTURE AND THE FATHERS :

BEING A

REFUTATION

OF THE

PRINCIPAL POPISH DOCTRINES

AND

ASSERTIONS

MAINTAINED IN THE

REMARKS ON THE REV. MR. STANSER'S EXAMINATION OF THE REV. MR. BURKE'S LETTER OF INSTRUCTION TO THE CATHOLIC MISSIONARIES OF NOVA SCOTIA,

AND IN THE

REPLY TO THE REV. MR. COCHRAN'S FIFTH AND LAST LETTER TO MR. BURKE, &c.

By THOMAS M'CULLOCH,

PICTOU.

— I thank him, he hath bid me to a calf's head; the which
if I don't carve most curiously, say my knife's naught.

SHAKESPEARE.

EDINBURGH :

PRINTED BY J. PILLANS & SONS, LAWNMARKET.

1808.



P R E F A C E.



THE following Réfutation was occasioned by a virulent attack upon the Protestant religion, and a defence of Popery, which has been published anonymously, and circulated with great industry through Nova Scotia and the adjacent provinces. Though I have no wish to excite animosity among the subjects of a Government, whose indulgent mildness ought to satisfy every religious party, I conceived it my duty to appear in defence of those principles which our ancestors have transmitted to us with the testimony of their blood. It appeared to me, also, that something of this kind was requisite in a country where books upon the Popish controversy are rarely to be found, and where Papists propagate their doctrines with a zeal that would do honour to a better cause : And besides, the Author of the Remarks needed a little wholesome castigation, to prevent him from arrogating to himself a victory, to which he has no claim. I have neither appeared in defence of Dr. Cochran

nor Mr Stanser. They are both able to fight their own battles. The Remarks are surnamed, *A Reply to Dr. Cochran's Fifth and Last Letter* : they might have been termed, with greater propriety, an invective against his person.

The Remarker, from a defect of judgement or some other cause, has produced his assertions without form or arrangement. I have therefore reduced them into a regular series. As my design was to direct the attention of the reader chiefly to the leading points of debate between Protestants and Papists, I have overlooked many errors and falsehoods contained in the Remarks ; because they could not be introduced without perplexing his mind, and diverting him from the principal object in view, and also swelling the Refutation to an immoderate size. But in the topics discussed, I have shifted no argument nor quibble which he had advanced, either to support his own principles, or to oppose the Protestant religion. In stating them to the reader, I have used his own language ; and even his quotations from scripture are given in his own form. The only liberty that I have taken, is the omission of a multitude of Hebrew and Greek scraps, which he has tagged to his English version of the scriptures, from a childish pedantry, and to impress his readers with an
idea

idea of his amazing erudition. It is not an acquaintance with the grammatical construction of languages, that constitutes either a man of learning, or a good writer upon controversy.

In the Refutation, I have taken the Remark-er upon his own principles. As Papists deem scripture an insufficient rule, I have added those human authorities to which they pretend to refer, and shown their principles to be equally inconsistent with scripture and antiquity. His dogmatic assertions I have sometimes contrasted with the sentiments of other Popish divines, and sometimes with the Fathers. The reader's attention, however, is most frequently directed to the latter, that he may see how little reason Papists have to boast of their assistance. " 'Tis common," says the Remarker, " with all innovators and pretended reformers to reject the authority of these sublime writers whom we Catholics call the Fathers of the Church *." To show, therefore, to whom these epithets properly belong, I have quoted the Fathers as often as he could desire.

The profusion of abuse which he has poured upon the first Protestant reformers, I have passed entirely in silence. At that species of rea-

soning, I humbly acknowledge his superior merit. Like Mr. Burke, his predecessor in the war, he seems to think the vilest calumnies laudable, when they tend to the support of the Popish system *. His wrath appears principally directed against Luther, whom he has loaded with every epithet which rage and malice could invent. The reason has been long ago assigned by Erasmus, a Papist more celebrated for the shrewdness of his observations, than for his friendship for the Romish clergy: "Luther," says he, "had two faults; he touched the "monks' bellies, and the Pope's crown."

Thomas Lord Cromwell is another of those characters whom he attempts to bespatter with his filth. He is pleased to style him "an out-cast from the dregs of Pultney, an arch-villain," with other appellations as happily devised. If it reflect disgrace upon a person, to have raised himself, like this worthy nobleman, from the lowest station in life to the highest dignities, solely by his talents and virtues, the Remarker has no cause to nourish anxious forebodings

* "I pass in silence," says that writer, "other party writers, not less virulent than he, holding it unfair and inconsistent with the morality of the Gospel to traduce before the public any man, much more so any body of men, *but in the case of self-defence: I reason,*" &c.

Postscript to his Let. of Instruct. p. 55

things of future animadversion. He is in no danger of being held in ignominious remembrance by posterity. Had he been born among the dregs of Pultney, he would have remained among the dregs of Pultney still. The memory of Lord Cromwell will be dear to every friend of religion and social virtue, when the Remark-er and his Remarks have descended with great quiet into the land of forgetfulness. The arch-villainy of this amiable reformer consisted in his opposition to the abominations of the Popish clergy of that period, and his successful attempts to diffuse real religion and rational information.

The Remarker also endeavours to represent the exertions of this nobleman and his friends in behalf of religion, as “such a complication
“of hell-invented stratagems and monstrous
“crimes as startle horror itself*.” But the reason is obvious; they exposed the vices of the clergy, discovered the deceptions by which they had imposed upon the credulous, or the “simple faithful,” as the Remarker terms the laity of the Romish Church; and, what he seems chiefly to deplore, they deprived them of that immense wealth, which had enabled them for many centuries to perpetuate their abomina-

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tions.

* P. 14.

tions. I have no intention at present to disprove his calumnies, by a recapitulation of the filthy practices which were then discovered in many of the religious houses in England. I will leave him to those consolations which he can derive from a refuge of lies, and, for the credit of human nature, let them rest in peace. Nor would I wish the reader to believe, that all the Romish clergy are actuated by the same sinister views. There are still many in that Church, who deplore its general depravity, and abominate the selfish spirit of their brethren; who cherish a high esteem for the scriptures, and entertain the most exalted views of the nature of religion. By consulting the Reports of the London Bible Society, the reader will see, that there are some among the Romish clergy, who have surmounted the prejudices of education, and rejected many of the trammels of Popery; who glory in the cross of Christ; and who rejoice in the efforts of Protestants to turn the attention of men to the scriptures.

The style of the Refutation may appear to some rather severe. It is not, indeed, that to which a candid opponent is entitled; but its justification will be found in the tone of the Remarks. To have given him the reply which Solomon directs*, severity should have degenerated

* Prov. xxvi. 5.

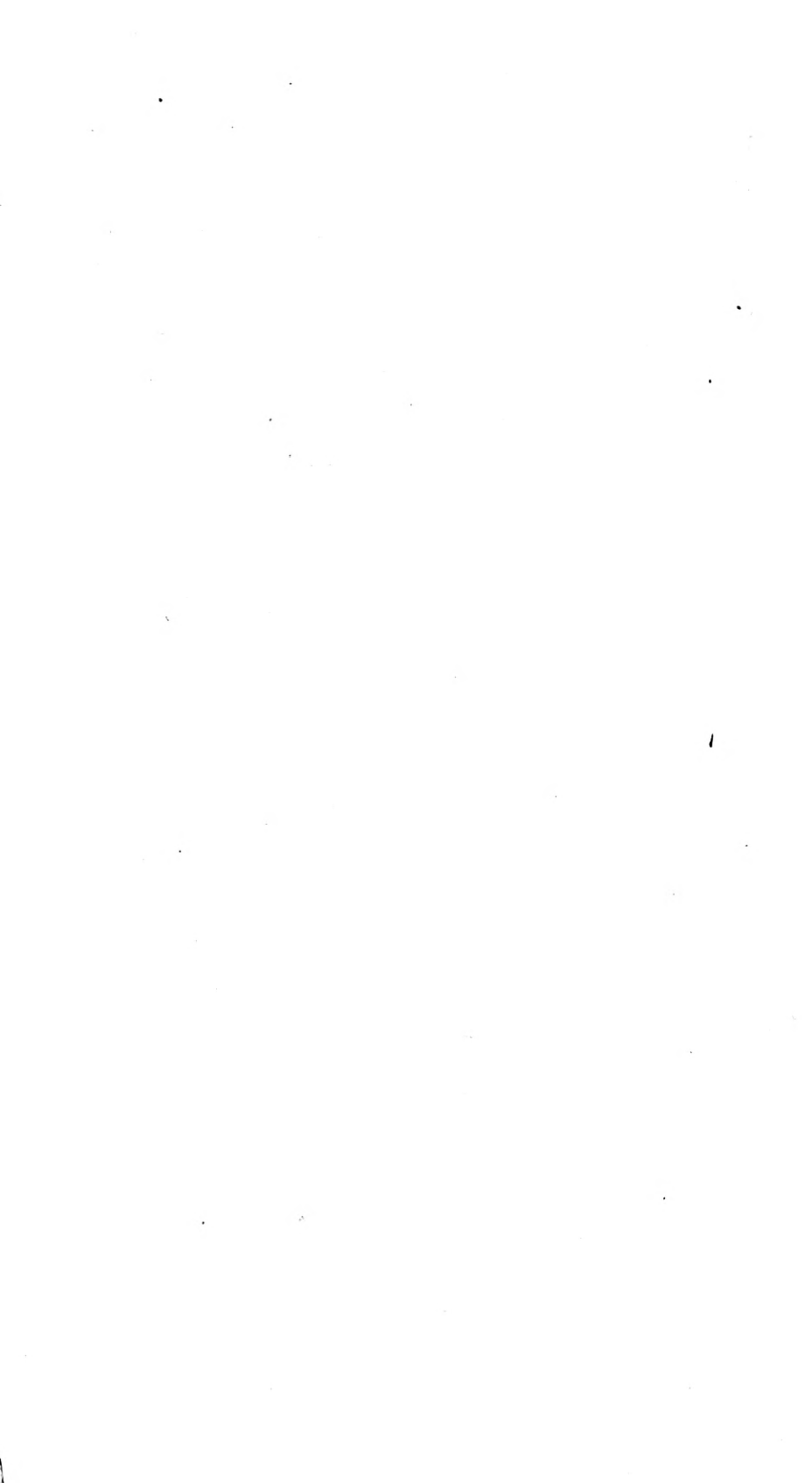
rated into ill nature. The Remarks exhibit much angry malice and many falsehoods, many quibbles without accurate reasoning, and a pedantic show of learning without one particle of sound erudition.

It was a party-coloured dress
 Of patch'd and pye-ball'd languages :
 'Twas English cut on Greek and Latin,
 Like fustian heretofore on satin.
 It had an odd promiscuous tone,
 As if h' had talk'd three parts in one ;
 Which made some think, when he did gabble,
 Th' had heard three labourers of Babel ;
 Or Cerberus himself pronounce
 A leash of languages at once.
 This he as volubly would vent,
 As if his stock would ne'er be spent ;——

HUDIBRAS.

N. B. In the following sheets, R. stands for Remarker, or the anonymous Author of that Pamphlet to which they are intended as a reply.

C O N-



CONTENTS.

	Page
CHAP. I. <i>A review of the R.'s assertions, that the apostle Peter was at Rome, and bishop of that Sec,</i>	13
II. <i>An examination of the supremacy which the R. has ascribed to the Apostle Peter,</i> - -	24
III. <i>A refutation of the spiritual supremacy which he has ascribed to the Pope,</i> - -	46
IV. <i>A view of the temporal authority claimed and exercised by the Popes, and an account of the means which they have employed to support it,</i> - -	96
V. <i>An examination of the R.'s scriptural notes of the true Church; indefectability, perpetual visibility, universality, and infallibility,</i> - - -	128
CHAP.	

	Page
CHAP. VI. <i>A refutation of his assertions concerning the Scriptures and tradition,</i> - -	197
VII. <i>An examination of the Popish views of the Lord's supper,</i>	277
VIII. <i>On purgatory, and prayers for the dead,</i> - -	305
IX. <i>On the worship of saints and angels, and the veneration of images and relics,</i> - -	330

POPERY

POPERY CONDEMNED, &c,

CHAP. I.

A REVIEW OF THE R.'S ASSERTIONS, THAT THE APOSTLE PETER WAS AT ROME, AND BISHOP OF THAT SEE.

THE extraordinary claims of the See of Rome are founded upon its supposed connection with the apostle Peter. The R. is at great pains to shew, that he both lived and died in that metropolis. "There is as great certainty," says he, "of his having been at Rome, as that he wrote his first and second Epistles*." As he is very anxious to have this assertion believed, I have no objections that he should retain it for a part of his faith. The certainty of this fact does not, as he imagines, prove "ruinous to the re-
A " formed.

* P. 176.

“formed system *.” There are more points to be established between that and the supremacy, and infallibility of the Romish church in the nineteenth century, than he will find himself able to prove, with all the assistance that Popish tradition can afford him.

To the evidence which he has adduced from the Fathers in confirmation of this fact, he might have likewise added the ocular demonstration of the Moderns. Paradoxical as it may appear to the reader, the wondering eyes of many living witnesses can attest, that Peter was actually in that city. Since the R. has omitted such a material part of his proof, he will permit me to add it; lest the church should lose any of these doctrines which Popish tradition has carefully transmitted for the edification of the faithful.

A principal design of Peter's coming to Rome was to oppose Simon Magus, who, by his juggling tricks, had procured the favour of both the emperor and the people. At their first interview, the magician engaged to ascend into the air, in the presence of him and the whole city. With the help of the devil, he accordingly performed his promise; but, Peter invoking the name of Jesus, the devil was so terrified, that he left Simon Magus to shift for himself; and the consequence was, that his body hav-

ing

* P. 177.

ing a much greater predilection for the earth than heaven, made such haste downward as to break both his legs. Were any person to question the truth of this narration at Rome, the impression of the apostle's knees in the very stone upon which he kneeled on this occasion would be shown him, and another stone still tinged with the blood of the magician. Whether this proof of the Romish faith yet remain at that city, I cannot positively affirm. Buonaparte has lately discovered great reverence for the gold, silver, and precious stones of the church ; so that these have perhaps been carried into captivity, with other parts of the patrimony of St. Peter.

The church of Rome was long supposed to possess another decisive confirmation of the same fact. This was the identical chair in which the apostle Peter had been accustomed to sit. So " universal and uninterrupted" had the tradition, respecting this point, been, that the 18th of January was regularly observed as the festival of the Holy Chair ; and then, it was exposed to public adoration. In the year 1662, when it was cleaning, in order to place it in some conspicuous part of the Vatican, the astonished optics of the gaping spectators were presented with the labours of Hercules engraven upon it. If the reader have any curiosity to know who was Hercules, and what were his labours,

he may be informed that he was a heathen god ; and his labours relate, how he begat fifty children on fifty sisters all in one night ; with many other stories equally edifying and pleasant, and such as an apostle would naturally keep about his house for the amusement of his visitors. “ Our worship, however,” says Giacomo Bartolini, who was present at the discovery, “ was not misplaced ; since we did not pay it to the wood itself, but to the prince of the apostles, St. Peter *.” Another Italian writer, unwilling that this holy chair should be altogether excluded from the worship of the church, attempted to explain the labours of Hercules, as emblematical of the future exploits of the Popes †. And it must be confessed, that the procreative powers of some former heads of the See of Rome, afforded him cause to entertain sanguine hopes of their future deeds of generation.

Though I have no intention at present to deny that Peter was at Rome, I cannot help observing that the proof which the R. pretends to draw from the scripture is entirely unfounded. “ His first epistle,” says he, “ is dated from Babylon, and that, under the name of Babylon, Rome was then understood, we know from the scripture and authentic history : St. John,

* Bartol. Antich. sacr. di Roma. † Luchesini Catectra restit. a S. Pietro.

“ John, in the Revelation, speaks of the city of
 “ Rome, under the name of Babylon, manifest-
 “ ly *.” That John under this designation
 meant Rome, is the general opinion of Protest-
 ant, as well as Popish writers ; because we are
 persuaded, it is the seat of the beast and the
 false prophet. But I cannot conceive, why he
 should transfer the mystical expressions of the
 apostle John, to Peter. He might as well say,
 where Egypt is mentioned in the New Testa-
 ment, it denotes Jerusalem ; because the latter
 is so denominated in the book of Revelation.

In confirmation of his sentiments, he has pro-
 duced a quotation from Eusebius. “ Eusebius,”
 says he, “ the father of church-history, better
 “ informed than all the modern scribblers in Eu-
 “ rope, says : Paphias (one of the apostle’s dis-
 “ ciples) says this, that Peter, in his first Epistle,
 “ which he wrote from Rome, remembered
 “ Mark ; in this Epistle he figuratively called
 “ Rome Babylon, saying, the church elect which
 “ is in Babylon salutes you, and my son Mark †.”
 Well informed as Eusebius was, the R. appears
 to have imagined, that a few corrections and
 amendments would greatly tend to improve his
 orthodoxy. In this, he might perhaps piously
 design the edification of the faithful ; but in
 writing to Protestants, he ought to have recollect-
 ed, that they are a species of heretics who have

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always

* P. 176.

† P. 177.

always spoken of the pious forgeries of the Romish church with great want of reverence. By consulting Eusebius again, he will find the following translation of this passage tolerably correct. “ Moreover, Peter mentions Mark in his first epistle, which, as they say, was written at Rome. Peter himself intimates as much, calling Rome by a figure Babylon, in these words, The church which is at Babylon *,” &c. These words are not, as he asserts, a quotation from Paphias ; but the sentiments of Eusebius. Nor does this historian declare the epistle written at Rome ; he merely mentions what was common report. When the R. finds himself at leisure to take a more correct view of this passage, he may also look into the thirty-ninth chapter of the third book of the same history, and he will find, that Paphias was not, as he has affirmed, a disciple of the apostles.

But profane history, he thinks, coincides with his exposition of this part of the epistle of Peter. “ Babylon, in Syria,” says he, “ was then in ruins, as Pliny and Strabo inform us ; and Babylon in Egypt was but a fort or castle †.” Had he been better acquainted with ancient history, he would perhaps have changed his opinion. By consulting Lucan ‡, Philostratus ||,”
or

* Eccles. Hist. lib. 2. c. 15. † P. 177.

‡ Lib. 1. v. 10. || Lib. 1. c. 17.

or even Pliny himself *, he will find Babylon in Syria mentioned, as a city then in existence. The old city was indeed in ruins ; but that Seleucia upon the Tigris went by this name, he might have known, with far fewer pretensions to acquaintance with antiquity. Du Pin, a doctor of his own church, who knew antiquity and the scriptures better than all the Romish clergy on this side of the Atlantic, and who had more candour than generally falls to the lot of a Popish polemic, says of the R.'s opinion, " This interpretation is false ; and it is more natural to say, that he wrote this epistle from Babylon †."

But though the apostle Peter had been actually at Rome, it by no means follows as a consequent, that he was bishop of that See. Nothing indeed can be more positive, respecting this point, than the R.'s assertion. " There is as great a certainty," says he, " of his having established his See at Rome, as that the scriptures are divinely inspired † :"—

If the R. think it any advantage to his cause, it will be granted, that Peter is called bishop of Rome by some ancient writers. The most ancient, however, who lived nearest the source of tradition, never bestow upon him this title. Of all the proofs which he has culled from the num-

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berless

* Lib. 6. c. 26.
diss. sect. 5.

† Biblioth. Patr. prelimin.
‡ P. 176.

berless quotations with which, he says, polemical writers abound, there are only two from authors who wrote before the fourth century. One of these, Dorotheus, lived about the end of the third ; and is said, by the R.'s great friend Bellarmine, to be full of fables. The other is Ireneus, who, says he, “ gives a catalogue of the Bishops of Rome down to Pope Eleutherius, his own cotemporary in the year 176. He begins with Peter and Paul, and says of Clement, that he was the third from the apostles *.”

Had the R. said, that Ireneus ought to have begun with Peter and Paul, he would have expressed the sentiments of the Roman church. But this father appears to have been a stranger to Peter's particular relation to that See. These apostles, he only says, founded the church, as a re-examination of his language will shew him : “ The blessed apostles, therefore, having founded and built the church, delivered the episcopal office to Linus, whom Paul has mentioned in his epistles to Timothy. Anencletus succeeded him ; after whom, in the third place from the apostles, Clemens had the bishopric allotted him.”

According to this tradition, the apostle Paul has as good a claim to the bishopric of Rome as the apostle Peter ; since they are said to have founded the See of Rome conjunctly. That church

* P. 184.

church would never indeed acknowledge him, as Pope Paul the first; but Epiphanius and Eusebius have been more complaisant: “Peter and Paul,” says the former, “were the first at Rome, both bishops and apostles* :” and the latter, “Alexander was the fifth in succession from Peter and Paul †.” Both, therefore, were bishops of Rome in the sense of these writers; and what this was, it is not difficult to determine. They founded that See by converting men to the faith, and appointing the first bishops. If the R. thinks them bishops in any other respect, let him inform us, how Linus, Cletus, and Clemens, were bishops of Rome, during the life of the apostle Peter. Ruffinus, in his preface to the Recognitions of Clemens, says they were appointed by Peter, to prevent interference with the duties of his apostolic office; and this, he assures us, was not his own, but the common opinion. Had the R. only attended to the quotation from Ireneus which he has pressed into his service, he would have seen the justness of this observation: “The blessed apostles, therefore, having founded and built the church, delivered it into the hands of Linus,” &c.

That Peter was a bishop, is acknowledged by Protestants as well as Papists. His claim to this title, however, did not originate in any particular

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ticular

* Hæres. 7. † Hist. Eccles. lib. 4 c. 3.

ticular relation to the See of Rome. A superior office includes an authority to discharge all that are under it ; and upon this principle, in the first epistle he styles himself a Presbyter or elder *. But had he fixed himself at Rome, as bishop of that See, he must have previously resigned his apostolic commission, “ Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” These primitive clergy were not so far initiated into the doctrine of pluralities, as to imagine the office of an apostle and a bishopric compatible.

Should the R. say, that the apostle James was bishop of Jerusalem, he cannot plead in his behalf “ universal and uninterrupted tradition.” A multitude of the Fathers might be adduced as vouchers, that it was James, the brother of our Lord. At present I will only produce his favourite Eusebius, who, he says, was better informed than all the modern scribblers in Europe. Perhaps, he can also shew us the origin of this mistake about James the apostle. “ James, the first bishop of Jerusalem, is in holy writ honoured with the title of the brother of Christ †. He is said to have been one of the seventy disciples of our Saviour, and also one of the Lord’s brethren. There were many beside the twelve, who were called *apostles* by way of imitation ‡.”

But,

* Ch. 5. v. 1.

† Hist. Eccles. lib. 7. c. 19.

‡ Id. lb. 1. c. 12.

But, says the R. "it was then so well ascertained, and so universally believed, that Rome was the apostolical See, that all sectaries, as well as Catholics, acknowledged it*." By a little acquaintance with the Fathers, he would have learnt, that many other primitive churches enjoyed the same title. In after times, indeed, the church of Rome attempted to monopolize this name, when, as the heiress of St. Peter, she began to collect his patrimony; but certainly, there were some churches which possessed a prior, and as undoubted a claim to it. The R. must allow, that Peter was bishop of Antioch in the same sense as he was bishop of Rome, at least he is so termed by Eusebius †; and the former See was founded before the existence of the latter. If Rome, then, be the mother church, Antioch must be the grandmother, and the most apostolic of the two.

When he writes again upon this subject, will he inform us, who placed Peter in the See of Rome? Was he appointed by Christ? Did the apostles name him? Did the people chuse him? Or did he appoint himself? And, when he is in the way of answering queries, he may likewise tell us, whether he resigned his office, or died bishop of Rome. If he resigned, the Pope is no more his successor than the bishop

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of

* P. 188. † Ignatius, (the second in succession thereafter, Peter), lib. 3. c. 35.

of Antioch. If he retained it, the church of Rome was in a very unscriptural state. She had too many heads for a church of Christ; and too few to correspond with the apostle John's account of her, in the book of Revelation.

CHAP. II.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE SUPREMACY, WHICH
THE R. HAS ASCRIBED TO THE APOSTLE
PETER.

THE church of Rome has with great propriety supposed, that a body without a head must make a very awkward appearance. To give the visible church, therefore, a respectable look in the corporeal absence of Christ, she has provided him a vicegerent of a corresponding kind. But, being aware of the aversion with which novelties in religion are viewed, she has palmed this appointment upon the Saviour; and attempted to show from both scripture and the Fathers, that the apostle Peter was the first in office. "Peter," says the R., "received from Christ an authoritative power over the whole visible church:" And this doctrine, he farther

ther assures, is “ manifestly revealed in the New Testament *.”

Were this assertion true, Protestants, in rejecting the plain truth of the scriptures, must be heretics indeed. It must, however, be acknowledged, that if we have been deficient in faith, we have abounded in candour: we have never failed to give the church of Rome due praise for her wonderful acuteness, in “ manifestly” observing what was never revealed.

Protestants have always believed the church “ built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone † ;” but they have been at a loss to conceive, how the apostles and prophets were built upon Peter. Of this the R. thinks the words of Christ to that apostle a decisive proof; “ Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ‡.” The apostle Paul, who knew something of the basis of the church, has assured us, that it is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. If the R. think any thing else is meant by these words, than that the church is established upon the testimony which these persons gave concerning the Saviour, I should like to hear his opinion. Is it not, then, rather unlucky for the R.s Popish claim in behalf of this apostle, that a part of the foundation of the church

* P. 190. † Eph. ii. 20. ‡ Matth. xvi. 18.

church has been provided many ages before his existence.

The R. indeed says, “ If Christianity be “ founded on the apostles because they taught “ the Christian religion, it must be founded “ in the first place on Peter, because he first “ of all men confessed Christ to be by na- “ ture the Son of the living God *.” But why does he overlook the prophets, in specifying the foundation of the church ? It has been always a received opinion in the church, that the Christian religion, or the religion of Christ, was published, in the world, a few thousand years before the days of the apostles : and had the R. been as well acquainted with the scriptures as he pretends, he would have also known, that Peter’s confession was merely the testimony of his faith, concerning what the prophets had taught. The first chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews will show him what views the church under the Old Testament entertained about the Sonship of Christ.

Should the R. still recur to Christ’s words to Peter, I have no objections at all to meet him on that ground. Peter’s excellent confession, he must acknowledge, produced this declaration of the Saviour. Upon what authority, then, does he overlook the apostle’s confession, and fix upon his person as the basis of the church ; especially,

* P. 150.

especially, since the scriptures declare confession to be the ground upon which it stands? Can he say, the church itself is called the pillar and ground of the truth in any other respect, than on account of her adherence to the truth of religion?

To shew that Peter himself is intended, he produces his translation of the words of Christ, “Thou art a rock, and upon this rock I will build my church *;” by which he would wish his readers to believe, that, in both places in the original text, the word signifying “rock” is the same. In the last, however, the expression is different; and this plainly intimates, that though Christ alluded to this apostle’s name, his expression respected something else than his person. Though the Romish church view these words, as one of the principal proofs of Peter’s supremacy, the R. has not thought proper to give them an extensive discussion. Might he not, as in other cases, have appealed to “universal and uninterrupted tradition;” and introduced a whole host of the Fathers, to confirm his sense of them? As it would be doing injustice to the subject, entirely to overlook these Popish tests of orthodoxy; I will supply him with a few of their observations on this passage of scripture.

“This, therefore,” says St Hilarius, “is the
“ only

* P. 122.

“ only immoveable foundation, this is the only
 “ blessed rock of the faith which Peter confess-
 “ ed, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living*
 “ *God**.”

“ The Church,” says St. Augustine, “ is at
 “ present assaulted by diverse trials, as with
 “ floods and storms, but it is not destroyed ;
 “ because it is founded upon the rock whence
 “ Peter received his name ; for the rock is not
 “ named from Peter, but he from the rock ; as
 “ Christ is not so named from the Christian,
 “ but the Christian from him. On this account
 “ the Lord says, *Upon this rock I will build my*
 “ *church ;* because Peter had said, *Thou art*
 “ *the Christ, the Son of the living God.* Upon
 “ this rock, therefore, says he, which thou
 “ hast confessed, I will build my church ; for
 “ Christ is the rock upon which even Peter him-
 “ self was built †.”

“ What,” says the same author, “ is the
 “ meaning of these words, *Upon this rock I*
 “ *will build my church?* It is, upon this faith,
 “ upon this testimony, *Thou art the Christ, the*
 “ *Son of the living God †.*”

“ When Christ called this confession, the
 “ rock,” says Basil of Seleucia, “ he named
 “ him who first made it, Peter ; giving him an
 “ appellation which might be a token of his con-
 “ fession :

* De Trinit. lib. 2.

† Tract. 124.

‡ Tract. 10. in Ep. Joan.

“ fession : For truly, this confession is the rock
 “ of religion, the basis of salvation, the bulwark
 “ of the faith, and the foundation of truth : *for*
 “ *other foundation can no man lay, beside that*
 “ *which is laid, which is Jesus Christ *.*”

“ The first fruits or chief of the apostles,”
 says Modestus of Jerusalem, “ was called Peter,
 “ on account of the unshaken faith which he had
 “ in Christ, the rock †.”

It might perhaps be gratifying to the R. to hear the opinion of a pope, upon such a tender point. I will therefore introduce him to a character whom he ought highly to esteem, Pope Gregory the Great. “ Since it is not said,” says he, “ in the scriptures, foundations, but in
 “ the singular number, foundation ; none else
 “ can be meant, but the Lord himself †.”—
 “ When the singular number is used in the
 “ scriptures, in speaking of the rock, who else
 “ is to be understood but Christ || ?”

If the R. have any curiosity to hear more of tradition and the fathers, a few dozens of additional quotations to the same purpose, are at his service. All these primitive writers appear to have been tinctured with Protestant heresy ; and even the Church of Rome, in the days of Pope Gregory the Great, had not learnt to explain the scriptures with due Popish orthodoxy.

But

* Hom. 25. † In Biblioth. Photii. Cod. 275.

‡ Moral. in Job. lib. 28. c. 9. || Id. lib. 31. c. 34.

But Peter's supremacy, he imagines, may be learnt from many other expressions of Christ. "To which of the apostles did Christ say, I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven? to which of the other apostles did he say, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith should not cease? which of them did he order after his conversion to confirm his brethren? or to which of them did he say, after exacting a testimony of his love, Feed my lambs, rule my sheep, feed my sheep *?"

The R. has acknowledged, that a certain degree of government belongs to all the bishops of the church; but it is only in subordination to the Chief Pastor †. Before this be granted, he must prove the appointment of such an office in the church. To establish this point, he says, "To which of the apostles did Christ say, I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven?" The passage of scripture to which he refers, is in the 16th chapter of Matthew, "I will give unto thee," says the Saviour to Peter, "the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." The keys, and the power to bind and loose, are synonymous expressions; and the latter, he will scarcely deny, was given to all the apostles.

" Verily

* P. 153.

† P. 154.

“ Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall
 “ bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven :
 “ and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall
 “ be loosed in heaven *.” He was indeed aware
 of this little objection, and therefore he is will-
 ing to give them a power to open and shut in
 subordination to Peter. But he must prove his
 premisses, before we admit his conclusion ; as
 we have not yet granted him, that Peter was
 chief pastor. He might as well say, If you will
 allow that Peter was the head of the church, I
 will prove his supremacy.

As he is apt upon occasions to complain of
 the obscurity of the scriptures, we may see what
 view his standard of orthodoxy, the Fathers, en-
 tertained of these words of Christ.

“ As some things,” says St. Augustine, “ are
 “ spoken, which may seem properly to belong
 “ to the apostle Peter, and yet have not a clear
 “ sense, but when they are referred to the
 “ church, as that is, *I will give thee the keys of*
 “ *the kingdom of heaven †.*”

“ The church,” says St. Jerome, “ is found-
 “ ed on all the apostles ; and all have received
 “ the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and the
 “ firmness of the church rests upon them equal-
 “ ly ‡.”

But, says the R., “ To which of the other
 “ apostles

* Matth. xviii. 18. † Enarratio in Psal. 108.

‡ Adv. Jovin. lib. 1. c. 14.

“ apostles did he say, I have prayed for thee,
 “ that thy faith should not cease? Which of
 “ them did he order after his conversion to con-
 “ firm his brethren?”

A plain statement of the transactions to which he refers, will be sufficient to show, how little reason he had to produce them as claims for supremacy. “ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat : but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not : and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me *.” Satan, it appears from these words, was about to take advantage of the sufferings of Christ, in order to make an attack upon all the disciples. His principal force, however, was to be directed against Peter ; because he might imagine presumption and cowardice pretty near akin ; and might hope to depress his spirits, as much as he had excited his arrogance. In consequence of this assault, when Christ was apprehended, the courage of this apostle failed him ; and with the rest of the disciples, he deserted his Master in the hour of trial, and through the force of temptation realised

* Luke, xxii. 31.—34.

sed his prediction. If the faith of all the disciples was shaken on this mournful occasion, Peter's was shattered in proportion to his former presumption. Our Lord, therefore, shows the sovereignty and riches of his grace even to backsliders, by assuring Peter, that though the exercise of his faith might terminate, still as a principle it would remain in his heart. The R. by his language, would seem to insinuate that the faith of the other disciples had been entirely destroyed. But the words of Christ afford no just ground for such a conclusion. Though Peter's apostacy rendered conversion necessary for himself, he was not ordered to convert, but merely to strengthen, his brethren. A candid examination of the words of Christ, discovers how much this apostle needed the assistance of grace, and how appropriate the divine goodness is; but they do not afford the most distant hint of his supremacy in the church.

But says the R., "To which of the apostles did Christ say, Feed my lambs, rule my sheep, feed my sheep?" As the dispute is not so much about being chief feeder, as chief ruler in the church, he takes care to show, in his translation of the words of Christ, that his address to Peter may include the idea of government as well as pasture. That the Greek word which signifies to feed, denotes also to govern, will not be denied. But whether does the R. think, to feed sheep
or

or to rule sheep is the most natural idea? Against his acceptance of the word in this place, I can produce him the united wisdom of the whole Romish church. The Council of Trent, in all whose decisions, he says, he is a staunch believer, have decreed, "That no person shall dare or presume to reject the Vulgate, on any pretence whatever, in disputations*:" and that translation teaches us, that the word in this place signifies to feed. But though the R.'s translation be granted to him, it will afford him no proof of the supremacy of Peter. That apostle uses the same word in his apostolic directions to teachers in the church, "Rule the flock of God which is among you †." When the R. quotes this part of scripture occasionally, he is indeed attentive to translate it feed. For this change of idea he can have no just reason, unless it originate in a conviction, that Peter, like his successors in office, committed the feeding to the inferior clergy, but reserved the government in his own hands. I cannot conceive how a direction, given indiscriminately to all teachers in the church, can with any propriety be placed as the basis of Peter's supremacy.

Should the R. say, If no supremacy were intended for Peter, why did Christ give this direction thrice to him, and not to the other disciples? let me ask him, which of his apostles had

* Sess. 4.

† 1 Pet. v. 2.

had denied his Lord thrice? Peter had been more forward than the rest in his professions of love to Christ; and his sin had been proportioned to his presumption. Our Lord therefore reproveth him indirectly, by inquiring about the extent of his love: “Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me *more* than these*?” Peter, now taught by his misconduct, would make no extraordinary professions; “Yea, Lord,” says he, “thou knowest that I love thee.” He had indeed displayed a contrary conduct; but he appeals to Christ, as the searcher of hearts, respecting the present state of his affections. Our Lord, therefore, shows him, that he still numbered him among his disciples, by assigning him a test for proving the sincerity of his love, “Feed my sheep.”

As the R. appears, upon all occasions, greatly edified by the sayings of the Fathers, I will produce him a few of their observations upon this knotty point.

“Jesus,” says Gregory Nazianzen, “received Peter again; and by a triple interrogation and confession, healed his threefold abjuration †.”

“The Lord recalled Peter,” says Epiphanius, “after he had denied him; and in opposition to his triple denial, he invited him to confession thrice ‡.”

“That

* John, xxi. 15. † Orat. 39. ‡ Hæres. 59. sect. 1.

“ That Peter,” says St. Ambrose, “ might remove the fault of his triple denial, he is as often interrogated by Christ, if he loved him. To this he replied, Thou knowest, Lord, that I love thee : this he said thrice, that he might be thrice absolved *.”

“ The apostle Peter,” says St. Jerome, “ by his triple confession, expunged his threefold denial †.”

To these quotations from the Fathers, many more might be added, if necessary. But these will suffice to show the R., how advantageously the ancient writers of the church may be consulted, even by Protestant heretics. When he presumes to palm his own ignorance and the quibbles of Papists upon antiquity, he ought to remember, that imposition and detection are sometimes pretty closely connected. These Fathers, so far from inferring Peter’s supremacy from the words of the Saviour, have declared them to be equally applicable to the other apostles, and all the teachers in the church. “ When Christ,” says St. Augustine, “ said to Peter, he said to all, Feed my sheep ‡.”

“ These sheep,” says St. Ambrose, “ not only Peter received ; but he received them with us, and we received them with him ||.”

From these quotations, the novelty of the R.’s doctrine

* De Sacrament. lib. 2. c. 7. † Ep. 149. ad Marcellam.
‡ De Agone Christi, c. 30. || De Dignitat. Sacerdot. c. 2.

doctrine is sufficiently obvious. But, should he still think that Peter was appointed chief ruler and feeder of the whole flock, can he shew us where Christ, in giving him the government of the lambs and sheep, subjected to him likewise the rams?

But farther, says the R., “ Peter did assert his supremacy in the first Council; he told the apostles there present, *that they knew that in former times God had made choice of him amongst them, that by his mouth the nations should hear the faith and believe* *.”

The R. must be an acute reasoner indeed, since he can draw a conclusion for Peter’s supremacy over the whole visible church, from his being the first whom God employed to preach the gospel among the heathen. Might not St. Anthony, of pious memory, upon the same principle, claim the supremacy over the fishes, because he first preached the gospel to them, and converted a great multitude? The scope of Peter’s language, according to the R., is plainly this, and it is certainly as good as the reasoning of many of his successors, God made use of me to preach the gospel among the heathen first, and therefore it is plain, that I am possessed of supremacy over the whole visible church, of both Jews and Gentiles.

In connection with this, he would try to per-

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suade

* P. 162.

suade us that the other apostles acknowledged his title. “The apostles,” says he, “invariably speak of Peter in the first place, and introduce him speaking upon every public occasion. If Mr Stanser has not seen it, it is because he has not read the New Testament attentively, if at all*.”

Much praise is without doubt due to the R. for being a great reader of the New Testament. He evidently appears to have been very studious; many times he appears to have outsitten the sun, and read his New Testament in the dark. To expose Mr Stanser’s ignorance of the scriptures, and to shew the acuteness and candour of the R.’s observation, it will be only requisite to let the apostles speak for themselves.

“Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Peter,” &c. 1 Cor. iii. 22.—“And when James, and Peter, and John, who seemed to be pillars,” &c. Gal. ii. 9.

Though Paul, in neither of these places, has thought fit to speak of Peter in the first place, the R. thinks, that by visiting him at Jerusalem, he acknowledged his supremacy. This he considers as of so great importance, that he mentions it thrice; and lest his readers should not see supremacy taught in this visit, he reminds them that the original words may signify to inquire of Peter, as well as to see him. When
he

* P. 165.

he was so anxious to give them an accurate knowledge of scripture, he might have also told them, that the phrase may be translated to get acquainted with Peter. But granting that Paul came to inquire of Peter, and even, if the R. please, to be instructed in the gospel, that is still at a considerable distance from owning his supremacy.

In the Council of Jerusalem, mentioned in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, the R. thinks he has found another strong proof of the supremacy of Peter. This Council was assembled to decide, whether the Gentile converts should be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses. "The controversy," says he, "was brought before the apostles and priests at Jerusalem, and there, with the concurrence of the chief pastor Peter, it was finally settled*." This he considers as a plain statement of facts; and he charges Mr Stanser with misrepresentation in saying, that the controversy was discussed by the apostles and elders, and by them decided: "If he had said," says the R., "that Peter's decision had been adopted by the Council, he would have told us what is there related †."

A wise man has judiciously observed, that much study is a weariness to the flesh. The reader must not therefore be surprised, though

* P. 71.

† P. 166.

the R. make some little slips, when fatigued with immense poring upon his New Testament. It happened to be the decision of James which the Council followed; but the best of people may be mistaken about a name. Luke has recorded his speech immediately after Peter's; so that he might very naturally ascribe the whole to the latter, particularly if he was reading in the dark. Peter had declared his opinion, that it was wrong to subject these converts to the ceremonial law. James, however, thought, that as it had been usual for a long time to read the books of Moses every Sabbath in the synagogues, it would not be amiss to give them some general directions how to avoid offending the Jewish brethren: "Wherefore," says he, "I decide that we trouble not them who, from among the Gentiles, are turned to God: but that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of images, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. —Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church," &c. *

The R. next attempts to produce Peter exercising his official duty as supreme head of the church. "The apostle," says he, "directs the Episcopal pastors of the provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Capadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, to whom his letter is addressed, to
" feed

* Acts, xv. 19.—22.

“ feed the respective portions of the flock over
 “ which they presided, *to en umin poimnion*, not
 “ through compunction, but willingly ; not in
 “ view of filthy lucre, but chearfully ; not to
 “ lord it over the inferior clergy, but in their
 “ own conduct to set an example of all Chris-
 “ tian virtues to the flock *.”

This epistle, he would wish us to believe, is addressed to the Episcopal pastors in these provinces. If he had read this part of his New Testament at all, he would have seen that it was written to the church. Had he even considered the quotation to which he alludes in defence of his doctrine, it would have rectified his mistake : “ The elders who are among you I exhort.” No other part of the epistle is peculiarly applicable to the clergy, except the beginning of the third chapter, which the R. may judge particularly appropriate to the state of these in the Romish church : “ Likewise, ye wives, be in sub-
 “ jection to your own husbands.”

The passage which he quotes for illustrating the supremacy of Peter, is in his first epistle, at the beginning of the fifth chapter. Though I have an aversion to introduce scraps of foreign languages into a publication intended for common readers, I cannot avoid producing it, as it is transcribed by the R. ; because he says he has given it in this form for the information of his read-

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ers ;

* P. 154.

ers; and it would be a pity to lose any information on such a precious subject. “I myself a
 “priest,” *sumpresbuteros*, “exhort the priests
 “who are amongst you,”—*tous presbuteros en*
 “*umin parakalo . . .*” “feed the flock of God
 “which is amongst you;”—*poimenate to en umin*
 “*poimnion . . .*” “superintending,”—*episcopountes:*
 “not domineering over the Clergy.” *katakuri-*
 “*rieuentes ton kleron* *.”

Granting the R. all the supremacy which this passage can afford him, it amounts to no more than what the apostle Paul exercised. “From
 “Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the
 “elders of the church, and said unto them,
 “Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and
 “to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost
 “hath made you bishops, to feed the church
 “of God, which he hath purchased with his
 “own blood †.”

I cannot bid adieu to this part of his proof, without complimenting him upon his extensive knowledge of Greek; and also upon the accuracy of his quotation. In his Greek, with a true Popish spirit, he has made Peter exhort the priests to domineer. In his version, he translates *ton kleron* the clergy; or, as he farther explains it in the same page, the inferior clergy. Formerly the church considered the proper meaning of this word to be, a lot or an inheritance.

* P. 154.

† Acts, xx. 17.—28.

ance. As he has discovered a new signification, he will permit me to try its merit, by applying it to other parts of scripture where the same word is used.

Acts, i. 26. " And they gave forth their
" clergy ; and the clergy fell on Matthias ; and
" he was numbered with the eleven apostles."

Acts, xxvi. 18. " That they may receive the
" forgiveness of sins, and clergy among them
" who are sanctified."

Col. i. 12. " Giving thanks to the Father,
" who hath made us meet for the portion of
" the clergy of the saints in light."

By these the R. will perceive, that new inventions and common sense do not always harmonize. In defence of the extraneous meaning which he has affixed to this word, he can produce no parallel, either from the classics, the Septuagint, the New Testament, or any other Hellenistic writing. His only authority is the Vulgate, which, in this place, puts language in the mouth of the apostle Peter which he never expressed. " Thus," to use his own language in speaking of Mr Stanser's version of this apostle's words, " the unlearned are duped and
" misled by arbitrary versions."

It will be admitted, that Peter is exhibited in scripture as among the most active of the apostles, and much engaged in the management of public business in the church. But the

apostle Paul did not, for these reasons, suppose him possessed of any supremacy. He merely classes him with James and John, who, he says, seemed to be pillars*.

If the R. consider it as of any importance to his cause, it will be also granted, that Peter is called the chief and prince of the apostles by some of the Fathers. But it is evident that they never intended, by these titles, to ascribe to him supremacy. They meant them merely as tokens of that respect which they imagined due to his character. Of this their own language will be the best illustration.

“As some things,” says St. Augustine, “are spoken, which may seem properly to belong to the apostle Peter, and yet have not a clear sense but when referred to the church, (of which he is acknowledged to have represented the person in a figure, because of the primacy which he had among the apostles), as that is, *I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven*; and if there be any like, so Judas sustains, after a certain manner, the person of the Jews, the enemies of Christ †.” And says Prosper his disciple, “Judas carried the primacy of the enemies of Christ ‡.”

The R., therefore, must not expect to establish Peter's supremacy from these expressions
of

* Gal. ii. 9.

† Enarratio in Psal. cviii.

‡ In eod. loc.

of the Fathers, till he have previously proven the authoritative primacy of Judas.

Before he write again upon this subject, I would advise him to extend his acquaintance with these ancient writers. They cannot be too often consulted by a person who wishes to attain just views of Popish principles. At the same time I would warn him, in reading them, to exercise great prudence and caution. Though the fathers lived long before the days of Luther, (whose very name is an abomination to the R.), and therefore could derive none of their opinions from him, they appear considerably tinged with the same principles. If he would read them, then, like a true Papist, he must first lay it down as a principle, that all the clerical quackery of the Romish Church is a part of the true religion, and afterwards pick out detached sentences from their writings for his proofs; for, if he attend to the scope of their reasonings, he will insensibly become, like other Protestants, “an innovator and a pretended reformer.”

C H A P. III.

A REFUTATION OF THE SPIRITUAL SUPREMACY WHICH THE R. HAS ASCRIBED TO THE POPE.

THE reason why the Romish church contends so strenuously for Peter's supremacy, is given in the 176th page of the Remarks: "Peter transmitted his authority to feed Christ's flock to his successor. For this was an official authority, not a personal quality, and official authority is always invested in the lawful successor." The R. accordingly endeavours to prove, that the Pope of Rome *, as the lawful successor of Peter, now possesses his supremacy. This apostle, I have already shown, possessed no such authority in the church; and therefore the Pope's claims must be without foundation. As the R. has, however, advanced many pretended proofs of this point, it may not be amiss to afford them an examination.

Though Peter had enjoyed all the supremacy for which the R. contends, it by no means follows, that the head of the Romish See inherits his

* The term *Pope* was formerly a title of respect given indiscriminately to any eminent clergyman, and not at all peculiar to the head of the Romish Sec.

his prerogative. It has been formerly shown, that Peter was not bishop of Rome in the sense of the R. ; and therefore the Pope has not even such a good claim to the supremacy as the bishop of Antioch. Still I will allow supremacy to Peter's successor at Rome, if he only tell us his name. Strange as it may appear to the reader, this Church, which knows so very positively who was the first bishop, cannot tell who was his successor. Some of the Fathers name one, and some another ; and thus supremacy is lost, by being entrusted to the care of tradition, that excellent standard of Popish belief. Nor is the succession of some of the succeeding Popes much better ascertained.

But though there was no difficulty about the succession, there is another which cannot be easily solved. It is generally agreed, that there were several successive bishops of Rome, during the life of the apostle Peter. Can the R. then inform us, who at this time possessed the supremacy ? If it was retained by Peter, it could be no part of the official authority of the bishop of Rome ; for that is received at ordination. If he resigned it, he subjected himself and all the apostles of Christ to the Pope, and placed a higher office in the church under the controul of one which is inferior.

Let us now attend to the proofs of supre-

macy which the R. has adduced in behalf of the bishop of Rome.

“ The Roman See,” says he, “ was always considered as the first See in the world, both by Greeks and Latins *.” Though this assertion were true, still precedence is no proof of supremacy. After allowing the bishop of Rome the precedence in the church, it will not be difficult to show, that neither he nor his bishopric possessed any other authority than what they derived from their local situation at the chief seat of government in the empire, and from their preserving the purity of the faith longer than many other parts of the church.

The reader may already observe a change in the R.’s language. Supremacy, he formerly told us, is an official authority, and consequently something which belongs to Peter’s lawful successor; now he extends it to the See of Rome. But he ought first to prove, that the latter, as well as the former, is Peter’s lawful successor; because he himself has said, “ official authority is always invested in the lawful successor.” Though the church of Rome has for many centuries claimed a supremacy, its members neither agree in what it consists, nor to whom it belongs. As the reader may be curious to know something of this part of the subject, I will present him with the opinions of
some

* P. 184.

some Popish writers. If the R. think I do the church of Rome injustice, he may object to the authorities produced. At the same time the reader will remember, that the present discussion respects only the authority claimed by the Romish church in spirituals.

Pope Martin V., in the instructions given to a nuncio sent by him to Constantinople, assumed the following titles: "The most holy, and the most blessed, who is invested with heavenly power, who is Lord on earth, the successor of Peter, the Christ or the anointed of the Lord, the Lord of the universe, the father of kings, the light of the world, the sovereign pontiff, Pope Martin *."

Clement VII., with his cardinals, writing to Charles VI., says, "As there is but one God in the heavens, so there cannot, nor ought to be of right, but one God upon earth †."

Bellarmino asserts, that all the names which are given to Christ, should be ascribed likewise to the Pope ‡; and says he farther, "If the Pope should commend vice, and prohibit virtue, the Church would be bound to believe vice good, and virtue evil, unless she would sin against conscience ||."

Nor does the canon-law speak of Popes in less

* Raynold. ad Ann. 1422.

† Froisard. tom. 3.

f. 147.

‡ De Conc. lib. 2. c. 17.

|| De Pent.

Rom. lib. 4. c. 5.

less exalted strains. “ It is evident that the
 “ Pope, who is called God by Constantine, can
 “ neither be bound nor loosed by any secular
 “ power ; for it is manifest that a god cannot
 “ be judged by men *.”

To these a multitude of testimonies might be
 added, in which he is called “ the Lord our
 “ God the Pope, another God upon earth, the
 “ King of Kings and Lord of Lords ;” and in
 which it is said, “ that he is more than God ;
 “ and that his power is greater than all created
 “ authority, and reaches to things in heaven,
 “ earth, and hell.”

On the contrary, the Council of Constance
 declared : “ This Council, being lawfully as-
 “ sembled in name of the Holy Ghost, which
 “ constituted the General Council, and repre-
 “ sented the whole Catholic Church, had its
 “ powers immediately from Jesus Christ ; and
 “ *that every person, of whatever state or dignity,*
 “ *even the Pope himself, is obliged to obey it, in*
 “ what concerns the faith, the extirpation of
 “ schism, and the general reformation in its
 “ head and members †.”

The R. appears to have embraced an opinion
 different from both. According to his first po-
 sition, he maintains the supremacy of the Pope ;
 but he does not concede to him so much power
 as some who have preceded him, in defining this
 point :

* Hist. 96. c. 7.

† De Piv Hist. Eccles. Cent. 15.

point : for says he, “ ’Tis a manifest absurdity
 “ to pretend that a Pope out of Council is greater
 “ than himself united with the body of Pastors
 “ in Council, an absurdity which no Catholic
 “ ever believed or asserted *.”

