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Truth and error contrasted

Wangt Smith



TRUTH AND ERROR CONTRASTED.



Truth and Error Contrasted.

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AN INQUIRY

INTO THE

NECESSITY OF PROMOTING THE REFORMATION

OF THE

ROMAN CATHOLICS OF IRELAND,

*PREFACED BY AN ADDRESS TO THEM ;*

TO WHICH IS SUBJOINED,

REFLECTIONS ON THE SOLEMN RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE

**Bishops & Clergy of the Established Church**

IN REFERENCE TO THE CHURCH OF ROME.

---

BY THE REV. ROBERT J. M'GHEE, A. B.

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“ So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the Gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”—Rom. i. 15, 16.

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1836.



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## PREFACE.

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THE vast importance of the subject treated of in the following pages, demands an apology for the time that has elapsed, between the date, and the publication of the Letters contained in it. A statement of the circumstances which elicited them, and which prevented their being sooner issued from the press, will, it is hoped, be considered sufficient.

In the month of July, 1829, a paper appeared in Blackwood's Magazine, containing a very crude but acrimonious attack, on the "*Society for promoting the religious principles of the Reformation,*" which had been formed in the metropolis of this country, under the patronage of his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin. Among other subjects on which the author of that paper gave vent to his indignation, he particularly fastened on a passage in a speech, which the writer

of these pages had delivered at the formation of this Society in the Rotunda; and he attempted to charge what he called its "bigotry and intolerance," upon the whole Society. The writer felt he was called on, either to vindicate the truth of the sentiment which he had uttered, or to acknowledge its error; not from any considerations connected with his own character, but for the sake of truth—for the sake of his Roman Catholic countrymen, whose eternal interests were involved—and for the sake of that Society, which he considers the most important in its object, that Ireland ever saw. But this article appeared at a time, when he was ordered to Harrowgate by his medical attendants, and directed to preserve a total relaxation from every exertion both of mind and body. It was in this state, when he was unable to bear the protracted mental fatigue, and anxiety, of controversial writing, or controversial thinking, that he endeavoured to hurry over the letters, written, as they are dated, to the Editor of Blackwood's Magazine. He had hoped to compress into one or two letters, matter, which has expanded into seven; and he sent them over, as soon as written, to be printed: but a long continuation of illness, prevented him on his return, from superintending the correction of the press: and it was not till the commencement of the present year, that he was able to desire the printer to proceed. This delay, and the circumstances of the Reformation Society; the total neglect of the Protestant Church on this most imperative and important duty, of openly endeavouring to enlighten their Roman Catholic neighbours; and the increased

facility of exertion, which the relaxation of the penal statutes seemed to afford, by removing the objection, that the Society was a cover for a mere political attack on Roman Catholics, led the writer to consider, that it might be useful, that an individual, however insignificant, should offer some considerations, on the duties and responsibilities of the Established Church, in reference to their Roman Catholic brethren. While he was engaged in this, a sentiment expressed from very high authority, relative to the duties of the clergy, on this important subject, seemed, when it appeared, to call for some plain and honest examination, not only on account of the high respectability and influence, of the quarter from whence it proceeded, but from the dangerous effects which it was calculated to produce upon the church ; administering an opiate, instead of a stimulant, in that protracted torpor of spiritual energy—that long continued lethargy of criminal indifference, from which, even an inexperienced practitioner might judge, that if the church be not awakened, she cannot long survive. These considerations, added to the neglect of the spiritual interests of our Roman Catholic friends, even by those who acknowledged the necessity of exertion in their behalf, seemed to call for some faithful appeal to the understandings, the judgments, and the consciences of those, who felt any interest in the propagation of the Gospel, in the salvation of Roman Catholics, or the preservation of the Established Religion in our land. In making this appeal, the writer humbly trusts he can lay claim to honesty of intention, and he does not fear to say, that he knows he has set forth the

principles of truth. For the subject itself he offers no apology, he solicits no indulgence, he deprecates no severity of reproof from the theologian, or of criticism from the scholar : the dignity and importance of truth, lift it up above all such considerations. But for the numerous defects in composition, he must apologize by saying, that as the work was written at numerous intervals, during a time of continual bodily weakness, and much mental depression, he was unable to write as the importance of the subject deserved ; but he was anxious to bring it through the press, from a deep sense of that importance, and the thought that his pen might soon be silent for ever.

Although intended chiefly for members of the Established Church, yet as it was written on the controversy with Roman Catholics, and might appear in some parts likely to wound their feelings, it seemed incomplete without a prefatory address to them. To speak the truth without offence, would be, to be wiser than Him, who spake as "*never man spake ;*" but the only offence which the writer would not fear to give, is the "*offence of the cross.*" It is time that Roman Catholics should be addressed as men, and as brethren—that the distinction between the truth of the Protestant religion, and the errors of their doctrines, should be marked by some other feeling than that of political hostility and penalties of law ; and if it be admitted a blessing, that Christianity should be established as the religion of the nation, it is time that a rational and intelligent race of men, should learn to recognize in it

something more, than a state provision for the instruction of one portion of the people, which protests against the guilt and idolatry of the rest, and which without an effort to save, leaves them to perish in their ignorance. The writer is aware, that by a large proportion of those who are called the *enlightened* part of the community, the proper exercise of Christian charity, is considered to be a perfect toleration, not only of persons, but of principles; and that the line of conduct thought most proper for members of the Established Church, is, to allow all men to think, and speak on the subject of religion as they please, without presuming, as it is called, to judge them—he is aware, that any attempt to limit that religion, which alone can save the soul, to certain defined principles, to the exclusion of those men who reject them, is, in their opinion, only the acme of prejudice, intolerance, and uncharitable bigotry; but there is ONE, whose word can never be accommodated to the fluctuations of our modern vocabularies, of which the firm unchanging language, like its Author, is “*the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;*” from this source, the writer has derived those principles that militate against the doctrines of this fashionable liberality—there was a time, when the Christian truth, was exclusively identified with the laws and constitution of the British empire, and seemed to borrow a stability from human institutions, which perhaps, in the estimation of many, made it superfluous to vindicate, and unnecessary to defend it; but that time is past for ever—the Christian faith is no longer an integral part of Britain’s Constitution—as a nation, she no longer

stands up in that capacity, in which alone the acts of a nation are to be recognized viz.—in the enactments and administrations of her laws, to identify herself with the God of truth, as He is revealed in his Holy Word, to bear her testimony against the principles that undeify her Redeemer by their infidelity, or nullify his great salvation by their superstition—as a nation she has held up her forehead to receive the mark of the beast, and when the mark of the beast is branded on her brow, the God of mercy alone can tell, when the judgments of the beast shall overtake her guilt. The writer does not mean to raise a cry against the administration that repealed the acts, which excluded infidelity from offices of trust, and superstition from them, and from the parliament of England—they acted as politicians under the pressure of a necessity which they were alike unable to encounter, or avoid—they saw what any man of common sense could see, that the penal laws could only have been continued at the point of the bayonet in Ireland, and they could not feel, that such an alternative was eligible, either on the principles of policy or of humanity. The objections urged against Roman Catholics in the legislature, were the evil tendencies of their political principles, but the administration must have gone to study the obsolete works of our Reformers, to have discovered the evils in their religion: they felt it the province of legislators to come to a decision on the policy, as they perceived, that the Church had long since abandoned the theology of the question. They laboured under evils that had been long and progressively accumulated, under the pressure of ne-

cessities, to which every day was bringing aggravated weight, which they thought it were a less convulsive struggle, to heave from their shoulders, than to attempt to carry on, till they should sink under the load.

Perhaps the mind of a soldier does not readily comprehend the nice refinements of casuistical distinctions, under which the penal code could have been continued. It may have struck a plain straight forward man, that when a nation had gone on for years, to train up a college of Priests, to teach the people a certain code of principles, it were not within the strict limits of justice, to punish them, and that people for profiting by this education. It may have seemed anomalous, that the expression of principles, should have been continued to be gravely, and solemnly imposed on men by law, on the occasion of entering into the legislature, which were scouted by common consent, out of the ordinary intercourses of society—and that a people, whose opinions were tolerated to acquiescence, if not to approbation, as being those of Christianity in the common usages of national intercourse, should be pronounced “*superstitious and idolatrous*,” on certain state occasions, by those, of whom many stood up the next moment, even on that very spot, to disclaim the very principles they had expressed, and virtually to recant the asseverations they had uttered.

While torrents of opprobrium are poured out by Protestants, upon those who have brought in Roman Catholics to participate in the councils of the nation,

let us ask what have they done? Let the man who counts it the greatest curse, that ever fell upon an infatuated country, as it certainly is, to sever its laws, its government, and its constitution, by a legislative enactment from the truth of the living God, and to take infidelity and idolatry into partnership in her politics, let him ask, what has the administration done? Let him ask, to what is their conduct to be traced? and what man of common sagacity, and principle, and knowledge, can be at a loss to answer? They have enacted into the law of the land, what the criminal neglect of true religion had long since permitted to be surreptitiously established in the law of opinion—this transition may be slow, but it is certain. In a free country, like Britain, the laws of the land must borrow their complexion from the law of public opinion; and on a question which agitates the public mind, or which endangers the public security of property, or life, it is not possible, that they can hold for any length of time, an opposite tone of language. What then, has been the case in Britain? the total neglect of the Roman Catholic superstitions, and of the truth of God, as contradistinguished from them, on the part of the Established Church, had allowed the public mind to stagnate into such ignorance, and apathy upon the subject, that it was considered at length uncharitable to suppose, that *Roman Catholics were not just as safe and just as good Christians as Protestants, provided they conducted themselves as sober and respectable members of society, notwithstanding they held certain opinions which might not be very good;* it was said that *the former errors of their*

religion were passing away, that the Roman Catholics of the present day were enlightened and liberal, and had quiterenounced those dogmas which had been maintained in the darker ages of the Church. One person who was thought their ablest advocate, introduced a bill into parliament on one occasion in their behalf, which they properly termed his "*humbug bill*," when he made an oration, denying that they held the doctrine of transubstantiation, and explaining it away in such terms, that one of them wrote an instant, an honest, and an indignant answer, spurning the imputation, and him who cast it on them, in unmeasured language. In short, the universal ignorance, the universal apathy, the universal blindness as to the errors of their religion, had so lowered the law of opinion on the subject, that there was scarcely to be found, shall I say, a man in the Parliament of England, who would have ventured, in any company, to assert, that the terms, which he was constrained officially to apply to the religion of Roman Catholics, were to be justified on the authority of reason, and the Holy Word of God. It was laid down as *charity* in Protestants, not to cast any imputations on their religion; but to counterbalance this, Protestantism was attempted to be upheld, by proportionably severe reflections upon their loyalty—Guy Faux was duly carried round in England—"No Popery" was annually chalked in legible characters upon the walls in her streets—the "glorious and immortal memory" was drunk, with three times-three in Ireland—and the statue of King William was dressed on the 12th of July, and the 4th of No-

vember; and if these, and the orations of Brunswick Clubs, and the parading of Orange lodges, had been the proper means of upholding the Gospel of Christ, of subverting the evils of Roman Catholic superstition, and of counteracting the solid, growing influence of six millions of men, acquiring rank, and property, and education, and influence, in every corner of the country—men, whose religion was the pretext for their exclusion from the state; but the errors, of whose religion no man would dare to impeach, and the teachers of whose religion, the very government of the country was training up in a college for their profession, the constitution of England had been Christian to this day. It is not then the crime of England, when the growing weight and power of Roman Catholics, and the laxity and ignorance of Protestants, in not only tolerating, but acquiescing in, extenuating, softening down, and explaining away the errors of their religion, had so lowered, so debased the standard of public opinion, that the distinction between truth and falsehood, was almost totally lost sight of in the nation—that her government did not permit the law of the land to borrow a sanction from the Established religion for its enactments, which that religion appeared utterly unwilling or incompetent to justify—it was not the crime of England, that when the swords of a divided nation were already half drawn from their scabbards, the administration had rather force them back into the sheath, than permit the people to bury them, each in the bosom of his neighbour—it was not the crime of England, no longer to permit the highest official authorities in the nation, to pledge

themselves, as to the superstitions and idolatries, of a vast body of her subjects within the walls of her senate house, to which, without those walls, even her spiritual peers, with one or two exceptions, did not venture to allude, except with reference to their political bearing on the interests of the nation—it was not the crime of England to admit into the participation of the rights, immunities, and privileges of all her constitution, a vast, and growing body of her subjects, whom she had nurtured, cherished, fostered, and educated with her treasures in the principles of their religion—whom her monarch and his representatives had laboured to conciliate—whose title to the name of genuine Christians, hardly one of all the learned, talented, exalted, and endowed ministers, professors and dignitaries of her church had ventured to impeach; and whose errors seemed so venial, that not one of them attempted their reform. This was not the crime of England—No—but her crime as a nation—her crime as a Christian nation—her crime as a nation, with a Church so excellent in its principles, so honoured, so gifted, so exalted by its God, as never Christian church was honoured and gifted and exalted upon earth, was this—that the Church, of that nation, could have so far forgotten its professions, its duties, its obligations before God and man, as to allow such a state of principles to arise, to progress, and to accumulate to such a consummation. Her crime was this, that that Church could have permitted the principles of superstition, of idolatry, and of true religion, to be so blended, so confounded, and so melted down together in the crucible of public opinion, that

the base alloy, the product of the process, was circulated by moral impostors, under the name of *charity* and *liberality* throughout the nation. It was a convenient medium for ignorance to trade with ; it rose in popularity, till it is at last adopted, and sanctioned by the law, cast at the mint, stamped with the king's image, and has become the current coin of the country. Her crime is this—not that the votaries of infidelity, idolatry, and superstition were admitted to hold offices of trust in her state, and to legislate for her Church—but that that Church, could have so forgotten her duties to her fellow-creatures, and to her God, that with all her gifts, her powers, her privileges, her dignities—with all that talent could command, that learning could acquire—that wealth, and rank, and honour could bestow—with the homage of a nation prostrate at her feet, and the principles of a people ready to be moulded to her will—and if we look to her invaluable principles, with the girdle of truth on her loins, the “helmet of salvation” on her head, the “shield of faith” on her arm, and “the sword of the Spirit” in her hand—with all the privileges of earth, and all the blessings of heaven—that with all these, she has allowed six millions of her subjects, multiplied by all the generations that have passed since God showered down these mercies on her head, to remain sunk in ignorance, idolatry, and superstition, whom she has not honestly attempted to instruct, to enlighten, or to reform. The talents that have been entrusted to her—as far as Roman Catholics have been concerned—she has buried in a napkin : the light that has been vouchsafed to her—as far as their interests

have been involved—she has hid under a bushel. Here—here is the crime of Britain as a Christian nation ; and if ever Church and State were identified together, it is here—not, that she has emancipated Roman Catholics from political restrictions, but that she has not emancipated them from all the awful tyranny of error that ever rendered those restrictions necessary for the security of true religion in the country. Not that she has placed Roman Catholics to legislate for herself and her religion, but that there remains in the nineteenth century, one single man, so ignorant of the Gospel, as a Roman Catholic, to be found in her land. What was she to have done with them ? To have expelled them—persecuted them—coerced them ? God forbid. To persecute a man for following the dictates of his conscience in the worship of his God, is a crime abhorrent from the spirit of the Gospel : to coerce him against his conscience, is, if possible, an aggravation of that crime ; but to possess, in the fullest sense, all the means of dealing with him, as a rational, and intelligent, and reflecting immortal being—to have the power of displaying towards him, from the superiority of circumstances, all the anxieties of Christian benevolence, of exercising the energies of Christian fidelity, and discharging the offices of Christian love—to possess all the human means of appealing to his understanding, of improving his judgment, and of enlightening his conscience, by supplying it with a proper standard of principle and conduct—and in the midst of all these advantages, to protest against his errors, to upbraid him with his ignorances, but to leave him to grow, and to harden, and to perish in them, without one

honest uncompromising effort to enlighten, to instruct, to rescue, and to save him, appears as criminal a system of delinquency as ever yet disgraced a people who called themselves by the name of Christian. How far this has been followed by us, the members of the Established Church, in reference to Roman Catholics, let facts, and Ireland determine.

To suppose that the nature of the Roman Catholic religion is altered, is to exhibit an ignorance only commensurate with such conduct. It is to suppose that the enemy of man's immortal soul, has abandoned the most perfect system for his enthrallment, his incarceration in mental darkness, his subjugation in a state of alienation from his God, and his total and eternal ruin, that he has ever invented since the fall. To suppose that he will not use every advantage, which temporal advancement and power can bestow, to subvert and crush every effort to enlighten and emancipate the people of this nation, from the darkness and thralldom in which he holds them, is to suppose, that his nature is regenerated, and that he has ceased to be, "the old serpent, the devil." The crisis is drawing near, in whatever way men may interpret the predictions of the Word of God, when the rightful Monarch of the world, shall assert his just dominion, and "take unto Himself His kingdom"—when He, who has gone into the "far country," shall return, and demand of his servants their account. The signs of the times speak louder than the trumpets of war, and give no uncertain sound of His approach. "*Upon the earth distress of*

*nations with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring—men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming upon the earth ;*" the ranks are mustering—the line of demarcation is drawing upon the world, and the question, "*Who is on the Lord's side ? Who ?*" is sounding in the ears of every man's conscience, who is not dead in his trespasses and sins. What are Constitutions ? Establishments ? Ancient Institutions ? Thrones ? Vapours, bubbles, shadows, clouds ; every country in Europe echoes round its mountains, hills, and vallies, the breath of the mob that blows them to the winds. Where is Britain, and where is her Established Church, to look for her security ? where, but in fidelity to the cause of her Redeemer ? where, but in holding up His truth with boldness ; and, instead of accommodating herself to the guilt and errors of those, who are apostatized from her God ; in putting on His armour, and going forth in His strength, to fight His battles in her spiritual conflict with His foes ? Let all who know the value of the Gospel in the land, awaken to a sense of their duty to the Roman Catholic population of this country—let the minds of the miserable inhabitants, be turned from the machinations of those who would mislead them into temporal and eternal ruin ; to the contemplation of those truths in which their real happiness consists, and in which alone they can discover, the guilt and misery of their present state of spiritual bondage, and moral degradation. But as this subject is treated of at length in the following pages, it is unnecessary to anticipate it. Every scene exhibited upon the theatre of Europe since

this work has been in the press—every movement in this country, which indicates a determination in the minds, at least of some incendiaries, to get up, if possible, some tragedy in our native land, evinces, that it is only in the favour and protection of God, the nation can be safe, only in His arm, she can be strong. To halt between two opinions, and neither to follow God nor Baal, to conciliate falsehood by the abandonment of truth, to temporize, and to substitute a contemptible expediency, for boldness, decision, fidelity, and zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of men, is only to draw down deservedly on the head of any Church, and any nation, contempt, instead of respect from their fellow-creatures, and to invite an unmingled outpouring of just indignation from their Creator. A consideration of the varied attacks from every quarter, made in this day upon our Church, led the writer duly to consider, whether it were a time for one who loved her, to point out the failure of her members in any branch of duty: but he is firmly persuaded that her danger, which he feels and deploras as much as any individual within her pale, arises from the just judgment of her God, for her criminal neglect on the subject on which he has written. That her only security is to be found in repentance, and “*in doing her first works;*” and that if no higher motive in reference to the salvation of guilty and perishing millions, should call forth the energies of those who love her, for the glory of God; common prudence, common sense, common policy, should point out exertion as affording the only human prospect of her preservation. The open and avowed object of the

great Roman Catholic demagogue, is to subvert the Established Church, and to set up the Popish religion in its place in this country. If Popery be truth, let him prosper; but if not—if it is calculated to bring destruction on man's immortal soul—then, in the name of truth, of charity, and of the God of our salvation, let the nation be appealed to; let the truth be proclaimed boldly and loudly to the people; let the word of the Judge of heaven and earth be lifted up as the arbiter between God and Baal; and let that God bear witness for himself to the souls and consciences of men.

The writer feels so strongly the truth of what he has written, that he considers "*great plainness of speech*" alone, as suited to the vast solemnity of the subject, and he cannot apologize for using it—he likewise offers no apology for the reiterated statements of the salvation of the Gospel, which so frequently occur in this little work; the errors and superstitions which he is combating, are fatal to the everlasting salvation of those who maintain them; they arise from ignorance of the salvation that is in Christ; every mode of controverting those errors, that does not bring that salvation into clear, simple, systematic contrast with them, is nothing but some weak impertinence, however learned it may be; it is like a physician coming to a man, who is dying of inflammation on his lungs, and spending his time in interrogating about, and prescribing for a wart on his face. *The Roman Catholics of Ireland need salvation from the wrath to come*—of the Protestants who are living in neglect of them, multitudes seem

very little better ; to apologize for reiterating statements of the Gospel in contradistinction to their errors, is like apologizing to a criminal for bringing him a reprieve. May the Almighty and eternal God, bless His own truth to his own glory, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

*Oct. 30th, 1830. Enniskerry.*

## ADDRESS, &c.

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DEAR ROMAN CATHOLIC FRIENDS, COUNTRYMEN  
AND BRETHREN,

ALTHOUGH I am aware, that an appeal to men on the subject of those principles which we conceive to be erroneous in their religion, is always a thankless and ungracious office; yet impelled, I trust, by a sense of Christian duty and feeling of Christian kindness, I venture to address to you some considerations on this subject—regardless of the consequences to myself, if I might, through the divine blessing, be instrumental in conveying any benefit to you. I feel the more impelled to this, because as a minister of that religion which I consider pure and holy in its principles, which is established by law in this country; I think you have been deeply wronged and injured by our Church in this respect—that with all the superiority of our principles—with all the positive advantages of our political powers, and our moral capabilities of discharging the imperative duties of a Church professing Christianity, we have contented ourselves with protesting against evils in your religion, of which we have taken no pains

to convince your understandings, and with inflicting on you the penalty of legal disabilities for the political consequences of that religion, respecting the guilt of which, in your Creator's sight, we have never been at the trouble of endeavouring to enlighten your consciences—and have scarcely made an appeal to any feeling, except the worst passions of your hearts. I stop not to enquire how far we have followed the dictates of a sound and sober policy; but I hesitate not to assert, that we have lived among you in a total contempt of the primary duties and dictates of sound and genuine Christianity. We have mutually suffered all the evils of discord and animosity which religious contention could produce, without the counterpoise of conveying a single spiritual blessing to your souls, which it is the province of genuine religion to bestow. We have paused, my countrymen at length—we have respired from the convulsive strugglings of political agitation—let us take advantage of this breathing-time, to reflect for a moment on the solemn responsibilities of rational, of accountable, and of immortal beings. It must be granted, brethren, by all who agree in the truth of divine Revelation, that God, in the infinity of his perfect wisdom, has declared a way of salvation to his creatures—that He has explained in the Sacred Volume of his inspired truth, how the soul of man is to be accepted in His sight. Now, it is enough, brethren, that our Churches having that Volume within our reach, are totally at variance with each other as to what that way of salvation is; I do not now enquire which of them is right; but I say this, that the man,

who is fully and conscientiously persuaded on the solid authority of that sacred book, that the principles which alone can save the soul, are those which he maintains; and that any of his neighbours maintain principles which are inconsistent with their salvation, is bound by every dictate of humanity, by every religious and moral obligation—by every duty which he owes to his fellow-creatures and his God, to use every means which Divine Providence has placed within his reach, to turn his brethren from the errors of their way, and to direct them to the path of everlasting life. What should we think of the humanity, even of a heathen, who saw some of his neighbours embarking in a boat which he believed to be so leaky, that it must founder, without endeavouring to convince them of their danger? and is it charity—is it humanity, in a Christian, to see his fellow-men, his countrymen, his friends, ignorantly embarking their immortal souls in a hope, which, he believes, must be engulfed in the awful abyss of everlasting death, without making a single effort for their preservation? Let us be faithful—let us be honest, brethren; and let us mutually admit, that the man who does so, is destitute of one of the most essential characteristics of Christian fidelity and Christian love—this concession must alike implicate the members, both of your Church and of ours. We have branded you, brethren, as “*superstitious and idolatrous;*”—a “*poor blind ignorant Papist,*” has been an idea, long familiar to the Protestant Church in these countries; but when our conduct is weighed in the balances of the sanctuary, and

when it is asked, what have you done for these men? the answer must evince, that though we have protested against *your* religion, we have not exhibited by our conduct towards you, a much nearer approach to Christianity in *our own*. While on your side, brethren, ‘*a Protestant dog*’—“*a heretic*”—“*an apostate from the only true Church, out of which it is impossible there can be any salvation,*” has been the idea annexed to every member of our religion. Yet, though you have claimed Scripture—Tradition—Apostolical succession—yea, infallibility—what have you done, brethren, to enlighten—to convert—to reclaim us? We have rendered you one essential service, brethren—we have educated a great proportion of your Priesthood; surely those, to whom we have given the facilities of instruction in this infallible religion, ought at least to have made the grateful effort to disabuse the minds of their benefactors. It may be said, you had no reason to thank us for this—that we acted on a principle of selfish policy, and not from any good wish to promote the interests of your religion. True; but genuine Christianity does not measure its zeal, by the merits of those whose errors it would reform. It may be added, that your priests have laboured in endeavouring to convert the Protestants, and have been successful too in their endeavours. I do believe indeed, brethren, that you have in this respect the advantage of our Church; I believe your priests have been much more zealous in their efforts to bring Protestants to their religion, than we have to bring the members of your Church to the knowledge of the Gospel; and I do believe, that

many more Protestants have been turned to the Roman Catholic religion within the last century, than there have been Roman Catholics turned to the Protestant Church. But brethren, the efforts of your priests have been made among the poor, the ignorant members of our population; and we have much cause to complain, that when some among us have lately given them repeated opportunities, of coming forward before the Roman Catholic or Protestant population, to vindicate their own religion, and to impugn the doctrines of ours—when all the learning of your priesthood, and all the supposed infallibility of your Church, might have been made to tell on the public mind, both in confirming the principles of your own Church, and in shaking those of Protestants; yet your priests have been almost universally backward to stand forth; and although they may urge, as they frequently do, that they need not come forward now, to vindicate principles which have been settled by the Church long ago—as Dr. Doyle quoting Tertullian, tells us “*causa finita est*”—the case has been decided—they should remember, that though it may have been settled in their estimation, yet, since we deny the principles, and reject the authority of their Church—since we are living and dying in a state which they call heresy—since we are willing to hear all their arguments, and listen to all their expostulations, though they may consider their own Church secure, it is not reconcileable with the first principles of Christian fidelity and Christian love, that they should make no effort to rescue us from eternal death: it exhibits either a want of zeal for the salvation of their

fellow-men ; or it seems to argue some suspicion as to the defensibility of their religion. But I write to you my countrymen on a higher subject than the characters or conduct of men—I address you on the very foundation of the hope of your immortal souls : it is to this I wish to direct your attention—to call it off from those subjects, by which the subtlety of your Church misleads you from the simple truth ; and to fasten it on that, and that alone, on which your salvation really depends. Your attention is directed by your Church, brethren, on almost all occasions of controversy, to some of these points—the evidences of the Scriptures, that is, their authority and interpretation by the Church—the infallibility of the Church—the apostolical succession, and the authority of the priesthood—their power of forgiving sins, traditions, penances, masses, the invocation of saints and angels, transubstantiation, prayers for the dead, purgatory, and such like points ; in which almost the whole of your religion consists, and the false impressions in which you are educated, as to the dangers and difficulties of the Bible—the variety of authors—the difficulty of access to human evidences, and the unsatisfactory and contradicting statements of those whose authority is adduced, both for and against these various points, conspire to perplex your minds with the difficulties of investigating them, and seem to place them so far beyond the reach, not only of the vast body of mankind, but even of learned men, whose occupations would not permit them to engage in the investigation, that the very thought of it, leads you to despair of acquiring knowledge on the subject, and makes you

rest content in the arms of that authority, which you believe must be right, not only from the prejudices of your education, but from the imaginary impossibility of discovering if it be wrong. Now, what brethren, is the fact connected with these points? it is this—that they tend to lead your minds from the one great truth which you are concerned to know, ignorance of which, leaves you perishing under the wrath of God, precludes the possibility of your being scripturally right on any subject; and a knowledge and belief of which, must bring you to eternal life, and preserve you from being in any respect fatally in error. It is to this I wish particularly to call your attention, to lead you to examine the principles of your Church, on the very foundation of all religion. Let me entreat you, my countrymen, to fix upon this single question; to abstract, if you can, your minds from every other consideration, to fasten them on this alone; and not to rest till you can find an answer, that can satisfy your feelings as rational, responsible, moral, and immortal agents—the question is this, **WHAT SHALL A MAN DO TO BE SAVED?** I will venture confidently to assert, that there is not a Roman Catholic following the dogmas of his Church, who can take pen, ink and paper, and sit down to write an answer to that question, by which his own heart can be satisfied, that he is himself in a state of salvation—for if he answers, as they generally do, that a man must “*keep the commands of God and the Church,*” the question then recurs, has he observed these commands? if not, if he admits that he is a sinner, then on what foundation does he rest, that

as a sinner, he shall stand accepted at the bar of God? Is he prepared to die? or does he know in what consists the preparation for death? Consider, O my countrymen, what abstract dogmas of theology can sooth the terrors of a dying sinner's conscience? what fond and bigotted attachment to outward parties, forms, or authorities of our fellow-worms, can open a refuge for the sinner in that day, when "*The heavens shall depart as a scroll when it is rolled together,*" when "*every mountain and island shall be moved out of their places, and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief oaptains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, shall hide themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains, and say to the mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.*" Rev. vi. 14—16. Shall multitude be a mark of the true Church? shall human authority, and pomp, and pageantry, be a mark of the true Church in that day? O my countrymen, shall we desire that our portion may be with those, described in this awful passage of the Scriptures, then? if not, let us leave man to stand in the place which God has assigned him—let us "*cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?*"—and let us take the word of God, and ask this question as immortal beings, **WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?**

Brethren, let us ask, has God revealed to man in His

holy Word, any solid ground of hope on which we may rest with peace for the salvation of our souls? I answer, that He has revealed it clearly, simply, plainly, so that he that runs may read; and I add, that the difficulty to Roman Catholics, or to any man, is, not that God has not plainly declared the way of salvation; but that they, through the blindness of their understandings, the corruptions of their hearts, will not admit as true what God has plainly written: to you indeed, my poor unhappy countrymen, is superadded this additional difficulty, that your Church has instructed you to reject the hope of salvation in a manner so insidious, as to render and keep you blind alike to her artifices and the truth of Revelation. Like a step-mother, who with an artful mixture of blandishment and fear, keeps her children in a state of pupillage, till she has got them to make over to her the birth-right of their inheritance, and leaves them to perish when she has plundered them of all their possessions, your Church has kept your understandings in a state of bondage, not only incompatible with the privileges of freemen, but of rational, responsible beings. Let me suppose, my countrymen, that a father left in his will, his property, freely and unconditionally to his son, and that he left his step-mother his guardian, who was to instruct him in the nature of his inheritance, and to educate him as the heir and possessor of his property—let me suppose, that instead of discharging her trust, she refused him the right of knowing or seeing his father's will, availed herself of the possession of it, to make him imagine she had all the authority of that instrument to support her.

usurpation, asserted that the property was left to her—that she had the sole right to dispose of it—and made the hope of his inheritance to depend on his subjection to her will—his submission to her caprice—let me suppose, that she gave him an allowance, which she took care, by practising upon his hopes and fears, should return into her own coffers; and that finally, when she had forced him to make a legal surrender as a man of that property, of which she had traitorously robbed him as a child, she then left him to perish a victim of her plunder and her crimes,—this, my countrymen, were but a poor imperfect sketch of the guilt and treachery to your immortal souls, of that Church in whose lap you have been nursed. She has deprived you of your birth-right—as rational and immortal beings, she has shut up the will of your heavenly Father from your eyes, in which He has bequeathed you the free, the full, the unconditional, unincumbered inheritance of salvation, of everlasting life—she has dared to usurp it, to claim it as her own, to dispense to whom she pleases on her own conditions—she has practised on the hopes and fears of your unhappy childhood—she has trained you tamely, to give up as men, the intellectual privileges, of which she has robbed you from your cradle; and having fleeced you of your all, as moral, responsible, immortal agents, having traded with your inheritance, and made merchandize of your souls in time—she leaves you—O! melancholy consummation of her guilt—she leaves you to perish in eternity! **WHAT ARE YOU TO DO TO BE SAVED?**

My friends, my countrymen, if there be any among you, who can so far burst the bonds of spiritual subjugation, as to think for yourselves on this most solemn and important subject, I call upon you to open your Bibles, and attend to the salvation which God has revealed in that Word to your souls. Never was property bequeathed on earth more freely, fully, and unconditionally to an heir, than salvation without the intervention or authority of priest, or Church, or human power, is bequeathed to sinners in the last will and testament of our adorable Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. What is the testimony of that will? it is this, that "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*" 1 Tim. i. 15. Now, brethren, pause upon that single truth, and examine the ideas it conveys: instead of the perplexing difficulties of the endless disputations of controversy, I affirm, that the Gospel is simple, that if you understand this one single passage in its scriptural sense, you shall see the whole fatal error of that system, in which you have been kept in such spiritual darkness and bondage, shut up from the hope and consolations of salvation, revealed in the Sacred Volume. I propose three simple questions on this text of Scripture. First—*Do you believe that you are sinners, and need salvation?* I shall not dwell on this, because I take it for granted, that you admit it, we must all admit it—the thought of death and judgment stamps the confession of it on our cheek—conscience pours it from our lips, and our hearts re-echo the acknowledgment—we must admit, we do admit this common principle, that **WE ARE SINNERS.** Now then, 2dly—I ask

this question, since it is written, that "*Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners,*" DID HE DO THAT WHICH HE CAME TO DO, OR NOT? I entreat you, brethren, to sift this question; *the whole controversy, as it affects the salvation of the soul, turns on this one question.* It is plain, that if a man goes to any place for a particular purpose, without executing the object of his journey, he might as well have spared himself the pains of going; and there must be some great defect arising from human imperfection, to account for his failure; either he was not previously aware of the difficulty before he set out, or some unforeseen contingency arose, against which he could not provide—or he had overrated his own capability of executing his proposed object, or some cause unknown or unforeseen, prevented its accomplishment. Now, again I ask, "DID THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHEN HE CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS, ACCOMPLISH THE WORK OF HIS MISSION OR NOT? Here brethren, is the difference between faith in Christ, and a rejection of Christ. Christian faith affirms, that *He did save sinners, and retss on his great and glorious salvation.* The unbelief that rejects Christ, *denies that He saved sinners,* and sets up some refuge, either without Christ, or in addition to Christ, to which it flies for hope. It may deny His divinity—it may deny His humanity—it may deny that He made *any* atonement for sinners—or it may admit, that he made *some* atonement, and did take *some* steps to save sinners; but that still something else remains to be done, to accomplish this work, without which, the sinner cannot depend on Christ alone. Every shade

of infidelity or superstition within the pale of nominal Christianity, is alike reducible to this one simple point—those who profess it, *reject Christ*—for they deny the simple truth, that “*Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*”—their falsehood is to be detected by this test, that they propose some other ground of hope for man, than the finished salvation of the Lord Jesus. For I submit to your consideration, brethren, thirdly—If a man depends on any other hope to save his soul, does he depend on Christ? Consider it, O my countrymen; let each of you consider it with reference to his own soul. I suppose a man on his bed of death, feeling as every sinner at some period of his life must feel, the accusations of that conscience—that witness within, which tells him he has offended against a just and holy God. I suppose him anxiously enquiring for peace, for rest of conscience, for one to take away “*the sting of death, which is sin,*” and fit him to stand without terror in the presence of that Judge, whom he is about to meet. It is as clear as day-light, that whatever that man turns to under these circumstances, as his hope of peace and salvation, that is the thing to which he really looks as *his Saviour*. Now I ask, to what has God in His holy Word, directed the poor sinner to look for salvation—is it to Jesus alone? or is it to something else alone? or is it partly to Jesus, and partly to something else? it must be to one of these three grounds of trust? and to which of them is it? I answer, TO JESUS ALONE. “LOOK UNTO ME AND BE YE SAVED ALL THE ENDS OF

THE EARTH, *for I am God, and there is none else.*" Isaiah xlv. 22. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16. "For the wages of sin is death, but the GIFT OF GOD IS ETERNAL LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD." Rom. vi. 23. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son, CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN." 1 John i. 7. "He that believeth on the Son IS NOT CONDEMNED; he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John iii. 18. "He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, BECAUSE HE BELIEVETH NOT THE RECORD THAT GOD HATH GIVEN OF HIS SON; and this is the record, that God HATH GIVEN TO US ETERNAL LIFE, and THIS LIFE IS IN HIS SON—he that HATH THE SON HATH LIFE, and he that HATH NOT THE SON OF GOD, HATH NOT LIFE." 1 John, v. 10, 11, 12. "There is therefore now, NO CONDEMNATION TO THEM WHICH ARE IN CHRIST JESUS." Rom. viii. 1. "O death, where is thy sting—O grave, where is thy victory?—the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law—BUT THANKS BE TO GOD WHICH GIVETH US THE VICTORY, THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57. These, and all the promises of salvation in Jesus to sinners in the holy Word of Life, while they *limit the hope of the soul to Christ, and Christ alone*, give full grounds of assurance to the sinner, that he may rest upon that hope without doubt, or fear; because God is faithful to his holy word—"faithful is He that promiseth, who

*also will do it ;*" because, " *it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ;*" and the whole testimony of God's Word, evinces that He did accomplish that work which he came to do ; that He did all that was necessary to be done, all that could be done to save sinners—His own dying words were, " IT IS FINISHED."