In one point, however, all are agreed, that
 supreme authority is lodged somewhere in the
 Church of Rome. The person who believes
 this, must not indeed be very scrupulous about
 the foundation of his faith. A few passages from
 the Fathers, perverted or misunderstood, and
 forged decrees of the Councils, are the only
 proofs which Papists have ever been able to pro-
 duce ; as may be seen in the specimen exhibited
 by the R.

“ That the Popes in the first ages of Chris-
 “ tianity,” says he, “ did exercise their jurisdic-
 “ tion, and that the Greeks and Asiatics did
 “ submit to it, we have the testimony of
 “ all early writers on the subject of Church-
 “ History.”

“ St. Ignatius, a disciple of St. Peter, in his
 “ Epistle to the Romans, marks the pre-emi-
 “ nence of that See. His letter is thus address-
 “ ed : “ To the beloved Church which is en-
 “ lightened by the will of him who ordaineth all
 “ things, which are according to the charity of
 “ J. Christ our God, which *presides* in the
 “ country of the Romans worthy of God, most
 “ adorned,

* P. 73.

“ adorned, justly happy, most commended, fit-
 “ ly regulated and governed, most chaste and
 “ *presiding in charity* *.”

No Protestant ever denied that the Romish Church presided in the country of the Romans, though many have disbelieved her presiding in charity. With some reason, they have imagined the charity of the Romish Church like the tender-mercies of the wicked ; and have always liked the theory of it much better than the practice. But since Ignatius has ascribed to her a presidency in the country of the Romans and in charity, we will not object to his doctrine at present. It is only when she claims a presidency over the whole visible church, that Protestants oppose her.

The R.'s next proof is from Ireneus : “ We
 “ confound all those who, in whatever manner,
 “ whether through self-love, vain glory, blind-
 “ ness or unsound doctrine, collect what they
 “ ought not, by indicating to them the faith of
 “ the greatest, the most ancient, and best-known
 “ Church, founded at Rome by the two most
 “ glorious apostles, Peter and Paul ; and that
 “ tradition which it has from them, and is come
 “ to us by the succession of bishops. ’Tis ne-
 “ cessary that every church should agree with
 “ this, on account of its more powerful princi-
 “ pality. That is the faithful, who are in all
 “ places,

* P. 196.

“ places, in which Church the tradition, which
“ is from the apostles, is always preserved by
“ those who are every where faithful *.”

A little attention to the scope of Ireneus' reasoning will help us to ascertain the meaning of these words.

The Valentinians, at this time, pestered the church with many absurd opinions. These they did not pretend to derive from scripture, but, like the Romish Church in many other cases, deduced them from what they affirmed to be apostolic tradition. The design of Ireneus is, therefore, to show, that the pretensions of these heretics were entirely without foundation, as no such traditions had been left by the apostles. In confirmation of this, he appeals to the belief of the Church of Rome, founded by apostles ; to which, on account of its being at the seat of government, Christians from all the surrounding quarters were daily resorting ; so that, had such traditions ever existed, they must have been known there. The “ more powerful principa-
“ lity,” then, is not of the Church, but of the State ; and the necessity under which Christians were of resorting to Rome, was not to learn apostolic tradition, but to transact their own business. Of this the last part of the R.'s quotation is a sufficient proof. Ireneus, instead of saying, that the faithful must come to Rome to learn the
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* P. 196.

the traditions of the apostles, assures us, that the preservation of these in that Sec, proceeds from the resort of such persons from other parts of the church: "In which Church, the tradition which is from the apostles is always preserved by those who are every where faithful."

Before the R. could produce these words as a proof of supremacy, it was necessary for him, not only to overlook the scope of Ireneus, but to commit an open violation upon the most simple rules of grammatical construction. A view of the last sentence of his quotation, will discover to a person who understands no Latin, that the ideas of either Ireneus or the R. have been very confused. For the satisfaction of the reader, I will produce the words of this Father, with a literal translation; by which he may form a judgement of the R.'s candour and accuracy.

"Ad hanc Ecclesiam, propter potentiorem principalitatem, necesse est omnem convenire Ecclesiam, i. e. eos qui sunt undique fideles: In qua semper ab his qui sunt undique, conservata est ea quæ est ab apostolis traditio *."

"To this Church, on account of its more powerful principality, every Church, that is, the surrounding faithful, are under a necessity of resorting; in which (Church) that tradition which is from the apostles has always been preserved by those who are around." It requires

* Lib. 3. c. 3.

quires only a superficial acquaintance with the Latin language to know, that though “*cum hac ecclesia convenire*” may signify “to agree with this church,” “*ad hanc ecclesiam convenire*,” the phrase used by Irenæus, can never be taken in that acceptation.

But to show that the words of Irenæus do not afford even the shadow of a proof for the supremacy claimed by the Church of Rome, I will suppose, that the faithful must have recourse to it, on account of its more powerful principality, as the R. would wish us to believe. This can mean nothing more, than that the suburbicary churches, under the jurisdiction of that See, ought to submit to its authority. In confirmation of this, I might refer to the sixth canon of the Council of Nice, which limits the authority of the bishop of Rome to the suburbicary regions. The R. has indeed attempted to produce it, with the assistance of a little Popish forgery, as a proof of the supremacy of the Romish church; with what propriety, a plain statement of facts will discover.

The design of this canon was to secure to the great Sees the authority which they had acquired over the surrounding provinces. The words of it are; “Let the ancient custom continue in Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis; that the bishop of Alexandria have the power of all these; because this is the custom or manner of the
“ bishop

“ bishop of Rome.” From these words, an impartial reader would conclude, that the custom of the Romish Church was adopted by the Council as a pattern by which the other Sees ought to be regulated. But the R. says, “ These words can bear no other sense but this, that ‘twas the custom of the Bishop of Rome to invest the Bishop of Alexandria with a jurisdiction over these provinces *.” The following words of the canon sufficiently illustrate the absurdity of this explanation. It is there added, “ that the honour or rights of the Church of Antioch and the other provinces, are likewise to be preserved ; it being always understood, that these do not interfere with the privileges of the metropolitan bishop.” Will the R. then inform us, if it was the custom of the bishop of Rome to share his authority with these also ; and how the Council, in fixing the privileges of these churches, secured the rights of metropolitan bishops, without hinting at a more extensive supremacy ?

Perhaps he does not know, that his sense of this canon is opposed by the Fathers. I will, therefore, introduce him to Rufinus, an Italian clergyman, who lived a short time after the Council of Nice, and therefore ought to know both the meaning of this canon, and the ancient practice of the Church of Rome, as well as the R.

Of

* P. 192.

Of both, he has given the following account in his Ecclesiastical History ; “ Let the ancient
 “ custom be preserved in Alexandria, as in the
 “ city of Rome ; that the Bishop of Egypt, like
 “ the Bishop of Rome, have the care of the
 “ suburbicary churches *.”

This testimony of Rufinus the R. has thought fit to overlook entirely ; but to show that he has given the genuine meaning of the canon, he appeals to the Council of Chalcedon, where he thinks a complete confirmation of it may be found ; “ The commencement of this canon of
 “ the Council of Nice,” says he, “ does not
 “ appear in printed books ; but ’tis given by a
 “ Council of equal authority, that of Chalce-
 “ don, in 451. ’Tis thus cited in the 16th
 “ action by the Bishop Paschasius : *The Roman
 “ Church had always this primacy. Let the old
 “ custom continue, that the Bishop of Alexandria,
 “ &c. After this 6th canon of the Council of
 “ Nice was read, the judges said : We consider
 “ that all primacy and chief honour according to
 “ the canons be reserved to the beloved of God,
 “ the Archbishop of old Rome †.*”

The R. must have judged his readers very ignorant of Church-history indeed, when he ventured even to mention the Council of Chalcedon. When he said, that the canon was cited in this form by Paschasius, why did he not add,
 that

* Lib. i. c. 6.

† P. 192.

that it was also received by the Council? Though the Pope's legates produced it in this form, the Council were far from receiving it as genuine. On the contrary, the canons of this very Council have completely destroyed all Popish claims of supremacy; as a short view of that part of their transactions to which the R. refers will completely show.

The bishop of Rome, by residing at the seat of government, had acquired considerable influence. On this account, a certain degree of deference had been generally paid him by the surrounding bishops. In course of time, this respect began to be viewed as an acknowledgement of his superiority; and he had subjected the neighbouring Sees to his jurisdiction. But, in extending his authority, he met with a formidable opponent in the bishop of Constantinople. When that city was made the head of the empire, the latter employed his influence to increase the power of his See; and, by the time in which the Council of Chalcedon convened, he had succeeded so far as to extend his jurisdiction over the Patriarchate of Antioch. This success, he was conscious, had proceeded only from his influence at court; and therefore, though custom had for a considerable time sanctioned his authority, he was desirous of placing it upon a more stable basis. To effectuate this purpose, application was made to the Council
by

by his archdeacon Aetius, for a confirmation of his privileges. The members of the Council, jealous of the growing power of the Pope, and wanting, as some of them openly declared, a protector equally powerful, to secure them against his encroachments, complied with the request of Aetius. The consequence was, the 28th canon of the Council of Chalcedon. By this, all the privileges enjoyed by the bishop of Rome were granted likewise to the bishop of Constantinople, with the exception only of precedence; so that the boasted supremacy of the Romish Church is thus reduced to a mere primacy of order. So far were the 630 bishops, who composed that Council, from acknowledging the supremacy of Peter as the origin of the rights claimed by the Pope, that they declare them to have been granted solely in consideration of the dignity of the city of Rome: “Whereas the See of old Rome,” say they, “hath been, not undeservedly, distinguished by the Fathers with some privileges, *because that city was the seat of the empire*; the Fathers of Constantinople were prompted by the same motive to distinguish the most holy See of new Rome with equal privileges; thinking it fit, that the city which they saw honoured with the empire and the senate, and equal in every civil privilege to old Rome, should be
“ equalled

“ equalled to her also in ecclesiastical matters *.”

Such a decree, the reader may easily conceive, would not be permitted to pass without opposition from the Pope’s legates, who attended the Council. When it was at first proposed, they withdrew, declaring that they had no instructions respecting such a point. They expected that such a number of the bishops would follow their example, as might prevent the rest from proceeding farther at present ; but they had the mortification to find themselves the only persons who retired.

On the day following, Paschasinus, one of the legates, said, that some regulations, he understood, had been made yesterday, which he apprehended to be repugnant to the canons, and inconsistent with the peace of the church, and therefore requested they should be read, as they were made in their absence. To this Aetius replied, that if they were absent, it was their own fault, since he had entreated, and even pressed them to stay. The canon, however, was read, with the subscription of all the bishops. Lucentius, the other legate, then insisted, that the bishops had been forced to subscribe, and had not done it freely. The bishops immediately exclaimed, that no force had been used ; but, on the contrary, what they had done

* Concil. tom. 4. p. 838.

done was entirely their own choice. All ground of exception to the decree upon this head being thus removed, the legates next declared it repugnant to the sixth canon of the Council of Nice; and Paschasinus produced it as quoted by the R. "The Roman Church had always " this primacy," &c. This was evidently a forgery, trumped up for the occasion; and accordingly it has never been admitted into the best translations of these canons, nor even by Dionysius Exiguus into his Roman Code.

The R. has attempted to tread in the steps of Paschasinus; but the same bad success seems to attend his pious exertions. When he says, "the commencement of this canon is given by the Council of Chalcedon," his assertion is utterly inconsistent with the whole proceedings of that venerable body. No sooner had Aetius produced a true copy of this canon, than these bishops declared the present decree to be in no respects repugnant to the decisions of the Council of Nice. The commissioners then published the result, in which it was declared, that though the bishop of Constantinople possessed the same power as the bishop of Rome, the preference belonged to the latter, in point of precedence.

From the whole of this transaction it appears, that the ancient bishops of Rome were ignorant of the divine right to the supremacy, which more modern advocates have modestly advanced in
C their

their behalf. The legates, at this Council, never pretended to derive the rights of the Church from St. Peter; they carried their claims no higher than the Council of Nice: And even the Pope himself did not know with what supreme authority St. Peter had invested him. His opposition to this decree of the Council of Chalcedon, he informed the emperor Marcian, proceeded from its infringing upon the canons of Nice: "Far be it from me," says he, "to envy
 " the See of Constantinople its due lustre; but
 " as the decree, lately enacted in favour of that
 " See, is an open violation of the canons of
 " Nice, and as it is incumbent on me to watch
 " and see, that the decrees of that great and ve-
 " nerable assembly be punctually observed, I
 " should think myself guilty of an unpardonable
 " crime, should I, upon any consideration, con-
 " nive at the least transgression of these sacred
 " laws; laws of eternal authority, which no
 " Council, however numerous, can ever abro-
 " gate or annul*."

The R. next introduces the prelates of the Council of Constantinople acknowledging the supremacy of Pope Damasus in a letter to him; in which, says he, they state, "That, in conse-
 " quence of his commandment by letters sent to
 " the emperor Theodosius, they had assembled
 " at Constantinople." "Would these prelates,"

he

* Pope Leo Ep. 78. 79.

he adds, “ say they were commanded by the
 “ Pope, if they acknowledged no authority in
 “ him * ?”

This is another specimen of the R.’s candour and accurate acquaintance with antiquity. If he can produce one ancient author who affirms, that the emperor called this Council at the commandment of the Pope, I will agree to his assertion. In the mean time, let me refer him to a few authors who have given a very different account.

According to Socrates Scholasticus † and Sozomen ‡, this Council was called by the emperor alone. Even Theodoret, whom the R. has quoted in proof of his assertion, affirms the same thing ||. This he would have seen, had he attended more to the language of that historian, and less to these Popish notes which have been added to him to pervert his meaning. If he look also into the letter, which the bishops of that Council wrote to the emperor, he will find them referring to his mandate, as the cause of their meeting. Should he still refer to his quotation from the bishops’ letter to pope Damasus, respecting the summons which they had received to meet at Rome, I must tell him, that he has reversed their language. In my copy of it by Binius, as zealous a Papist as the R., these bishops say, “ that Damasus summoned them to

C 2

“ meet

* P. 193.

† Hist. Eccles. Lib. 5. c. 8.

‡ Lib. 7. c. 7.

|| Lib. 5. c. 6.

“ meet there, in virtue of the emperor’s letters *.” After consulting all these ancient records, he may turn his attention to more modern writers ; and among these he will find Richerius, a learned Papist, asserting, in his History of the Councils, that Theodosius called this Council solely by his own authority †. Or he may consult Christianus Lupus, who has proven the same fact ‡.

Equally unfounded is the R.’s assertion respecting the calling of Councils : “ A general Council is not celebrated without the Pope’s concurrence and approbation, never was, nor ever will be ||.”

What may occur in future, I will not presume to determine ; but if we may judge from the past, the R. is no prophet. He will allow the first Council of Nice to have been general ; and that was called by the emperor. Of this fact we are assured by Eusebius in his Life of Constantine §. The same thing is asserted by the members of that Council in their letter to the Egyptian bishops. If he think that these were false witnesses, the testimony of the emperor himself, in his speech to that Council, can be added. “ When, contrary to all expectations,” says he to the bishops, “ I was informed of your disagreement, I considered it as a report which
“ ought

* Apud Bin. p. 539.

† Lib. 1. c. 5. sect. 1. 2.

‡ Note in Can. 1. 2.

|| P. 73. § Lib. 3. c. 6.

“ ought not to be neglected ; and wishing that,
 “ by our assistance, a remedy might be applied
 “ to this mischief, I called you together without
 “ any delay *.”

Before he had expressed himself in such positive terms upon this point, he ought to have read the preface of Socrates Scholasticus to the fifth book of his Ecclesiastical History. “ In
 “ our History,” says he, “ we include the em-
 “ perors ; because, from the time in which they
 “ began to embrace the Christian religion, the
 “ affairs of the Church have depended upon
 “ them ; and the greatest Councils have been,
 “ and at present are, convened by their deter-
 “ mination and appointment.”

At present, I will only further remind him of what was said upon this point by the Council of Constance ; “ This Council, being lawfully
 “ assembled in the name of the Holy Ghost,
 “ which constituted the general Council, and
 “ represented the whole Catholic Church, *had*
 “ *its powers immediately from Jesus Christ ; and*
 “ *even the Pope himself is obliged to obey it :*” And the R. must allow that to have been the most august assembly that ever appeared in the kingdom of Antichrist. Beside clergymen and laymen, of all ranks, in myriads, there were present 1600 barbers, 300 tavern-keepers, 505 musicians, 1500 strumpets, and 346 jugglers and

C 3

play-

* Id. lib. 3. c. 12.

play-actors; all, without doubt, for the convenience and comfort of these venerable fathers, who burnt John Huss and Jerome of Prague, for believing and teaching the doctrine of the scriptures about the way to heaven.

As a farther proof of the supremacy of the Pope, the R. says, “ In his letter to them prelates Damasus twice calls them his most honoured children *.”

That Damasus, a man who arrived at the popedom through the murder of 160 citizens, whose arrogance was unbounded, and whose table vied with the emperor’s in luxury, might do so, I will not dispute. But a multitude of passages can also be produced from ancient writers, in which the Popes of these times are merely denominated *colleague* and *brother* by the surrounding bishops.

But says the R., “ In the general Council of Ephesus, held in the year 431, ’twas affirmed without a contradiction, or even without the least motion of surprise, that Peter was the head of the apostles, and Pope Celestine, (then at Rome), the head of the Council †.”

It has been already shewn, in what sense the primacy of Peter and the Pope was understood by the primitive Church. This can, therefore, be no proof of an authoritative supremacy.

“ In the seventh Synod held at Nice,” says the

* P. 193.

† P. 194.

the R., " Pope Adrian's letter to Tharadius was
 " received with universal applause, in it we read
 " that his See was the head of the universal
 " Church : That it has a distinguished primacy
 " over the inhabited world ; that Peter always
 " was and is still supreme *."

If the bishops of that Council received this declaration of Adrian with such unbounded applause as he mentions, they seem very soon to have altered their sentiments. By consulting the letter which they sent to this Pope at the conclusion of the Council, he will find them far from acknowledging his supreme authority. The only titles which they give him, are these of brother and fellow-minister.

But farther, says he, " Epiphanius says : *that*
 " *Ursace and Valens went in penance with libels*
 " *(supplicatory) to the blessed Julius, Bishop of*
 " *Rome, to give an account of their error and their*
 " *crime.* Her. 68.—Would these Bishops ap-
 " pear to account for their conduct before a Bi-
 " shop in whom they acknowledged no jurisdic-
 " tion †?"

A few observations on the state of the Church at that period will tend to illustrate these words of Epiphanius.

A custom had, for a considerable time, sub-
 sisted, by which persons, who imagined them-
 selves unjustly condemned in their own provin-

C 4

cial :

* P. 194.

† P. 197.

cial assemblies, appealed for their vindication to the neighbouring churches. This, however, was not done upon the principle of a superior jurisdiction. The condemned person merely supposed, that the approbation of the surrounding bishops, particularly if their influence was considerable, would tend to his justification in the eyes of the world. Ursacius and Valens acted entirely on this principle in appearing at Rome before Julius. They had been infected with the Arian heresy, and were also violent enemies of Athanasius. But finding his cause very warmly espoused by the Western bishops, they judged it sound politics to retract their opinions, and chime in with the multitude. For this purpose, they appeared before the Council of Milan, and pretended to abjure their errors. Their recantation was accordingly received by these bishops, who also restored them to the communion of the Church. After this, imagining that, could they obtain also the countenance of Julius, it would tend to remove any remaining suspicion against them, and to restore their credit, they repaired to Rome, and repeated their recantation. In all this, however, there was no acknowledgement of the Pope's supremacy; for they had been restored by the Council, previous to this journey. It is evident also, that they were not sent by the Council; for Hosius, bi-
shop

shop of Corduba, says in express terms, “ They
“ came to Rome of their own accord *.”

The R.’s next proof is from the works ascribed to Athanasius: “ Athanasius,” says he, “ in his letter to Pope Felix, says: *for this that*
“ *Jesus Christ placed you and your predecessors*
“ *in the fortress of the summit, and ordered you*
“ *to take care of all Churches, that you might as-*
“ *sist us †.*”

There are some points of doctrine taught by the Fathers, about which the R., notwithstanding his pretensions to an extensive acquaintance with these writers, would require a little farther information. Their words must not always be taken in their literal acceptation; particularly, when they speak of the merit and influence of metropolitan bishops. Of this I will produce some examples, which cannot fail to receive his cordial approbation. Gregory Nazianzen, in his Panegyric upon Athanasius, ascribes to him that supremacy for which the R. contends. “ He had,” says he, “ the government of that
“ people committed to him, which is as much
“ as to say, of the whole world.” St. Basil also, in writing to Athanasius respecting the establishment of Meletius, as patriarch of Antioch, says, “ That so he might govern, as it
“ were, the whole body of the Church ‡.” But Theodoret overlooks both these, and bestows

C 5

the

* Apud Ath. ad Solitar.

† P. 197.

‡ Ep. 50.

the supremacy on the patriarch of Constantinople : “ He was intrusted with the government
 “ of the Catholic Church of the orthodox at
 “ Constantinople, and thereby, of the whole
 “ world *.” Before the R., therefore, can receive any assistance from these words which he has ascribed to Athanasius, or from similar expressions, he must lay down the following rule for understanding the Fathers, “ When supremacy is ascribed to the bishop of Rome, it
 “ must be literally understood : but to others,
 “ it is merely complimentally.”

But, though these words had actually ascribed an exclusive supremacy to Felix, they would afford the R. very little ground for boasting. Du Pin has proven, by conclusive reasoning, that the letter from which they are extracted is false and supposititious. “ It has,” says he, “ many marks of falsehood. 1. Athanasius
 “ never communicated with this false Pope. 2.
 “ It has not the style of Athanasius, but of a
 “ Latin author. 3. It is composed of passages
 “ from works which were not then in existence.
 “ 4. When Felix was chosen, Athanasius was
 “ in concealment, and could not assemble a Synod, as the letter says he did †.” But, perhaps, nothing less than the testimony of Athanasius himself will persuade the R. of its forgery.

* Haeret. Fabul. lib. 4. c. 12.
 vol. 1. p. 176.

† Hist. Eccles.

ry. If he please, then, to look into the works of that Father, he will find him calling Felix “ a monster, raised to the See of Rome, by the malice of Antichrist *.” Such was this venerable Father’s opinion of a man, who is now honoured by the Romish Church as a saint and a martyr.

According to the R.’s account, Athanasius had good reason to acknowledge the Pope’s supremacy ; for, says he, “ Sozomen, the Greek historian, says, Lib. 3. ch. 6. that Julius bishop of Rome reinstated him in the See of Alexandria †.”

The same thing is also affirmed by Socrates Scholasticus ; but it is evident that they were both mistaken. In the Council which met at Rome, Athanasius was declared unjustly deposed, and admitted into the communion of that Church ; but, so far from being reinstated by the Pope, he did not return to Alexandria for a considerable number of years. This Father was restored to his See by the Council of Sardica, as is farther related by Socrates, in the twentieth chapter of his second Book.

The R.’s next proof of supremacy is deduced from the conduct of Victor. “ Pope Victor,” says he, “ in the year 192, threatened to excommunicate the Asiatics for celebrating the Easter on the same day with the Jews ; *Blas-*

C 6

“ *tus,*

* Ath. ad Solitar.

† P. 199.

‡ Ibid.

“ *tus*, says Tertullian *de prae in fine, fraudu-*
 “ *lently endeavoured to introduce Judaism: he*
 “ *said that Easter was not to be celebrated but ac-*
 “ *cording to the law of Moses, on the fourteenth*
 “ *day of the month.* As the Asiatics had adopt-
 “ ed this mode of celebrating the Easter, the
 “ pontiff applying an effectual remedy to a grow-
 “ ing evil, either did or seriously threatened to
 “ retrench from the Catholic communion all
 “ those who obstinately persisted in the error*.”

The R., in his relation of this affair, discovers the most contemptible ignorance of antiquity. The Asiatic mode of observing Easter, he would try to persuade us, was an innovation in religion, and erroneous; and, therefore, because it seemed to be a growing evil, Pope Victor endeavoured to stop it by applying the effectual remedy of excommunication. A very little acquaintance with antiquity indeed would have shewn him, that the observation of Easter on any particular day, had no foundation, either in the scriptures or apostolic tradition. The bishops of Rome before the days of Victor, instead of considering the different practices of the Church in this point a sufficient cause for thundering out an excommunication, were wont to send the eucharist, as a mark of communion, to bishops of opposite sentiments. Pope Anicetus even permitted Polycarp to consecrate the sacrament in his own church

church at Rome, though they could not agree about this particular. By consulting the Ecclesiastical History of Socrates Scholasticus, he will find that neither the observation of Easter, nor many other nonsensical rites, which the Romish Church have imposed upon the ignorant, as essentials of religion, had any other origin than the will-worship of men. As it may be gratifying to the reader to hear the opinion of this historian, I will transcribe a few of his observations on this subject.

“ The apostles, therefore, and the gospels,
 “ have no where imposed the yoke of servitude
 “ on those who have approached the preaching
 “ of the faith, but have left the feast of Easter,
 “ and the other festivals, to be honoured by the
 “ gratitude and benevolence of those who have
 “ had benefits conferred upon them on those
 “ days. Wherefore, because men love festivals,
 “ on account of the cessation from labour which
 “ they enjoy at such times, they have, accord-
 “ ing to their own pleasure, in every place, ce-
 “ lebrated, by a certain custom, the memory of
 “ the saving passion. For neither our Saviour
 “ nor his apostles have enjoined us by any law
 “ to observe this festival, nor have the gospels
 “ or the apostles threatened us with any fine,
 “ punishment, or curse, as the Mosaic law does
 “ the Jews. . . . Moreover, it was not the a-
 “ postles’ design to make laws concerning festi-
 “ val

“ val days, but to introduce good life and pie-
 “ ty : And it seems to me, that as many other
 “ things, in several places, have been establish-
 “ ed by custom, so the feast of Easter also had
 “ a peculiar observation among all persons from
 “ some old usage ; because none of the apostles,
 “ as I have said, have made any determinate
 “ decree concerning it. Now, that the obser-
 “ vation of this festival had its origin among all
 “ men, in the primitive times, from custom ra-
 “ ther than law, the things themselves do de-
 “ monstrate. For in Asia Minor, most people
 “ kept the fourteenth day of the moon, disre-
 “ garding the Sabbath-day ; and though this
 “ was their practice, they never separated from
 “ those who celebrated the feast of Easter other-
 “ wise ; till Victor, bishop of Rome, overheated
 “ with anger, sent an excommunication-libel
 “ to the Quartodecimani in Asia *.”

Nor is the R. better informed about the nature of excommunication, as it was frequently used in the primitive ages. In many cases, it was merely a mark, by which one bishop withdrew himself from the communion of another, over whom he possessed no jurisdiction. Nor did this sentence always imply, that an excommunicated person was removed from the communion of other parts of the church. Of this, the case before us is an apposite illustration. The

R.

* Hist. Eccles. lib. 5. c. 22.

R. would wish it believed, that Pope Victor's authority was acknowledged by the excommunicated bishops and the whole Church; and also, that this strong measure produced a more regular observance of Easter: "His severity," says he, "put a stop to the progress of the evil, his authority was never called in question*." But nothing can be farther from the truth than both these assertions. These excommunicated bishops disregarded equally the Pope and his sentence; and the other bishops of the Church, instead of acquiescing in his judgement, and withdrawing from their communion, combined to rebuke him, as a disturber of the peace.

Such views did they entertain at that time of the infallibility and supremacy of the Romish Church; and yet the R. presumes to say, that they entertained no doubt of the validity of the act! As yet the thunder of Popes was not armed with all its terrors. They could neither toast the refractory with fire and faggot, nor disseminate discord among neighbours, rebellion in kingdoms; and therefore, their unjust decisions were treated with contempt. So little did the primitive bishops consider a Pope's excommunication as a decisive proof of his supreme authority, that they never failed to use this weapon against himself upon just occasions. Had the R. ever seen the writings of some of these Fathers
which

* P. 200.

which he pretends to quote, he would have known, that the head of the See of Rome, this pretended successor to the official authority of St. Peter, has been more than once excommunicated by them, for condemning the doctrines of the gospel*.

Such are the principal proofs by which he attempts to establish the supremacy of the Romish Church. They are, he informs us, the best that he could produce; "He has confined himself to these testimonies, which are warranted by cotemporary writers of the greatest note †." In presuming to fight such a great battle with so feeble weapons, he has certainly freed himself from the charge of cowardice. Like many other bold warriors, however, his courage originated in ignorance of his danger. With a number of borrowed quotations, set off with scraps of Greek, he has attempted to make a show of learning. But he is evidently a considerable stranger, both to the writings of the Fathers and the practices of antiquity. His proofs will neither stand the test of fair reasoning nor just investigation. Many of his authorities are taken from books which he never consulted, and perhaps

* St. Hilarius anathematized Pope Liberius, for declaring himself Arian, and condemning the orthodox faith: and Pope Vigilius, for favouring the Eutychian heresy, was excommunicated by the African bishops.

haps never saw. Of this, many proofs have been already shewn. Out of many more, which might be added if necessary, I will only produce one, that the reader may see the accuracy of his researches into the works of the Fathers.

“Evagrius the Syrian,” says he, “whom
 “Photius, a good judge of history, though a
 “very bad man, thinks an accurate historian,
 “says in his history, Lib. 1. Hist. Cap. 4. that
 “the general Council of Ephesus deposed Nes-
 “torius, patriarch of Constantinople, by a
 “mandate from the Roman Pontiff; but think-
 “ing the cause of John, patriarch of Antioch,
 “more doubtful, did not presume to pronounce
 “on it, but reserved it for the judgement of
 “Pope Celestine himself*.”

According to Evagrius, the Council declared themselves induced to the deposition of Nestorius, “by the authority of the canons, and also
 “by the letter of our most holy father and fel-
 “low-minister, Celestine, bishop of the Roman
 “Church.” Did these bishops either view this letter as a mandate, or acknowledge the supreme authority of the Pope, when they styled him merely their fellow-minister, and restricted his jurisdiction to the See of Rome? But this is the most correct part of his statement. In this chapter, neither John of Antioch nor his case are so much as mentioned. This Council, also,

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* P. 193.

so far from making any reference concerning him to Celestine, deposed him from his office, and cast him out of the church, as the R. may see by consulting the very next chapter of Evagrius, that accurate historian : “ John and the
“ bishops of his party are separated from holy
“ communion, and from all sacerdotal authori-
“ ty.” He might employ his time to excellent advantage, in furnishing the world with a new copy of the works of these ancient writers. That is a work for which he appears to be very well qualified. He is a greater adept at framing an original than making translations ; and he seems also to know, that had the Fathers composed their works in the nineteenth century, when Popery, in the decrepitude of old age, required many props to support it, they would have written very differently from what they did in the days of their ignorance.

As yet, we have only taken a view of what the Fathers have not said respecting Popish supremacy ; we may now observe what they have actually taught. This must be pleasing to the R., whose heart is refreshed by the very names of these ancient writers. We may begin with the decisions of the Council of Sardica, which was held in the year 347.

By the canons of this assembly, at which a hundred Western bishops were present, it was agreed, “ That if any bishop shall think him-
“ self

“ self unjustly condemned, his judges shall acquaint the bishop of Rome, who may either confirm the first judgement, or appoint a re-examination of his case by some neighbouring bishops.” Hosius of Corduba, who was much attached to the See of Rome, requested the Council to grant this privilege to the memory of St. Peter. This every reader will allow to be a notable testimony for the Pope’s supremacy, and must be very much surprised that the R. should overlook it. But his neglect of it was occasioned by its connection with a number of circumstances, with which he found it a little delicate to intermeddle. As I am not under the same restraint, I will present them to the reader.

So far was the Pope’s supremacy from being an established doctrine in the church at this time *, that before the Council of Sardica could pass their decree, they were necessitated to revoke the decisions of the Council of Antioch, by which all appeals beyond the neighbouring provinces had been totally prohibited. After all, it tended very little to advance the Pope’s authority; for the decrees of this Council were neither put into the code of the canons of the universal church, approved by the Council of Chalcedon, nor would the Eastern and African bishops receive them. But the principal use to which

* A. D. 347.

which this canon has been applied, is yet to be mentioned. This I will relate with the greatest satisfaction, because it must please both the reader and the R.; the former, by affording him a just view of the supremacy; the latter, by showing him a Pope exercising himself in these upright and pious labours, by which the Romish Church has been exalted.

The African bishops, having been disgusted with the arrogance of Pope Zosimus, attempted to put a stop to his encroachments, by a decree of Council assembled at Carthage in the year 418. By this it was determined, that if any person presumed to appeal beyond seas, he should be excluded from the communion of the church. In a very short time, however, they found this assertion of their independence insufficient to prevent Zosimus from intermeddling with their affairs. The first appearance of this was upon the following occasion.

Apiarius, a presbyter of Sicca, having been convicted of many grievous crimes, was degraded and excommunicated by his own bishop Urbanus. Notwithstanding the justice of his sentence, and the prohibition of the Council, he appealed to the bishop of Rome. Such deference to the See of St. Peter was too flattering to pass unrewarded; and therefore Zosimus, without even hearing the other party, restored Apiarius to his dignity, and to the communion
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of the church. The African bishops upon this took the alarm, and exclaimed against his procedure as an open violation of the canons. Zosimus knew that it would be in vain for him to appeal to the Council of Sardica in vindication of his conduct, as that Council had never been acknowledged in Africa; and therefore he judged it a most prudent expedient to palm its decrees upon these bishops, as the canons of Nice. To carry on this imposture, Faustinus, a bishop, with Philippus and Assellus, both presbyters, were dispatched into Africa. In their instructions, they were commanded to require of the African bishops an observance of these canons; and also, that they would not communicate with Urbanus, unless he received Apiarius as formerly.

On the arrival of these legates, a Council was immediately called, and their instructions read. These canons were next compared with many copies of the canons of Nice, to which they were found not to bear the most distant resemblance. The legates, however, continuing to affirm, with the most consummate effrontery, that the canons produced by them were genuine, the Council agreed to observe them till a more particular inquiry should be made. But, as this was an affair of general concernment, and only a few bishops present, they agreed to call

a general Council, before any decisive step should be taken.

Agreeably to this resolution, 217 bishops from the different provinces of Africa convened at Carthage on the 25th of May 419. Aurelius of Carthage moved, that the canons of Nice, in the possession of the African bishops, should be read. This was strenuously opposed by Faustinus the legate, who insisted on their first reading his instructions, and forming some resolutions respecting the observance of the canons in his possession. After much wrangling, it was proposed to send messengers to Constantinople, Alexandria, and Antioch, for authentic copies of the canons of Nice. This proposal Faustinus opposed most furiously, as an outrage offered to the See of Rome, and an indirect accusation of forgery. Notwithstanding his remonstrances, the Council agreed to this measure, and determined, that if the canons produced by Faustinus were correct, they should be strictly observed; but if otherwise, a new Council should be called, and such resolutions formed, as might then be judged proper. They also farther decreed, that Apiarius should make proper submission to his bishop, and then be restored.

In the mean time, they sent to Constantinople, Alexandria, and Antioch, for the most authentic copies of the canons of Nice. On receiving

ceiving these, and comparing them with the copy which Cecilianus had brought from that Council, they were found to correspond in every particular. This was the more remarkable, as the Alexandrian copy had been sent originally from Rome by Pope Marcus, at the request of the bishops of Egypt. The African bishops immediately informed Boniface, who had succeeded Pope Zosimus, of this agreement of the copies, and the dispute was dropped.

In the pontificate of Celestine, however, it was again renewed. Apiarius, after his restoration, was convicted of the most scandalous conduct, and on this account excommunicated anew. This produced another appeal to Rome; and Pope Celestine not only declared him innocent, and admitted him into his communion without an examination of witnesses, but sent his legate along with him into Africa, with orders to see him reinstated.

On their arrival, a general Council was called, and Apiarius summoned to attend. He accordingly appeared with the legate, who insisted, that as he had been declared innocent at Rome, he should be received into communion. To this the African bishops replied, that, having been condemned among them, his innocence must also appear, before that could take place. They therefore proceeded to his trial, which lasted three whole days. During this time, he defended

defended his cause with art and cunning; and, by the protection of the bishop of Rome, he might have escaped, had he been able only to withstand the stings of his own conscience. But, upon the fourth day, to the great confusion of the legate and the supremacy, he confessed every crime with which he had been charged. What these were, we are not informed; but, in the proceedings of that Council, they are declared to have been “heinous, incredible, such as ought not to be named, and such as drew sighs and tears from the whole assembly*.” The Council immediately declared him excluded from the communion of the church, and renewed the canon, which prohibited appeals beyond sea, on pain of excommunication. They then wrote a synodical letter to the Pope, in which they asserted their rights, and told him to send them no more of his legates upon errands of this kind.

The reader, I hope, will forgive the length of this narration. It affords a juster view of the supremacy, than could be given by a multitude of quotations from ancient authors. Nor is it even without its consolation to the R. It will show him that the Church of Rome did not obtain the supremacy, without being sometimes most sadly foiled, and therefore, may encourage him to persevere, though his present attempts
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* Concil. tom. 2. 1145. 1148.

have not succeeded. He may yet do great things and marvellous by a steady perseverance. There is the greater prospect of success, as he occupies a ground, of which these near-sighted Popes could not perceive the advantage. From the whole of this dispute it appears, that they knew no other foundation for the supremacy than the canons of Nice. Now, it stands upon a much surer bottom; and besides, the traditions of eighteen centuries may be wrested to support the building.

I will, in the next place, introduce the R. to his learned friend St. Jerome, who, being a clergyman employed in the service of Pope Damasus, ought to know something of the supremacy of these early times. "Wherever there is a bishop," says he, in his epistle to Evagrius, "whether at Rome or Eugubium, Constanti-
nople or Rhegium, Alexandria or Tanis, he is of the same worth, and of the same priesthood; the advantage of wealth, and the disadvantage of poverty, neither make a bishop higher nor lower; for they are all successors of the apostles." St. Jerome, in these words, places the most eminent and the most obscure Sees equally on a level.

Notwithstanding the numerous quotations which the R. has produced from St. Cyprian, in defence of Popish supremacy, no ancient bishop contended more strenuously against it. He

would wish us to believe, that the dispute between Pope Stephen and this Father respected merely the baptism of heretics. But though that was the original quarrel, it was connected with a steady opposition on the part of St. Cyprian to any supremacy assumed by the See of Rome. As a complete refutation of all the proofs which he has produced from this Father, I will give the reader a view of the progress and termination of this dispute.

Cyprian entertained an opinion, that all converted heretics ought to be re-baptised, but, at the same time, declared himself willing to live in unity and love with all who were of opposite sentiments. His views on this subject having been embraced by two Councils at Carthage, they wrote to Stephen, informing him of their decision, and also of their intention to act upon the same principles of peace and charity. In reply to their letter, Stephen, who had warmly espoused the contrary opinion, sent them a very arrogant epistle, in which he commanded Cyprian, and all who adhered to him, to quit their views, on pain of exclusion from his communion: And, to shew them how much he was in earnest, he dignified the former with the appellation of false Christ, false apostle, deceitful workman, and the like.

Though highly provoked by the Pope's abusive language, this Father was still desirous that
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the truth might be ascertained, and therefore summoned another Council for a re-examination of the question. After the former Council's letter to Stephen and his reply had been read, Cyprian made a short speech, exhorting every member to speak his mind freely; and, says he, in allusion to the arrogant pretensions and conduct of the Pope, "Let none of us set up for
 " bishop of bishops, nor, by a tyrannical fear,
 " reduce his colleagues to the necessity of obey-
 " ing*." The bishops then delivered their opinions in order, unanimously adhering to the decree of the former Councils, which was immediately confirmed, notwithstanding the threats and menaces of the Pope: And yet the R. has produced a string of quotations from St. Cyprian, as a notable defender of Popish supremacy. In these he has attended merely to the jingle of the words, and not to the scope of the writer. To illustrate this, I will produce one, which may serve as a specimen of the whole.

" In his letter," says he, " to Cornelius, then
 " Pope, St. Cyprian says: *Sects and schisms re-*
 " *sult from this only, that obedience is not paid to*
 " *the priest of God; nor is it considered that there*
 " *is but one priest of God for the time, and one*
 " *judge for the time in the place of Christ, to*
 " *whom if, according to divine instruction, the*

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" whole

* Con. p. 397.

“ whole fraternity obeyed, no one would disturb
 “ the college of priests.—Lib. 1. Epist. 3.

“ St. Cyprian shews that there is but one
 “ priest in the Catholic Church to whom all
 “ others owe obedience; that disobedience to
 “ him is the source of heresy and schism . . .
 “ In the same epistle he calls the Roman Church
 “ the See of St. Peter, and the principal Church
 “ from which the unity of the priesthood arises*.”

Perhaps, it did not occur to the R., that St. Cyprian has not yet specified the Pope to be this
 “ one priest of God for the time;” but it is very natural for a Romish priest to presume that he thought so. If the reader advert to this Father’s opposition, he will be apt to think otherwise. St. Cyprian, it is more than probable, knew something of his own meaning, and therefore he ought to be consulted on this point. He indeed says, that episcopal government is founded in unity; but it is no less evident, that he means a unity of counsel, and not of supreme authority. “ The episcopal government,” says he, “ ought to be but one, spread abroad among
 “ bishops; many in number, and agreeing heartily together †.”

It will be granted, that St. Cyprian calls the Church of Rome “ the See of St. Peter, and
 “ the principal Church, from which the unity
 “ of

* P. 204.

† Ep. 52. ad Antonian.

“ of the priesthood arises.” But had the R. ever seen the epistle, which he pretends to quote, he would scarcely have ventured to mention it to his readers. St. Cyprian, in this very place, teaches a doctrine diametrically opposite to Popish supremacy, as may be seen from the following extract : “ After all these irregularities, after
 “ electing an heretic to be a bishop, they have
 “ still the impudence to go to Rome, and carry
 “ letters from schismatics to the Chair of St. Peter ; to that chief Church, which is the spring
 “ of sacerdotal unity. But what can be their
 “ design, since they are still resolved to perse-
 “ vere in their crimes ? or what benefit can they
 “ expect by going to Rome ? If they repent of
 “ their faults, they should understand, that they
 “ must come back to this place to receive abso-
 “ lution ; since it is an established order all over
 “ the world, and indeed it is but reasonable,
 “ that every person’s cause should be examined
 “ where the crime was committed. Every pas-
 “ tor has received a part of Jesus Christ’s flock
 “ to govern, and shall render an account of his
 “ actions to God alone. On this account, it is
 “ not to be allowed, that persons under our
 “ charge should run here and there, and sow
 “ dissension among bishops,” &c.

The scope of this passage is sufficient to shew, that Cyprian, in calling the See of Rome the principal Church, and the spring of sacerdotal

unity, did not intend to ascribe any supremacy to the Pope or his See. But his own explanation of his meaning can be also produced. "Christ," says he, "builds his Church upon one; and though he gives equal power to all the apostles, and tells them, *Whose sins ye retain shall be retained, and whose sins ye forgive shall be forgiven*, yet, to make unity manifest, he ordered, by his own authority, that the origin of that very unity should begin from one; For the other apostles were the same as he, (*Peter*), equally sharers of honour and power; but the beginning springs from unity, that the Church may be shewn to be only one*."

In these words, St. Cyprian does not grant even a primacy of honour to any of the apostles, and certainly far less to the bishop of Rome. If the R. imagine that this Father calls the Church of Rome "the See of St. Peter, and the principal Church," in exclusion to all others, he is a stranger to the doctrine which was taught in the primitive church, and even by the head of the Romish See. I will introduce him again to Pope Gregory the Great, that excellent writer, who will shew him what he ought to understand by the See of St. Peter. "Though there were several apostles," says he, in his epistle to Eulogius of Alexandria, "there is but one apostolic

* De Unit. Eccles.

" lic See, the See of the prince of the apostles,
 " which has acquired great authority ; and that
 " See is in three places ; in Rome, where he
 " died ; in Alexandria, where it was founded by
 " his disciple St. Mark ; and in Antioch, where
 " he resided himself seven years. These three,
 " therefore, are but one See ; and on that one
 " See sit three bishops, who are but one in him
 " who said, *I am in my Father, and you in me,*
 " *and I in you.*"

Having mentioned the name of this Pope, it may not be amiss to take a short view of his contendings about supremacy.

In his time, the bishop of Constantinople assumed the title of universal patriarch. Pope Gregory took the alarm at this, and strained every nerve to induce him to relinquish it, as being proud, profane, and antichristian. His applications, however, to the emperor, the empress, and the patriarch himself, were unsuccessful. Finding himself disappointed, he again wrote to his nuntio at Constantinople, to apply anew for the abolition of this title. His letter was closed with the following words : " It is
 " very hard, that, after we have parted with
 " our selves, our gold, our slaves, and even
 " our garments, we should be obliged also to
 " resign our faith ; for to consent to that im-
 " pious title, is parting with our faith *."

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* Lib. 4. Ep. 39.

When the applications of his nuntio were equally unsuccessful, he wrote a letter to the bishop himself, in which he styles his new title “vain, ambitious, profane, impious, execrable, antichristian, blasphemous, infernal, and diabolical.” “Whom do you imitate,” says he, “in assuming that arrogant title? Whom, but him who, inflated with pride, exalted himself above so many legions of angels his equals, that he might be subject to none, and that all might be subject to him. . . . If none of the apostles would be called universal, what will you answer in the last day to Christ, the Head of the universal Church? You who, by arrogating that name, strive to subject all his members to yourself? But this is the time which Christ himself foretold; the earth is now laid waste, and destroyed by the plague and the sword; the king of pride (Antichrist) is at hand, and, what I dread to say, an army of priests is ready to receive him*.”

To this bishop's successor, Pope Gregory wrote a letter upon the same subject; in which he says, “Whoever calls himself universal bishop, or desires to be so called in the pride of his heart, is the forerunner of Antichrist.” Nor did he reject this title with less indignation, when given to himself by Eulogius of Alexandria.

* Lib. 4. Ep. 32.

dria. In reply to a letter from that bishop, he says, “ If you give me more than is due to me, you rob yourself of what is your own due. I chuse to be distinguished by my manners, and not by titles. Nothing can redound to my honour, which conduces to the dishonour of my brethren. I place my honour in maintaining them in theirs. If you call me universal Pope, you thereby own yourself to be no Pope. Let no such titles, therefore, be mentioned or ever heard among us. Your Holiness says in your letter that I commanded you. I command you! I know who you are, —who I am. In rank you are my brother, in manners my father. I, therefore, did not command, and I request, that you will henceforth forbear that word for ever *.”

* Any observations on the sentiments of this head of the See of Rome are entirely unnecessary. Should the R. think, that a more complete view of them ought to have been given, a larger assortment of quotations from his writings to the same purpose are at his service. It is, indeed, some consolation to the R. to reflect, that these proofs against the supremacy were penned by Gregory in the midst of great ignorance. Learned and judicious as he was, he neither knew that his successors would claim the title which he declared to be execrable, nor that “ innovators

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“ and

* Lib. 7. Ep. 36.

“ and pretended reformers” would quote his sayings in defence of their heresies. Had he written a few centuries later, he would have perhaps expressed himself in very different strains. But, like many other ignorant and well-meaning persons, he happened to stumble upon the truth, which the R. knows very well ought never to be told, when it tends to diminish the influence of the bishop of Rome.

This ancient Pope appears to have been a great enemy to Antichrist. According to his views, he was at hand in his days. Since then, twelve hundred years have elapsed; and therefore, he ought now to be getting pretty grey-headed. Will the R. then be pleased to cast his eyes upon what is called the Christian world, and observe whether the Protestant interest, or Papal authority, is in the most declining condition. A very slight glance will show him, that the horizon of the Romish Church is overcast and gloomy. Might we not then suppose, that the period had arrived, when great Babylon, or, as the R. explains it, “ great Rome came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath*.” St. John informs us, that the kings of the earth, after having given their power and strength to the beast, “ would hate Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and make her desolate and
“ naked,

* Rev. xv. 19.

“ naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with
“ fire *.” The accomplishment of this prophecy is hastening to a conclusion. The kings of the earth have already given her the most ample tokens of their hatred; they have not only eaten her flesh, but squeezed the very marrow from her bones; and the time is not far distant, when the flames, with which she has tormented the servants of God, will overtake her. The present generation may yet “ see the
“ smoke of her burning;” and then the R. ought to join the Church in her doxology,
“ Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honour,
“ and power, unto the Lord our God: For
“ true and righteous are his judgements; for
“ he hath judged the great whore, who did
“ corrupt the earth with her fornication, and
“ hath avenged the blood of his servants at her
“ hand: And again they said, Alleluia. And
“ her smoke rose up for ever and ever †.”

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CHAP.

* Rev. xvii.

† Chap. xix. 1.—3.

CHAP. IV.

A VIEW OF THE TEMPORAL AUTHORITY CLAIMED AND EXERCISED BY THE POPES, AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE MEANS WHICH THEY HAVE EMPLOYED TO SUPPORT IT.

AFTER discussing the doctrine of the Pope's spiritual supremacy, it may not be amiss to present the reader with a short view of the temporal authority which he has both claimed and exercised. This part of the supremacy the R. has attempted to deny indirectly: "To the Ex. second conclusion," says he, "that is, that the Pope enjoys full power over all nations and kingdoms, the writer replies, that Mr Burke has shewn in that very Letter of Instruction, under examination, that the Pope does not possess an atom of civil power or temporal jurisdiction over any one town or village in the whole world, beyond the territories which he governs as a temporal prince*." By this, he would insinuate to his readers, that former Popes were in the same situation with respect to temporal jurisdiction. It is lucky for the R., that he lives at a time when coals are scarce in his Holiness' kitchen, and under a government which has yet to learn the propriety of

* P. 72.

of broiling its subjects for the benefit of the clergy. Had he maintained these sentiments a few centuries sooner, both himself and his doctrine would have met with a reception from the church, as warm as he could desire. The most merciful sentence of the benevolent ecclesiastics of these days, would have been destruction in this world, and damnation in the next. But, as it must be distressing to the mind of a good Papist, independent of the danger, to have believed in opposition to the faith of the church, I will show him her belief and practice in former ages.

The sword was formerly considered as such a useful appendage to the keys of St. Peter, that the Popes united the imperial diadem to the mitre. This civil power they did not exercise merely for the government of their own territorial possessions, as the R. would wish his readers to believe. They claimed a universal dominion, by the same right which invested them, as they pretended, with spiritual supremacy. It has accordingly been the common declaration of the Popes, that crowns and kingdoms are at their disposal; and that it is their prerogative to establish kings, and destroy them at their pleasure. But lest the R. accuse me of misrepresentation, I will produce the authorities on which these observations are founded. On this subject there is no lack of proofs. Popes,
Consistories,

Consistories, Councils, Doctors, and Casuists, have discussed it extensively, and without the least degree of that backwardness which the R. discovers. They spoke, it is true, at a period in which their doctrine was more likely to be received with submission than at present.

The R. may have perhaps heard of the twenty-seven sentences of Pope Gregory VII. and his Council. In these, it is declared, “ That the Pope alone ought to wear the tokens
“ of the imperial dignity, and all princes ought
“ to kiss his feet :—That he is to be judged
“ by none, and that he has power to depose
“ emperors and kings :” And these opinions, Baronius asserts, “ have been hitherto received
“ in the Romish Church *.”

“ The church my spouse,” says Innocent III.,
“ is not married to me without bringing me
“ something. She has given me a dowry of
“ a value beyond all price ; the plenitude of
“ spiritual things, and the extent of things
“ temporal ; the greatness and abundance of
“ both. She has given me the mitre in token
“ of things spiritual ; the crown of things tem-
“ poral ; the mitre for the priesthood, and the
“ crown for the kingdom ; making me the
“ lieutenant of him who has written on his
“ vesture, and on his thigh, *King of kings, and*
“ *Lord of lords.* I alone enjoy the plenitude
“ of

* Ad Ann. 1076.