Now, let me entreat you, my Roman Catholic friends, and brethren, again and again, to fasten your attention on this simple truth. This one ground of hope I have asserted to be true—if it be, the other two grounds of hope, are therefore false ; those who bear a name of Christianity, and turn to either of them, turn to a lie—they reject Christ ; and except they repent and believe the Gospel, they must perish. To explain—a Socinian embraces the first of these falsehoods, instead of looking for salvation to Jesus alone, he denies entirely the salvation that there is in Jesus—he denies his Godhead, and he denies his atonement—he looks to *something else* for salvation *without Christ*, his morality, or some other hope ; so he rejects Christ, he " *deceives himself, and the truth is not in him*"—he denies altogether, that " *Jesus came into the world to save sinners*"—his hope is derived from the father of lies, and except he repents and turns to Christ, he shall perish in his iniquity. This perhaps, you admit. The Roman Catholic who is guided by his Church, believes the second of these falsehoods, he depends partly on Christ, and partly on some other hope ; he looks to something for salvation *in addition to Christ*—his alms-deeds, or good works—his masses—his contritions—his

confessions—his imaginary satisfactions, which he calls penances—his absolutions—his extreme unctions—his Church. He admits in so many words, the divinity and atonement of Christ; but he denies that the atonement is *sufficient* for him to rest his soul on; he will say, he could not be saved *without* Christ, but he denies that he is saved *by* Christ—he tells Christ, in effect, *I cannot depend on your salvation alone*—you will not save me without such and such acts on my own part, or such and such works done for me, or offerings made for me by my Church—I require intercessors to pray to you for me, or something to recommend me to you—I cannot turn to you *alone*, I cannot rest on you *alone*, without something else—if I do not do something for myself, or if my Church does not do something for me, I must perish. He rejects Christ in another way—he admits in words, that he “*came into the world to save sinners*—but he denies that *he did that which he came to do*. The Socinian “*makes God a liar*” in one way, and he “*makes him a liar*” in another. Mark, brethren, while I bear my feeble testimony, without exception of the Socinian—the infidel; I say not the same universally of Roman Catholics; I trust and believe, there are many of you, my countrymen, who rest *on Christ alone*. I have conversed with some, who, I think do so, and whosoever doth so shall be saved; but they are not Roman Catholics in spirit and truth—they retain the forms, but they do not, though unconsciously, really hold the principles of their religion. I write on the evils of the system, and not to judge or condemn individuals; it is our duty to judge of princi-

ples, we are not called on to pronounce indiscriminately on persons. The Roman Catholic who rests exclusively on the righteousness and atonement of the Lord Jesus, shall be saved; but it is evident, that he who rests on any thing else, does not rest on Christ, and therefore, unless he repents he shall perish.

I have endeavoured in the course of the letters which follow this Address, so to mark the essential points of opposition between the Gospel, and some of the leading dogmas of your Church—that it would but anticipate what I have written, to dwell upon them now; but as I foresee that objections of too great a severity of expression shall be urged against some of my arguments; I would bespeak your kind and patient attention, while I offer an apology upon this subject. I think there is but one principle which can justify an attack on the religion of any men—and that is, a principle of love to their immortal souls—a conviction of their being in error, fatal to their salvation; and a firm persuasion, that you are pointing out to them the true way of salvation. This conviction, that they are in fatal error, which alone can justify an exposition of the evils of their system, should dictate the fullest, clearest, strongest, simplest, exposition of it. Brethren, if you meet expressions that strongly convey a sense of the errors of your Church, impute them, as I trust you justly may, to an ardent desire, to awaken some investigation of the subject, both among yourselves, and among those who ought to have your everlasting interests, warmly at heart. When I believe you are shut out by the awful principles which your Church inculcates,

from that one and only hope, which is proclaimed to sinners in the Gospel—when I am convinced, that the glad tidings of the salvation of that Gospel, are never sounded in your ears; and that you are dying, leaning in too many instances on refuges of lies, which shall all be swept away at last, before the coming of the Lord; shall I make it a light matter to you, brethren? shall I call those superstitions which are fatal to your salvation, by some gentle names, lest your ears might be offended? shall I tap gently at the door, as if apprehensive of awakening you, while the house is on fire, and ready to bury you in its ruins? I am not aware, brethren, that I have penned a single word with the intention of offending even your prejudices. I should feel it unworthy of the solemn subject, of the office of a minister, and of the feelings of a man; and if you think I have done so, I ask your forgiveness. But bear with me, when I assure you, that language would fail me, were I to attempt to express my sense of your danger, and of the awful character of that religion, if it deserves the name, by which you are beguiled and blinded, as to your own state as sinners, and as to the hope of salvation which the Gospel proclaims to the human race.

And here, my countrymen, let me observe, that I draw a broad and total distinction, between you, and your religion. If I could consider that you, or your Priests or Bishops, were accessory to the construction of a system, so destructive to the immortal souls of men, no language of reprobation were strong enough to paint the criminality of such delinquents: but you

are not the authors, but the unhappy victims of a system, which you must feel it a crime to examine, and to which, as your only hope, you are necessitated to adhere. The moment your infant reason is capable of discerning any thing on the subject of religion, your ears are filled with the sound of an imaginary being, a mysterious power, whose name and authority are mighty as that of God himself; who holds the fiat of your eternal destiny in her gigantic grasp, to which obedience is life, and against which, rebellion is death: this being is your Church. When your childhood is instructed what you are to do for salvation, it is "*To keep the commandments of God and the Church.*" Who is the only interpreter of God's word for your souls? *The Church.* Where is the power lodged to forgive your sins? *In the Church.* By whose authority are they to be pardoned in your life? *By that of the Church.* By whose ordinances and offerings is your soul to be saved in death? *By those of the Church.* By whose prayers are you to be delivered from Purgatory? *By the prayers of the Church.* Who, finally, has the keys of heaven and hell? *The Church.* In short, this wonderful mysterious power, of which you are the victims, places such an insurmountable barrier against freedom of thought, over every avenue of your understanding, and exercises such an overwhelming influence over every feeling of your hearts, binding up so effectually your destinies for time and eternity, within her chains, that I know not, brethren, what power can emancipate, what arm, but that of God, can deliver you. I know not at what

period of his existence it could be expected, that a poor Roman Catholic could make a struggle to be free. In childhood, could he burst those bands that every feeling of parental care had coiled around his infant heart? In youth, could he fling off the feelings, and affections, and impressions of his earlier years, when instilled into his ears by a venerated man, who, being the absolver of his sins, is really to be trusted as the saviour of his soul? In manhood, can he abandon all the prejudices of his infancy, and all the principles interwoven with all the glowing feelings of his youth; and this, when every motive that at first awakened, still continues to press them on his heart? And can age, when tottering on the brink of the grave, abandon all that it has clung to, during its existence that is past, and all that it has hung its hope on, for the eternity that is to come? O, my poor countrymen! I know not at what moment of your life, the spell with which the enemy of souls has bound the intellectual powers of your immortal spirits, could be broken. God forbid, brethren, that I should address you in the language of invective, as men who are the authors of a system, so pregnant with all the elements of death. No, my countrymen, I cannot contemplate you as the criminal supporters of a superstition which you have raised up, but as the hapless victims of a spiritual despotism, under which you had the misfortune to be born. Just consider, brethren—here, in the same country—under the same laws—and now, with all the same privileges—in the same city—in the same house—perhaps in the same room—and at the same hour, two immortal beings

are brought into the world, with the same sympathies, wants and interests of their existence; but O, in what different circumstances of their destiny! There is a revelation in the land from the God and Author of their being, by which both are to be judged, and to receive their final sentence for eternity—a revelation, which describes their own nature and that of their God—which develops all the evils of their disposition—forewarns them of all the judgments impending over sin—and proclaims to them in all the details of infinite and everlasting love, a pardon suited to their utmost need—commensurate with all their wants. One of these immortals is permitted, nay, he is instructed to read, to study this volume of his Creator's mercy—the other is interdicted its perusal. One is enfranchised\* with all the rights and privileges of this charter of his salvation—from the other it is shut up, and sealed for ever. The one is invited to hold communion with his God, to hear the voice of his Redeemer speaking in accents of mercy to his soul. The other is excluded from the converse of his Creator, shut out from the sound of his sacred voice, and exiled from the invitations of his mercy and his love. To the one, salvation is sent freely in messages of love from his Redeemer—the other never receives one whisper of that free salvation; but, instead of this, a vain delusion is set up to him for sale by his fellow-sinners. If the one does not enjoy the benefit of all the blessings to which he is entitled, it is because, like Esau, he sells the glory of his birth-right. If the other is ever rescued from the abject spiritual condition in which he is born, it is because the mercy of God

has brought him, like Joseph, from the prison to the throne. I mean not to say, that all Protestants exhibit the influence of their spiritual privileges, nor to say that all Roman Catholics are sunk in the degradation of this spiritual bondage; but I say, that this is the condition in which, under their Churches, they are respectively born; and I ask you, my brethren, what right has man to make between immortal beings, a distinction such as this? What right has man to throw a chain across your cradle, and bind your immortal faculties, even till you are shrouded in your grave? Awake, my friends, I will not say to the privileges of Christians, but fallen as the human race is, I will say, awake to assert the dignity of man—awake to assert the birth-right of intellectual, of rational, of accountable, and of immortal beings. You are imposed on by an imaginary power—by the apprehension of an ideal authority, equally impotent to save or to condemn, and only existing in the affrighted imagination, like these bugbears of lesser superstition, which a nurse conjures up in the mind of the weak and credulous infant, to affright it into compliance, or to subdue it into silence in the night; nor is it more the part of a faithful parent, to disabuse the mind of the child from the superstitious fears of the nursery, and of the dark; than it is that of reason and revelation, to enlighten your minds, my countrymen, and save you from the paralyzing apprehensions of a power, that is only the greatest bugbear, with which superstition ever dared to affright the mind of man on earth.

Your Church—alas! my countrymen, if she took but half the pains to turn your hopes to your Redeem-

er, that she takes to hang all your hopes and fears upon herself, she would come nearer to the claim of the epithet of Christian, and afford you some solid ground on which to enter into everlasting life.

Let me briefly call your attention to the nature of that evidence, on which, while she shuts up from you the word of your Creator, she presses you to receive the dogmas which she imposes on you for truth; and then, let me ask you to consider, on an authority which you will not venture to question, the nature of that awful code of error which she substitutes for the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The boast of *antiquity*, is that powerful argument with which she endeavours to satisfy the consciences, and silence the inquiries of all whom she holds under the yoke of her domination; she taunts the Protestants with the alleged novelty of their doctrines, and imagines she can convince mankind of the antiquity of her own, by the assertion, that she can trace them back through the Fathers up to the Apostles themselves. The principle on which she goes is popular and plain—“*the nearer the fountain, the purer the water.*” Now she argues, if we can prove the existence of our doctrines in the earliest ages of the Fathers, we come nearer to the apostolic age, and therefore, to the pure fountain of truth. But we can prove the existence of our doctrines in these times, and therefore our Church is the true and apostolical. This argument, brethren, you are all taught to consider conclusive and unanswerable; but though I could easily point out its fallacy, yet I rather prefer to let it stand as a true and

sound one, and to prove from her own argument the falsehood of your Church's doctrine. Now, I will grant, brethren, more than any of your controversialists have ever ventured to demand, and ten times more than you know the truth will justify. I will give you any of the Fathers, say Tertullian—his book on Prescriptions seems a favourite one with Dr. Doyle—and I will suppose that this work contains as full and complete an exposé of the present doctrines of the Church of Rome, as Dr. Milner's *End of Controversy*. Now, Tertullian died in the beginning of the third century; but if I can produce testimony from a Father of the Church, one century before him—testimony, not only generally on the doctrines of Christianity, but testimony of the very doctrines, professed and maintained in the Christian Church that was at Rome itself, in the Apostles' days, in which, not only not one of the doctrines of Tertullian is to be found, but which is wholly incompatible with their existence in the same system of religion—if this Father was acknowledged as indisputable authority by the then whole Christian Church—if he were admitted as such by Tertullian himself—if all the principles which this early Father laid down as pure Christianity, were strictly conformable to those which I maintain, and as opposite to those of Tertullian as mine are to those of Dr. Milner; then, on the principle of the Roman Catholic Church itself, "*the nearer the fountain, the purer the water,*" it must uncontestably follow, that the palm of pure antiquity must be yielded to me, and the doctrines of Tertullian must be confessed to be spurious and corrupt: and if,

in addition to this, I prove, that though Tertullian could neither deny the authenticity of the work, nor impeach the character of the writer; yet from the consciousness of the discrepancy between that work and his own, he endeavoured to suppress it, and to hide it from the people: then, I say, it must be granted, not only that Tertullian was not a sound divine, but that he was not an honest man. You will say, brethren, that if I had such ground to stand on, I should have a strong defence for my principles. Now, lend me your attention, and I shall prove to you, that I have a higher ground still. You will grant me, that a Father, a century nearer the Apostles, than Tertullian, would be better evidence than he is, as to the apostolic doctrines of the Church at Rome. Now, let me go back to one, fifty years nearer them still—is not he still better evidence? “*the nearer the fountain, the purer the stream.*” Now, let me go back, and find a Father who was contemporary with the Apostles—does not the evidence rise higher and clearer in its testimony? well then, I shall go at once to the very best—I shall add to the fidelity of the historian, the inspiration of the sacred writer, I shall take the evidence of the Apostle Paul himself. I shall take a letter of that inspired author, written to the very Church at Rome itself, depicting the pure and holy religion of that ancient and Apostolic Church, as it existed in the Apostle’s days, concentrating and embracing every truth of Christian doctrine, comprising, and condensing every precept of Christian morals, that is to be found in the whole Volume of Revelation, so that it is of itself, almost a perfect epitome of Christianity. I

can produce on this, the purest, the earliest, the most unquestionable, the most authentic evidence, the whole system of the Christian faith, as it regards doctrines and morals, as it was professed at Rome in the Apostle's days—I can prove, not only that it does not contain the principles of the religion of that Church at this day, but that such a system, as that of the Church of Rome at present, can no more co-exist with it, than midnight with the blaze of noon. I can appeal to this—I can assert, that it contains the whole of those principles for which I contend—I can point out those men, who, though they do not dare to deny its authenticity—its inspiration, yet endeavour to suppress, to hide it from the people. Now, let me put it to your own candour, to your own good sense, my countrymen; where is pure and genuine Christianity—where is pure apostolical antiquity to be discovered? Is it in those, who, while they pretend to lay claim to it, turn to the more modern and less authentic documents; or in those, who appeal directly to the most ancient and most authentic extant? Where is the most authoritative testimony to be discovered? Is it in those who profess to quote a Father as authority, because indeed, he had conversed with somebody, who had conversed with some other person, who had conversed with an apostle—or in those, who go directly to the undisputed testimony of that Apostle himself? in those who turn to the vague unsatisfactory errors of their fellow-men—or in those who make their appeal to the authority of the holy God? Who is the man who wishes to present the cup of water, purest and freshest to the lip—the man who goes to a distance

from the spring, where the stream is impregnated with the ooziings of the muddy channel in which it has flowed—or the man who runs directly to the fountain to draw the living water from the wells of salvation? Why need I speak of purity, and of antiquity—where, I ask you, my friends and countrymen, is honesty, is truth, to be discovered. Is it in those, who throw open wide to the world—who invite—who implore their fellow-men to examine and investigate the authority to which they appeal for their principles—or in those who only use the divine inspiration of that authority, to establish a power, and influence over the human mind, and then avail themselves of that power, to promulgate lucrative errors of their own, and to silence all investigation—to prevent all appeal to that authority for their detection. I ask your candour, my countrymen, if it is the authority of antiquity to which we refer to establish any doctrine, ought we not at once to recur to the authority of that antiquity, which is the most ancient, and the most authentic known? Shall antiquity, subsequent to the apostolic age, be appealed to; and shall not that which is contemporaneous with it be preferred?—shall men pretend to maintain an appeal for purity of Christian truth to sources of authenticity, confessedly contaminated with human errors, plainly polluted with maxims of heathen philosophy, and contradictory and inconsistent with each other; and shall we not turn from these in triumph, to the more pure, and ancient, and uncontaminated sources, bursting fresh and uncorrupted from the living fountain of eternal truth? shall men pretend to give authenticity

to opinions, on the testimony of those, who conversed with others, who had conversed with the Apostles ; and if the truth is garbled by them, shall we not quash such evidence with triumph, in recurring to the testimony of the Apostles themselves? Will any man, who pretends to understand the rules of evidence, or the principles of common sense, presume to say to me, that I am to receive the testimony of a man's opinions from second, third, or fourth persons, when I have the sentiments of the individual, written with his own hand, upon the subject to recur to? Will the hearsay of an evidence be received as legal testimony in a court of justice? Let me put a simple case, brethren. Let me suppose it were necessary on any trial in a court of law, on which any individual among you had a property depending, to ascertain the intentions of a man who had been some time dead—let me suppose your opponent brings forward a witness, who pretends to have been intimate with the deceased—or who states, that his father or grandfather had been intimate with him ; and who, either from his own knowledge, or from their report, proceeds to detail what his sentiments, or intentions on this subject were—let me suppose, that from some inconsistency in his statements, there is cause to question his veracity ; if it could now be whispered in the ears of counsel, that he had a letter on the very subject before the court, in the man's own hand-writing—would it not instantly appear, that this was the proper evidence? would not the counsel—would not the jury—would not the judge himself—would not the assembled court cry out, “ *where is his letter?* ” “ *produce his*

*own letter.*" If he hesitated—if he quibbled—if he tried to cushion it, would not every honest man instinctively exclaim that he was a knave? is there a lawyer among you, my countrymen, who would let his client's cause for the value of a single shilling, rest on the parole testimony of such a witness, or of any evidence whatever, when he had the written document to refer to? and will he tell me as a man of sense, and candour, and truth, that the testimony which he would trample on in the case of any earthly property, however insignificant, is to be admitted, and received, and vindicated, as sufficient and conclusive, when the question at issue is the salvation, or the destruction of the immortal soul: the property at stake, an everlasting inheritance—the suit lying not before the tribunal of man, but before the bar and the judgment-seat of the holy, and eternal God? How does this apply to your case, my countrymen? Mark, I beseech you, the application.

The apostle Paul, when he addressed a letter to the church at Rome, wrote to that church the doctrines of the religion of the gospel of Christ; this, even the most ignorant must admit, unless he is prepared to prove, that the doctrines of the apostle Paul were not those of the Gospel. I say that the letter of that Apostle is the proper evidence of the principles of that Gospel, and not the opinions said to be derived from those who lived after the days of the apostles, and whose authority is appealed to, only to blind the eyes of men, because it is so voluminous, so inconsistent, so unsatisfactory, and so inaccessible; that while it can determine nothing for

the truth, it affords the interminable mazes of uncertainty to error, by which it can elude detection, and evade pursuit.

Now, I say, brethren, that I shall prove to you from authority which you will not dispute, that while there is contained in the doctrines of the Gospel, as exhibited in the apostle's letter to the church at Rome, that salvation, which is revealed in the sacred volume to mankind, which alone can give hope and peace to the soul of a sinner; I shall prove from the same authority, that in that system in which your minds are so lamentably imprisoned, there is not so much as a sound of that salvation. This is the point, my countrymen, to which I implore your attention. You are prohibited from listening to, or at least from receiving the evidence of the apostles, on the salvation which those apostles taught—and a system is imposed on your understandings, as if it were that salvation, which is as far from that salvation as the religion of the Turk. I grieve to use such an expression, brethren, of a church which is called Christian; yet, if I do not prove it on the evidence of that church itself, believe it not: but if I do, I call on you, I charge you, I adjure you, dear friends and countrymen, fly, while yet you may, from that Babylon on whose brow is stamped "MYSTERY," and on whose head the wrath of God is impending—"Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her plagues," saith the Lord.

I do not, I repeat it, charge you, my brethren, either

priests or people, with the iniquities of the Church of Rome: you are all, I repeat, the sufferers—the victims—but not the authors of her crimes. It has been at varied stages in the history of her apostacy, that interested powers, whether popes, or bishops, or priests, have gradually introduced that traffic for the immortal soul, in which the awful trade of sacrificing priests and mediators consists; when it was pretended that the door of mercy and of grace which Christ has opened wide to lost and guilty man, was a toll-bar committed to the priesthood; when they whose very office was appointed by the Lord, to go as messengers of salvation to mankind, and beseech them to enter in through that open door, “without money and without price,” to the mercy and the favour of a reconciled God, pretended that the door was locked, and the key committed to their keeping; and affected to sell for money, that which nothing but the blood of Jesus could have bought, and nothing but the mercy of Jehovah could bestow: as if a messenger sent with a reprieve to a convicted criminal, were to tear his master’s document of mercy on the way—to extort money from the unhappy sufferer, on pretence of making interest in his favour—and then, when he had fleeced him of his utmost farthing, were to leave him to perish by the executioner at last. I say not that this is the intention of your priesthood, but I say it is the necessary nature of that system which they administer; I say the Church of Rome, as far as she can do so, has “shut the gate of mercy on mankind;” and in pretending to deal forth remedies for sin, instead of proclaiming the remedy that Christ has wrought, has swept

away man's only hope of mercy from his soul, and left him nothing in its place but darkness and delusion, and everlasting woe. Alas, my countrymen, my friends, compare even what she herself is forced to state, of the salvation that is in Christ, when she is thrown off her guard upon the subject, with the wretched system of worship which she teaches you, and judge for yourselves what similitude there is between them. It is not, brethren, when a man stands up to protest his innocence, or to dress himself to advantage, to deceive, that we can form a proper estimate of his real character; it is when he is speaking his own language, giving uncontrolled vent to his temper and dispositions, that we discover the true nature of the individual; so, it is not when your church comes forward on the testimonies of her Bellarmines, her Bossuets, her Milners and her Bayness, to tell us of her "faith, hope and charity," and all her Christian dignities and graces, that we can believe her—it is not when she comes to invite us into her pale, and tells us all that she is, and all that she is not.—No—what does she say in her own family? She talks of being the church of Christ. What does she say of Christ?—how does she go to you on your beds of pain and suffering and death?—what hope does she hold out to cheer and comfort the departing sinner?—what is her religion now, compared with the religion of the ancient church—compared with the Gospel of the Lord our Redeemer? Read, brethren, and judge for yourselves.

I have taken out of her own edition of the Bible, not the words of the sacred volume, but the summary which she herself has given, or at least has authoritatively recognized, of the doctrines of salvation, as held in the Church of Rome in the days of the apostles—I have placed them in the centre column of this sheet. I most earnestly invite your attention to them. Here, brethren, though it is a poor, and meagre, and imperfect sketch of the original, I find our common condition, and common hope as sinners—I see that *“all men are sinners;”* that *“none can be justified by the works of the law, but only by the grace of Christ”*—I see *“the grounds we have for hope in Christ”*—that *“sin and death came by Adam—grace and truth by Christ.”* I see that *“we are released by Christ from the law, and from the guilt of sin”*—that *“there is no condemnation to them that, being justified by Christ, walk not after the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”* I see that *“the end of the law is faith in Christ, which the Jews refusing to submit to cannot be justified.”* I see *“Lessons of Christian virtue,”* *“lessons of obedience to superiors;”* I see a warning from the apostle *“to beware of all that should oppose the doctrine they had learned.”*

Now this, which is as poor and meagre a summary of the ancient religion of the Church, as could well be extracted from the epistle, and is indeed in some points erroneous; yet it exhibits, brethren, the guilt of man, the pardon, the justification of the soul that Christ has purchased—it exhibits the falsehood of that principle which expects to obtain pardon from works, as it con-

fesses that none can be justified by them. Now, brethren, let me entreat of you to observe this, meagre as it is, laid beside the summary of the principles of your religion, as exhibited in the index, the full and entire index of a work, said to contain the whole instruction of a "Catholic Christian," (I quote from a popular modern work sanctioned by all your bishops) and let me just ask you this question: Do you think any honest, unprejudiced man, who was to see these two expository summaries, and who had no previous knowledge on the subject, could possibly suppose that they belonged, I will not say to the same religion, but that there was even the least similitude between them? where, let me ask, is there to be found in this summary of your religion, as it now is, one shadow of hope for sinners in the grace, the mercy, the salvation of the Lord Jesus? where a recognition of the guilt and misery of man, and where of the hope, the joy, the peace, the salvation purchased for sinners by a crucified Redeemer? Where again will you find in the ancient religion of the Christian church at Rome, one of all the host of superstitions with which your Church is here exhibited as abounding? where are the "*masses, the confessions, the penances, the benedictions, the processions, the jubilees, the extreme unctions, the prayers for the dead, the purgatories, the supremacy of the Pope, the celibacy of the clergy, the orders, confraternities, devotions to the Virgin Mary, invocations of saints and angels; use and veneration of relics, use of pictures and images, exorcisms, benedictions*"—where, I ask you, as men, as rational men, as honest men, as men who shall answer at the bar of the

heart-searching and eternal God—as men whose everlasting interests are at stake upon the question—where, even in your own Church’s summary of the ancient religion of the Christian church at Rome—where is there a single trace of these awful superstitions to be found? and on what authority of antiquity, on what ground of truth can they be palmed upon you as the religion of the Lord Jesus? Mark, brethren, either your church says that these things are needful to salvation, or they are not; if not, then where is their place in the hope of a Christian’s soul? where ought it to be in a religion professing to be Christian? if they are, then is salvation by them, and not by Christ; and the church who sets them up, is an opposer of Christ, an antichristian church, a subverter of the Gospel—the very apostolic exhortation, to “*beware of all who should oppose the doctrines which they had learned,*” were a call to every man that had learned from the Word of God, to fly from such a code of error, to the hope that is revealed in God’s eternal word to sinners.

Look now, my countrymen, to the extracts taken alphabetically from the Index of the Koran, the religion of Mahomet, and compare it with those summaries that are placed beside it. You have in the centre your Church’s own acknowledged summary of the principles of the religion of the ancient Church of Rome. You have on one side of it the summary of her present instructions for a “*Catholic Christian,*” and you have on the other side some extracts from the summary of the religion of the Turks. I ask you, brethren, I demand it

of you, to compare these three together; and I put the question to your consciences, as honest men, whether of these two systems on the right or on the left, appears more nearly to resemble even that imperfect statement of the religion of the Gospel? let a man who never saw either of them before, be asked which of them bears the nearer resemblance to it, and do you think he could determine to which he was to assign the name of Christianity?

I shall not compare them, brethren—I leave that to your own conscience and judgment—“*I speak as unto wise men, judge ye what I say.*” I shall only remark, that if I see unchristian errors in the code of religion on the right, I see some solemn truths, for which I look in vain to that on the left. In the one, I see, for example, some reverence for the attributes of God—“*His omnipresence asserted—His omnipotence—His omniscience asserted—His power and providence conspicuous in his works.*” I do not see a recognition of the attributes, nor do I see even the name of God, from the beginning to the end of the other. In the one, I see a reference to the Holy Spirit—I do not see His name alluded to in the other. In the one, Turkish as it is, I see “*a curse denounced on those who believe not on Jesus.*” In the other, I see him presented as an object of faith only in an ordinance, which is a virtual rejection of his atonement, and not a mention made of faith in his salvation. In the one, I see a reference to the “*Laws of God in the punishment of those who conceal them*”—in the other, I do not see an allusion.

to their authority, or even to their existence. In the one, I see "*exhortations to the worship of God, and to a good life*"—the "*reward of the righteous*" referred to. In the other, a miserable substitution of ceremonies and ordinances, even for the outward forms of morality and virtue. In the one, I see "*Prayer commanded and enforced, and directions concerning it*"—in the other, I see a reference to prayers; but they are "*Prayers for the dead,*" or those to be used "*in the canonical hours of the Church.*" In the one, I see the solemn truth concerning the character of man, namely, "*His presumption in undertaking to fulfil the laws of God*"—in the other, the whole system is a scheme of salvation by human works, and efforts to satisfy for sin. In the one, I see "*Idolaters compared to brutes,*" the "*heinousness of idolatry,*" and that "*the insignificance of idols will appear against their worshippers.*" In the other, I see "*the use, and veneration of relics, of pictures and of images;*" and I see a reference to "*the real presence of Christ, and to the worship of Christ in the sacrament.*" In the one, I see that "*Angels are not objects of worship.*" In the other, I see "*the invocation of angels and saints.*" But it is for you, brethren, to institute the comparison between them both in reference to each other, and to the Word of God. I fasten but on one point, and on that one, I affirm, that both are alike foreign from the Gospel of the Lord Jesus—they both bear a common mark of a total destitution of the hope of salvation—they both evince an awful ignorance of the glorious fact, that salvation has been wrought for sinners

by a crucified Redeemer — they both turn men to some other refuge for their souls, and therefore to some refuge of lies; for “*there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,*” Acts iii. 12. This is the point, brethren, in which you are deeply, everlastingly interested. Ask an Apostle, “*What must I do to be saved?*” He answers, and his answer is on record—“*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,*” Acts xvi. 30, 31. If that Apostle spoke the truth, it follows, that the man who sets forth any other hope for the soul, or any thing more as necessary for salvation, sets forth a false gospel, and must perish, unless he repent and believe that Gospel, which he has denied. And here, brethren, I shall make one assertion, to which I intreat your attention; and as it is of deep and solemn magnitude, I shall leave it to your understandings to examine, and I shall put it to your whole Church, if it is in her power to refute it.

You will recollect, brethren, that our Lord Jesus Christ gave as his last charge to his Apostles—“*Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned,*” Mark xvi. 15, 16. Now, brethren, here is a commission, on which the salvation of man’s immortal soul is suspended. Your Priesthood claim the succession to those who have received it; and what now, brethren, is the fact? I assert it in the face of day, my countrymen—I assert it in the face of the nation—I assert it

in the presence of Him who is more than an assembled world—THAT THERE IS NOT IN ALL YOUR CHURCH, A PRIEST, A PROFESSOR, OR A BISHOP, WHO PREACHES OR CAN PREACH THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, TO YOU WHO HANG YOUR SOULS ON THEIR INSTRUCTIONS. O mark—O hear, my countrymen: I write not against your Priests as individuals—I write of them as the administrators of an awful system, which shuts out the light and the salvation of the Gospel, from the miserable souls of men. I shall first explain my assertion, and then shall put it to the proof: the Gospel is Jehovah's proclamation of free and full forgiveness to guilty man, through Him who came as man's Surety, to pay his debt of obedience to God's holy law, and of satisfaction to His eternal justice. This, brethren, is "*good tidings of great joy.*" Man can only be addressed as a debtor—a sinner—a convicted culprit before his God. That God should send a Surety to undertake his debt, and to discharge it—to bear his curse—to deliver him—that He should send messengers to proclaim His Royal mercy to the criminal—Himself the Pardoner—His beloved Son the Surety, the Mediator, the Purchaser and Giver—the Author and Finisher of salvation—is grace, is bounty, is blessing, is goodness, beyond thought.

Now, brethren, the man who proclaims this Royal mercy to mankind; comes to them with the word of their Redeemer—he carries his credentials in his hand—he appeals to those credentials—he exhibits them—he refers to them—he turns his hearers to them, and only to them, as the one great source of solid satisfaction, of

joy, of peace, and of salvation to their souls. But the man who tells mankind, that other means for their salvation are to be adopted—that other hopes and refuges are to be fled to—other grounds to be rested on, than the finished work of a Redeemer's obedience unto death for man—they do not bring, nor do they dare to refer them, to these credentials; they do not, and cannot preach the Gospel of Christ: and whether those hopes and refuges which they propose, are the ordinances of a Church, the contritions of the sinner, or the virtues of the righteous man, the outward forms of a true religion, or the grossest fictions of that which is false: they are all alike agreed in this one point of error, fatal to the salvation of men, and opposed to the Revelation of the Lord: they do not place man's hope in Christ, and therefore build it on a lie. The system of your Church, forbids your Priests to preach salvation to your souls by Jesus; they hold an office at war with the everlasting Gospel: a *sacrificing Priest*, declares by his very name, that he does not preach the finished sacrifice of Him who died on Calvary; for, was Christ's sacrifice sufficient for a sinner to rest on? then, any other is a lie. Does he say that sacrifice was insufficient? then he is not a preacher, but a denier of the Gospel. Now, brethren, I will put this assertion to the test, and I trust, that if truth be the object of inquiry, there are men to be found within your Church to meet it. I lay this down as an indisputable fact, that when the Lord Jesus commissioned his holy Apostles to preach his sacred Gospel, *they executed that commission, that they did preach that Gospel to the world.* Now, I

lay it down as another fact, that *that Gospel, whatever it be, is a certain truth, on the belief of which, the soul of man shall be saved.* I lay it down also as another fact, that *this Gospel is to be discovered in the recorded sermons or writings of the Apostles.* And I add, moreover, that it is to be *so* discovered, *that those who believe, can point it out, what, and where it is.* Nor does it matter as to the point in question, whether men say, they can see it simply in the Bible, without note or comment, or whether they say, they require their Church to point it out to them. Those teachers who know and believe it, can point it out in the Sacred Volume. Now, brethren, I will not say I *challenge* you, for that word has an air of hostility, or of defiance, which I disclaim in every feeling towards my Roman Catholic brethren ; but I will say, I *invite* you to find in all your Church a Priest, a Professor, or a Bishop, who will venture to put this charge of mine upon this issue. Let him take the Apostolical Epistle to the ancient Church at Rome—let him study it with all the helps, and for any given time he pleases—let him take it then, and deliver either a written or an oral exposition of the whole, or of any parts of that portion of the Sacred Volume—and let him distinctly mark those passages of sacred truth to be found in it, of which he is able to say, “ *This is the Gospel, the belief of which can save the soul*”—he is at liberty to corroborate his positions, with references to every portion of the Scripture, but not to introduce any other authority in his exposition, though he may avail himself of all the helps which he pleases in his preparation for it. Now, if there is a man to be found

in your Church, at any given time, who can venture to put it to this test, whether he can preach the Gospel or not, I shall find a minister of the Church of England to meet him, to answer extemporaneously the most scholastic treatise he can produce, and to prove one of these two truths—either that the principles which he has set forth as the Gospel of Christ, are not justly and faithfully extracted from His word, and that they are not the Gospel; or, that if he has set forth the Gospel, he has totally abandoned the whole system of doctrine of the modern Church of Rome—and let the exposition of the Priest, and the answer of the Clergyman, be submitted in print to the judgment of every honest man in the nation.

I desire, my countrymen, by this appeal to excite a spirit of enquiry, which nothing but the Gospel can satisfy. I presume not to address you as one, who would dare to set himself in the sight of God, above the meanest among all your population: I write to you as a fellow-man, and a fellow-sinner, with all my sympathies of weaknesses and wants, and sins, awake towards those, who, like myself, have need of grace and mercy from their God. You will be told, my countrymen, that I, or that any man who addresses you on the errors of your Church, is actuated by a feeling of hostility towards you, or a spirit of party; and that he desires you to change your religion, merely from a political motive to induce you to turn Protestants, that he may increase the security of the Established Church. Brethren, believe it not—on the contrary, it is a most important

truth to impress upon the minds of men, that no change of form in religion—no change from one profession to another, can bring a sinner nearer, no not by the thousandth part of a hair's breadth, to everlasting life. Brethren, you might renounce every dogma of your Church one after another—you might cry out as loudly against its superstitions, as many Protestants do—you might become as zealous for the profession of our religion, and against the errors of your own, as thousands and tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands that are called Protestants, and yet be as far from the salvation of the Gospel, as you could possibly be, under any delusions of superstition, or any depravities of infidelity. No, brethren, I say not unto you *turn Protestants and be saved*—I say unto you, “*believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved,*” that is, believe *the truth of Him*—embrace the hope that the Bible proclaims through Him—turn to the salvation of which the blessed Gospel testifies, through His righteousness and His blood, as the sinner's Surety—turn to this brethren; and then—remain firm in your Church as long as your consciences, and your understandings permit you.

This, brethren, is not the spirit of hostility, or of party, it is the spirit of Christian honesty, and truth, and charity; if we breathe a liberty—if we enjoy a hope—if we expect a blessing for our own souls, is it hostility to our brethren, to endeavour to lead them to be as free, and as happy, and as blessed, as we are ourselves? Hear then, brethren, the utmost of my hostility to my Roman Catholic countrymen. Whatever

blessings I enjoy or expect from the Gospel of the Redeemer in time—whatever blessings I hope for, or anticipate from it in eternity, it is my heart's desire and prayer to God, that my Roman Catholic countrymen may enjoy them all, as fully and as richly as myself: this is my utmost hostility against you, brethren. Since I can advert without wounding you now, to those statutes under which you felt so long burthened, I would ask you this, my countrymen: let me suppose, that in addition to these, it had been enacted, that no Roman Catholic should be permitted even to read the laws of the realm, of which he was a subject—that if he were guilty of any offence, and about to be brought to trial, he should neither be furnished with a copy of his indictment, nor allowed to know the statute under which he was to be indicted—let me suppose, that if he were condemned, and that the king chose to extend the royal mercy to him, there were a set of knaves in power, that would not let the sound of pardon reach his dungeon. What brethren, could you have felt in bondage such as this? if you felt impatient and indignant, and all your spirit stirred within you, under the penal statutes, as they were a little time ago, what would you have felt, had such an iron code as this, been superadded to them. You would have felt as men, that any death were better than the name of a miserable existence dragged on in chains, and under despotism such as this; you would have risen in simultaneous rebellion as one man—you would have armed your spirits for the forlorn-hope of freedom, deliberately determined to conquer or to die—and who could blame you for the struggle? What slave has ever hugged

his chain so closely, as to have bid you tamely bow beneath a lash and goad of tyranny like this? Yet, what is the actual fact, my poor unhappy countrymen, respecting your spiritual condition, as rational and immortal beings? What is the fact? I testify before that God, who hast gifted you with reason and immortality, that this is but the actual fact, as to your state of spiritual bondage at this hour—you are subjects of the King of heaven and earth; but there is a despotism hanging over you, that will not allow you to read the laws for which you are accountable. I say you are not permitted to read them—do not tell me, that that man is allowed to read a book, who shall not dare to exercise his faculties as a rational being in forming a judgment of what he reads—if you do, you may tell me of a man who is at large, because he is in an open field, while he is chained by the leg to a spot from which he cannot stir. You may tell me of a man who is allowed the unrestricted exercise, both of his eyes and ears, while he is immured in a dungeon, where the light of heaven never dawns upon his eye, or the sound of human voice can never strike upon his ear. You are sinners too, brethren—you are guilty, you are accountable for your transgression of God's holy law—you are hastening on—yes, even while my pen is tracing the words, you are hastening on to death and judgment—but you are not permitted to know the laws under which you are to be tried—the statutes are sealed up from you, under which your souls are to be indicted—you must not, dare not read them; but worse, far worse than all—condemned as you must be, as sinners,

brethren, the King of glory in His everlasting word, proclaims a full, a free, a finished, and an unconditional forgiveness—Pardon—Pardon—Pardon to the chief of sinners, who embraces it through the righteousness and atonement of a crucified Redeemer ; but not a sound of this reprieve has ever reached your ears—not a sight of the Royal signature for your salvation, has ever blessed your eyes—you dare not hear—you dare not look at it—you dare not even believe in its existence ; and yet you stand up to vindicate that power that holds your spirits in such bondage. If the meanest earthly privileges were so denied you, as the richest blessings and privileges of everlasting life, it would move

“ The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny.”

O, my countrymen, I will not ask, are the paltry privileges of the British constitution—but I will ask, is the puny sceptre of the British throne, or the little diadem that glitters for a moment on its monarch's brow—are these to be put into competition for a moment as objects of interest, of jealousy, or of ambition, with the rights, the privileges, unalienable, and intangible as the Throne of Him who gave them, of immortals—of heirs of eternity ? You are not mean—the least of you is immortal—you ought not to be poor—had you but the rights and privileges to which you have a claim, indisputable as those that dare to detain them from you—the poorest among you might aspire to “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.” Awake ! awake ! my friends, my countrymen, awake ! and shake the fetters from your

necks—awake! and say, you *will* think for yourselves. Who shall appear, when you are summoned to the bar of God—Who, I say, shall appear, to answer in your place? O, my Roman Catholic friend, whose eye may meet this page, retire into your own bosom for a moment, and ask yourself this single question, who shall go for you, or who shall pass with you to the bar of the Judge of quick and dead? Alas! you must enter into the valley of the shadow of death, and pass through it alone. O then, think I pray you, think why should man presume, why should a fellow-worm dare, or why, if he does, should you permit the daring act, to stand between your soul and your Redeemer's mercy here? O think, my friend, my fellow-sinner, think, the moment you have closed this page, perhaps may be that, in which your eyes shall be closed for ever on the message of redeeming mercy. I pray sincerely that your soul, that the souls of you all, my Roman Catholic countrymen, may be brought to feel, and to enjoy the richest blessings of salvation. I trust I write to you with feelings of honest, affectionate anxiety for your everlasting welfare. I trust I can speak with sincerity, that I could look you all in the face, from the highest to the lowest, and say from my heart, that I love you as a countryman—that I love you as a Christian—and that I love you as a man. If I simply and honestly endeavour to expose the fatal errors under which your Church would draw your souls, I do not intend in this to wound the feelings of the poorest individual among you—I trust the principles which have been laid down upon the subject in

these and the following sheets, will bear the investigation of the word of God; and, under this conviction, I care but little, with what severity they shall be scrutinized by the criticism of man. If one among you, brethren, shall be awakened to examine and investigate the truth, I shall feel it as a rich reward. And now, my countrymen, I bid you farewell. May you be enabled to enjoy the privileges and blessings of an emancipation, greater than the parliament of Britain, or than all the empires of earth could give. May you enjoy the birth-right of men, and of Christians, contained in the MAGNA CHARTA OF SALVATION, the SACRED VOLUME OF ETERNAL LIFE! May no sword be ever drawn against the principles of your religion upon earth but "*the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.*" May no bonds be ever forged by man to lay upon the exercise of your religion, but those of Christian faithfulness and love. May you burst every shackle, that spiritual despotism has invented, to fetter the freedom of your understandings, your consciences, and your judgments, as rational, accountable, immortal beings! May the spirit of political rancour against you be lost in a principle of genuine Christian charity! and may no man ever attack the religion you profess, but one, who can say before his God, that he is actuated by a desire to promote your temporal and eternal happiness, and who can conscientiously subscribe himself as I do,

Your sincere, and faithful friend and servant,

R. J. M'GHEE.

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V.	The grounds we have for hope in Christ. Sin and death came by Adam. Grace and life by Christ. The Christian must die to sin and live to God.
VI.	We are released by Christ from the law, and from the guilt of sin, though the inclination to it still tempt us.
VII.	There is no condemnation to them that, being justified by Christ, walk not after the flesh, but according to the Spirit. Their strong hope and love of God.
VIII.	The apostle's concern for the Jews. God's election is free, and not confined to their nation.
IX.	The end of the law is faith in Christ, which the Jews refusing to submit to, cannot be justified.
X.	God hath not cast off all Israel. The Gentiles must not be proud, but stand in faith and fear.
XI.	Lessons of Christian Virtue.
XII.	Lessons of Obedience to Superiors.
XIII.	The strong must bear with the weak. Cautions against judging, and giving scandal.
XIV.	He exhorts them all to be of one mind, and promises to come and see them.
XV.	He concludes with salutations, bidding them beware of all that should oppose the doctrine they had learned.

Chapter.	Extracts from the Index of the Koran, in which one or two beads, or parts of beads, are selected in alphabetical order.—Sale's Koran, London, 1823.
A.	Always recommended—The punishment of not giving alms in the next life. Angels—Their original—Not objects of worship—Some of them appointed to the souls of men.
B.	Believers—The sincere ones described—Their reward—Their sentence. Burthen, every soul to bear his own. Calumny forbidden. Charity recommended. Chastity commended. Days appointed to commemorate God. Dying Persons—What part of the Koran is usually read to them.
C.	Eucharist, seems to have occasioned a fable in the Koran. Exhortation to the worship of God—To a good life.
D.	Fidelity recommended. Friendship with unbelievers forbidden.
E.	God—Proofs of his Existence—His Omnipotence asserted—His Omnipresence—His Omiscience asserted—Power and Providence conspicuous in his Works.
F.	Hell, torments of, described—The portion of unbelievers.
G.	Holy Spirit—Who is meant thereby. Idolaters compared to brutes. Idolatry, the heinousness of. Idols—Their insignificance—will appear as witnesses against their worshippers.
H.	Jesus promised to many—His miraculous birth—Compared to Adam—A curse denounced against those who believe not on him—Will descend on the earth before the Resurrection and kill Antichrist.
I.	Keys of Knowledge, the fire.
J.	Loss of God—The punishment of those who concealed them.
K.	Magn—His wonderful formation—His presumption in undertaking to fill the Laws of God. Mary the Virgin—Her Story—Free from Original Sin, &c.
L.	Night—Part of it to be spent in prayers.
M.	Oath—An inconsiderate one—How to be expiated. Orphans not to be injured—A curse on those who defraud them.
N.	Parents to be honoured. Pride abominable in the sight of God. Prayer commanded and enforced—Directions concerning it.
O.	Quarrels between true believers to be composed.
P.	Repentance necessary to salvation—A death-bed one ineffectual. Righteous—Their reward. Righteousness—Wherein it consists.
Q.	Sin—The Seven Deadly Sins. Supererogation. Trumpet will sound at the Last Day.
R.	Unbelievers described—Their sentence. U—ought to be just. Widows to be provided for.
S.	Wishes of an Infidel will appear against him at the Last Day.
T.	Yathreb, the ancient name of Medina.
U.	Zacharias praying for a son is promised Jeho.

# TRUTH AND ERROR

CONTRASTED,

&c.

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## LETTER I.

TO THE EDITOR OF BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

SIR,

When an individual, however insignificant, steps forward on the public stage, to enter into a controversy on the subject of religion, if he be not prepared to incur the reproach, the ridicule, or the resentment of those whose principles he impugns, and whose prejudices he offends—or, if he expect to find protection in the purity of his intentions, the benevolence of his motives, the anxiety which he feels to promote their temporal and eternal happiness—he must be totally ignorant of the character of man. If, therefore, in conjunction with others, whose zeal, whose talents, and whose experience, are more calculated to convince our Roman Catholic countrymen of those errors which are fatal to their eternal interests, the writer of these pages should incur a portion of their displeasure, he is prepared to meet it; and he trusts, that from all

who are engaged in this important work, the answer both of their lips and their hearts may be, “being defamed, we entreat—being reviled, we bless;”—so that, although our Roman Catholic brethren may oppose or reproach our principles, they may be eventually led to do justice to our motives; and though they may hold us as heretics in Christian faith, they may acknowledge that we are only discharging what we consider to be the duties of Christian charity.

But while we are prepared to expect reproach from the Roman Catholics—while we are prepared to expect a difference in judgment among many of our Protestant brethren, and a deficiency in zeal and cooperation among some who even profess to approve of our undertaking—we should scarcely have been prepared to expect from any one who had a true regard for the Established religion of these countries, the language of reproach and severity, with which a writer in the last number of your Magazine has attacked us. And although we have cause to be indebted to him, for choosing a channel of such literary celebrity, to call the attention of Protestants to our Institution, we regret that he may so far succeed, by his vain professions of regard for the Established Church, and respect for her authorities, and some coarse abuse of the Roman Catholic Priests, in imposing on the unwary, as the production of a Protestant, a paper which, upon close examination, carries some internal evidence of coming from the pen of a wily Jesuit: and it is worthy of observation, that in the Newspapers

which maintain the principles of the Roman Catholic religion, extracts from your article have been inserted,—attacking the Reformation Society on the triumphant authority of Blackwood's Magazine ! This consideration may be of some importance to you, Sir, as the Editor of a periodical distinguished for the talent with which it is conducted, and professing a high regard for the Established Church. But we have considerations of much higher moment than the names, or characters, or interests, or parties, or politics of men, or literary productions to discuss, namely—the salvation of the immortal soul of man—the rights and privileges of rational and responsible agents, who are hastening onward to a tribunal, where they shall account for their use of that reason which they have abandoned—for their reception of that revelation which they have slighted—for their obedience to that God whose authority they have postponed to that of their fellow-worms, yielding to the precepts and traditions of men, that reverence and that submission which is due alone to the eternal God.—These, and the immeasurable difference between the influences of superstition and of true religion on the intellectual, the moral, the social, the temporal, and eternal misery or happiness of man, of our countrymen, of our friends, of our kinsmen—of those to whom we are bound by all the ties that ought to cement and identify our mutual affections and interests—these, Sir, are considerations too vast to be mixed up with the trifling characters of individuals—to be trampled on by

their wickedness, or to be obscured by their ignorance or their folly.

The author of the paper to which these pages refer, has selected the writer of these letters as the object of his peculiar animadversion; and having described his notions as “uncharitable, extravagant, unscriptural,” &c. &c. he attempts to identify the Reformation Society with this individual: he says, “The theology, “if it may be so called, of the Rev. Mr. M’Ghee, is “the leaven with which the whole mass of the Reformation Society is leavened, and the spirit which “actuates that gentleman, the same that may be expected to characterize all its proceedings.”

It certainly exhibited no deficiency of tact in this writer, to select one of the weakest and least judicious of all those who have taken a part in the proceedings of this Society, and one who has probably exposed himself, from these causes, the most to animadversion, as the object of his attacks. But while, in the name of a Society which enrols on the list of its members some of the most exalted in rank, and office, and character, and talent, and Christian faithfulness and benevolence, in the land, I must protest against its being either identified with, or responsible for, the faults, or errors, or extravagancies of any of its members, much less of one so insignificant as I;—While I must protest against this charge, as being at war with all that is fair, and just, and reasonable, in estimating the

character or principles of any public institution;—and while I must remark on the plain indecorum of such a subterfuge, as being unworthy of any cause, however bad—I am far from retreating under the authority of the Society—of all or of any of its members—in meeting the charge of this assailant. I owe it to that valuable and respected body of men, whom I believe, to the best of my judgment, to be engaged in the most important work that ever has been undertaken in Ireland, to acknowledge my fault, if I have been in error, or to vindicate the principles on which I advocate the cause in which they are engaged. I owe it to my Roman Catholic friends and countrymen, whom I have ventured to address on the subject, to prove that I have endeavoured to speak to them, not the language of fanaticism or folly, but “the words of truth and soberness.” I shall not say I owe it to myself—for I can assure the writer, that such imputations as these rebound from the conscience of a man who desires to discharge his duty, like a marble which a child would fling against a rock. If the writer be, as I suspect, a Jesuit in disguise, I regret that he has had recourse to this unworthy artifice, unworthy even of his order, in opposing the Reformation Society, instead of coming boldly forward to meet, with the weapons of reason and revelation, the arguments that are urged on his understanding and his conscience, to induce him to fly from the confines of a dark and dreadful superstition, whose paths lead to death, to the light and salvation of the everlasting Gospel. If, on the contrary, I should be mistaken, and that this

writer should be a member, or a Minister, of the Established Church, as I have heard hinted, I can unfeignedly assure him, that the most painful feeling I suffer, in vindicating the principles which I have advanced from the imputations he has cast upon them, is that of supposing it possible that such an attack could come from such a quarter, and of being obliged to engage with such an antagonist, whom, like an old acquaintance met in hostile ranks, it is a shock to the feelings to encounter, and a pang to the heart to overcome.

I can truly say to him, with one of old, "With me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you or of man's judgment;" and in such a cause as this, it surely is not the part of one who wishes to investigate or to exhibit truth, to divert the attention of men from *principles* to *persons*, to rail instead of to reason, and to attempt to merge a question which involves the temporal and eternal interests of a nation, into the contemptible consideration of the weakness or folly of an individual. Of what consequence is it to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, whether an insignificant member of the Reformation Society be a fanatic and an enthusiast, or a man of sense and spiritual wisdom? If his sentiments be false, they are probably of too little weight in the scale of any contingent influence, to deserve notice;—if they be considered, from their plausibility, to be worthy of remark, let their error be demonstrated, and let the truth be placed in clear comparison beside them. If this writer should consider it expedient to

pursue his lucubrations upon this subject, it is to be hoped he will adopt a plan, not only better adapted to the discussion of truth, but also infinitely more worthy of the subject, and of those who conscientiously engage in it. If he had brought merely a vague and indefinite charge of “ fanatical extravagance ” against me, I should willingly dismiss the unworthy subject here—or rather, indeed, I should never have thought it worthy of notice ; but he has quoted from my speech at the formation of the Society, the passage on which his invective seems to be founded, and on which he has stamped the seal of his peculiar displeasure—and here, indeed, matter of the deepest importance is involved. In entering on this subject, we come to the vital points connected with the great question to which it seems peculiarly important to call the attention of all who love truth, whether they be Protestants or Roman Catholics.

It is my intention to examine whether the Roman Catholic religion is of such a nature as to make it a duty imperative on Protestants to attempt the reformation of that Church. This is the chief point to be considered. I shall then offer some remarks on the letter of your Irish correspondent, as it seems to bear on the subject. And although I am aware that, in the estimation both of him and of many—alas! too many—who think with him, it will corroborate the charge of “ fanatical extravagance ” to speak of any spiritual influence on the human heart, yet do I pray, in much weakness both of mind and body, as I now am, that the spirit of the living God will strengthen me, and

enable me with all holy boldness, and fidelity, and Christian love to him who has attacked the truth of God through me—to my dear Roman Catholic countrymen, who are wandering in the depths of ignorance and error, under the guidance of an awful superstition, which they are taught to venerate as the truth of God—and to all who differ from me on this vast and important subject,—to speak the truth as I shall wish to have spoken it when I come to stand at the tribunal of the high and holy God.

I am, Sir, &c.

R. M'G.

*Harrogate, July 22, 1829.*

## LETTER II.

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SIR,

The first enquiry which I shall propose in vindication of the Reformation Society, is this—“ *Whether the religion of the Church of Rome be of such a nature, as to render it a duty imperative on Protestants to attempt the reformation of that Church ?*”

In examining this question I wish it to be clearly understood, that I confine my enquiry to the point, whether the Church of Rome be in error on principles which affect the salvation of the human soul? If men, as members of any Church which dissents from the Established religion, do not maintain principles contrary to the fundamental truths of the Christian faith, or the plain precepts of Christian morals, however we may believe them in error on other points, yet this does not seem to me to justify any attempt to shake their principles, or to engage them in disputations. Men differ, and will, probably, continue to differ, on points in religion which God has not decided, and on some which they view differently in His holy Word; but

He *has* decided—He *has* enjoined—He *has* enforced, by every consideration, the principle of Christian unity, and of Christian love, amongst all who profess “*the faith of Christ crucified* ;” and the experience of the Christian Church has proved, that the tendency of every controversy on points that are not essential, is to impair that unity and love which all, who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, should endeavour to keep—“the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” As a member and minister of the Established Church—a Church whose fundamental principles are those of the Gospel of Christ, I think that all dissent, (I care not on what principle) is in itself an error and an evil ; but if the consciences of others feel differently, and that they do not give up the *fundamental principles of faith and morals*, it is not mine to judge, but to respect their conscience, and to endeavour to walk in peace, and unity, and concord with those here, with whom I trust to dwell in everlasting love hereafter. But if, on the contrary, a Church, professing to call itself by the name of Christ, should teach principles *subversive of the faith*, and by a direct and necessary consequence, of the *morals* of Christ’s religion, are we not then called on, as we value the souls of men and the truth of God, to hold a controversy with her? not only to contend, but to “contend earnestly” against her, “for the faith once delivered to the saints?” If we do not, we become partakers of her sins, and if God does not hold His hand, we shall surely be partakers of her plagues.

The quotation which the writer in your Magazine

considers so uncharitable, extravagant, &c., brings us at once to the very vital point of the question ; it is this —“ It is my full conviction, that the principles and teachers of their religion do not set forth that salvation as the only refuge of their immortal souls, but turn their minds from that salvation to fictions of human superstition, and ‘refuges of lies,’ which shall be swept off when heaven and earth shall be rolled away, and leave those who have been so unhappy as to rest on them, naked, shivering, guilty, and condemned, TO PERISH FROM THE PRESENCE OF THEIR GOD FOR EVER.” The last words of this quotation the writer has distinguished by capital letters, intending, I suppose to convey to his readers, by all the intensity of typographical emphasis, the magnitude of that uncharitable and unchristian extravagance with which he considers the sentiment to abound. But let me call this writer to a deliberate examination of this extravagant sentiment. It contains either very awful truth, or very awful falsehood ; and it had been more worthy of the vast importance of the subject, to have brought it to the solid test of proof, than to have attempted to drown the voice of sober investigation in the cry of contempt and contumely on the person who gave it utterance : and now,—in the most grave and solemn deliberation of deep, contemplative reflection, I assert, in the face of that contempt and contumely, and of all that this writer, or any other, can cast on the assertion, that every tittle of that offensive sentence is true—awfully, scripturally true—true in the tremendous fact that it declares—true in the scriptural judgment it denounces. It consists of

two distinct propositions: One, that the principles and teachers of the Roman Catholic Church, instead of setting before their flock the salvation of the Gospel, that *only* refuge of man's immortal soul,—turn them from that salvation to “refuges of lies,” and fictions of human superstition. The truth of this proposition depends on exhibiting the difference between the Gospel of Christ, and the grounds of salvation held out by the Church of Rome; if they are opposed to each other, yea, if they are not identified, this proposition is irrefragably true.

The other proposition is—that all fictions of human superstition—all refuges of lies, shall be swept away when God shall come to judge the quick and dead; and that all who have been turning to them for salvation, instead of to that hope which God reveals in His Gospel to man, shall fall under the judgment of Jehovah, and perish from His presence for ever. The truth of this depends upon the testimony of God's word, whether there is hope for man's soul in refuges of lies and human fictions, as well as in the Gospel—whether it be true, that he that believeth the Gospel shall be saved, and that he that believeth not shall be damned.”

Now, this writer was bound to prove the falsehood of these propositions. If the first were false, the second, as applied to the Roman Catholic religion, could not be true. If the first were true, the man who could admit its truth, and yet deny the truth of the second proposition as applied to it, must, himself, be radically

ignorant of the very fundamental principles of the Gospel.

I regret to be constrained to apply this to the writer of that article. I regret to be obliged to say, that he appears as ignorant as that Church for which he virtually contends, of the very foundation of a sinner's hope. I must submit his principles to the test of that examination which I cannot but wish he had vouchsafed to mine. He states in the second column, p. 84 :—" Far indeed are we from underrating the mischiefs which must ever attend on that demoralizing system, even as the shadow attends upon the substance. It may be briefly described as the eclipse of the Gospel wherever it exists. Deeply rooted and widely extended are the errors which must prevail—errors concerning not only the rule of faith, but the foundation of government in civil society." I shall not stop to remark on the commencement of this sentence, in which he anticipates a charge that too deeply lies against his production ; and I must beg to correct the conclusion of it, in which he condenses the errors of " a demoralizing system," and " an eclipse of the Gospel," into " errors concerning not only the rule of faith, but the foundation of government in civil society." As to errors on the rule of faith—although the Roman Catholic Church is in great error on this subject, still it is by no means to be considered as her greatest error ; errors on *the rule of faith*, and errors on *the thing believed* are perfectly distinct from each

other. A man may have a clear and adequate perception of the rule of faith, and yet be grossly ignorant of, and refuse to believe, the fundamental principles which that rule reveals. On the other hand—a man may have a genuine belief of the truths revealed in the rule, and a very imperfect or erroneous view of what the true rule is, by which his faith is to be regulated. There are many men who could clearly contend for the Word of God as the sole and genuine rule of faith, who yet reject the most important truths which that Word reveals. There are many who believe the Gospel, and whose life evinces the truth of their profession, who would place the articles and liturgy of their Church upon a par, or nearly so, with the Bible, as their rule of faith. If, therefore, the writer mean this as an explanation of his expressions “demoralizing system” and “eclipse of the Gospel,” as applied to the Roman Catholic religion, it is a mistake; if not, I ask his pardon for the correction. As to their errors on “the foundation of government in civil society;”—however these may result from their religious principles, it has nothing whatever to do with the subjects in debate. I must, therefore, (consistently with an excellent rule of the Reformation Society, which disclaims all interference in political concerns) decline following this writer into any expressions on this topic, which he has unmeaningly crowded into his article; we must adhere closely to the point at issue. I would keep him to that, if he does not there mean to explain away his expressions, I will take his statement of the Roman

Catholic religion in his own terms, as to Christian faith and Christian morals. As to morals, it is “*a demoralizing system.*” As to the Christian faith, I thankfully adopt this writer’s expressive image—“*It may be briefly described as the eclipse of the Gospel.*” The faith of that Church is not only not the Gospel, but it is as different from the light of truth, as the opaque and interposing planet, from that luminary whose beams it intercepts from earth.

Now, the assertion, that the principles and teachers of the Church of Rome do not set forth the salvation of the Gospel as the refuge of man’s immortal soul, but substitute for that, fictions of human superstitions, and refuges of lies; and the assertion, that their religion, so far from being that of the Gospel, is the eclipse of the Gospel, seem to mean so precisely the same thing, that I take it for granted, the writer does not mean to charge the first proposition in this offensive passage, with extravagance or want of charity. I, therefore, conclude, that the force of all his charges is directed against the second proposition—namely, that all such fictions and refuges shall be swept away at last by the judgment of God, and that all who have been so unhappy as to rest on them, SHALL PERISH FROM THE PRESENCE OF THEIR GOD FOR EVER; and this conclusion is warranted both by his having emphatically distinguished this latter clause in capitals, and also from his remarks on the passage which are these:—

“We thought it was confined to the Church of

Rome, thus to deal damnation upon all who differ from her; but Mr. M'Ghee is one of those who furnish a proof that extremes are nearest, and it is rather unfortunate for himself that, that gentleman, when he turned his back upon Popery, should have pursued a course by which he has been carried out of Christendom, and landed upon a *terra firma* of bigotry, as gloomy and inexorable as any that he could have relinquished."

It is scarcely worth while, Sir, in writing on this important subject, to make a personal observation, but I must assure this writer that I have never been a Roman Catholic, or belonged to any Church, but that of which I desire to be a faithful, though I feel I am an unworthy minister. Before I enter on an examination of this "gloomy," "inexorable," and "bigotted" proposition, I must make a few preliminary remarks, which are called for by the nature of this writer's sentiments—sentiments unhappily, not less popular and generally received, than unsound and unscriptural in their nature and ordinary application.

The judgments of God denounced against the sins of men are so awful, that the mind recoils from contemplating the execution of their tremendous sentence, against any number or any individual of our fellow-men; and it is unquestionably a true and genuine principle of Christian charity, a principle without which, no man could possess a title to the name of Christian, to wish from our hearts, and to use our endeavours as

far as we can, that all our fellow-sinners should escape the terrors of "the wrath to come." But that which it is an acknowledged principle of Christian charity, to *wish* for every individual, has become (by a transition from truth to error, too easy to the human mind) established among the sentiments of the multitude that bear the Christian name, as a sort of courteous charity to *hope* for them; and, accordingly, the term charity has been modernized into an application, not only different from the true and scriptural meaning of the word, but which transfers it from the pure and holy page of revelation, to the profligate vocabulary of latitudinarianism and infidelity. Now, it is *uncharitable* to say that any man can be lost—now it is only Christian *charity* to hope that every man will be saved.—*Let every man go his own road to Heaven—let us not be so UNCHARITABLE as to think evil of each other's religion—do you go your way and we will go ours—let us not presume to*

" Deal damnation round the land,  
On each we judge his foe."