“ of power, that others may say of me next to
 “ God, *and out of his fulness have we received.*”

“ These are the swords,” says Boniface VIII.,
 “ in the power of the Church, the spiritual
 “ and the material ; on, which is in the hand
 “ of the Pope, and another, which is in the
 “ hand of kings and warriors, but whose ex-
 “ ercise depends on the good pleasure and in-
 “ dulgence of the Pope.”

The same Pope, in a letter to Philip le Bel, addresses him thus ; “ Boniface, bishop and
 “ servant of the servants of God, to Philip
 “ king of France; fear God, and keep his com-
 “ mandments. We would have you to know,
 “ that you are subject to us in things both
 “ spiritual and temporal; and we declare all
 “ those heretics who believe the contrary.”
 And in another he says, “ God has established
 “ us over kings and kingdoms, to pluck up, to
 “ overthrow, to destroy, to scatter, to build,
 “ and to plant, in his name and by his doc-
 “ trine.”

These quotations, the reader will perceive, are unexceptionable; and they sufficiently demonstrate the nature of the Papal supremacy. But this doctrine does not rest merely on the opinions of a Pope. It is none of these articles of faith which terminate in speculation. The history of the Church, and of the politics of
 Europe,

Europe, discovers the most ample consistence between the faith and practice of these Popes. Of this, I will produce a few illustrations, which the R. may controvert if he please, after he has made himself better acquainted with what is usually called the dark ages.

In the year 1179, Alexander III. bestowed the royal title and badges upon Alphonsus, Duke of Portugal; and Innocent III., in 1204, conferred the same dignity on Primislaus, Duke of Bohemia. By his legate, he also raised Johanicus, Duke of Bulgaria and Wallachia, to the same honour. In 1220, Stephen, Great Jucan of Servia, was crowned by the authority of Honorius III. Bolislaus, son and successor of Cassimer, King of Poland, having been excommunicated, first by the bishop of Cracou, and afterwards by the Pope, was not only deprived of his authority, but his people were prevented from chusing a successor without the consent of his Holiness, who prohibited any after him from assuming the title of King. Roger, Count of Sicily, was, by the same authority, declared the first King of Sicily, Duke of Apulia and Calabria, and Prince of Capua, and confirmed in all these titles as the feudatory of the Church. Alexander IV., intending to dispossess Manfred, who had made himself Sovereign of Sicily, offered that kingdom to Edward, the son of the King of England. But this plan failing, Urban,
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the successor of Alexander, ordered a croisade, with the usual encouragements, to be preached against Manfred. But this scheme being attended with little success, he bestowed that kingdom on Charles of Anjou, who accepted the donation. Clement IV. succeeding Urban, ratified the deed of his predecessor ; and in 1266, Charles was crowned King of Sicily, on condition that he should pay every year a stipulated tribute to that Pope and his successors. Charles, having defeated and killed his rival, took possession of his new dominions, and was, by the Pope, declared Lieutenant-general of the empire in Italy. Nicholas III., however, soon after joined with the King of Arragon to dispossess Charles ; and this produced the cruel massacre of the French on Easter-eve, known by the name of the Sicilian vespers. But the succeeding Pope opposed the King of Arragon, forbade him to assume the title of king, deprived him of his dominions, and put him under an interdict.—Many more examples, if necessary, might be produced from the histories of these times ; but these are sufficient to show what supremacy has been claimed by Popes, and how little they have imitated the conduct of that Master who said, “ My kingdom is not of this world *.”

In the course of these contendings between the church and the world, princes frequently discovered

* John, xviii. 36.

covered considerable aversion to be gulled out of their dominions, and endeavoured by force to oppose this part of Papal usurpation. In such cases, the decisions of the Pope were usually corroborated by ecclesiastical censures. Excommunication, intended by the Saviour for reclaiming sinners, was employed in the most dreadful forms, to support the arrogant pretensions of this ruler of kings. In these days of superstitious ignorance, this sentence involved the refractory in very extensive evils; and therefore, it frequently produced, from the most hardy, an abject submission to the civil authority of the Pope. To give the reader an idea of a Popish excommunication, I will present him with a form of it, which was pronounced against a person who had belonged to the Pope's alum-works, but afterwards came to Britain, and revealed the secrets of the trade.

“ By the authority of God Almighty, Father,
 “ Son, and Holy Ghost; and of the holy
 “ canons; and of the immaculate Virgin Mary,
 “ the mother and patroness of our Saviour;
 “ and of all the celestial virtues, angels, arch-
 “ angels, thrones, dominions, powers, cheru-
 “ bims and seraphims; and of all the holy
 “ patriarchs and prophets; and of all the
 “ apostles and evangelists; and of the holy in-
 “ nocents, who, in the sight of the Holy Lamb,
 “ are found worthy to sing the new song; of
 “ the

“ the holy martyrs and holy confessors ; and of
“ the holy virgins, and of all the saints, together
“ with all the holy and elect of God, we excom-
“ municate and anathematize this thief or this
“ malefactor N. : and from the thresholds of
“ the holy Church of Almighty God, we se-
“ quester him, that he may be tormented, dis-
“ posed, and delivered over, with Dathan and
“ Abiram, and with those who say unto the
“ Lord God, *Depart from us, for we desire not*
“ *the knowledge of thy ways* : and as fire is
“ quenched with water, so let his light be put
“ out for ever, unless he shall repent and make
“ satisfaction. Amen.

“ May God the Father, who created man,
“ curse him. May God the Son, who suffer-
“ ed for us, curse him. May the Holy Ghost,
“ who was given for us in baptism, curse him.
“ May the holy cross, which Christ for our sal-
“ vation triumphing ascended, curse him. May
“ the holy and eternal Virgin Mary curse him.
“ May St. Michael, the advocate of holy souls,
“ curse him. May St. John, the chief forerun-
“ ner and baptist of Christ, curse him. May
“ St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Andrew, and all
“ the other apostles of Christ, together with the
“ rest of his disciples, and the four evangelists,
“ curse him. May the holy and wonderful
“ company of martyrs and confessors, who by
“ their holy works are found pleasing to God,
“ curse

“ curse him. May the holy choir of the holy
 “ virgins, who, for the honour of Christ, have
 “ despised the things of the world, curse him.
 “ May all the saints, who, from the beginning
 “ of the world to everlasting ages, are found to
 “ be the beloved of God, curse him. May the
 “ heaven and earth, and all the holy things
 “ therein remaining, curse him. May he be
 “ cursed wherever he may be, whether in the
 “ house or in the field, in the highway or in the
 “ path, in the wood or in the water, or in the
 “ church. May he be cursed in living, in dying,
 “ in eating, in drinking, in being hungry, in
 “ being thirsty, in fasting, in sleeping, in slum-
 “ bering, in waking, in walking, in standing,
 “ in sitting, in lying, in working, in resting, in
 “ p——g, in sh——g, and in bloodletting.
 “ May he be cursed in all the powers of his
 “ body. May he be cursed within and without.
 “ May he be cursed in the hair of his head.
 “ May he be cursed in his brain. May he be
 “ cursed in the crown of his head, in his tem-
 “ ples, in his forehead, in his ears, in his eye-
 “ brows, in his cheeks, in his jaw-bones, in his
 “ nostrils, in his fore-teeth and grinders, in his
 “ lips, in his throat, in his shoulders, in his
 “ wrists, in his arms, in his hands, in his fin-
 “ gers, in his breast, and in all the interior
 “ parts to the very stomach, in his reins, in
 “ his groin, in his thighs, in his genitals, in his
 “ hips,

“ hips, in his knees, in his legs, in his feet, in
 “ his joints, and in his naves. May he be cur-
 “ sed in the whole structure of his members.
 “ From the crown of his head to the sole of his
 “ foot, may there be no soundness in him.
 “ May the Son of the living God, with all the
 “ glory of his majesty, curse him. And may
 “ heaven, and all the powers that move therein,
 “ rise against him to damn him, unless he re-
 “ pent and make full satisfaction. Amen.
 “ Amen. Amen *.”

In this manner did the pretended ministers
 of that religion, which says, *bless and curse not*,
 pour out their execrations against offenders;
 and it must be confessed, that this specimen of
 their cursing talents is a masterly performance.

Though such a sentence would now be re-
 garded with the utmost contempt, yet, when
 Europe was involved in superstition and igno-
 rance, it was frequently attended with the most
 baleful consequences to the person who incur-
 red it. According to the canon-law, the sub-
 jects of excommunicated princes were not only
 loosed from their oaths of allegiance, but ex-
 pressly prohibited to yield them any kind of
 obedience. This censure, therefore, in the
 hands of one, who was generally believed to
 possess a power over the very gates of heaven,
 greatly

* Leger Book of the Church of Rochester, and Sir
 Henry Spelman's Glossary, p. 206.

greatly influenced the views and conduct of men in civil society, and proved a successful instrument for establishing his authority over kings and princes.

If the R. say, that this sentence was entirely ecclesiastical, and therefore, no evidence of a civil supremacy, let him say if it be any thing else than a political engine, when employed for political purposes: and, that it was often applied in this manner, can be very easily shewn.

Raymond, Count of Thoulouse, having been excommunicated for favouring the Albigenses, and for killing, as his enemies alledged, a persecuting priest, all his subjects were absolved from their obligations to obedience, and his lands given to the first occupier. In consequence of this, he was attacked by 500,000 of his zealous neighbours. That he might, therefore, avert impending ruin, he wrote a letter to the Pope, in which he offered to submit to the decision of his legates. By these, he was commanded to surrender seven of his strong towns to the church, as a token of his conversion; and, that he might receive absolution, he was beaten with rods at the door of the church where the dead friar had lain, and then dragged to his tomb, with a rope about his neck, in the presence of twenty archbishops and an immense multitude of spectators. He was afterwards forced to join these blood-thirsty villains,
who,

who, by the encouragement of the Pope, had plundered his dominions, and murdered such vast multitudes of his subjects, that in Baziers alone, above 60,000 persons were destroyed. But after all, refusing to surrender his possessions at the command of the Church, he was again excommunicated. Upon this, he flew to arms, but was at last obliged to resort to the tender mercy of the Pope, before whom he and his son appeared as suppliants. From him he obtained, that his lands should be given to his enemies; and as a great favour, 400 merks allowed himself for subsistence, on condition of submitting and acquiescing in his sentence.

The Emperor Henry IV., having been excommunicated, soon found almost the whole princes of the empire in arms against him. By an extraordinary act of humility, he therefore endeavoured to appease the wrath of the Pontiff. In the middle of winter, he took a journey into Italy, with his wife and a son of two years old. On arriving at Canopa, where the Pope then was, he was permitted to enter the outer gate, which was immediately shut, and his attendants excluded. He was then informed, that there could be no remission for him, unless he remained for a time where he was, in the condition of a penitent. For three days, therefore, he continued in the outer court, clothed in mean apparel, exposed to the cold and snow, bare-footed,

footed, and fasting from morn to night. On the fourth day, the Pope deigned to admit him to an audience, at the intercession of the Countess Matilda, to whom this godly Pope could deny no favour ; because he always found her equally condescending. He was then absolved from the sentence on the following conditions :

“ That he should attend a general Council appointed by the Pope, to which the German princes should be also called, and there answer the accusations presented against him ; and likewise, that he should submit to the sentence which might then be passed upon him : That if he was deprived of his imperial dignity by the decrees of the Church, he should heartily acquiesce, and that, whether deposed or restored, he should never seek to be revenged for any thing done against him : That till his cause be finally decided, he should remain as a private person, by laying aside every mark of royalty, and desisting from all acts of government ; and also consenting, that every person should be acquitted before God and man of their oaths of fidelity to him : That, if he were restored, he should be always subject to the Pope, and obedient to his orders, and employ all his power, in concurrence with him, to maintain the laws and decrees of the Church,” &c.

Through the influence of the Pope, the last days

days of this monarch were spent in the most abject misery. Even death could not screen his ashes from the rage of a Pope, who bore a much greater resemblance to a fiend of hell, than to the supreme teacher of the doctrine of Christ.

Such were the use and effects of an excommunication, in these days of darkness when Popery was in its glory, rejoicing in the bloodshed of nations, and the destruction of kings: and the examples produced are far from singular in the annals of the Church. If the R. have the least curiosity to see a farther illustration of this point, I can present him with the list of a hundred princes, who have been excommunicated and deposed by Popes; and double that number can be collected with very little labour.

Another mean, by which the Popes maintained their authority over princes, was the Interdict. By this, whole kingdoms or provinces were at once deprived of the benefit of the ordinances of religion. The clergy were prohibited from discharging their functions, and every office of religion ceased, if particular exceptions were not made by the Pope. In these ages of superstition, the interdict seldom failed to be the scourge of nations and the terror of kings. It may be easily conceived, that the termination of all public prayers, preachings, masses, marriages, and festivals, to have the church and church-

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yard

yard shut up, the altars stript of their ornaments, and the very bells, which then were accounted holy, entirely silenced, would occasion murmurings and insurrections, and thereby reduce refractory princes to the most abject submission.

To maintain this supremacy, every principle of religion was perverted, and practices the most turbulent and detrimental to the peace of society introduced; and yet the R. affirms, that “the principle of obedience to the ruling prince, whether a Christian or a heathen, was a part of the established doctrine; a doctrine which our ancestors believed, and reduced to practice in the most trying circumstances*.” If, by “our ancestors,” he mean the apostles and primitive Christians, he is perfectly correct; but if, the Church of Rome in the following ages, he is presuming too much upon the ignorance of his readers. Whatever may be the present views and dispositions of Popish clergymen, the obedience of their predecessors has always flowed in a channel, which comported little with the peace of society. If deposing princes and transferring their dominions, absolving their subjects from oaths of allegiance, and exciting them to revolt and murder their sovereigns, be examples in point, they can be most amply produced. The archives of every nation

* P. 8.

nation in Europe, attest the bloody cruelty of former Popes in the exercise of this supremacy. Did the R. confess the truth, he would tell, that these pretenders to religion, having effectuated the establishment of their spiritual supremacy, employed it merely as an engine to advance their temporal interests. After cheating the nations out of true religion, and fettering their minds with the most superstitious absurdities, they enforced their commands with all the consolations and terrors which their religion afforded, to excite their deluded devotees to the most savage barbarities. The R. may, if he please, refer many of the cruelties committed by Papists to the civil power. But what else are magistrates, under the influence of the Romish religion, than the creatures of the Pope? "There are two swords," says Boniface VIII., "in the power of the church, the " spiritual and material : One, which is in the " hand of the Pope ; and another, which is in " the hand of kings and warriors, but whose " exercise depends on the good pleasure and indulgence of the Pope." Between this declaration and the general conduct of the Popes, there has subsisted the most harmonious connection. It can be shewn by the most authentic documents, that the assassinations of princes, the bloody massacres, and the cruel persecutions, which grace the annals of modern Europe, either

have been the devices of Popes, or received their approbation.

Upon this subject, the R. has not judged proper to enlarge. He only observes, that there were “some cruelties committed in Queen Mary’s reign* ;” and even these, he attempts to persuade his readers, proceeded from the cruelty of her disposition, and a sense of the wrongs which she had received from Protestants. But did not Mary herself ascribe it to that gloomy and intolerant religion, to which she was a bigot? And were not Popish priests her abettors and excitors? He indeed tells us, that religion was only the pretext for destroying Ridley, Cranmer, and others who had attempted to deprive her of the succession. Will he inform us, if the poor old men and women, blind and lame, who suffered at that time, were burnt by Mary upon this principle; or if reading the scriptures, denying transubstantiation, and other absurd tenets of the Romish Church, were such high treason against her, as to occasion the consignment of many to the flames? Or will he deny, that the greatest part of these martyrs for the testimony of Jesus, were taken from the lower walks of life, and burnt at the stake, amid the rejoicing and execrations of priests? Did many Papists know half of the spirit of that religion which they profess, they would lend it their
heartiest

* P. 9.

heartiest execrations. But ignorance has been always found in the Romish Church, an excellent preservative in the faith; and, therefore, counting a few beads, and mumbling over a few prayers, is rather enjoined, than the acquisition of that rational information for which the mind of man is intended.

But though no person had been persecuted by Papists in Queen Mary's reign, the declarations of the Church ought to cover the R. with shame for his misrepresentation. The third Council of Lateran, at which were present 400 bishops, and 800 abbots and priors, excommunicated all who opposed the Catholic faith, and decreed, "That they should be delivered to the secular power, to be punished as they deserve, and their goods confiscated: That all suspected persons should be laid under an anathema, unless proofs of their innocence appeared; and if they continued a year under the excommunication, they should be treated as heretics: That lords should be advised, and even obliged by ecclesiastical censures, to take an oath to exterminate heretics and excommunicated persons out of their lands; and any neglecting to do so should be excommunicated by the bishops: and that, within the year, if they gave no satisfaction, the Pope should be informed, that he might absolve their subjects from allegiance, and

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" give

“ give their lands to Catholics.” They granted also extensive indulgences to all persons, who would gird up their loins for the destruction of heretics ; with many other particulars equally descriptive of the spirit of the Romish religion. To this, a multitude of similar declarations of the Church might be added, but at present, I presume, both the reader and the R. will judge them superfluous.

But the Romish Church has not been satisfied with simple decrees. Heretics are a species of animals, against which Popes have always entertained the most rooted antipathy. To procure, therefore, their utter excision, it was no unusual thing for them to exhibit the dearest consolations of religion as the reward of those who would engage in this laudable undertaking. Croisades were proclaimed ; by which, all good Papists were exhorted to aim at the destruction of such noxious vermine ; and the gates of heaven opened to thieves, robbers, murderers, and sinners of all descriptions, who would only embrue their hands in the blood of a heretic : And yet the R. has the audacity to say, “ That
 “ to accuse the Church of encouraging their
 “ punishment is an unfounded slander *.” He tells us of one Spanish friar who preached against persecution. Why not tell us of innumerable Popes, and other Papists, who have blown the trumpet

* P. 24.

trumpet and drawn the sword, and, by their influence and authority, destroyed above fifty millions of persons, entirely on account of their religious principles? In the short space of sixty years, the Inquisition itself murdered a hundred and fifty thousand heretics. But he does not, perhaps, believe that such a tribunal ever existed.

The R., in the bitterness of his spirit, deploras the burning of the library of Oxford by the soldiers of Oliver Cromwell. I can tell him for his comfort, that the hatred of these Protestant heretics against the Church, did not extend to the library of Cambridge; and though much ecclesiastical information, treasured up at the former, was destroyed, there are yet in the latter many memorials of Popish mercy and loving-kindness for heretics. Among others, there is the original Bull of Innocent VIII. for the extirpation of the Vaudois, by which eight hundred thousand of these poor people were murdered, for believing contrary to the faith of the Pope. From this, I will present him with a few extracts, which will shew the nature of a Crusade, illustrate the spirit of the Romish religion, and discover how the godly priests of these days propagated their doctrines.

“ Innocent the bishop, *the servant of the ser-*
 “ *vants of God*, to our well-beloved son, Albert
 “ de Capitaneis, archdeacon of the Church of
 “ Cremona, our nuntio and commissary of the

“ Apostolic See,—health and apostolic benedic-
 “ tion

“ We have heard with great displeasure, that
 “ certain sons of iniquity, inhabitants of the
 “ province of Ambrun, &c. followers of that
 “ most pernicious and abominable sect of wicked
 “ men called the *Poor men of Lions or Waldenses*,
 “ which long ago has damnably risen up in
 “ Piedmont, and other places adjacent, by the
 “ malice of the devil——

“ We, therefore, obliged by the duty of our
 “ pastoral charge, being desirous to pluck
 “ up and entirely root out from the Catholic
 “ Church that execrable sect, and those impious
 “ errors formerly mentioned, lest they spread
 “ farther, and the hearts of the faithful be
 “ damnably corrupted by them, and to repress
 “ such rash and audacious attempts, have re-
 “ solved to exert every effort for this purpose,
 “ and to bestow upon it all our care : And we,
 “ putting our special trust in God, as to your
 “ learning, the maturity of your wisdom, your
 “ zeal for the faith, and experience in affairs,
 “ and likewise hoping, that you will execute,
 “ with honesty and prudence, all that we have
 “ judged proper to commit to you for extirpa-
 “ ting such errors—we have thought good to
 “ appoint you by these presents our nuntio and
 “ commissary of the Apostolic See, for this
 “ cause of God and of the faith.

. . . . “ Moreover,

. . . . “ Moreover, to entreat our most dear
 “ son in Christ, Charles, the illustrious King
 “ of France, and our beloved sons, Charles
 “ Duke of Savoy, the dukes, princes, earls,
 “ and temporal lords of cities, lands, the uni-
 “ versities of these and other places, the con-
 “ federates of higher Germany, and in general
 “ all others who are faithful in Christ in these
 “ countries, that they take up the shield for the
 “ defence of the orthodox faith of which they
 “ made profession in receiving holy baptism,
 “ and of the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 “ by whom kings reign and princes rule
 “ And that they vehemently and vigorously set
 “ themselves in opposition to these heretics, for
 “ the defence of the faith, the safety of their
 “ country, the preservation of themselves and
 “ all that belongs to them; that so they may
 “ cause them to perish, and utterly blot them
 “ out from the face of the earth.

“ And if you think it expedient, that all the
 “ faithful in these places should carry the salu-
 “ tary cross on their hearts and on their gar-
 “ ments, to animate them to fight resolutely
 “ against these heretics, cause preach and publish
 “ the Croisade by the proper preachers of the
 “ word of God; and grant to those who take
 “ the cross and fight against these heretics, or
 “ contribute thereto, the privilege of a plenary
 “ indulgence, and the remission of all their sins

“ once in their life, and also at the point of
 “ death, by virtue of the commission given you
 “ above. Command likewise, upon their obedi-
 “ ence, and on pain of the greater excommuni-
 “ cation, all fit preachers of the word of God,
 “ secular and regular, of whatever order they
 “ be, mendicants not excepted, exempt and
 “ non-exempt, that they excite and inflame
 “ these faithful to exterminate utterly, by force
 “ and arms, that plague; so that they may
 “ assemble with all their strength and powers
 “ for repelling the common danger

. . . . “ Moreover, deprive all those, who
 “ do not obey your admonitions and mandates,
 “ of whatever dignity, state, degree, order, or
 “ pre-eminence they be; ecclesiastics of their
 “ dignities, offices, and benefices, and secular
 “ persons of their honours, titles, fiefs, and
 “ privileges, if they persist in their disobedience
 “ and rebellion,” &c. &c.

In such a manner was supremacy exercised
 by this pretended minister of the God of peace;
 solely because these Waldenses rejected his
 headship, and testified against the prevalent
 abominations of the Romish Church. This is
 merely a specimen of the illustrations which can
 be produced on this point; and without doubt,
 much more would have been afforded us, did
 we only enjoy all the records of antiquity. But
 this is not the case; and therefore, we can only
 execrate

execrate the Gothic barbarity of Oliver Cromwell's soldiers, who consigned the Oxford library to the flames for heresy, and thus deprived us of "much ecclesiastical information."

But, though there were no other proof of the civil supremacy, than the manner in which Popes and Councils have annulled civil oaths and obligations, it would sufficiently show that the Church arrogates a superior authority. This fact, the R., in opposition to the plainest testimonies of his own Church, and the most unquestionable historical records, rejects as groundless. I will, therefore, produce him the opinions of Papists, which he may try to reconcile with his own sentiments; and let him be assured, that his curiosity can be extensively gratified on this part of the subject.

"Be it known," says Gregory IX., "to all
 " who are under the jurisdiction of those who
 " have openly fallen into heresy, that they are
 " free from the obligation of fidelity, dominion,
 " and every kind of obedience to them; by
 " whatever means or bond they are tied to
 " them, and how securely soever they may be
 " bound*."

The Council of Constance, who burnt John Huss and Jerome of Prague, certainly possessed some knowledge of Popish doctrine and practices; and this was their declaration, after mak-

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ing.

* Greg. Decr. p. 2. c. 16.

ing the emperor break his promise of a safe-conduct to these persons, “The holy Synod of
 “ Constance declares, concerning every safe-
 “ conduct granted by the emperor, kings, and
 “ other temporal princes, to heretics, or persons
 “ accused of heresy, in hopes of reclaiming
 “ them, that it ought not to be of any prejudice
 “ to the Catholic faith, or to the ecclesiastical
 “ jurisdiction; nor to hinder such persons from
 “ being examined, judged, and punished ac-
 “ cording to justice, if those heretics refuse to
 “ revoke their errors, though they have come
 “ to the place of judgement relying upon their
 “ safe-conduct, and without which they would
 “ not have come; and the person, who shall
 “ have promised them security, shall not, in
 “ this case, be obliged to keep his promise, by
 “ whatever tie he may have been engaged.”

By this, the reader will perceive, what dependence ought to be placed on Popish oaths of allegiance. The bindings of the Legislature can easily be untied by absolution of a priest. The R. attempts to quibble upon this point, by insinuating, that no dispensation can be given to break a lawful oath. But has the Romish Church ever taught the obligation of oaths of allegiance to heretics, and accounted them “lawful?” I will show him how Papists, in the reign of James VI., took an oath of allegiance;

giance ; and what views were entertained of it by the Romish Church.

After the discovery of the Gunpowder plot, it was judged requisite to bind the Popish part of the community a little more securely. For this purpose, an oath was framed, which this king imagined sufficiently strong. But he soon found, that the consciences of Papists could not be so easily fastened as he had supposed. Paschenius shewed him a way, by which all their obligations were speedily cancelled, as the R. may see by consulting his treatise against the king. " See," says he, " what simplicity discovers itself in the midst of so much cunning. When he had placed all his security in that oath, he thought it knit with so many circumstances, that it could not, with a safe conscience, be dissolved by any man. But he could not see, that if the Pope dissolved it, all its tyings, whether of fidelity to the king, or of admitting no dispensation, would be dissolved together. Yea, I will say another thing which is more admirable. You know, I suppose, that *an unjust oath*, if it be evidently known or openly declared to be such, bindeth no man, but is *ipso facto* null. That the king's oath is unjust, hath been sufficiently declared by the pastor of the church himself. You see, therefore, that the obligation of it has vanished into smoke ; so that the

" bond,

“bond, which so many wise men thought to be
“of iron, is become less than a straw.”

I would not, however, be thought, by this view of Romish principles, to charge the Papists of Nova Scotia with disloyalty. To the views of that part of the community, I am an entire stranger. But, till the Church of Rome come forward collectively, and abjure her former opinions, their loyalty is at war with the principles of their religion; and the Legislature can only consider them like Samson at the millstones. The practices of that Church afford the most ample grounds for this assertion. Former Popes have been no strangers to dissolving oaths of allegiance, promises, and obligations. “To the
“intent,” says Martin IV., in his Bull against the king of Arragon, “that our threatenings be
“not contemned; by this sentence, passed with
“the advice of our brethren the cardinals, we
“deprive Peter III. of the kingdom of Arragon,
“of all his other territories, and of the royal
“dignity; and we expose his estates to be pos-
“sessed by the Catholic princes, as the Holy
“See shall dispose of them; *declaring his sub-
“jects absolved from their oath of fidelity.*”

Henry I. of England, hesitating to break a promise which he had made, was told by Calixtus II., that he was Pope, and would absolve him. To this the monarch replied, that though the Pope might have power to absolve him, he did

did not think it fit to break his word. Henry II., however, was not so scrupulous. He received a dispensation to break his father's will, and thereby dispossessed his brother Geoffry of the kingdom of Anjou.

Clement VI. granted to King John of France and his queen a very extensive indulgence to break vows and promises: "With the exception of vows ultramarine to the blessed apostles, Peter and Paul, and of chastity and continence, to exchange such vows as they had already made or might make, and also such oaths as had been or might be taken by them and their successors in all time coming, *which they could not conveniently keep*, for other works of piety, which should appear to their confessor expedient, toward God and for the peace of their souls *."

The case of Moses Charas, a French physician of eminence in the 17th century, presents an example of supremacy and of perfidious baseness, which can be equalled only by other parts of the conduct of the Romish Church. On account of the persecutions in France, he was obliged to remove to England, where he was honourably received by the king. Afterwards he settled at Amsterdam, and practised with great esteem in that city. The Spanish ambassador there endeavoured to persuade him to attend his
 master,

* Dactyl. p. 236.

master, who at that time was very infirm. When the doctor hesitated through fear of the Inquisition, the ambassador assured him of protection, and carried him and his family along with him to Madrid. But he did not continue long there, till he was delivered up to these heresy-hunters, and saved himself from the flames, only by renouncing his religion.

By these observations, the reader will be able to judge whether the Romish Church approve of keeping faith with heretics. Mr Burke and the R., in saying that it ought to be kept, belie both the principles and practices of their predecessors in religion. "Be assured," says Martin V., in an epistle to Alexander, Duke of Lithuania, "thou sinnest mortally, if thou keep thy faith with heretics." "And justly," says bishop Simancha, "were some heretics burnt by the most solemn judgement of the Council of Constance, though they had been promised security *."

As Mr Burke's exposition of this particular is very curious, I will present it to the reader. "'Tis also necessary," says he, "to disclaim this position, *that no faith is to be kept with heretics*; no Catholic, nor any other man of common sense, ever believed it. . . . The indiscretion of a Cardinal, and the ignorance of an Irish Prelate of the Established Church, gave

* Inquit. tit. 46. sect. 52.

“ gave occasion to the insertion of this clause :
 “ The Cardinal in a private letter said, *that credit was not to be given to the words of heretics,*
 “ a most indecent and groundless assertion ; the
 “ letter was published, and the Prelate through
 “ mere ignorance mistaking the Cardinal’s mean-
 “ ing, translated the phrase in a sense which
 “ was not intended, and which the words can-
 “ not bear : A child at the Grammar School
 “ would have told the Prelate, that *non est fides*
 “ *habenda hereticis,* the Cardinal’s words signify
 “ simply, *that credit is not to be given to heretics,*
 “ which was the sense intended by the Cardinal,
 “ not that *faith is not to be kept with heretics,*
 “ the Prelate’s version *.”

With all due deference to Mr Burke’s opinion, he ought to have possessed either a little more knowledge or candour, before he pretended to discuss this point. He ought to have known, that to keep no faith with heretics has for a long time been a maxim faithfully believed and practised in the Romish Church ; and also, that the phrase, which he has either ignorantly or cunningly produced, does not exhibit the doctrine of the Church of Rome in its true colours. Indecent as the expression of this cardinal may be, it is modesty itself when compared with the conduct of the Council of Constance, and many other Popish clergymen, and also with the expressions

* Letter of Instruct. p. 20. 21.

pressions which have been used to illustrate this doctrine. He must be a very ignorant priest indeed, who does not know, that the phrase used by the Church is not “non est fides habenda hereticis,” but “non est fides servanda hereticis;” and the latter would be translated by a boy at the grammar-school, in the usual way. Of the real existence of this doctrine in the Church, and likewise of the mode of expression, the following authorities may convince him.

“Fides hereticis data servanda non est : Faith given to heretics is not to be kept *.”

“Si tyrannis piratis et ceteris praedonibus, fides servanda non est, qui corpus occidunt, longe minus hereticis pertinacibus qui occidunt animas.—If faith ought not to be kept with tyrants, pirates, and other plunderers who kill the body, far less with obstinate heretics who destroy souls †.”

“Hereticis datam fidem servandam non esse intelligo, cum data fides est ad detrimentum fidei catholicae.—Faith given to heretics ought not to be kept, that is, faith given to the detriment of the catholic faith ‡.”

Menochius, a Roman Canonist, also asserts, “That the safe-conduct granted by princes in cases of heresy is unlawful, because the inferior” (as he supposes all princes to be to the Pope)

* Simancha Instit. tit. 46. sect. 51.

† Id. ibid.

‡ Placa Epit. delict. lib. 1. c. 37.

Pope) “ cannot secure them who are condemn-
 “ ed by the superior ; and therefore, the Coun-
 “ cil of Constance did well in annulling the safe
 “ conduct granted to heretics *.”

Cardinal Hosius told Henry, King of Poland,
 “ That he ought not to keep the faith given to
 “ the Protestants, for this reason, that an oath
 “ ought not to be a bond of iniquity †.”

The same excellent doctrine is inculcated by
 Andreas Philopator, who says, “ That the whole
 “ school of divines, (and that is a goodly com-
 “ pany), teaches, and it is a thing certain, and
 “ of the faith, that any Christian prince, if he
 “ manifestly apostatize from the religion of the
 “ Catholic Roman Church, and attempt to draw
 “ others from it, does, by the law of God and
 “ man, fall from all power and authority ; and
 “ all his subjects are free from the obligation of
 “ any oath of obedience and loyalty to him ;
 “ and they may, and ought to cast such a one
 “ out of his power, as an apostate and a heretic,
 “ lest he infect others ‡.”

From these particulars, the reader will learn
 what civil supremacy has been claimed by Popes.
 Before the R., therefore, again attempt to per-
 suade the world that they never arrogated any
 such authority, he must let the memory of my-
 riads of martyrs, whom the Romish Church, by
 her

* Lib. 1. Concil. 100. n. 227. 228. † Epist. 193.

‡ Resp. p. 149. 157.

her cruelty, has hastened to their habitation around the throne of God, be forgotten. The Pope, it is true, does not now possess any such power; nor is it at all probable that he ever will. These kings, who "gave their power to the "beast," are gone; and another race sprung up, who are not likely to trust their authority into hands who made such a beastly use of it. The declining condition of the Romish Church will soon terminate in eternal dissolution. The hour of God's judgement is approaching, when Babylon shall fall, and be found no more: "They have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgements *."

CHAP. V.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE R.'S SCRIPTURAL NOTES OF THE TRUE CHURCH; INDEFECTABILITY, PERPETUAL VISIBILITY, UNIVERSALITY, AND INFALLIBILITY.

It must be of considerable importance in religion to ascertain the true Church. By the ordinances

* Rev. xvi. 6 7.

dinances of religion dispensed there, the best interests of man are promoted ; for with these the divine presence is connected, and that blessing which makes rich for eternity. On this account, “ seeking the way to Zion ” becomes the exercise of those persons, whose views are directed beyond the limits of time. For the direction of such, the R. has specified certain notes, by which the Church may be distinguished from every other society. These are indefectability, perpetual visibility, universality, and infallibility.

Since the days of his great friend and fellow-champion Bellarmine, the Church appears to have lost many of her distinguishing characteristics. That celebrated hater of heretics counted fifteen ; but perhaps the R. considered many of these as scarcely applicable to the present state of the Church of Rome, and therefore through prudence omitted them. As they were formerly given for the confirmation of the simple, and the direction of wanderers, he will permit me to exhibit them for the benefit of a country in which there are so many heretics. 1. The name Catholic. 2. Antiquity. 3. Duration. 4. Amplitude. 5. Succession of bishops. 6. Agreement in doctrine with the primitive church. 7. Union of the members among themselves, and with the head. 8. Sanctity of doctrine. 9. Efficacy of doctrine. 10. Holiness of life. 11. The glory of miracles. 12. The light of prophecy.

phesy. 13. Confession of adversaries. 14. The unhappy end of the enemies of the Church. 15. Temporal felicity*.

According to Bellarmine, wherever these notes exist, there is the true Church, or; to express his meaning more perspicuously, there is the Church of Rome, which, he and the R. very naturally suppose, possesses the only claim to truth. A short review of these notes would evince the contrary. At present, the reader may be satisfied with comparing the 15th, temporal felicity, with the doctrine of Christ. That is essentially necessary to the existence of the church, because the Saviour has said, "In the world ye shall have tribulations †." On the contrary, persons, who are persecuted, "afflicted and tormented," for conscience sake, smell rankly of heresy; for it is said of those who are before the throne and before the Lamb, "These are they who came out of great tribulation ‡."

His illustration of the notes of the true Church, the R. has prefaced with the following observations. "He does not enquire whether the Church of Christ be the Roman Church, or the English Church, or a Church of any other denomination: such an enquiry is useless: for if it be incontrovertibly true that the Church of Christ is and was perpetually visible, since the publication of the new law on the day of
" Pentecost,

* De Not. Eccles. † John, xvi. 33. ‡ Rev. vii. 14.

“ Pentecost, all the different societies, which
 “ have since been formed ; all the Churches
 “ whose commencement is fixed by Catholics to
 “ a later date, and admitted by the members of
 “ these Churches to have commenced at that
 “ time in their present form, are manifestly no
 “ parts nor portions of the *one* Church of Christ,
 “ at all times, and without any cessation, vi-
 “ sible *.”

Such an inquiry is not so useless as the R. supposes. When Papists begin to fix dates, Protestants do not always acquiesce in the accuracy of their chronology. No Protestant Church, which proceeds on scriptural principles, acknowledges a commencement at a later date than the days of the apostles. We maintain, that we have only reassumed our original form, after having been transformed into the *image of the beast*. We also consider the present state of the Church of Rome as a decisive proof of her antichristian condition ; and by taking the R. upon his own principles, we can prove her to be no Church of Christ. All Churches whose present form commenced at a later date, he affirms, are no part of the one Church of Christ. Will he say then, that the Romish Church has subsisted in her present form since the day of Pentecost, with all her offices, as popes, cardinals, patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, archdeacons, deacons,

* P. 109. 110.

cons, abbots, priests, monks, friars, nuns, &c. &c.? Or with her various orders, such as Augustines, Carmelites, Franciscans, Dominicans with all their subdivisions, Cordeliers, Recollects, Capuchins, Penitents, the Mitigated, the Reformed, and whole legions of Maturins, Trinitarians, Minims, Celestines, Servites, Jesuites, Barnabites, Theatines, Lazarites, Benedictines, Bernardines, Fathers of the Christian doctrine, Friars of Charity, and a multitude of other orders which have desolated the earth? Was the Church then in the possession of all her present means of salvation; such as holy water, holy candles, and holy grease? Or did the apostle Peter, in sending the inferior clergy upon a preaching-excursion, dispatch with them a few heresy-hunters from his Inquisition, that the "simple faithful" might frequently enjoy an Auto de Fe, and be delighted with the torments and savoury smell of roasting heretics? Till the R. has settled these points, we may proceed to an examination of his notes of the Church.

I. INDEFECTABILITY.

By indefectability the R. means, that the Church of Christ has always enjoyed, and will continue to possess, an uninterrupted existence to the end of time. To prove this point, he has produced a number of quotations from scripture.

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He might, however, have saved himself this trouble, had he only recollected that we Protestants are as strenuous supporters of this doctrine as the Romish Church. The Lord Jesus Christ, we believe, will always have a seed to serve him, whom he will preserve as the apple of his eye; and we consider it as one of the principal consolations of religion in declining times, that he will again build up Zion, and appear in his glory. But we will not be so ready to grant the consequences, which he pretends to deduce from this doctrine. Though we receive the declarations of scripture without hesitation, we proceed with the assertions of men upon logical principles, and never admit a conclusion, till we have examined its premises.

As a proof of the indefectability of the Church, he produces the following words of Isaiah, “ Every weapon which is formed against thee
“ shall miss, and every tongue which rises in
“ judgement against thee, thou shalt condemn.” And then he draws from them this conclusion. “ If the first reformer had weighed well the
“ force of this promise, he would have seen that
“ as he himself did not compose the Church to
“ which the promise was made, his opposition
“ to her established doctrine placed him evident-
“ ly among these tongues, which rise up in
“ judgement against her, and that of course she
“ would condemn him. This reasoning is ap-
F “ plicable

“ plicable to every innovator, who has formed a
 “ party since the apostles’ days. The argument
 “ is insoluble if the Ex. will admit that the pro-
 “ mise was made to the Catholic Church ; if he
 “ denies it, let him assign some other Church
 “ visible since the Apostles days, without inter-
 “ ruption or intermission *.”

Though the Church of Rome has condemned, and laid her murderous fangs, as often as she could, upon those who differ from her in sentiment, it is no evidence that she is the Church of the Prince of peace. The R.’s argument, with all its bindings, is not so insoluble as he imagines. With a very small portion of penetration, he might have seen, that his reasoning, if it deserves the name, must appear inconclusive to Protestants, who oppose the very principles upon which it is founded. Though Papists have arrogated to themselves the name of Catholic, we have neither granted, nor has he proven, the Romish Church to be exclusively the catholic or universal Church, to which the promise was made. We have as little ~~acknowledged~~ acknowledged ourselves no part of this catholic Church, or allowed the necessity of its visibility without interruption or intermission. On the contrary, we are persuaded, that both our faith and practice are founded upon the word of God ; which is more than can be said for many of the doctrines and unmeaning ceremonies,

* P. 115.

ceremonies, which Papists have grafted upon religion. We hope also to witness the faithfulness of God in our preservation ; and as yet, we have certainly reason to view the operations of his providence as a confirmation of our faith. Notwithstanding the bloody persecutions of the Romish Church, by which millions of our ancestors have been persecuted to the death, the Reformation, so congenial to both the religious and civil interests of society, is not only preserved, but extending its benign influences over these very countries which most furiously opposed it. We are also persuaded, that a religion, which tends to fetter the minds of men with ignorance and superstition, must be repugnant to the designs of Christ, who expands the hearts of his people by informing their judgement. Whatever, therefore, may be our charity for individuals of the Romish Church, we consider her collectively, as the enemy of mankind ; and we view the operations of God, as hastening the approach of that period, when the friends of Christ shall join in halleluias, on beholding the smoke of her torment ascending up for ever and ever. Till the R., therefore, has proven that the Protestant Churches and other existing societies of Christians are no parts of the "one" Church of Christ ; till he has shewn that the Romish Church is exclusively so, and also that the

Church must be perpetually visible, we must resist his conclusion respecting all reformers.

By this doctrine of indefectability, he thinks he has completely overturned the whole Reformation. "The first reformers," says he, "did not even pretend that there was a kingdom or state, a city, town, or country village on earth, in which the reformed doctrine was taught before their own time*." Upon this doctrine he founds the exulting inquiry, "What became of Christ's kingdom before that invincible hero Martin Luther reinstated him on his throne †?"

Whom he means by the "first" reformers, I am at a loss to determine. It will be difficult for him to specify a period, in which there were none who testified against Papal usurpations and other pollutions of the Romish Church. If he mean Protestant reformers, he discovers the most contemptible ignorance or misrepresentation.—Our ancestors always declared their doctrine founded upon the scriptures, and agreeable to the faith of the primitive Church. They universally appealed to scripture, and showed from the writings of the first ages, the antiquity of their opinions. So far from broaching new doctrines, they often appealed to a free Council, which the Popes, afraid of the consequences, would never allow them. Many of them have

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* P. 121.

† P. 120.

also shewn in the plainest manner, that the Church of God in every age had witnesses for the truth of their opinions. Let the R. consult Flaccius Illyricus' *Catalogue of Witnesses for the truth in former ages*, and it will show him what doctrines have been taught even in the Romish Church before the Reformation. Let him recollect the Waldenses, the Wickliffites, the Husites, and many others who existed before Luther, and then examine himself, if he be not propping a system of iniquity with falsehood.

A very easy answer, then, can be given to his inquiry, "What became of Christ's kingdom before that invincible hero Martin Luther reinstated him on his throne?" Does the R. know where the tares were, when the wheat was springing up? It existed among those who, long before the Protestant reformation, opposed the corruptions of the Romish Church, and it existed in part even in that society. Notwithstanding the unscriptural doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, there were always some of her members who deplored the general depravity, and bare open witness to many truths of religion. But though these continued in her communion, our ancestors were under no obligation to sacrifice the rights of conscience and the honour of Christ, by ceasing to attempt a reformation; and when they were unjustly cast out of that Church, they considered it as their

indispensible duty to disregard her censures, and oppose her corruptions as far as their influence extended.

Nor were they in this case, as the R. imagines, chargeable with schism. His reasoning on this subject is very curious indeed. He produces a quotation from the seventh Article of the Church of England, which says, "That there is a holy Church which will remain for ever, but the Church is the assembly of Saints." Upon this he observes, "That it is manifestly subversive of the whole reformation; on it Catholics proposed some very embarrassing questions, to which no satisfactory answer has been, or ever will be given: *If, said they, the Church be holy why do you pretend that there is superstition and idolatry taught and practised in it? Idolatry and sanctity are as opposite as light and darkness. If the Church be the Assembly of Saints, why do you separate yourself from it? to separate yourself from the Assembly of the Saints is to acknowledge yourselves impious*.*"

The R. observes with great propriety, that no satisfactory answer has been given to these questions. Nothing will "satisfy" the Church of Rome but the return of Protestants to the old vomit and puddle of filth, from which they have emerged. They have, however, received many quieting

* P. 109.

quieting replies; as many a sturdy polemic, before the R.'s days, has experienced. When the framers of the Thirty-nine Articles said, "There is a holy Church which will remain for ever," did they add, that this was to be understood of the Church of Rome? Where, then, is the foundation of the R.'s queries? To show him for what kind of holiness that Church is famous, I will produce him the sentiments of a few Popish writers.

"They prefer," says St. Bernard, "little school-boys and young children to Church-dignities, on account of the nobility of their birth; so that you may see those, who have just escaped from the birch, go to command priests. They seem more fit to run from a rod, than to be employed in government; for they are far more sensible of the pleasure of freedom from their masters, than of becoming masters themselves. These are their first thoughts; but afterwards growing more bold, they very soon learn the act of appropriating the altars to themselves, and of emptying the purses of those who are under them, without going to any other school than their ambition and covetousness*."

"How few," says Nicholas de Clemangis, "can be found at present among those that are raised to the episcopal grandeur, who have

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"either

* Ep. 42.

“ either read or know how to read the holy
 “ scriptures. . . . They have never touched any
 “ other part of the Bible than the cover, though
 “ they swear at their instalment that they know
 “ it all * :” And, says the same author, “ The
 “ Church, which Jesus Christ has chosen for
 “ his spouse without spot- and blemish, is in
 “ these days a warehouse of ambition and busi-
 “ ness, of theft and rapine. The sacraments,
 “ and all orders, even that of the priests, are
 “ exposed to sale. For money, they bestow fa-
 “ vours, dispensations, licences, offices, and be-
 “ nefices. They sell the pardon of sins, masses,
 “ and the very administration of our Lord’s bo-
 “ dy. If any person desire a bishoprick, he
 “ need only get himself furnished with money ;
 “ yet not a little sum, but a great one, must
 “ purchase such a great title. He need only
 “ empty his purse to obtain the dignity which he
 “ seeks ; but he may soon fill it again advan-
 “ tageously, by more ways than one. If any
 “ one wish to be made a prebendary or a priest
 “ of any church, or to have any other charge,
 “ it is of no consequence whether his merit, his
 “ life, or his manners be known ; but it is very
 “ requisite that it should be known, how much
 “ money he has gotten ; for his hopes will suc-
 “ ceed only in proportion to his cash †.”

“ The Court of Rome,” says Eneas Sylvius,
 “ gives

* De Corr. Stat. Eccles. † De Presul.

“ gives nothing without money. It sells the
 “ very imposition of hands, and the gifts of the
 “ Holy Ghost. It will give pardon of sins to
 “ none, but such as will part with their mo-
 “ ney *.”

“ With shame and sensible displeasure,” says
 the cardinal of Lorraine, in an oration to the
 Council of Trent, “ I mention the lives we have
 “ led:” And the complaint of the Duke of
 Bavaria’s ambassador before the same Council
 shows, that the cardinal had some reason for
 saying so. He told them, “ That he could not
 “ describe the horrible wickedness of the clergy,
 “ without offending the chaste ears of the au-
 “ dience ; and that the correction of doctrinal
 “ points would be vain, unless they first cor-
 “ rected their manners : That they were infam-
 “ ous for their luxury ; and, though the civil
 “ magistrate did not suffer any layman to have
 “ a concubine, it was so common among the
 “ clergy, that there could not be found above
 “ three or four out of a hundred priests, who
 “ did not keep whores, or were unmarried.”
 Does the R. think these Popish quotations de-
 scribe “ a Holy Church which will remain for
 “ ever ?”

But, even allowing the Romish Church to be
 the Church of Christ which has holiness as a cha-
 racteristic, Protestants may still have good rea-

* Epist Lib. 1. ep. 66.

son to charge her with superstition and idolatry. Israel appear to have been guilty of “some” superstitious idolatry; and yet God acknowledged their relation to him as a Church, “*My people,*” says he, “ask counsel at their stocks They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills*,”——

But the R.’s second question is still more insignificant. “If the Church,” says he, “be the Assembly of the Saints, why do you separate yourselves from it?” Let him bethink himself whether Protestants separated themselves, or were unjustly cast out of the Romish Church. When our ancestors discovered the abominations that were practised under the mask of religion, ought they to have quieted their consciences with the consideration, that it was the Church who did them? They saw it their duty to attempt a removal of them; and they took the regular steps for this purpose. But the Church of Rome justified her pollutions, by treating them as the rulers of the Jews did the first disciples of Christ; and our ancestors only imitated the conduct of the latter when cast out of the synagogue. It is the Church of Rome, therefore, that is chargeable with schism. Our ancestors were expelled from her communion, solely for an adherence to the truths of religion; and

* Hos. iv. 12. 13.

and therefore, we have the best right to say, that we are the Church of Christ, and to claim that indefectability from which the R. attempts to exclude us.

But, by taking him upon his own ground of indefectability, it can be easily proven, that the Church of Rome has no claim at all to be the Christian Church. Bellarmine informs us, that the true Church subsists only, where there is a union of the members with the head. In this case, the want of a head must be as great a defect, as a want of members. In either case the Church must be entirely annihilated; and many periods can be specified, in which there was no Pope.

Since the R. thinks a continuation of the same form necessary to the indefectability of the Church, let me ask him, where his Church was before the Council of Trent? Was Leo the Great for receiving the Eucharist only in one kind? Did Gregory the Great support the worship of images, and "the proud, profane, and Antichristian title" of universal bishop? Was Pope Gelasius a defender of transubstantiation? Were St. Cyprian, St. Augustine, the Council of Chalcedon, and the African bishops, for appeals to Rome, and submission to the Pope's jurisdiction? If not, what right has he to appropriate indefectability to the Romish Church? since he has laid it down as a principle, that all Churches,

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which

which have not retained the same form from the day of Pentecost, are manifestly no parts nor portions of the one Church of Christ.

II. PERPETUAL VISIBILITY.

WHAT has been already observed, will show the reader, that the establishment of this doctrine proves at least as much for Protestants, as for the Romish Church. We do not pretend to have commenced our ecclesiastical existence in the days of Luther; we trace it to the exhibition of the first promise of mercy. If the R. can then show the perpetual visibility of the Romish Church, he proves our existence before the reformation. And since that period, proofs are unnecessary. These paroxisms of rage, into which he is thrown by the very names of our reforming ancestors, shew, that he thinks us still existing in real earnest.

Though I have no intention at present to controvert his doctrine of perpetual visibility, I cannot help observing, that his view of it is entirely unscriptural. By raking together a few passages of scripture which describe the Church in her periods of splendour, he figures to himself a visibility, which has no existence but in his own imagination. Of this, the following passage may serve as an illustration; “*And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the moun-*
“ *tain*

“ *tain of the Lord’s house shall be established in*
 “ *the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted*
 “ *above the hills,* The prophet in terms
 “ strongly expressive as language can afford an-
 “ nounces the visibility of Christ’s Church.
 “ Nothing can be more visible than a mountain
 “ elevated on the summit of mountains, the
 “ man must be blind indeed, who does not see
 “ it*.”

If the desire of establishing a particular sys-
 tem had not perverted the R.’s judgement, he
 would have seen that these words are far from
 applicable to every state of the Church. Does
 his doctrine of visibility apply to the days of
 Elijah? or to that period, when “ Israel were
 “ without the true God, and without a teaching
 “ priest, and without the law †?” Will he de-
 clare the Church of Rome to have been as vi-
 sible during the ten persecutions, as at the
 Council of Constance? Both Protestants and
 Papists, I believe, maintain with the apostle
 Paul, that the appearance of Antichrist is con-
 nected with a general apostacy; and should not
 that affect the visibility of the Church? Will he
 show us how much visibility she possessed, when
 the wings of a great eagle were given her to fly
 into the wilderness? or let him measure its extent
 by the words of Christ, “ When the Son of man
 “ cometh, shall he find faith on the earth ‡?”