*Let us all go on quietly and peaceably like GOOD CHRISTIANS together—let us live and act well, and it is not much concern what we believe.* This is *modern charity*, and if your correspondent wish to finish the picture as poetically as he has drawn mine, he may take the popular couplet:—

" For modes of faith, let graceless bigots fight—  
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

He will recollect, it is from the same poet who has

already furnished him with his quotation, of which I shall but remark, that I have enough of Christian charity, sincerely to wish that the principles of the person who quotes the passage, are not infected with the source from which it is derived. A composition which its profane author has called by desecration, a "*prayer*," of which the first stanza is an attempt to identify the *obscene idol* worshipped by the Heathen, under the name of Jupiter, with the *true and living God*, the Jehovah of the sacred Scriptures. But what, Sir, is this charity—this popular charity of our day? It is an infidel abandonment of the principles of divine revelation; it is an infidel attempt to accommodate the truth of God, to all the falsehoods and the fictions of the fallen human heart; it is an insult to the majesty of that Divine Being, who has revealed his holy will to his ignorant rebellious creatures; it is a contempt of his law—a rejection of his Gospel—a mockery of his authority—a scoffing at his mercy—a braving of his judgments. Let us plainly examine it, and what is it but to say—it is of no consequence what God has revealed for the instruction of his creatures; men may embrace or reject whatever parts of it they please, and it is Christian charity to hope that they shall all be saved, whether their principles be those to which God's word annexes salvation or not. If, Sir, to reject such charity as this, be gloomy, inexorable bigotry—then, Sir, I trust, I shall ever justly fall under the imputation. Such charity as this, may be called by the name of *Christian*, but can never be professed, except by him who is ignorant of

that faith, and destitute of that hope, which alone can scripturally entitle him to the appellation.

That charity which the Bible recognizes alone as true, is founded on a belief of the truth of God's holy word. It is that love to him, and love to our fellow-creatures, which springs from the faith of his great and rich salvation. It is the agent of faith, the spring of action in the believer's life—for "faith worketh by love." It "believeth all things," but nothing contrary to that which God commands it to believe. It "hopeth all things," but nothing which God has forbidden it to hope. It cannot believe, it cannot hope that those who reject the Gospel can be saved, unless they repent and believe it—for this were to believe, and hope, that God would be untrue. It cannot believe, and hope, that those who, though they profess to believe it, are living in practical ungodliness, can be in a state of salvation, for this were to believe, and hope, that God would be untrue likewise; and while it earnestly desires, and would gladly labour to promote the salvation of all mankind, it cannot ignorantly, and weakly, and sinfully indulge a hope for any fellow-creature, at the expense of the truth and authority of the Creator. It evinces the genuine principle of its existence, not in flattering men in their errors, but in endeavouring to convince them of them; not in soothing them in their ignorance, but in endeavouring to enlighten and instruct them; not in lulling them to sleep in their "refuges of lies," saying with the false teachers, "*peace peace, when there is no peace,*" but in awakening and calling on

them to fly to the strong holds of truth and of salvation, crying to them with the Apostle, "*awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*" This is genuine charity, and I trust our Roman Catholic countrymen shall see and feel that, they who in a spirit of honest, affectionate fidelity, call on them to turn to Him who is the only hope and refuge of apostate man, feel more of genuine charity for them, and take a deeper interest in their happiness both here and hereafter, than those who raise the cry of fanaticism, and "uncharitable," and "inexorable bigotry," &c. against men that tell them that if they do not turn to Christ, they must perish in their iniquity. PERISH (yes, let it be written in capitals) FROM THE PRESENCE OF THEIR GOD FOR EVER.— But while there are some good charitable people, who are so full of Christian amiability, that they will say, all men are to be saved, whatever be their creed, and who think God too compassionate, to be holy—too merciful, to be just—too relenting, to be true. There is another class among whom, it is most probable, your correspondent is to be reckoned—who are like him, ready to cry out against the uncharitable bigotry of those, who would impugn a certain description of errors, perhaps *those to which they feel particularly inclined to verge*, but who are not quite arrived at the full latitudinarian extent of this infidel charity that I have described, who profess themselves highly orthodox.— This class of men forget that after all, their own liberality is but of a comparative latitude; for there are classes, and it is to be feared the major class, in many

parts of this same Christendom too, beyond the boundaries of which my intolerance has so hurried me, who would place your correspondent but a few steps above such a bigot, as even the peculiar object of his reproach. Let me ask him, Sir, whether there is no standard of truth in his estimation, the falling short of which, subjects a man "to perish from the presence of his God for ever?" Let me ask him, whether he thinks that those who assert with citizen Dupont, that "THERE IS NO GOD"—shall read their sentence at His dread tribunal if they die in their iniquity?—If he answer yes; what a terrible bigot must he appear to all the disciples of the national convention!—Let me bring in another class before him—what does he say of those who imagine they have made an advance to true religion from Atheism—who admit that there is a Divine Being, that "the Heavens declare his glory, and that the firmament showeth his handy work," but yet, who consider that the only revelation of his existence is in the works of nature, and that the book which we call the sacred volume is only a cunningly-devised fable; does his charity extend so far as to illustrate in capitals the bigotry which asserts that those who trample on the words of eternal life as a fiction, "*shall perish from the presence of their God for ever?*" If not—if he will pass sentence on such a class as this—it is well that he has not lived in days of yore, when the classic pen of Voltaire, of Gibbon, or of Hume, would have immortalized his bigotry, as he has endeavoured to give celebrity to mine. But does he give up the Deists too?—Well! let him prepare himself now, if he is not very

liberal, for a charge of bigotry, which shall be vollied on his head from thousands in this very favored land, when I shall summon before him another band of meek, demure, most moral, pious gentlemen, enshrined

“ In all the great divinity of virtue,”

who look with horror, like himself, on those who deny a God, or who do not *reverence his sacred word*—gentlemen, who prize the Bible as much as he himself, who acknowledge with him that it “ *contains a system of divine philosophy, which may afford its highest exercise to the sagacity and intelligence of the deepest and most enlightened thinker*”—who place the sacred code of Christian morals, as far beyond those of “ *Epictetus, Plato, Tully,*” as their *pious and enlightened Founder* was superior to the sages both of Greece and Rome. But then—O, can there be an exception against such grave divinity as this? These wise, these meek, these moral, pious men, can call that founder—but a sage! Those antiquated creeds, those stubborn, bigotted, and stupid formularies that are after all but fit to be said or sung in churches—how illiberal, how unenlightened are their dogmas, that Jesus Christ is “ *over all, God blessed for ever!*”—How irrational, would they say, is their doctrine of atonement! How inconsistent with all that “ *divine philosophy,*” conceives of a merciful and holy Being, that Jesus should “ *die, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God!*” Now what, Sir, does your correspondent think of these? will he stand up in the centre of enlightened Christendom, in this the middle of the nineteenth century, and repeat without a

blush that revolting antiquated dogma, "*this is the Catholic faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved; \* \* \* which except a man do keep, whole and undefiled, without doubt, he shall PERISH EVERLASTINGLY?*"—If he can do so, there are some good doctors, even in little Ireland, who will exclaim, "we thought it was confined to the Church of Rome thus to 'deal damnation' upon all who differ from her;" but your anonymous correspondent is one of those who furnish a proof that extremes are nearest; and it is rather unfortunate for himself, that that gentleman, when he turned his back upon Popery, has pursued a course by which he has been carried out of Christendom, and landed upon a terra firma of bigotry and intolerance as gloomy and inexorable as any that he could have relinquished. Does your correspondent fear to encounter this imputation?—if not, then let me call on him to recollect, that the charge of bigotry and intolerance is frequently the outcry of ignorance, and still more frequently of guilt and wickedness, by which it seeks to drown the voice of honest reproof, and silence an investigation which it is incompetent to meet;—let him remember, that virulence is not a test of truth; that to bestow unchristian appellations is hardly calculated to convert or to convince the very individuals who are so unfortunate as to deserve them—let him remark, that every man who seeks to draw the line of demarcation between truth and falsehood must incur the charge of bigotry and intolerance, from those who arrogate to themselves the wisdom of taking a stand above him; and that, therefore, the only proper plan for one who professes

to write on such a solemn subject, as that which he has undertaken, is to determine, and clearly lay down the abstract principles of eternal truth, and to exercise, not a spurious, but a genuine Christian charity, and a sound, well-regulated judgment in their application—an application which, when it is made to any body of men, can alone be justified by an honest and sincere desire for their eternal welfare, a clear conviction of their error on essential points, and an earnest and affectionate anxiety to correct it. Will this writer take his stand on the existence of a God?—he must be content to be branded as a bigot by the Atheist. Will he take his stand on the Divine authenticity and inspiration of the sacred volume—will he maintain the sanctioning of eternal judgment against the scoffers of Jehovah's truth?—then must he receive a similar stamp of bigotry from the Deist. Will he assert the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity—will he hold up the Godhead and atonement of the adorable Immanuel?—then shall he be sentenced by

“ Recumbent virtue's downy Doctors,”

who have turned from the Fountain of Life to the broken cisterns of Socinus. Does he flatter himself, that in opposing these, he stands upon the solid ground of orthodoxy? I tell him then, with as much confidence as he would speak to them, that while some may pride themselves on their intellectual superiority, in having learned to explain away the facts, or to trample on the evidences of revelation, or to deny the existence of a God; and others may pride themselves on a more orthodox creed, in adhering to a church whose principles are in accordance with the Sacred Volume, and

alike abhorrent from infidelity and superstition; and others again may seek to shroud their ignorance in the authority of their fellow men, and their sins, in gloomy dens of human superstition—I tell him, that the simple abstract truth, in reference to them all, is the same—“HE THAT BELIEVETH THE GOSPEL SHALL BE SAVED, AND HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT SHALL BE DAMNED.” Infidelity, whether Socinianism, Deism, or Atheism, affords no refuge for the human soul—superstition allures and lulls it asleep in refuges of lies. A genuine Christian Church points out in her principles the real refuge for the soul, but can afford no security to those who do not fly to it in spirit and truth, all shall alike “appear before the judgment seat of Christ,”—when the presumptuous audacity of infidelity, the lying refuges of superstition, the Laodicean guilt of merely nominal orthodoxy, which imagined itself “rich and increased with goods,” and knew not that it was “poor, and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked,” shall all be swept away from before the Holy God, and their votaries shall perish from His presence for ever and ever.

So far from shrinking then, from the charges of your correspondent, he may perceive I enlarge the borders of my bigotry; but I tell him in deep and solemn truth, that this to my view is the imperative duty, yea, and a distinctive mark of genuine Christian charity—to warn men of their danger—to tell them of the remedy, seems to me not the characteristic of unkindness but of regard—he may call it the “*terra firma* of bigotry,”—

but I entreat him to examine whether it be not the "*terra firma*" of truth—I fearlessly affirm that it is. I trust that the finger of the living God may not mark it as a "*terra incognita*," in tracing the course of his pilgrimage in the map of life—I trust that he and all who are tossing, as we must fear all the apologists of error are, upon a troubled sea of ignorance and sin that cannot rest, may be brought to land upon the Rock of Ages—may feel with joy its firm support beneath their feet—may look upon the waves of sin, and time, and death, as they play with impotence around its base, unable any longer to destroy, but only to dash them a little with their spray, until they reach the *terra firma* of everlasting rest and glory. If this be want of charity I am a terrible delinquent, and I will acknowledge, that in this the Reformation Society must share the blame with me—for we feel, we confess, *this* want of Christian charity even for every Roman Catholic in Ireland. But this is a digression, Sir, I must go back to the toil of a strict and sober controversy, and I most willingly confess, that controversy is a toil and trial to my spirit.

Is then, the religion of the Church of Rome of such a nature, as to render it a duty imperative on Protestants, to attempt the reformation of its members? Who shall answer the question? Let us hear the opponent of the Reformation Society—what saith he?

*“ Mischiefs attend on that demoralizing system even as the shadow attends upon the substance—it may be briefly described as the eclipse of the Gospel.”*

True—what are the consequences? Is a demoralizing system of religion Christianity—is that from which demoralization is as inseparable as the shadow from the substance—is that Christianity? Is a religion which is not only not the Gospel, but as different from the Gospel as the opacity of the planet from the lustre of the sun, as darkness from light—is this Christianity? If not, can those who teach, and who live in a demoralizing system—a system which is not Christianity—a system from which, by every effort, they endeavour to shut out the light of truth—a system which seems concocted, as an illustration of that divine testimony, *“he that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reprov’d.”*—Can men teach and live in this, and yet be in the way of salvation? If salvation come to man but through the Gospel of Christ, can men live in a system confessedly as different from the Gospel as darkness is from light, and yet receive that salvation which the Gospel alone can give? Are the words that fell from those divine lips false?—“This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil”—may they then be in darkness, and love darkness, and yet this be no condemnation?—Must we read in our Bibles—“he that believeth the Gospel shall be saved”—but it is no matter whether he believe or not, for he that believeth what is as contrary to the Gospel, as darkness to light, shall be saved too. If it be extravagant, fanatical, uncharitable bigotry, to say that such men must perish from the presence of their God, then it is just, and sober, and cha-

ritable liberality, to hold out to them in their ignorance and guilt, the hope of everlasting life. What, am I to reply to a writer who maintains this? shall I say that such principles are only calculated to confound all right and wrong, all vice and virtue, all good and evil, all truth and falsehood, all the revelation of Jehovah, and all the superstition and infidelities, and follies, and fanaticisms of man, in one heterogeneous and undistinguishable mass of error?—shall I say that such principles are alike at war with all the testimonies of divine revelation, and all the legitimate deductions of sober and enlightened reason? shall I urge against him the authority of a Church for which he pretends a reverence, but with whose principles he appears so totally unacquainted;—a Church, which not only faithfully declares the judgments of God against the professors of falsehood, but with an intolerance and bigotry, even greater than my sentiment contained, denounces as a scriptural sentence an anathema on their apologists.—“They also are to be *had accursed*, that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature, for holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.”—Art. 18. Shall I urge these as a refutation of the charge of bigotry and intolerance, &c. &c. against the Reformation Society? No—but I will entreat that writer, for his own sake, to consider the solemn denunciations of one, who treats of sentiments like his—denunciations of an authority far higher than that of a fellow-worm, an au-

thority far greater than the Articles of the Church—  
 “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that  
 put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put  
 bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter,” Isaiah v. 20.—I  
 would entreat him for his own sake, to consider how  
 the eternal God marks efforts similar to that which he  
 has made, as the crown and consummation of Jewish  
 iniquity—“*They please not God, and are contrary to  
 all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that  
 they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway,*”  
 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16. I would remind him of an admoni-  
 tion which, though not inspired, is preserved in the  
 pages of inspiration for our learning, as given to those  
 who were engaged like him in attempting to oppose the  
 dissemination of the Gospel among men who were in  
 darkness and the shadow of death.—“*And now I say  
 unto you, refrain from these men and let them alone,  
 for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come  
 to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it,  
 lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.*”—  
 Acts v. 38, 39. I submit these to his own considera-  
 tion, as a fellow-sinner, and I hope I may truly add  
 as a friend to himself, though an enemy to his errors—  
 but if I must answer him as a controversialist, I will  
 say, that he must achieve what is beyond the ability  
 of man;—he must reconcile not my charges but his own  
 concessions, as to the Roman Catholic religion, with the  
 word of God, as holding out some hope of eternal life  
 to those who fly to its false unchristian refuges, before  
 such flippant, puerile, and inconsistent arguments, as  
 he has ventured to advance, can weigh a feather in the

mind of any man that is entitled to the name of Christian, against the Reformation Society—and I would say to the members of that Society, who have the salvation of their Roman Catholic countrymen at heart, that so far from being daunted by the attacks of such a writer, who though he professes to dip his pen in oil, mixes not a little of the “*succus nigræ loliginis*” along with it, they should rather the more boldly, “set their faces like a flint” to their work; for what must the evils of that awful superstition be, when viewed in the light of God’s eternal word?—what must it be in the estimation of any man, who can weigh truth and falsehood in the balances of the sanctuary?—and what should be their zeal, and firmness, and fidelity, in endeavouring to enlighten our poor countrymen who are labouring under its yoke, when even an adversary like this, who (if not one of themselves, is but a few degrees removed from them) is obliged to confess that it is a demoralizing system with mischiefs attendant on it, as the shadow attends the substance, and that is as different from the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the dark eclipsing planet from the sun?

I find, Sir, this part of the subject must be continued in another letter.

I am, Sir, &c.

R. M’G.

*Harrowgate, July 24, 1829.*

### LETTER III.

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SIR,

Having shown, I trust, the glaring inconsistency of a writer making such a concession, respecting the religion of Roman Catholics, as that it was a demoralizing system and an eclipse of the Gospel, and yet accusing a Society of intolerance, and bigotry, and uncharitableness, &c. &c. which has been embodied for the sole professed object of their instruction, I proceed with my inquiry as to the nature of that religion.

And here, if these pages should meet the eye of any of my Roman Catholic countrymen, I would request of them to bear in mind, that I speak not of *men* but of *principles*. I presume not to judge of their individual condition before God—that is the prerogative of the Searcher of hearts alone—but I speak of the principles of their Church as expressed in her standard works, of which it is alike the privilege and the duty of their fellow-men to judge: and I must correct here, what I will presume was an unintentional sophism, in the very first remark which your correspondent makes

on the offensive passage in my speech. "We thought," he says, "it was confined to the Church of Rome thus to 'deal damnation' upon all who differ from her"—implying that I had done so!—I stated that all persons who were so unhappy as to rest on the fictions of human superstition and refuges of lies, to which the principles and teachers of the Church of Rome turn the human mind, shall perish—therefore, this writer concludes, *I deal damnation upon all who differ from me!* I know not on what principle of logic he has drawn this conclusion—it is neither true in matter of reasoning, nor in matter of fact; there are many who differ from me on various points connected with religion—many Dissenters, for example, both from among the living and the dead, whose characters and memories I honour as faithful holy servants of God.—Equally inconclusive and untrue, is the assumption that I deal damnation upon all the individual members of the Church of Rome. I trust and I believe that both among those that are living and dead of that Church, though sunk in the darkness of superstition in her principles, God hath reserved to Himself many "who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal," yet still is my position irrefragably true—for I believe there are many, who, amidst all the superstitions which their system presents to them, do really *not rest their souls on them*, nor turn to them as their refuge, but hang their hopes of everlasting life on Jesus Christ, and on Him alone, and such, whoever they be, shall be saved. It is not for man to dive into the bosom of his fellow-creatures—we know full well that the outward forms of Churches

can afford no test by which to judge the real principles of their respective adherents, in the midst of a blaze of surrounding light which is reflected upon the countenance and exterior of the sinner; the eye of God may see that not a beam has reached the inner man, and in the midst of superstitious gloom and darkness, in which prejudice and education may chain the person of the sinner, the God of love can shoot a beam to cheer and to illuminate the heart. I have conversed with some Roman Catholics, who I had reason to hope were really resting on the Redeemer alone. Our little sight is all-incompetent to place our rule or compasses upon the intersection of light and darkness on this earth—this can but be seen and judged of by that eye that looks upon that darkness and that light from heaven; but though we cannot do so with respect to *men*, we are called on to do so with respect to *principles*. While I therefore do not presume to pass a sentence on the body of Roman Catholics, because they belong outwardly to that Church, however superstitious—nor to pronounce on the state of any individual of that body, unless on hearing him deny the Gospel, I should be called to bear a testimony to the truth—yet I do, without hesitation, pronounce on the fictions of superstition and refuges of lies which the principles of their Church hold out to the human soul, and as certainly pronounce, that any man or men who live and die really placing their confidence in them, and consequently not on Christ, must perish from the presence of their God for ever. And I earnestly, and solemnly, and affec-

tionately entreat the attention of any of my Roman Catholic countrymen whose eye may meet this page, to a patient examination of this all-important subject. O let them consider how contemptible and insignificant is the opinion of our kindred dust—how little it shall profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul. I trust I can conscientiously say I do not write a line on the subject with the intention of giving them offence; and if I should unintentionally offend them, I can only say, “am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” It is not my object to enter at length into any doctrines of the Church of Rome, much less to urge all the objections which lie against them, but merely to consider some of their leading principles with reference to this one simple point, namely—That the means of salvation which that Church sets forth are inconsistent and at war with the Gospel of Christ.

The Gospel of Christ is that Glorious Royal Proclamation from the King of kings, of full, free, finished, unconditional mercy, pardon, and salvation to lost and guilty sinners—which infinite wisdom planned, and everlasting faithfulness and love, effected through the righteousness and atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, our crucified Redeemer—which displays at once the whole perfections of the moral government of Jehovah, and the harmonious exercise and adjustment of his moral attributes—exhibiting the purity of His divine law—the tremendous and uncompromising nature of its,

sanctions—His spotless holiness—His inflexible justice—His infinite grace and mercy—and His eternal faithfulness and truth.

Now, against every one of these the superstitions of the Church of Rome are systematically set in opposition.

The Gospel I have stated displays THE PURITY OF THE DIVINE LAW. The Lord Jesus Christ, as man presents to us, neither more nor less than a living pattern of that character which Jehovah's law requires in His creatures—to say that it is beyond the power of man to fulfil that holy law as the Redeemer did, is only to say what the Scripture testifies, that man is a fallen being; but the law of God is not degenerated with man's fall—it has not lowered its requirements to accommodate itself to man's guilt. This popular but ignorant and absurd doctrine, which men lay as "a flattering unction to their souls," that "*God never demands from us more than we can perform,*" is but to say, in other words, that God's law has become less strict in proportion to our depravity; yea, as the peculiar temperament, habits, education, &c. of different individuals prompts them peculiarly to the commission of different iniquities—the law dilates and contracts in proportion to their respective depravities—each individual construes the mercy, as he calls it, and the forbearance of God in the way most favorable to his own besetting sin, and hopes that God will mercifully moderate the requisitions of his law in the way most

accommodating to him. One individual imagines that God will not be so strict as to mark one crime, and another expects that He will make particular allowance for another, until the law of God is frittered away into a mere indefinite rule, of which the requirements are as uncertain, and the sanctions as vague and indeterminate as the law itself; and although the uncompromising holiness of that law, which is as immutable as its Author, is at this moment as perfect as when Adam was created competent to fulfil its requirements in Paradise; and although its sanctions are as terrible as when the curse was pronounced upon the fallen race—as when the deluge overwhelmed a guilty and apostate world—as when (what is infinitely more) He who became at once the surety for its fulfilment and its penalty, drank the cup of wrath and justice to the very dregs—bowed His sacred head and yielded up the ghost—when the rending rocks, the quaking earth, the darkened sun, the convulsed and mourning frame of nature, bore a testimony to the unmitigated nature of its pure and holy requisitions, and of the tremendous terror with which Eternal Justice enforced the rigorous infliction of its sentence: and although the inspired preachers of the everlasting Gospel found their proclamations of mercy to a guilty world on the unchanged condition of their guilt under that law, “what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God,” Rom. iii. 19: and although they testify the utter impossibility of men justifying themselves by any of their vain attempts at

its observance—"Therefore by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified, for by the law is the knowledge of sin," Rom. iii. 20 : and although they repeat, with terrible emphasis of denunciation the sentence upon those who blindly and proudly imagine that they can, at least in some degree, bring an offering of the "filthy rags of their righteousness" to God, "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse ; for it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them," Gal. iii. 10 : and although they level all the vain distinctions of comparative merit before God, which many men proudly build on—their "not being as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican"—bringing them all alike as criminals before the tribunal of the Eternal Judge, "whosoever shall keep the whole law," (a higher degree of purity than ever any Pharisee affected,) "and yet offend in one point," (a less degree of delinquency than ever Pharisee could pretend to claim,) "he is guilty of all," James ii. 10 : and although they declare that any system setting up the moral righteousness of man as constituting any ground of hope is a direct subversion of the Gospel, a direct denial of salvation by a Redeemer—"If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain," Gal. ii. 21—a direct forfeiture of every hope in Him—"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace," Gal. v. 4.—Notwithstanding all this, yet such is the miserable condition of the Church of Rome, that she has reduced and embodied

into a system all the corrupt and ignorant misconstructions and perversions of God's holy law that ever the human heart devised upon the subject—she adopts, in opposition to the testimony of revealed truth, that principle which is the prolific root of every error in her whole religion—that principle which is a complete subversion of Jehovah's law—that principle which is a total rejection of His Gospel—that principle which she holds in common with every Pagan superstition, and with every form of infidelity that professes to admit the existence of a God, whether Socinianism or Deism, and with every corrupt system of Christianity, by whatever name it may be called, and with every corrupt member of the purest system, and with every Jew and every Turk—namely, JUSTIFICATION IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY MAN'S OWN MERITS OR EFFORTS BEFORE GOD. This is the Pope's *foundation of sand*; and to every member of that Church, a man who knows the truth of the Gospel, and who values the salvation of their immortal souls, will feel called on to testify that if in this instance they rest on the principles which their Church sets before them, they must be as ignorant of the real nature of God's holy law, as ignorant of the extent and purity of its demands, as ignorant of the extent and guilt of their own violations of it, as ignorant of, and as indifferent to, the terror of its sanctions, the sentence of awful judgment that overhangs them, and consequently as heedless of the one and only, but all-sufficient remedy which God has proposed, and as easily satisfied with the vain, absurd, and

hopeless refuges from sin, which their Church has substituted, as if they were in the midst of heathen darkness, as if there were no Bible, and as if there were no God.

Let me give one or two specimens of the system of their Church. In the first place, she mutilates the copies of the law of God which she distributes in her Catechisms among the millions of the Irish population, by expunging altogether from the decalogue that one commandment, in which God expressly prohibits man from making those very objects which she makes and sets up before them in every place of her worship; and by omitting that clause of another commandment, in which God enjoins men to labour those six days, on so many of which she, on the contrary, commands them to abstain from labour, and to consecrate them in sloth and idleness to Saints. Who can estimate the guilt or the audacity of man, the worm man daring to blot out one letter of that law, which the great and living God revealed—nay not only revealed, but expressly gave, and not only expressly gave, but wrote, engraven with his own Almighty hand on tables of stone, as that law which was to be the standard of His moral government over His intelligent and responsible creatures? Nor can we reprobate too strongly the manifest injustice towards men of hiding from them that law, for obedience to which they are accountable, and by which they are to be judged—nor the impiety, the presumption of impeaching the wisdom of the Eternal Lawgiver, as if He had engraven with His Almighty hand, what it was superfluous and unnecessary for his creatures to know. But, omitting any further consideration of these mo-

mentous charges, I will here show, that even of that mutilated part of the code that she has left, she has perverted and explained away the whole of its spiritual meaning, so that not a single man who takes her as the standard by which to regulate his conscience, can know any thing of his own character or danger as a sinner before God. And here, lest I should be considered to misrepresent her doctrine, I will give an extract from one of her own enlarged and most popular catechisms—it is entitled,

“The Real Principles of Catholics: or a Catechism, by way of general instruction, explaining the principal points of the doctrine and ceremonies of the Catholic Church.” By the Right Rev. Dr. Hornihold, fourth edition—Dublin, R. Coyne, 1821, and which bears the following imprimatur of the highest ecclesiastical authority. “*We approve highly of Dr. Hornihold's book, entitled the Real Principles of Catholics, and we recommend it for perusal to the Roman Catholics of this Archdiocese.*”

“✠ THOMAS TROY, D.D.

“✠ DANIEL MURRAY, D.D.

“M. H. HAMILL, D.D.”

Now in this work there is a chapter on “sin in general,” which is more like the casuistry of a Heathen writer, not very far advanced in notions of morality, than like the testimony of a Christian Church, respecting the scriptural doctrine of the violation of the laws of God. The following questions and answers are

to be found in it. It commences with the question p. 297:—

“ Q. What is sin ?

“ A. It is defined by St. Augustine to be any thought, word, or deed, against the law of God—which includes all sins of omission, which are interpreted in an affirmative sense. It also includes all human laws, civil and ecclesiastical, which are God’s laws radically, for as St. Paul says, he who resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God.” The latter clause of this answer is untrue, and a misapplication of the Apostle’s words ; there might be many laws, both civil and ecclesiastical, as there are in the Court and Church of Rome, which it would be treason against God to submit to, or obey. The first clause is scriptural—it is the apostolic definition of sin, 1 John 3, 4—and therefore, let the Roman Catholic remark, that both in the word of God, and in his own acknowledged principles, “ *sin is the transgression of the law of God.*”—Now let us go on to p. 299.

“ Q. How many kinds of actual sins are there ?

“ A. Two ; *mortal* and *venial*.

“ Q. What is a mortal sin ?

“ A. It is a sin whereby we lose the grace and love of God, and make ourselves liable to eternal damnation.

“ Q. Why is it called mortal sin ?

“ A. Because it kills the soul.”—Again p. 300.

“ Q. What is venial sin ?

“ A. *It is a much less offence*, whereby the grace of God is not lost, but it lessens his love in our hearts.”

Now I pause on this, and invite every Roman Ca-

tholic to examine this principle, of the distinction between mortal and venial sin. It is admitted that all sin is a violation of God's law—His holy word denounces a sentence of death against all transgression—“*Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law to do them.*” Gal. iii. 10. “Whosoever shall keep *the whole law*, and yet offend in *one point*, he is *guilty of all*,” James ii. 10. Yet what saith this principle? That the laws of God may be transgressed either in kind or degree, not only without fear of God's justice overtaking us for the transgression, but even without any apprehension of losing His favour—that there are transgressions of it, which are only venial, whereby the grace of God is not lost.—What is this but a direct contradiction to the testimony of His sacred word?—what is it but an insult to the whole system of His moral government?—the laws which it is a venial offence to transgress, must be but of little consequence in their enactment; the laws which may be transgressed with impunity must be so insignificant, or so much too severe, as to be abandoned in their execution, and just allowed to lie a dead letter on the statute books. What is this but to deceive and blind the sinner, both as to the nature and consequences of his iniquity? and instead of teaching him the truth of his Creator, to join the enemy of souls in repeating the delusion that

“*Brought death into the world, and all our woe?*”

“Ye shall not surely die,” saith the Devil, for only eating of a tree—ye shall not surely die for your venial offences, saith the Church of Rome—what wonder

that such a Church should make her erasures from the decalogue! what wonder she should shut up the Bible from the soul of man! But not only is she guilty of an insult to the truth and authority of the Lawgiver not only is she guilty of deluding and blinding the subject as to his state, his character, his accountability to the law, and his prospects before the tribunal of his Holy Judge—but she confounds all the principles, and relaxes all the bonds of the moral obligations of that law.” Hear her farther, p. 300.

“Q. What rules can you give, that we may know mortal sins from venial?”

“A. The principal rules are these:—First, mortal sins are marked in the Scriptures by the word woe, the threats of deserving death, eternal pain, excluding from heaven,—&c. Secondly, the *opinion* of the *Fathers* and *Divines* when they *all* agree; and when they differ, to follow the safer part. The third general rule is reason, viz.: when the dishonour done to God, and the injury to our neighbour, is notoriously against the love of God and charity.”

Now, mark the standards to which the poor Roman Catholic is referred.

1st, He is referred to the Bible—but this alas! is a mockery—the Bible is shut up from him.

2dly, He is referred to the opinions of all the Fathers and Divines when they *all* agree, and when they differ, to follow the safer part—a standard which, not only has no existence on the earth, but which no man on earth ever could pretend that he knew.—And

3dly, The poor Roman Catholic is thrown from the standard of divine revelation, on the troubled and fathomless abyss of human opinion and conjecture, and thence on the miserable guidance of his reason—and all this to determine what those offences are, which subject him to the wrath of God; and what those are which he may commit without forfeiting the favour of his Maker. O miserable condition of uncertainty, and guilt, and error!—while one word from the standard—the only standard of truth to which his Church refers, lays the axe to the root of her corrupt perversion of the law.

“Mortal sins are marked in the Scriptures by the “word woe, the threats of deserving death, eternal “pain, excluding from heaven,” &c.—then take a single text, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all things* that are written in the book of the law to do them;” and if her own standard of determining mortal sin from the Bible be true, then on her own showing, her system, root and branch, is levelled to the dust; she but “deceives herself and the truth is not in her.” But mark her farther.

“Q. Can a sin that is mortal in its nature, be only venial by accident?

“A. Yes, in three cases chiefly, viz.: *to steal a trifle; secondly, for want of deliberation; thirdly, for want of sufficient use of reason, as in children, and persons half asleep.*”

Now, mark the transition from mortal to venial sin—mark the point of escape from the crime that calls down

the sentence of eternal justice, to the peccadillo, that does not forfeit the favour of the Righteous Judge. *To steal a trifle!! Thou shalt not steal*, saith the God of holiness, of justice, and of truth. *A trifle wont forfeit your favour!* saith this infallible Church.—O blasphemous insult to the Judge of heaven and earth!