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* P. 110. † 2 Chron. xv. 3. ‡ Luke, xviii. 8.

To shew him how inconsistent his views are with truth, and even with the views of Papists, I will shew him what some have taught concerning the visibility of the Church.

“ The whole faith of the Church,” says Ockam, “ may remain in one person, as it did in the blessed Virgin at the time of our Lord’s passion. If God permitted this in the days of the apostles, he will much sooner permit it in these latter ages*.”

“ It is possible,” says Panormitan, “ that the faith of Christ may remain in one person only. At the passion of our Saviour, it remained only in the blessed Virgin; and on this account, perhaps, the Gloss says, *Wherever good men are, there is the Church o Rome †.*”

Many more divines of the Romish Church can be produced to the same purpose. But these will suffice to show the R., that a person may lose his view of the Church, and yet not be chargeable with blindness. If there be times, in which “ the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be exalted,” there are others, in which “ the city shall be low in a low place †.”

III. UNI-

* Dial. p. 1. lib. 2. c. 25. † In Cap. Signif. de Elect.

‡ Isa. xxxiii. 19.

III. UNIVERSALITY.

PROTESTANTS, as well as Papists, are persuaded that the Church of Christ is catholic or universal. I have, therefore, no intention to controvert the scriptural proofs which he has adduced in defence of this doctrine. In the course of his reasoning, however, he has committed one trifling mistake. He has forgotten to shew, that these promises of universality, which have been made to the Christian Church, are only applicable to the Church of Rome. He seems to have viewed it as an uncontroverted principle, that the Romish and the Catholic Church are synonymous expressions. But though Papists have arrogated to themselves this title, and Protestants have sometimes called them Roman Catholics to distinguish them from others, we never believed them to be the universal Church. Many of us, on the contrary, have maintained them to be no Church at all. His reasoning, when divested of circumlocution, is this, “If you allow us Papists to be the Catholic Church, I will prove that promises of universality are made us in the scriptures.”

According to the R.’s own language, the Romish Church is destitute of that universality which he attempts to claim for her. “In these
“ texts

“ texts and others similar of the Old Testa-
 “ ment,” says he, “ the universality of Christ’s
 “ Church is so distinctly foretold, that ’tis an
 “ article inserted in the baptismal creed, com-
 “ monly called the apostles creed : *I believe in*
 “ *the Holy Catholic Church.* That this univer-
 “ sality includes both time and place
 “ we shall presently see *.” Can the R., then,
 specify a period, in which the Romish Church
 possessed a universality of place? Have her
 tenets been propagated in every nation on earth?
 If not, why does he claim for her the title of
 the Catholic Church? A little reflection would
 have shewn him, that many of the scriptures,
 by which he attempts to illustrate this point,
 are applicable only to these days, when the
 whole earth shall be filled with the glory of the
 Lord; and therefore, can be no distinguishing
 characteristic of the Church of Christ in her
 present situation.

IV. INFALLIBILITY.

IN what infallibility consists, we are informed
 in the 125th page of the Remarks: “ ’Tis mani-
 “ fest to any man, who reasons, who is not
 “ totally blinded by prejudice or party spirit,
 “ that this promise of Christ † must exclude
 “ for ever from his Church the lightest shade
 “ of

* P. 111.

† Mat. xvi. 18.

“ of error. This is what we Catholics understand by infallibility.”

The establishment of this doctrine is of the last importance to Papists. Without it, they have no resting place for the sole of their foot, even in the scriptures themselves. Of this, the R. is sensible; and, therefore, he labours hard to prove its existence. Before entering upon an examination of his proofs, it may be proper to inquire, where this prerogative is lodged, and to whom it belongs.

Upon this point, the R. has been very explicit. “ Some 1750 years ago,” says he, “ ’twas a settled doctrine that infallibility in doctrinal decisions is claimed by the body of the Pastors united to their head on the promise of Jesus Christ to be with them till the end of time, *Mat. ult.* and the assistance of the Holy Ghost who was sent to teach them all truth.—John xvi. 13. On this article of doctrine there never was a shade of disagreement among Catholics*.”

This point, which, he says, has been settled so many ages ago, appears, like other sublunary things, to have undergone various revolutions since that period. Infallibility has been sometimes claimed by Councils, and sometimes by Popes; and Protestants have not hesitated heretically to declare, that it belonged to neither.

Upon

* P. 69.

Upon this point, I will produce a few Popish opinions, which the R. may compare with his own sentiments.

By a decree of the Council of Constance, it was declared, “ That this Council had its power “ immediately from Jesus Christ ; and that even “ the Pope was bound to obey it.” This decree was also confirmed by the Council of Basil, who, after suspending Eugenius from all Papal jurisdiction, emitted the following declarations : “ I. That the power of a general Council, representing the universal Church, over “ the Pope and every other person, declared by “ the general Council of Constance and this of “ Basil, is a truth of the Catholic faith. II. “ That the Pope has no authority to dissolve, “ prorogue, or transfer from one place to another, a general Council, without their consent, is a truth of the Catholic faith. III. He “ is to be esteemed a heretic, who pertinaciously opposes these two aforesaid truths *.”

On the contrary, it is maintained in the decretals, “ That the Pope can be judged by none ; “ that his judgement, whether respecting faith, “ manners, or discipline, ought to be preferred “ to all things ; and that nothing is true except “ what he approves, and every thing which he “ condemns is false †.”

“ We can believe nothing,” says Lewis Capensis,

* Sess. 38. † P. 1. dist. 19. c. 1. 4.

ensis, “ unless we believe with a divine faith, “ that the Pope is the successor of St. Peter and “ infallible *.”

“ It depends on the pleasure of the Pope,” says Baronius, “ to ratify decrees and alter them “ when ratified †.”

“ The Pope,” says Bellarmine, “ is absolute- “ ly above the Catholic Church and above a “ general Council ; so that he has no judge a- “ bove him on earth ‡.”

The R. may also recollect, that the Pope classed it among the scandalous and heretical opinions of Luther, “ That any one should “ maintain a doctrine contrary to his sentiments, “ while he waited for the decision of a general “ Council.”

These are a sample of Popish opinions respecting the seat of infallibility ; and yet the R. affirms, that “ on this article of doctrine, there “ never was a shade of disagreement among “ Catholics.” The jarring opinions of Popes and Councils must be an excellent foundation for the faith of the “ simple faithful.” Will he shew us how they are to know where the infallibility is lodged ? Must they likewise be infallible, that they may be qualified to judge whether Popes or Councils are the greatest liars ? But perhaps another way may be found. Phi-
losophers

* De Fide disp. 2. sect. 6. † Ad. Ann. 573.

‡ De Rom. Pont. lib. 3. c. 6.

losophers have sagely observed, that virtue lies in the middle, and vice at the two extremes. When the Pope then says, lo, here is Christ, and the Council, lo, there, might not the “simple faithful” follow his own direction, “believe them not?”

A great part of his reasoning in defence of the infallibility, he pretends to found on the scriptures. It did not occur to him, that according to his own principle, this prerogative must be granted to the Romish Church, before he can draw any proof from the scriptures to defend it. “It is only,” says he, “by the infallible testimony of the Catholic Church, that the scriptures are known to be divinely inspired*.” Is it not reasoning in a circle to say, the infallibility proves the inspiration of scripture, and then the scriptures prove the infallibility?

But, overlooking this difficulty entirely, the doctrine of infallibility is not even implied in these passages of scripture by which he attempts to support it; as a short view of his proofs will discover.

Infallibility he maintains to be by no means a privilege peculiar to the Church under the New Testament. He accordingly endeavours to shew that the Jews possessed it, as a collateral proof of its present existence in the Church. “’Tis admitted,” says he, “by the framers of the
“ thirty-

* P. 143.

“ thirty-nine articles, which compose the code
 “ of doctrine by law established in England,
 “ that the Church has authority in controversies
 “ of faith, but with this restriction, that she
 “ must not order any thing contrary to scrip-
 “ ture. The restriction is of their own growth,
 “ and speaks the exuberance of their fancy.
 “ It’s not found in scripture, and is insulting to
 “ common sense; the Saviour says without re-
 “ serve or restriction, *If he will not hear the*
 “ *Church let him be to thee as a heathen.—*
 “ *Mat. xviii.* Why so? because the Redeemer
 “ had promised that he himself would be with
 “ the Pastors and teachers in his Church, and
 “ of course that in it nothing contrary to the
 “ scriptures should be taught. Hence also
 “ speaking of the lawful ministers of the Jew-
 “ ish Church, he said without restriction; *Matt.*
 “ *xxiii. 1. The Scribes and Pharisees sit on the*
 “ *chair of Moses, all things therefore whatsoever*
 “ *they bid you observe and do, observe them.* The
 “ Scribes and Pharisees were corrupt men,
 “ taught errors privately, gave false interpreta-
 “ tions to the law, through interested views;
 “ with this the Saviour reproached them; but
 “ they taught no public error, . . . *.”

“ This restriction,” he says, “ is of their
 “ own growth; it is not found in scripture,
 “ and is insulting to common sense.” He
 ought

* P. 126.

ought to know a little more of the doctrine of the scriptures, before he condemn the opinions of Protestants. These framers were ignorant of any precept of religion, which enjoined them to follow the directions of the Church implicitly. But they had somewhere read, "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them;" and therefore they judged it the safest course, to try every doctrine by the scriptures*. Does the R. think the conduct of the Bereans unscriptural and insulting to common sense, when they did not submit to the *infallible* decisions of the Jewish Church concerning Christ, but tried the apostles' doctrine by the scriptures, and searched them daily whether these things were so †?

"But," says he, "our Saviour said without reserve or restriction, *if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen.*" The apostle Paul also says, with as little reserve or restriction, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates;" yet both the primitive Christians, and Protestant heretics, whom they have murdered in myriads, can attest their want of infallibility. Let the R. explain the last precept of religion, before he produce the first as a proof of his doctrine.

Having

* Isa. viii. 20.

† Acts, xvii. 11.

Having discussed these introductory remarks, let us now attend to his proof of Jewish infallibility. This he seems to think of very great importance, and therefore he illustrates it twice.

“ When the Saviour spoke of the lawful pas-
 “ tors of the Jewish Church, whose province it
 “ was to expound the law, and attest the truth
 “ of tradition, he strictly enjoined obedience
 “ and submission to their decisions and orders ;
 “ *they sit, says he, in Moses chair, whatsoever*
 “ *they say to you, observe and do it.* Matth.
 “ xxiii. 2. By these words the Saviour autho-
 “ rises the infallibility of decision in the Jewish
 “ Church *.”

With all their infallibility, the Saviour, in the 24th verse of the same chapter, declares them to have been blind guides. The perusal of the whole of that chapter might edify the R. considerably. It would show him what views Christ may entertain of an *infallible* church. He exposes there the vices of their ministrations and conduct, and denounces against them the judgements of God. The R. himself seems to be a little ashamed of the company with which he has associated the Romish Church. He confesses, that they taught errors privately, by giving false interpretations of the law to gratify their vicious inclinations ; but he maintains that, in public, they were faithful and infallible.

This

* P. 87.

This is precisely the doctrine which many sagacious pastors of the Church of Rome have taught concerning the Pope. He may sin, say they, or teach error as an individual, but not as a Pope. But even this nice distinction will not free him from those woes which the Saviour denounced against the Pharisees in a similar situation. When the devil lays hold of him individually, he will have hard struggling, as a Pope, to get out of his clutches.

But granting that the doctrine of the Pharisees was different in public and private, it is attended with more consequences than the R. would wish to acknowledge. These Pharisees and the Romish Church, we will suppose, might be both infallible. Yet the former erred most egregiously in private, and so may the latter. What a comfortable prospect does this present to the "simple faithful!" The Pope and his clergy may teach in public by an infallible rule, and at the same time undermine their doctrine in secret, by the most damnable heresy. Under such pastors, the flock has great reason to be lulled in security. Let us hear the declaration of Christ concerning them: "But woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in, nor suffer them who are entering to go in," &c. *

The

* Matth. xxiii. 13.

The R.'s application of the words of Christ is a mere perversion of scripture. Did our Saviour commend the public teaching of the Scribes and Pharisees, when he said, "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*," or, when he commanded his disciples to beware of their doctrines? If it be any gratification, he may hear how the Fathers have expounded this part of scripture.

"By the chair of Moses," says St. Jerome, "Christ means the doctrine of the law †."

"God therefore," says St. Augustine, "teaches by them, (the pastors of his own Church), but if they teach doctrines of their own, do not hear them, do not do them ‡."

"He enjoins their obedience," says St. Hilary, "to all the commandments of the law ||."

As a farther proof of the infallibility of the Jewish Church, the R. has the following observations: "The Prophets, in doubtful cases and obscurities, refer contending parties to the decision of the High Priest, who was the Chief Pastor of the Jewish Church. Deut. xiii. And in the prophecies of Malachi we read, "the lips of the Priest shall preserve knowledge, and they shall seek the law from

G

" his

* Mat. xv. 9. † In Loc. ‡ In Joan. tract. 46.

|| Can. 24.

“ his mouth. Because he is the messenger of
 “ the Lord of Hosts. Ch. II. 7.*”

According to this statement, the Jews seem to have been as unsettled in their opinions of the seat of infallibility, as the Romish Church. Even the Saviour himself and his prophets entertained different sentiments. The former referred the people to the Scribes and Pharisees for infallibility of decision; the latter, to the high priest. The supporter of an absurd hypothesis, like a great liar, ought to have a good memory, in order to maintain the appearance of consistency. A view of the passages to which he refers, will discover, that the prophets were far from ascribing any such prerogative to the high priest of the Jewish Church.

The thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy contains no case of reference at all; but the transactions to which, I suppose, he alludes, may be found in the seventeenth: “ If there arise a
 “ matter too hard for thee in judgement, be-
 “ tween blood and blood, between plea and
 “ plea, and between stroke and stroke, being
 “ matters of controversy within thy gates, then
 “ thou shalt arise, and get thee up into the
 “ place which the Lord thy God shall choose;
 “ And thou shalt come unto the priests the
 “ Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in
 “ those days, and inquire; and they shall shew
 “ thee

* P. 104.

“ thee the sentence of judgement. And thou
 “ shalt do according to the sentence which
 “ they of that place which the Lord shall
 “ choose, shall show thee; and thou shalt ob-
 “ serve to do according to all that they inform
 “ thee * :” &c.

If these verses be considered by the R. as a proof of infallibility, he must extend it to civil transactions as well as ecclesiastical discussions, and likewise allow the judge as well as the high priest a share of it; but his view of the passage requires no refutation.

“ But,” says he, “ we read in the prophe-
 “ cies of Malachi *the lips of the Priest shall pre-
 “ serve knowledge, and they shall seek the law
 “ from his mouth. Because he is the messenger of
 “ the Lord of Hosts.*”

A little attention to the scope of this prophet would have shown him, that his words ought to have been rendered, “ The lips of the priest
 “ should preserve knowledge.” But let him only consult the following verse, and he will see what infallibility the priests of these days discovered: “ But ye are departed out of the way;
 “ ye have caused many to stumble at the law;
 “ ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith
 “ the Lord of Hosts.”

Having discussed these proofs of Jewish in-
 fallibility, if the R. please, we will take a peep

at the state of the Church during that dispensation, to see if it was preserved “from the lightest shade of error.” With such an excellent guide, we might naturally expect to find the rulers of that Church ready to receive the testimony of God by his prophets; but, like the Romish Church, they generally found them rank heretics, and therefore persecuted and put them to death. Does the R. recollect how these *infallible* guides received the Lord of glory? After judging his doctrine to be heretical, they decreed, “that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue* ;” and as soon as they could lay hold of him, they delivered him to the civil power, to be punished as a teacher of error and blasphemy.

Let us next observe those proofs which more immediately respect the infallibility of the Romish Church. They are founded on a supposition which every Protestant will not be ready to grant him. He proceeds upon the principle, that the Romish Church is the Church of Christ, and then he appropriates these promises which, he imagines, will suit his purpose. Still, after all, he must have recourse to inferences, before he can produce even the appearance of a confirmation of this doctrine.

The promises of teaching, which have been
made

* John, ix. 22.

made to the Church, the R. views as proofs of infallibility. To illustrate this point, he has produced a quotation from the prophet Isaiah :
 “ He shall teach us his ways, and we will walk
 “ in his paths *. God,” says he, “ whether
 “ he teaches immediately by himself, as when
 “ visible on earth, or by his ministers, as since
 “ his ascension, teaches no errors at all †.”

To this truth the most heretical Protestant will assent. At the same time, it excites our admiration, that the Popish clergy, who pretend to have enjoyed such excellent teaching, should be so bad scholars. In taking a survey of the doctrines which have been maintained in the Church of Rome, we find Popes teaching one thing, and Councils another, and individuals again reprobating the doctrine of both.

But let us suppose, that infallibility is actually taught in these words. Does the R. think that the Romish Church can claim it, according to the principles of the prophet? Duty, as well as doctrine, he must allow to be the ways of the Lord. The prophet also assures us, that the Church will be as apt to walk in his paths, as to be instructed in his ways. If these words, therefore, prove the existence of infallibility at all, they teach as much freedom from error in obedience as in doctrine, which is more than the Church of Rome can claim, with all her boasts

* Isa. ii. 3.

† P. III.

purity. He must not then expect a concession of this point, till he is able to present her perfect in obedience.

But there is another difficulty here, to which he does not seem to have adverted. All infallible teaching in the Church must proceed from the chief pastor, and inferior clergy assembled in Council; for with these conjunctly the infallibility is lodged. Still the great body of the Church remains to be instructed; and they can only receive the teaching of persons who have no infallibility. How, then, do the advantages of this doctrine extend to them? If the R. say, that the teachers must follow the decisions of the Councils, let him inform us how they infallibly ascertain their meaning; and also, if the decrees of the Councils extend to every duty to be inculcated, and advice given by the clergy, connected with time, place, and circumstances. But though the clergy teach no error in doctrine, may not the faithful, who are simple and ignorant, mistake their meaning, and believe damnable heresy? Is there, then, any way by which the Church can be infallibly instructed, but by extending this prerogative to both teachers and taught? It is the more necessary for the R. to attend to this point, because both the clergy and the people have at times mistaken the doctrines of religion. Perhaps he may have heard of a benevolent pastor of the Romish Church,

Church, who judiciously extended his instructions to a congregation of pious monks, because it had been enjoined “to preach the gospel to every creature.”

His next proof has as little tendency to establish the doctrine of infallibility : “There shall come a Redeemer to Zion and to those, who return from iniquity in Jacob, saith the Lord ; this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord, my spirit which is over thee, and my words, which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart from thy mouth, nor from the mouth of thy seed, nor from the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever, Is. ix. 20. 21. Here,” says he, “we have the most express and intelligible declaration, that the Spirit of the Lord is with his Church ; that his words are in her mouth, not errors nor fictions, but his truth : for he is the God of truth, and by her mouth he teaches as he did the primitive Christians by the mouth of the Apostles ; and his words are in the mouth of her seed, that is, in the mouth of the immediate successors of the Apostles *.”

These words of Isaiah respect only the restoration of the Jews, so that, though they actually taught infallibility, the Church of Rome could have no claim to it. But did they even

G 4

extend

* P. 116.

extend it to the Gentile Church, it is not of that kind for which the R. contends. It is something in which the whole Church is equally interested; for, though he says that the seed of the Church denotes the apostles' successors, he cannot refuse the same appellation to every true convert to Christianity. The particular manner, also, in which this privilege is bestowed, must make it of very little use to the Romish Church. Upon his own principles, he will allow that a Pope and his inferior clergy may be very wicked men. His *infallible* chief priest and Pharisees were so in the days of Christ; and I can produce him, from Popish writers, numerous complaints of the abominable immoralities of later clergy. At such a period, therefore, the infallibility here promised must have perished entirely; for it is secured only to those who "return from iniquity in Jacob."

To establish the infallibility, he has farther produced the promise of Christ, to his disciples, recorded in John, xiv. 26. "The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the father will send in my name, will teach you all things and bring to your memory all the things which I have said to you." "From this passage," says he, "'tis manifest that the end for which the Holy Ghost presides over the Apostles in their successors the Pastors of Christ's Church, is to instruct them in the
" truths

“ truths of religion ; these truths which Christ
 “ himself revealed, which without the assistance
 “ of the Holy Ghost, would have been forgot-
 “ ten *.”

This promise of Christ the R. considers as applicable to the apostles' successors, because he had said in a preceding verse, that this Comforter should abide with them “ forever.” He has, certainly, not yet to learn, that the word “ forever” is frequently used in the scriptures to denote *uninterrupted* continuance, more than perpetuity of duration. That it is used in this sense here, is evident from the scope of our Lord's discourse. He had been telling his disciples of his departure from them to go to the Father ; but he would pray for the Comforter, who would not leave them, “ that he may abide “ with you for ever †.”

But the R. has no authority at all to apply this promise of Christ directly to the apostles' successors. A little attention to the words of it would have shown him a peculiarity, which must restrict it to the former. On account of the obscurity of their present views, and the afflicting temptations which were about to overtake them, they would be apt to let the words of Christ slip from their minds ; but says he, “ The Holy Ghost will bring all things to your
 “ remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto
 G 5 “ you.”

* P. 117.

† Ver. 16.

“ you.” Does the R., then, think the Holy Ghost given to the apostles’ successors, with a view to bring to their remembrance the things which Christ spoke to *them* in his personal ministrations?

But, let us suppose this promise made to the apostles’ successors. Infallibility, in this case, becomes a personal qualification. Besides, he must allow the promise to be applicable to them both in the same manner. That the apostles received the Holy Spirit, we have every reason to believe. When they began to preach that gospel which Christ had taught them, “ God bare them witness both with signs and wonders, and with diverse miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost *.” As a proof, then, of the infallibility of the Romish Church by the accomplishment of this promise, let the R. and his brethren come forward and authenticate their claim in the same manner, that Protestants may have some ground for receiving their testimony.

As an appendix to this part of his proof, he has the following observations: “ If the Ex. imagines that errors in faith are consistent with this promised assistance and special protection of the Holy Ghost, he must permit us Catholics to believe St. Paul, who is of a contrary opinion: “ *what union,*” says the Apostle, “ *between light and darkness? what agreement* “ *between*

* Heb. ii. 4.

“ *between Christ and Belial? or what part has*
 “ *the believer with an infidel? and what agree-*
 “ *ment hath the temple of God with idols? for you*
 “ *are the temple of the living God, as God saith,*
 “ *I will dwell in them and walk among them, and*
 “ *I will be their God and they shall be my people.*
 “ 2 Cor. vi. 14. 15. *”

It will be highly gratifying to Protestants, to hear that Papists have believed St. Paul. We would recommend it to the R., when he begins this noble exercise, to believe him not merely according to the sound of his words, but to take the sense along with him. There will then be some hope of his forsaking the idolatry of the Romish Church, and commencing Protestant reformer. By turning his attention again to these words of St. Paul, he will find, that he is neither speaking of infallibility nor errors of faith. He is merely cautioning Christians against an intimate connection with persons who rejected the truth, and adhered to the worship of images and other heathenish practices. “ Be ye not,” says he, “ unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness?” &c.; and then he adds, “ Wherefore, come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.”

G 6

“ ’Tis

“ 'Tis beyond a contradiction,” says the R.,
 “ that the Apostle in this passage speaks of the
 “ Church of J. Christ, in which he admits the
 “ immediate presence of God as in his temple,
 “ from which his truth excludes every shade of
 “ error, as light expels darkness, and as faith
 “ effaces infidelity *.” An ignorant and un-
 learned reader, with only common sense for his
 guide, would rather say, It is beyond contradic-
 tion, that the apostle, in this passage, speaks of
 Christians individually, who, having the Spirit
 of God residing in them, are a spiritual temple,
 which he has sanctified for himself; and, there-
 fore, it is both their interest and duty to keep
 at a distance from the worship of images, and
 every thing which may grieve the Spirit, and
 interrupt their own peace.

Any farther examination of his proofs of in-
 fallibility from promises of teaching, will be at
 present unnecessary. This part of his defence
 originates entirely in mistaken views. He sup-
 poses the whole visible Church to be Christ's
 spiritual seed, to whom the promises are made;
 and then he draws the conclusion, that these
 will be preserved from the lightest shade of er-
 ror. But his opinion is repugnant both to the
 word of God, and the history of the Church.
 Let him look into the account which the Saviour
 himself has given of the state of the seven
 Churches

* P. 117.

Churches of Asia * ; he will find errors taught there, as gross as he could wish them, and yet Christ acknowledges their relation to himself, and, as the R. will see, is actually fulfilling his promises of teaching.

But farther, in promises of preservation which have been made to the Church, he finds another proof of infallibility. “ Christ says to Peter
 “ thou art a Rock and upon this Rock will I
 “ build my Church and the Gates of Hell shall
 “ not prevail against it The reader will easily conceive that Christ here promises to found
 “ not a Church indistinctly, or in general, but
 “ *his own Church*, that is, that very Church, in
 “ exclusion to all others, to which the prophet
 “ Isaias foretold, that all nations would flow ;
 “ that house of God in which he himself will
 “ teach his law that Church which Osee fore-
 “ told that God would espouse in judgement in
 “ justice and truth and in which by his word
 “ all his children are spiritually begotten. If in
 “ this Church at any time gross errors were
 “ publicly taught by the pastors and believed by
 “ the people the Gates of Hell would prevail
 “ and Christ’s promise would have been false—
 “ the prophets and apostles would have deceived
 “ us and the Christian religion would have been
 “ but a fiction †.”

These are serious consequences, but I can as-
 sure

* Rev. chap. i. ii. iii.

† P. 123. 124.

sure him they are not logically deduced. Besides, they are repugnant to the experience of the Church; and that should induce him to give them a re-examination. The apostle Paul informs us, that some in the Corinthian Church denied the doctrine of the resurrection *; and also, that Hymeneus and Philetus both erred in doctrine, and were believed by the people: “Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some †.” Even the apostle Peter, to whose opinion the R. ought to pay considerable respect, opposes his sentiments. “There shall be false teachers among you, who shall privily bring in damnable heresies, . . . And many shall follow their pernicious ways;” . . . ‡

But why does he restrict this promise to preservation from errors in faith? Are not persecutions, and alluring temptations, the devices of the gates of hell? If these words of Christ, therefore, teach the Popish doctrine of infallibility, they prove also perpetual freedom from all the operations of Satan. The R., in explaining this promise, ought likewise to have said, “If the enemies of the Church persecute and put its members to death, or by allurements withdraw them from allegiance to Christ, the gates of hell have prevailed, and his promise is false.”

* 1 Cor. xv. 12. † 2 Tim. ii. 18. ‡ 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

“ false.” The same thing may be said of every promise of preservation. By these, therefore, he cannot prove the infallibility of the Romish Church, till he present her absolutely free from the influence of temptation.

In the precepts of religion, the R. finds another proof of this doctrine. Of his reasoning from these, the following extract will serve as a specimen : “ *Obey, says the Apostle, your guides and be subject to them. Heb. xiii. 17.* He immediately assigns the reason why he exacts this obedience without any restriction : *Because, says he, they watch over your souls as being obliged to account for them.* St. Paul did not order the faithful to watch over their Pastors and enquire whether the doctrine taught by them be consistent with Scripture or not. If any particular teacher should introduce strange doctrine, the Evangelist St. John, gives the most simple rule to detect it ; a rule easy in practice within the comprehension of the most illiterate and absolutely infallible : *Dear-ly beloved, says the apostle, believe not every Spirit but try the spirits whether they be of God : for many false Prophets are gone out into the world.* 1. John iv. 1. As ’twas not possible for the unlearned, who in all countries compose a great majority of the people, to try strange doctrine by the rule of the Scriptures which they don’t understand, St. John gives
“ them

“ them this very simple rule: *Ibidem*, v. 6. *We*
 “ *are of God, he who knoweth God heareth us:—*
 “ *he who is not of God heareth us not:—by this*
 “ *we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of er-*
 “ *ror.* ’Tis not possible to speak more intelli-
 “ gibly or more to the purpose: we, says the
 “ Apostle, that is the Chief Pastors of the
 “ Church, of whom St. John was unquestion-
 “ ably one, *are of God*, that is are Gods ap-
 “ pointment: *he who heareth us not, is not of*
 “ *God*, that is, that teacher, let him be who he
 “ will, or what he will, who disobeys us the
 “ Chief Pastors, is not of Gods appointment.
 “ By this we know the spirit of truth and the
 “ spirit of error. By this obedience or disobe-
 “ dience to the Chief Pastors of the Church,
 “ true and false teachers are easily distinguish-
 “ ed*.”

Implicit obedience may be a very grateful doc-
 trine to Popish clergymen, but it is more savoury
 than scriptural. The R. may detect his own
 sophistry by considering, that the precepts of
 religion to obey magistrates, parents, and mas-
 ters, are as unlimited as those which he has pro-
 duced. He ought also to recollect, that the
 beauty of quibbles lies in the seeming consistency
 of one part with another, which he has not even
 preserved. “ As ’twas not possible,” says he,
 “ for the unlearned, who in all countries com-
 “ pose

“ pose a great majority of the people, to try
 “ strange doctrine by the rule of the Scriptures
 “ which they don’t understand, St. John gives
 “ them this very simple rule : *We are of God,*
 “ *he who knoweth God heareth us :—he who is*
 “ *not of God heareth us not :—by this we know*
 “ *the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.*” Did
 it not occur to the R., that *this very simple rule*
 of St. John is a rule of the scriptures, which the
 unlearned, he says, do not understand.

But though St. John, in these words, had actually enjoined implicit obedience to himself and the other apostles of Christ, it is not consequently due to the Church of Rome. The former were under the immediate direction of the Spirit of God ; but the R. has not yet proven the latter infallible. This apostle, however, teaches no such doctrine. Instead of referring the members of the Church to their teachers implicitly, he turns their attention to the doctrine of the scriptures, and tells them to exercise their judgement, by bringing the instructions of the clergy to this test ; as the R. may see by observing his language : “ Beloved, believe not every spirit,
 “ but try the spirits whether they are of God ;
 “ because many false prophets are gone out into
 “ the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of
 “ God : every spirit that confesseth that Jesus
 “ Christ is come in the flesh is of God : And
 “ every

“ every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus
 “ Christ is come in the flesh is not of God * ”

The Popish doctrine of implicit obedience to the Church, by keeping the people in ignorance, may secure the influence of the clergy ; but it is totally repugnant to the spirit of the gospel. To illustrate this, it will be only necessary to recur to the *very simple rule* of this apostle, which the R. has quoted : “ We are of God ; he that
 “ knoweth God heareth us ; he that is not of
 “ God heareth us not.” In these words we are taught, that it is a knowledge of God which produces submission to the faithful ministers of the Church. Wherever this knowledge is wanting, there may be much credulity and submission to the clergy ; but there can neither be that faith which is an assent of the understanding to the truth, nor obedience to Christ which is a reasonable service.

Nor is the R. more correct when he says, that the unlearned are incapable of trying strange doctrines by the rule of the scriptures. The unlearned and the ignorant are far from being phrases of the same signification. A person, who is destitute of what is called learning by men, may possess a very accurate knowledge of the doctrines of religion ; and, on the contrary, men of learning are not always the fittest judges of divine things ; “ Thou hast hid these things,” says

* 1 John, iv. 1.—3.

says Christ, “from the wise and prudent, and
“*hast revealed them unto babes* *.”

But, granting that an implicit submission is due to the ministers of Christ, I will shew the R., in a very few words, that the Church of Rome has no right to claim it. In illustrating this topic, he has the following observations: “At the same time that the apostles so pointed-ly directed the faithful to adhere invariably to *the faith once delivered to the saints*, they warned them against the insidious artifices of innovators and pretended reformers. Thus in his first of Timothy, iv 1. *Now the Spirit manifestly saith that in the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, and having their consciences scar-*ed †.” But why did he not produce the following words of this apostle? The R.’s grand design is to detect the insidious artifices of innovators and pretended reformers; and he there specifies the marks by which they may be known. They are persons, this apostle says, who “forbid to marry, and command to abstain from meats, which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving ‡.” Let the R., then,

* Mat. xi. 25.

† P. 129.

‡ 1 Tim. iv. 3. 4.

then, shew what Church has forbidden to marry, and commanded to abstain from meats; and I will tell him who have departed from the faith, and consequently can have no claim to infallibility.

From the name given to the Church by the apostle Paul, the R. deduces another proof of the doctrine of infallibility. "*These things I write to you hoping shortly to come to you, but if I delay, that you may know how to conduct yourself in the house of God which is the Church of the living God. the pillar and ground of truth.*" 1 Tim. iii. 14. 15. . . . The writer wishes to know from the Ex. or his most powerful ally, whether this Church which St. Paul calls the pillar and ground of truth, does at present, or has at any time supported error? if so she was no longer the pillar of truth, but the pillar of falsehood; the Apostle was deceived, and has deceived us; if not that infallibility of decision so painful to the Ex. is infallibly true."

The R. ought to have known, that the Church of Rome is far from being infallibly certain whether these words should be applied to the Church or to Timothy. By consulting the Fathers, according to whom, he and his brethren have sworn to explain the scriptures, he will find some referring them to the one, and

some

some to the other. "St. Paul," says Gregory Nyssen, "wrought and fashioned Timothy to " be a goodly pillar ; making him the pillar " and ground of the Church and of truth *." These ancient writers were also accustomed to call any person eminent in the Church by this name. St. Basil, writing of the bishop of Neocaesarea newly deceased, bewails his loss, because he was " the ornament of the Churches, " the pillar and ground of truth, a strong and " firm establishment of faith in Christ † : " And in another epistle, complaining of the wretched state of the Church on account of the dispersion of the bishops by persecution, he says, " The pillars and ground of truth are dispersed ‡ . "

But though these words were peculiarly applicable to the Church, they by no means support the doctrine of infallibility. The R. would wish his readers to believe, that the Church is the basis upon which the truth is founded. Let him then inform us, upon what the Church rests ; and also, what a Church would resemble, which was formed and subsisted, before the truth was built upon it. It might perhaps be like the Church of Rome ; but it could resemble no other object in the visible creation. The truth, we Protestants believe to be founded on the testimony of God. We know no other foundation

* De vita Mos. † Tom. 2. Ep. 62. ‡ Ep. 70.

tion for our faith, than, "Thus saith the Lord." The Church, we conceive to be a pillar and support, merely on account of that record, which it bears to the divine testimony. But, though the Church be the pillar and ground of truth, it does not follow, as the R. imagines, that it cannot err, or that by erring, it is no longer a Church of Christ, but a pillar of falsehood. A person may be a saint of God, and yet be considerably involved in the pollutions of sin; and a Church may belong to Christ, though deficient in knowledge and adherence to the truths of religion. Errors were maintained in some of the seven Churches of Asia; and yet our Lord acknowledged them as pillars, in as far as they were witnesses for the truth. Had the R. attended to the history of the Romish Church, he would have learnt, that the testimony of the Church is not so uniform as he imagines. Instead of reasoning from false principles, and drawing conclusions which exist only in his own fancy, let him advert to facts, and he will find, that the only Church, which, in his opinion, possesses any claim to truth, has supported errors and deceived its members. Both the faith and practice of the Church of Rome have varied considerably since the days of the apostles. These primitive teachers of Christianity were notoriously ignorant of the use of the Inquisition, that excellent institution for

for

for scenting out heretics ; nor were they better informed about the wonderful efficacy of the material sword, for pricking the conscience, and begetting faith in the most stubborn and rebellious. The R. must allow, that the worship of the Romish Church has acquired additional orthodoxy since the days of Epiphanius, that great enemy of images ; and also that the Council of Trent possessed a more extensive acquaintance with the faith, than Pope Gregory the Great, who declared a universal bishop the forerunner of Antichrist. As the R. has declared his resolution to believe St. Paul, I will produce him a quotation from his epistle to the Church of Rome, upon which he may exercise his faith ; and when he has perused it, he may inform us whether that apostle believed the Romish Church an infallible pillar and ground of truth, or was an innovator and a pretended reformer. “ Because of unbelief they (the
“ Jews) were broken off, and thou standest by
“ faith : be not high-minded, but *fear* : For if
“ God spared not the natural branches, take
“ heed *lest he spare not thee*. Behold therefore
“ the goodness and severity of God : on them
“ who fell, severity ; but toward thee, good-
“ ness, if thou continue in his goodness : other-
“ wise, *thou also shalt be cut off**.”

The R. indeed refers his readers indirectly to
the

* Rom. xi. 20.—22.

the state of the Romish Church, which he has all along viewed as the one Church of Christ. "There is therefore," says he, "nothing taught in the Church of Christ but truth, no faith but that which was once delivered to the Saints *."

Let us then observe how the truth has been supported by such able teachers; and we may begin with a view of their sentiments respecting the infallibility itself. I will not at present presume to say, that the most heterogeneous opinions have been maintained upon this point; since the R. has declared them all equally true. I would only advise the reader not to be surprised, though the truth assume the most discordant forms.

"It is rash," says Occam, "to say, that a general Council cannot err †. The scriptures, the universal Church, and the apostles, are without hesitation to be believed; but none else are to be believed in every thing without exception, however eminent in holiness and learning; no, not a general Council, though the universal Church were gathered together in it, nor the decrees of Popes, nor the judgement of doctors ‡. It belongs to every man skilful in the scriptures, with a firm assurance to judge, whether Councils
" have

* P. 138. † Dial. R. 1. lib. 5. c. 25.

‡ Id. P. 3. tract. 1. lib. 3. c. 4.

“ have been celebrated catholically, and emitted
 “ Catholic definitions *.”

Peter de Alliaco, cardinal of Cambray, and one of the presidents of the Council of Constance, has declared, “ 1. That a general Council can depart from the law of Christ. 2. That the Church of Rome, which is distinguished from the whole congregation of the faithful, as a part from the whole, may fall into heresy. 3. That the whole multitude of clergy and laity may apostatize from the true faith †.”

“ In things indeed concerning the faith,” says cardinal Panormitan, “ a Council is above the Pope ; yet, if the Pope be moved by better reasons and authorities, we must abide by his determination ; for even a Council may and has erred. In matters of faith, even the judgement of one private man ought to be preferred to the sentence of the Pope, if he be moved by better arguments drawn from the Old and New Testaments ‡.”

We may next observe how they have illustrated the doctrine of indulgences.

“ There were some in the Church,” says Aquinas, “ who affirmed, that her intention in indulgences was only, by a pious fraud, to induce men to acts of charity, which they

H “ would

* Ibid. c. 19.

† In Quaest. Vesper. art. 3.

‡ In Cap. de Elect.

“ would not otherwise have done ; as a mother
 “ promises her child an apple to run abroad,
 “ which yet she does not give him, when he
 “ has gone her errand.” But this he rejects as
 a very dangerous opinion ; because says he, “ it
 “ is in plain terms to make the Church guilty
 “ of a notorious cheat *.”

“ No Pope,” says Wesselus, a man highly
 esteemed in the Church of Rome, “ can grant
 “ indulgence even for an hour ; and it is ridi-
 “ culous to imagine, that for doing the same
 “ thing, an indulgence should be granted,
 “ sometimes for seven years, sometimes for 700
 “ or 7000, and sometimes for ever by a plenary
 “ indulgence. There is not the least founda-
 “ tion in scripture for the distinction of remit-
 “ ting the fault and the punishment, upon
 “ which the doctrine of indulgence is grounded.
 “ Covetousness was the cause of their introduc-
 “ tion at first ; and though the Pope once swore
 “ to the French ambassador, that he did not
 “ know the corruption of the sellers of indul-
 “ gences, yet, when he knew, he permitted
 “ them, and they became more extensive. God
 “ himself does not give plenary remission to
 “ contrition and confession ; and therefore, the
 “ Pope can much less do it †.”

Jacobus Angularis, in his reply to Wesselus,
 acknowledged, “ That there is nothing in scrip-
 “ ture

* Suppl. Sam. Q. 25. art. 2. † Opera, p. 867.

“ ture or antiquity expressly for indulgences ;
 “ but that ought to be no argument against
 “ them, *since there are many other things, owned*
 “ *in the Church as necessary points, which have*
 “ *as little foundation* *.”

Wesselus, in answer to Angularis, said,
 “ That indulgences were accounted pious frauds
 “ before the days of Albertus and Thomas ;
 “ and that there were a great number of divines,
 “ who still opposed the errors and practices of
 “ the Court of Rome in this matter : That
 “ though the Church were for them, yet the
 “ authority of the scriptures ought to be prefer-
 “ red ; for no multitude of men whatever
 “ should be believed against scripture : That
 “ he had not taken up this opinion rashly ; for
 “ he had maintained it thirty-three years ago at
 “ Paris, and also in the Pope’s Penitentiary
 “ court at Rome ; That the doctrine of indul-
 “ gences was delivered with great confusion and
 “ uncertainty ; by which it appeared to be no
 “ catholic doctrine ; and that it is almost im-
 “ possible to find two persons agreeing in the
 “ explication of them : That though the strictest
 “ person of the Carthusian or any other order
 “ received a plenary indulgence at the hour of
 “ death, he would request his brethren to pray
 “ for his soul, which is a plain evidence that he
 “ did not believe in its validity : And, that

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“ many

* In ep. Wessel.

“ many in the Court of Rome spoke against
 “ them more freely than himself.”

“ None,” says Gerson, “ can give a par-
 “ don for so many years as are contained in the
 “ Pope’s indulgence, but Christ*.”

Such are some of the opinions which have been maintained in the Church of Rome respecting infallibility and indulgences. Let the R. then reconcile them with his own sentiments, and shew the truth of his assertion, “ There is
 “ nothing taught in the Church of Christ but
 “ truth.” I suppose, he will also acknowledge the doctrines of morality to be a part of the truth. He can, therefore, have no objections to a few hints of the pure and unerring manner in which they have been taught in the Church of Rome.

“ It is too sadly certain,” says D’Alembert, “ that the maxims, imputed to Guignard and
 “ the Jesuites, respecting the murdering of
 “ kings, were at that time those of all the re-
 “ ligious orders, and of almost all the ecclesias-
 “ tics †.”

“ A man does not commit any sin,” says Sanchez, “ nor is guilty of any irreverence to-
 “ ward God, when he presumes to address
 “ himself to him in his devotions, having an
 “ actual inclination mortally to offend him ‡.”

“ A

* De Indulg. Consid. † Apol. pour les Casuist.

‡ Opusc. Lib. 7. c. 2.

“ A person,” says the same author, “ may swear, that he has not done a thing, though he actually have ; by understanding within himself, that he did it not on such a day, or before he was born :—And this is a thing of great convenience on many occasions ; and is always justifiable, when it is necessary or advantageous in any thing which concerns a person’s health, honour, or estate *.”

“ Considering justice simply in itself,” says Escobar, “ a judge may lawfully take a sum of money to give sentence for which of the parties he pleases, when both have an equal right :—If a judge receive a bribe to pass a just sentence, he is bound to restore it ; because he ought to do justice without a bribe ; and therefore, the party has nothing for his money, but what is his right : but if the judge be bribed to pass an unjust sentence, he is not obliged in conscience to make any restitution †.”

“ If a man,” says he farther, “ intend to hear mass as he ought, he fully performs the duty ; nor does any other evil intention, such as looking lustfully at women, make against it †.”

The Canonists, among other important articles, have given an orthodox definition of a
 H 3 strumpet ;

* Ibid. P. 2. Lib. 3. c. 6. † Tom. 1. Lib. 10.

‡ Tract. 1. Ex. 11.

strumpet : “ She is one who has been familiar
 “ with more than twenty-three thousand men*.”

“ A bishop,” says a Casuist, “ may proceed
 “ against any person for a mortal sin ; unless
 “ it be permitted by law, such as fornication †.”

These are a few specimens of the morality taught in the Romish Church ; to which many more equally edifying might be added if requisite. I do not, however, exhibit them as universally believed or practised. Individuals, in the communion of that Church, have entertained pure and exalted views of the precepts of religion. I design merely to contrast them with the R.’s proof of infallibility, “ There is nothing taught
 “ in the Church of Christ but truth.”

From the above sentiments of Popish divines, the reader will be able to judge of the falsity of another of his assertions ; “ The writer begs
 “ leave to inform him (the Ex.) that dissensions
 “ on points of Catholic doctrine are not known
 “ in our schools †.”

The Council of Trent has declared the Church of Rome to be the *Catholic* or universal Church. By *Catholic* doctrine, therefore, the R. must understand the principles of religion sanctioned, and permitted to be taught in that Church. Whether dissensions concerning these
 be

* Decret. Dist. 34. c. Gloss. † Bauny Somm. des
 pech. p. 148. † P. 67.

be known at present in Popish schools, I will not pretend to affirm. Perhaps, the foreboding appearances of annihilation, which threaten the whole society, may have terminated for a time their internal disputes. But if he take a retrospect of the past, he will find, that neither the Church of Rome nor her schools could complain for want of squabbling. Were there no dissensions, when Pope Liberius declared himself an Arian, and cursed the doctrine of the scriptures? when St. Cyprian contended for the freedom of the African Churches? or when Pope Gregory declared the supremacy Antichristian? Were there no disputes, when Pope Honorius became a Monothelite? or when Gregory forbade the worship of images? Popes have declared against Councils, and Councils against Popes. Some of the orders also have waged almost an incessant war, and, times without number, upbraided each other with teaching damnable doctrines. Nor have the schools been averse to engage in these bickerings. Let him inform us, if there were never any dissensions in the schools concerning the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, indulgences, or the Eucharist, when the Council of Basil permitted the Bohemians to communicate in both kinds. If the danger of excommunication and other terrors of the Church, have at times prevented them from interfering with

these doctrines, which are the basis of her aggrandizement, the outposts of the Popish system have never failed to afford them abundant scope for the most outrageous squabbings*.

In defence of the doctrine of infallibility, the R. says, that he does not pretend to introduce the Fathers. "They were all arrant Papists," says he, "their testimony in favour of Popery would be inadmissible." Had he pleased, he could have assigned a much more substantial cause. They were utter strangers to this pretension of the Romish Church, and knew of no infallibility beyond the testimony of God in the scriptures. Could they have afforded him any help, he would have embraced it most cordially. Notwithstanding his pretended modesty, he accordingly produces a quotation from St. Augustine, to shew that the testimony of the Church is the only foundation of our belief in the scriptures. The reader will find this point discussed in the following chapter, to which it more properly belongs. At present, I would only

* The ecclesiastics of the Romish Church have disputed furiously upon many points, worthy to be recorded. Among others, there was at one time a rancorous contention amongst learned divines, whether any of the Eucharist, by passing into the intestines, was converted into excrement. One party maintained the affirmative; but this was strenuously opposed by another, who, to testify their abhorrence of such unwholesome doctrine, dignified their adversaries with the savoury appellation of T—dists.

only observe, that this is merely a recurrence to his former absurd reasoning, “The infallibility
“ proves the inspiration of scripture; and then
“ the scriptures prove the infallibility.”

Since the R.’s modesty will not permit him to quote these arrant Papists the Fathers, I will exhibit to the reader a few of their sentiments respecting infallibility.

“We ought,” says Athanasius, “to pray
“ for the spirit of discretion, that every one
“ may know what to receive and what to re-
“ ject; A faithful disciple of the gospel is able
“ to distinguish between truth and pretence,
“ because he has the spirit of discerning; but
“ the simple is carried away with every co-
“ lour*.”

“The Church,” says St. Augustine, “ought
“ not to set herself above Christ.—For he
“ always judges according to truth; but eccle-
“ siastical judges, being men, are frequently
“ mistaken †.”

From this censure, he does not even exclude Councils; for he affirms, in another part of his works, that even plenary Councils may require an amendment; and the last may always rectify what is amiss in their predecessors †. In an epistle to Jerome, he also declares, “that he
“ had learnt to pay only to the canonical scrip-

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“tures-

* Orat. 1. con. Ar. † Con. Cresc. lib. 2.

‡ De Bapt. lib. 2. c. 3.

“ tures the deference of believing their authors
 “ to have erred in nothing ; but others, though
 “ ever so learned or holy, he read so as not to
 “ take any thing to be true because they were
 “ of that opinion, but because they proved it by
 “ reason or scripture.”

When the R. has explained the meaning of St. Augustine and Athanasius, I may perhaps extend his acquaintance with these *arrant* Papists. In the mean time, the reader is at liberty to reject the infallibility ; for he has assured us, that “ there is nothing taught in the Church
 “ of Christ but truth.”

When the R. produced his proofs for the infallibility, he has entirely overlooked the difficulties with which it is attended. Before bidding him adieu upon this subject, I will therefore present him with a small addition to these which have been already proposed, that he may have an opportunity of confirming the faithful in his next publication.

Infallibility, he says, is claimed by the body of the pastors united to this head. In order, then, to preserve this prerogative in the Church, the Pope and his clergy ought to be continually in Council ; because, according to his doctrine, the promise of the presence of Christ and the assistance of the Spirit to teach them all truth, belongs to them conjunctly. On this principle, the dissolution of the Council must remove the
 presence

presence of Christ and the assistance of the Spirit from the Church, and leave its members to discover the truth for themselves. Let him then inform us, where the infallibility was lodged, and how the Church was directed, from the apostles' days to the first general Council. If ever it was requisite, it was particularly so during that period; for the Church was pestered with heresies, as well as plagued with persecutions.

If the R. say, that the presence of Christ and the assistance of the Spirit have been promised to continue always in the Church, and therefore, so must the infallibility; let him shew us where it is lodged. After the dissolution of the Council, the presence of Christ and the Spirit must either be in the ordinances of religion, or in the heart of Church-members. If these be in ordinances, then they must be infallibly dispensed by every teacher, and consequently, no heresy could ever appear in the Church; If they remain in the hearts of the faithful, they must be infallible; and that would render all Councils superfluous.

But farther, the R. acknowledges that the promise of Christ does not exclude vice and immorality from his Church*. The Pope and his clergy may be very wicked men, and therefore, in a moral point of view, very unlikely to enjoy the presence of Christ and his Spirit. Against

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* P. 137.

this objection he has provided, by saying, that the authority of public men does not depend upon their personal qualities, their virtues or their vices. And here he produces Caiaphas, prophesying of the death of Christ, as an example that wicked men may be under the direction of the Spirit *. It will be granted him, that God, who opened the mouth of Balaam's ass, may at times use the agency of very wicked men; and also, that authority may be connected with many ill qualities. He ought, however, to recollect, that good qualities and authority should be inseparably connected in a Christian bishop; for "he must be blameless, as well as the husband of one wife," &c. † Should a wicked Pope and clergy, then, assemble in Council, would they receive the direction of the Spirit promised to blameless bishops? "Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity ‡."

If a Council regularly held be infallible, why do they pretend to found their decisions upon the authority of the Fathers? None of these were infallibly directed in their judgement and writings; and infallibility should never be brought to the test of private opinion.

Infallibility, he says, is the distinguishing characteristic

* P. 134.

† 1 Tim. iii. 2.

‡ Psal. v. 4. 5.

racteristic of the true Church. How, then, was it never claimed by any but Papists since the apostles' days, though heretics in all ages have declared themselves to be the true Church of Christ?