Take this audacious trifler with her God, and ask her where—with her Bible, her Fathers, and her reason—where does she fix the boundary at which her poor deluded votary is to be taught, that he passes from a venial to a mortal sin?—how far may he go till he shall begin to fear the sentence of eternal justice, and within what confines of sin may he triumph with impunity?—yea, without fearing to forfeit the favour of his God?—to steal a penny—what is that?—A trifle—a *venial sin*. To steal a thousand pounds—what is that?—It is *a crime—a mortal sin*. Let this Church now, which lives upon calculating the price of penalties for sin—*let her subtract by a penny at a time from the greater, and add it to the lesser sum, and tell us at what point the justice of the living God is to be bribed to arrest its sword, in smiting the thief who is descending, and provoked to turn on him who is venturously ascending in the scale of crime*. Where is the price that bribes Jehovah to assert and execute His law?—and where is that which is too small to rouse his slumbering attributes into exertion?—but she does not stop at one poor trifling law, she takes a far wider range.—p. 301.

“ Q. Which are the most common venial sins ?

“ A. These following, viz.: *idle works*—*small excesses in eating and drinking*—*too much pleasure in diversions*—*jocose lies, or lies out of excuse*—coming late to prayers—neglecting alms—*harsh words and flattering speeches*—*small thefts*—distractions in prayer, not fully resisted, &c.”

Might not a Church who holds such principles, address those whose sentiments are in direct opposition to them thus—“*Away ye false and gloomy teachers who forbid us to “let our heart cheer us in the day of our youth, and to walk in the ways of our heart, and in the sight of our eyes,”* and who frighten us with the apprehension, “*that for all these things God will bring us into judgment,*” Eccles. xi. 9—that He “*shall bring every work into judgment, and every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil.*” Eccles. xii. 14.

Away ye false Apostles, who alarm us with the vain idea, that God “*will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts,*” 1 Cor. iv. 5.—Ye over-righteous moralists, who bid us “*lie not one to another,*” Col. iii. 9.—Who terrify us with the hard uncharitable sentence, that “*all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone,*” Rev. xxi. 8.—That “*neither thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God,*” 1 Cor. vi. 10.—Who forbid us to “*go beyond or defraud our brother in any matter, for that God is the avenger of all such;* and tell us that “*he that despiseth, despiseth*

*not man but God,*" 1 Thess. iv. 6, 8.—And Thou! "Let us alone; *what have we to do with Thee? we know Thee, who Thou art,*" Luke iv. 34.—Thou who wouldst pass on us the horrible sentence, that "*whosoever shall say unto his brother, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire,*" Matt. v. 22.—Who wouldst persuade us that "*every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment,*" Matt. xii. 36. That "*whatsoever we have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light, and that which we have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house tops,*" Luke xii. 3.—"Art Thou come hither to torment us?" we will not believe you—no, nor will we let our people read or hear your false uncharitable threatenings—no, "God hath forgotten, he hideth away his face, and he will never see it," Psal. 10, 11.—No! *excess in these offences, we confess, is wrong—mortal sins, indeed, we hate—but we may idle a little, and drink a little, and game and riot a little, and lie a little, and rail a little, and flatter a little, and steal a little.* These are but venial offences, and "*do not make us forfeit the grace of God!*" here is a system of *Christianity!* here are doctrines of a Christian Church! But this is all too little, turn on another page.—p. 302.

"Q. What is passion, and when does it excuse or aggravate sin?"—to which is added this note:—

"N. B. By passion, we mean any strong or vehement emotion of the soul, as inclination, desire, &c." Now, what is the answer?

"A. A sin of passion is called a *sin of infirmity*—

it is grounded in self-love. Passion does not excuse from sin—yet *strong passion* diminishes it, because it renders sin less voluntary—if passion is *so violent as to hinder reason* entirely, *it excuses from sin*. But passion consequent, or which comes after sin, aggravates it, but antecedent, or going before, diminishes it.”

Now, if a Roman Catholic shall ever read this page, I entreat, I conjure, I implore him, as he has a soul to be saved, and as he is hastening on to the tribunal of a holy God, to pause, to think, and to examine this single passage—to mark the inconsistency, the folly of a system, which he is taught to believe *infallible*—the awful guilt and wickedness of a Church, which he is taught to consider *holy*—let him remember the question is no less than the ground of excuse or aggravation of that sin for which his soul is to be judged.

Those “vehement *emotions, inclinations, desires, passions*” of his soul, which hurry him into all the guilt which his conscience and his Creator’s word alike condemn—these are softened down by his Church into “*sins of infirmity*”—to be sure, it is declared that these do *not excuse from sin*—but the next word is, that if they are strong enough, that is, if they instigate him still more to sin, they *diminish* that sin to which they more intensely prompt him—but if they be stronger still, if they be so violent as to overwhelm his reason, and reduce him from the rank of man to the level of the impetuous ungovernable beast, then they altogether excuse from the enormities in which they plunge him,

On this atrocious system of morals, every iniquity that man can commit, is to be palliated up to perfect excusability, in direct proportion to the ardour with which it is undertaken, and the pleasure with which it is perpetrated—the intenseness of every criminal propensity rises up to plead the apology for the crime—the act ascends in the scale of innocence, in proportion to the atrocity of the agent—the most wicked is the most excusable, and if this principle were only pushed to its source, the Devil himself, if not a moral being, must be the least culpable of all the violators of the laws of God. O horrible impiety, to cloak beneath the name and authority of Christianity, a system that is alike at war with all the principles of Christian truth, and all the purity of Christian morals ! Omit the garbled copies of the laws of God put forth by the Church of Rome—omit her casuistical sophistry of reasoning—omit her apologetic palliatives to vindicate iniquity. Let it but be shown that she applies the term *venial* to that which she confesses to be transgressive of her Maker's law, and by this alone she subverts the sanctions of all moral accountability and obligation—she tears down the divine standard of moral good and evil—she explains away the requirements of the Creator upon the understandings, wills, and affections of His creatures—she deceives, deludes, and blinds those who are so unhappy as to follow her guidance, with respect to their duties, their characters, and their conditions in their Maker's sight. If it be not the duty of Christian charity and benevolence, to use every means for their instruction, every effort to rescue them from such an unhallowed yoke of bondage and

superstition, that talent can devise, that zeal can prosecute and that uncompromising Christian fidelity, ardent affection, and unwearied exertion can effect—then, Sir, Christianity would be but a fable, and we could too soon renounce the profession of it for ourselves, when we have come to the conclusion, that it is such a matter of indifference for our fellow-creatures and our fellow-countrymen.

I am, Sir, &c.

R. M'G.

*Harrowgate, July 27, 1829.*

## LETTER IV.

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SIR,

I have proved that the Roman Catholic religion is opposed to the purity, the holiness, the sanctions of the Divine law—it is but necessary to show the practical influence of this fundamental error, in the gross delusion practised in the ordinary documents of instruction on the minds of our misguided countrymen.

Dr. Doyle in his Catechism, Dublin, printed by Coyne, 1827, directs certain prayers to be said previous to teaching the Catechism; among these are four acts, as he calls them, of *Contrition, Faith, Hope, and Charity*—now in this last, “an act of Charity,” the sinner is taught to come before his God with this profession in his mouth.

“O my God, *I love Thee above all things, with my whole heart, and my whole strength, and my whole mind, because Thou art infinitely good and perfect and most worthy of all my love, and for Thy sake I love my neighbour as myself,*” p. 5—and again in the

admonitions which he gives for the “Christian’s Daily Exercise,” p. 10, in speaking of nightly self-examination, he says, “*If you do not find that you committed any sin during the day, give thanks to God with great humility, and beg of him the grace of perseverance.*”

Now, in the first of these, a sinner is represented as coming into his Creator’s presence with His holy law in his hand, and professing to Him that *he fulfils it*, that is, that he is *not a sinner*;—in the second, the sinner is represented as examining his conscience before his Creator in the silence of the night, and acquitting himself of having violated his law during the day past.

Now, I affirm without a shadow of hesitation, taking the word of God as the standard of truth—that if any Roman Catholic is so blind as to assert this of himself, believing that it is his true state before God—he is as utterly ignorant of the spiritual nature of the law of God—as utterly ignorant of his own character as a sinner against that law, the condemnation of which he deserves—and as ignorant of the hope which the Gospel reveals, as any Heathen that is to be found upon the surface of the Globe. I can best corroborate my assertion with the testimony of Jehovah’s word—“If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us—if we say that we have not sinned we make him a liar, and his word is not in us,” 1 John i. 8—10. Nor can any Heathen more require to be converted and brought to know the truth than such a person as this; and I entreat any Roman Catholic who may see this

statement, to examine whether he thinks so of himself, and to consider how differently that God judges of his heart who declares that, "The carnal mind is enmity against God, *for it is not subject* to the law of God, neither indeed *can be,*" Rom. viii. 7—that "The *heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,* Jer. xvii. 9—and the worst possible deceit which it can practice on us, is that which is the most common, namely, to persuade us that its thoughts, affections, and desires, are good in the sight of our Creator.

The opposition of the principles of the Roman Catholic Church to the purity and sanctions of the Divine law, is connected with their opposition to all the revealed moral attributes of God—his holiness, his truth, his justice, and his mercy;—while she impeaches his holiness with the supposition, that her *venial sins*—her *small excesses*—her *small lies*—her *small revellings*—her *small railings*—her *small flatteries*, and her *small thefts*, &c., will not forfeit his grace, as she calls it—she equally impeaches his truth, by discrediting the universal judgments which he has declared, the wrath which he has "*revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,*" Rom. i. 18—and by disregarding alike his testimonies, his threatenings and his promises—so she confounds, and virtually denies the divine attributes of justice and mercy, in every hope which she holds out to man, evincing this awful fact, viz. : that she rejects that hope—that only hope which God reveals to the soul, setting forth to the unhappy sinner's conscience false

hopes of averting his justice—and equally false hopes of obtaining his mercy—teaching them to hope for his mercy, on conditions that are totally incompatible with his justice; and on the other hand, teaching them to apprehend his justice, in direct opposition to the great and glorious proclamation in the Gospel of his mercy—“turning,” I repeat it, “the soul of man from the great salvation of the Gospel to fictions of human superstition and refuges of lies;” and I repeat in the face of every outcry of uncharitableness, fanaticism, and extravagance, that can be raised against the sentiment, with the hope that some of my Roman Catholic friends and countrymen, may profit by the spirit of anxiety for their eternal happiness which dictates it, that “all such refuges of lies shall be swept off when heaven and earth shall be rolled away, and leave those who have been so unhappy as to rest on them, naked, guilty, shivering, and condemned to perish from the presence of their God for ever.”

How, Sir, is God's justice to be averted?—how does the Scripture reveal that mercy is to be extended to man?—surely if there be any subject worthy the inquiry of a rational immortal being, it is this—all others sink into insignificance before the question, how is my sin to be forgiven? how is my soul to be saved? The awful threats and judgments denounced in the Bible against sin, and the exceedingly gracious promises given to sinners, appear to him who does not see and understand the Gospel of Christ, irreconcilable contradictions—if such judgments are denounced against sin, on what conditions can he, who feels himself a sin-

ner, have any consolatory hope?—If promises of grace and pardon are held out so largely to the sinner, why should he, although a sinner, fear?—in one passage he reads a threat against the very sin which his conscience tells him he commits, and he fears lest it be executed on him—in the next passage he reads of pardon and salvation, and he hopes it will not be executed. Will God be so severe, so strict, so terrible, as He threatens? or will God be so good, so gracious, so merciful, as he promises?—he does not know what to fear or what to hope, after all the good that he has done, or thinks he has done, or laboured, or resolved to do—still in the prospect of death, these threatenings force him to fear; but if he resolves, and really is able to execute his resolutions in future, still these promises encourage him to hope;—but still the man who is ignorant of the real nature of the Gospel, whatever Church he may belong to, whatever information upon other subjects he may have acquired, whatever learning, whatever talent or intellectual powers he may possess, that man can look into eternity with no better hope than that which the poet puts into the Heathen's lips—

The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me ;

But shadows, clouds, and darkness, rest upon it.

The Church of Rome rejecting the Gospel of Christ, has merely reduced to system some of the ordinances of the Bible, which she has perverted from their scriptural meaning, use, and application;—some code of morals, which she has sanctioned with the name of Christian, but which, with those ordinances, is alike foreign from the Bible—some rites, and principles, and

ceremonies, which she has borrowed from the Pagans, and some, which, for the sake of gain, she has invented from the redundant stores of artifice, presumption, and iniquity, with which the human heart abounds, to calm the alarms or stifle the convictions of the soul, to soothe its fears in the consciousness of guilt, and cheer it with false hopes in the apprehension of punishment. The Gospel solves the difficulty—reconciles the contradictions—meets all the wants, silences all the fears—answers all the demands, relieves all the doubts—and better still than all, it banishes all the sorrows of the anxious sinner's soul—the greatest difficulty in fact which it presents to the mind is this, that it is too good, too gracious, too plain, too simple to be true.

Man owes to his Creator a double debt—a debt, as his rational accountable creature, of obedience to his law—a law which recognizes nothing of man's fall, which demands inflexible, and proclaims reward for perfect obedience—and which denounces as inflexibly eternal death for even one violation of it—a law pure, perfect, immutable as its Author, of which to call a transgression *venial*, is to speak as rationally and as scripturally as to talk of God, as a *God of little truth*, and *little holiness*, and *little justice*, with a *little law*, with a *little heaven*, and a *little hell*, for venial sinners to reward or punish them.

Man—fallen man is declared in God's word, as rendered by his fall, incompetent to fulfil that law, and now another debt hangs over him—a debt of penalty for

sin—infinite eternal justice has passed the sentence of eternal death—Jehovah has denounced that the soul of guilty man shall die—all attempts to escape, to flee from the wrath to come, to any efforts of his own, evince only the more his guilt, his ignorance and folly : The same perversion of a blinded understanding, that led his fallen forefather to make the vain attempt of hiding from his Maker's presence, leads the hearts of his posterity to hope that they can build for their souls, a refuge from the justice of an offended God. The sighs and groans of penitential tears, the wretched offset of some deeds that we have fondly hoped were good in days gone past, or the miserable resource of vows and resolutions formed for the time to come, when fled to as a hope of pardon, or pleaded as a palliative for the sin committed against the holy law—only prove that man adds ignorance and pride to iniquity, and folly and presumption to apostacy. The vilest wretch that ever incurred the sentence of a human tribunal, for the most atrocious crime that ever debased the human form, might as well stand up and offer sighs and promises to arrest the hand of justice, when tried, convicted, and condemned, as man—rebellious guilty man, bring forth any offering of his sorrows, penitences, resolutions, acts or virtues, to stop or mitigate the sentence of the just and holy God. Every threat denounced on sin from Genesis to Revelations, must be executed as inflexibly as God is just and true. This is the law—who then can be saved ? None on these terms—“ *By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified* ”—where is the sinner's hope or refuge—is there none?—Yes, a glo-

rious refuge—God hath provided out of the depths of his wisdom and his love, a means of full reconciliation and forgiveness—He hath sent his beloved Son to be a surety for apostate man—to be a man—to be a creature upon earth, “made of a woman—made under the law,” to pay the double debt of *obedience* to its requirements, and of *penalty* for its violation. The truth proposed to man in the word of eternal life is this—that Immanuel in our nature undertook our debt of obedience, and that his obedience, his pure, his spotless perfect righteousness, is placed to the account of every sinner who trusts on him, as if it were his own—so that the sum which a man pays as a surety for his friend, is not more set down to the account of the man for whom it is paid to restore him to freedom and his home, if he be a debtor or a captive, than the obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ is put down in all its fulness and perfection to the sinner’s account, to give him a title to everlasting life. So that a man, if there were such, who was as righteous as Jesus Christ, and of whom God could say, “He was well pleased in him,” would not be more entitled to the reward promised to obedience, than the sinner who is brought to trust in Christ is entitled to that reward, through the righteousness of his Redeemer.—Thus, in the Old Testament we read, “*This is his name whereby He shall be called, the LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,*” Jer. xxiii. 6; “*I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God, for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, as a bridegroom decketh himself*

“with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with  
 “her jewels,” Isaiah lxi. 10—In like manner in the  
 New Testament—“Even as David describeth the bless-  
 “edness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteous-  
 “ness without works, saying, blessed are they whose  
 “iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered—  
 “blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute  
 “sin,” Rom. iv. 6—8—again “Christ is the END OF  
 “THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS to every one that be-  
 “lieveth,” Rom. x. 4—“If righteousness come by the  
 “law, then Christ is dead in vain,” Gal. ii. 21.—  
 But “He who knew no sin was made sin for us, that  
 “we might be made the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN  
 “HIM,” 2 Cor. v. 21. So, if He is indeed our trust,  
 He is the Lord our righteousness—He covers us with  
 his righteousness—God imputeth it to us—Christ is the  
 end, the full accomplishment of all the law demands  
 of righteousness for us, and he makes us not only  
 righteous, but the righteousness of God in himself.

This is one part of his office as a surety, but there is  
 another;—the creature for whom this obedience was  
 paid was a criminal, a convicted sentenced criminal;  
 the sword of justice, of eternal justice was drawn  
 against him; obedience paid in his place, would not  
 pay the penalty demanded; holiness might acknowledge  
 that this obedience satisfied the requirements of the  
 law, but justice could not admit that this obedience sa-  
 tisfied for its violation. This Surety, this Redeemer,  
 this adorable Immanuel, undertakes this office too; He  
 undertakes to be made, as if He were a sinner, a curse  
 by justice for the broken law—he demands the penalty

of sin to be exacted from him, and all that sin has ever brought of evil upon earth for man, and all that God inflicts on this side eternity. He calls to meet upon His sacred head, till sunk beneath the weight of contumely, reproach, false accusation, insult, mockery, offended majesty, (O what majesty! O how offended!) stripes and buffetings, the scoffs of enemies, and desertion of friends, thorns, and vinegar and gall; and O mysterious more than all! desertion of His Father, such as, perhaps, the victim who shall suffer that dread vengeance of the living God, shall feel when outer darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth shall yawn upon his view.—He bowed that sacred head and gave up the ghost.—It was finished.—The ransom was paid.—Justice exacted the penalty to the last—the thunderbolts ready to be hurled on the guilt of created beings, were quenched in the blood of the Creator.—Here upon that Cross, become the Throne of Justice, where she sat displayed in vengeance more terrible than when she opened the floodgates of divine wrath, and poured a deluge, on a guilty world—more terrible than when she rolled the rebellious angels into an abyss of flame, or than if she were to hurl the race of all rebellious creatures after them—here upon this throne of satiated justice, mercy takes her stand—and on the infinite worth of that complete and full atonement, proclaims salvation to the very chief of sinners, who looks to this adorable Redeemer as his salvation. Here man no longer interested in deceiving himself as to his own depraved and guilty nature—no longer interested in striving to eke out a robe from his own “filthy rags” of righteousness to cover his nakedness

in his Creator's sight—boldly stands up and looks into the Bible, fears not to see himself stripped of all that false and meretricious drapery of fancied virtue with which his Pharisaic pride had clothed him, he dares to know and call himself what he *is*—*a sinner*. The threatenings of divine justice he seeks not to explain away—he sees, he knows, he feels he has deserved them all—but he sees, he knows, he feels that the sword has fallen—there is a heart of everlasting love that has interposed, and bared its bosom to the blow—**JESUS HAS DIED, THAT HE MIGHT LIVE FOR EVER.**

The exceeding great and precious promises “of grace, and peace, and pardon, and adoption, he fears not now to rest on, since he no longer thinks that they are to be purchased at the price of an obedience, which even in the scale of a partial extenuating conscience, was “weighed in the balances and found wanting;” the very sense of his sin that placed them farther from his hope before, now drives his soul to them as his only joy and refuge—for they are all, “yea and amen, in Christ Jesus.” To be lost is the ground on which he looks to Him who came to “*seek and to save*”—to be “*weary and heavy laden,*” is his title to the invitation of that Lord that promises to *give him rest*—to be a poor and outcast prodigal, is the very cause why he arises and comes in all his rags, and want, and wretchedness, to a Father who, “when he is yet a great way off, sees and has compassion on him, and runs and falls upon his neck and kisses him”—to be hungry, is his claim to the “Bread of life”—to be thirsty, is the cause of his approach to the “Fountain of

living waters"—to be "tied and bound with the chain of his sins," is the very reason why he hails the footstep of eternal mercy that comes "to proclaim deliverance to the captive, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." In one short sentence, to see and know the depths of all his wants, and guilt, and misery, and condemnation as a sinner, is the very cause of his delighted joy to hear the freeness, the fulness, the unsearchable riches of mercy, pardon, and salvation, that are treasured up in Christ, who of God is made unto him his "wisdom, his righteousness, his sanctification, and his redemption."

Here all the attributes of God converge into the Sun of Righteousness, and life, and love. The law unchanged, and unchangeable in its demands, is fulfilled even to the fulness of Jehovah's will. The *holiness* of God here finds perfection in man, even as the Father which is in heaven is perfect, for He is "the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Here *truth* fulfils its threats, man dies for guilt—a man whose vast infinitude of worth, far outweighs all created beings, as far as God is greater than the creature.

Here truth fulfils its promises of grace and mercy too, for pardon reaches to the chief of sinners. Here justice sits enthroned in all her mighty plenitude of power—her sword struck deeper here than if it had smitten all rebellious creatures into everlasting death—it was buried in the bosom of a victim who undertook to bear its

stroke, against whose value all creatures had weighed but as the small dust of the balance.

Here mercy triumphs over all iniquity, she stands upon Mount Calvary, and spreads out her arms to a guilty world, and calls all sinners on this side eternity to come and be washed in that unfathomable fountain, and spring up cleansed and regenerated in the well-spring of salvation, upon the wings of faith, and hope, and love, even to the realms of eternal day. Here pure morality is built upon the basis of the everlasting Gospel—no more an unwilling exaction, wrung from the rebellious and reluctant slave; but the willing tribute of a dutiful and loving son. Obedience here is yielded on account of love bestowed—claimed from the sinner as the requital of that love, but never claimed as *its condition*—the very means of man's salvation becomes the main spring of his moral conduct, and by a contrivance, worthy of Jehovah's wisdom; the very pardon of his guilt, becomes the source of his obedience; the very law under which he stands condemned, is distilled into his heart by the pardon granted for its violation. *Love is the demand of the law*—love from man to his offended judge—a law impossible to a trembling guilty rebel. The Gospel proclaims that "*God is love,*" and bringing to the sinner pardon for the broken law—the light of hope and joy breaks in upon his soul—the fear, the guilty fear drops off the rebel with his shattered chain, and gratitude, and love, flow into the melted heart of the pardoned, the ransomed, the reconciled, and the adopted son. "Do we

then make void the law by faith? God forbid, yea, we establish the law," Rom. iii. 31. Here is the morality of the Christian faith—

“ They talk of morals—O thou bleeding Lamb !

The grand morality is love to thee.”

The very thought of founding salvation upon human merit, or building morality on the condition of obtaining heaven, proves that the light of truth has never dawned upon the mind, and that the only real hope of eternal life has never yet arisen on the soul.

These are the means of man's salvation, propounded in the everlasting Gospel—Christ is the Alpha, and Christ the Omega of the sinner's hope. Whatever else by a church or an individual teacher, is set before the sinner as his salvation, in whole or in part, it is “another Gospel” than that which the Apostle's preached—the wrath of God is denounced against that church or teacher, if he were “an angel from heaven,” Gal. i. 8, 9; and those who follow or believe that church or that teacher, shall perish in their iniquity, except they repent and believe the Gospel, while their blood shall be required at the hands of their blind and ignorant leaders.

Now, what are the means of salvation which the Roman Catholic Church proposes? Does she set forth the truth of the everlasting Gospel? Alas! every principle, every doctrine, every ordinance of that unhappy Church—awful it is to state it, but as true as it is awful, is founded on the dreadful assumption, that the Gospel

is not true. If it be true, she must be false, and *vice versa*, for she is opposed to it as darkness to light.— Let us patiently examine some of her leading principles. We have seen her ignorance of the law of God, and of the nature of sin—we shall now see her awful ignorance of God's appointed means of pardon and salvation, and the absurd superstitions which she substitutes in their place. Of these, I shall select but three—Penances, Masses, and Purgatory, every one of these in the act and institution, denies the Gospel of the Redeemer, and destroys the only hope of man's immortal soul.

PENANCE IS A DENIAL OF THE GOSPEL.

I take Dr. Doyle's Catechism, because the popularity and acknowledged talents of the writer, and the weight of his authority with Roman Catholics, may draw the more attention to the opposition of his principles to the Gospel of Christ. In the edition published in 1827, by Coyne, we find the following questions and answers, p. 47:—

Q. What should a person do if he be in mortal sin before Communion? Now I entreat the attention of any Roman Catholic who reads this, to the directions given to him if he be in mortal sin, which, as his Church by this same instructor declares, p. 23, is "a grievous offence against the law of God," and "brings everlasting death and damnation on the soul." What is a poor creature in this state to do?

1. *A.* He must obtain pardon in the sacrament of Penance.

Q. What is Penance?

2. *A.* A sacrament, by which the sins are forgiven, which are committed after Baptism.

Q. What must we do to obtain pardon of our sins in the sacrament of Penance?

3. *A.* We must *make a good Confession.*

Then, p. 48—

Q. What must we do at Confession?

4. *A.* We must beg the Priest's blessing—say the confiteor, accuse ourselves of our sins—listen attentively to his instructions, and renew our sorrow when he gives absolution!

Q. What should we do after Confession?

5. *A.* We should return God thanks, and *diligently perform the Penance enjoined* by the Confessor.

Q. What do you mean by the Penance enjoined by the Confessor?

6. *A.* The *prayers* and other *good works* which he enjoins on penitents in *satisfaction* for their sins.

Q. Will the Penance enjoined in Confession *always satisfy* for our sins?

7. *A.* No; but *whatever else is wanting* may be *supplied* by *indulgences*, and our *own penitential endeavours.*

Q. What does the Church teach concerning indulgences?

8. *A.* That Christ gave power to his Church to grant indulgences, and that they are most useful to Christian people.

Q. What is the use of an indulgence?

9. *A.* It releases from Canonical Penances enjoined by the Church *on penitents* for certain sins.

Q. To whom does the Church grant indulgences ?

10. *A.* To such only as are in a state of grace, and are sincerely desirous to amend their lives, and to satisfy God's justice by penitential works.

Q. Is an indulgence a pardon for sins to come, or a license to commit sin ?

11. *A.* No ; nor can it remit past sins ; for sin must be remitted by penance before an indulgence can be gained, and to grant pardon for sins to come, or to grant a license to commit sin would be impossible, and to attempt it would be a most heinous crime.

Q. Why does the Church grant indulgences ?

12. *A.* To assist our weaknesses, and to supply our insufficiency in satisfying the Divine justice for our transgressions.

Q. When the Church grants indulgences, what does it offer to God to supply our weaknesses and insufficiency, in satisfying for our sins ?

13. *A.* The merits of Christ which are infinite and superabundant, together with the virtues and good works of his Virgin Mother, and of all his Saints.

Now, let any man of common sense and common honesty, examine the principles laid down here as the hope of the Christian religion for a sinner's soul. I have extracted thirteen questions and answers out of two chapters, and numbered them for the convenience of reference. Here is a man brought before us in a state of mortal sin, that is as Dr. Doyle states, p. 23, "with the sentence of everlasting death and damnation on his soul."

This man to obtain pardon of his sin is directed to "*the sacrament of Penance,*" (No. 1.) *by which sins which are committed after Baptism are forgiven;* (No. 2.) to obtain pardon in this sacrament, his Church informs him, that "*he must make a good Confession,*" (No. 3.) "*beg the Priest's blessing, say the confiteor, accuse himself of his sins, listen diligently to the Priest's instructions, renew his sorrow when he gives absolution—return God thanks, and then diligently perform the penance, that is, the prayers and other good works, which he enjoins on penitents in satisfaction for their sins.*" (Nos. 4, 5, 6.) Mark—these are the directions given by the Church for obtaining pardon of his mortal sin.

Now, let us suppose he has completed all this, he has opened all his heart to his Priest, as his Church directs him; he has performed every penance which that Priest enjoined, as the Church directs him, to obtain pardon; and now he comes and asks his Church, may this cheer his conscience, with the hope of that pardon which she has led him to expect, "will the penance enjoined in confession always satisfy for his sins?"—What is her answer—"No." (No. 7.)

She directs him in one page to the performance of certain duties to satisfy God for his sins—and after he has fulfilled them, then she tells him in the next page *it will not do!*—What is a poor wretch to think?—what is he to believe?—is this infallibility?—is this consistency?—is it truth?—Alas! what is an unhappy man to do,

when his guide confesses in one moment, the utter insufficiency of the very means of salvation, which she had herself prescribed the moment before. But she adds—“*Whatever else is wanting may be supplied by indulgences, and our own penitential endeavours.*” (No. 7.)

Well—suppose him again to make these penitential endeavours, as she tells him she only grants indulgences to persons “desirous to amend their lives, and to satisfy God’s justice by penitential works;” (No. 10.) and still his conscience is uneasy, as to whether this justice is satisfied by these endeavours—he comes again to solicit these promised “indulgences,” to supply the “whatever else is wanting”—but when he comes, trembling between hope, and fear, to get this grand desideratum—what must be the poor wretch’s horror, disappointment, and dismay, when his Church informs him, that “sin must be remitted by penance, before an indulgence can be gained!!!” (No. 11.) Now, I conjure Roman Catholics to mark this—let us bring this poor man who is under the guilt of mortal sin to his Church, to deliver his conscience from guilt, and his soul from condemnation—let us suppose him faithfully fulfilling all her injunctions, and mark how she betrays him at the last—she imposes by her Priest, whom she teaches him to believe infallible, a penance to deliver his soul from eternal death—she tells him this penance then will not do—but buoys him up with another hope, that “whatever else is wanting will be supplied by indulgences and

more penance ;” and that if “he is sincerely desirous to satisfy God’s justice for his sins,” she will grant these indulgences, and then at the last she tells him, that after all, she cannot help him, for that his sin must be remitted by penance, before she can grant the indulgences she promised. She cheered him with the hope that she would grant them to supply the wants, the anxieties, the very salvation of his soul, when struggling under the terror of mortal sin ; and then when he comes to cast his hopes, his soul, upon her promise, she throws him back upon himself, and tells him he must save himself before she can grant them. What is this, but to encourage the drowning wretch to struggle to the life boat and that you will take him in ; and then when he has spent his strength in grasping up to catch the rope you fling to him, to dash him back again into the billows, and tell him you will help him when he gets to the shore. If this is not cruelty—if these are not lies—refuges of lies, then let Satan be set up for the God of mercy and of truth. I do not enter on the Scripture—I do not compare them with the word of God—I do not insult the intellect of any man that ever opened his Bible, by asking him, is this the Gospel of Christ? is this the salvation that God proclaims to a lost and ruined world—but I stand in the midst of these superstitions, as a rational being, and on comparing them with themselves, one with the other, I affirm, that there never was collected on any subject of ordinary interest to man, a greater tissue of errors, inconsistencies, and contradictions, than the means here propounded, to deliver

the soul of man from condemnation ; but this is all too little, compared with what follows. What is the very next question—No. 12—

Why does the Church grant indulgences ?

To assist our *weaknesses* and to *supply our insufficiency* in *satisfying the Divine justice for our sins!* This is really too great a refinement upon cruelty—this is too horrible a mockery of human misery and guilt.

She had told him expressly the last words she uttered, that she could not grant him an indulgence until after sin was remitted by the penance ; and now she tells him in the next words, that she grants the indulgence first, to assist in the satisfaction to be made by the penance. She grants the indulgence to aid in that, which must be completed before she can grant it !!! What wonder that this Church will not allow her helpless votaries to use their reason?—this is her “balm of gilead” for the sinner’s soul, as if an empiric should puff his medicine thus. Here’s an infallible heal—all for wounds, but the wounds must be healed before I apply it. Here’s a specific to cure the dumb, and as soon as they tell me they want it, I’ll give it. Here’s a nostrum to raise the dead, and the moment they come for it, it will bring them to life. Not less absurd, as applied to man’s immortal soul, are the expectations of pardon which this Church holds out to sinners, in the thing she calls a sacrament—three times here does she invite the sinner to cling to these indulgences, and three times does she mock the anxious efforts of his soul. O miserable hope of mercy for a helpless sinner to attempt to grasp, to satisfy

his conscience, or appease an offended God—a hope like the shadowy unsubstantial image of the vision—

“ Ter conatus ibi circumdare brachia collo

Ter frustra compressa manus effugit imago.”

But this is merely reasoning on the principles laid down by the Church herself on her own ground, we have not yet come to a comparison of her doctrines with Scripture.

Let us suppose all these contradictions reconciled—let us suppose that she gave the aid she led the poor sinner to expect, and that she gave him these “indulgences,” and what does she give? let it be asked—

Q. 13. When the Church grants indulgences what does it offer to God to supply our weaknesses and insufficiency in satisfying for our sins?

A. The merits of Christ which are infinite and superabundant, together with the virtues and good works of his Virgin Mother and of all his Saints.

This is an indulgence!!—Now, this indulgence consists in the Church making an offering to God, and what does she offer? Let us analyze her offering—let us get over the difficulty of the Church *offering* the *merits* of *Christ*—suppose she *can* do so—now these she tells us are “infinite and superabundant” for the purpose required—but still they are not enough, she must add to them!!