When the R. affirms, that there is nothing taught in the Church of Christ but truth, let him compare the present state of the Church of Rome with the past; the decisions of one Council with the dictates of another; and the practices of Papists with the laws of nature and of Christ. The *infallible* Church of Rome, in former times, rejected some parts of the canon of scripture: These the Council of Trent not only recognised, but admitted into it books, which, a few years before, were declared in Rome to be no part of the word of God. The apostle Paul prohibited the use of an unknown tongue in the Church, unless accompanied by an interpretation: The Council of Trent declared every person accursed, who should say, that mass ought to be celebrated only in the vulgar tongue. The sixth general Council declared, that marriage is dissolved by heresy: The contrary was affirmed by the Council of Trent. The latter decreed, that the mystical benedictions, lights, incense, garments, and other frippery used in the mass, were apostolic traditions. In opposition to this, Antoninus de Valletelina told them, "That it
" was plain, from all history, that every Church
" anciently

“ anciently had her particular rite of the mass,
 “ introduced by custom: That, to gratify the
 “ Pope, the Roman rite had been introduced
 “ into a number of provinces, though the rites
 “ of many Churches are still very different from
 “ it: That the Roman rite also has undergone
 “ great alterations, both in ancient times and
 “ lately; as is evident from the book called Or-
 “ do Romanus: That what was observed with-
 “ in the space of 300 years, was not the rite
 “ observed in the city, but that retained by
 “ the Order of St. Dominic: That the vest-
 “ ments, vessels, and other ornaments of
 “ priests and altars, appear from books, sta-
 “ tues, and pictures, to have been so much al-
 “ tered, that, were the ancients to return into
 “ the world, they would not know them: And
 “ therefore, he concluded, that by binding all
 “ to observe them, they might be reprehended
 “ as condemning antiquity.” The auditory were
 much displeas'd with this discourse; but the
 bishops of five Churches protected him, decla-
 ring, “ that he had delivered only the truth;
 “ and he, who would condemn him as scanda-
 “ lous or rash, discovered his own ignorance.”

Let the R. explain these difficulties to the sa-
 tisfaction of his readers, and then I will furnish
 him with such an addition, as will shew him
 that he is only beginning his labours. But, be-
 fore proceeding to this, let him consider, by
 what

what authority he explains the doctrines of religion. He has no infallibility to direct his judgment, or regulate his language: May he not, then, inadvertently degenerate into a heretic, and become an innovator and a pretended reformer?

Taking the R., then, upon his own principles, the Romish Church is destitute of relation to Christ. She has been shewn to be without these conjunct notes, which, he says, distinguish the Church of Christ from every other society. Her claim rests entirely upon her own testimony; and therefore, she should apply to herself the words of the Saviour, "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true*."

When he again attempts to describe the Romish Church in her past, present, and future condition, it will be necessary for him to take a more accurate observation of the meaning of scripture, and likewise, to discriminate between descriptions of Christ's Church, and these given of the Church of Rome. A very little attention only will be requisite to prevent mistakes. He appears already to know, that Babylon denotes Rome in the book of Revelation. This may serve as a key to open to him a fruitful source of information respecting the past conduct and future state of that Church. Many other prophets

* John, v. 31.

phets also, besides St. John, have spoken a great deal about Babylon, which he might turn to good account, in describing the pretensions and future lot of the Church of Rome. At present I will only mention one prophecy, which, on account of its peculiar excellence, he can scarcely overlook: “Thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, *I am, and none else beside me*, I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children; But these two things shall come to thee, in a moment, in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee, in their perfection, for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments. For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness; thou hast said, None seeth me, thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, *I am, and none else beside me*. Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth, and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off; and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know*.”

C H A P.

* Isa. xlvii. 7.—11.

C H A P. VI.

A REFUTATION OF THE R.'S ASSERTIONS CONCERNING THE SCRIPTURES AND TRADITION.

THE existence of a Church presupposes the appointment of certain principles for regulating the faith and practice of its members. For this purpose, he to whom the Church belongs has given a revelation of his will in the scriptures; and this revelation Protestants consider as affording a sufficient knowledge of every thing to be believed and practised. The greater part of modern Papists, however, have found this limitation rather inconvenient. Many of the doctrines and usages of the Romish Church, being not only destitute of foundation in scripture, but diametrically opposite to its plainest dictates, necessity has impelled them to provide for the faith, or rather the credulity of the simple, a much more extensive basis. To scripture, therefore, they have added the oral tradition of the Church; and lest any person should imagine this to be a part of what the apostle Peter denominates "vain conversation received by tradition from the fathers *," they have dignified it

* 1 Pet. i. 18.

it with the appellation of the "unwritten word of God." On these two they have pretended to establish the faith and conduct of the Church of Rome; and her doctrines, it must be confessed, exhibit marks of legitimate production from this motley origin.

Papists, to enhance the character of tradition, have found it requisite to detract from that value which the primitive Church, like modern Protestants, attached to the scriptures; because the use of the former is founded entirely upon the supposed insufficiency of the latter. Every little art, and the meanest sophistry, has been employed to diminish the affection of men for the scriptures, and to excite their esteem for what has been maintained to be the oral tradition of the Church. To promote these laudable purposes, the R. has expatriated, in a very lengthy manner, and entered keenly into the spirit of these quirks and quibbles, which have been often found to be the principal support of Popery. I cannot, however, join him in these shouts of triumph, which, on reviewing his labours, he raises over the Protestant interests. A few observations will show him, that, though his sophistry may confuse the minds of wavering Papists, they will not affect Protestants, who have been taught to render a reason. I will therefore proceed to an examination of what he has advanced respecting the scriptures and tradition, that

that the reader may see how little reason Protestants have, as yet, to relinquish the former as an insufficient rule for directing the faith and practice of the Church.

I. ON THE SCRIPTURES.

To the scriptures the R. is willing to grant a certain degree of usefulness: "What advantage then," says he, "results from the possession of the Scriptures? the greatest possible: 'tis assigned by St. Paul; *every writing divinely inspired is useful to teach, to argue, to instruct, to correct in justice, that the man of God may be entire perfectly prepared for every good work.* 2 Tim. iii. 16. 17. These were the ends for which the Scriptures were written, and given to the Church, already composed of Pastors teaching and administering sacraments, and of simple faithful, who were taught by their pastors*."

Overlooking entirely his mistranslation of this apostle's language, I will merely contrast his own views with the conduct of the Romish Church. The greatest possible advantage, he says, results from the possession of the scriptures; and to promote this advantage, they were given to the pastors and the simple faithful. Of this arrangement the Church of Rome has

* P. 52.

has invented an improvement, by prohibiting the latter, except in particular cases, from using freely this advantageous book. The pastors pretended to find, that a practical use of the scriptures was productive of consequences inconsistent with the designs of God in giving this revelation of his will; and therefore, with all Popish humility, they altered his arrangement: "Seeing it is manifest by experience," says the Council of Trent, "that if the holy bible be permitted to be read every where without difference in the vulgar tongue, more harm than benefit results thence through the rashness of men; let it therefore be at the pleasure of the bishop or inquisitor, with the advice of the parish clerk or confessor, to grant the reading of the bible, translated by catholic authors, to those, who, in their opinion, will thereby receive an increase of faith and piety. This licence, let them have in writing; and whoever shall presume, without permission, to read or possess such bibles, may not receive the absolution of his sins, till he has returned them to the ordinary *."

This was caring for the souls of the simple in a very high degree; and these reverend ecclesiastics ought to receive due praise for their affection. At the same time, the whole truth should be told; and this the reader will find in the

* Regula 4. List of prohibited Books.

the speech of Richard du Mans in that Council, mentioned by F. Paul. He asserted, "that the scriptures were become useless, since the schoolmen had established the truth of all doctrines; and tho' they were formerly read in the Church, for the instruction of the people, and still read in the service; yet they ought not to be made a study, *because the Lutherans only gained those who read them* *."

But, though the R. seems at first view to differ from these venerable doctors, their sentiments receive his most cordial approbation. He accordingly proceeds to show, that, notwithstanding the great advantage which attends the acquisition of the scriptures, they are destitute of every prerequisite to usefulness: for, though his ostensible object be to prove them an insufficient rule of faith, his obvious intention is to induce Papists to disregard them entirely. This will be sufficiently discovered by a little attention to the scope of his reasoning.

That the scriptures are an insufficient rule, he endeavours to show, by affirming them to be very much mutilated. "No human industry," says he, "can discover all the books which have been canonical, many of them are irrecoverably lost. Adam Cotzen proves that twenty books of the Scripture are lost, Q. 4. Ch. 8.—Thus for Ex. *it is said in the book of*
" *the*

* Lib. 2. p. 176.

“ *the wars of the Lord.*—Numb. xxi. 14.—This
 “ book is lost, and *Solomon spoke three thousand*
 “ *proverbs and five.*—1 Kings iv. 32. Where
 “ are they? *Now the rest of the acts of Solomon*
 “ *first and last, are they not written in the book*
 “ *of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of*
 “ *Abijah, and in the vision of Iddo.*—2 Chron.
 “ ix. 29. The first of Chronicles terminated in
 “ these words, *Now the acts of David, the king*
 “ *first and last, behold be they not written in the*
 “ *book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Na-*
 “ *than the prophet, and in the book of Gad the*
 “ *seer.* All these books are consigned to obli-
 “ vion; two of St. Pauls Epistles shared the
 “ same fate, one to the Loodiceans, which in
 “ his last Epistle to the Colossians he ordered to
 “ be read in that Church, and one which he
 “ mentions in his first Epistle to the Corinthians,
 “ *I wrote to you an Epistle,* v. 9. This Epistle
 “ does not appear; St. Matthew cites a whole
 “ quotation from Jeremias, which is not in his
 “ book, as transmitted to us. There is some-
 “ thing similar to it in the book of Zacharias;
 “ but it must have been then in the book of Je-
 “ remias, or St. Matthew would not have cited
 “ it, that may be the reason why the Jews re-
 “ trenched it; the same Evangelist had said, *it*
 “ *was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a*
 “ *Nazarean.*—ii. 23.”

“ Chrysostome writing on this text, says
 “ many

“ many of the prophetic monuments have perished : for the Jews being careless and not only careless, but impious, they have carelessly lost some of these monuments, others they have partly burnt, partly torn to pieces. Hom. 9.

“ St. Justin arguing against Tryphon, shows that the Jews did make away with many books of the old Testament, lest it should appear consistent with the new *.”

This, it must be confessed, is an extraordinary passage, both in its sentiment and composition. It must be gratifying to the R. to reflect, that the identical weapons which Deists employ against the Christian religion are used by himself against the doctrines of the Reformation. In collecting this catalogue of stale objections to the perfection of scripture, instead of refusing the doctrine of Protestants, he has erased the very foundation of all Popish faith. How does he account for the perfect preservation of oral tradition by a Church, which has lost a part of the written word of God? Does he think the simple faithful will be convinced and edified by informing them, that the scriptures, which were constantly read in the Church, and by individuals daily in every part of the world, have been partially lost; but oral traditions never met with selfish men to corrupt them, nor careless ones to neglect them, and therefore remain
pure

* P. 61, 62.

pure and perfect as when at first revealed. He cannot reasonably expect from them such a stretch of credulity, unless they be relations of Solomon's simple, "who believe every word, "and inherit folly*." If these scriptures, which he thinks lost, were necessary for the perfection of the saints, how is the deficiency to be-supplied? Perhaps tradition, like the rolling snow-ball, has picked up as much in the revolution of so many centuries, as will compensate for the wants of the scriptures.

After all that the R. has said upon this subject, it can be very easily shown, that the scriptures are not in such a mutilated state as he flatters himself. Adam Cotzen, he assures us, has proven the loss of twenty books. If Adam's proofs were so decisive, why did the R. withhold them from his readers? They might have probably produced a belief which must be withheld from his own.

To prove his assertion, he mentions certain books to which reference is made in the scriptures; such as, the book of the wars of the Lord, certain proverbs of Solomon, &c. But he has forgotten to show, either that these were written by inspiration, or that they ever constituted any part of the canon of scripture. If he suppose all the books mentioned in scripture were written under the immediate direction of God,
for

* Prov. xiv.

for the improvement of the Church, why does he not also refer us to what Solomon wrote concerning trees, beasts, fowls, creeping things, and fishes *? And likewise, to that multitude of writings which the magicians burnt on their conversion to Christianity †? These would have made a considerable show among the losses of the Church, and attached the simple more closely to the invaluable traditions which have flowed from the mouths of former generations.

After all the vast loss of books which the Church has sustained, more remain than are carefully perused even by the R. “Solomon,” says he, “spoke three thousand and five proverbs.” By turning to the place to which he refers his readers, he will find the following words, “He spake three thousand proverbs, and his songs were a thousand and five.”

Two of St. Paul’s epistles, he says, are consigned to oblivion; “one to the Laodiceans which in his last Epistle to the Colossians he ordered to be read in that Church, and one which he mentions in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, *I wrote to you an Epistle. v. 9.*

Will he inform us, where he learnt that this apostle wrote more than one epistle to the Colossians? When he calls the one which remains the last, why does he not add the others to his list of lost books? That he wrote one epistle to

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this

* 1 Kings, iv. 33.

† Acts, xix. 19.

this part of the Church, is universally believed; but the R. is the first person who ever heard of more.

If he would persuade his readers that Paul wrote an epistle to the Laodiceans, he must draw his proof from some other quarter than the epistle to the Colossians. In the last chapter of that book, an epistle from Laodicea is mentioned; but without the most distant hint of its being the work of this apostle. Some have rather supposed it one written to himself; and others, that it was the first to Timothy, which is dated from that place. If it would gratify the R. to read an epistle to the Laodiceans, ascribed to St. Paul, he will find it in Hutter's New Testament, or in Leusden's *Philologus Hæbreo-Græcus*. But this is too apocryphal, even for the Church of Rome to receive.

Nor has he any better foundation for maintaining the loss of an epistle to the Corinthians. Had he attended to the scope and language of St. Paul in the passage which he has quoted, he would have seen, that he merely refers to the preceding verses. He had been inculcating it as the duty of the members of the Church, to keep themselves apart from persons guilty of fornication, which is publicly licensed within the precincts of the Romish Church. But, lest the Corinthians should view his prohibition in too extensive a meaning, he proceeds to inform them,

them, that it referred only to Christians. If the R. please to consult the apostle's language, he will find that he does not say, "I wrote you an epistle," but "I have written to you in the epistle, not to associate with fornicators. Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world," &c.

In attempting to prove the scriptures mutilated, he descends from books to single verses: "St. Matthew," says he, "cites a whole quotation from Jeremias, which is not in his book as transmitted to us. There is something similar to it in the book of Zacharias; but it must have been then in the book of Jeremias, or St. Matthew would not have cited it, that may be the reason why the Jews retrenched it."

The passage to which he alludes is in the twenty-seventh of Matthew: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet," &c. This quotation is indeed only to be found in the prophecies of Zechariah; but it does not follow, that ever it existed in any other part of the scriptures. Had the Jews, as he supposes, retrenched it from the book of Jeremias, they would scarcely have troubled themselves to insert it elsewhere. If the R. imagine this passage a strong proof of his assertion, he shows himself very ignorant of biblical criticism. These Fathers, whom he venerates so highly,

can teach him to solve this difficulty, without supposing any part of the scriptures lost. St. Augustine mentions, that the word Jeremiah was to be found, in his days, only in some copies of this evangelist, while others had merely “the prophet;” and therefore he concludes the last to be the genuine reading*. The same word is also wanting in the Syriac and Persic versions. It is therefore with reason supposed, that some transcriber had, by mistake, placed the name Jeremiah in the margin as a reference, which afterward came to be inserted in the text.

As a farther proof of the mutilation of the scriptures, the R. produces another proof from the gospel of Matthew: “It was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarean. ii. 23.”

This he supposes a quotation from former writers, whose works have perished. After telling us that St. Jerome was “a man profoundly versed in the scriptures, who with every advantage from nature, and every external adventitious aid, had made them the study of a long and laborious life †,” he can have no objection to give his observations on these words a hearing. “If the Evangelist,” says he, “had referred to any particular passage of Scripture, he would not have said, *It* “ was

* De Consens. Evang. Lib. 3.

† P. 177.

“ *was spoken by the prophets*, but rather *by the prophet*. But now when he uses the word *prophets* in the plural number, he plainly shows that he does not take the words from the Scripture, but the sense *.”

The R. has likewise endeavoured to show, from Chrysostom and Justin Martyr, that many books of scripture have perished, through the carelessness and impiety of the Jews. Had he been much acquainted with biblical literature, he would have hesitated to advance an opinion which has been long ago exploded by the most learned doctors of the Romish Church. Many of the Fathers, it will be acknowledged, have maintained it in their writings; but they did it through the influence of prejudice and ignorance. The Church, during the first ages, had little acquaintance with the Old Testament, except by the Septuagint translation. This, by the carelessness of the clergy from whom the Romish Church pretends to have received her traditions, had undergone considerable changes. On this account, in their disputes with the Jews, objections were frequently made to their quotations from the Old Testament; and these Fathers, unacquainted with the real cause of difference, retorted by a charge of mutilation and corruption. They were, however, with the exception of a few individuals, totally ignorant

* Comment. in loc.

both of the Hebrew language, and of the state of the scriptures among the Jews, and therefore incompetent judges of the truth of their assertion. On the contrary, Origen and Jerome, who were well acquainted with both the Hebrew text and the Septuagint, have completely exculpated the Jews from this charge; and at the same time shown the latter to be in a very corrupted condition. “If any one,” says Jerome, “should say that the Hebrew books have been corrupted by the Jews, let him hear the opinion of Origen on this point: *Had the Scribes and Pharisees*, says he, *been guilty of any crime, our Lord and his disciples, who accused them of others, would not have passed it over in silence*.*” That they did not mutilate nor corrupt them afterwards, he proves in many parts of his works, by showing, that in proportion as the Septuagint had been less altered by transcribers, it bore a greater resemblance to its Hebrew original. F. Simon, a Popish doctor, to whose learning and biblical researches the Roman scarcely be a stranger, says, “If any person reflect upon the objections of Justin and some other Fathers to the Hebrew Scriptures, he will find them founded on this principle, that the Septuagint version alone is authentic and divine, and whatever is not conformed to it, has been corrupted. But the principle

* Comment. in Is. C. 6.

“ principle is not true, and therefore their conclusion must be false *.”

It must doubtless displease the R. exceedingly to learn, that the scriptures are not in such a mutilated state as he imagined. Should he, however, still retain his opinion, and write again upon this subject, let him specify one lost book which was divinely inspired, and ever admitted into the canon of scripture ; that he may show something else than mere vague assertion, in opposition to the united testimony of learned Protestants and Papists.

As a farther proof of the insufficiency of scripture, he attempts to insinuate, that what remains is in many places so corrupted, as to render the original meaning totally uncertain †. Various readings, it is true, have crept into the inspired writings through the mistakes of transcribers ; but both Protestants and Papists, who have spent the greatest part of their lives in examining and comparing the numerous manuscripts which remain, have drawn a very different conclusion from the R. Their extensive researches have always terminated in a declaration, that they never found any change which could affect either the faith or practice of the Christian. Let him show, from the writings of the Fathers, that the scriptures ever exhibited other doctrines of religion than at present ; and

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then,

* Hist. Crit. de vieux Test. p. 1. c. 18. † P. 66.

then, perhaps, his readers may acquiesce in his assertion.

From the supposed obscurity of the scriptures, the R. draws another proof of their insufficiency. "To refer a man," says he, "to the Scriptures as his only guide, is to refer the benighted traveller to an intricate path, instead of giving him a guide to conduct him through it, and enable him to avoid the precipices, which may be in the way *."

He had formerly assented, with the apostle Paul, to the usefulness of scripture; but it seems this utility consists in leading persons astray. Moses certainly did not imagine the doctrines transmitted by him to the Church like "an intricate path to the benighted traveller," when he said to Israel, "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand; and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates †." Let us observe how the Bereans stumbled over "precipices," by perusing the scriptures: "They searched them daily, whether

* P. 90.

† Deut. vi. 7.—9.

“ther these things were so. *Therefore many of them believed* *.”

I am willing to allow, that the scriptures seem very obscure to the R. Did he give them any other character, it would be very wonderful indeed. The manner in which he has quoted many parts of them, discovers the most striking inattention even to the words of the scriptures; and how can he expect to understand their meaning? Had he ever given them a perusal sufficiently deliberate and candid, perhaps he would not have complained so much of their obscurity.

But the R. thinks the diversity of sentiment entertained respecting the meaning of the scriptures a decisive evidence of their obscurity.

“Will the Rev. Ex.,” says he, “pretend that a knowledge of all the precepts of the divine law is so easily discovered in the Scriptures, that even the most stupid cannot mistake it? if so, whence this variety of opinions on the sense of certain texts? whence these endless controversies, not amongst the unlearned, who are incapable of controversial discussion, but amongst the learned themselves? with what propriety can that be called a common highway, in which the unwise shall not wander, which the learned themselves cannot find without the greatest difficulty †?”

I 5

These

* Acts, xvii. 11. 12.

† P. 55. 56.

These are a part of his observations on the following words of Isaiah, “ An highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called, “ The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein *.” A little attention to the scope of this prophet would have prevented the R. from attaching to his language these imaginary difficulties. Had he only given himself the trouble to inquire where this highway should be, the preceding verses would have shown him, that it is not merely where the scriptures are enjoyed, but where these are connected with the effusion of the Holy Spirit, as a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ: “ For in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert †.” Though the scriptures contain all the doctrines of religion, a proper knowledge of them originates in the operations of the Spirit, who leads the Christian to the truth, not by any new revelation, but by preparing his mind to understand these doctrines which have been already revealed in the scriptures.

Had the R. attended to this principle of religion, it would have completely obviated the objection which he has made to the perspicuity of the scriptures, from the various sentiments and controversies

* Ch. xxxv. ver. 8.

† Ver 6.

controversies of the learned. If these cannot find the way without great difficulty, the unwise, he thinks, must be in a dangerous condition. But why does he place the unwise as an antithesis to the learned? Learning and wisdom, and want of learning and folly, are far from being synonymous terms. There may be a great deal of judgement displayed, where there is no human learning; and, on the contrary, learned men often discover themselves to be the greatest of all fools. Had he taken his observations from real life, he would have seen, that many persons who are but poorly qualified to manage their secular affairs, conduct themselves with great propriety in religion; while men of learning wander in their imagination, and, professing themselves to be wise, have become fools. If he have ever read the histories of the bloody persecutions which our ancestors suffered from the Romish Church, he must have frequently observed with astonishment, that many persons whom he has ranked among the unwise, by their knowledge of the scriptures, and the acuteness of their replies, have put to shame and silence the learned and persecuting Popish priests who opposed them. Should he have any difficulty to account for these facts, it discovers his ignorance of these scriptures which he attempts to vilify: “Not many wise men after the flesh, “not many mighty, not many noble, are called;

“ But God hath chosen the foolish things of
 “ the world to confound the wise ; and God
 “ hath chosen the weak things of the world to
 “ confound the things which are mighty ; and
 “ base things of the world, and things which are
 “ despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things
 “ which are not, to bring to nought things
 “ that are, that no flesh should glory in his pre-
 “ sence *.” “ I thank thee, O Father, Lord
 “ of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid
 “ these things from the wise and prudent, and
 “ hast revealed them unto babes. Even so,
 “ Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight †.”

I have no intention to declare the scriptures
 entirely free from obscurity to us at present.
 Many future events, of which the prophets
 have spoken, are yet little understood by the
 Church. There are also in the scriptures many
 allusions to customs and transactions, which are
 now totally unknown. But these can constitute
 no objection to their sufficiency as a rule of faith
 and practice. If the R. can shew any obscu-
 rity in the statement which they give of the
 doctrines of the gospel, or the precepts of mo-
 rality, we may perhaps be induced to afford him
 a farther hearing. Till then, he must permit
 Protestants to adhere to the scriptures.

That a diversity of opinion respecting the
 meaning of many passages of scripture subsists
 among Protestants, will be freely admitted. But
 why

* 1 Cor. i. 26.—29. † Mat. xi. 25. 26.

why does the R. thence infer their obscurity? Ought he not rather to acknowledge, as an incontrovertible fact, that there is a variety of interests and prejudices among men, and a diversity in the degree of their understandings? The variety of views, which persons take of the scriptures, no more proves them obscure, than the ignorant mistakes, or the quibbles of a lawyer, demonstrate the obscurity of the laws of a nation. As he discovers a great affection for the writings of the Fathers, we may observe what they have said concerning the obscurity of the scriptures. Such orthodox company will help to kindle his angry zeal against the scriptures into wrath.

“ Believe me,” says St. Augustine, “ what-
 “ ever is in these Scriptures is lofty and divine ;
 “ they contain nothing but the truth, and that
 “ doctrine, which is most fit for the repair and
 “ restoration of souls ; and they are so dispos-
 “ ed, that every man may draw thence what
 “ is sufficient for him, if he come devoutly
 “ and piously affected, as true religion re-
 “ quires *.”

“ In the Scriptures,” says he farther, “ all
 “ these things which respect faith and practice,
 “ are plainly exhibited † :” And again, “ The
 “ Scripture speaks these plain things which are
 “ contained

* De Utilitate Cred. c. 6.

† De Doctr. Christ.

“ contained in it, like a familiar friend without
 “ disguise, to the heart of the unlearned as
 “ well as of the learned * :” And also, “ The
 “ Scriptures contain the same things in those
 “ places which may be easily understood, which
 “ it does in the abstruse †.”

“ These things,” says Basil, “ which seem
 “ to be ambiguous and obscurely spoken in
 “ some places of the holy Scriptures, are ex-
 “ plained in other places, by those which are
 “ acknowledged to be perspicuous ‡.”

“ In the Scriptures,” says Chrysostom, “ all
 “ things necessary are perspicuous ||.”

These quotations are sufficient to shew, that the Fathers did not imagine the scriptures so obscure, as the R. would wish them. Should he express the least dissatisfaction with their number, a much more extensive collection are at his service. The sentiments of Popish divines, to corroborate the Fathers, can also be produced from any later period upon which he pleases to fix. Even among Papists, there have been almost always some, who did not allow their judgements to be perverted by the mercenary doctrines of the Romish Church.

From the mysteries contained in the scriptures, the R. seems to insinuate their insufficiency.

* Ad. Voluc. Ep. 3. † Ibid. ‡ Reg. brev. resp. ad. Interrog. 267. || Hon. 3. in Sec. ad Thessal.

ciency. "From the extreme simplicity of the
 " Christian religion both in faith and morals,"
 says he, "the Ex. thinks he knows the suffi-
 " ciency of the Scriptures. What! the myste-
 " ries of religion simple! the mysteries of the
 " Trinity, of the incarnation, of original sin
 " and predestination simple *!"

A very few words will suffice to shew the fu-
 tility of these exclamations. Did it never oc-
 cur to him, that the existence of a mystery may
 be revealed with great clearness and simplicity?
 Every object in nature is enveloped in mystery
 when traced to first principles; and yet no per-
 son doubts their existence, though he cannot ex-
 plain them. In this point of view, these doc-
 trines which he has specified, though mysterious
 in their nature, and above the comprehension
 of men, are proposed as articles of faith in a
 very plain and simple manner. We are not
 commanded to know how three persons exist in
 the divine nature, how the Son of God became
 man, nor why Adam's sin is imputed to his de-
 scendants. We are only to receive the divine
 testimony that these things are so; and certain-
 ly, nothing can be more simply plain respecting
 these points, than the declarations of scripture;
 "There are three that bear record in heaven,
 " the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit;
 " and these three are one †.—The Word was
 " made

* P. 101.

† 1 John, v. 7.

“ made flesh, and dwelt among us *.—By the
 “ offence of one, judgement came upon all men
 “ to condemnation †.”

The R. farther tries to persuade his readers, that many important doctrines of religion are very indistinctly taught in the scriptures. “ The
 “ divinity of Christ,” says he, “ and his con-
 “ substantiality with the father, is an article of
 “ faith, and this is so far from being distinctly
 “ taught in the Scriptures, that the Arians elud-
 “ ed every text of Scripture brought in proof of it.
 “ See Eusebius of Caesarea : his epistle in Theo-
 “ doret, B. 2. ch. 12. in which he expounds
 “ even the term consubstantial in an arian sense ;
 “ that there is but one person in Christ, the
 “ Nestorians could not see in the Scriptures, nor
 “ could the Eutychians discover that in him
 “ there are two natures, the divine and human.
 “ To come to ourselves we Catholics think
 “ transubstantiation clearly revealed in the Scrip-
 “ ture, Protestants cannot find it there. Lu-
 “ therans think consubstantiation distinctly
 “ taught, Zuinglians deny it. In a word, there
 “ is no description of Christians, who do not find
 “ or pretend to find their tenets in Scripture; and
 “ as their tenets are in general contradictory,
 “ even those which are founded in truth cannot
 “ be so distinctly taught as the Ex. pretends †.”

This,

* John, i. 14. † R m. v. 18. ‡ P. 99. 100.

This, it must be confessed, is a very extraordinary article. To infer the indistinct revelation of truth from the doubts of men, destroys the very foundation of both natural and revealed religion. Some have doubted the existence of a God; and therefore, according to the R.'s principles, the proofs to the contrary exhibited in the works of nature, the operations of providence, and the scriptures, are very indistinct. Some have doubted their own existence: and therefore, it is a dubious point, that ever they existed at all. Or, to come closer to the point, Protestants have not only doubted, but denied all Popish peculiarities to be doctrines of religion; and therefore, the R. should scruple to believe them: Has he never observed opposite sentiments entertained concerning the simplest transactions of life, through the passions and prejudices of men? Why then does he overlook the influence of these in the present case, and blame the scriptures for indistinctness?

The divinity of Christ, he says, is indistinctly taught in the scriptures. This opinion, he has not formed from an examination of the scriptural proofs of it, but because the Arians explained them away in their disputes with the orthodox. Upon this principle, the most cunning quibbler has always the best cause. It is much to the credit of the Popish faith, that it must be supported by Arian sophistry. Let the

R. read the scriptures for himself, instead of resting his faith upon the testimony of the Arians; and he will find the divinity of Christ very distinctly taught. If he please also to consult Justin Martyr, he will perceive his assertion to be false, and totally groundless. In his dialogue with Trypho the Jew, he tells him, “ that he would produce such proofs of the divinity of Christ, even from the Old Testament, that no person would be able to contradict them.”

It would afford a far more honourable testimony to the R.'s judgement, were he, instead of producing such silly objections to the sufficiency of scripture, candidly to acknowledge that the Romish Church hates the light, and is neither willing to come to it herself, nor to permit others, lest her deeds should be reproved. To encourage him to such an honest confession, I can assure him, it is not without precedent even in the Church of Rome. Among other advices which the bishops assembled at Bononia gave Pope Julius III., for establishing the Romish Church, the R. will find their views of the scriptures very plainly delineated. “ We have reserved to the last,” said they, “ the most considerable advice, which we could at this time give your Holiness: And here you must be awake, and exert all your force, to hinder as much as you possibly can the gospel from being
“ ing

“ ing read in all the cities that are under your
“ dominions ; particularly in the vulgar tongue.
“ Let that little of it, which they have in the
“ mass, serve their turn, nor suffer any mortal
“ to read more : For as long as men were con-
“ tented with that little, things went to your
“ mind ; but they grew worse and worse, as
“ soon as they began to read more. This in
“ short is the book which has, above all others,
“ raised these storms and tempests, by which
“ we are almost driven to destruction : And
“ really, whoever diligently weighs the scrip-
“ tures, and then considers all the things which
“ are usually done in our Churches, will find
“ that there is a vast difference between them,
“ and that this doctrine of ours is very unlike,
“ and in many things entirely repugnant to it.
“ And no sooner does any man discover this,
“ being excited by some of our learned adver-
“ saries, than he continues bawling against us,
“ till he has made the whole matter public, and
“ rendered us odious to all men. Those papers,
“ therefore, are to be stifled ; but you must use
“ caution and diligence in it, lest that create us
“ greater disturbance. D. John Della Casa, bi-
“ shop of Beneventum, the legate of your See
“ at Venice, behaved himself handsomely in that
“ business : For though he did not openly and
“ avowedly condemn that book of the gospel,
“ nor order it to be suppressed ; yet in an ob-
“ scure

“ scure dissembling manner, he insinuated as
 “ much ; while in that long catalogue of heretics
 “ which he published, he has found fault with
 “ some of the doctrines maintained in it ; parti-
 “ cularly some chapters, which seem principally
 “ to oppose us. Seriously, it was a renowned
 “ action, whatever others may chatter. At first
 “ view, it seemed ridiculous to many that he
 “ should condemn at once such a number of
 “ authors who had written about religion ; and
 “ that he should publish something to which he
 “ gave this title, “ Of the Divine Art ;” when
 “ he himself had never read so much as one syl-
 “ lable of divinity. But that is of no conse-
 “ quence ; and they who censure him have
 “ little business of their own to employ them ;
 “ and they likewise show themselves to be mere
 “ novices in the Court of Rome.”

From the institution of teachers in the Church
 the R. farther attempts to shew the insufficiency
 of the scriptures. “ The apostle, (Eph. iv.
 “ 11.),” says he, “ informs us, in language as
 “ strong and as plain as words can express it.
 “ That the Pastors given by J. C. are the law-
 “ ful teachers, who by their ministry are to col-
 “ lect into one body, all the members of J. C. ;
 “ from them therefore, we are to receive the
 “ faith ; elsewhere we seek it in vain *.”

We Protestants will not deny the usefulness
 of

of teachers in the Church. We will not, however, acknowledge them useful as a "rule" of faith and practice. The R. ought to recollect, that he has yet to prove their infallibility; and therefore, they have no right to the implicit obedience of the members of the Church. "From the Pastors," says he, "we are to receive the faith; elsewhere we seek it in vain." Did the Bereans seek the faith in vain, when they searched for it in the scripture? Or did St. Augustine receive it from the pastors of the Church, when he was converted by reading in the epistle to the Romans?

But says he farther, "Will the Ex. inform us of what use is a teacher to a man who teaches himself? or what is the use of a pastor to a man who finds all the spiritual food which is necessary in the scriptures? and not only finds it there, but according to the principles of the Ex. must find it there and not elsewhere. Why not substitute Printers to Bishops and Ministers in the Church?"

If the R. be yet ignorant of the use of preaching in the Church, it is time for him to learn it. Preaching may be very necessary and useful as a mean of salvation, though not as a rule of faith. Faith, he has properly observed, is founded on divine testimony. Unless, therefore, he can demonstrate, that his ideas in preaching are infallibly dictated by the Spirit of God,

God, they cannot be a foundation for Christian belief. One great end of preaching must then be, to direct men to the scriptures as a rule of faith. If he say, where men have the scriptures and peruse them, preaching, according to this principle, becomes superfluous, he ought to remember that it is an ordinance of God, to which his blessing is annexed; and on this account, when God gives us line upon line, we must account neither unnecessary. In the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, there is no doctrine exhibited, nor blessing received, beside these which are revealed and conveyed by preaching; and yet no Christian imagines these superfluous on this account. Besides, the R. should know, that preaching is useful in the Church, not merely as a mean for the instruction of the ignorant, but also for the comfort of the informed; and this end is frequently promoted, not by giving them a more extensive view of the doctrines of religion, but by the Spirit of God, through the ordinance of preaching, applying to their minds these truths with which they were previously acquainted; "Wherefore," says an apostle, "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth*."

The R. inverts the order of religion, when he

* 2 Pet. i. 12.

he says, "The scriptures are useful and the public ministry indispensibly necessary." The reason which he has assigned for this, though specious, is totally inconclusive: "For without the Scriptures the faithful have been sanctified before the Scriptures were written, but not without the ministry of the Pastors and teachers."

When he has informed us, that pastors and teachers were given to the Church before the scriptures, could he likewise add, that they were given before the word of God was revealed? Pastors he must allow to be merely echos of the divine testimony. Where then is the force of his reasoning? He might as well say, words are indispensibly requisite to the happiness of men; but to convey any meaning by them is of less importance. Besides, when he says, that the faithful have not been sanctified without the ministry of pastors and teachers, he belies the testimony of his own Church, and unsanctifies some of the most eminent saints in the Popish calendar. Let him tell us, who sanctified these persons, who, from mistaken views of religion, forsook the habitations of men and every social virtue, retired into deserts and dreary solitudes, and never left their dens, but when urged by the pressing calls of nature. Yet, according to Popish principles, these arrived at great sanctity

tity without the ministry of pastors and teachers.

To show the superior usefulness of pastors to the scriptures, he attempts to produce proof from themselves. “The angel,” says he, “did not refer Cornelius the Centurion to the Scriptures, that he might find perfection and sanctification in them, but ordered him to send for St. Peter and learn from him what he was to do, *he will tell you*, said the angel, *what is necessary for you to do.* Acts, x. 6. If the Scriptures were alone sufficient to perfect and furnish him to all good works why not tell him so? why direct him to learn his duty, not from the Scriptures, but from St. Peter the Chief Pastor of the Church? it seems the Angel was ignorant of this new doctrine; he thought as plain men do now-a-days, that ’twas the duty of the pastor to direct the sheep in the choice of pasture, and not permit them to range at large amongst poisonous herbs, and exposed to ravening wolves or wily foxes *.”

It seems, the R. at last thinks reading the scriptures no better than ranging in a field of poisonous herbs; and therefore God has provided pastors to guard his flock against such noxious fare. The Romish clergy, it must be confessed, have discharged their duty in this respect,

* P. 96.

spect most admirably. When any of the flock have swallowed such dangerous food, they have generally declared them to be under deadly disease ; and being well aware of the mischief which one scabby sheep may do in a flock, they have seldom failed to use the actual cautery ; or, as plain men would say now-a-days, because fire is an excellent purifier, they roasted the sheep to destroy the contagion, and be an example to the flock.

The R.'s judgement must be very much warped indeed, if he imagine that the minds of Protestants can be perverted by such trifling quibbles. The angel did not direct Cornelius to the scriptures ; but the reason is obvious. It was the design of God to exhibit to him the Saviour " already " crucified and exalted, as a foundation of faith for the remission of sins to both Jews and Gentiles. The angel, therefore, could not direct him to the Old-Testament scriptures, because they taught no such doctrine : nor could he direct him to the New Testament, for it was not yet written. If the R. say, preaching must then be more excellent than the scriptures, because it was previously instituted ; he ought to recollect, that though the New Testament was not written at this time, the word of God had been revealed as the basis of all preaching ; and was also preserved in purity by agency, of which the Romish Church cannot prove the possession.

If he have ever read the first chapter of the Acts, he has perhaps observed Christ's words to his apostles: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me*." Before Peter, therefore, could be sent to Cornelius to preach a gospel not yet written, it was necessary for him to be under the immediate direction of the Spirit of God, and thereby completely guarded in his declaration of the truth. The R.'s reasoning, then, cannot be conclusive, till he has proven the Romish clergy under the direction of the Spirit in the same manner; and there is only one way in which this can be done; let him show that they "have received power." His proofs of this, he may perceive, must not consist in the assertions of a Council, nor in scriptures wrested from their real meaning; they must be such as were given by the apostles, when "God bare them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost."

The R. farther maintains the insufficiency of the scriptures, by asserting that all the doctrines necessary to be believed are not actually contained in them. "The Rev. Ex.," says he, "will have the modesty to admit, there are some doctrinal truths which are not contained in the Scriptures; the first of these is, that the
" Scriptures

* Ver. 8.

“ Scriptures themselves are divinely inspired,
 “ and transmitted to us without interpolation or
 “ corruption. In no book of the Scripture do
 “ we find that these books which we call cano-
 “ nical were divinely inspired, and if we did,
 “ the difficulty would be only transferred to it-
 “ self: the question would immediately recur—
 “ on what authority do we believe that this
 “ book, which makes the Scriptures divinely
 “ inspired, was itself divinely inspired. This
 “ argument is from the nature of things inse-
 “ luble, and precludes even the possibility of
 “ evasion *.”

When the R. was so active in snaring Pro-
 testants, he did not foresee that he might be
 caught himself. There is one evasion which he
 either had not penetration to perceive, or ima-
 gined that his readers would not observe. In
 the scriptures and oral tradition, Papists think
 they find a sufficient rule of faith; and by the
 latter, they pretend to know the inspiration of
 the former. But how are we to know tradition
 to be the unwritten word of God? If the R.
 reply, by the infallible testimony of the Church,
 let him next inform us, how we are to ascertain
 the truth of this testimony. “ This argument
 “ is from the nature of things insoluble, and
 “ precludes even the possibility of evasion.”

But, upon this point, Protestants require no

K 2

evasions

* P. 48. 49.

evasions to rid themselves of his imaginary puzzles. A plain statement of the truth is sufficient to obviate the objections of Papists, Deists, and all other enemies of revelation, undesigned or avowed. The R. may not be able to solve his own argument ; but any Protestant may, with the greatest ease. It can be shown him, with very little trouble indeed, that we have both a rational certainty and a divine faith respecting the inspiration and purity of the scriptures.

In proving the canonical books genuine, we are far from rejecting the testimony of the Church. We do not, however, receive it because it is the testimony of a Church, or upon the ground of that infallibility for which the R. contends. We embrace it merely as the evidence of faithful witnesses, who could neither be deceived, nor have any interest in imposing upon posterity ; and this proof, we think, amounts to a moral certainty. When Hardouin the Jesuite asserted, that Homer, Virgil, and all the other Greek and Latin classics, were written by the monks of the middle ages, the ridicule of the literary world was deemed a sufficient refutation : and any person who would embrace the same opinion with respect to the scriptures, would be properly answered by a similar treatment.

But, in proving the inspiration of the scriptures,

tures, we proceed upon very different ground. Here we attend to the internal evidences, and in them we find a decisive confirmation of this point. The R. is mistaken when he says, “ In
 “ no book of the Scripture do we find that
 “ these books which we call canonical were di-
 “ vinely inspired.” However unwilling he may be to permit Papists to read the scriptures, in writing against Protestants, he should have read them himself. He cannot deny that the books of the Old Testament were received by our Lord and his apostles, as dictated by the Spirit of God. In their quotations from them, we frequently find them using phrases of this import; such as, “ David himself said by the
 “ Holy Ghost;” “ The Spirit speaketh;” “ The Holy Ghost saith *.” And what is said of particular passages, is declared by St. Paul respecting the whole canon of the Old Testament scriptures. “ From a child,” says he to Timothy, “ thou hast known the Holy Scrip-
 “ tures . . . All Scripture is given by inspira-
 “ tion of God †.” If the testimony of St. Peter can be believed by a Papist, it will also prove the inspiration of scripture: “ We have
 “ also a more sure word of prophecy; where-
 “ unto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a
 “ light that shineth in a dark place, . . . For
 K 3 “ prophecy

* Mark, xii. 36. 1 Tim. iv. 1. Heb. iii. 7. &c.

† 2 Tim. iii. 15. 16.

“ prophecy came not in old time by the will of
 “ man : but holy men of God spake as they
 “ were moved by the Holy Ghost *.”

If the R. next inquire where the inspiration of the New Testament is taught, it will not be more difficult to show him. Nothing is more plainly revealed in scripture, than that these persons by whom it was written received the Holy Spirit, to qualify them to be witnesses for Christ. Their speech and writings concerning him were consequently under his direction ; and hence says the apostle Paul, “ Which things
 “ also we speak, not in the words which man’s
 “ wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost
 “ teacheth.” If the R. then admit the New Testament to be a witness concerning Christ, he must also grant its inspiration.

Should he next say, “ On what authority do
 “ we believe that this book, which makes the
 “ Scriptures divinely inspired, was itself divine-
 “ ly inspired?” his difficulty can be very easily solved. A writing may possess internal marks, by which the authenticity of its claims may be proven, independent of external evidence. Should any person present to him a letter, declaring it the production of a friend, concurring circumstances might prevent him from believing it upon the ground of this evidence. But if a perusal showed him the modes of expression
 and

* 2 Pet. i. 19.—21.

and sentiments peculiar to his friend; and, above all, particulars with which he only could be acquainted, all hesitation would terminate. In this manner, Protestants prove that the scriptures are, what they pretend to be, a work of inspiration. To show the R. how this subject can be discussed, I will direct him at present to one internal mark, by which we Protestants know the inspiration of scripture; and that is, prophecy. The prediction of events must originate in that Being, who has arranged the plan, and regulates the government, of the world. If he then compare the prophecies of scripture with the operations of providence, he will find the conclusion unavoidable. The history of kingdoms which are now no more, and the present state of the Jews and of the Christian Church, demonstrate “that holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*.”

The validity of this argument can be shown to the R.'s perfect satisfaction, by turning his attention to some part of prophecy, and pointing out the manner in which it has been accomplished. Perhaps, by looking into the writings of the apostle Paul, we may find some appropriate and pertinent illustration.

This apostle has spoken many things respecting the state of the Church in after ages. A-

K 4

mong

* 2 Pet. i. 21.

mong others, he has foretold a great apostacy from religion, which should occur among Christians. This has excited us Protestants to much diligence, both to ascertain its nature, and mark its progress. In attending to these points, we have found a striking coincidence between the prophecies of Paul and the conduct of the Romish Church. If the R. please, we will observe his language: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there come an apostacy first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders *." Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving †."

By observing this apostle's language, the R. will perceive, that this extraordinary character was to appear in the Church: "He sitteth in the temple of God." In this point of view, then, he

* 2 Thess. ii. 3. 4. 9.

† 1 Tim. iv. 1.—3.

he cannot object to an application of these words to the bishop of Rome. But St. Paul does not refer his readers to this man of sin merely as an individual, but a number of men actuated by similar views, and pursuing the same course. What he denominates the man of sin in the former passage, he calls in the latter, seducing spirits, or persons whose principles inclined men to apostatize from the faith. That this is the meaning of the phrase "seducing spirits," is evident from their mode of acting in the Church. They do not operate like "the Spirit, which worketh in the *heart* of the children of disobedience;" but appear externally, are invested with authority, and establish laws: "They forbid to marry, and command to abstain from meats." Let us then observe how the character which he has given the man of sin, will fit the succession of bishops in the See of Rome.

Various marks, by which he may be known, are mentioned in these words; "His coming," says this apostle, "is after the working of Satan, with all power." Perhaps the R. may remember what Pope Gregory the Great has said about the appearance of Antichrist. He declared that person his forerunner, who should account himself universal bishop, and arrogate a "power" over the whole visible Church; and this has been both claimed and exercised by

the bishops of Rome. But they were far from resting satisfied with the spiritual power. The acquisition of that only excited their ambition to connect it with the temporal authority; and the period in which their usurpations commenced, had a powerful tendency to promote their views. The greater part of Europe was immersed in barbarism and superstition; and neither the civil nor religious rights of mankind were at all understood. Many, from mistaken views of religion, bequeathed their wealth to the Church; not for the advancement of virtue and piety, but for supporting a clergy, whose wallowings discovered more of the nature of the hog, than of the Christian pastor. Even the kings of the earth, impelled by superstition or fear, made a surrender of "their power and strength to the beast." The purposes for which this power was applied, have been formerly observed. The bishops of Rome deposed kings, transferred their dominions to others, absolved subjects from their oaths of allegiance, and prohibited their obedience; and, to crown all, they exercised their power for the murder of myriads of the human race, merely for refusing submission to doctrines repugnant to the scriptures, and at war with both the temporal and eternal interests of men. The apostle Paul had therefore good reason for announcing their approach

approach to be “after the working of Satan, with all power.”

But the coming of the man of sin was also to be accompanied with “signs and lying wonders.” Any person who reads the legendary lore of the Romish Church, will readily perceive to whom this prediction ought to be applied. Pretended miracles, the most absurd and ridiculous, have been sanctioned by that See, and palmed upon the credulous minds of the simple, as a confirmation of these doctrines which established its power.

The “doctrines of devils” is another particular attending the appearance of the man of sin. By consulting the original text, the R. will see, that it is the doctrine of demons; and, if he be at all acquainted with antiquity, he must know, that demons were not viewed by the ancients as a distinct order of beings, but as deified dead men, to whom divine honours ought to be paid. The coming of Antichrist, this apostle assures us, would be attended with a revival of this heathenish doctrine; and the canonization of saints and martyrs constitutes a material part of the fabric of the Romish Church.

But when St. Paul has mentioned the concomitant circumstances which mark the appearance of the man of sin, he has also delineated his character: “He exalteth himself above all

“ that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so
 “ that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God,
 “ showing himself that he is God.” The lan-
 guage and conduct of the Church of Rome will
 discover how appropriate these words are to the
 character of its bishops : “ The Lord our God
 “ the Pope, another God upon earth,” says
 one ; “ The Pope,” says another, “ is more
 “ than God ;” and says Clement VII. himself,
 “ As there is but one God in the heavens, so
 “ there cannot, nor ought to be of right, but
 “ one God upon earth.”

But the bishops of Rome have not been sa-
 tisfied with arrogating to themselves the titles
 which are peculiar to the Deity. They have
 usurped his authority, and even pretended to
 render him subservient to their inclinations.
 They have abrogated his laws, and commanded
 things which he has expressly prohibited. They
 have sold indulgences for the basest crimes, li-
 censed houses of debauchery in the very pre-
 cincts of their palaces, pretended to pardon sins
 authoritatively, and even claimed a controuling
 power over the invisible world : “ We com-
 “ mand the angels of paradise to introduce
 “ that soul into heaven,” said Clement VI.
 concerning these persons who died on their pil-
 grimage to Rome, during the year of jubilee.

Of the authority exercised by the man of sin,
 this apostle has specified two particulars, “ for-
 “ bidding

“ bidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.” Whether these be applicable to the bishops of Rome, let the R. judge. The celibacy of the clergy is one of the principal devices for the aggrandizement of that See. It has therefore been strenuously enjoined as an important precept of religion; as if the extinction of the human race were highly gratifying to God. Nor is the other precept of the man of sin less appropriate. The Church of Rome, like a skilful shepherd, has been aware how much the health of the simple flock depends upon the nature of their food; and therefore she has taken their feasting and fasting under her own direction. By long experience she has found, that restricting them to certain kinds of provender upon particular days produces a vast improvement of both the flesh and the wool, and fully repays for any extra labour which it occasions. Like other persons occupied in the pastoral life, she is a great observer of the influence of days upon the qualities of food; and having often seen that what is good and nourishing to-day, will to-morrow produce the rot and other deadly distempers, she has commanded to abstain from meats, agreeably, no doubt, to the direction of scripture, “ Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused.”

The

The R. must be surprised, that the apostle Paul could describe the future state of the Romish Church with such minute precision. To what cause can he refer his predictions, but to inspiration by the Spirit of God? Prophecy he must then acknowledge to be of vast use in religion; since it enables us to conclude, both that the Pope is Antichrist, and that the scriptures are the word of God.

By such evidence, the scriptures discover themselves to the rational mind, as the work of inspiration. The faith of the Christian, however, does not receive them upon this ground. A rational assent to the truth of scripture may be thus produced, but not a divine faith; for an assent must always be of the same kind with the principles upon which it is founded. Protestants, therefore, distinguish between faith and reason, and maintain, that there may be a rational persuasion of the inspiration of scripture where divine faith is wanting. To illustrate this, it may be observed, that faith is not merely a belief of the inspiration of the scriptures, but an acceptance of the doctrines which they exhibit. Upon rational principles, a person may believe the former, while he has never viewed the latter as adapted to his condition, or necessary to his happiness. The apostle Paul has, accordingly, assigned this as the cause why the doctrines of religion are rejected by rational men. “The na-
“ tural.

“ tural man receiveth not the things of the Spi-
 “ rit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him :
 “ neither can he know them, because they are
 “ spiritually discerned *.”

But the R. must not conclude, that, because Protestants have no infallible tradition, they can only have a rational belief. Though rational evidence can never be productive of divine faith, this may flow from the impressions which the scriptures themselves make upon the mind. The light and authority with which they are presented to the understanding of the Christian, produce his assent to them as the testimony of God. These accordingly are represented in scripture, as sufficient evidences for distinguishing the divine word from the language of false pretenders to inspiration ; “ How long shall this be in the
 “ heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea,
 “ they are prophets of the deceit of their own
 “ hearts ; who think to cause my people to for-
 “ get my name by their dreams, which they tell
 “ every man to his neighbour, as their fathers
 “ have forgotten my name for Baal. The pro-
 “ phet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream ;
 “ and he that hath my word, let him speak my
 “ word faithfully : what is the chaff to the wheat?
 “ saith the Lord. Is not my word like a fire?
 “ saith the Lord ; and like a hammer that break-
 “ eth the rock in pieces †?” The R. ridicules
 the

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

† Jer. xxiii. 26.—29.

the idea that the scriptures convey light and sensations to the mind, by which they may be known and felt to be the word of God. Were he to read them with a little more attention, he would be able to trace his merriment to his own ignorance. In David's days, the entrance of God's word not only gave light *, but appears to have been attended with such peculiar sensations, as made him account it sweeter than honey and the honey-comb †. The apostle Paul also seems to have imagined, that an exhibition of the word of God might be followed by such convictions of its truth, as to produce the exercise of divine faith : " My speech and my preaching was not
 " with the enticing words of man's wisdom, but
 " in demonstration of the Spirit and of power :
 " That your faith should not stand in the wis-
 " dom of men, but in the power of God ‡."