They are not only abundant but superabundant; nor only superabundant but infinite—but she must mul-

tively this superabundance—she must increase infinity! O marvellous super-omnipotent Church!—shall I pause to reason on such inconceivable absurdity—am I copying from a catechism published on the solemn subject of religion, by a scholar—by a man of talents—by a man holding the office of a Bishop in that which he calls a Church of Christ? I do not attach any peculiar blame to him, this is not composed by Dr. Doyle; it was alas! the very catechism from which he was taught himself; he has added but a little to it here and there, to prop what he thought were points that had been weakened by the reiterated attacks of adversaries against his Church. But if I were to exhibit the influence of this awful superstition, in paralysing and prostrating all the powers of the human mind, I should not look at the millions of poor creatures in Ireland, who hang the salvation of their immortal souls on such instructions, but I should look at such a man of naturally high and powerful intellectual capacity, sitting down soberly in the retirement of calm deliberate meditation, to copy, to enlarge, to publish, and to recommend them. How is it to be accounted for? I will give the most strenuous opponents of this learned and able man, the whole range of his publications, and I challenge them to produce from among them all, a specimen of what is alike foreign from all reason and revelation, such as that which is exhibited in this catechism, which he gives as a compendium of religious instruction to his flock, begs of them in his dedication to “accept it from the hand of their Bishop, who watches as to give to God an account of their souls,” and “as

the best gift he can offer to them." How is it to be accounted for? It is because he dares not question it, or examine it, or reason on it for himself—he has been born under the fangs of a superstition that watches over the infant faculties of the immortal soul, seizes them in the very cradle, and binds them in chains of darkness for herself—forbids them ever to "peep, or mutter, or flutter the wing," beyond the limits of their prison-house. Take some point in which his Church has not dogmatized even on a religious subject, and could this learned man give an answer so pregnant with absurdity? Suppose a poor man to ask how long his soul was to live in heaven? Could he reply, "as long as Jesus Christ lives, which is for eternity, and as long as his Virgin Mother, and all his saints live besides." Surely he knows that the ideas of infinity and eternity are alike incapable of increase, and that to talk of adding to the infinity of the Redeemer's merits is about as rational, as to talk of eternity and half an hour.—But put reasoning out of the question, and bring this to the test of the word of God. Let me implore a Roman Catholic to open the Bible, and compare this catechism with the Apostolic doctrine. Let us take men in mortal sin as they call it—they will acknowledge murder to be mortal sin—and let us take some specimens of the most atrocious murderers, namely, men whose hands were stained with the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the 2d chapter of Acts, we see in the 23d verse, the Apostle Peter testifying against those "*who with wicked hands had crucified and slain*" Him. Alarmed at the charge, and convinced of the atrocity

of their crime, they cry out to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, v. 37—"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"—What is Peter's reply?—"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The Douay translation for repent, is "do penance"—but grant this correct, here the Church of Rome and St. Peter are at issue. She explains penance as "a sacrament, whereby sins are remitted *after baptism*"—"be *baptized and do penance*," saith she. No, "*do penance and be baptized*," saith St. Peter, as she translates it. Can Dr. Doyle decide which is right?—But *here we see* St. Peter brings them at once in their mortal sin to "repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus, for the remission of sins," and it is clear as daylight, that to "*do penance*," from the very facts of the history is an absurd translation, for it could not be that they went to do penance—because at the very same hour they were "baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins;" but according to this translation they were to *do penance* before they were baptized, v. 41.—"*Then*" (*at that very hour*) "*they that gladly received his word were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls*"—so that this passage proves the translation, "*do penance*" false. Now, let a Roman Catholic mark, did St. Peter call them to confession? then did he send them to "prayers and other good works," to make satisfaction for their dreadful sin? then did he send them back, and tell them it was not enough, but hold them out a hope of

supplying the deficiency by more penances and indulgences? then did these poor wretches come back again after these penances, to seek for those promised indulgences? then did the Apostle drive them to despair, by telling them they must make satisfaction for their sins, and have them remitted by penances before he could grant them the indulgences? then did he mock them, by telling them that the reason why he granted indulgences, was to enable them to do those penances which, nevertheless, they must perform before he granted them, and then finally, did he inform them that those indulgences consisted in that he and his brother Apostles, were to offer to God “the merits of Jesus Christ, which were infinite and superabundant, together with the virtues and good works of his Virgin Mother, and of all his saints,” which however, were not to be offered for them till after their sins had been remitted by penance.— Was this the glorious Gospel of salvation which the Apostles proclaimed?—O treason! treason! treason! against the God of love and mercy, to call it by such a name. The mercy of the Bible had been but a message of darkness and despair, had it been such as this—the host of angels that professed to proclaim “good tidings of great joy” to lost and guilty sinners, must have come from the lowest pit and not from the realms of light, and love, and joy, if this had been their message.

Let us hear the real nature of the Apostolic Gospel, as preached by the Apostle Peter on that day.— The Lord Jesus had commanded that “repentance and remission of sins should be preached among all nations

in His name, beginning at Jerusalem," Luke xxiv. 47. The Apostles, being invested with power from on high, stand up on the day of Pentecost, for the first time, to execute the divine commission. They begin at Jerusalem, and with the vilest sinners in Jerusalem, those who had crucified the Lord of Glory. But to them—to them who were patterns of iniquity, such as the world never saw before or since—the message of the Gospel is "remission of sins" through Jesus Christ. God had over-ruled the depths of human crime for his own glory; yea, and for a means of mercy to a rebellious race, even to those who had been most deeply plunged in it—the blood that stained their guilty hands were drops from that "Fountain" that had been "opened for sin and uncleanness;" and though that blood upon their hands, like that on those of the first murderer, rose up to cry to heaven for vengeance on their heads, that blood, as the blood of atonement for iniquity, "that speaketh better things than that of Abel," rose up to plead for pardon for their souls: they heard the glad tidings of remission of sins—they repented, that is, their hearts were changed—they saw the misery of their state of sin—the vanity of every other refuge—the glory of the one proclaimed to them in the Gospel—they believed, they rejoiced—from thenceforth they loved and served their Lord. "They continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers; and they (even those who had been the murderers of the Redeemer), continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking of bread from house to house, did eat their meat

with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favour with all the people," Acts ii. 42, 46, 48. O! for a tongue of fire like that which lighted on the Apostles' heads, to tell the Roman Catholics of Ireland, the grace, and love, and mercy of their God, as opposed to the gloom, and guilt, and misery, and superstition that is taught them, for the Gospel of Jesus.

The whole testimony of the Apostolic Gospel is REMISSION OF SINS THROUGH THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST. Here St. Peter proclaims remission of sins through Him. In the 10th chapter, too, he testifies thus to Cornelius—"To Him give all the Prophets witness, that *through His name whosoever believeth on Him* shall receive REMISSION OF SINS," Acts x. 43: so St. Paul, chap. xiii. 38, 39, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the FORGIVENESS OF SINS, and by Him, all that believe are JUSTIFIED FROM ALL THINGS, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." So, when another poor sinner comes trembling, and asks, "*What must he do to be saved!*" he is directed at once to Christ for his salvation—"Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED," Acts xvi. 30, 31. The Apostle tells him what Christ had done for sinners—he believes, and he rejoices "*that same hour of the night.*" So, in the Epistle to the Romans, God "hath set Him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood to declare His righteousness for the REMISSION OF SINS THAT ARE PAST," Rom. iii. 25. "In whom we have redemption

through his blood, *even the forgiveness of sins,*" Eph. i. 7. Again, the same text, Col. i. 14, Remission of sins by the blood of Jesus is the **WHOLE FOUNDATION OF THE HOPE OF MAN'S SALVATION WHICH CHRISTIANITY SUPPLIES.** Take it away, and the sun drops from the system, and all is outer darkness, desolation, despair, and death. Thus it is in the unhappy Church of Rome—salvation by Christ is gone from her, and thick darkness, guilt, and death broods over every cavern of her superstition—she assumes it as a fact, that the Lord Jesus Christ has *not made atonement for sin.* This dark and deep denial of the salvation proclaimed by God to man is that on which her every ordinance is built. In every single question and answer which I have quoted from her catechism, she either expressly or by implication denies the atonement of Immanuel.

When the sinner wants to know to what he is to turn for remission of that sin, by which death and destruction is brought upon his soul, she directs him to penance, and not to Christ—so salvation is by penance, and not by Christ. It is not through Christ, but through penance, she preaches to him the remission of sins.

Again, when the sinner who has fled to this refuge of lies, turns to her to ask her if it can shelter his soul, if it is sufficient! she denies again salvation by Christ; for when she tells him that the very penance to which she herself has directed him is not sufficient, she implies that it **GOES SOME WAY** in obtaining remission—but "what-

ever else is wanting" may be supplied by indulgences and more penitential works. Here, again, she preaches salvation to him, not through Christ, but through works—she directs him partly to her own abominable indulgences, and partly to himself and his own efforts—and indeed between both, according to the proverb, she takes care the poor sinner shall fall to the ground.

Again, whatever sophistry she might use in pretending that she includes the atonement of Christ in her doctrine of indulgences, she shuts even this sophistical pretext out in her next declaration—for when the poor wretched sinner comes to her, out of the miseries of these penances, to ask for her indulgences, she declares that *remission of sins must be gained by penance before she can grant them*—so that she expressly excludes Christ from the whole or any part of the sinner's hope—he must gain remission by his own penance, before she will *indulge* him with a hope in Christ. O what a mother of abominations to the soul of guilty man! O what an instructor in the religion of Christ—to shut out salvation by Christ, until the sinner does not want it, viz. when by penance he shall have atoned for sin, and thus shall have saved himself!

Again, she denies the Gospel, if possible, in a way more derogatory to God, when she does make mention of the merits of the Lord—for instead of pointing the sinner to that blessed Saviour, when she does *indulge* him with the mention of a Saviour's name, "who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot

to God," she directs the sinner to *herself*—*she* is to make the offering—whereby she denies that Christ has made it once for all—and then what does she offer? She offers the merits of Christ, which she calls "*infinite and superabundant*;" but then proves her ignorance and unbelief of their sufficiency, by adding "the virtues and good works of his Virgin Mother and all the saints"—she tells the sinner, she gives him an ocean which is fathomless, without bottom, and without shore, to cleanse him, (after he has cleansed himself,) but it is not deep enough for him to wash in, till she pumps a can of water out of the well at Rome to throw into it. O miserable hope! O wretched foundation of sand for a sinner's soul to build on! Let a poor weak mortal bring truth, and reason, and Scripture to bear upon it, they batter its superstitions down to the very dust. O let me conjure my countrymen to think how shall such a system stand, when the God of truth, and the God of Scripture, comes "to lay judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet"—when the floods and storms of eternity shall shatter it to its foundations, and plunge those who have fled to it into the dark abyss of everlasting death. If this religion be not such, as to make it a duty to endeavour to enlighten our countrymen, then there is no difference between truth and falsehood—righteousness and unrighteousness—Christianity and superstition—the Word of God and the fictions of men—to be found on earth; and if it be of such a nature as to make it a duty, an imperative duty of men, of brethren, and of Christians, to labour for the instruction of those who are misguided by it, I can only say, that

however awful the guilt and ignorance attendant on the system may be, it seems a lesser evil to support it from a conviction of its truth, than to pretend to see the evil, and endeavour at the same time to weaken the hands and misrepresent the motives, and attempt to impede the efforts of those who would conscientiously and faithfully endeavour to apply the remedy.

I am, Sir, &c.

R. M'G.

*Harrowgate, July 30, 1829.*

## LETTER V.

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SIR,

I am to prove that the sacrament of the Mass is opposed to the Gospel of Christ, and when the Gospel is known and believed, it requires but a glance to discover this—a careful perusal of the preceding letter will render any laboured proof superfluous. If the Gospel of Christ be the proclamation of sin forgiven, through the righteousness and atonement of a crucified Redeemer, to every sinner that believeth, then it follows, as clearly as the light of day, that any effort made by man to obtain forgiveness of sins for himself, is a testimony that he does not believe that Gospel, and whatever means he sets up to obtain forgiveness of his sins, these are the instruments which he uses to oppose it.—On this ground we have seen that penance was a denial of the Gospel, and on the same ground is the sacrifice of the Mass, with this difference, that penance professes to procure remission of sins, by some satisfaction which the sinner is to make to God's justice for himself—but he is to procure this remission in the Mass not through himself but through his Priest. But before

I consider the immediate opposition between the Mass and the Gospel, it is worth while to remark the glaring inconsistency and folly of this superstition, as compared with the one preceding, and how they contradict each other in their own Catechisms.

Hear Dr. Doyle again. In his chapter on the Eucharist, p. 45, we have the following questions and answers :—

Q. 1. What are the ends for which Mass is said ?

A. To give God honour and glory, to thank him for his benefits, to obtain remission of our sins, and all other graces and blessings through Jesus Christ.

Q. 2. For what other end is Mass offered ?

A. To continue and represent the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. This do says Christ in remembrance of me.

Again—

Q. 3. Which is the best method of hearing Mass ?

A. To offer it to God with the Priest, for the same purpose for which it is said, to meditate on Christ's sufferings, and to go to Communion.

Q. 4. How must we be prepared for Communion ?

A. We must be in a state of grace, and penetrated with a lively faith, animated with a firm hope, and inflamed with an ardent charity.

Q. 5. What means to be in a state of grace ?

A. To be free at least from mortal sin.

Q. 6. Is it a great sin to receive unworthily ?

A Yes whosoever receives unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, and eats

judgment, that is damnation to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.

Q. 7. What do you mean by receiving unworthily ?

A. To receive the blessed Eucharist in the state of mortal sin.

Now from these we perceive, that one great benefit to be obtained by the Mass, is the remission of sins ; No. 1. That the best method of hearing Mass is to offer it with the Priest, for the same purpose that he offers it, and to go to the Communion ; No. 3. That to go to the Communion, you must be free from mortal sin ; No. 5. And that it is a mortal sin to go to it if you are not so. And lastly, as hearing Mass is the first of the six precepts of the Church, it is asked, p. 37—

Q. Is it a mortal sin not to hear Mass on a Sunday or kept holyday ? And she answers

A. *It is* ; if we be absent from it through our own fault.

If a Roman Catholic should ever read this, who feels any concern about the one grand point: the pardon of his sins and the salvation of his soul ; let him seriously consider and compare these directions of his Church. If he is asked, “when does he most feel his want of pardon and mercy from his Creator ?” I suppose he will reply, “when his conscience charges him with what he calls mortal sin.”

Now his Church tells him, that her Mass is offered for the remission of sins—he is glad to hear it. She tells

him too, it is a mortal sin not to go to hear Mass—very well—he is ready to go, and anxious to go, for he wants the Mass to take away his mortal sin; and he is anxious to go in the best manner he can too—but his Church tells him the best manner is to go to Communion—very well—he is willing to go, for he longs to get remission of his mortal sin. Yes, but that will not do; for his Church says if he is in mortal sin, it is a mortal sin for him to go to the Communion—though this is the best way of going to the Mass, to get remission of his mortal sin—so that it is a mortal sin not to go to the Mass—but when he is in mortal sin, it would be a mortal sin to go in the best manner to the Mass—that is, it is one mortal sin to go in the best way to the ordinance, that his Church appoints, as a sacrifice for the remission of another mortal sin!! Then what is he to do? he is on the horns of a dilemma, and he does not know how the Pope himself can get him off.

Q. “What then is a man to do if he be in mortal sin before Communion?” (p. 47) This brings us back to the point whence we set out in the last letter—then the Church relieves him at once.

A. “He must obtain pardon in the sacrament of Penance”—that is, he must go off to the Priest, the confessions, penances, indulgences, &c. &c. which we have already disposed of. So that in fact to fit him to take advantage of the Mass to take away his mortal sin, he must prepare for the Communion to go in the best manner to the Mass; and then to prepare for the Communion, to go in the best manner to the Mass, he must

go to the Penance to take away his mortal sin, to prepare him to go to the Communion. But then when the Penance has taken away his mortal sin, to prepare him to go to the Communion, to prepare him to go to the Mass—the Penance has done for him what he wanted the Mass to do—ergo, since whenever he is in mortal sin, the Mass must always drive him back to the Penance—the Penance having remitted his sin, saves him the necessity of going back again to the Mass—therefore, the best and safest remission of sins in the Church of Rome, is always to be found in the Penance and not to be found in the Mass—only it is a mortal sin not to go to it—and if a man be in mortal sin, it is another mortal sin to go in the best way to it!!! O mystery!—mystery!! written indeed upon her brow. It is quite impossible to reduce her own principles upon her own showing, I will not say to the standard of God's holy word, but to that of plain, simple reason and common sense, so that the inconsistency and folly does not wear the appearance of the ridiculous—but the subject is too deeply, too solemnly awful. I beseech every Roman Catholic to think it over, to examine it, to see how far in its application to his own soul and wants as a sinner, it has ever given him peace—if it has, it is impossible he can know his state before God—if it has not—he may rest satisfied it is because it is foreign from the Gospel.

The Mass is opposed to the Gospel in four different particulars :—

1st, In assuming to be a sacrifice for sin.

2d, In assuming to take away sin as a bloodless sacrifice.

3dly, In assuming to take it away as a repeated sacrifice.

4thly, In assuming what is most awful and which adds idolatry to the rest, that it is Jesus Christ himself.

In every one of these particulars it denies and opposes the Gospel, and turns the poor sinner from the only hope that God has provided, to a "fiction of superstition," and a "refuge of lies."

1st, It denies the Gospel in assuming to be a sacrifice for sin.

The glory of the Gospel is, that when a sinner anxiously inquires how his guilt is to be removed—his debt paid? It immediately answers, "*it is finished.*" It points his eye to Calvary, to see that rich unutterable ransom, hanging for him on the Cross, and pouring out his soul unto death—it tells him "*He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed,*" Is. liii. 5. It tells him, that this is that Promised Saviour to whom "*All the Prophets give witness, that through His name whosoever believeth on Him, shall receive remission of sins.*" Acts x. 43. It tells him of Him, that "God hath set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God," Rom. iii. 25. That it is "a faithful saying, and worthy of all

acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. If the sinner believes that truth, that glorious truth, it necessarily brings with it rest and refreshment to his soul—" *We which have believed do enter into rest,*" Heb. iv. 3—if he believeth not, it is foolishness and profitless to his soul, as with those in the preceding verse "unto us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them, but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it," Heb. iv. 2.

Now, if the sinner believes that in Christ he has full and free remission of sin—however guilty—however vile—however alienated from God before; it necessarily changes his rebellion into love, to see sin such as his forgiven—so great a debt cancelled—at such a price—such an inestimable ransom—that he may come to the Redeemer as a sinner—as a Mary Magdalen, as a Manasseh, as a Philippian gaoler—as the prodigal—as a Saul—as the thief—as his murderers, and find like them—a Saviour—pardon—remission of all his sins—it melts his heart, it subdues his spirit, he asks, is this the God against whom I have been rebelling? Is this the Saviour whose name I have been slighting? Is this the salvation from which I have been turning to other hopes and other refuges? O my Redeemer—my Saviour—my Refuge—my God!—I sit at the feet of thy Cross for evermore Thou hast paid my debt—thou hast bought me—I am thine. All he requires is to read more of that word of life, to understand more of that Redeemer's character, to rest more on that Redeemer's promises, to

rejoice more in the “strength of his salvation,” and to live more to his praise, his honour, and his glory. He never once thinks of making any effort, or doing any thing to take away his iniquity, for the whole ground of all his hope, and peace, and joy, is this, that Jesus Christ has done it already.

Now when, on the other hand, a sinner does not believe this Gospel, he finds no relief, no rest, no consolation in the Bible for his soul—he may be glad to hear that Jesus died on the Cross, as he would be glad to hear of any thing that he imagines would help his guilty conscience to get rid of its burden, and this, he thinks, makes God more *easily appeased*, by his own endeavours, than he would have been without it, but still his own endeavours, and his own offerings are the main hope of his soul—and thus, however numerous they be, however earnest, zealous, or sincere, he never finds rest and never can—he is blind as to his own state, his utter incapacity to serve or please his God—and he cannot by any denial of the Redeemer’s Godhead or his existence, more fully and effectually reject his salvation, than by looking to Him, not as God sets him forth, a full salvation for the chief of sinners, but by looking to him through his own ignorance, and pride, and unbelief, as one who will help him to save himself, and do *some part*, on condition that he does *the remainder*—hence, any offering, whatever, made by man to appease God for sin, any service of religion, or any act of morality performed with that aim and intention, so far from being acceptable to God, is an insult to His Divine Majesty; it is a plain declaration in words, or

actions, or thoughts, that the sacrifice of Jesus is not complete, and cannot be depended on; therefore, any ordinance of religion which professes to be a sacrifice to God to obtain remission of sins, is a denial of his truth, a rejection of his whole scheme of salvation for man, and the utmost reverence for Him, which the word of God ascribes to it is this, that "*it makes God a liar.*"—"He that believeth not God hath made him a liar."—mark the point in which he makes him so—"because he believeth not the record that God hath given of His Son—and *THIS is the record* that God hath given to us *eternal life*, and *this life is in his Son*. He that *hath the Son hath life*—and he that *hath not the Son of God hath not life*, 1 John v. 10, 11, 12.

Now mark, Sir, it is not he that believeth the historical facts concerning Christ in the New Testament, that shall be saved; these, Roman Catholics believe as well as Protestants, concerning his birth, conversations, miracles, life, death, resurrection, and ascension—yes, and the declarations of his future coming to judgment. These, as well as his divinity and humanity, multitudes believe, and would contend for them against the infidel, with great zeal, and energy, and truth; but still are just as far from the salvation of that Redeemer, as He against whom they contend; for they believe these facts as matters of historic truth, or divine revelation if you please; but the great object and end of them all they utterly deny, namely, that Jesus Christ came to save sinners, and completed that work which He came to do—so that every sinner who depends on his salvation, is partaker of his salvation. They make God a liar—

for they believe *something*—*many things* about Christ, but not what God declares, not “the record that God hath given of his Son, for *this is the record*—not merely the facts recorded in the birth and life and death of the Redeemer, but the great object of his being born, and living, and dying—namely, to *give* salvation, eternal life to sinners—that “God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son;” therefore, “He that hath the Son, *hath life*—and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”

Now the Roman Catholic offering of the Mass as a sacrifice to obtain remission of sins, is a standing testimony of that Church, that she rejects the truth, that Christ hath made that offering which is all-sufficient for the sinner’s soul to rest on; it is a standing witness against her that she believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son; every time she offers it, the Bible witnesseth that she maketh God a liar; every Priest who offers it, stands up in the very fact before Jehovah’s throne, to say that God is a liar; every soul that really depends on it for the remission of his sins makes God a liar; and so far from being the religion of Christ, it is an utter denial of the religion of Christ for salvation by Christ alone, to the utter exclusion of every other hope, is the foundation and the only foundation of the religion of the Lord Jesus. I have said, Sir, every soul that *really depends* on it. I repeat again, I presume not to sit in judgment on the persons of individuals of the Roman Catholic Church. I trust there may be many of them who do not really depend on it, and who in all the clouds of ignorance and superstitions,

feeling their own guilt and helplessness, look alone to the blood that was shed on Mount Calvary for sin, and go to Mass rather as a thing which they have been accustomed to do, and which is a sort of commemoration of Him on whom they depend, than a ground of dependence itself. He that believeth on Jesus shall be saved, and the Lord alone knoweth them that are his—but I speak of the principle, the ordinance, the service, as an offering made to God by a guilty sinner to obtain remission of his sins, and as such, it is, I repeat, an awful testimony that that Church denies the salvation of the Redeemer, and makes a liar of the God *whom she professes to worship.*

Again, the Mass denies the Gospel, because, 2d, it proposes to be a bloodless sacrifice to take away sin.

Dr. Doyle, p. 45, asks—

Q. Is the Mass a different sacrifice from that of the Cross? The answer is,

A. *No*; because the same Christ who once offered Himself a bleeding victim to his Heavenly Father on the Cross, continues to offer himself in an unbloody manner by the hands of his Priests on our altars.

I shall not stop here to examine the want of common sense in this answer, which asserts, that the sacrifice is not different, though it declares in the same breath that one was a bloody and the other an unbloody sacrifice. I am considering it as opposed to the Gospel. The whole of the ceremonial law pointed out in its typical offerings for sin, that the blood, the outpouring of the

life of the victim, was that, which justice demanded for sin. The life of the body being typical of that of the soul—the substitution of innocent animals for the individuals who had been stained with moral guilt or ceremonial uncleanness, was the great means by which the Lord pointed the attention of those to whom the revelation of His divine will was given; to the Lamb of God who was to take away the sins of the world—who was to pour out his life blood as a Fountain open for sin and uncleanness. It is quite unnecessary to enter into the Old Testament, for we have an inspired commentary upon the whole ceremonial law in one passage, which settles the question in the estimation of every man who reverences the word of his Creator. The Apostle having commented on the typical nature of the ceremonial law, contrasts its offerings with that of the Redeemer in the 9th of Heb.—“*But Christ being come an high Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands—that is to say, not of this building, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifyeth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God,*” Heb. ix. 11, 12, 13, 14. Here, it is declared that by his *blood* he hath obtained eternal redemption; here it is declared that it is *his blood* that cleanseth

the conscience, and then it is stated that the blood poured out in the Old Testament, was all for the purpose of figuring this.—“*For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, this is the blood of the Testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled likewise with blood, both the tabernacle and the vessels of the ministry, and almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission,*” Heb. ix. 19, 20, 21, 22.

Now, in opposition to the whole tenour of the sacred oracles of God, not only to the tenour of its doctrines, but the testimony of its facts; to the whole facts of that dispensation which constituted the theocracy of the Jewish people, and typified the salvation of the Gospel, and in opposition to the whole testimony of the Apostles, who place the entire salvation of the human race upon the fact of Immanuel having poured out his blood upon the Cross for remission of sins; the Roman Catholic Church points her unhappy followers to a thing for remission of their sins, which she calls an unbloody sacrifice. Either the God who alone can pardon sin declares what is not the truth, that “without shedding of blood is no remission,” or the Roman Catholic Church calls sinners to obtain remission in a thing, which that God declares could never have procured it. The blood of Jesus is that to which the people of

God are directed as their whole dependance in his word. Are they thirsty? He "*that drinketh that BLOOD hath eternal life,*" John vi. 54—Are they purchased? They are "*the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own BLOOD,*" Acts xx. 28.—Are they redeemed? "*In him they have redemption through his BLOOD, even the forgiveness of sins,*" Eph. i. 7, Col. i. 14.—"*They are not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious BLOOD of Christ,*" 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.—Are they cleansed? It is "*the BLOOD of Jesus Christ that cleanseth them from all sin,*" 1 John i. 7.—Are they sanctified? It was "*that he might sanctify the people with his own BLOOD, he suffered without the gate,*" Heb. xiii. 12.—Do they overcome Satan? "*They overcame him by the BLOOD of the Lamb,*" Rev. xii. 11.—Are they admitted into the realms of glory? "*they have washed their robes and made them white in the BLOOD of the Lamb,*" Rev. iii. 14. Do they sing a new song? It is "*Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy BLOOD,*" Rev. v. 9. Well then may it be said, this Church has committed two great evils—"she hath forsaken Him, the Fountain of living waters, and hewn out to herself cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water," Jer. ii. 13—for it must be granted, that whatever takes away sins, can alone bring a sinner to eternal life. Now, if refreshment, redemption, purification, sanctification, victory, and eternal glory, are by the blood of Christ, and if the song of the Redeemed celebrates that blood that brought them, as a part of its eternal theme of praise, there is no hope that those

persons shall participate in these who look for remission of sin to an unbloody sacrifice.

Again, 3dly, *the Mass is opposed to the Gospel in assuming to be a repeated sacrifice.* If the two former statements be according to the word of God—this must necessarily follow, for if it be a denial of the Gospel that it should be offered once, it is but a reiterated denial, the more frequently it is repeated. The Apostle marks as a proof of the inefficacy of the sacrifices of the ceremonial law in satisfying for sin, that they were frequently repeated; therefore, he argues, they could never make those who came to them perfect, for if they could, if they could bring an offering sufficient to satisfy divine justice, by which sins were cancelled for ever, then they would have ceased to be offered, Heb. x. 1, 2. But each succeeding sacrifice is an acknowledgment that the last was insufficient, and therefore, he contrasts the full, final, finished, perfect sacrifice of Christ with them all, as supplying to the sinner that mighty want of his soul, a refuge ever present and ever perfect, to which he might flee from the vengeance of pursuing justice, a refuge in which justice sat enthroned and satisfied for ever. So “*when Christ cometh into the world, he saith sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me; in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, thou hast had no pleasure; then said I, lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will, O God.*” Heb. x. 5, 6, 7. On which the Apostle reasons, that the Redeemer takes away the first sacrifices, showing their insufficiency

and inability to justify the soul ; to establish the completeness and perfection of his own—“ I come to do thy will, *by the which will,*” adds the apostle, “ *we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all,*” Heb. x. 18 ; therefore, as there is remission of sins in the sacrifice of the Redeemer the Apostle concludes ; *Now, where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin,* v. 18—then the folding doors of everlasting life being thrown open to guilty men He invites them—“ *having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh, and having an High Priest over the house of God ; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,*” Heb. x. 19, 20, 21. Here the poor helpless sinner is invited to rest and peace—the greatness and completeness of the offering—the full perfection of the atonement made by it—the impossibility of offering any more, and finally, He who offered it being enthroned as the High Priest who hath gone in with the accepted offering to the presence of his Father for us, and the declaration of God that He hath accepted the sacrifice—all these conspire to give the sinner courage and confidence to come, and to come boldly to the throne of grace in full assurance of pardon and acceptance. Now, here is rest for the soul—ratified by the word of God—the sinner when he comes in spirit and truth to examine it, finds at once the hope that the Gospel gives, and says with joy like Andrew, “ we have found the Messiah, which is being interpreted the

Christ"—but what is the condition of a poor Roman Catholic—blinded with the names of God and Christ, and the Holy Ghost, and other sounds, for they are, alas! but sounds in the system of his Church; when his conscience is burdened with sin, he thinks that Penances, Absolutions, Masses, &c. can procure remission for his soul—he may, perhaps, have his conscience lulled for a season, but then sin again makes him uneasy, and again he turns to these miserable remedies, and because he knows not the hope that there is in the Redeemer, he flies to his Masses and his Priest to make atonement. But when it pleases God to teach him that what he wants is to be found in Christ, and that "where remission of sins is, there is no more offering for sin," he soon sees that it must necessarily follow, that his Masses are a human fiction—for where there always must be still more offering for sin, it is plain there cannot be remission of sins; he sees the same contrast between his own Priests and Christ, that the Apostle marks between the Priests of the ceremonial law and the Redeemer.—"*Every Priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sins; but this man after He had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down at the right hand of God,*" Heb. x. 11, 12. His work of salvation was finished, he sat down as a Prince and a Saviour for lost and guilty sinners to flee to, and to rejoice in for ever and ever.

The last iniquity of the Mass which I shall remark as opposing the Gospel of Christ is, that the Romish

Church assumes that it is Jesus Christ himself. This was the last point of impiety to which she could bring it; and her doctrine, when once she left the Gospel of Christ, had a natural tendency to run into this idolatry. When man flies to some false refuge for the hope of his immortal soul, the more he can exalt the refuge, the more fancied security he feels in it; when the Church of Rome once began to attribute an unscriptural efficacy to her sacraments, it followed as a necessary consequence, that she ascribed an unscriptural magnitude to their elements; when she attributed to the shadow the efficacy of the substance, it was no wonder, that misled by her error, she mistook the one for the other, and lost the substance in catching at the shadow; this was in fact the real origin of her transubstantiation. It would be an easy matter to call it by hard names, and no less easy to prove that it deserved them, but it is not my object to enter into that question at large, but simply to show that in even calling it Jesus Christ, it is as much in opposition to the Gospel, as in calling it a wafer—to say that Jesus Christ is to make a sacrifice for sins—to say he is to make an unbloody sacrifice for sins—to say he is to make a repeated sacrifice for sins, is to deny the whole of his Gospel. I will go farther, I will give a Roman Catholic more than he asks—I will suppose it possible for him, under a heavy apprehension of eternal death, to be able to pray that Jesus Christ might actually in person appear, that he might actually be seen again on earth, that he might actually suffer a death, I will not say an unbloody one, but even die upon the cross again for sin. The answer to

that prayer, if it could be answered, would blight the whole hope of salvation that the Gospel reveals; it would show that Calvary were not sufficient; that the blood poured out there was not enough; that justice was not satisfied; that the souls of sinners were not redeemed. It would show that his whole salvation was incomplete; that though he had come "to save sinners" he had not finished his work, but that he was obliged to come again to make up the deficiency—yea, what hope, what confidence could man have, that it were sufficient now, when the necessity of its repetition had proved its insufficiency before? All that the Apostles spoke of pardon—all that they had proclaimed of forgiveness—all the Gospel which they had preached to man had been falsified by the very act, if Christ were to come again to make another offering for sin; and if such would be the case, if he were to come undeniably to the eye of human sense—what a dreadful superstition is it to call a wafer Jesus Christ, and say that it is an offering for sin. The very fact of saying so, putting the idolatrous worship out of the question, proves that the man who says so, can know nothing whatever of the salvation that is revealed in the Gospel—he has a plan of salvation for himself, but it is not the plan of salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ.

In reflecting on this tenet of the Romish Church, I can hardly persuade myself that a Roman Catholic ever really thinks with sober reflection on the subject. I take a piece of flour and water and make paste of it, I suppose a Roman Catholic himself to supply me with

it, he has sown the wheat, he has reaped it, he has made the flour and he has made the paste, he can prove, if necessary, on his oath, with a clear conscience, that it grew last harvest in such a field, and that it is now a plain honest piece of wheaten flour and water. The Priest pronounces a few words over it—will any Roman Catholic take the same thing that he proved one minute ago to be a bit of flour and water, and apply in the presence of the Being that has endowed him reason and senses, the word of his creed to that—is that thing now the only Son of God?—was that thing which he can swear grew in a corner of his own field, actually born of the Virgin Mary?—did that thing walk about nearly 1800 years ago in Judea? perform miracles?—is that the thing that spoke all the words he reads in the Testament, if he ever does read them?—was that thing transfigured on the Mount? is that thing, He, whose mighty voice silenced the winds and waves?—did that thing heal all the sick?—did that thing speak the almighty word that raised the dead, “Lazarus come forth?”—did that thing stand in Pilate’s judgment hall?—was that thing crowned with thorns, scourged, buffeted, crucified?—is that thing, He, whose garments they parted among them, and on whose vesture they did cast lots?—is that thing, the mighty God, at whose crucifixion the sun was darkened, and the earth quaked, and the rocks rent, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose?—is that thing, He, who was sealed up in the tomb, and who burst the gates of death, and rose triumphant from the grave?—is that He who conversed with His dis-

ciples going to Emmaus?—is it He who appeared to them and said, “peace be unto you,” and “showed them his hands, and his feet.” Finally, is that He who ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead? and is that thing the Creator of the heavens and the earth? You believe now, O Roman Catholic, before God, that this is the identical thing that has done all this, and five minutes ago you would have taken your solemn oath it grew in your field last harvest!—O what is reason—what is revelation—when man can so trifle with, can so abuse them both?—O that we could feel for our countrymen like men that feel for themselves. We may talk, Sir, of religion and revile Roman Catholics as we please, but let me see a man who comes forward to oppose any scriptural effort that could be made to reform the religion of the Roman Catholics, and there is not a Roman Catholic in Ireland, who requires a reformation in his religion, more than such an individual requires reformation in his own.

I am, Sir, &c.

R. M'G.

*Harrowgate, August 1, 1829.*

## LETTER VI.

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SIR,

Purgatory is the last lying refuge which the superstition of the Church of Rome holds out to her deluded followers; and it sets forth at least this one melancholy truth to the Roman Catholic: that all the means of salvation which his Church has proposed are ineffectual; that penance cannot atone for sins; that all her Masses cannot atone for sins; that all her indulgences, with her offerings of the “infinite and superabundant merits of Christ, together with all the virtues and good works of his Virgin Mother and of all his saints,” cannot supply the “whatever else is wanting” to atone for sins; but that after all she must confess that the poor miserable soul must suffer fire, from which she cannot save, punishment from which she is unable to redeem, and as all her “fictions and vain refuges,” cannot satisfy the wants, and silence the terrors of a guilty conscience, she consigns the sinner to a place of suffering which she has invented in the next world, to pay that quota of penalty, which she never could make him feel secure, that she with all her offerings was able to pay for him

in this. But before I show that this invention is in itself a direct denial of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, I shall point out some of the inconsistencies which are to be found in the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church concerning it.

Dr. Doyle in his Catechism, pp. 24, 25, has these questions and answers:—

Q. 1. Where shall they go who die in mortal sin?

A. To Hell for all eternity.

Q. 2. Where do they go who die in venial sin?

A. To Purgatory.

Q. 3. What is Purgatory?

A. A place or state of punishment in the other life, where some souls suffer for a time before they can go to Heaven, where nothing defiled can enter.

Q. 4. Do any others go to Purgatory besides those who die in venial sin?

A. Yes, all who die indebted to God's justice on account of mortal sin.

Q. 5. When God forgives mortal sin as to the guilt of it, and the eternal punishment it deserved, does he require temporary punishment to be suffered for it?

A. Yes, very often, and even in this life for our correction, to deter us from relapsing into sin, and that we should make some atonement to his offended justice and goodness.

Now, it might be important to ascertain here in the first place, the distinction which the Church of Rome makes between venial and mortal sins, with respect to

Hell and Purgatory : for a Roman Catholic must surely be concerned to know whether he be guilty of that for which his Church sentences him “to Hell for all eternity,” or only to Purgatory, to stop and suffer a while on his way to Heaven, from which she will be kind enough to deliver him—provided she be properly remunerated for her trouble. Now, the Church herself, notwithstanding her boasted unity, is not quite certain as to the sins that send to Hell and those that send to Purgatory. I have now before me six of her Catechisms—Dr. Hornihold’s, Dr. Doyle’s, Dr. Butler’s, Dr. Plunket’s Dr. Reilly’s, and the first Catechism for the use of Roman Catholic Sunday Schools.—London, stereotyped by Cuddon.

Dr. Doyle, Dr. Butler, Dr. Reilly, and the London Catechism, give us the following, as the seven deadly sins :—

“Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, Sloth.”

Dr. Hornihold and Dr. Plunket, make a change in the list—this is their catalogue :—

“Pride, Covetousness, Luxury, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, and Sloth.”

Now these Divines are all agreed on the one solemn fact, that they who die in mortal sin shall go to Hell for all eternity ; but it is evident, there is a difference in all propriety of language in the nature of one of the sins, which they place on their list. Dr. Hornihold, I know, identifies them in his explanation, but this is

evidently an abuse of terms ; however, this is a matter of small importance, compared with the evils which a closer examination of the subject exhibits. Let us compare the list of mortal sins which they say cast the soul into Hell for all eternity ; with that of venial sins, which do not lose the grace of God, which only cast into Purgatory, yea, which may be forgiven on much easier terms, viz. by sacraments, holy water, signing with the sign of the Cross, alms, fasting, &c. Dr. Hornihold, p. 301.

“MORTAL SINS.—Pride, Covetousness, Luxury, Envy, Gluttony, Anger and Sloth.”—Dr. Hornihold, p. 395.

MOST COMMON VENIAL SINS.—“Idle works—small excesses in eating and drinking—too much pleasure in diversions—jocose lies—or lies out of excuse—coming late to prayers—neglecting alms—harsh words and flattering speeches—small thefts—distractions in the time of prayer not fully resisted,” &c.—p. 301.

Now, I would entreat a Roman Catholic to consider that the question is, whether his soul is “to be cast into Hell for all eternity or not”—that is, whether he be guilty of mortal or venial sin, and if he believes his Church infallible in the adjudication of the punishment, to examine how far his conscience can be satisfied, as to her infallibility in the decision on the crime.

The existence of evil propensities and passions in the human mind, is hardly questioned by members of the

Roman Catholic or Protestant Churches, although they may be ignorant of the nature, or extent, or consequences of them. But it is generally allowed, even by the most ignorant, that whatever degree of culpability may attach to their existence in the mind, that culpability is increased by their being reduced into practice; in fact, in a truly Scriptural sense, the difference between the man who is a servant of God and him who is not, does not consist in this, that the same corruptions do not exist in both; they may and often do exist more strongly in the man who is the servant of God than in the other; he may be naturally of a more proud, a more covetous, a more irascible disposition, than the man who is living without God in the world; but it is the subjection of evil in his life and conduct, and the motives and principles of that subjection that indicate his real character. Now, let any man of plain common sense, who has any serious concern for his salvation, compare those sins which the Church of Rome calls mortal, and which cast the soul into Hell with those which she calls venial, which are of comparative insignificance, and which only cast it into Purgatory, Pride, Covetousness, Luxury, Envy, Anger, Gluttony, Sloth, which are evil passions and dispositions, existing in the human mind in the opinion of the Church of Rome, are mortal sins.

But when we examine her catalogue of venial sins, we find that these sins, which in their existence in the heart, she states to be *mortal*; in their practical exercise, are turned into *venial*!

We shall subjoin her list of crimes and punishments:—

<i>Crime.</i>	<i>Punishment.</i>
“Pride,” .. .. .	Mortal..Hell.
“Self-excusing,” which results from this, and lying, .. .. .	Venial—Purgatory.
“Luxury,” .. .. .	Mortal—Hell.
“Too much pleasures in diversions,”	Venial—Purgatory.
“Gluttony, .. .. .	Mortal—Hell.
“Small excesses in eating and drinking,”	Venial—Purgatory.
“Anger and Envy,” .. .. .	Mortal—Hell.
“Harsh words,” giving way to them,	Venial—Purgatory.
“Sloth,” .. .. .	Mortal—Hell.
“Idle works,” or “coming late to Prayers,” .. .. .	Venial—Purgatory.
“Covetousness,” .. .. .	Mortal—Hell.
“Small Thefts,” .. .. .	Venial—Purgatory.

I put it to the conscience of any Roman Catholic of integrity and of principle, how far it is possible for any human being to ascertain whether he is in mortal sin or venial sin—whether Hell or Heaven is to be his portion, if he gives any consideration to these casuistries of his Church—are not some of these sins which she sets down as venial, the results of those, yea, the actings of those that she calls mortal. If pride which is mortal, leads us to justify and excuse our faults, and add lying to it, then it is *venial*.—If luxury which is mortal, leads us into “too much pleasure in diversion,” it becomes *venial*.—So if gluttony, which is mortal, makes us exceed, provided we do not go too far, it is venial!—But how far is this to be? is it to be decided by the capacity of our stomachs, the depth of our purses, or the strength of our heads? What number or nature of *idle works*—what number or nature of de-

lays in attending on the worship of God, will bring the slothful man out of Hell into Purgatory? What degrees of theft confer comparative innocence on covetousness, and turn it from a mortal to a venial sin?—I have kept *theft* for the last, because the criminality of the principles which this Church maintains on this is unparalleled, except in the morals of the Spartan legislator, and even in his case, there is an exception in his favour; that he had an object in view in the encouragement of theft, while the Church of Rome has nothing to excuse her sin on the subject. Imagine a Christian Church laying down this exposition of the law, “Thou shalt not steal.” Dr. Hornihold on the 7th commandment, p. 168.—“Theft in general, is a taking away or detaining what belongs to another”—he mentions the different kinds of theft; rapine, sacrilege, peculations, and abegeations. Then adds—“and it is to be observed, that the *sin is so much the greater or less, as the prejudice which is done is greater or less, and so it is a mortal sin when the thing that is taken is of a considerable value in itself, or when it is considerable in respect of the person from whom it is taken, as a penny is a considerable loss to a beggar, and twelve pence to an ordinary man!*”—Therefore, if a servant lives with a gentleman of moderate fortune, and steals twenty guineas from him, it is a mortal sin— but if this honest thief should be able to get a place in the family of some wealthy Peer, and be so happy as to have an opportunity of compassing a similar booty—it is a venial sin, because the matter would be a mere bagatelle to his Lordship, being “inconsiderable in respect

to the person from whom it was taken!"—"He that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much," saith the Lord Jesus. What saith this Church, which is called by His holy name.—Dr. Hornihold, p. 169.

Q. "When may persons be *excused from sin* though they take or detain what belongs to others?"

A. "A person in extreme necessity may take bread or other food when he finds it.—A *presumptive leave* of the *master* may *excuse a servant disposing of some small matters*, in *other cases* where *the thing is only trifling it is but a venial sin.*"

Now, when we couple this with the former passage, and recollect that the thing is more or less trifling, in proportion to the fortune of the owner, as Dr. Hornihold lays down.—The system of petty plunder that the Church of Rome sanctions, may serve well to account for its practical effect upon the lower classes of the Irish poor. What could be expected from them, when their religion thus presumes to explain away and neutralize the laws of God?—I can only say, that I know there are some poor Roman Catholic servants who would have too much integrity to justify, much less commit the crime of theft upon the principle which their Church lays down for them, in her commenting on this commandment; and when we see her so awfully and openly endeavour to fritter away the law of the Eternal God; when we behold her thus attempt to classify its violations, to nullify its holiness and its perfections, and to appropriate and dispense its judgments, or rather judgments which she herself has

invented ; we perceive even in her commonest principles of catechetical instruction, not only all deficiency of scriptural knowledge, and holiness, and truth, but all the most lamentable characteristic marks of ignorance, inconsistency, and error.

But I must not allow myself to be diverted from the point which I intended to prove, viz. :—that Purgatory is a direct denial of the Gospel. It is more palpably opposed to it, if possible, than Penances and Masses, for it comprehends more distinctly marked, the perversions both of the law and of the gospel, with which the doctrines of this Church abound—as it is pretended to be a place of punishment to satisfy divine justice for venial offences ; it annuls the law in the offences which it professes to receive, and the Gospel in professing to atone for those offences—besides it is, as it were the last link in that chain of darkness with which Satan binds the minds and consciences of men, and holds them at a distance from the hope of salvation—the conscience unsatisfied with all the vain repeated offerings which the Church professes to make, and to impose as atonements for sin, might, humanly speaking, if left to sink in its own uncertainty, and guilt, extend the hand of faith, to grasp the merits of the Lord, and turn to him like the dying thief for pardon and salvation— but Purgatory comes to hold out to it a false hope beyond the grave, to enhance every evil of superstition in this world, by transferring it into the confines of that which is to come. In proving it to be a denial of the Gospel, nothing more is necessary than

to mention its name—*Purgatory!* that is, a place of *purgation*. The glad tidings of the Gospel, I repeat again and again, is the testimony of sin pardoned, cancelled, purged, blotted out by the atoning sacrifice of a crucified Redeemer. Knowing the ignorance and opposition of the human mind to the glorious testimony of salvation, “without money and without price” by “the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world;”—I fear not any accusation of repetition; in again and again turning the attention of my fellow-sinners, to that hope to which my own poor needy soul must turn every moment for all her pardon and peace. What saith the word of eternal life concerning the salvation of Christ, “who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had *by himself purged our sins*, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high,” Heb. i. 3. There is no use in multiplying texts from the Scripture, when the meaning of a text is clear and plain and undeniable—the man that will not admit one as true, will refuse to admit five hundred. Now, I put it to a Roman Catholic to take this one text into the silence of his Chamber, ask himself does he believe it to be the testimony of Jehovah or not—if so—is it true? Is it a matter of fact, that the Lord Jesus Christ has *by himself purged the sins* of sinners or not. Is the offering of himself a sufficient atonement to purge man’s guilt—or not. If he says no! then let him settle the matter with his conscience, he is at issue with his God not on this passage alone, but on the whole testimony of salvation by

Christ—then let him go to his Penances, and Masses, and Priests, and Purgatory, to try and purge his soul, and make him fit to appear before his God in judgment. But if it is a plain matter of fact to be believed on the truth, the promise, yea, the oath of the Eternal God, that Jesus has “*by himself purged our sins*”—then why look for another means of purging them? A nobleman comes, and he tells a poor man who is in debt, and who fears being put in prison, “*my friend, I have paid your debt for you this morning freely—here is a receipt in full from your creditor*”—if the poor man believes his word—if he believes that the receipt which he presents to him is genuine—will his mind be harassed in turning to other sources to borrow money to pay his debt for himself?—No—his mind will be set at ease—at liberty—he will rejoice and be exceeding glad, bless his deliverer, and glory in his deliverance. If he were to listen to him, however, with indifference, if he were to turn away his head from him, and go his way to try and borrow the sum from other quarters, it would evince at once his incredulity and his ingratitude. The Purgatory of Roman Catholics, though a fiction of superstition, is however, in one sense an awful reality—it is a standing testimony of the melancholy state of ignorance and unbelief, the *deliberate systematic* denial of Christ in this benighted Church. The Lord of life and glory tells her that He came to pay the mighty debt of sin, that by Himself he purged our sins—she turns from Him, makes a liar of the God of truth, and goes to vain and unprofitable refuges to seek salvation, where it is not to be found—

she calls one of them a *Purgatory*, to show that she denies she can be purged by Him. What gospel—what good tidings of great joy to a poor perishing wretch, that he must be cast into flames to expiate his guilt! What blessing—what hope for an immortal spirit to be

“————— confined to fast in fires,  
Till the foul crimes done in his days of nature,  
Are burnt and purged away.”

What shall we say for such a hope as this—Is it “O death where is thy sting?—O grave where is thy victory?” No—let not the word of truth be named with such a system, but let us rather borrow farther from the tragic fiction, and say, “*Alas! poor ghost!*”

O that my countrymen would hear the voice of great salvation that the Gospel testifies. Its sound would be to them, as it is reported to have been to the poor heathen, who, walking in his shoes of torture to expiate his sins, heard a missionary preach upon the words, “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth (purgeth, the original is the same) us from all sin.”—He heard the testimony of the atoning sacrifice, the finished nature of the mighty work of pardon, the rest for the guilty conscience, the refuge for the guilty soul—he is reported to have flung off his shoes of superstitious expiation, exclaiming, “that is the very thing I want.” So it is the common want of every sinner—not more is food for the support, water for the refreshment, air for the respiration of the human frame, a common necessity of our nature, than pardon for the guilty soul of sinful and apostate man; and

poison substituted for food, could not more certainly destroy the life of the body, than Purgatory put for the Lord Jesus Christ, is fatal to the soul that trusts to such a refuge.

I cannot dismiss the subject, Sir, without advert-  
ing to another evil attendant on this superstition, for  
while the other fictions of the Church of Rome prey  
upon the hopes and fears of their unhappy victim  
while he is alive, Purgatory like the vampyre, comes to  
feed upon his grave—and in this, not less than in all her  
other dogmas, does she set up this superstition against  
the Gospel, that whereas, the Gospel is “preached to  
the poor”—Purgatory is to be preached more parti-  
cularly to the rich. It is a lucrative settlement in the  
regions of darkness, from which she levies contributions  
to support her usurpation over the fears and feelings of  
the human heart. The ministers of this miserable  
fiction, claim from the affections of surviving friends  
money for Masses, to redeem the souls of the dead—  
offerings proportioned to the means of the living and  
given in proportion to their love for the departed. The  
more money paid, the more Masses can be said—the  
more Masses said, the sooner is the suffering ended,  
and the soul set free from Purgatory—and though it  
were an insult not to be endured by man, that any of  
the hirelings of a judge, could stay for money the sen-  
tence of judicial retribution, or shorten its duration, or  
mitigate its severity; the judgments of the God of  
heaven and earth are to be mitigated or shortened, for  
money paid to those who call themselves his servants,

and entrance into the realms of eternal glory, set up to auction upon earth!—the Gospel!—Is this the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Is this Christianity?—Well, indeed, may the Word of God be shut up from those unhappy persons who are taught to call it so.

I need not dwell upon the subject farther, Sir, but if that Sacred Volume, which we call a revelation from the God of truth, be in reality what we profess to call it—if it is that alone which reveals to man the character of his Creator, his Preserver, his Benefactor, his Lawgiver, his Redeemer, and his Judge—if it is that alone which reveals to him the principles of truth, in which he requires to be instructed as a rational, an accountable, and an immortal being—if it is there alone he can learn the laws by which he is governed—the sins with which he is charged, the justice by which he is condemned, and the mercy by which he can be forgiven—if it is there alone he can learn whatever can conduce to his moral conduct, his social interests and duties, and his everlasting happiness; and if this Sacred Volume, and all that it reveals is a blessing to man—if he may not despise and trample on it with impunity—if it is not intended to be given up to the covetousness and ambition of a few individuals, by which they may set up an iniquitous traffic for the temporal and eternal interests of the rest of their species—if it is not intended to lend merely the weight of a nominal divine authority, to sanction an awful system of spiritual tyranny over the minds, the consciences, and the immortal souls of men, and then to

be locked by those who have abused it, that they may escape all scrutiny and detection—if they are not permitted under the cloak of religion to trample upon the laws, to insult the attributes, and to usurp the government of God, to set up fictions of man's invention for truths of divine revelation, to pretend for money to arrest the mandates, and mitigate the ordinances of eternal justice—to reverse the sentence of immutable truth, and to poison and pervert the springs of everlasting mercy—if, in short, the Christian religion is intended to instruct, enlighten, direct, regenerate, and save the human race, and not to blind, to mislead, to enslave, to demoralize, and to destroy the immortal soul—then, Sir, I say, that the nature of the Roman Catholic religion, as shutting up the word, as nullifying the law, perverting and opposing the Gospel of the living and eternal God, and as enslaving, misleading, and destroying the immortal souls of men, is such as to call on every man who knows and values the word, the law, and the Gospel of his God, and who has any anxiety for the temporal and eternal happiness of his fellow-creatures, to labour with zeal, with honesty, with fidelity, and with earnest affectionate solicitude, for the total and fundamental reformation of the Roman Catholic religion.

I am, Sir, &c.

R. M'G.

*Harrowgate, August 4, 1829.*

## LETTER VII.

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SIR,

The names, characters, and writings of men, are of very little importance to the world, except as they may tend to produce some influence of a good or evil tendency on the well-being of their fellow-creatures. This is a reason of sufficient cogency why a detailed reply to your Irish Correspondent is unnecessary. It may, however, be useful as a warning to persons who call themselves friends and members of the Established Church, but who are ignorant of the genuine principles of our religion, to see that men who oppose a faithful effort, to bring the doctrines of Roman Catholics to the test, are themselves, though perhaps unconsciously, really infected with the errors of that Church; and although they may sincerely, perhaps, protest against some of her dogmas, and the absurdity of some of her forms, they virtually labour under the infection, of her worst and most dangerous principles. Ignorance of the Word of God is the prolific parent of these; and of this your correspondent has exhibited a lamentable example, not only in impugning that plain

Scriptural truth, which has been vindicated in the preceding letters, but in exhibiting the opinions which he avowedly expresses of the Sacred Volume.

He says, "The Roman Catholics are called upon to do little more than *abandon the guidance of their Priests, and become for themselves interpreters of the Holy Scriptures*—*self-direction* is proposed to be substituted for *misdirection*. They are encouraged to *embark on the perilous ocean of controversy, without chart or compass*; and to *undertake a voyage of discovery in quest of truth, without even the rudiments of that knowledge which would enable them to proceed on their course with safety*. To our minds this is *extremely dangerous*—it must beget a presumptuous *self-confidence, equally to be deprecated with the most abject credulity, and ensure the perpetuation of religious discord.*"

In sitting down to comment on the total and radical ignorance of the Bible, which such sentiments exhibit, I thought that the images of "*abandoning guides*"—"*embarking on an ocean*"—"*want of chart and compass,*" &c. had recently met my eye, and I just happened to recollect Mr. Pope's controversy with Mr. Maguire; and in the fifth speech of the latter gentleman on the first day's discussion, I found the passage which had struck me—"It is evident that the ignorant, the unlearned, and the weak-minded, who form the great majority of mankind, can only *proceed safely* when conducted by a *living guide*—if they be allowed

to frame a rule of faith for themselves, embark *without chart or compass* upon the *wide ocean of opinion*, if they are allowed to think *upon matters of faith as they please*—the result will be, they will give way to prejudice and passion, and substitute their own judgments for the Revelation of Jesus Christ.” It is no wonder, Sir, that your correspondent should oppose any attempt, to bring the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church to the test of the Scriptures, when his opinions on one main point of that Church’s errors are identified with those of this Roman Catholic Priest—it may be pleaded, that this is a point in which Mr. Maguire is not so ignorant. But when its Divine Author represents the Sacred Volume under a variety of images, which convey the ideas of *illumination, direction, guidance, instruction, wisdom, salvation*—as “*a lantern to the feet and a light to the paths*”—that its “*entrance giveth light—giveth light and understanding to the simple,*” as a “*sure word of prophecy, whereunto they do well to take heed, as unto a* LIGHT THAT SHINETH IN A DARK PLACE,” as “*all given by inspiration of God, and PROFITABLE for DOCTRINE, for REPROOF, for CORRECTION, for INSTRUCTION in RIGHTEOUSNESS*”—“ABLE TO MAKE US WISE UNTO SALVATION *through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.*”—When, therefore, He commands men, “*hear this all ye people, give ear all ye inhabitants of the world, both LOW and HIGH, RICH and POOR together.*”—When He commands them to “*search the Scriptures,*” to “*let the word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom,*” &c., and when on the other hand such persons as these

represent the Scripture under the image of a *dark tempestuous ocean*, when the *voyage is perilous*, and compare the study of the Bible to embarking on such a voyage *without chart or compass*—that it is after all, but an uncertain “*voyage of discovery*,” as if the principles of eternal truth lay in remote and unknown regions of revelation, like distant islands in the trackless deep; it is of little consequence to prove how far they may agree in their errors with each other, when it is evident they are at issue with the great and holy God.

There is another passage of similar import in your correspondent’s letter, which evinces the inconsistency of a man really agreeing in this point with the Roman Catholic Church, and attempting to give a tone of Protestantism to his errors. He tells us “the Scriptures are a volume which contains all truth necessary to salvation—to have access to them is the undoubted privilege of all Christians—in them truths are revealed and precepts given, which the humblest and least instructed will find as *guides to their eyes* and *lanterns to their feet*;—but they also contain a *system of divine philosophy*, which may afford its highest exercise to the sagacity and intelligence of the deepest and most enlightened thinkers. They have been truly described as containing “fords where the lamb may wade, and depths where the elephant must swim,” and surely when rude and undisciplined minds are *encouraged to roam at large over a commonage such as this*, without *pastoral care or guidance*—it is not to be expected, that they *will confine themselves to the consumption of just so*

*much as is good for them*, and it would, indeed, be greatly to be admired, if they did *not tread down and disfigure* more than they can appropriate with advantage." The only answer which a passage so replete with inconsistency and error deserves, is to request the reader to attempt to reduce it, if possible, into common sense.

We have first the Scriptures described as a Revelation of inestimable value, "containing all truths necessary to salvation."—We have it admitted, that "to have access to them, and to read them, is the undoubted privilege of all Christians."—We have it asserted, that in them "truths are revealed, and precepts given, which the humblest and least instructed will find as guides to their eyes, and lanterns to their feet."—Then arises a sort of exception to these concessions—"but they also contain a system of divine philosophy, which may afford its highest exercise to the sagacity and intelligence of the deepest and most enlightened thinkers—they have been truly described as containing fords where the lamb may wade, and depths where the elephant must swim." Now, what can this writer mean in this passage?—what is this "*system of divine philosophy*," which is contradistinguished from the "truths and precepts" of the Bible? Is that book all true? If so, where are we to find its philosophical, and where its unphilosophical truths? Where is this wondrous system suited to "the sagacity of these deepest and most enlightened thinkers"—and where these harmless truths for the humblest and least instructed? If instead of embarking on a perilous voyage without chart or

compass, on this ocean; we are to wade, and swim near its shore—surely where the elephant is out of his depth, the lamb can swim as well as he—but whatever he means by his philosophy, he means that it is to exclude the poor from reading the Bible—for that book is suddenly changed from a system of divine philosophy, or a sea with these deeps and shallows, into good dry land, in the shape of an immense large commonage; and then, notwithstanding all these truths and precepts, and the undoubted privileges thereunto belonging—still, “surely when the rude and undisciplined minds” (or “unlearned and weak-minded,” as Mr. Maguire calls them) “*are encouraged to roam at large over a commonage such as this, without pastoral care or guidance, it is not to be expected that they will confine themselves to the consumption of just so much as is good for them.*” So we perceive that this “commonage,” namely, the Bible, contains some *dangerous herbage* for the common herd of men to feed on—they require *pastors!!!* to prevent them from eating more *than “is good for them”*—an overdose of the Bible is a dangerous excess! and certainly for such pastors as this writer (if he be one) and Mr. Maguire, the less their flocks can be allowed to feed in these pastures the better for their guides. The Bible is then turned from this extensive commonage into a sort of enclosed pleasure-ground, where the system of philosophy is railed off, I suppose, for the deep thinkers, and the truths and precepts for the common herd to feed in at the discretion of their guides—and in such a nice enclosure as this, “*it would, indeed, be greatly to be ad-*

*mired, if they did not tread down and disfigure more than they can appropriate with advantage.*" It were easy to remark with severity on such a passage—but to point the attention of those who have any true religion to its meaning, precludes the necessity either of comment or reproof.

But it is not surprising that your correspondent should have fallen into these errors, and with an inconsistent profession of Protestantism, adopted principles identical with those of the Church of Rome, since he evinces a total ignorance of the nature of that religion : in one place professing to affix to it epithets of severe reproach, and in another, attributing to it as much as its own Priests would venture to assume. What man, with any clear consistent view of divine truth, could call in one passage in the same letter, Popery "the eclipse of the Gospel," and then take the very text which the Romish teachers quote, to prove the infallibility of their Church, and assert not only that it is applicable to their Church, but that it is *perfectly fulfilled* in it? I must quote his sentiments at length, for they contain principles which, in the present state of religion in Ireland, it is of deep importance to examine. "There is nothing," he says, "in which the providence of God has been more *strikingly exemplified*, and the parting promise\* of Christ more *perfectly fulfilled*,

\* I cannot conceive to what promise this writer here alludes, except it be to that one, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" and this, it is well known, is the great foundation on which the Romish Church builds the doctrine of

than the manner in which amidst all the corruptions which disfigured the Church, *vital and essential truths were preserved unextinguished*, whilst the true doctrine was suffered to be *disguised*, it was not *permitted to be destroyed* by the errors with which it was *encrusted*; and, therefore, when the light of reason shone again upon the world, and the holy Scriptures recovered their proper ascendancy over the minds of true believers, little more was necessary than *to pare off the excrescences* which had accrued in ages of darkness and ignorance, in order to restore *true religion* to the express form and lineaments by which it was recognized in the Apostolic times. Far different would the case have been, had the errors been those of *curtailment* and not of *redundancy*—had they consisted in *believing too little* instead of *believing too much*—it was a much easier, as well as a more natural process *to throw off the envelopments* within which *the Christian verities lay, as it were, secured beyond the reach of accident*, than to engraft them anew upon the barren stock of a defective and mutilated faith.” Which being put into plain English, amounts simply to this:—

The Lord Jesus Christ perfectly fulfilled his parting promise, in preserving the vital and essential truths of his religion unextinguished in the Roman Catholic Church, until the time of the Reformation. The true doctrines were only *disguised*, not *destroyed* in this Church—she preserved within her *the Christian*

infallibility—all her writers quote it. Dr. Milner in his *End of Controversy*—Mr. Maguire in his *Discussion*—repeatedly appeal to it, and so does every controversialist of that persuasion.

*verities secured beyond the reach of accident.* We at the Reformation pared off her *encrustations, excrescences, and envelopments*, and retained these unextinguished lights and undestroyed doctrines, and carefully preserved verities which we thus derived from her.— Now, in the first place, as a consistent Protestant, I must protest against the interpretation of this promise of our Lord, as conveying to any outward or visible Church that either then existed, or was to exist, the assurance of His presence and protection, as the depository of his truth. I contend that it was limited to the Apostles as His inspired messengers, and to their word; or that if extended, it can be but to His spiritual Church. But even conceding the interpretation to convey a promise to *some* Church, I deny the fact with respect to the Church of Rome. It is an affront to the majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, to represent Him as being with a Church, on the brow of which He hath stamped the name of “Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth”—nor is a man to be deterred from saying so, by the exquisite sensibility of your correspondent, Sir, who writes “the ——— of Babylon,” that he may avoid the Apostolic indelicacy of the Sacred Volume, in branding her with the broad stamp of this appellation, from which it is not to be wondered that her friends should shrink. I must also protest against the unscriptural and unfounded assumption, that any outward Church, whether in the Apostles days or since their days, was, or is to be considered by mankind as the accredited depositories, or preservers of the “true doctrines,” or “the vital and

essential truths of Christ's religion," or of the "Christian verities." I readily concede, that these doctrines or verities did exist in the Apostolic Churches, and that they do exist in any Church that now is entitled truly to the name of Christian, and I consider that they exist in the best and most unexceptionable manner in the Established Church of these countries—but I deny that any man or men, any Church or Churches, or any human documents on earth, are the accredited depositories and preservers of these. I maintain, that the only depository to which man is to be referred for them as of divine authority, is the Holy Word of his Creator—all documents, all creeds, all confessions of faith, however excellent or scriptural they may be, are but as cups or vessels that may serve to carry a draught of the waters of life, to refresh the traveller's lip—but it is at the Word of the eternal God alone, that the pilgrim can sit down beside "the wells of salvation," and quench his thirst at this "Fountain of living waters." But with respect to the Church of Rome, I fearlessly encounter all the charges of uncharitableness, fanaticism, &c. &c. which your correspondent may please to bestow on me, when I assert that so far from preserving the vital and essential truths of Christ's religion unextinguished, this Church *has extinguished by her errors, every article of genuine Christian truth within her pale*; call on any of my Roman Catholic countrymen, who may read, and be displeased at such a charge against their Church, to grant a little calm and patient investigation to a subject in which their eternal interests are involved.

A Roman Catholic will justly and consistently deny this—but when a writer calling himself a Protestant, tells us that Popery is “an eclipse of the Gospel” and yet “preserves unextinguished the vital and essential truths of Christ’s religion;” it is about as sound in theology as it would be in science, to tell us that our satellite eclipsed the sun, but preserved that sun shut up safely in her centre. If he were asked, what he means by “Christian verities,” I suppose he would place foremost on the list the Apostles’ creed—we shall take this then, and he will confidently ask, do I not allow this to be a summary of Christian verities? This is my answer—The Apostles’ creed contains real verities of the Christian faith, exactly so far as the words of that symbol are scripturally understood, and the ideas annexed to those words, derived from the fountain of eternal truth—if the ideas annexed to those words, are unscriptural and false, the creed itself in the mouth of him who uses it, is a mere form of superstitious jargon, and is no more to be called a Christian verity, than the phrase “I believe there is one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet”—for example—if a man says, “I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth,” and if it be asked does not that man acknowledge a Christian verity? I must answer he certainly does—but if that man says to me, “Come into my room, and let us hide from God, let us shut the window and he cannot see us”—then I say, that that article repeated by that man is false—the thing that he calls God is a mere idol of his imagination, it is not the omniscient omnipresent God of the Bible, and it is of no consequence whether the thing

which he calls God, is a being whom he acknowledges to be invisible and to dwell in the heavens, or a bit of wood in the shape of a man, which he sets up to worship on his chimney-piece. I presume that this will scarcely be denied by any man who admits, that the only true God, is the God whose character is revealed in the Bible, and that as to any thing else which we call God, whether we divest him of his character of omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence, or call an idol of stone by his name, we are equally far from the truth of his sacred word, or from using words of "Christian verity," when we say we believe in him.