I am willing to grant, that the scriptures have never as yet produced these effects upon the R. But does he think the sun has no light, because his usefulness does not extend to the blind? Eyes are as necessary as light to make objects visible. A little attention to the doctrines of the gospel will teach him, that an exhibition of the truth produces faith, only where the understanding is prepared to receive it. On this account, the scriptures inculcate the necessity of an internal change by the operation of the Spirit, who
 is

* Psal. cxix. 130. † Psal. xiv. 10. ‡ 1 Cor. ii. 4. 5.

is there denominated “ the Spirit of wisdom and “ revelation in the knowledge of Christ.” He is also called the Spirit of faith; and so essentially requisite are his operations to produce the exercise of this grace, “ that no man can say “ that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy “ Ghost *.” In this manner, we Protestants are brought to believe the scriptures as the word of God.

It is some consolation to the R., if he be a stranger to this doctrine, that his case is not without precedent in the Church. “ Art thou “ a master in Israel,” said Christ to Nicodemus, “ and knowest not these things †?” Yet, as an instructor of the simple faithful, he ought to acquire at least a speculative knowledge of this point; for Christ seems to account it the only entrance to the possession of the blessings of the gospel: “ Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Ex- “ cept a man be born again, he cannot see the “ kingdom of God ‡.”

The absurdity of the R.’s own principles upon this subject can be very easily shewn him. “ It “ is only,” says he, “ by the infallible testimo- “ ny of the Church that we know the Scriptures “ to be the word of God.” Divine truth, he must confess, influences very powerfully the mind of the Christian. Let him then inform us, whether this influence proceeds from the truth

* 1 Cor. xii. 3. † John, iii. 10. ‡ Ver. 3.

truth, itself, or from the testimony of the Church. According to his views, a Papist must say, "My judgement is informed, and my affections elevated, by certain doctrines; not because they tend to produce such effects, but because the Church has declared them to be the word of God." On the contrary, the Protestant says, "The scriptures declare themselves to be the word of God, and represent themselves as producing these effects upon the mind. This I believe, because the clear and powerful manner in which the truth is proposed, will not permit me to doubt." By this, the R. will be helped to comprehend a particular, which seems to have puzzled him considerably, that is, how a person, who has never read the scriptures, may know the truths contained in them to be the word of God.

The R. must not consider this view of the powerful influence of the scriptures upon the soul as a new doctrine in the Church. Long inexperience of it may have rendered it obsolete among Papists; but our Lord and his apostles taught it, and the primitive Christians believed it. When Augustine was converted by reading in the epistle to the Romans, whether did his faith originate in the testimony of the Church, or in the force of truth? Had the R. perused the Fathers attentively, he would have seen them strenuous supporters of this Protestant doctrine.

At present, I will only refer him to that testimony, which experience induced Justin Martyr to give. “The Christian doctrine,” says he, “possesses a certain innate majesty, calculated both to terrify and allure the sinner; and it affords, to those persons who have embraced it, the most delightful ease *.”

The R. indeed attempts to prove, from the writings of Augustine, that the scriptures can be known to be the word of God, only by the testimony of the Church: “The Manicheans,” says he, “pretended that their founder, Manes, was an Apostle—’tis true his title was as good as that of the German Apostle. The Epistle of Manes begins thus:—*Manes the Apostle of J. Christ, by the providence of God the Father.* A man would be tempted to imagine that Luther had this epistle before him when he stiled, or rather dubbed himself, Evangelist at Wertemberg. To this Austin replies in his book against the Epistle, *chap. iv. I therefore ask who is this Manes? you will answer the Apostle of Jesus Christ. I do not believe it. Perhaps you will read the Gospel to me thence endeavouring to prove it. What if you had to reason with one, who does not believe the Gospel? what would you do if such an one should say unto you, I do not believe you? this reasoning of St. Austin, whatever con-* tempt

* Dial. cum Tryph.

“ tempt the Ex. or his friend Jortin, may have
 “ for his authority, is absolutely unanswerable
 “ and applies with the same force to any other
 “ innovator as to Manes. For how will this
 “ pretended reformer shew an infidel that he
 “ ought to believe the Gospel? he must of
 “ all necessity have recourse to the testimony
 “ of the Church, in whose hands he finds it,
 “ and if he denies the infallibility of her testi-
 “ mony, he leaves no infallible authority; on
 “ which, to rest his belief of the Gospel. Hence
 “ St. Austin says, in the course of his reasoning,
 “ *I would not believe the Gospel if the authority*
 “ *of the Church did not move me thereto. Why*
 “ *should I not obey them, (the Bishops) saying*
 “ *to me: do not believe Manes, whom I obeyed*
 “ *saying, believe the Gospel*.*”

The R. thinks the Popish mode of convinc-
 ing infidels much more conclusive than that
 used by Protestants. Let us then compare the
 two together, and observe the result. If an in-
 fidel inquire who was St. Paul, the Papist
 would reply, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Should
 this be doubted by the infidel, the Papist would
 refer him to the infallible testimony of the
 Church. But what answer would the Papist
 make, when the infidel disbelieved the doctrine
 of infallibility? He has no farther proofs by
 which he could convince his disbelieving judge-
 ment.

ment. One topic, however, remains, which, it must be confessed, possesses a powerful influence, and may produce wonderful effects. The Church of Rome, like other great orators, can appeal to the "feelings" of an infidel, when conviction cannot reach his judgement. When he disbelieves the doctrine of infallibility, the Papists can add, The Pope and the Inquisition have provided ample store of red-hot arguments, which never fail to terminate every shadow of doubt, either by the conversion or destruction of the unbeliever. But we Protestants go to work in a very different way. When an infidel disbelieves the inspiration of the writings of St. Paul, we refer him to the prophecies of that apostle, and prove the Pope Antichrist, in such a decisive manner, that he is unable to reply.

Though St. Augustine had actually viewed all faith as founded in the testimony of the Church, it by no means follows as a consequent, that his sentiments are just. The nature of truth or falsehood can never be changed by the most extensive authority. But the R. has entirely mistaken the scope of this Father's reasoning. Of this, I think, the manner of Augustine's conversion might have afforded him sufficient proof. He would have acted very inconsistently indeed, had he resolved his faith into the testimony of the Church, after having received such

such a convincing proof from the scriptures themselves. But a view of the scope of his reasoning will show, that he entertained no such sentiments.

When the disciples of Manes began to publish his absurdities, they found themselves opposed by the plain testimonies of the scriptures. It therefore became necessary for them to invalidate their authority ; and this they attempted, by charging them with falsification and corruption in those places which opposed their errors, and also by ridiculing the Church for believing without reason ; whereas they were ready to assign a reason for every doctrine, which they proposed for belief*. To these charges St. Augustine replied, “ That if such sentiments
“ were allowed, the divine authority of any
“ books must be entirely useless for the con-
“ demnation of errors. It would,” says he,
“ be much more consistent to reject the scrip-
“ tures entirely like the pagans, or the New
“ Testament with the Jews, than to acknow-
“ ledge in general the divinity of the books,
“ and yet reject these passages which opposed
“ their opinions. If there were any suspi-
“ cion of corruption, they ought to produce
“ more ancient and truer copies than what the
“ Church possessed †.” To show the absurdity of their conduct, he proceeds to take them
upon

* *Con. Faust. Lib. 11. c. 2.* † *Id. ibid.*

upon their own principles ; and he begins with the inscription of the epistle of Manes ; “ Manes, “ an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the providence “ of God the Father.” Of the apostleship of Manes, he puts them upon their proof ; and hopes they will not be angry with him, since they themselves had taught him not to believe any thing without reason. Should they refer him to the gospel, he tells them he disbelieves it ; and here he shews that proof fails them, because, according to their own principles, they had rejected authentic records as evidence, but at the same time, placed reason for the basis of their belief.

St. Augustine, it is evident, is showing his readers how the truth of any historical fact is to be ascertained. It is by reference to some record, whose authenticity is universally acknowledged ; and upon this principle he says, “ I “ would not believe the Gospel, unless the “ authority of the universal Church induced “ me.” The R., in quoting these words, has omitted the word “ universal,” that his readers might view the authority of the Church as the cause of Augustine’s belief. This Father, however, when permitted to speak for himself, rests his faith upon the “ universality” of the testimony. Having accordingly mentioned the authority of the “ universal” Church as the cause of his assenting to the authenticity of the gospels,

pels, he proceeds to shew, that he ought likewise to receive the Acts of the Apostles, "because," says he, "*universal* authority induces me*."

Had the R. paid a little attention to the reasoning of Augustine, he would have seen, that it is not the divinity of the doctrines of scripture which the testimony of the Church induced him to believe, but their authenticity, as writings of the persons to whom they are ascribed. The faith, therefore, of which he speaks, is not a belief which has the testimony of God for its basis: It is an assent to truth, founded on rational evidence; and no Protestant rejects the testimony of the Church in proving the authenticity of the books of the scriptures.

Before the R. write again upon this subject, I would advise him to extend his acquaintance with the scriptures. When a person designs to write against a book, he will find it of some use to have previously read it. He will by this time perceive, that he has not such a knack at inventing insoluble arguments, as he had flattered himself. But though he has failed as yet to destroy the authority of scripture, it is to be hoped that he will not desist from his attempts. The undertaking is arduous; but its accomplishment will produce him great renown. He will

* Con. Ep. Fundam. c. 5.

will then be able to boast of having done what all the enemies of revelation before him have been unable to effectuate.* In the mean time, let me suggest to him, in his present disappointment, a topic of consolation, which can scarcely fail to soothe a serious and reflecting mind. When he is perplexed with the crabbed and obscure writings of the apostles and evangelists, or when he is foiled in argument, let him think on the disinterested saying of a great maker of images, of whom honourable mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles, “ By this craft we “ have our wealth *.”

II. ON TRADITION.

THE Church of Rome is conscious, that if many of her opinions and practices were tried by the scriptures, they would be found inconsistent with the plainest principles of religion ; and therefore, she has sewed certain fig-leaves together for a covering to these things which might expose her to shame. As she would wish the world to believe this an old family-garment, she has dignified it with the name of tradition ; but being aware how little men are disposed to overlook a bad habit, merely on account of its antiquity, she has judged it requisite to give it another appellation, descriptive of

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* Acts, xix. 25.

its value; and on this account she has called it "the unwritten word of God." A rejection of any part of divine revelation being repugnant to both the duty and happiness of men, we Protestants ought to possess decisive evidence of the falsity of these claims upon which tradition is founded, since we have withheld our assent to this part of the Romish creed. In attaining such proof, very little trouble is requisite. A short view of what the R. has advanced on this subject will show us, that, instead of establishing the claims of tradition, he has merely bewildered himself in absurdity: It will discover his defence of tradition to be as inconclusive as his objections to the scriptures.

Before entering upon a discussion of this subject, it may be proper to remark, that the difference between Protestants and Papists does not consist in the latter adhering to tradition, and the former rejecting it entirely. The word tradition, in its proper acceptation, signifies any thing transmitted from one person to another; and therefore, it is as applicable to the scriptures, as any other part of the Romish creed. In many parts of the writings of the Fathers, these are accordingly called the tradition, as the R. must have observed, if he has ever perused them attentively. The difference between us consists in our opposite views about an "Oral" tradition, or certain verbal instructions, which

which Papists pretend to have received from the apostles. These we Protestants have rejected, for reasons which might stumble even the mind of a Papist. But, as the value of any thing and its usefulness are closely connected, we may observe what the R. can advance in its behalf.

The use of oral tradition is founded upon the supposed insufficiency of scripture, as a rule of faith and practice. This, according to the R., exhibits only a partial view of Christianity; and even that, in such a manner as to be of very little use to the greater part of readers. It remains, therefore, with oral tradition, to obviate the difficulties, and elucidate the obscurities of the scriptures; and also to present the Church with a view of the doctrines omitted by the inspired writers. “In the word of God transmitted to us,” says the R., “we find the intended sense of obscure passages *which the unlearned and the unsettled wrest to their own perdition*, as we learn from St. Peter speaking of St. Paul’s epistles, in which there are some things difficult to be understood,—2 Pet. iii. 16. Thus we know the manner of administering the sacraments; of instituting the ministers of the Church; of their different orders; the obligation of sanctifying the first day of the week Sunday, not the last Saturday, as ordered in the scriptures, which ordi-

“ nance of the Old Testament is no where cancelled in the New ; the necessity of baptizing infants ; of offering up prayers and supplications for the repose of departed souls *.”

When the R. produced this long catalogue of traditions, he forgot to shew, that they are actually apostolic. That would have completely terminated his contendings ; and therefore, he has prudently declined the undertaking. A few observations will suffice to shew him, that some of these doctrines, which he has specified as traditions, are very perspicuously taught in the scriptures ; while others originate merely in Popish prostitutions of religion.

Before proceeding to a review of his assertions, I would merely hint to him, that previous to his making such a bustle about the obscurity of scripture, he ought to have inquired more particularly, whether that originated in the language of inspiration, or in his own understanding. He appears to be considerably a stranger to the meaning of his own mother-tongue ; and how can he expect to understand the language of the scriptures ? In the above quotation, he considers an obscure passage, and one difficult to be understood, as phrases of the same import. A very little reflection will teach him, that a doctrine may not be easily comprehended, and yet be very perspicuously proposed. The
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* P. 56 57.

person who considers a mathematical demonstration, may at first find himself sadly puzzled; but when he has made himself master of the subject, he may admire it both for acuteness of reasoning, and perspicuity of arrangement; and studying mathematics by oral tradition, the R. himself must confess, would be entirely a new invention. Were the members of the Romish Church left to their own judgement and the scriptures, they would understand much more of them than would be consistent with the edification of the clergy. But the R. and his brethren, after perverting the minds of their hearers, raise a clamour, "There is a lion without;" and these re-echo, "I shall be slain in the streets."

Among the obscurities of scripture which oral tradition explains, the R. has classed "the manner of administering the sacraments." Of these Protestants have never been able to discover more than two in the scriptures: so that he might have placed the other five among his traditional doctrines. But if, from the obscurity of some parts of scripture, we have never been able to view these five as any thing else than Popish excrescences in religion, we have generally seen the mode of administering the other two pretty plainly taught. Nothing less than Popish ingenuity could have discovered obscurity in the scriptural account of the administration of bap-

tism by water, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. These attentive observers of tradition have, however, found out, that when this ordinance was dispensed by the apostles, they first made the water salt, and then greasy; and afterwards dipped a candle in it thrice, and divided it into four parts. But the peculiar excellence of this tradition is not restricted to an elucidation of the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism. It possesses infinite merit for explaining other obscure parts of the scriptures. Thus, for example, when the Ethiopian eunuch was converted, and wished this privilege of the Church, "See," said he to Philip, "here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized *?" Being only a young convert, and ignorant of the forms of religion, his language is very much calculated to mislead the unwary. But luckily for the Church, oral tradition teaches, that he meant or ought to have said, "Here are salt, oil, candles, and water, with dishes to mix and divide them sacramentally; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

Of the manner of administering the Lord's supper also, the scriptures afford us a very simple account: "The Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and

* Acts, viii. 36.

“ and said, Take, eat ; this is my body which
 “ is broken for you : this do in remembrance
 “ of me. After the same manner also he took
 “ the cup, when he had supped, saying, This
 “ cup is the new testament in my blood : this
 “ do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance
 “ of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and
 “ drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death
 “ till he come * :” and yet the R. places the
 manner of dispensing this ordinance among his
 doctrines of oral tradition. Because this ac-
 count, he would say, is obscure, defective, and
 radically erroneous, (the apostles not being very
 desirous to let the people know too much of the
 truth by their writings), we must recur to oral
 tradition for a more correct statement of facts ;
 and there we will learn what vestments are ne-
 cessary in saying mass ; how many crosses, curt-
 sies, and genuflections, the priest must make ;
 how the host must be elevated for the adora-
 tion of the simple faithful, and how he must
 give the bread to the laity, but reserve the cup
 to himself ; with many other particulars equally
 true and savoury.

By oral tradition, according to the R., the
 manner “ of instituting the ministers of the
 “ Church and their different orders” are also
 ascertained.

In the scriptures, we have a plain account of

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* 1 Cor. xi. 23.—26.

all the Church-officers, whose authority can be traced to divine appointment, and also of the manner of instituting ordinary teachers and rulers, by prayer and the imposition of hands; so that we consider a recurrence to tradition as totally unnecessary. Since the R. has placed the different orders of clergy which subsist in the Church of Rome, and the form of their institution, among his oral traditions, let him show, from the writings of the Fathers, that the present orders of clergy, and the manner of their ordination, are the same at present, as during the three first centuries.

“ In the same manner we know,” says he, “ the obligation of sanctifying the first day of the week Sunday, not the last Saturday, as ordered in the Scriptures, which ordinance of the Old Testament is no where cancelled in the New

Perhaps it never occurred to the R., that the observation of the “ seventh” day was a Jewish peculiarity, and consequently terminated with that dispensation. The moral obligation to observe one day in seven is taught in the fourth precept of the decalogue. It does not, however, follow, that this morality is restricted to any particular day, except by the appointment of God. If he, accordingly, observe the reason why the “ seventh” day was observed by the Jews, he will find the obligation peculiar to them :

them: "Remember that thou wast a servant
 " in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy
 " God brought thee out thence through a
 " mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm:
 " therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee
 " to keep the Sabbath-day*." The R. is mis-
 taken when he says that this ordinance of the
 Old Testament is no where cancelled in the
 New. When the apostle Paul illustrates the
 influence of the death of Christ upon the pec-
 uliarities of the Jewish worship, he expressly
 mentions the abrogation of the Sabbath:
 "Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances
 " that was against us, which was contrary to
 " us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to
 " his cross; and having spoiled principalities
 " and powers, he made a shew of them openly,
 " triumphing over them in it. Let no man,
 " therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or
 " in respect of an holy day, or of the new
 " moon, or of the "Sabbaths," which are a
 " shadow of things to come; but the body is
 " of Christ †." With respect to the institution
 of the first day of the week, both the language
 and conduct of the apostles can be exhibited
 as evidence of its being appropriated to divine
 worship. The scriptures assure us, that these
 primitive Christians assembled on that day for
 the express purpose of communicating and

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other

* Deut. v. 15.

† Col. ii. 14.—17.

other religious exercises * ; and to show that they viewed it as a season devoted to religion, they called it “ the Lord’s day †.”

By oral tradition only, he farther observes, we know “ the necessity of baptizing infants.”

The circumcision of the fore-skin of the heart, and the washing of regeneration, he must grant to be phrases of similar import. The apostle Paul accordingly teaches, that by Christian circumcision, we are to understand baptism : “ In whom also ye are circumcised with the cir-
“ cumcision made without hands, in putting off
“ the body of the sins of the flesh by the cir-
“ cumcision of Christ ; Buried with him in
“ baptism ‡.” It is, then, a conclusion tolerably natural, that all who had a right to circumcision under the Old Testament, possess the same claim to baptism under the New ; so that this doctrine is more plainly taught in scripture than he was at first aware.

The concluding article of this long catalogue of supposititious traditions is, “ offering up
“ prayers and supplications for the repose of
“ departed souls.”

The R. has at last hit upon a doctrine which no Protestant could ever find in the scriptures. Between the two boards of the Bible, it is not once mentioned ; and in the vast variety of prayers recorded there, it is not to be found.

But,

* Acts, xx. 7. † Lev. i. 10. ‡ Col. ii. 11. 12.

But, what must appear no less extraordinary to the R., and must convince him equally of the imperfection of the scriptures, and the necessity of oral tradition, there is the same silence about praying for the devil. Did it never occur to him that neither of these were duties of religion? But the discussion of this subject must be reserved till hereafter.

But the R. is not satisfied with this enumeration of traditionary articles. "On oral tradition," says he, "the divinity of J. Christ was always believed and publicly professed in the Church, on this principle the Arian heresy was condemned in the great Council of Nice: there is no text in Scripture, however expressive of the divinity of J. Christ, which the Arians did not elude by ingenious and artful explications; but the public faith of the Church, founded on the oral tradition of the Apostles, was not to be evaded*."

It is a pretty curious logical deduction to say, because the Arians were ingenious and artful, therefore the divinity of Christ is not plainly taught in the scriptures. He might say, with equal propriety, that truth is a nonentity, because ingenious quibblers can invent paradoxes. These absurdities, by which he endeavours to establish the doctrines of the Romish creed, discover the most palpable ignorance of the ancient

state of the Church. Though the universal consent of Churches might be used by the Fathers as an evidence against innovations, they were far from embracing it as the ground of their belief. St. Cyprian will show him, how the primitive Christians treated oral tradition : “ Whence comes this tradition ?” says he ; “ does it descend from the Lord’s authority ; or “ from the commands and epistles of the a- “ postles ? for those things are to be done which “ are there written :” and likewise, “ If it be “ commanded in the gospel, or in the epistles “ and acts of the apostles, then let this holy “ tradition be preserved *.” St. Jerome expressly contradicts his assertion respecting the divinity of Christ : “ As we deny not,” says he, “ the things which are written ; so we re- “ ject those which are not written. We believe “ that *God* was born of a virgin, because we “ read it ; we do not believe the marriage “ of Mary after her delivery, because we do “ not read it *.”

As yet, the R. has exhibited no real use for oral tradition. The scriptures completely answer all the purposes to which he has applied it. Let him recollect himself, whether there be no other valuable use to which it has been frequently appropriated in the Church of Rome. I am loth to accuse him of giving his readers an undigested

* Ep. 74.

† Adv. Helvid.

undigested view of the extensive utility of this excellent article of Popish belief. Truth, however, obliges me to declare, that he has forgotten some of the most important purposes for which the Church of Rome has employed it. To show him what might have been said upon this subject, I will mention one particular which he has entirely omitted.

One principal design of the Romish religion is, to abstract men from the world, or to abstract the world from men; for the R. will see, that according to Popish practices, the result is ultimately the same. This religion also supposes, that the rulers of the Church, being, as teachers of others, sufficiently mortified and weaned from worldly vanities, must be best qualified to fight against dangerous temptations; and therefore it has transferred them to the keeping of the wise and prudent. But as the greater part of men are much better acquainted with buying and selling, than simple transfer, and withal, exceedingly averse to intrust the clergy with too many carnal things, oral tradition has invented a most excellent expedient for promoting this great end of Popery. It has discovered, that some members of the Church, by performing certain exercises which they had no occasion to do, because the divine law would have been satisfied without them, may become righteous overmuch. Now oral tradition, and even

even common sense, shows, that this surplus of goodness, being of no use to the owners, and being also acquired by religion, must naturally revert to the Church; and, therefore, it has enjoined the clergy to open shop, and expend all such spare merit upon poor sinners, who have had no leisure nor inclination to provide themselves otherwise, in exchange for these worldly things which were hastening their ruin. Every person must grant the excellence of the scheme; and besides, extensive experience can demonstrate its usefulness. Had the R. only adverted to the former state of the Church, he would have seen how much the bowels of the clergy have been refreshed and replenished by substantial proofs of devotion, flowing entirely from this source.

The R., in discussing his doctrine of oral traditions, ought to have produced some proof of the apostolic origin of these taught in the Romish Church; especially as we Protestants have always maintained them to be merely Popish inventions. In comparing them with the principles laid down in the writings of the apostles, we find the most glaring inconsistency between them. These ancient propagators of the Christian religion make no mention of the celibacy of the clergy, the use of grease and other filth in baptism, nor the necessity of holy water for sanctifying the Church. They never
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inform their readers, that the Holy Ghost may be purchased ; nor direct them to pay the clergy for pardons, indulgences, and the extra merit of the saints. Their works exhibit no marks of veneration for relics. They reveal no purgatory, nor enjoin prayers for the dead ; nor do they command the worship of saints and images : and yet all these are doctrines of the Romish Church. Besides, a view of ecclesiastical history shows us, that these corruptions of religion originated in the vices of the clergy. Having contracted a stronger relish for sensual gratifications than the refinements of religion, they gradually invented such baits for rendering the superstitious and credulous subservient to their views. The R. indeed refers his readers to the infallibility of the Church, as a sufficient proof of the truth of tradition ; but this doctrine also remains unproven ; and therefore it can be of no use in the case before us. The faith of the Church of Rome, then, rests upon a very curious foundation. A Papist who is asked about the ground of his belief, can only reply, “ There is an oral tradition in the Church, that the apostles left certain oral traditions ; and there is also an oral tradition in the Church, that these oral traditions are the very oral traditions now taught by the clergy.”

But, though all the infallibility for which the R. contends be admitted, there still remains a difficulty

difficulty which he ought to obviate. Can the doctrine of infallibility reconcile contradictions? How does he account for the opposition which subsists between scripture and the present oral traditions of the Romish Church? The scriptures say, that a bishop must be the husband of one wife, the Church of Rome has declared the marriage of the clergy unlawful: the former gives the cup to the laity, the latter with-holds it: in the scripture the worship of images is forbidden, but in the Romish Church idolatry is a truth of the Catholic faith. Many other instances of a similar kind might be adduced, if necessary. Whether does the R. think, that such contradictions originated with the apostles or the Church? Did the former preach one doctrine, and write another? or does the Church teach for doctrines the commandments of men?

After obviating these objections, let him, upon the principle of infallibility, account for the variation of the traditions of one age from these of another. The Church of Rome, during the first ages, did not receive the epistle to the Hebrews; but tradition afterwards varied, and it was admitted into the canon of scripture. After fifteen centuries had elapsed, the Council of Trent found tradition erroneous in rejecting certain books as apocryphal, and therefore received them as writings of inspiration. In the
primitive

primitive ages, the clergy were permitted to follow apostolic direction and example in the article of marriage; what became afterward the doctrine of the Church, the R. knows. Formerly, the necessity for infants partaking of the Lord's supper was taught by the Church of Rome; now all the asserters of this doctrine are declared accursed. When he has given a satisfactory account of these contradictions, it will not be difficult to provide him with a fresh supply.

Though the R. has carefully avoided these troublesome particulars, he has attempted to produce both precept and example for his traditional mode of teaching Christianity. "The intelligent reader," says he, "need not be informed, that the book of Genesis was written by Moses one of Abraham's descendents, some 400 years after the death of that patriarch in whose time we know of no Scripture; and all who believed in God, and served him, must have founded their faith and practice on the unwritten word of God, what we call oral tradition*."

When he was giving this view of the foundation of the faith and practice of these patriarchs, he has overlooked one particular, to which, for the sake of his intelligent readers, he ought to have adverted. If these ancient believers had no scriptures

* P. 126.

scriptures to direct them, they received from God repeated intimations of his will, by which the truths of religion were unfolded to them, and freed from that rust in which traditional articles of antiquity are frequently involved. Before the R., therefore, can exemplify the present state of the Romish Church by the situation of these patriarchs, he must produce a regular series of revelations from God, by which her oral traditions have been preserved in purity. If he wish to find a parallel case, he must recur to the state of the Jews in the days of our Saviour. At that period, like the Romish Church, they had both scripture and a long catalogue of traditional doctrines. How far the parallel between them runs, he may learn from the words of Christ: "Ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition *."

A similar reply may be given to the example which he has produced from the New Testament. It is true, as he affirms, that the gospel was preached in the Church before the New Testament was written. But it was preached by men possessing the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit of God, which, he must confess, constituted an excellent antidote against the introduction of error by such a mode of teaching. Should he produce here his plea of infallibility in behalf of the Church of Rome and her traditions, he has

* Matth. xv. 6.

has only to recollect, that he has not yet proven its existence; for God has not borne her witness, as he did the apostles, “with signs and wonders, and with diverse miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost*.”

In behalf of oral tradition, the R. likewise attempts to produce precept from the scriptures. “Why does the Apostle,” says he, “strictly command the Thessalonians to hold fast the oral traditions, which they had received from him: *Wherefore brethren, stand and hold fast, the traditions, which you have been taught, whether by word or by our Epistle. 2. Thess. ii. 15.* The Apostle not only thought but taught expressly that the Scriptures were not sufficient, when he ordered them to hold fast what they had learnt by oral tradition as well as what they had read in the Scriptures †.”

Will the R. specify the traditions delivered orally to the Thessalonians, that Protestants may dutifully receive them? Though the apostle Paul enjoined the former to receive his traditions, the R. must not from this deduce the duty of the latter to submit to these of the Romish Church. It will be necessary for him previously to show, that the Church of Rome is equally qualified to deliver the doctrines of religion orally, and can prove, in the same manner, (by the performance of miracles), that her oral traditions are sanctioned

* Heb. ii. 4.

† P. 95.

tioned by God. Does he think it conclusive reasoning to say, Because this apostle delivered traditions, and the Romish Church have traditions, therefore, they are exactly the same. He might affirm with equal propriety, that because Protestants and Papists both profess religion, their sentiments and practices are similar ; or because all men worship, there is no difference among them, though one worship God, and another the devil.

From the words of this apostle it may be inferred, that he both preached the gospel and wrote to the Thessalonians, and likewise, that his sermons and epistles were equally binding ; but how the R. draws from them, that he preached one doctrine and wrote another, it would be difficult to discover. He ought also to have recollected the Protestant doctrine, that some precepts of scripture, from their very nature, are obligatory only upon these persons to whom they were at first addressed ; while others extend to the Church in all ages. The Thessalonians were certainly obligated to hold fast what the apostle Paul had taught them orally, because his language was dictated by the Spirit of God. But the Church is no more bound to receive their traditions, than to bring Paul's cloak from Troas, or Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey.

Before leaving this subject, let me compliment

ment the R. upon his critical ingenuity, in discovering the true sense of obscure words in the scriptures. When the apostle Jude exhorted the Church "to contend earnestly for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints *," Protestants imagined a suitable appearance in behalf of the doctrines of the scriptures sufficient; but the R. has discovered, that the Greek word, which we translate delivered, possesses a very different meaning. "The Greek terms," says he, "signify the faith once delivered by oral tradition to the saints †." The excellence of this critical observation consists, not merely in its ascertaining the meaning of the apostle Jude, but in its elucidating many obscure passages of scripture, in which the same Greek word occurs. For the reader's conviction, a few examples may be produced.

Mat. xvii. 22.—The Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men by oral tradition.

John vii. 64.—Jesus knew from the beginning who should deliver him by oral tradition.

John xiii. 2.—The devil put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to deliver him by oral tradition.

The R. has certainly great merit in discovering the devil to be the father of oral tradition, and Judas a type of the Romish Church. We Protestants have never entertained a very high opinion

* Ver. 2.

† P. 57.

opinion of the religion of the devil, and therefore we have rejected this part of the Romish creed.

Had the R. taken an unprejudiced view of the state of the Church of Rome, he would not have defended her oral traditions so keenly. They have been foisted into religion, merely to support a system of principles repugnant to both scripture and reason. A view of ecclesiastical history would have also shewn him, that the Fathers, the canon-law, and even the most judicious divines among Papists, have rested the faith of the Church upon scripture, to the utter rejection of all oral traditions.

“ Because this has no authority from the scriptures,” says Jerome, “ it is as easily condemned as produced *.”

“ We have received,” says Ireneus, “ a knowledge of the plan of our salvation, from these persons who first preached it, and afterwards, by the command of God, delivered it in the scriptures, that they might be the foundation and pillar of our faith †.”

“ In the plain places of scriptures,” says Augustine, “ are found all those things which respect faith or practice ‡.”

If the R. next turn his attention to the canon-law, he will find it a strenuous supporter of
Protestant

* Com. in Mat. c. 23.

† Lib. 3. c. 1.

‡ De Doct. Christ. Lib. 2. c. 9.

Protestant principles. “ If any one command
 “ what God has forbidden, or forbid what God
 “ has commanded, he is to be accursed of all
 “ that love God : And, if he require any thing,
 “ beside the will of God, or what God has evi-
 “ dently required in scripture, he is to be con-
 “ sidered as a false witness of God and a sacri-
 “ legious person *.”

Were it requisite, a multitude of quotations to the same purpose might also be produced from the most celebrated divines of the Romish Church. At present, I will refer the R. only to two ; assuring him at the same time, that many more await him, should he question the sufficiency of these.

“ Let no one dare,” says Gerson, “ to speak
 “ any thing concerning religion, but what is de-
 “ livered to us in the scriptures ; because these
 “ have been delivered to us as a sufficient and
 “ infallible rule for the whole Church, to the
 “ end of time ; and whatever doctrine is not
 “ conformable to them, is to be rejected as ei-
 “ ther heretical, suspicious, or impertinent to
 “ religion †.”

“ Those things,” says Aquinas, “ which de-
 “ pend on the will of God, can be known to us
 “ in no other way than as they are delivered in
 “ the

* Caus. II. q. 3. c. 101.
 consid. I.

† Exam. Doct. p. 2.

“ the scriptures ; for it is by them that we are
 “ made acquainted with the divine will *.”

Though the R.'s sentiments appear at first view to oppose these authorities, they coincide more exactly than an unwary reader may be apt to suspect. By exercising his critical talents, he has traced oral tradition to a very diabolical source. He has shewn, by plain scriptural evidence, that the devil put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot ; and therefore, since it can have nothing in common with scripture, he should be willing to return it to the father of lies. “ De-
 “ livering Christ by oral tradition” has never been attended with much satisfaction to any person who has attempted it. Judas, the great predecessor of the Romish Church, repented very severely ; and the experience of such an eminent doctor should have its own weight with the R. Teachers of oral tradition may for some time thrive by their trade, and be able, like Judas, to purchase a field with their earnings † ; but this doctrine, we are assured in scripture, is always tending to the place from which it at first proceeded : “ For this cause, God shall send
 “ them strong delusion, that they should believe
 “ a lie ; That they all might be damned, who
 “ believed not the truth, but had pleasure in
 “ unrighteousness ‡.”

CHAP.

* 3. Q. 1. a. 3. in C.

† Acts, i. 18.

‡ 2 Thess. i. 11. 12.

C H A P. VII.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE POPIISH VIEWS OF
THE LORD'S SUPPER.

AMONG the various means which Christ has appointed for promoting the great ends of religion, is the sacrament of the Supper. Sensible of the wants of his people, and how much they need the comforts of a father's house, he has established this ordinance, that he might afford them an earnest of the consolations of mercy, and elevate their expectations to that fulness of joy which is in the presence of God. In the Christian Church there has accordingly subsisted a general persuasion of its utility; and upon the ground of his authority it continues to be dispensed. But though there has been a general coincidence of sentiment respecting its usefulness and the warrant to dispense it, the most contradictory views have been taken of its nature, and of the uses to which it ought to be applied. Upon these points the Romish Church has maintained the most extravagant notions, as well as employed the institution itself for the basest and most unscriptural purposes. As the R. has appeared in defence of her views and conduct, it

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will be requisite to afford his assertions a short examination.

Of the institution of the Lord's Supper, we have an account in the first epistle to the Corinthians: "The Lord Jesus, the same night
 " in which he was betrayed, took bread: And
 " when he had given thanks, he brake it, and
 " said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is
 " broken for you; this do in remembrance of
 " me. After the same manner also he took the
 " cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup
 " is the new testament in my blood: this do ye,
 " as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.
 " For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink
 " this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he
 " come *."

From these words it appears, that the dispensation of this ordinance is attended with a consecration of the elements. This, according to Papists, occurs, when the priest uses the words of Christ, "this is my body, this is my blood." Their opinion, however, is repugnant to both scripture and antiquity. The Lord's Supper is dispensed to the Church in the form of a common repast, which, according to the appointment of God and the practice of good men, is set apart for the support of the body by an address to the Father of mercies: "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused,

* 1 Cor. xi. 23.—26.

“ sed, if it be received with thanksgiving : For
 “ it is sanctified by the word of God and
 “ prayer.” The word of God authorises the
 use of it ; and it is consecrated or set apart by
 prayer and thanksgiving. In the same manner,
 St. Jerome informs us, consecration takes place
 in the Lord’s supper : “ Upon the prayer of the
 “ presbyters,” says he, “ the body and blood
 “ of Christ is made *.”

The Popish view of the consecration of the
 elements is intended as a preparatory introduc-
 tion to the grand doctrine of transubstantiation,
 which the Romish Church has grafted upon the
 plain and simple ordinance of the Supper. This
 the Council of Trent have defined to be, “ a
 “ wonderful conversion of the whole substance
 “ of the bread in this holy sacrament into the
 “ whole substance of the body of Christ, and of
 “ the whole substance of the wine into his blood,
 “ the species or accidents of the wine only re-
 “ maining † :” And this the Roman Catechism
 affirms to be the very same body which was born
 of the virgin, and now sits in heaven at the right
 hand of the Father ‡. A similar view of tran-
 substantiation is given by the R. : “ In the pub-
 “ lic sacrifice of the mass,” says he, “ J. Christ
 “ was believed to be really present, and offered
 “ up to his eternal father under the appearance

M 2

“ of

* Ep. 85. ad Evagr.

† Sess. 13. c. 4. & Can. 2.

‡ Cat. ad. Par. p. 2.

“ of bread and wine—*.” Religion has been generally supposed to contain doctrines above the comprehension of reason; but the Romish Church has the merit of discovering, that these may contradict each other, without a deviation from truth.

Before proceeding to an examination of the R.’s sentiments, it may be proper to observe, that the dispute between Protestants and Papists is not, whether Christ be absent or present in the ordinance of the Supper. We Protestants have always acknowledged his presence in the eucharist, though we have not been able to believe that the eucharist is Christ. We are persuaded, that, like the first communicants at the Lord’s table, all succeeding disciples, believing the promises of the gospel, enjoy intercourse with him, and partake of his beneficence in this ordinance: “ The cup of blessing which we
 “ bless, is it not the communion of the blood of
 “ Christ? the bread which we break, is it not
 “ the communion of the body of Christ †?” The presence of Christ we do not, however, view as at all peculiar to this institution. Wherever the ordinances of religion are dispensed, and its services performed according to divine appointment, he has pledged his presence and his blessing: “ In all places where I record my
 “ name,

* P. 58.

† 1 Cor. x. 16.

“ name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee *.”

But Papists have not been satisfied with the presence of Christ in the eucharist. To meet their views, he must not only be present, but formed out of bread and wine by the consecration of a priest. No sooner does the priest pronounce certain words, than the nature of these elements is changed, and they become that very body which was born of the virgin Mary : And what is no less extraordinary, this change is entirely dependent on the priest's intention. Though he repeat the words of consecration a thousand times, if he do not wish to bestow Christ's body and blood upon the members of the Church, they can only receive bread and wine, and must remain unconscious of the wickedness of their clergyman and their want of Christ, till purgatory or hell make them feel the imposition.

The Council of Trent have, with great propriety, declared transubstantiation to be a “ wonderful” conversion. It never fails to beget admiration in Protestants, as well as Papists. If we cannot admire the conversion, we wonder most amply at the amazing credulity of Papists in believing it. For this we have been branded with the name of heretics, an epithet which stinks like carrion in the nostrils of the simple faithful ; and, by a natural association of ideas,

M 3

reminds

* Exod. xx. 24.

reminds them of the necessity of very "forcible" arguments for removing incredulity. Such a mode of reasoning, I am afraid, would hurt our feelings; for though we be much addicted to argumentation, we are far from being attached to that species of it which is most frequently used by the Romish Church, and which logicians have learnedly denominated "argumentum ad hominem." Besides, we are not obstinate heretics: If the R. would solve our doubts, by directing his arguments to our understanding, it would serve the same purpose, and perhaps prepare the way for our return into the bosom of the Church. To afford him an opportunity of shewing his zeal for the instruction of unbelieving Protestants, I will mention a few of those reasons which have induced us to reject transubstantiation; and when these are answered, a more comprehensive view of the subject may be taken.

According to the R., there remains only the appearance of bread and wine in the eucharist, but the real substance is the body and blood of Christ, and therefore, we are not to consider the eye as a proper judge in this part of religion. I perfectly agree with him, that we are apt to be deceived by appearances; and that trusting to the eye-sight in religion may be attended with dangerous consequences. But perhaps some of the other senses may be more
useful

useful for affording us a knowledge of the truth. When a person questions the correctness of his eye, he naturally attempts to feel the object which has engaged his attention. If that do not satisfy him, he may apply it to his nose; and if he have much curiosity, he may even put it in his mouth. Will the R., then, inform us, if what has the appearance of bread and wine possess either the taste, smell, or feeling of flesh and blood? But probably he reckons these among the deceitful appearances which objects may assume. The learned Fathers of the Council of Trent tell us as much, when they affirm, that the species or accidents of the bread and wine remain; that is, there is no change in these qualities, by which one object is distinguished from another. This is in other words to say, that the bread and wine remain; for the existence of matter in any particular form depends entirely on its combination with certain accidents or qualities. Let the R. conceive to himself, what bread or wine would be, were they deprived of the qualities on account of which they receive these appellations. On both sides the argument is against him. If he say, that these elements are no longer bread and wine, how do they possess all the qualities which distinguish these from every other object in nature? If he say that they are flesh and blood,

how are they destitute of those qualities which constitute their distinguishing characteristic?

But another difficulty no less puzzling remains to be solved. How does the R. suppose the existence of accidents or qualities without a subject? Can he conceive the existence of colours, unconnected with matter? or a taste and smell, without any object to be tasted and smelt? And yet the Romish Church maintains the existence of qualities, when the subject with which they were connected no longer remains.

As a reply to these objections, the R. may refer us to the duty of believing, and say, because religion inculcates this doctrine, we ought not to permit philosophical distinctions to pervert our minds. Let him then inform us, how religion can be established on the destruction of reason. If he has ever reflected on the grand purposes for which the former is designed, he must have seen, that one of these is to repair the ravages of sin, by restoring to man the right use of his intellectual faculties. Can religion, then, enjoin any thing diametrically opposite to the plainest dictates of reason? As long as reason, taught by experience, says, this is bread and wine, faith will never be able to make it flesh and blood.

Averse as Papists are to rational distinctions in religion, they were very much used by those Fathers, of whom they pretend to be conscientious

tious followers. By looking into the writings of a few of them, the R. will see whether Protestants or Papists teach the doctrine of the primitive Church.

“ We cannot,” says Ireneus, “ understand water without moisture, nor fire without heat, nor a stone without hardness ; for these are so united, that they must always co-exist *.”

“ If you distinguish figure from body,” says Basil, “ you act contrary to nature ; for the one must always be understood in connection with the other †.”

“ It is monstrous,” says Augustine, “ and notoriously false, to say, that what would not exist at all, unless it were in a subject, should be able to exist when the subject ceases to be ‡ ;” and likewise, “ When the subject is changed, every thing in it is necessarily changed ||.”

If the R. apply these observations of the Fathers to the eucharist, he must either grant that the bread and wine remain, or totally reject the testimony of his senses, and say, that these elements have neither the form, taste, nor smell of bread and wine, but all the qualities which belong to flesh and blood.

But, though he may be willing to bid adieu to his senses, he ought to retain a little respect

M 5

for

* Lib. 2. c. 14. † Ep. 43. ‡ Soliloq. Lib. 2. c. 12. || De Immortal. Anim. c. 5.

for the language of the scriptures. Obscure and crabbed as they are, they exhibit some truths with tolerable perspicuity. Among others, they teach us to reject the doctrine of transubstantiation; they instruct us to call the bread and wine, even after consecration, by their former names: “As often as ye eat this *bread*,
“ and drink this *cup*, ye do shew the Lord’s
“ death till he come.”

Perhaps a recurrence to the original institution of the Supper may have a farther tendency to elucidate this subject. The first dispensation of this ordinance was by Christ himself, who then said to his disciples, “Take, eat; this is
“ my body.” Now, though we can easily conceive how he could give them bread and wine, it must require extraordinary exertions of mind to believe, that the very body born of the virgin Mary held itself in its own hand, and gave itself out of its own hand. The disciples would, without doubt, be astonished, when Christ’s body became invisible, by passing into the elements; nor would their surprise be diminished, when they were addressed by him under the appearance of bread and wine.

But, if Christ was eaten and digested by these primitive communicants, let the R. inform us, with what body he was afterward crucified. The dissolution of a body, and its non-existence as a body, are synonymous expressions. There

was, therefore, some reason in the reply of a young son of the Church, who was asked, after he had been at mass, how many Gods there were? None, says he, for there was but one yesterday, and I ate him.

But, granting that the bread and wine became Christ at the institution of the last Supper, it is difficult to comprehend how this can again occur in the Christian Church. According to the scriptures, our Lord has ascended bodily into heaven, and will remain there “till the times of the restitution of all things*.” Will the R. show the consistency of this account with transubstantiation? Pure and holy as he exhibits the Romish Church, her mode of treating heretics discovers her to be still the Church militant. Upon what principle, then, does she claim the bodily presence of Christ?

As the Church of Rome has left reason and common sense behind her upon this subject, the R. may probably reply, that a body can be in different places at the same time. Will he, then, inform us, if he can prove his assertion by experience, by scripture, or by any other body in the universe? As it must please him exceedingly to observe Protestants quoting the Fathers, I will show him how Augustine has illustrated this point. “Christ,” says he, “having said thus, ascended immediately into heaven;

M 6

“and

* Acts, iii. 21.

“ and would precaution us against those who,
 “ as he foretold, should arise in succeeding ages,
 “ and say, *Lo, here is Christ, or lo, there* ;
 “ whom he warned us not to believe. Nor can
 “ we have any excuse, if we believe them, con-
 “ trary to the voice of our pastor, so clear,
 “ open, and manifest * :” And also, “ Christ,
 “ in his bodily presence, cannot be in the sun,
 “ in the moon, and on the cross, at the same
 “ time †.” If this Father does not call transub-
 stantiation an absurdity, he gives pretty broad
 hints of it.

But, supposing it possible that the body of
 Christ could exist in different places at once,
 how does the R. account for its being contained
 in so small a space as the least particle of the
 sacramental wafer? Nazianzen, with great pro-
 priety, observes, that a vessel which is filled
 with one measure, can never contain two.
 When the R. gives implicit belief to this part
 of Popish doctrine, he ought to take into consi-
 deration the words of Fulgentius: “ Every
 “ thing remains as it has received its existence
 “ from God ; one in this manner, and another
 “ in that ; for it is not given to bodies to exist
 “ in the same manner as spirits ‡.”

But, overlooking this point entirely, there
 remains another difficulty which he ought to
 obviate.

* De Unit. Eccles. c. 10. † Cont. Faust. Lib. 20.
 c. 11. ‡ De Fid. ad Petr. c. 3.

obviate. Though the nature of the bread and wine be changed, the Church of Rome acknowledges no alteration in the body of Christ. This we Protestants have always believed to bear some resemblance to the bodies of other men : “ Handle me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh “ and bones as ye see me have *.” Did the R. ever find any of these in the eucharist? Some have been known to find farthings among Popish wafers, and some poison ; if the R. have any thing else to show, he can produce his proof.

From all such objections the R. attempts to shelter himself in universal and uninterrupted tradition : “ The universal practise of all Christian Churches in all ages invariably the same “ before the reformation, shews the sense in “ which the Apostles understood the words of “ institution, and the sense in which they taught “ them, that is, the plain, obvious, and literal “ sense, as they were always understood in the “ Christian Church †.” In proof of this universality, he has produced the sentiments of the Council of Lateran in 1215. If he think it any advantage to his cause, I will admit transubstantiation to have been then the general doctrine of the Romish Church. Pope Gregory the Great had long before announced the approach of Antichrist ; so that we might naturally expect,
about

* Luke, xxiv. 39.

† P. 59.

about this time, to find such doctrines flourishing. The R.'s other testimonies, however, will not be so readily received.

His next proof is from the acts of the first Council of Nice: "Here in the divine table
 " let us not be abjectly intent on the bread and
 " cup exposed to view: but elevating our
 " minds by faith let us understand that the
 " Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of
 " the world, is placed on the sacred table; that
 " he is, in an unbloody manner, sacrificed by
 " the Priests; and that we truly receiving his
 " precious body and blood believe them to be
 " the symbols of our resurrection; for this we
 " don't receive much but little, that we may
 " know that they are not received to satiety, but
 " to sanctification*."

The R. must have been sadly puzzled to find proof for transubstantiation, when he rests it on these words. When these Fathers said, "Let us not be abjectly intent on the bread and cup exposed to view," they seem to have imagined that something more than the bare appearance of these elements remain. In order to have discovered due orthodoxy, they ought to have said, Let us not be abjectly intent on the appearance of bread and wine exposed to public adoration.

In the opinion of these Fathers, faith also is
 requisite

requisite in communicating. Now Papists maintain, that Christ's body and blood are present in the eucharist, not by faith as a mean, but by the consecration of a priest; so that, in communicating, persons with or without faith are on a level. Can the R. then show us the use of faith for receiving a corporeal object? Augustine assures us, that the corporeal presence of Christ is utterly incompatible with the exercise of believing: "Christ," says he, "is always with us by his divinity; but, unless he were corporeally absent from us, we should always carnally see his body, and should never spiritually believe*." "Therefore," says he in another place, "our Lord absented himself from every Church, and ascended into heaven, that our faith may be edified; for, if thou know nothing but what thou seest, where is thy faith †?" Should the R. say, that the faith of a communicant is exercised in believing the elements no longer bread and wine, but the body and blood of Christ, he must believe without either testimony or evidence. For when these Fathers said, "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world is placed upon the sacred table," they forgot to add, "corporeally." But St. Ambrose goes farther, he affirms that they must believe a falsehood; for, says he, addressing the

* De Verb. Dom. Serm. 60. † De Temp. Serm. 140.

the Saviour, “ Ascend, that we may follow
 “ thee with our minds, whom we cannot see
 “ with our eyes. St. Paul has taught us how
 “ we should follow thee, and where we may
 “ find thee; *Seek those things which are above,*
 “ *where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.*
 “ Therefore, we ought not to seek thee upon
 “ the earth, nor in the earth, nor according to
 “ the *flesh*, if we would find thee *.” This
 Father likewise calls the sacrament of the Sup-
 per an unbloody sacrifice. If, then, Christ’s
 body be broken, and his blood poured out in
 the eucharist, let the R. explain how it receives
 this appellation.

His last proof of transubstantiation is from
 the acts of the passion of St. Andrew. “ And
 “ what,” says he, “ does this Ex. think of the
 “ testimony of the disciples of the great St. An-
 “ drew, who wrote the acts of his martyrdom
 “ at which they were present? they tell us that
 “ the Apostle ordered by the Pro-consul *Ægeas*
 “ to sacrifice to the Gods, replied, *I sacrifice*
 “ *every day the immaculate Lamb to the Almighty*
 “ *God Who tho’ truly sacrificed and his*
 “ *flesh truly eaten by the people, perseveres entire.*
 “ When the Pro-consul desirous of knowing
 “ how ’twas possible that the Lamb could be
 “ eaten and yet remain living and entire, threat-
 “ ened to force the Apostle to explain to him
 “ this

* Comment. in Luc. 24.

“ this mystery of religion, St. Andrew replied
“ *that 'twas not possible to come to a knowledge of*
“ *this mystery without faith in Christ.* If the
“ bread and wine, as innovators pretend, had
“ been simply received in commemoration of
“ the death of Christ, there was nothing more
“ easy than to tell him, that 'twas not the Lamb
“ itself that was eaten but the figure of the Lamb,
“ which any man possessed of common sense
“ would have understood on the exposition.
“ The authenticity of this testimony has never
“ been disputed, nor has the writer ever heard
“ of any attempt made by innovators to elude
“ the force of it. This is a specimen of that
“ tradition by which Catholics evince the truth
“ of their doctrine *.”

If the stock be like the sample, Papists have very little reason indeed to boast of the foundation of their faith. The R.'s invincible argument consists entirely in his own ignorance, when he says, “ The authority of this testimony
“ has never been disputed.” Protestants have no need to elude the force of an argument which has been given up by the most learned Popish doctors. To teach him the propriety of reading a little when he engages in controversy, I will introduce him to a Popish writer, whose works have received the approbation of the doctors of the Sorbonne, and of the doctors of divinity

* P. 80. 81.

vinity of the Faculty of Paris. “ Men are divided in their censures upon the Acts of the Passion of St. Andrew, written by the priests of Achaia, which are inserted in the History of the Saints, published by Surius. Baronius, Bellarmine, and some other critics of the Church of Rome, admit them as authentic; *but they are rejected by many.* The ancient ecclesiastical writers knew no other records of St. Andrew, than these that were corrupted by the Manicheans, mentioned by St. Augustine, Philastrius, and Pope Innocent; and which are reckoned by Pope Gelasius among the number of apocryphal books. But it is certain, that these were different from them of which we are speaking. It is also evident, that the last Acts of the Passion of St. Andrew have been cited by none but authors who lived since the seventh or eighth century, as by Remigius Altissiodorensis, Petrus Damianus, Lanfrank, St. Bernard, and Ivo Carnutensis; which is the reason why we have no assurance of their being very ancient. The mystery of the Trinity is not only explained in these, after such a manner as gives us reason to suspect, that he who wrote them lived after the Council of Nice; but they contain also the error of the modern Greeks, in affirming that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father, and remains in the Son. It

“ is

“ is indeed objected, that there are manuscripts
 “ in which these words are not expressed ; but
 “ who knows whether they have not been omit-
 “ ted in some, rather than inserted in others.
 “ Therefore, this history ought at least to be es-
 “ teemed a dubious writing, *which cannot be ap-
 “ plied, as St. Jerome declares, to prove any doc-
 “ trine of faith* *.” And what does the R.
 himself now think of the testimony of the dis-
 ciples of the great St. Andrew? “ This is a
 “ specimen of that tradition by which Catholics
 “ evince the truth of their doctrine.”

Had the R. taken an impartial view of the writings of the Fathers, he would have learnt, that tradition, as well as scripture, opposes the Popish notion of transubstantiation. These ancient writers, it will be granted, have frequently called the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ ; and in doing so, they are authorised by the expressions of scripture. But it is evident from their writings, that they never supposed any change in these elements. On the contrary, they represent the Lord’s Supper merely as a symbolical mode of exhibiting truth to the mind, which, by divine appointment, is connected with the presence of Christ in the power of his Spirit. They accordingly considered baptism as an ordinance of the same kind, and equally connected with the presence of Christ ;

as

* Du Pin Hist. Eccles. Tome 1. p. 42.

as the R. may observe by the following quotations.

“ O Christ,” says St. Ambrose, “ we find thee in thy sacraments *.”

“ Now,” says Augustine, “ thou hast Christ by faith ; now by the sign of Christ ; now by the sacrament of baptism ; now by the meat and drink of the altar †.”

“ Thou shalt presently embrace our Lord himself,” says Chrysostom to one about to be baptized, “ be mingled with his body, be incorporated into that body which is seated above ‡.”

But the Fathers have not represented Christ as only present in baptism. In this ordinance, Christians are likewise said to be partakers of his body and blood : “ The Gentiles,” says Cyril of Alexandria, “ could not have shaken off their blindness, and contemplated the divine and holy light, unless, by holy baptism, they had been made partakers of his holy flesh ||,” &c.

“ Neither need any one in the least doubt,” says Fulgentius, “ that every believer is then made a partaker of Christ’s body and blood, when he is made, in baptism, a member of Christ’s body §.”

As.

* Apol. David. c. 12.

† In Joan. Tract. 50.

‡ In Mat. Hom. 50.

|| In Jean. ix. 6.

§ De Bap. t. Æthiop.

As the R. appears so much attached to the Fathers, it may be gratifying to him to hear their sentiments concerning the nature of the eucharist. I will therefore produce a few quotations from their writings, which he may explain in his next treatise on transubstantiation.

“ That which is bread from the earth,” says Ireneus, “ perceiving the call of God, is not now common bread, but the eucharist ; consisting of two things, the one earthly, and the other spiritual *.”

“ Bread and wine,” says Macarius, “ are offered in the Church, the antitype of his flesh and blood ; and they who are partakers of the visible bread, do spiritually eat the flesh of the Lord †.”

“ For as, (in the eucharist),” says Chrysostom, “ before the bread is consecrated, we call it bread ; but when the grace of God by the priest has consecrated it, it has no longer the name of bread, but is counted worthy to be called the Lord’s body ; though the nature of bread remain in it, and we do not say there are two bodies, but one body of the Son †.”

“ He,” says Theodoret, “ who called his body, which is so by nature, wheat and bread, and again termed himself a vine, honoured

* Lib. 4. c. 34. † Hom. 27. ‡ Adv. Apollin.

“noured the visible symbols with the appella-
 “tion of his body and blood, not changing na-
 “ture, but to nature adding grace* ;” And
 again, “After consecration, the mystical sym-
 “bols do not depart from their own nature ;
 “for they remain still in their former sub-
 “stance, figure, and form, and may be viewed
 “and touched the same as before †.”

“The symbols of the body and blood of
 “Christ, which we take,” says Pope Gelasius,
 “are surely a divine thing ; for which reason
 “we become, by them, partakers of the divine
 “nature ; and yet the substance or nature of
 “bread and wine does not cease to exist ; and
 “indeed, the image and likeness of the body
 “and blood of Christ are celebrated in the ac-
 “tion of the mysteries. Therefore, it appears
 “sufficiently evident to us, that we ought to
 “think of our Lord what we profess, and cele-
 “brate, and receive in his image ; That as they
 “(the elements) pass into the divine substance
 “by the operation of the Holy Spirit, their na-
 “ture still remaining in its own property*,” &c.

“Thus,” says Ephrem Antiochenus, “the
 “body of Christ, which is received by the
 “faithful, docs not depart from its sensible sub-
 “stance, and yet it remains unseparated from
 “the intellectual grace : So baptism, becoming
 “wholly spiritual and one, preserves its own
 “sensible

* Dial. 1. † Dial. 2. ‡ De Duab. Nat. in Christ.

“ sensible substance, I mean water, and does
 “ not lose what it is made to be *.”

“ When our Lord,” says Chrysostom, “ de-
 “ livered the mysteries, he delivered wine †.”

“ To eat bread,” says Augustine, “ is the
 “ sacrifice of the New Testament ‡.”

“ Now, that is, in the time of the New Tes-
 “ tament, the holy universal Church through
 “ the whole earth does not cease to offer, in
 “ faith and charity, the sacrifice of bread and
 “ wine to Christ, with the Father and the Holy
 “ Spirit, who have one dignity together with
 “ him ||.”

The R. must have been very poorly versed in the Fathers, when he affirmed that transubstantiation was universally taught till the days of Berengarius. If these testimonies do not edify, they are at least calculated to convince him of his mistake.

But Papists have erred no less about the use, than about the nature of the eucharist. “ In
 “ the public sacrifice of the mass,” says the R.,
 “ J. Christ was believed to be really present,
 “ and offered up to his eternal father, under
 “ the appearance of bread and wine as a propi-
 “ tiatory sacrifice, . . . §”

This unscriptural opinion originates in the
 supposition

* Apud Phot. Bibl. Cod. 229. † In Mat. Hom. 83.

‡ De Civ. Dei, Lib. 17. c. 5. || De Fide ad Petr.

c. 19. § P. 58.

supposition that Christ, in the last Supper, offered his body and blood to God, as an atonement for sin, because it is said in the words of institution, “ This is my body, which is broken “ for you,” &c. A very little attention to the language of scripture will discover this conclusion to be totally unfounded. A future event, when near and certain, is frequently mentioned as having already occurred; “ The Son of “ man,” says Christ, “ is betrayed into the “ hands of sinners*.” And if the R. give himself the trouble of consulting either the Vulgate or the Missal, he will find a coincidence between them and the Protestant view of the words of institution, “ This is my blood which “ shall be shed.”

But we need not rest the refutation of this doctrine on criticism. In the scriptures, the necessity of repeating Christ’s propitiatory sacrifice is plainly denied. In the tenth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, the R. will find an illustration of the sufficiency of that sacrifice which our Redeemer perfected on the cross; and likewise, of the inutility of all Jewish and Popish propitiations: “ By the which will we “ are sanctified, through the offering of the “ body of Jesus Christ *once*. And every priest “ standeth daily ministering, and offering often- “ times the same sacrifices, which can never “ take

* Matth. xxvi. 45.

“ take away sins : But this man, after he had
 “ offered *one* sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down
 “ on the right hand of God ; . . . For by *one*
 “ offering he hath perfected for ever them that
 “ are sanctified. . . . Now, where remission of
 “ these (sins) is, there is no more offering for
 “ sin*.” Papists, then, with their frequent
 masses, are the kinsmen of these heathen, who
 expect to be heard in prayer for their much
 speaking ; and doubtless they are equally suc-
 cessful.

The scriptures, likewise, as plainly show the
 Lord’s Supper to be a service of commemora-
 tion. The symbols of his body and blood, in
 this ordinance, are intended to direct the faith
 of the Christian to that offering, which has al-
 ready completely satisfied divine justice for sin :
 “ Do this in remembrance of me ; for as often
 “ as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye
 “ do shew the Lord’s death till he come.” If
 the R. consult the Fathers, he will find this view
 of the eucharist very extensively inculcated :
 “ It is not,” says Eulogius of Alexandria,
 “ the offering of different sacrifices, but the
 “ commemoration of a sacrifice once offered †.”
 “ He commanded us,” says Eusebius, “ to
 “ offer to God continually the remembrance,
 “ instead of the sacrifice †.”

N

When

* Ver. 10.—18.

† Apud Phot. Cod. 280.

‡ Demonstr. Evang. Lib. 1. c. 10.

When the Christians were accused of not sacrificing for the Roman Emperors, Tertullian replied, that their religion knew no propitiatory sacrifice: “ We do not,” says he, “ sacrifice for others, because we do it not for ourselves*.”

The Fathers, indeed, frequently call the eucharist a sacrifice; but they leave us in no uncertainty concerning its nature. They considered it merely as a figurative representation of the death of Christ, and an offering of gratitude to God for his goodness: “ Diligently consider,” says Ephrem Syrus, “ how Christ, taking the bread in his hands, blessed and brake it, for a figure of his immaculate body; and he also blessed and gave the cup to his disciples, for a figure of his precious blood †.”

“ The bread,” says Tertullian, “ which he took and distributed to his disciples, he made his body, saying, *This is my body*, that is, the figure of my body ‡.”

“ We are not Atheists,” says Justin Martyr, “ we worship the Maker of all things, who needs neither blood, libations, nor incense, with the word of prayer and thanksgiving.— And we are persuaded, that he needs no material oblation from men ||.” And likewise, “ Prayers and praises made by good men, are the

* Apol. c. 10. † Tract. de Nat. Dei. ‡ Adv. Marc. Lib. 4. c. 40. || Apol. 2.

“ the only perfect and acceptable sacrifice to
“ God *.”

“ This is the host to be offered,” says Minu-
tius Felix, “ a good mind, a pure soul, a sin-
“ cere conscience ; these are our sacrifices, these
“ are the sacred things of God †.”

These quotations exhibit the views which the
Fathers entertained of the Lord's Supper ; and
they are not the hundredth part of the proof
which can be extracted from them, if requisite.
The Romish Church has, then, very little rea-
son to boast of their advocacy. They have
made her an ungrateful return for trumpeting
their praises so long and loudly. Like a mob
in a scuffle, who make no distinction between
friends and foes, these Fathers have attended
more to the quantity than the quality of broken
heads ; and, instead of assisting, have ruined
the cause of those who called them to their aid.
Still, however, Papists are not without their con-
solutions. When revolving ages have rendered
Baronius, Bellarmine, and the R., no longer mo-
dern authors, they will naturally be classed among
the Fathers of the Church, and the standards
of orthodoxy. Long before the arrival of these
happy days, also, the primitive writers on Chris-
tianity will be totally forgotten ; and then the
Church of Rome will enjoy a complete revenge,
in quoting her own Fathers, to the utter confu-

* Dial. cum Tryph.

† Minut. Octav.

sion and dismay of all Protestant innovators and pretended reformers.

When the R. finds himself disposed to controvert the proofs which have been adduced against the Popish view of the eucharist, will he be so kind as to show, from scripture and the Fathers, a warrant for the adoration of the host, and for altering the institution, by withholding the cup from the people? And if he please, he may also inform us, whether all the apparatus which the Romish Church employs about this institution, can be traced to divine appointment.

We Protestants have always conceived, that the motions and genuflexions used by the priest bear a greater resemblance to the tricks of a merry Andrew, than to the religion of the gospel. Could he, therefore, give us a satisfactory account of these things, it would be one step toward the conversion of heretics.

C H A P. VIII.

ON PURGATORY, AND PRAYERS FOR THE
DEAD.

THE Church of Rome has judiciously perceived, that, on account of the vast variety of character and conduct which appears in the world, it must be difficult to draw a line of distinction between the righteous and the wicked. Among men, there may be a number whose vices counterbalance their virtues, and show them very ill prepared for happiness; while, at the same time, it might be too hard a lot to consign them to misery. Influenced, therefore, by that charity to which heretics can bear the most ample testimony, she has provided a receptacle for the scabby part of the flock, in which all their diseases may be cured by one general purgation; and to this place she has naturally given the name of Purgatory. Though the existence of such a place be not once mentioned in scripture, had the Romish Church ever been there herself, Protestants might perhaps have allowed her the privilege of roman-
cing a little, like other great travellers, and yet believed her report concerning it to be radically

true. But, as all her knowledge of it proceeds from persons who knew as little about it as herself, we have been disposed to judge her testimony entirely apocryphal.

The R., in speaking of purgatory, has prudently classed it among those doctrines which are known to the Church by oral tradition. He has, however, produced no proof, that it was either taught by the apostles, or believed by their immediate successors. Yet there is certainly no doctrine in the Popish creed, which has greater need of confirmation. To show him the necessity of paying a more particular attention to this part of his faith, I will mention some of those reasons which have induced Protestants to reject it as a fiction. But, before producing these, it may not be amiss to take a short view of the account given by Popish writers of its nature and local situation.

Purgatory having been provided for the reception of sinners, it is naturally understood to be a place of punishment. As such it is accordingly defined in the catechism published by order of the Council of Trent: “ There is a
 “ purgatorial fire, in which the souls of the
 “ faithful, being tormented for a certain time,
 “ are expiated ; that so a passage may be open-
 “ ed for them into their eternal country, where
 “ no unclean thing can enter*.” It is not,
 however,

* Cat. ad Par. p. 1. art. 5. sect. 5.

however, by any means understood, that a sinner in purgatory must be unavoidably punished in proportion to his crimes. Paying the clergy well for saying prayers and masses, has been discovered to be of vast use for alleviating the pains of these suffering purgatorians; and hence a decision of the Council of Trent, founded on the most disinterested and benevolent principles: “ That they are assisted by the
 “ suffrages of the faithful, but particularly by
 “ the acceptable sacrifice of the mass; and
 “ therefore the bishops should diligently take
 “ care that the wholesome doctrine of purgato-
 “ ry, delivered by the holy Fathers and Coun-
 “ cils, be believed, held, and taught, by all the
 “ faithful in Christ *.”

Respecting the local situation of purgatory, there is not such a general agreement. According to Bellarmine, the most prevalent opinion is, that the damned and the purgatorians are tormented in the same place and fire. Some, however, have considered certain places upon the earth as particularly appropriated for this purpose; and undoubtedly with good reason, for witnesses, esteemed worthy of credit in the more flourishing days of Popery, have assured us of their beholding departed souls broiling on gridirons, roasting on spits, smoking in chimneys, and enduring other similar punishments,

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which

* Sess. 25.

which might be supposed to free them from the pollutions of sin. Mount Ætna, Vesuvius, and such warm climates, have also been declared the entrances to this place of purification. A door to purgatory has even been discovered in Ireland. Whether this passage has been provided expressly for the convenience of the faithful in that part of the Church, on account of their more urgent need of purification, I will not presume to determine. I will merely present to the reader Cardinal de Vitry's account of it. "There is," says he, "a certain place
 " in Ireland, called the purgatory of St Patrick,
 " into which, if any person enter, unless he be
 " truly penitent and contrite, he is immediately
 " seized and murdered by devils, and never re-
 " turns more. When one who is truly con-
 " trite, and has made confession, enters, these
 " devils chastise him with fire, water, and a
 " thousand other kinds of tortures, till he have
 " undergone a complete purgation. But they
 " who are greater delinquents meet even with
 " much harder treatment. Those who return
 " thence after this cleansing never laugh, nor
 " joke, nor care for any worldly objects, but
 " go about whining and howling, neglecting
 " the past, and minding only futurity *."

Such are the nonsensical fables which have been retailed by the clergy, and believed by the simple

* Lib. c. 92.

simple in that community, which styles itself “the pillar and ground of the truth.” Leaving the R., then, to contrast them with his boasts of the purity of the Romish Church, I will proceed to show him, that the Popish doctrine of purgatory is without foundation either in revelation or the Fathers.

Were this article of the Romish creed true, it must be allowed to be of considerable importance in religion. We might therefore expect to find it mentioned in that system of principles which are laid down in scripture, for directing the faith and practice of the Church. Can the R., then, show, why heaven is so often exhibited there to incite men to duty, and hell to deter them from vice; without the most distant hint of a period and place of reformation beyond the precincts of the grave? Indeed, the scriptures oppose very plainly the doctrine of purgatory. They represent death to the Christian as followed by a cessation from all suffering, and an entrance into eternal happiness: “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord *from henceforth*: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours* ;” and the apostle Paul assures us, that the Christian who is absent from the body is present with the Lord †.

The doctrine of purgatory originates in the unscriptural notion, that some sins, though they

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ought

* Rev. xiv. 13.

† 2 Cor. v. 8.

ought to be punished, are not in their nature so offensive as to deserve eternal misery; and hence it has been defined to be “ a place or
 “ state, where souls, departing this life with
 “ the guilt of some *venial* sins, are purged and
 “ purified before their admission into heaven.” This view of some sins the R. attempts to illustrate in the 26th page of the Remarks. “ We
 “ Catholics,” says he, “ do think that some
 “ lies are venial, and some are damnable, without thinking any lie either laudable or lawful;
 “ for we have not yet learnt to believe even on
 “ the evangelical authority of the Wirtemberg
 “ Evangelist Martin, that all sins are equally
 “ damnable; we think that an act of intemperance on the King’s Birth day is not so damnable a crime as murder; we think that an
 “ amusing jest is not inductive of perdition,
 “ though atrocious calumny most certainly is,
 “ and this our doctrine is so evidently founded
 “ on reason, that Horace, an Epicurean poet,
 “ believed it.”

This heathen poet must be allowed to have been excellently skilled in Christian morality. Might not the R. also have told us, how Horace has extolled fornication and drunkenness, and even sung the praises of sodomy; and then shown us, that all these have been practised in the Romish Church, as being evidently founded in reason? Protestants have never judged
 Popish

Popish clergymen to be scrupulous adherents to the scriptures; but making the principles of heathen poets a standard of orthodoxy, far exceeds even our blackest views of them. After all, a few references to the word of God might do no injury to the cause of morality.

If the R. imagine the Protestant doctrine to be, that every sin subjects men to condemnation, he is perfectly correct. The divine law neither approves nor tolerates any thing inconsistent with its precepts; and therefore every breach of it must be of a damning nature. In its penalty, we are accordingly informed, that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men* ;” and at the same time, we are expressly warned against the Popish doctrine of venial transgressions, which, an apostle assures us, originates in deception: “Let no man deceive you with vain words; for, because of these things, cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience †.” I would then be glad to know, if the R. can specify any way in which this wrath comes upon men, but in the form of that “death, which is the wages of sin.”

But, if he suppose that Protestants consider every sin as equally damnable in degree, he is chargeable with gross ignorance or misrepresenta-

N 6

tation.

* Rom. i. 18.

† Eph. v. 6.

tation. We view some sins as more grievous than others, both in their nature and aggravations; and therefore we believe, that when God brings every work into judgement, he will render to every man according to his works. Still, however, we believe the punishment of all to be perpetual, because we know no part of the divine law which promises life to an offender after the infliction of death. Had the R. attended to the nature of laws, he would have perceived the absurdity of such an idea. It would have shown him, that death, which is the wages of sin, is not a punishment designed for the reformation of offenders. It supposes the existence of these repugnant to the interests of society; and therefore it involves in it both a punishment and a total exclusion. We have, on this account, judged the doctrine of purgatory equally inconsistent with the law of God and the common principles of equity.

The R. is rather unlucky in his illustrations of the venial nature of some sins. "We Catholics," says he, "do think that some lies are venial." All persons who tell lies, he must allow, come naturally under the denomination of liars; and these, says the scripture, "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone:" and the R. must beware of thinking this merely a purgatorial business;

ness ; for it is immediately subjoined, “ which
“ is the second death *.”

“ We think,” says he, “ that an act of in-
“ temperance on the King’s Birth day is not so
“ damnable a crime as murder.”

If drunkenness ought to be tolerated at all, it is certainly when a Papist rejoices in the prosperity of the house of Hanover. That is neither such an outrage upon the feelings of nature, nor so repugnant to the spirit of religion, as dancing, in joyous acclamation, around roasting heretics. But though drunkenness may not be attended always with the same aggravations as murder, it is no less inconsistent with the prohibitions of God ; and it equally subjects to a corresponding sentence of condemnation. When a drunkard appears at the tribunal of God, does the R. think his excuse for degrading himself below the dignity of man, and trampling on the practice of piety and virtue, will be accepted as valid, because he was guilty on the King’s birthday ?

“ We think,” says he farther, “ that an
“ amusing jest is not inductive of perdition,
“ though atrocious calumny most certainly is.”

As far as I know, Protestant divines have never classed wit among the breaches of the decalogue ; though they have frequently declared that it may be prostituted to the most sinful
purposes.

* Rev. xxi. 8.

purposes. Of this the R. has produced a very appropriate example, when he mentions an amusing jest and atrocious calumny as different ways of murdering a person's reputation. He seems to think, that the harm does not consist so much in the effect produced, as in the means of accomplishing it. He who retails slander with great seriousness, is an atrocious sinner; but he who propagates falsehood merely for his amusement, alleviates his crime by his good-nature: And the consequence is, that the former is remitted to hell for his seriousness, and the latter to purgatory for his fun. If the R. would wish to establish the doctrine of venial sins, he must turn his attention to more appropriate illustrations.

The doctrine of purgatory originates likewise in a mistaken view of the mediation of Christ. "Those," says De Meaux, "who depart this life in grace and charity, but nevertheless owing divine justice some pains, are to suffer them in the other life.—This is what the Council of Trent proposes for our belief, respecting the souls detained in purgatory *."

The absurdity of this statement can be very easily shown. It supposes, that either divine justice requires a double atonement for sin, or that the sufferings of men are necessary to perfect the satisfaction of Christ. But both these positions.

* Sect. 8. p. 15.

positions tend to annihilate divine justice entirely. A double atonement is more than equity requires, and two incomplete satisfactions less; for a law can never declare any thing righteousness, which does not perfectly answer its demands. The scriptural doctrine of the atonement, also, illustrates the absurdity of both these views: “ He bare our sins in his own body upon the tree *.” “ He has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us † :” And consequently, “ There is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus ‡ .” Will the R. then show, how justice can require some pains of persons who are not under its sentence of condemnation? In the economy of grace, the Christian feels the influence of divine justice, only as it operates for the accomplishment of the promises of the gospel.

Should the R. refer to the afflictions of the Christian life as a proof that justice requires some pains, he has yet a great deal to learn concerning both the source and design of this part of the divine dispensations. Afflictions, to a sinner, proceed from justice exacting a penalty for broken laws; but to the Christian, they originate in love; for “ whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth || .”

In

* 2 Pet. ii. 24. † Gal. iii. 13. ‡ Rom. viii. 1.
 || Heb. xii. 6.

In the former case, therefore, these sufferings respect merely the demands of the law; in the latter, the object in view is reformation: "He corrects us for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness *:" and that this end is ultimately promoted, we are also assured in the scriptures: "No chastisement for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterwards, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby †." Before Papists, therefore, can establish the doctrine of purgatory, they must subvert this view of the economy of grace.

As purgatory is one of the oral traditions of the Romish Church, we may next examine the sentiments of the Fathers.

"In the other world," says Epiphanius, "after men's death, there is no fasting, repentance, alms, nor piety. There Lazarus comes not to Dives, nor Dives to Lazarus. The storehouses are sealed; there is no egress; the time is accomplished; the combat ended; the race run, and the crowns given; and they who have striven are quiet. After death, all things are plainly terminated. While all are in combat, after falling there may be rising again; there is yet hope, there is yet help. . . . salvation is not desperate. After death, the
" King

* Heb. xii. 10.

† Ver. 11.

“ King shuts the doors, and admits none : After our departure, we may not correct what was formerly amiss in us *.”

“ He,” says Chrysostom, “ who in this life shall not wash away his sins, shall find no consolation hereafter ; this is the time of combatting, that of crowning †.”

“ Tell me,” says he, “ what is the meaning of these bright lamps at funerals ? Is it not, that we may bring forth the dead as victorious combatants ? Why are the hymns ? Is it not, because we glorify God for crowning him who is departed ; that he has freed him from labours and from the fear of death, having him with himself ‡ ?”

“ The heathen,” says Lactantius, “ speak of a bivium or two ways in the shades, relating to the dead ; we more truly say, that these two ways are heaven and hell ; for to the righteous immortality belongs, to the wicked everlasting death ||.”

“ No man,” says Hilarius, “ after this life, can be helped or delivered by the merits and works of another §.”

“ When the soul,” says Jerome, “ freed from the bands of the body, shall have liberty to fly whither it will, or whither it is compelled to
“ go,

* Hæres. 59. † In Gen. Hom. 5. ‡ In Heb. Hom. 4. || Instit. Lib. 6. c. 3. § In Mat. 25.

“ go, it shall either be carried to hell, or exalted to heaven *.”

“ *Of a third place,*” says Augustine, “ *we are entirely ignorant ; nor do we find it in the holy scriptures †. There is no middle place to any,* that he who is not with Christ, should not be with the devil ‡. In whatever state the day of death finds any one, he shall be judged accordingly at the last day ||.”

It is not without reason that the R. has boasted of the orthodoxy of the Fathers. Their works are calculated to extort, even from Protestant heretics, a confession of their excellence for deciding some controverted points in religion.

The belief of the existence of a purgatory is far from being so universal and uninterrupted as the R. imagines. Even as late as the twelfth century, it was not universally received in the Romish Church. “ Some do affirm,” says Otto Frisingensis, anno 1140, “ that there is in hell a place of purgatory, in which such as are to be saved, are either only troubled with darkness, or decocted with the fire of expiation §.” To this many other testimonies might be added, if necessary. At present, I will only subjoin the sentiments of Joannes Roffensis, the Pope’s martyr in the days of Henry VIII., who spoke upon this

* In Amos 9. † Hypognost. Lib. 5. ‡ De Peccat. Mer. et Remiss. c. 28. || Ad Hesych. Ep. 80. § Chron. Lib. 8. c. 26.

this point with more candour than credit to his cause. "No true believer," says he, "doubts the existence of a purgatory; though it be never, or very rarely indeed, mentioned by ancient writers, and though the Greeks do not believe it to this day:" And then he proceeds to show how much this wholesome doctrine tended to the edification of the clergy. "As long as there was no concern about purgatory, none regarded Indulgences; for, from the former proceeds all the esteem which persons have for the latter. If there be no purgatory, of what use are Indulgences? No sooner did men become terrified for the torments of purgatory, than these were in request *."

Since the Church of Rome has such a controul over purgatory, can the R. assign any reason, why her charity is not frequently displayed by a general jail-delivery of these wretched sinners? Is it because the clergy are not remarkable for their benevolence? or, because prayers and masses are availing, exactly in proportion to the price which is paid for them? Did many of the Romish clergy express their sentiments respecting the efficacy of these, they would use the language of Cardinal Richelieu, who, after posing his chaplain to tell him how many masses were requisite to free a soul from purgatory, solved the

* Polyd. Virg. Lib. 8. c. 1.

the difficulty by replying, "Exactly the same number as of snow-balls to heat an oven."

Protestants will not deny, that a receptacle of the dead, distinct from both heaven and hell, is mentioned in the writings of some of the Fathers. It is represented by them, however, as of a very different nature from the purgatory of Papists. In some of the first centuries, it appears to have been an opinion pretty generally received, that, except Christ, none are admitted into heaven till the day of judgement. The saints were supposed to be subjected to what Ireneus denominates "the law of the dead," and "the order of the promotion of the just," that is, they were not admitted into the highest heavens, nor to the possession of their full reward, till after the resurrection. But these Fathers never considered this separate state as at all connected with punishment to the saints. On the contrary, they declared it to be a place of rest and happiness: "It is," says Tertullian, "a place of divine pleasantness, appointed for the spirits of holy men *." It was not, therefore, a state in which they either needed or could be helped by the masses of the Church; for there could be no change in their condition, before the resurrection.

Some of the Fathers also maintained, that, at the day of judgement, all men must undergo a fiery trial: "We must all be tried by fire," says

* Apol. c. 47.

says St. Ambrose, " Christ only, who is the
" righteousness of God, and never committed
" sin, escapes it *." But this affords no proof
of the existence of purgatory ; for, as the R.
knows, that is not designed for all men, but
chiefly for the benefit of such as can pay well to
get out of it.

Origen was the first person who taught the
doctrine of a purgatory. He supposed the great
end of all punishment to be reformation ; and
therefore he maintained, that in course of time,
not only all men, but all devils, would be saved.
This was one of the novelties which he attempt-
ed to introduce into religion ; and as such, it
was rejected by the Church, and received the
mark of reprobation in the fifth general Coun-
cil.

At present, it will be unnecessary to show
how Papists have perverted the sentiments of the
Fathers, by attempting to produce them in de-
fence of purgatory. When the R. brings them
forward, he will perhaps find them of very little
use to his cause. Should he ever attempt a vin-
dication of this doctrine, I would advise him to
illustrate it from the Fathers in all its bearings.
For every quotation to prove its existence, let
him produce one to show, that these primitive
teachers of Christianity sold prayers, masses, and
Indulgences,

* In Ps. 118. Serm. 20.

Indulgences, to diminish pains inflicted by the justice of God.

IN connection with the doctrine of purgatory, it will be necessary to take a short view of the Popish practice of using prayers and other services for the dead ; because the R. has attempted to produce the latter as an evidence of the existence of the former. From the subsistence of this usage in early times, he concludes, that the primitive Christians believed in a purgatory, and received the traditional account of it from the apostles ; “ So true is it,” says he, “ that in “ the practice of the Church, founded by the “ Apostles, the genuine sense of the doctrine, “ which they taught is to be found ;” . . . * Protestants will not dispute with him the early existence of this practice. We may not, however, concede to him so readily the inferences which he attempts to deduce from it.

In order to ascertain whether these prayers and services originated in the belief of a purgatory, it will be only necessary to attend to the nature of them. This is sufficiently explained in the liturgies of the Church, from which the following quotations are extracted.

“ We offer unto thee this reasonable service,
 “ for those who are at *rest* in the faith ; our an-
 “ cestors, fathers, patriarchs, prophets and a-
 “ postles,

* P. 59.

“ postles, preachers, evangelists, martyrs, con-
 “ fessors, religious persons, and for every spirit
 “ perfected in the faith ; particularly for our
 “ most holy, immaculate, and most blessed lady,
 “ the mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary.”—
 Liturgy of the Church of Constantinople, ascri-
 bed to Chrysostom.

“ Be mindful, O Lord, of thy saints ; vouch-
 “ safe to remember all thy saints, who have
 “ pleased thee from the beginning ; our holy
 “ fathers, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles,
 “ martyrs, confessors, preachers, evangelists,
 “ and all the souls of the just who have died in
 “ the faith ; particularly the holy, glorious, ever-
 “ more Virgin Mary, the mother of God, and
 “ St. John the fore-runner, the baptist and mar-
 “ tyr, St. Stephen the first deacon and martyr,
 “ St. Mark the apostle, evangelist, and mar-
 “ tyr,” &c.—Liturgy of the Church of Egypt,
 ascribed to Basil, Nazianzen, and Cyril of Alex-
 andria.

“ Be mindful, O Lord, of them who are dead
 “ and departed out of this life ; and of the or-
 “ thodox bishops, who, from Peter and James,
 “ the apostles, to this day have clearly professed
 “ the right word of faith ; and particularly of
 “ Ignatius, Dionysius, Julius, and the rest of
 “ the saints of worthy memory. Be mindful,
 “ O Lord, of them also who have stood unto
 “ blood for religion, and by righteousness and
 “ holiness

“ holiness have fed thy holy flock.”—Liturgy ascribed to Basil.

The author of *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, after describing the person deceased, as “replenished with divine joy, and now feeling no more any change for the worse, being publicly pronounced a happy man, and truly admitted into the society of the saints who have been from the beginning of the world,” introduces the bishops praying for him, “that God would forgive him all the sins which he had committed through human infirmity, and bring him into the light and land of the living; into the bosom of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; into the place where there is no more any pain, nor sorrow, nor sighing *.”

From these public prayers, no proof can be produced in favour of purgatory. On the contrary, those for whom they were presented, were supposed to have already entered into a state of rest and felicity. By these quotations, the R. will also discover what views the Church formerly entertained respecting the influence of the Virgin Mary, and other saints in heaven. As yet they had not learnt how beneficial it is to say, “Holy Virgin, &c. pray for us.” But it is easy to account for the change which has occurred in the worship of the Romish Church. That community has prayed her saints into great
favour;

* C. 7.

favour ; and now, it is presumed, they are gratefully inclined to employ it for the advantage of their benefactors.

If we next turn our attention to the prayers of individuals, we will find them resting on the supposition of their being actually in the possession of ease and happiness. To illustrate the views of these ancient Christians, I will produce a few extracts from the Oration of St. Ambrose, on the death of Theodosius : “ Give perfect rest
“ to thy servant Theodosius ; that rest which
“ thou hast prepared for thy saints. Let his
“ soul ascend to that place, whence it had its
“ origin ; where it may be out of the power of
“ death ; where it may know, that death is not
“ an end of nature, but of sin. I loved him,
“ and therefore I pursue him to the region of the
“ living ; nor will I leave him, till, by my tears
“ and prayers, I bring him whither his merits
“ call him, into the holy mountain of our Lord,
“ where there is life without end.” Still St. Ambrose was a stranger to purgatory ; nor did he entertain the least doubt of the felicity of Theodosius ; for says he, in a preceding part of the Oration, “ Theodosius of honourable me-
“ mory, being freed from doubtful combat, now
“ enjoys everlasting light and continual tranquillity ; and for the things which he did in this
“ body, he rejoices in the fruits of God’s reward ;” And again, “ He has not laid down,

“ but changed his kingdom ; being taken by the
“ right hand of his piety into the tabernacles of
“ Christ, into the heavenly Jerusalem :” And
also, “ Theodosius, therefore, remains in the
“ light, and glories in the company of the
“ saints.”

But nothing more plainly militates against the Popish view of prayers for the dead, than the account which Epiphanius has given of what he calls the error of Acrius. This person had opposed a recital of the names of the dead in prayer, asking, for what purpose it was done : “ He who
“ is alive,” says he, “ prayeth, or offereth the
“ sacrifice ; what shall this profit the dead ? But
“ if the dead be actually profited by them, then
“ let no man henceforth trouble himself to live
“ well ; but let him oblige his friends, or give
“ money to persons to pray for him, that none
“ of these inexpiable sins, which he has com-
“ mitted, may be required of him.” In reply to this objection, Epiphanius does not give the most remote hint of the existence of a purgatory ; which he could not have avoided, had it then been known. When he assigns the reasons for this practice, he says, it was to declare their faith and hope concerning the dead ; and to shew the infinite prerogative of Christ above the best of saints, by praying for them, but giving thanks only for him : And that, though these prayers were not availing to remove all sins, yet they were

were profitable to implore the mercy of God for those who had been sinners, but had repented, and to obtain for them a recompence for all, in the resurrection of the just *.

Aerius, the R. will perceive, opposed the ancient prayers for the dead upon the most orthodox principles. These prayers being gratis jobs, there might be some danger of neglect or improper performance. Aerius, therefore, reasoned in the true spirit of Popery, that if these were actually of use, they would be most advantageous in the way of fair trade; for then they would be more frequent, and of course more availing. On the contrary, Epiphanius showed himself a poor defender of the Church. He forgot to assign purgatory as the grand cause of these supplications, and likewise, to show that prayer in the Church was a commodity for sale.

Should the R. ask, Of what use are prayers for the dead, if there be no purgatory? and why were they made by the Fathers? he ought to recollect that Protestants are under no obligations to reply. It is sufficient for us to have shewn, that these did not originate in a belief of Popish notions. By consulting the writings of the Fathers, he will find many sentiments maintained about the state of the dead, which are now rejected even by the Church of Rome, on account

* Heres. 75.

of their absurdity. In these their prayers for the dead originated.

When the R., from the antiquity of this practice, infers its apostolic appointment, his conclusion is totally unfounded. In the ancient Church, it was not ranked among the articles of faith. By consulting the conclusion of the works of Epiphanius, where he recapitulates what is of the Catholic faith, and what the constitutions of the Church, he will see prayers for the dead classed with the latter *. Tertullian also, and many other Fathers, confessed it to be without foundation in scripture. Had it been enjoined by the apostles, the silence of their writings is a little surprising. The saints also under the Old Testament, must have been very deficient in the duties of religion; for in all their prayers, they have entirely overlooked the state of the deceased. Does the R. think, that the dead, during that period, had less need of the prayers of the living, since this exercise was neither enjoined by God, nor practised by the Church? He indeed attempts to prove the contrary; for, says he, “ Prayers and sacrifices were offered for the
 “ dead in the Jewish dispensation: Of this we
 “ have authentic evidence in the book of the
 “ Maccabees, which, whether canonical or not,
 “ is at least a history written by a well-informed
 “ Jew,

* P. 1106.

“ Jew, who knew the practice of the Jewish
“ Church *.”

The R. is right to speak with some reserve about the divine authority of this book. It was never admitted into the Jewish canon of scripture, nor received by Christians; till superstition had perverted their minds, and persuaded them that there was a necessity for more means of devotion than God ever appointed. The author of it might be very well informed concerning the practices of the Jewish Church, but he seems to have been a considerable stranger to the principles of religion, else he would scarcely have given his approbation to suicide. If the R. consider the practice of the Jewish Church as a sufficient precedent for the conduct of Christians, there was no necessity for referring to this apocryphal writer. In the Old Testament he will find some edifying precedents to justify the conduct of the Romish Church. He will there discover, by a cursory perusal, that the Jews, like Papists, not only worshipped images, but found services for the dead to be full of comfort to the living: “ They joined
“ themselves to Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices
“ of the dead †.”

O 3

CHAP.

* P. 59.

† Psal. cxi. 28.

C H A P. IX.

ON THE WORSHIP OF SAINTS AND ANGELS, AND
THE VENERATION OF IMAGES AND RELICS.

HOWEVER destitute of true religion the Church of Rome may be, she has never been wanting in professions of devotion. Every thing connected with the Church, from the jaw-bone of the ass with which Samson slew the Philistines, down to the milstone which carried St. Anthony over the sea to Russia, has, in its turn, received some kind of worship or veneration. To this species of devotion we Protestants could never be reconciled, through a persuasion that it savours more of will-worship than of the service of God. In behalf of our aversion, we have been long accustomed to plead both scripture and antiquity; the former as a rule of faith and practice, the latter as exhibiting a precedent in the Church. In opposition to our views, the R. has produced what he imagines a vindication of this part of the Romish religion. Though there be very little danger that his proofs and illustrations will ever pervert the minds of Protestants, it may not be amiss to review them, and show him the Protestant side of this subject.

In establishing the worship of creatures, the
R. ;

Romish Church has experienced considerable opposition from some texts of scripture, which common sense would not permit them to class among the obscure and difficult. Of these, none has given them more trouble than a quotation which the Saviour himself produced from the Old-Testament scriptures, expressly to show, that religious adoration belongs to God, to the utter exclusion of all creatures: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*." To preserve, therefore, some appearance of respect for the language of Christ, and at the same time advance their own views, they have been reduced to the necessity of inventing some nice distinctions between the nature of the worship which belongs to God, and that which may be given to his creatures. That species of service, expressed by the Greek term *latria*, they think, belongs only to the Creator; but an inferior kind, called *dulia*, may be given to angels, and other objects of their adoration. There is, however, one small objection to this discrimination. *Latria* and *dulia* are used indiscriminately in scripture, to denote that service which is due to God.

Between the nature of the worship of God, and that given to creatures, the R. assures us, there is a great difference. But, as it might be attended with some difficulty to show in what it

O 4

consists,

* Matth. iv. 10.

consists, and might likewise lead to a more extensive view of Popish worship than would promote edification, he has wisely declined it, and turned the discourse to his usual compliments to innovators and pretended reformers. “ ’Tis matter of surprise,” says he, “ how the first reformers could have prevailed on their deluded followers to believe that we Catholics who publicly profess our faith in one God, should notwithstanding adore many Gods; or that, whilst we know, and confess, that sovereign homage and supreme worship is due to the Creator alone, we should pay this homage to any of his creatures. The absurdity is so gross, that we can sufficiently admire the stupidity of these who permit themselves to be duped by it; but ’tis a prodigy, that this scaffolding, however necessary to the architects of that work of darkness, which misrepresentation had formed, should yet continue, notwithstanding the numberless dissertations published by Catholic writers, in which the essential difference between the veneration, which we Catholics have for Angels and Saints, and the relative respect we shew their relics and images, and that sovereign homage and supreme honor which we pay our God, is so clearly stated that even ignorance cannot mistake it. There must be some hideous deformities in the work, when
“ scaffolding

“ scaffolding of such monstrous aspect is found
 “ necessary to conceal them *.”

The R. seems to know, that it is good generalship in controversy to make the greatest show where there is the least force. If Popish writers have acquitted themselves so well upon this subject, why did he not, since he is such an adept at gleaning, pick out a few of their most convincing illustrations? They might perhaps have reached a conviction to the minds of deluded Protestants, which his own angry contendings must fail to produce. “ Deluded and ignorant” as we are, we have never refused Papists the credit of pretending to “ know, and confess, “ that sovereign homage and supreme worship “ is due to the Creator alone.” We only maintain, that “ they profess to know God, but in “ works deny him †.” Whether our opinion has been justly formed will best appear by attending to the nature of that worship which Papists afford to creatures.

I. SAINTS AND ANGELS.

THOUGH the R. has not explained the nature of the various parts of the worship offered to saints and angels, he has told us with what view Papists present to them their supplications. “ Nor did any Catholic,” says he, “ ever pray

O 5

“ to

* P. 216. 217.

† Tit. i. 16.

“ to an Angel or Saint as to a Mediator, but
 “ simply as an intercessor, whose prayers are
 “ more acceptable to God than ours. To God
 “ we pray for mercy, grace, and glory, which
 “ we hope to obtain through the mediatorship
 “ of Jesus Christ; to the angels we pray for
 “ none of these graces: we ask their prayers
 “ as more effectual than ours, . . . *” Accord-
 ing to this statement, saints and angels are not
 mediators, but simply intercessors. When the
 R. took this view of their office, why did he
 forget to show in what the difference between
 them consists? As far as I know, the word me-
 diator means one who transacts business between
 two parties; and what else is an intercessor?
 Supplications to them, he says also, consist
 merely in asking them to pray for us. Respect-
 ing this point, it may not be amiss to take the
 opinion and practice of other members of the
 Romish Church; and, as the Virgin Mary is a
 saint of the first magnitude, we may begin with
 observing their views and worship of her.

In the Contemplations on the life and glory
 of holy Mary, the mother of Jesus, published
 anno 1685, *Permissu Superiorum*, it is said,
 “ The blessed Virgin is the empress of sera-
 “ phims,—the most exact original of practical
 “ perfection which the omnipotence of God
 “ ever drew; and, by innumerable titles, she
 “ claims

* P. 214.

“ claims *the utmost duty* of every Christian, as
 “ a proper homage to her greatness.”

“ O mother of God,” says St. Germain,
 “ your defence is immortal ; your intercession
 “ is life ; your protection is security ; if you do
 “ not teach us the way, none can become spiri-
 “ tual, nor adore God in spirit. O most holy
 “ Virgin, none can have the knowledge of God,
 “ but by you : O mother of God, none can be
 “ saved, but by you : O virgin mother, none
 “ can be delivered from dangers, but by you ;
 “ O favoured of God, none can obtain any gift
 “ or grace, but by you *.”

“ From the time,” says St. Bernardine,
 “ that the virgin mother conceived in her womb
 “ the Word of God, she obtained, as I may
 “ say, a certain jurisdiction and authority over
 “ all the temporal processions of the Holy
 “ Ghost ; so that no creature has received any
 “ grace or virtue from God, but according to
 “ the dispensation of his holy mother †.”

“ Approach,” says the Abbot of Celles,
 “ with a devout contemplation of spirit, toward
 “ the blessed Virgin ; because through her, and
 “ with her, and in her, and from her, the
 “ world both has, and will have, all that is good.
 “ She is our advocate with the Son, as
 “ the Son is with the Father. She solicits for
 “ us both the Father and the Son. Often those

O 6

“ whom

* Verit. Devot. de Crasset, p. 31. † Crasset, p. 37.

“ whom the justice of the Son might condemn,
 “ the mercy of the mother delivers. . . . In
 “ short, as our Saviour once said, that none
 “ could come to him while he was on earth,
 “ unless the Father drew him, so dare I, in
 “ some sort, affirm, *that none comes now to thy*
 “ *glorified Son, unless thou draw him by thy holy*
 “ *assistance* *.”

In these, the R. must acknowledge, there is a little more than merely asking the prayers of the Virgin; and they are a very small specimen of the abominable blasphemies which have proceeded from the mouths of the beast and the false prophet. Should he say, that the Church is not accountable for the expressions of individuals, let him show us how it is pure, and preserved from the lightest shade of error, when every individual may utter, with impunity, such horrible abominations. But, to prevent him from disclaiming the language of individuals, I will subjoin a few specimens of the prayers of the Church.

“ We fly to your protection, O holy mother
 “ of God; despise not our prayers which we
 “ make to you in our necessities; but deliver
 “ us from all dangers, O glorious and ever
 “ blessed Virgin †.” “ Vouchsafe that I may
 “ be worthy to praise thee, O sacred Virgin:
 “ Give

* Crasset. p. 33. 34.
 Antw. Ed. 1631.

† Officium B. Virg. p. 84.

“ Give me strength and power against thine
 “ enemies*.” “ Let Mary and her son bless
 “ us †.”

Perhaps the R. has heard of the Psalter of Bonaventure, of which the design was, to apply to the Virgin all the addresses made to God, in the psalms and hymns of the Church. This book has been printed, with licence and commendation, as a piece “ which was profitable to be printed, and very piously and commendably to be recited by all men in their private prayers, to the honour of the blessed Virgin.” The author of it, also, has been canonized by the Church, and worshipped among others of the same fraternity; which certainly implies, that his works were tolerably meritorious. A few quotations from it will discover what exercises are permitted in the Romish Church.

“ Come unto Mary, all ye that labour and
 “ are heavy laden; and she shall refresh your
 “ souls.”

“ Come unto her in your temptations; and
 “ the serenity of her countenance shall establish
 “ you ‡.”

“ O Lady, in thee do I put my trust; deliver
 “ my soul from mine enemies. O give
 “ thanks unto the Lord, for he is good. O
 “ give

* P. 103.

† P. 105.

‡ Ps. ii.

“ give thanks unto his mother, for her mercy
 “ endureth for ever *.”

Such an edition of the Psalms, &c. it may be easily conceived, must contain abundant specimens of the same kind. At present, I will only transcribe the concluding prayer. “ O
 “ my holy Lady Mary, I commend to thy
 “ blessed trust and special custody, and into the
 “ bosom of thy mercy, this day, and every day,
 “ and in the hour of death, both my soul and
 “ body. I commit all my hope and consolation,
 “ all my troubles and my miseries, my
 “ life and the end of my life, to thee, that, by
 “ thy most holy intercession and merits, all my
 “ works may be directed and disposed according
 “ to thine and thy Son’s will. Amen.”

The R. will perceive, that many caudal appendages must be docked from this prayer, before it can be reduced to the simple form of
 “ Holy Virgin, pray for us.”

If Popish tales be true, the Romish Church is under very strong obligations to pay all this homage, and a great deal more, to the Virgin. There is scarcely any favour which she has withheld from her devout worshippers. She has delivered them from sickness, restored their eyesight, preserved them from dangers, saved them from the gallows, and even raised them from the dead; and, what must peculiarly tend to
 the

* Ps. cvii.

the consolation of Papists, she is not at all squeamish in the choice of her votaries. "Sinners," says Crasset, "being her subjects, make up her crown and glory; and it is for that she loves them with the tenderness and sweet compassion of a mother, let them be ever so wicked*." "Know thou," said the Virgin herself to St. Bridget, "my dearest child, that there is no man in the world so lewd and accursed of God, that he is entirely forsaken of him while he lives; no sinner so desperate, but he may return and find mercy with him, provided he have recourse to me †."

Crasset has related many edifying proofs of her extensive benevolence to the chief of sinners.

A certain young Gascon soldier, having spent his fortune, afterward, for particular reasons, sold himself to the devil, and renounced the Saviour. No temptation, however, could induce him to sacrifice his interest in the Virgin; and this confidence in her mercy secured him protection from his old acquaintance Satan, who began to be troublesome, notwithstanding their former friendship. On prostrating himself before an image of the Virgin with Christ in her arms, he was greatly comforted by the following dialogue between the two idols. "O my sweet son,
" have

* P. 77. † Brig. Revela. Lib. 6. c. 10.

“ have mercy on this man.” “ Why, mother? “ what would you have me to do with this “ wretch, who has renounced me?” The Virgin, upon this, prostrated herself before her son, and again demanded his pardon. This was irresistible. The little image raised the large one from the ground, and replied, “ I never yet “ refused my mother any thing she asked; I “ grant it for your sake, and for yours alone*.” Should any incredulous reader inquire how the images could hold such a conversation, or how a little image in the arms of a large one could raise it from the ground, and embrace it, let him recollect that this is the least marvellous part of the adventure. But, to obviate all difficulties, it is only necessary to remember, that this soldier was a witness worthy of all credit, for he belonged to a country famous for gasconading, that is, for giving a plain statement of facts without exaggeration.

Once upon a time, as Pelbart of Temeswaer relates, a certain robber, who had been accustomed to fast every Saturday in honour of the Virgin, was accidentally beheaded by some travellers, in the way of his vocation. After performing this atchievement so effectually, they had very little doubt of his death. But to their surprise, the head began, with great vociferation, to cry “ confession, confession.” These travellers,

* Crasct. p. 90.

travellers, having saved their purses, were far from possessing an implacable disposition. They therefore quickly procured him a priest; and no sooner did the ecclesiastic apply the head to the body, than this devout plunderer related, that as soon as he was beheaded, the devils seized his soul to carry it to hell, but were prevented by the Virgin. On account of the pleasure which his fastings afforded her, she would not permit his soul to be separated from his body, till after confession. Now, the wonderful in this story does not consist in the talking of the head after its separation from the body; for that is a mere straw among the works of the Virgin. It lies entirely in the safety which a soul possesses after confession. If a person have only unbosomed himself to a priest before death, the devil may enjoy the pleasure of seeing him in purgatory; but if he expect to get him farther, he will be miserably disappointed.

Pelbart, indeed, narrates this story only from report. The reader, however, has no reason to doubt either the truth of his narration, or the power of the Virgin; for he himself witnessed another miracle no less extraordinary. A certain wicked villain, he informs us, fell into the Danube, and remained under water for three days. In ordinary cases, there would certainly have been some danger of drowning; but to the rogue's great surprise, he was greeted in
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this new element with the following address. “Thou well deservest, base rascal, to lose thy life, and be condemned for ever, for thy sins; but because thou art a servant to the Virgin Mary, thou shalt be delivered from this danger, that thou mayest go and be confessed.” Up he came accordingly, and made the above declaration to the priest Pelbart himself. “It was from this man himself,” says Crasset, “that the religious Pelbart heard this history; and you must either believe the penitent an impostor and cheat, or else that Pelbart was a wicked man, who took delight in imposing on the sovereign pontiff of Rome, (to whom he dedicated his works), and on all the faithful; or you must believe this story for an absolute fact; and, consequently, that the Virgin does sometimes preserve her servants from everlasting damnation after death*.” The reader is at liberty to believe which he pleases.

When the Virgin bestows such marks of her beneficence upon the base and graceless, the faithful, who are remarkable for their pious simplicity, have certainly reason to expect much more extensive favours; and the Church would be chargeable with great ingratitude, did she only permit her members to say, “Holy Virgin, pray for us.” But let us now take a peep at the worship given to the little saints; for

* P. 134.

for they are all little, when compared with Mary.

“ Many hymns,” says a French writer, “ are
 “ still remaining, in which those things are ask-
 “ ed from saints, which ought to be requested
 “ from God alone; such as, deliverance from
 “ the bondage of sin, preservation from spiri-
 “ tual diseases and hell-fire, and increase of
 “ charity and fitness for heaven. Is not this
 “ joining the saints with God himself? What-
 “ ever men may talk of the sense of the
 “ Church, the very forms and natural meaning
 “ of the words excite other ideas in the minds
 “ of men *.” The propriety of these observa-
 tions will appear from the following specimens.

“ O ye just judges and true lights of the
 “ world, we pray to you with the requests of
 “ our hearts, that ye would hear the prayers of
 “ your suppliants: Ye, who by your word shut
 “ and open heaven, deliver us, we beseech you,
 “ by your command, from all our sins: Ye,
 “ to whose command the health and sickness
 “ of all men is committed, heal us, who are
 “ sick in our manners, and restore us to vir-
 “ tue †.”

Confession of sin is made “ to God Almighty
 “ and the blessed Virgin Mary, to St. Michael
 “ the archangel, to St. John the Baptist, to the
 “ holy

* Entret. de Philal. et Philer. p. 2. p. 160.

† Offic. P. Virg. p. 497.

“ holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the
 “ saints *.”

Excommunications are performed “ by the
 “ authority of Almighty God, the Father, Son,
 “ and Holy Ghost ; and of the blessed apostles
 “ Peter and Paul, and of all the saints †.”

The following are extracts from a prayer of
 Pope Gregory VII., offered at the head of a
 synod, in excommunicating the Emperor Henry
 IV., anno 1080. “ Blessed Peter, prince of
 “ the apostles, and O thou blessed Paul, doctor
 “ of the Gentiles, vouchsafe, I beseech you,
 “ mercifully to incline your ears unto me, and
 “ hear me. . . . Go to now, I beseech you,
 “ O fathers and holy princes, that all the world
 “ may know and understand, that as you have
 “ in heaven the power of binding and loosing,
 “ you have also on earth power over empires,
 “ kingdoms, principalities, &c. For you have
 “ often taken away patriarchates, &c. from the
 “ wicked and unworthy, and have given them
 “ to religious men. Let the kings and all the
 “ princes of the world now learn how great
 “ you are, and how much you can do ; and
 “ fear to undervalue the command of your
 “ Church ; and execute judgement on the a-
 “ foresaid Henry so suddenly, that all men may
 “ know

* Missal. R. in Ord. Miss.

† Pont. R. Ord.

“ know that his fall is not by chance, but by
“ your power *.”

In the lives of the Romish saints, they are represented as well deserving all the worship they receive. Like the Virgin Mary, they have wrought great deliverances for the Church, cured deadly diseases, and even raised the dead. Beside such stupendous works as naturally come under the denomination of miracles, they have been no less remarkable for little acts of endearment and benevolence; such as, helping women in labour, curing the tooth-ach, and killing all sorts of troublesome vermin; and what will appear still more surprising to the reader, any dead person whatever, who receives the name of saint, becomes a sharer of their power, and performs the same works. To illustrate this, I will mention a fact, related by Ressendius, an authority to which the R. can have no objection.

About eight miles from Evora in Portugal, there is a place called the cave of the martyrs, where a number of Christians, with their bishop and his two sisters, were supposed to have been murdered. Over the bishop's sepulchre is a table of stone, upon which the mass was wont to be sacrificed in honour of his saintship, whom they called Viarius; and hither came all persons who were pained about the loins, and were invariably

* Platina in Vit. Greg. VII.

variably cured. When Ressendus, who designed to publish his life along with these of the other saints, visited the spot with a view to pick up information, he asked the priests if they possessed any records or inscriptions respecting St. Viarius. Upon this he was directed to the table over his sepulchre, which was inscribed with a Latin epitaph of considerable length. But Ressendus, who happened to be better acquainted with Latin inscriptions than the priest, soon discovered, that the celebrated tomb of St. Viarius contained only the heathenish carcasses of two menders of Roman highways. Information was immediately sent to Cardinal Alphonsus, at that time bishop of Evora, who ordered the place to be shut up, to the great discontent of all the simple faithful who were pained about the loins*.

Such legendary lore drew from a learned man of the Romish Church the following complaint :
 “ There is also another error not unfrequent,
 “ that the common people, neglecting in a man-
 “ ner the ancient and known saints, worship
 “ more ardently and diligently the new and un-
 “ known, of whose holiness we have but little
 “ assurance, and of whom we know some only
 “ by revelations ; so that it is justly doubted of
 “ several, that they never existed at all †.”

Were

* Ressend. Ep. ad Barthol. Kebedium. † Cassand. Consult. p. 971.

Were it requisite, a few forms of prayer to angels might be likewise added. This, however, would be superfluous, as the Romish Church has classed them with the saints, and the R. assured us of their exact similarity*.

In inculcating the worship of angels, the R. ought to have been a little more particular in his observations. The word *angel* is a generic term; and therefore he should have specified, whether Popish worship be restricted to any particular kind. From the following narrative of F. Gauffre, he will perceive the necessity of such a discrimination. It will show him that the black kind, as well as the white, are sometimes worshipped in the Romish Church.

This worthy ecclesiastic had been called to exorcise a terrible devil, named Arfaxa, who had taken violent possession of the foot of sister Bonaventure, a nun. On his arrival, she earnestly entreated him to confess her; for, as F. Gauffre observes, the devil had a particular desire to converse with him. After some conversation, "I threw myself," says the Father, "upon my knees before him, and told him, that I designed to confound my own pride by the devil's, and learn humility from him, who had none. The devil, enraged to see me in this posture, replied, that he had a commandment to prevent me. But when I continued, nevertheless,

* P. 213.

“ nevertheless, to humble myself before him,
 “ he thought to take advantage of it, and told
 “ me, Thou dost this to adore me. Villain, I
 “ replied, thou art too infamous; I consider
 “ thee as the creature of my God, and the ob-
 “ ject of his wrath, and therefore I will submit
 “ myself to thee, though thou dost not deserve
 “ it; and for that very reason I will immediately
 “ kiss thy feet. The devil, surprised at this action,
 “ prevented me. Upon this I conjured him to
 “ tell me, as far as he could guess, whether it
 “ was the will of God that I should kiss his
 “ feet, or he mine. Thou knowest, says he,
 “ what motion God gives thee; follow that.
 “ Immediately I threw myself upon the ground,
 “ and kissed his feet, at which he stormed ex-
 “ ceedingly. I then commanded him, by the
 “ relics of Father Bernard, to kiss mine; which
 “ he did with great readiness. After this, I
 “ continued on my knees before him, for half a
 “ quarter of an hour*.”

But, granting that all the opinions and prayers
 produced amount to no more than a solicitation
 for the prayers of saints and angels, even that is
 more than religion permits. In all the institu-
 tions of God, there is no precept for such an
 invocation: and in the vast variety of prayers
 with which scripture abounds, there is no ex-
 ample. On the contrary, we are expressly en-
 joined

* Recit. Veritable, &c. &c. p. 30. 31.

joined to come directly to the throne of grace by Jesus Christ; and by personal application, to make our requests known to God. Does not the R. think it a little unaccountable, that our Lord, in teaching his disciples to pray, should entirely overlook the invocation of saints and angels?

But, though the scriptures had not expressly prohibited this species of worship, reason sufficiently demonstrates the absurdity of addressing prayer to beings, whose presence cannot be as extensively diffused as their votaries. Will the R. inform us, also, if these spirits possess omniscience, and know the secret ejaculations of the heart, as well as what flows from the lips of their worshippers? or are Papists, like the servants of Baal, heard in proportion to the extent of their vociferation *?

He has, indeed, made a feeble attempt to obviate these objections, when made by Mr Stanser. “We are assured,” says he, “by J. Christ in very plain language that they rejoice at the conversion of a sinner;—Luke xv. 10. —and common sense assures us that they don’t rejoice at an event of which they know nothing: two things therefore they must know; who are sinners, and who are sincere converts †.”

It is pretty wide reasoning to say, because

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they

* 1 Kings, xviii. 27.

† P. 216.

they know two things, therefore they know every thing ; for this is the conclusion he would wish his readers to draw. But even the knowledge of these two particulars is more than the scriptures ascribe to them. They only inform us, that there is joy in heaven, and in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repents *. But the R., by this reply, merely shifts an objection which he was unable to solve. The question still recurs, Are they omniscient ? or, how do they attain the knowledge requisite to render them fit objects of worship ? Nor have others of the Romish Church been more successful in their solution of these difficulties. The saints and angels know all things, say some, in the glass of the Deity ; that is, they know all things, by beholding him who is omniscient ; They know all things, say others, by revelation from God. The plain meaning of both these opinions is, that God tells saints and angels the prayers of the Church, and then they tell God. Overlooking entirely a whole series of absurdities on which these sentiments are founded, let the R. and other knowing Papists only inform us, how they have obtained such an intimate acquaintance with the transactions of heaven.

As the R. has attempted to prove this worship
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* Luke, xv. 7.—10.

a doctrine of scripture, I will now proceed to a review of his illustrations.

“ Let the Ex.,” says he, “ read the forty-
 “ eight chapter of Genesis, and he will see the
 “ patriarch Jacob, a man of some authority,
 “ seriously and solemnly invoking an angel,
 “ and acknowledging his protection through
 “ life: *may the angel of the Lord, who delivered*
 “ *me from all evil bless these boys :—ha Maleak*
 “ *ha goel othi mi cal rah jibrack eth ha Naariim.*
 “ Gen. lviii. 16.—Would the Ex. permit this
 “ holy patriarch, who candidly acknowleges
 “ that the angel had delivered him from every
 “ evil, to say once in his life: *Holy Angel pray*
 “ *for us? or Holy Angel protect me?* The pa-
 “ triarch done something more, for we read
 “ in the thirty-second of Genesis, that he pray-
 “ ed an angel to bless him, and Moses, a man
 “ of some credit adds, *that the angel did bless*
 “ *him :—wajibarek otho sham *.*”

For what purpose has the R. introduced these scraps of Hebrew? If it was with an intention to display his learning, it shows rather to a disadvantage. A Hebrew quotation, with a version of it from the Vulgate, which does not express its meaning, is no mark of extensive erudition.

Since he has directed us to the thirty-second chapter of Genesis, he can have no objection to

P 2

receive

* P. 212.

receive the account which is there given of this angel. It will show him, why Jacob so ardently desired his blessing for himself and his descendants. Moses, a man of some credit, informs us there, that Jacob, a man of some authority, after wrestling with the angel, “ called the name of the place Peniel ;” for he said, “ I have seen *God* face to face *.” In Hosea’s account of this transaction, also, the same view of the angel is afforded us. “ Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed : he wept, and made supplication unto him ; he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us ; even the Lord God of hosts ; the Lord is his memorial †.” If the R. think the opinion of the Fathers of importance, it can likewise be added. Both Athanasius ‡ and Cyril of Alexandria || declare it absurd to suppose, that Jacob would join God with an angel, when he said, “ The God who fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel who redeemed me from all evil :” And says Justin Martyr, “ He who is both an angel, and God, and Lord, appeared to Jacob in the form of man §.” Should the R. have any doubt of Christ’s being called an angel in scripture, it will be removed by consulting the prophecies of Malachi : “ Behold, I will send my messenger, and

* Ver. 30. † Hos. xii. 4. 5. ‡ Serm. 4. contra Arian. || Thesaur. lib. 3 c. 6. § Dial. cum Tryph.

“ and he shall prepare the way before me; and
 “ the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come
 “ to his temple, even the messenger or angel of
 “ the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold,
 “ he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts *.”

The R.'s next proof is from Exod. xxiii. 20. :
 “ *Behold, I send my Angel to protect you in the*
 “ *way, and to conduct you to the place which I*
 “ *have prepared. Beware of him and hear his*
 “ *voice; don't neglect him for he will not bear*
 “ *your prevarications, my name is in him. . . .*

“ Though this angel was expressly sent to pro-
 “ tect and conduct the Jews, and they were
 “ strictly ordered to hear and obey him, they
 “ could not without idolatry in our Ex'rs. opi-
 “ nion say: *Holy Angel protect us: This is a*
 “ *stretch of stupidity—it baffles description †.*”

It seems not to have occurred to the R., that though he could not describe a stretch of stupidity, he could afford a very good personal exemplification of it. Had he only attended to the concluding words of this quotation from scripture, “ My name is in him,” it might have induced him to suspect something peculiar in the expression. As he is a great admirer of the Fathers, it will afford him satisfaction to hear the observation of Justin Martyr on these words. “ Know therefore,” says he to Trypho the Jew and his companions, “ that he who

P 3

“ brought

* Ch. iii. ver. 1.

† P. 212. 213.

“ brought your fathers into the land of Canaan,
“ is also called Jesus.”

“ That the angels do pray for us,” says the R., “ we know from several passages in Scripture : in the prophecies of Zacharias we read :
“ 1. 12. *And the Angel replied and said, O Lord
“ of Hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on
“ Jerusalem and the cities of Juda, with which
“ thou hast been angry now these 70 years *.*”

The R., in this part of his book, seems to have forgotten the Fathers entirely. They might have been consulted to advantage, I can assure him, by a person who intended to explain this part of the scriptures. They appear universally to have been persuaded, that the angel mentioned in it was Jesus Christ ; as he may see by consulting Ribera the Jesuite, who has collected their sentiments in his Commentary on Heb. vii. 18.

But farther, says he, “ St. John saw an Angel offering to God the prayers of the saints.
“ Rev. viii. 3. 4. †”

The R., in his application of these words, appears to be singular and solitary, for says Viegas the Jesuite, “ All interpreters confess,
“ that by the angel Jesus Christ is to be understood here ; because no other can be said to
“ offer, in a manner so majestic and glorious,
“ the

* P. 213.

† Ibid.

“ the incense, that is, the prayers of all saints,
 “ upon the golden altar *.”

His next proof is from the fifth chapter of Joshua, where we have an account of his interview with the prince or captain of the Lord's host. “ Josue,” says he, “ being told by the
 “ Angel that he was Prince of the army of the
 “ Lord, fell on his face and adored the Angel :
 “ . . . Josue could not mistake the Angel for
 “ his God, because the Angel had told him
 “ that he himself was the chief of the army of
 “ God : . . . The Angel exacted a yet greater
 “ homage : he ordered Josue to loose his shoes
 “ from his feet, because the place on which he
 “ stood was holy, and Josue done as he was or-
 “ dered †.”

The R., in his observations on this part of Joshua, is very profuse in his use of the word angel. By recurring to the passage, he will see that he is not authorised to do so by the expressions of scripture. It does not afford him even the appearance of proof for the worship of either saint or angel ; for the person with whom Joshua conversed is said to have been a man. A little closer attention will also show him, that this person, who called himself the captain of the Lord's host, is named Jehova in a following verse. Is there not, then, some reason for concluding him to have been the same person whom

P 4

the

* In Loc. Sect. 2.

† P. 214.

the apostle Paul has styled the Captain of salvation? That apostle seems to have imagined Christ the conductor of Israel, when he said, "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents*." Prone as Papists are to pervert the plain meaning of scripture, there are many who have acknowledged Christ to have been the Captain of the Lord's host: "The apostle," says the Jesuite Salmeron on these words of St. Paul, "intimates to us Christ's divinity, and that justly; for he was the peculiar leader and conductor of the Israelites."

The R.'s last and most extraordinary proof is from the book of Revelation. "We find John the Evangelist," says he, "falling prostrate before the Angel, (see 9th of Rev.) The Ex. who is singularly unlucky in his references, says, the Angel refused to receive this homage—true, the Angel did, and thereby commends his modesty and humility in refusing to receive such homage from so great and highly favoured an Apostle as St. John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ; but he will permit us to believe that St. John knew something of the Christian religion; that he thought he might without being guilty of idolatry pay a reverential worship to the Angel? if not, St. John was highly criminal in re-
peating

* 1 Cor. x. 9.

“ peating the offence : for he tells us that again
 “ when the vision was finished : *I John, who*
 “ *heard and saw these things ; and after I had*
 “ *heard and seen I fell to adore before the feet of*
 “ *the Angel who shewed me these things.*—Rev.
 “ xvii. St. John was therefore convinced that
 “ the Angels modesty did not free him from
 “ the obligation of paying honor to whom ho-
 “ nor is due*.”

In order to ascertain the justness of the R.'s observations, it may be of use to take a view of the passage of scripture on which they are founded. “ And I fell at his feet to worship him : And he said unto me, See thou do it not ; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus ; Worship God †.” In these words, there are two obvious reasons assigned for the rejection of this adoration, “ I am thy fellow-servant,” and, “ worship God.” But the R., by diving into the very thoughts of this angel, has discovered that it was refused for very different causes. The angel, in his opinion, neither intended to show the impropriety of one fellow-servant worshipping another in the Church, nor to restrict adoration to God alone, but merely to teach us how humble angels can be, and that there may be some in the Church who have recourse of their prayers. When the R. *de* little inclinatio-

* P. 214. 215.

† *Ibid.*

thing like reason for his views, they may perhaps be controverted.

The apostle John, he thinks, was in so high esteem with the Saviour, as not to need the intercession of angels. Had he been much acquainted with the nature of the gospel, he would have known that the communications of divine favour never originate in the personal qualifications of the Christian. These, an apostle assures us, proceed from the free love of God to men as sinners, and not saints: “ God, who is
 “ rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith
 “ he loved us, *even when we were dead in sins,*
 “ hath quickened us together with Christ: by
 “ grace ye are saved *.” If quickening, then, or holy qualifications, originate in divine love, how can they procure divine favour? We can easily conceive how one gift of God may follow another; but how one should procure another, the R. will find it hard to demonstrate. The same apostle gives us a very different view of the economy of grace: “ He that spared not
 “ his own Son, but delivered him up for us all,
 “ how shall he not with him also *freely* give us
 “ all things †?”

These quotations contain every thing which the R. has produced from scripture with the least *appearance* of proof for the adoration of an

* 1 Co

for

† Rom. viii. 32.

for such a ponderous fabric. Bad, however, as it is, it is much more extensive and strong than his scriptural authorities for the worship of saints. Of these, as far as I have been able to discover, there are only two, and these two neither contain precept nor example. Such as they are, I will exhibit them to the reader.

“ That the Saints,” says he, “ are similar to the Angels we know from the express declaration of J. Christ : *they are as the Angels of God in Heaven* : Mat. xxii. *They are equal to the Angels.*—Luke xx. *”

Christ, in these parts of scripture, is showing the Jews, not how much saints ought to be worshipped, but what they resemble when they have arrived at heaven ; - and he compares them to angels, on account of an exact correspondence in their condition : “ They neither marry nor are given in marriage.”

“ As power,” says he farther, “ is given to the Angels over nations, so power is given to the Saints who live with Christ. This truth is expressly revealed by St. John :—*To him who overcomes and observes my works to the end, I will give power over nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron.*—Rev. ii. 26. 27. †”

Much attached as the Romish Church is to departed saints, she would have little inclination

to feel the effects of their government ; for it is immediately subjoined, “ as the vessel of a pot-
 “ ter shall they be broken in pieces.” The R. will have some difficulty in converting an iron rod into a sceptre of grace to the Church. But he has only to recollect, that before the saints can receive this power, they must have overcome death, as well as other enemies ; and therefore, prayers to them before the resurrection must be rather premature.

To these strong proofs for the worship of saints, the R. has added a kind of collateral assistance : “ We have,” says he, “ some striking examples of the religious respect shown
 “ to Saints both in the Old and New Testament : ’tis said of Elias, 1 Kings, xvii. that :
 “ *When Abdias was in the way Elias met him,*
 “ *who, when he knew him, fell on his face and*
 “ *said : this you, my Lord Elias ?* and 2 Kings
 “ i. ’tis said that after fire from heaven had
 “ consumed two Captains and their companies
 “ in punishment of their disrespect to the prophet, &c. &c. The respect shewn the Prophets and the Apostles must have been of a
 “ religious nature ; they possessed no power or
 “ place under Government, to which a civil
 “ respect is due*.”

Though the R. do not exhibit many marks of acute discrimination, he might have easily

ly distinguished between respect and worship consisting in adoration and prayer. Still he has great merit in discovering, that the nature of the respect shown to a person must correspond with his character and station. Thus, the respect shown to a clergyman is religious, to an officer of government civil, to a wicked man vicious, and to a rogue thievish.

In defence of this worship, the R. has likewise made a feeble attempt to produce the Fathers. He has, however, avoided a profuse exhibition of their sentiments; without doubt, because general observations are not so tiresome to a reader as minute discussion. "To avoid
" prolixity," says he, "let the Ex. and his
" friends take Joseph Mede's testimony. This
" zealous Protestant, in order to show that the
" Papal power was the kingdom of Antichrist,
" has collected the concurring testimony of
" many early writers in support of the doctrine
" of the invocation of Saints and Angels.—
" Book iii. Ep. 16. &c. *"

That Mede, in proving the Pope to be Antichrist, has produced the testimony of many early writers as evidences of the existence of this prostitution of religion, is abundantly true. But he knew that the more early writers were strangers to such a practice in the Church; and therefore he has passed them in silence. As our
business

business at present is not to prove the Pope Antichrist, but to ascertain what is Christian doctrine, the R. can have no objections to approach nearer apostolic times than Mede, and take the Fathers as early as we find them. There, perhaps, the R. may find something to kindle his zeal, and arouse his indignation against the degeneracy of Protestant heretics.

When Polycarp, the disciple of the apostle John, was martyred, the proconsul, at the instigation of the Jews, would not permit the Church of Smyrna to receive his body ; lest, as the Jews suggested, they should pay it divine honours, as Christians in general did to the Saviour. To this aspersion, the Church of Smyrna, in their Epistle, replied, “ These men know, that we
 “ can neither forsake Christ, who suffered for
 “ the salvation of all who are saved, the inno-
 “ cent for the guilty ; nor can we worship any
 “ other. Him, being truly the Son of God,
 “ we adore ; but the martyrs, and disciples, and
 “ followers of the Lord, we justly love, for that
 “ extraordinary affection which they have shewn
 “ for their king and master : Of whose happi-
 “ ness God grant that we may be partakers, and
 “ that we may learn by their example.”

Ireneus mentions some persons, who, in his time, entertained a strange opinion of the power of angels ; and on this account gave them divine worship. But this, he assures us, was not the
 practice

practice of the Church. There, he informs us, the worship of all creatures was excluded; for says he, “Through the whole world, the Church
 “ does nothing by invocation of angels nor by
 “ incantations; but purely and manifestly directs
 “ her prayers to God who made all, and calls
 “ upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*.”

“These things,” says Tertullian, “I can ask
 “ of none but him, from whom I know I shall
 “ obtain them; because he alone grants them,
 “ and I, to whom it belongs to obtain them, am
 “ his servant, and him alone I serve †.”

Epiphanius informs us, that, as early as his time, some women began to worship the Virgin Mary as the queen of heaven, by offering her a cake. In opposition to this practice, he says,
 “Let us assume the spirit of men, and beat
 “ down the madness of these women. For
 “ which of the prophets ever permitted a man
 “ to be worshipped? and much less a woman. . . .
 “ The old error shall not reign among us; to
 “ forsake the living God, and worship things
 “ which he has made. For if he will not suffer
 “ the angels to be adored, much less the daugh-
 “ ter of Joachim and Ann ‡.”

But though the zeal of Epiphanius against the worship of the Romish Church was great, he has been considerably outdone by Justin Martyr, who
 unchurches

* Lib. 2. c. 57. † Apol. c. 34.

‡ Hæres. 79. adv. Collyrid.

unchurches every worshipper of angels and saints. “ But that God alone,” says he, “ ought to be worshipped, he thus teaches us, saying, *The greatest commandment is, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve, with thy whole heart, and thy whole strength . . .* Those persons, therefore, who do not obey his instructions, show themselves to be no Christians, though they may profess the doctrine of Christ *.”

The R. has produced two quotations from the Books of Origen against Celsus, in behalf of the worship of angels. But, in neither, is there the least hint of any such a practice then subsisting in the Church. “ Origen,” says he, “ a very early and well-informed writer, speaks of it as an universal practice in the Church: *The Angel of the Christian offers his prayers to God through the only High Priest, himself, also praying for him, who is committed to his charge. Lib. 8. Con. Celsum.* In the fifth book he says, *that the angels carry up our prayers to God, and bring down his blessings to us †.*” Since the R. has given him the character of a very early and well-informed writer, I will present him a specimen of the information which he has transmitted to us in these very Books against Celsus. “ We must pray to him alone,” says he, “ who is God over all; and we must pray

“ to

* Apol. 2. p. 63. † P. 215.

“ to the Word of God, his only-begotten and
 “ the first-born of every creature, and we must
 “ humbly beseech him as our high-priest, to
 “ present our prayer (for it is known to him)
 “ to his Father, and the Father of them who
 “ live according to the word of God *. Good
 “ angels in some sense we reverence and honour
 “ as God’s ministers ; but we worship one God
 “ and his only Son with prayers and supplica-
 “ tions ; offering them to God by his only-be-
 “ gotten, begging that he, as our high-priest,
 “ would present them to God †. All prayers
 “ are to be offered to God ; and it is not rea-
 “ sonable to invoke angels ‡.”

“ The first God,” says Arnobius, “ is enough
 “ for us : In him, we worship all that is to be
 “ worshipped ||.”

Athanasius, in his Orations against the Arians, exhibits the worship given to Christ as a decisive evidence of his divinity. In explaining these words of the apostle Paul, “ Now God himself
 “ and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ,
 “ direct our way unto you §,” he says, “ No
 “ man is a true Catholic, who would pray to
 “ receive any thing from God, and angels or
 “ any other creature ; Nor has any Christian
 “ as yet used this form of prayer or words,
 “ God and an angel grant it to you ¶ :” And

says

* Lib. 8. † Ibid. ‡ Lib. 5. || Contr.
 Gent. Lib. 3. § 1 Thess. iii. 11. ¶ Orat. 4.

says Novatian upon the same subject, "If Christ
 " be only man, why is he invoked in prayer?
 " . . . This is not the prerogative of man, but of
 " God *."

If the R. would shew the worship of saints and angels to be an apostolic doctrine, let him produce his proofs from these more early writers, and not from persons who wrote when this abominable practice had begun to creep into the Church. In consulting the works of the Fathers, he ought also to distinguish oratorical and poetical apostrophes, from what is written coolly to illustrate the doctrines of religion. The former, Theodoret assures us, ought not to be considered as a rule of faith †; and even Sixtus Senensis, a Papist, acknowledges, that many things, which the Fathers have said in their public discourses, proceeded from the passions, and cannot be justified ‡. A cursory view of modern writers will show him the propriety of making this discrimination. No person ever imagined Shakespeare a Papist, though he said, "Angels
 " and ministers of grace defend us;" nor the British poets heathens, though they have invoked the muses.

When the R. has controverted these authorities from the Fathers, he may perhaps be furnished with a fresh supply. As an antidote against

* De Trinit. c. 14.

† Dial. 3.

‡ Biblioth. Lib. 6. Annot. 152.

gainst the worship of saints and angels, I would advise him to ponder seriously his own proofs and illustrations. But should this not induce him to relinquish his views, let him, in his next publication, support them from the Fathers of the three first centuries.

II. IMAGES AND RELICS.

THE R. has told us, that the veneration of images and relics consists in a certain relative respect *. Though he has not specified the nature of this relative respect, his deficiencies can be supplied from the acts of the Councils. “Due honour and veneration,” says the Council of Trent, “must be given them, according to the definition of the second Nicene Council †.” In the acts of that Council, we are then to find the faith of the Romish Church; and these teach us, that images are not merely to be respected, but worshipped. “I worship and adore the venerable images, and I declare those accursed who do not so profess or practise ‡. It is without doubt acceptable and pleasing to God to worship and salute the images of Christ, the blessed Virgin, angels, and all saints ||.”

In what the veneration of relics consists, it is more difficult to determine. These are so multifarious as to exceed the power of reduction to order;

* P. 217. † Sess. 25. ‡ Act 2. || Act 7.

order ; so that a great deal must be left to the judgement of the simple faithful. Thus, for example, there must be some difference in the worship offered to the parings of St. Edmund's toes, and that given to the coals which roasted St. Lawrence, or to the stones preserved among the Glassenbury relics, as the identical stones which the devil tempted Christ to turn into bread. Some, we know, are to receive divine worship ; for says Aquinas, “ If we speak of the very cross
 “ upon which Christ was crucified, it is to be
 “ worshipped with divine worship ; both as it
 “ represents Christ, and touched the members
 “ of his body, and was sprinkled with his blood :
 “ And for these reasons, we both speak to the
 “ cross and pray to it, as if it were Christ crucified upon it *.” But others, intended merely to terrify the witches, cure the diseases of cattle, kill vermin, and serve other little necessary purposes, must receive a veneration suited to the nature of their uses.

Though many of the relics of the Romish Church may seem considerably remote from religion, such as the pap-spoon of the Virgin, and the tail of the ass on which Christ rode to Jerusalem, yet they ought not to be viewed with indifference. The Church can attest how useful they have been to both the souls and bodies of the simple. Besides begetting naturally a great
 reverence

* P. 3. Qu. 25. Art. 4.

reverence for religion, they have been productive of the most stupendous miracles in behalf of their worshippers, and for the vindication of the truth. Had the reader only faith to believe, he might be told of the wondrous cures performed by the Holy Thorn; how the bones of St. Gervaise and St. Prolaise cured an old blind butcher; how the relics of the saints have cast out devils, and sent them yelling into the Red Sea in myriads; and many other strange events, equally true and marvellous. But as the present design is to give a just view of Popish relics, and not to write their history, I will mention only one fact, which will beget admiration even in Protestant heretics.

Prince Christopher, of the family of the dukes of Radzecil, having gone a pilgrimage to Rome to kiss his Holiness' toe, received, as a reward of his piety, a box of very precious relics. These, on his return home, became the consolation of the afflicted, and the terror of the devil. Even the most stubborn of those evil spirits, over whom ordinary relics possessed no influence, acknowledged their virtue in bellowings of submission.

Scarcely had a few months illustrated their power, when some monks, with humble intreaty, requested the use of them for the benefit of a man into whom the devil had entered. As this foul fiend stuck to his new habitation with
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the utmost stubbornness, and had disregarded their most potent conjurations, the Prince readily complied : And no sooner were they applied to the body of the demoniac, than the devil was forced to decamp. The spectators exclaimed, A miracle ! a miracle ! and the Prince lifted up his heart and hands in pious gratitude to God, for bestowing upon him such a holy and powerful treasure.

Some time after, when the Prince was relating to his friends this wonderful deliverance, and extolling the virtues of his relics, one gentleman, who had been in his retinue at Rome, discovered uncommon incredulity. Being posed to account for his rejecting such plain evidence as attended this transaction, he told him, that in returning from Rome, he had unluckily lost the box of relics, which had been entrusted to his care. To screen himself, therefore, from his resentment, he had provided another exactly similar, and filled it with bones and little trinkets ; and this was the identical box which had wrought such great wonders.

Next morning, the Prince sent for the monks, and asked, if they knew any other demoniac who needed his relics. A person of this description was easily found ; for the devil, in Popish countries, is particularly remarkable for his spirit of opposition, and is generally to be found nestling in the neighbourhood of relics. When
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the monks produced the demoniac, the Prince caused him to be exorcised in his presence, but without effect. The devil kept his birth with all the obstinacy of a mule, and would neither be moved by threats nor coaxing. The Prince then ordered the monks to withdraw, and delivered the demoniac to some Tartars, whom he kept about his stable, with orders to give the devil his due. At first, the demoniac thought to terrify them by his horrible gestures and grimaces; but these Tartars used their whips with such faithfulness as the devil never witnessed before. Having never dreamed of such a mode of exorcising, he found himself taken on the weak side; and therefore, without the use of either relics, hard words, or holy water, he began to cry for quarter, and confessed, that the monks had hired him to personate a character, which he was ill qualified to sustain.

The Prince again requested the presence of the monks, and produced to them the man, who threw himself at his feet, and acknowledged the imposture. They at first declared this to be only an artifice of the devil, who employed the organs of this man to propagate such a falsehood, to the discredit of religion. But when the Prince told them, how necessary it was to exorcise the father of lies out of them also, they began to repent, and acknowledged that they had been guilty of this imposition, with a view to stop the
progress

progress of Lutheranism, and save the souls of all good Papists in that country. He then dismissed them, at the same time telling them, that such pious frauds were mere diabolical inventions, and that he would no longer trust his salvation to men who used such means to support their religion. He accordingly began to turn his attention to the scriptures; and, notwithstanding their obscurity, he understood as much of their meaning as showed him the absurdity of Popish principles, and induced him to make an open profession of the Reformed religion.

The reader may perhaps be curious to know what the Pope had put into this wonderful box. But the loss of it has for ever deprived us of this important piece of information. For his satisfaction, however, I can give him an abstract of the catalogue of images and relics which formerly belonged to the cathedral of Glasgow. At the Reformation, there were treasured up there, an image of our Saviour in gold, the twelve apostles in silver, and two silver crosses, enriched with precious stones, and small portions of the wood of the true cross. There were, likewise, five silver caskets, containing the following articles of adoration. 1. Some hair of the blessed Virgin; 2. A piece of the hairy garment worn by St. Kentigern, a part of the scourge with which he flogged himself, and a part of the scourge used by St. Thomas a Becket; 3. A
piece

piece of St. Bartholomew's skin ; 4. A bone of St. Ninian ; 5. A piece of the girdle worn by the Virgin Mary. In a crystal case, was contained a bone of St. Magdalene. There were also four crystal phials, containing a part of the Virgin Mary's milk, a piece of the manger in which Christ was laid, a red liquor which formerly flowed from the tomb of St. Kentigern, some bones of St. Eugene and St. Blaise, and a part of the tomb of St. Catharine. There were six hides containing very precious relics ; such as, a piece of St. Martin's cloak, part of the bodies of St. Kentigern and St. Thomas a Becket, &c. Two linen bags were filled with saints' bones ; and a vast assemblage of small relics were lodged in a wooden chest*.

When the Reformation rendered images and relics useless in Scotland, the Archbishop of Glasgow retired to France, and carried along with him this precious treasure. With such a host of friendly intercessors, he could not fail to enjoy a cordial reception from the Church. The most mortified ecclesiastic in France could scarcely behold a golden Saviour and silver apostles without welcome greetings, and feeling his demure visage relaxing into smiles of complacence.

Though I cannot at present give the reader a view of all the uses of relics in religion, there is

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one,

* Beauties of Scotland, vol. 3. p. 217. 218.

one, which it would be doing injustice to the subject to omit. Like oral tradition, they have been found of vast use for explaining obscure passages of scripture. Of this many edifying illustrations might be produced; but one will serve as a specimen of the whole. Five devout pilgrims, happening to meet on their return from Rome, loaded with these excellent helps to religion, each began to extol his acquisitions. After much conversation highly characteristic of their faithful simplicity, they produced their riches; and, lo, to their great amazement, each was honoured with a foot of the very ass upon which Christ rode to Jerusalem. Now, the reader may recollect, that the scriptures do not even tell us that this ass had a foot, but here is decisive proof of the existence of five; and if five were collected by five pilgrims only, let him conceive how many must be travelling through other parts of the Church, to assist the simple faithful in their exercises of devotion. The Romish Church is remarkably lucky, in picking up this relic before the existence of the Antiquarian Society. The discovery of an ass with five feet would have rendered them frantic with joy, and completely marred the devotions of the whole congregation of the simple. Rather than see such a precious ass deprived of one hoof, they would permit every member of the Church to remain in ignorance for ever.

At present, I cannot, as usual, refer the R. to the writings of the Fathers in confirmation of the above fact. It is one of those facts which are known to the Church only by oral tradition.

Such idle fooleries has the Church of Rome palmed upon the world, under pretence of religion. A view of their influence upon our ancestors is sufficient to show their opposition to the spirit of the gospel. In proportion as our progenitors were actuated by this gloomy superstition, we find them destitute of practical piety and every social virtue. They spent that time and property in idle pilgrimages, in hunting after relics, and in other nonsensical acts of devotion, which ought to have been employed for the benefit of mankind; and multitudes at last beggared their families, to perpetuate these delusions. So prevalent was this evil in England, that the statute of Mortmain was found necessary to prevent the whole landed property of the nation from becoming the plunder of the Church.

When the Church of Rome maintains the usefulness of images and relics as means of devotion, it is merely a cloak to conceal the basest and most selfish views. Let the R. observe either the former or the present state of that community, and he will find, that wherever

these appendages of superstition have abounded, they have always been connected with swarms of monks, remarkable only for their vices, and for impoverishing the bigotted and the ignorant. Mistaken views of religion introduced them at first into the Church; and afterwards they have been used to render mankind subservient to the gratifications of the clergy. The advice given to Pope Julius III. by the bishops assembled at Bononia, discovers the light in which the crafty ecclesiastics of the Romish Church view the relics of the saints. "When any bishop," said they, "sets himself to officiate in any divine service with pomp and solemnity, he ought to have many ornaments to distinguish him from ordinary priests; such as, the bones and relics of some dead man. Do you command him to hang a whole naked leg, arm, or head of some saint, about his neck by a good thick cord; for that will contribute very much to increase the religious astonishment of all who behold it. The truth is, these ceremonies were all invented and continued by Popes; you, therefore, who are a Pope, may, if you please, augment them."

Let us now observe, how the R. has proven a relative respect due to images and relics.

In discussing this point, he has neither informed us how graven and molten images can convey

convey to the mind adequate conceptions of the Deity and glorified saints, nor how the worship of old rags and shoes, &c. can be acceptable to God. He has also cautiously avoided an explanation of the second precept of the decalogue, and other parts of scripture, in which the judgements of God are denounced against the worshippers of images. He has merely produced what he imagines to be examples of respect for relics. A short view of these will discover, that, had he designed to render this expiring cause ridiculous, he could not have chosen more apposite illustrations.

“ By faith Jacob dying, blessed each of Joseph’s sons, and worshipped on the summit of his rod or sceptre: in the Hebrew text, ’tis *to the head of his bed*. The Apostle therefore shewing Jacob’s faith, in worshipping Joseph’s sceptre as an emblem of Christ’s sceptre and kingdom, did not cite the Hebrew text as we have it *.”

The R. has not specified whether this rod was a saint, angel, or relic; but this is a kind of worship which will not bear nice discrimination. In expounding these words of the apostle Paul, he should have also considered, that placing truth and falsehood so closely together might perhaps lead to detection. Does this apostle say, that Jacob worshipped the top of Joseph’s

Q 3

rod?

* P. 63.

rod? The Vulgate translation, indeed, mentions something like it; but this, he might have known, is a corruption, which has crept into it since the days of Jerome, who made it; for says he, “Some persons foolishly feign, that Jacob adored the top of Joseph’s sceptre, that, in honour of his son, he adored his power. But the Hebrew reading is very different. Israel, it is there said, worshipped upon the bed’s head, that is, after exacting an oath of his son, and secure of his request, he worshipped God, &c. *”

“The pious Josiah,” says the R., “respected the bones of the prophet, who foretold the destruction of Bethel—4. b. of Kings, xxiii. 18. and Moses himself returning from Egypt, took with him the bones of the great patriarch Joseph. . . †”

In producing this illustration, he might have likewise added, that this prophet announced the destruction of Bethel for presuming to worship God by images. Since the R. would exhibit these bones as relics, can he inform us where they were worshipped? and when the clergy of these days hung them about their necks in sacrificing to God? The bones of dead men could not then be handled to advantage; and therefore the Church permitted them to rest in peace; “Let him alone,” said Josiah, “let no
“ man

* Quest. in gen.

† P. 216.

“ man move his bones ; so they let his bones
 “ alone *.” It has been the peculiar prerogative of the Romish Church to disturb the ashes of the dead, and plunder their sepulchres.

The R. must have presumed a great deal indeed upon the ignorance of his readers, when he introduced the bones of Joseph as a corroboration of the practices of the Romish Church. Yet, so confident is he respecting this particular, that he mentions it twice : “ The respect and veneration,” says he again, “ shown to relics is clearly revealed both in the Old and New Testament : “ Moses going out of Egypt took with him the “ bones of the Patriarch Joseph †.” A plain statement of scriptural facts will sufficiently refute his groundless insinuations : “ By faith Joseph, when he died, gave commandment concerning his bones ‡.” “ And Joseph said “ unto his brethren, I die ; and God will surely “ visit you, and bring you out of this land into “ the land which he sware unto Abraham, to “ Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an “ oath of the children of Israel, saying, God “ will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up “ my bones from hence ||.” “ And Moses “ took the bones of Joseph with him ; for he “ had straitly sworn the children of Israel, say-
 “ ing,

* 2 Kings, xxiii. 18.

† P. 219. 220.

‡ Heb. xi. 22.

|| Gen. l. 24. 25.

“ing, God shall surely visit you, and ye shall
 “carry up my bones away hence with you *.”
 “And the bones of Joseph, which the children
 “of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried
 “they in Shechem †.”

“In like manner,” says he, “we read that
 “the greatest possible respect was paid to the
 “Ark of the Covenant, which was but an image
 “of the throne of God, ‡”

Can the R. specify any particular period in which the ark was worshipped with prayer and adoration? If not, why does he produce it as a proof of the worship of images? According to the views of the Council of Trent, nothing less could constitute a proper degree of worship to such an image: For say they, “The honour
 “which is paid to images, is referred to the originals which they represent ||;” and therefore an image of the throne of God must be entitled to all the worship which men can give it.

“We know,” says he, “the veneration
 “which was conceived for the Brazen Serpent,
 “on which whoever looked when bit by the
 “fiery serpents, was instantly healed §.”

And we know, likewise, that when Israel treated it with Popish honours, Hezekiah, a pretended reformer, sprung up in the Church,
 and

* Exod. xiii. 19. † Josh. xxiv. 32. ‡ P. 219.

|| Sess. 25. § P. 219.

and afforded an example which has been duly imitated by his Protestant successors. “ He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent which Moses had made : for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense unto it :” And, what will appear very surprising to the R., whose principles must induce him to execrate such Protestant conduct, it is added, “ He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord *.”

“ Elisha,” says he farther, “ when his master Elias was translated in a fiery chariot by Angels, on his return struck the waters of Jordan with the mantle which had fallen from the prophet, saying : *Where now is the God of Elias . . . and the waters were divided hither, and thither and Elisha passed over.* 2 Kings, ii. 14. What Catholic ever expressed such confidence in any relic as this holy prophet did in the mantle of Elias † ?”

Such contemptible prostitution of scripture discovers how hardly the R. was beset in illustrating his sentiments. Will he inform us whose relic this mantle was, when Elijah himself used it for the same purpose, and with similar effect ? If Elisha placed his confidence in it as a relic, why did he, instead of giving it due worship,

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* 2 Kings, xviii. 3. †

† P. 220.

turn his attention entirely to the Lord God of Elijah? With the promise of a double portion of that spirit with which Elijah had been endowed, he imagined himself competent to perform the same works; and hence this imitation of his conduct. But let the R. tell us, whether the future miracles of Elisha were performed by the assistance of this mantle, or by the spirit of Elijah.

He next produces the history of the revival of a dead man, by touching the bones of Elisha, and adds, “ Would the Ex. permit this man, “ who was raised from the dead, or his friends “ to have some respect for these venerable bones “ to which he was so much indebted *.”

When he can show us, that Israel took up the bones of the prophet and worshipped them, this will be acknowledged as a precedent for the Popish doctrine of relics.

His last proof is taken from the Acts of the Apostles: “ *God wrought special miracles by the “ hand of Paul, so that even there were brought “ from his body handkerchiefs and aprons, and “ the diseases departed from them and the wicked “ spirits went out of them. If one of these “ handkerchiefs or aprons had relieved the Ex. “ from a mortal disease, would he have thrown “ it aside to rot? would he shew no sort of re- “ spect*

* P. 220.

“ spect to an instrument to which he was in-
 “ debted for a continuation of life * ?”

Another quotation from the Acts of the Apostles will afford a sufficient reply ; “ Inso-
 “ much that they brought forth the sick into
 “ the streets, and laid them on beds and couches,
 “ that at the least the shadow of Peter passing
 “ by might overshadow some of them †.” The
 R. must acknowledge, that these shadows were
 very substantial relics ; and doubtless they were
 carefully preserved by the Church, for the be-
 nefit of the diseased upon future occasions.

When the R. raked together all these suppo-
 sitious examples from scripture for this kind of
 worship, why did he overlook the precepts with
 which the book of Revelation abounds ? If the
 former be entirely imaginary, the latter are as
 plain and direct concerning image-worship, as
 he could possibly desire. To show him that he
 might have treated this subject to much better
 purpose, I will subjoin a few of those hints
 which are given us in the scriptures, of the
 manner in which we ought to conduct ourselves
 with reference to images.

“ Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven
 “ image, nor any likeness of any thing that is
 “ in heaven above, or that is in the earth be-
 “ neath, or that is in the waters under the
 “ earth.

* P. 220.

† Ch. v. 15.

“ earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to
 “ them, nor serve them . . . *”

“ Ye shall make no idols nor graven image,
 “ neither rear ye up a standing image, neither
 “ shall ye set up any image of stone in your
 “ land, to bow down unto it †.”

“ What agreement hath the temple of God
 “ with images ‡ ?”

“ Little children, keep yourselves from i-
 “ mages ||.”

As the R. has tacitly forsaken his acquaintances the Fathers, it will be unnecessary to produce their sentiments on this subject. Should he, however, express the least inclination to hear them, they can be profusely exhibited. A search into the writings of the first centuries for this absurd and abominable superstition, would be a fruitless labour. The primitive Christians were too frequently taught by affliction, to be conformed to the world, and too often felt their need of the true consolations of religion, to trust in the lying vanities of their superstitious descendants. If the R. wish to find the beginning of this abomination, he must look for it at a time when heathens and their opinions were too freely admitted into the Church; when pride and contention had banished the spirit of religion;

* Exod. xx. 4. 5.

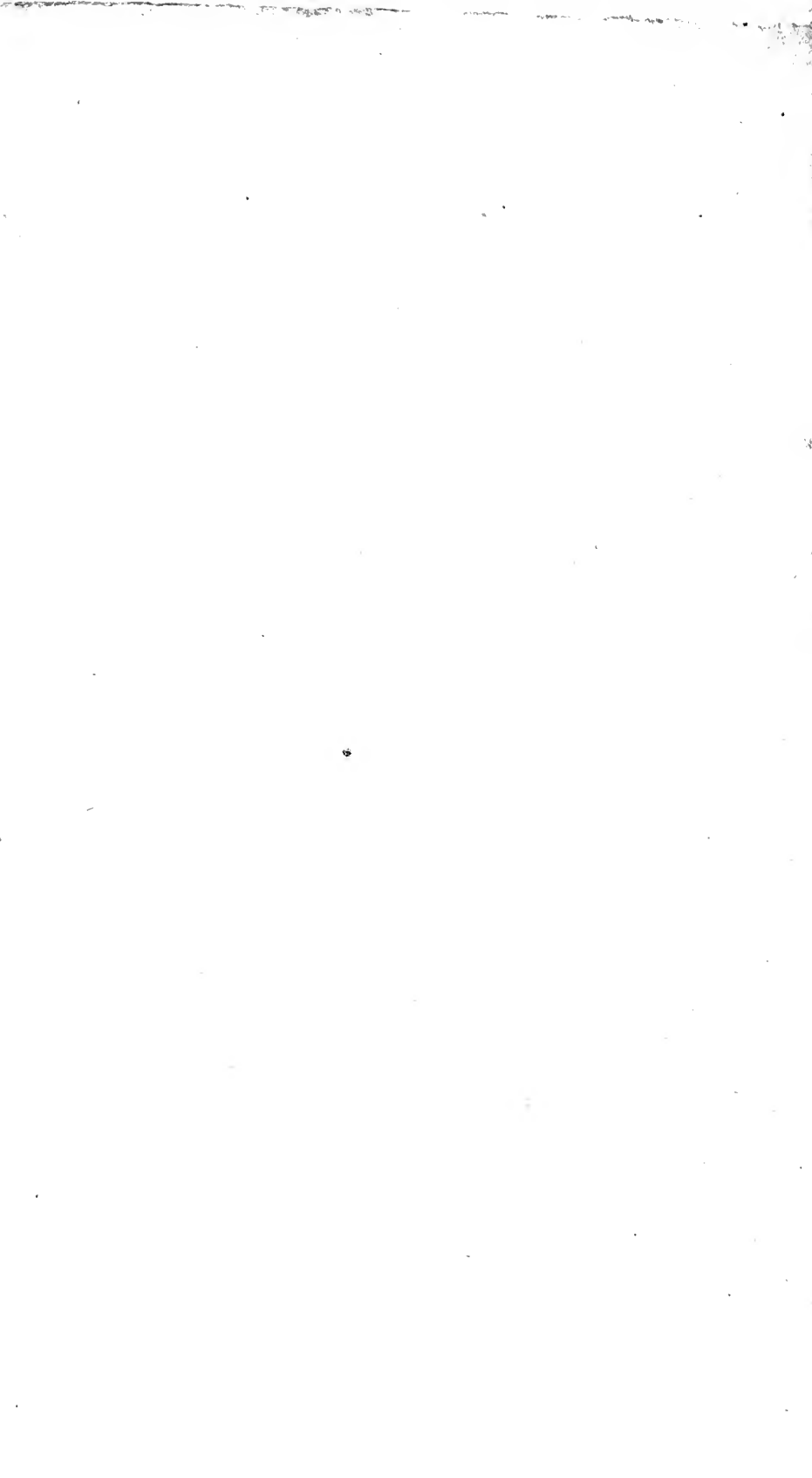
† Lev. xxvi. 1.

‡ 2 Cor. vi. 16.

|| 1 John, v. 21.

religion ; when the luxury and dissipation of the clergy had displaced the simplicity of primitive times. But he may be assured, that notwithstanding his props, the days of superstitious foolery are fast hastening to an end. The Church of Rome has long been the habitation of devils, and “ the hold of every foul spirit, “ and a cage of every unclean and hateful “ bird ;” and the events of providence are tending to introduce that period, in which the beast and the false prophet shall reap the fruit of their labours ; when the divine prediction concerning Rome shall receive its accomplishment : “ And the light of a candle shall shine “ no more at all in thee ; and the voice of the “ bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard “ no more at all in thee ; . . . for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.”





Handwritten text, possibly a signature or name, including the word "Sabunda" and "Ami".