Now, I shall go one step farther and say, that when the idea of the divine character is divested of its moral attributes of holiness, and justice, and truth; the true God is as much denied, as if a man says he can hide from him in a dark closet or under a table. When a man professes to say, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth," but declares that it is a *venial offence* to transgress one of his laws—that he can *satisfy the divine justice*, by punishing his body for his sins, or confessing to his Priest, and that he himself or that Priest can *atone to God for his offences*. I affirm that the assertion "I believe in God," is no more a "Christian verity" in the lips of such a man, than if he lifts up a stone and informs us that this is the God in whom he believes. Nay, when this man is informed of the real scriptural character of Jehovah—when he hears it read out of his Sacred Oracles, that "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet

offend in one point, he is guilty of all"—that "by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified"—when he hears that God "hath set forth Jesus to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins"—that "without shedding of blood is no remission," and that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin"—when he reads the scriptural character of that God in the only revealed mode of exercising his divine attributes in the salvation of a sinner, and when he evinces both in his language, and in the very ordinances of his religion, that he denies that God, then I say, that the Apostles' creed in the lips of such a man, or in the mouth of a Church, which has systematized a denial of God's revealed character and attributes, is no more a "Christian verity," than "*Barbara Celarent Darii Ferio*," or any other unmeaning sounds you may please to put together.

Again, Sir, when a man says, "I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord," &c.—take the remainder of that creed referring to our blessed Redeemer—if I am asked does not this man acknowledge a number of Christian verities? I must answer—yes. But let me suppose that this man asks me, if I have ever seen Jesus Christ? and I reply—no. He then takes me and shows me a little Indian idol, made of rice paste, of which many have been brought to this country, and he tells me that this little god is the Jesus Christ of whom he believes these things, and that this is the very person who "was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary," &c. I think I shall

be justified in asserting, that the Apostles' creed is no more a Christian verity in the mouth of that man, than it would be in that of the Hindoo.

Let me now come to the point—let me turn this rice paste into wheaten paste—let me flatten this little Indian idol into a wafer, and when a man declares, that this is the Jesus Christ, of whom he believes all the articles of the creed; that this wafer is, in fact, not a wafer, but that it is the “whole body, blood, soul and divinity,” of Jesus Christ; that this is that Christ who “was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,” &c.—who, but a man blinded by the same superstition, will pretend to say, that the creed is a Christian verity in his lips?

If articles of faith bear a scriptural meaning, in the sense of that system into which they are incorporated; then those articles in that sense, and in connexion with that system, are scriptural and true. But if the terms in those articles of faith, are used in a sense which that system has rendered unscriptural and false, then those articles are no longer Christian verities in connexion with that system, but unscriptural and false in their use and application; and this is so, even if they be the very words of the Holy Scriptures themselves, as they were when cited against their Divine Author in the lips of the father of lies. When, therefore, Sir, your correspondent speaks of “the Christian verities” being preserved in the Church of Rome, and of the Lord Jesus Christ fulfilling his promise to that Church, he

evinces not only an ignorance of the Roman Catholic religion, but what is much worse, of the pure and immutable nature of the Gospel itself—for just as when arsenic is mixed with flour, however pure, to be made into bread, that composition can no longer be denominated food, but poison; so when false unscriptural ideas of the real nature, and attributes, and government, and word of God, and of his Christ, are annexed to terms in articles of faith, those articles of faith can no longer be denominated Christian verities, but unscriptural errors, in the system with which they are incorporated: blinding and beguiling the mind, by giving to those errors the semblance and authority of truth, and only serving to give weight and perpetuity to superstitions, by cloaking them under the shelter and sanction of divine revelation. In like manner, when he talks of the advantages derived from “*believing too much instead of believing too little*”—it can only be said of men who speak in such a strain, that whatever they may believe, they neither believe nor understand the Gospel of Christ. It is of deep importance to examine this principle. The holy and eternal God, in the depths of that wisdom, and the riches of that grace, which are beyond the reach of human thought to fathom, or human imagination to conceive, hath sent salvation to a guilty world—salvation full, free, and finished, through the righteousness and atonement of his ever blessed, co-equal, and co-eternal Son. The infidel, whether Atheist, Deist, Arian, Socinian, or of any other shade of infidelity, denies, perhaps, the existence of a God—the authenticity and inspiration of the

Scriptures, or the divinity or atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ.—He “*believes too little*”—his own fancied moral virtues are the foundation of his hope before God. The Roman Catholic professes to acknowledge these all in the abstract, but he denies them in detail ; he professes to admit the atonement, but denies its all-sufficiency to cleanse from sin, and his doctrines of Masses, Penances, Purgatory, &c. &c. conspire to testify his rejection of that salvation, which the Gospel proclaims through the Lord Jesus to sinners—he “*believes too much.*”

The votary of infidelity detracts from the revelation of Jehovah—the votary of superstition adds to it—what difference does it make in irreverence and contempt for the word of the holy God, what the nature of that falsehood is by which men evince that they disbelieve it? That sacred word declareth, “he that believeth not God hath, *made him a liar*, because he believeth not the record that God hath given of his Son.” And when such writers as your correspondent sit down to panegyricize the advantages of believing too much, rather than too little ; they would do well to favour the world with a treatise, on the most advantageous method in which a sinner can give the lie to his Creator, before they venture to attack, as uncharitable and unchristian, those who feel called on by every motive and principle of Christian charity, to expose those errors, which evince a rejection of the Gospel, and therefore the awful condemnation of those who really maintain them.

Let me suppose, Sir, that two men were to profess to embrace the Newtonian system of astronomy—that they were to profess to believe in the law of gravitation, and to receive all the demonstrations of that great philosopher, respecting the revolutions of the planets in their orbits—but that they were each to make one exception, though of an opposite description. One asserts, that the planets perform their revolutions in one month more, and the other, that they perform them in one month less, than the period assigned to them in the calculations of that astronomer. What should we think of a man who should stand up to institute a comparison between these in favour of the former, and tell us that it was uncharitable to refuse him a station in the ranks of science, because he believed only a little more, rather than a little less than Newton? We should be inclined, I think, to place the advocate in the same class of literary attainment with his client; convinced that the same radical ignorance of the principles of science, which could lead one man to commit the blunder, alone could lead another to defend it. And, Sir, let me ask are the truths which involve the moral attributes and character, and government of the holy God—truths on which depend the everlasting interests of immortal beings, more to be trifled with, than those which man has himself deduced from his own observations on the laws of matter? Are the sacred records of God of less comparative importance, than the reasonings and deductions of natural philosophy? or where shall we find a stronger illustration of the scriptural testimony concerning the blindness, and apostacy, and guilt of man

than this—that while an error in science, such as I have described, would affix an indelible blot upon the literary character of any individual—men may assume a prescriptive right of publishing with impunity, every species of folly and absurdity on the all-important subject of eternal truth. But while the systems of superstition and infidelity in every shape and shade, alike evince their enmity against the truth of Jehovah, by adding to or detracting from the glory of the Gospel of Christ; and while writers, such as your correspondent, in proportion as they verge to these extremes, attempt to vindicate, or make light of those errors, to which they themselves approximate; O! that they would learn to weigh their principles in the balances of the sanctuary before it be too late; and to estimate the tendency of their respective systems according to that awful and irrefragable judgment which Jehovah hath equally denounced upon them both—“ I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, *if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*” Rev. xxii. 18, 19. O that men who “*believe too much,*” and they who “*believe too little,*” and those who, under a profession of believing aright, evince the hollowness of their profession by advocating the cause of either; would turn from their several errors, and fly from the condemnation to which they are running, to that bless-

ed hope which is set before them in the salvation of a crucified Redeemer !

Men whose views of religion are of a shallow and superficial nature may easily crowd together a mass of subjects, and hop over them with a levity, inversely proportioned to their depth and importance ; your correspondent has not discussed one single point or principle of truth, but has touched on a variety which either ought not to be introduced, or, if adverted to, ought to be dwelt on with that gravity which the subject required ; he must not suppose that the errors of his opinions are undetected or uncensured, if they are not sifted and exposed. He concludes a laboured panegyric on the Established Church, by informing us how very closely it is allied to the Church of Rome ; speaking of the doctrines of the real presence and absolution, he tells us in direct opposition to the acknowledged fact, that “ *the more liberal and better informed of the Roman Catholic clergy have slid into a more lax and Protestant mode of speaking concerning them* ” — he informs us that the doctrine of absolution “ *is now defended by the ablest Popish writers, as being the same in substance with that of the Church of England ;* and he adds, “ *the Government is the same, the orders the same, many of the doctrines the same, and the Roman Catholics themselves anxious to represent others as very little different.* ” The Government the same ! What ! is the Pope the head of the Church of England ? “ *The orders the same* ” ! Have we got the cardinals among us too ? sacrificing

priests and bishops also? “*Many of the doctrines the same*”!—does he mean the articles of the creed? the very names of God and of Jesus Christ in the Church of England, are names of Beings as different from those in the Church of Rome, as Jehovah from a wafer! Does the writer mean to assert these things as if they were to be admitted by our church? I affirm in contradiction, that pole and pole, earth and heaven, light and darkness, truth and falsehood, are not farther asunder, than the principles of the articles, homilies, and liturgy of the Church of England are, from the principles, the decrees, and the canons of the councils of the Church of Rome: and *that* on the very foundations of the Christian faith. But if, indeed, the writer makes these assertions respecting the approximation of some who are called Protestants to the Church of Rome, I shall not dispute the justice of his statements.

He is scarcely more felicitous in his remarks on the Reformation Society, than in the principles which he exhibits respecting the Roman Catholic religion: this is, however, a secondary consideration; but I shall just glance at some of his inconsistent and unfounded assertions. He speaks of the confusion that is to be expected from the circumstance, that Protestant ministers of different denominations unite in endeavouring to awaken their Roman Catholic countrymen to a sense of their errors; and having compounded the two formidable epithets of “*this medley of creeds*”—“*this concrete of contradictories in religion,*” he asks the question, whether this is calculated to promote “the unity of the Spirit

in the bond of peace?" and then says, "we unhesitatingly answer, no." An ordinary logician would be inclined to hesitate a little, before he asserted, that a conclusion of future discord, was to be deduced from the circumstances of present union; but he leaps over the common barriers of reasoning, and lays it down as a certainty, that "as soon as the strong holds of Popery shall have fallen before them, this bond of brotherhood will be dissolved—they will no longer know each other as friends, but as enemies—the Baptist, the Moravian, the Independent, the Calvinist, will each contend for the maintenance and establishment of the systems to which they are respectively attached," &c. This writer appears to be totally ignorant of the difference between the forms of church government, the administration of ordinances, and the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith; he is ignorant that the churches which he here enumerates, whatever be their differences from the Church of England, and from each other, have no difference as to the truths necessary for salvation: and in this respect, the conversion of Roman Catholics to any one of these forms—however, as members of the Established Church, we should deprecate their union with any dissenting body—would be a blessing which every man who knows the Gospel would hail. And certainly, to urge the activity of dissenters as a motive for supineness on the members of the Establishment, is a singular species of argument for a person who professes such a high veneration for our church. But there is a most unhappy sympathy between this writer in his apprehensions for the Established Church, and

the Roman Catholic Priests; their object is the same, viz. to endeavour by any means to put down this Reformation Society. Mr. Maguire and he are in perfect harmony on this subject: in that gentleman's third speech on the last day of his discussion with Mr. Pope, he says, "according to his principles" (i. e. referring men to the Scriptures) "that book, which is inspired of God, will be made to dictate one hundred and fifty different religions—the spirit of truth will be changed into the spirit of error—every wild fanatic will appeal to private interpretation, and internal illumination—the book of God will be produced to support the most abominable blasphemies, and real religion will be utterly destroyed. It was this devastating principle which superinduced the ruin of the Protestant religion in the Protestant Churches of Germany and France. It was by such a principle that the episcopal Church of Scotland was pulled down; and the same principle will effect shortly similar results in Ireland, in regard to the Established Church, if it meet with the encouragement it has hitherto received. *I call upon the Bishops of the Established Church to step into the breach, and to save their church from utter destruction.*" The sympathy between these gentlemen, indicates a wonderful coincidence of principle. The alarm which your correspondent expresses too, as to the objections of "thinking Roman Catholics" feeling great anxiety as to what doctrines they are to embrace, whether they are to agree with the "Calvinist, or anti-Calvinist, Independent, or Episcopalian," has been most sympathetically anticipated by another Priest on the other

side the channel. It is the very chief objection urged by Mr. Maddocks, the Priest at Bradford, against a discussion—from which he most prudently retreated—“Is it your desire, gentlemen,” said he, “that we should become Churchmen, or Methodists, or Ranters, or Quakers, or Shakers, or Calvinists, or Moravians, or Independents, or Baptists, particular or general, or Lutherans, or Swedenborgians, or Zuinglians; or rather would you have us rank ourselves among the followers of John Knox or Socinus; or perhaps what is still better, among the admirers of Lady Joanna Southcote?” Your correspondent is only inferior to the Priests in the point and spirit of his objections to the Reformation Society. It is a matter of little consequence to prove either of this writer, or of any other opponent, that his principles are identical with those of the Priests of Rome: but it is of importance to all men who love the truth of the Gospel, to remark, in reference to the Reformation Society, the effect which it produces on the minds of such men. The Roman Catholics cry out against it—the hollow nominal Protestants, like your correspondent, (if he be one) endeavour to put it down. Why? Because, of all the Societies in existence, this alone professes to drag forward into day, the errors, and falsehoods, and superstitions of the human mind, to make them subjects of public discussion, and to bring them to the test of the word of eternal truth—to maintain the principles of the Christian faith—the authenticity and inspiration of the sacred volume—its sufficiency to make man wise unto salvation—the truths which it contains—the Trinity in

unity of the adorable Jehovah—the incarnation, miracles, resurrection and ascension of the blessed Jesus—the influences and operations of the Holy Spirit—the guilt, apostacy, and condemnation of fallen man—and still more than all, the great foundation of the sinner's hope, *justification before God, by the finished righteousness and atonement of a crucified Saviour*, in opposition to all the efforts, in every shape or form, of human merits and inventions, and the necessity of moral righteousness and holiness of life, not as the *condition* of man's acceptance, but as the *test of his character*, that he really depends for acceptance on his Redeemer. These doctrines, alike more or less hateful to men who are ignorant of the salvation of Christ, are necessarily brought into discussion in exposing the errors of the Church of Rome, especially *that error* on which all the rest are built—*that error*, which is as fatal as all of them besides to man's salvation—*that error* from which, if a man is not converted, he rejects the Gospel, and except he repents, must perish—namely, JUSTIFICATION IN WHOLE OR IN PART BY HUMAN MERIT. All men naturally, of every denomination, and of every religion, and of every sect, and of every superstition, hold this fundamental error; they are ready to unite against a Society, which, if it be faithful to its principle of endeavouring to enlighten Roman Catholics, must trace continually all their errors to this fountain, from which they spring: hence the hostility to the Reformation Society, "*hinc illæ lochrymæ:*" and when I see such objections as your correspondent has made to it, it is only throwing another Priest into the scale to give

weight to the reasons for its uncompromising exertions and diligence in the prosecution of its objects. He charges us with using language of an offensive nature at our meetings, with calling men "idolaters" their Priests "deceivers" and their church "the ——— of Babylon"—delicately reproving the Word of inspiration for the impropriety of its expressions. But while epithets merely calculated to offend, are confessedly to be avoided, the admonition to the Reformation Society, and the reproof of the inspired Apostle, hardly come with decorum from a writer who compliments the whole body of Roman Catholic Priests with a delicate quotation from Horace, in which he compares them individually to *Priapus*! calls them "*demagogues in canonicals*"—"uniting the intemperance of the agitator with the bitterest polemical bigotry"—"*well qualified to be firebrands*"—and by their "*clumsy brutality, co-operating with the reformers.*" I merely point this out as a literary inconsistency. I can assure him, the Priests are too well acquainted with their interest, to confound the over-acted hostility of a friend with the rancour or malevolence of an enemy. He attacks the meetings of the Reformation Society thus—"As far as we have had an opportunity of observing, these meetings are always more calculated to exasperate the feelings than to win the affections or inform the judgments of those, for whose edification they are especially got up, and who, when they do attend them, attend them more from an idle curiosity, than any real anxiety on the subject of their salvation."

This, fortunately, is a simple matter of fact accusation; and I affirm in contradiction of it, that as far as I have observed, it is perfectly unfounded. I have attended three meetings at the Rotunda, at night, and in the time of deepest political agitation, and I never saw in any congregation in a church, more deep attention generally, than in the body of those persons who attended: and if, on any occasion, any person did attempt to cause interruption, there appeared on the part of the meeting a determination to put him immediately down. But who has erected this writer into a judge of the motives with which men attend these meetings? who has made him competent to pronounce upon the principles which actuate Roman Catholics to come to them? even of the Athenians, whom idle curiosity drew to hear the apostle, the Lord was pleased to enlighten many; and as to the truths which are calculated to “inform the judgments” of men, the letter which he has written on the subject, is a melancholy standard of his competence to decide on them. I shall only now, Sir, notice the propositions for an attempt to reform the Roman Catholic religion which your correspondent makes.

He tells us that “until the fields are more white for the harvest,” truly enlightened Protestants will be content with converting Roman Catholics, according as it pleases Providence to prepare them for conversion by exciting within them yearnings after a more pure and perfect way of righteousness, when they will be led to adopt the genuine doctrines of the Gospel as something corresponding to the newly awakened religious appetite

which they experience, and by which they will be drawn, as it were instinctively, to the spiritual food most healthful for their souls." This is, in plain language, that we are to sit down without an effort to enlighten our Roman Catholic countrymen, till God is pleased to excite them by his Spirit to seek instruction. It is true, indeed, that all means are inadequate to awaken men without the influence of Divine grace to give them power : but it is as true, that it is only in the Scriptural use of means, that the Divine blessing is to be expected. And since to neglect God's appointed means of instruction, and say we should wait till He was pleased to "excite yearnings" in us by His Spirit, would be a criminal neglect of duty, and a fanatical tempting of the Lord for ourselves : it is yet to be shown, how it is not chargeable with the same guilt and folly, when we propose to adopt such a system for our fellow sinners. Your correspondent, himself, admits that this scheme is untenable, by proposing that there should be stated sermons preached in our churches : but every man acquainted with the state of the country, is aware that this experiment, except in some few instances, is hopeless, because the very act of going into a church is in itself a crime in the estimation of Roman Catholics. He acknowledges that "many would feel a reluctance to be seen at our places of worship;" and for the benefit of these, he proposes the establishment of a standing committee in every diocese, of learned and skilful men, who might resolve any questions that Roman Catholics chose to propose to them. He says, "let it be publicly known that such a body exists for such a pur-

pose, and we stake our credit upon it, numerous applications would be made:” and he adds, “ we cannot contemplate such a process going on for a series of years, without the most gratifying anticipations.”

If this be a scriptural and apostolic mode of proceeding in enlightening our fellow sinners; or if the history of the Christian Church, supplies a proof that it was ever attempted, and attended with the blessing of God, let us adopt it; but one must imagine the apostles presenting their compliments to the Heathens around them, or to the churches who had fallen into errors or apostacy, that they had formed themselves into a committee, and were ready “ to give appropriate answers to all such questions as might be proposed to them by serious inquirers !” before we can consider such a proposition as any thing else, but a thoughtless mode of trifling with God’s appointed means for the conversion of sinners. If the college of Jesuits wished to propose some scheme to lull us into a false security, and blind us with the delusive idea that we were doing something, when in fact we should be doing worse than nothing, they could hardly hit on a more proper expedient. Your correspondent tells us indeed, “ *It would be slow, but sure—it would be fishing with a line, rather than a net.*” By his own admission then, his system savours little indeed of that “ *kingdom of heaven,*” which its Divine Sovereign compares to “ *a net cast into the sea:*” it is not such fishermen as these we want in Ireland; such sporting with eternal truth, is ill suited indeed to the circumstances of this

unfortunate country; nor can we wonder it continues to this day depressed under such a yoke of superstition, when a professed regard for that church, which is the “pillar and the ground of truth” in our land, can be unblushingly identified with such futile and abortive schemes for its deliverance. But in truth, Sir, it too plainly appears, that a knowledge either of the nature or necessity of true religion, does not give birth to such plans which are utterly incompatible with a sense of its importance; and your correspondent evinces, throughout the whole of his letter, both a total ignorance of the nature of the Roman Catholic religion as destructive of man’s salvation; and of the value of the word of God in conflicting with the powers of darkness; he seems to consider that religion but a sort of temporal evil, which is not to be indebted to the word of God, but to an improved system of civil and political economy for its amelioration; he says, “We do not so much rely on *improving their condition by banishing Popery*, as on *banishing Popery by improving their condition*; and this in the first instance by increased vigour in the execution of the laws, and then by such measures, as may tend gradually to put the relation between landlord and tenant, on the same footing that subsists in England, giving the latter an interest in the improvement of the ground, and the former an interest in the improvement of the people. The wretched drudge, who is assailed by the cries of a starving family, and only too happy, when by working from sunrise to sunset, he can earn for them and for himself a scanty meal of potatoes, has no leisure for *abstract considerations*; let him, how-

ever, be set somewhat at his ease, and surrounded by the humble comforts to which every subject of the British government should feel himself entitled by honest industry to aspire, and some traits of rational reflection may be expected." Here we perceive the means on which this writer really "*relies*" for banishing Popery. Attention to the word of God—inquiry into the will and truth of God—the salvation of their own immortal souls are "*abstract considerations*," for which the poor have "*no leisure*;" but the execution of the laws, and a specific improvement in their temporal condition, these are to lead to those "*traits of rational reflection*" in which we are taught to suppose the *banishment of Popery* consists.

It is painful to see the very excuses which the most ignorant, the most bigoted, or the most wicked of the lower orders of Irish would make for refusing to profit by instruction, namely—that they have not time on account of their poverty—gravely put forth in a literary production of considerable respectability, with the hope of impeding every effort to enlighten them; the writer forgets, that, in the midst of all their poverty and distress, they have leisure to aggravate these, by devoting many of their days of labour, in idleness, to their saints; leisure to go to confessions—leisure to go on pilgrimages—leisure to go to masses—leisure for penances, and that they appropriate part of their miserable earnings to their priests, as a means of making atonement for their sins, and purchasing aids to their salvation: and any man who looks upon the wretched

state of Ireland may well calculate the value placed upon religion, by a writer who would defer instructing its population in the Gospel of Christ, till they were “somewhat at *their ease*, and *surrounded by the humble comforts to which every subject of the British government should feel himself entitled by honest industry to aspire.*” Alas, poor unhappy Ireland! were she consigned to such speculators as these, her prospects were alike gloomy in time and in eternity.

I have done with my remarks on the letter of your correspondent, I shall only observe on this and all similar productions, that before their authors send them forth to obstruct the labours of their fellow men, it were well if they would consider how they shall answer for them at the tribunal of their God—for you, Mr. Editor, if I have gained your own attention to the important subjects discussed in these letters, I trust the effect may be exhibited in the future tenor of your publication, as far as you treat of theological subjects; and that before you send forth another lucubration against the Reformation Society, which, like this one, as you tell us, has been narrowly rescued from the flames, you will at least be more competent to decide, whether or not it has been worthy of preservation. Let me recommend you to study the word of your Creator. You profess to be a strenuous supporter of the Established Religion—let me advise you to examine the principles of the religion you profess to support—that you may not put forth as you have now done, the doctrines of the Roman Catholic controversialists of the day, even

on the very Word of God, as principles of the Protestant Church. But there is a higher and a more important consideration for you to attend to—your own immortal soul. Your “*noctes ambrosianæ*” shall soon come to a close—“the tongue that has set the table in a roar” shall soon be silent in its grave—a morning shall dawn upon those “nights,” when you shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ—that tongue shall then be called to an account for every idle word that it has spoken. Where shall be the fame, the talent, the profits of all your literary labour, if your soul shall stand before that bar, unwashed in the atoning blood, and unclothed in the righteousness of the Lord, the Saviour of sinners? I trust, you may be led to give to this important subject, all that attention which you shall wish to have bestowed on it in that day, and that you and your correspondent may know the value of that sacred truth, the progress of which, as author and editor, you have attempted to impede.

As an unworthy minister of this truth, I desire to subscribe myself, your faithful friend and servant,

R. M'G.

*August 28th, 1829.*

# REFLECTIONS

ON THE

SOLEMN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

OF THE

CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

IN REFERENCE TO THE

CHURCH OF ROME.

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“ Jampridem equidem nos vera rerum vocabula amisimus.”

SALLUST.

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JOHN HATCHARD & SON, PICCADILLY, LONDON ;  
RICHARD MOORE TIMS, DUBLIN ; MESSRS.  
WAUGH & INNES, EDINBURGH.

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M.DCCC.XXX.



## REFLECTIONS, &c.

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PERHAPS there never was a time when it was more difficult to write on any point, in which either the temporal or spiritual interests of the Established Church are involved, than the present. A great and growing body in the empire, growing in numbers, and increasing in presumption, ranged under the banners of superstition, of infidelity, and of a combined religious and political dissent, hostile to its principles, jealous of its possessions, and enemies to its existence, labour incessantly, and now with a more open avowal of their intention, for its complete subversion; a vast multitude who nominally belong to it, and who profess an earnest anxiety for its preservation, but who have contributed to demolish those barriers of British law by which it was insulated and protected, have facilitated those attacks which they are totally incompetent to repel, and evinced in too many instances, that, except as a mere engine of the State, they are incapable of appreciating or understanding its real value; some persons, and not few in number, with more religious zeal than common sense, imagine that they exhibit but a proper fervour and

purity of principle, in endeavouring to detect and expose every real or imaginary evil in the Church, thereby affording a handle to its enemies, and weakening the hands of its friends ; forgetting that purity and perfection in any human institution is more a creature of the imagination, of Utopian folly, than a reality that in the present condition of man, either has been, or can be, exhibited upon earth,—this is the state of things more immediately referring to the temporal concerns of the Church. And with regard to its spiritual interests, there are too many within its pale, and who consider themselves too its zealous defenders, because they are opposed in a temporal, and, in some degree, in a religious sense, to the evils which I have mentioned, who are so ignorant of the very fundamental principles of our religion, that they consider the assertion of them as tantamount to dissenting from the Church, because it is dissenting from their own opinions. To this class belong all persons who hold that unchristian root of all Romish superstition, and of all infidel apostacy from God, *Justification before God in whole or in part by the merit of man's works*, (of which I shall have occasion to say more hereafter,) while the spiritual ignorance, and indolence, and apathy, necessarily connected with this fundamental error, that prevails, and has so long prevailed, among us, has permitted superstition and infidelity to increase to such gigantic stature, and power, and influence, in our land, that we stand aghast at the strides which they are making to attack, and the menacing aspect with which they threaten to overwhelm us. In such a state of things, it is impossible to write

with truth and plainness without offending many whom it is painful to offend ; and in venturing to offer some reflections on the cause of these evils, which are neither to be found in unions of parishes, nor disproportion of clerical incomes, poverty of curates, or riches of bishops ; I can only say, I desire to write with a single eye to the salvation of men, and the glory of God, in the maintenance of that Church which I consider the greatest blessing which the British nation has to boast of ; and, while I neither desire to please or to offend, I trust I care not, in the assertion of important and eternal truth, who is pleased, or who is offended. I shall feel happy if even, though unable to produce an impression myself, I should call forth some more competent to arouse the members of the Established Church to a sense of their duty, and guilt, and danger, as it respects their conduct to the Church of Rome : their guilt in permitting a superstition so derogatory to the character, the attributes, and the revelation of Jehovah—so pregnant with perdition to the souls of men—so destructive of all the moral principles, and social blessings, and everlasting hopes and consolations of true religion—to grow and strengthen in the land, without an effort to enlighten, to reform, and to save those millions who are bound beneath its iron yoke ; and their danger, not from the threats or power of man, for “if God were for us, who could be against us ?” but from the just displeasure of an offended and neglected God, who, when the blessings and privileges which He has bestowed on us, and the powers with which He has invested us, are neither used for his divine glory and honour, nor for the tem-

poral and eternal happiness of our fellow-creatures, will, it is justly to be feared, return our wickedness upon our own head, and cause, by the very righteous operation of a holy and retributive justice, that the very beings to whom, with such spiritual advantages and temporal privileges, we have so criminally neglected to impart the blessings of our religion, should be the instruments with which our spiritual guilt and apathy should be chastised, and the temporal privileges of that religion rent from us, and trodden under foot for ever.

What are the spiritual advantages and temporal privileges of the Established Church of this empire? Is it *nothing* to have the pure and holy principles of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ embodied summarily into Articles of faith, which her ministers are bound, by the most solemn obligations, to profess and teach; into Homilies, according to which they are equally bound to instruct; into a holy form of spiritual devotion, in which the nation is invited to unite—in which all the necessities of man are brought to the footstool of the grace and mercy of the Lord—in which prayer, and praise, and instruction from the pure and only fountain of eternal truth, are blended in beautiful proportion, and harmony, and order? Is it *nothing* to have temples erected, though alas! too few, through our country, where this established form of truth is every Sabbath day set forth—where the warning bell addresses and invites the dying sons of earth, around the hills and vallies of the land, to “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” and to come and listen to the word of

eternal life—to hear that while they are guilty and miserable sinners before God, there is a hope by which they may “rejoice in the strength of their salvation”—that “*When Jesus had overcome the sharpness of death, he opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers*”—that while they have cause to bless the Lord “*for their creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, yet, above all, for his inestimable love in the redemption of the world by the Lord Jesus Christ for the means of grace and for the hope of glory?*”—Is it nothing, that, while by all the means which human wisdom could devise, to supply the nation with instructors, who should “guide their feet into the way of peace”—affording a field for the zeal, and the doctrines, and the labours of an apostle, if he were a minister or a bishop within her pale; the Church of England has provided, and placed beyond the power of the worst and most ignorant pastor, who could climb into her fold, a system of public ordinances and instruction from the pages of eternal truth, and opened a channel to preserve the waters of life in the land, which even the hireling shepherd could not poison nor shut up from the flock? Is it nothing that the Church holds up the Bible as the only basis of her faith, and invites all her followers, and all the world, to prove, that she is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone?” Is it nothing that the laws of a nation—and *that* the greatest nation in the civilized world—should have identified with their existence, and incorporated into the essence of their constitution, the pure and undefiled religion of the Lord

Jesus Christ in an Established Church, which, amidst all the sins, and ignorances, and vices of men, maintains, unchanged and uncorrupted, the doctrines of the Word of God for her principles, and the precepts of that Word for her morals; and which stands like the Word itself on which she is founded, a solemn and portentous witness against those, whether Ministers or people, who belong to her, and who live in ignorance or contempt of the doctrines, or in violation of the morals which they profess? If these are blessings, great and incalculable as the interests of eternity for ourselves; is it nothing in addition, most especially for the bishops and ministers of our Church, to be so secured, so enriched, so honoured, so dignified in the enjoyment of them, that whatever the influence of all these outward circumstances can afford to man, in blessing him with the capability of communicating the truths of the everlasting Gospel, to those who are in darkness and the shadow of death, is bestowed and accumulated on them beyond all that ever has been enjoyed by men upon this earth? The records of Ecclesiastical History present no trace of any Church in any nation, which united at the same time such scriptural truth and purity in the doctrines, morals, and ordinances of her principles, her precepts, her liturgy, and the whole theory of her government, with such legitimate stability, such literary celebrity, such aggrandized property, and such influential authoritative dignity as the Established Church of England. Nor are those to be listened to for a moment, who presume to call these outward privileges, and riches, and immunities, and honours, unsuitable to the character of a

Christian Church. Shall all that man can command, and all that he can attain, of intellect, and influence, and authority, and wealth, and power, be squandered in the service of the perishing trifles of an hour? Shall all the outward means by which he can express his reverence for what is good—his respect for what is great—his love for what is holy—and his desire to diffuse, and to communicate to others, the feelings and influences with which he is himself impressed, for all that is to be revered, respected, and beloved—shall these be all absorbed in support of those earthly institutions, which, however important and excellent, are still comparatively contemptible and insignificant; while the ministers, the ordinances, the services, and the worship of the holy and eternal God, are to be stripped and denuded of them all, to please the taste of those, who pretend to tell us of the poverty and humility, that is suitable to the spirit of the Christian Church? It is not from a respect for the purity of religion that such principles originate, but from a contempt and enmity against it. It is not from a wish to dignify and purify the services of Jehovah, but from a sacrilegious desire to plunder the temple of the Lord and to dedicate the spoil to the service of the Devil—to desecrate the vessels of the house of God by appropriating them to the revellings of profanity and guilt. And if there are individuals who abuse the privileges with which they are entrusted; and if that abuse were more general, more universal than the greatest enemy of the established religion could venture to assert—nay, if all the property of the Church at this moment, were squandered in pro-

fligacy and vice,—whatever field for animadversion this would open, as to the persons who were guilty of the crime, it would not touch the principle—that it is the duty, the privilege, the dignity of a nation, of a government, that professes to be called Christian, to provide for the maintenance, the honour, the influence, the aggrandizement of her religion—that all the facilities and powers with which it can be endowed and invested by every human means, may be superadded for the security of its establishment, for the preservation of that reverence which is due to it—for the dissemination of its principles, the proclamation of its doctrines, and the inculcation of its morals—and that whatever blessings of prosperity, it may please the God of providence to pour upon the nation; she should evince her sense of gratitude to the hand from which she receives them, by a liberal appropriation for the services of that religion; which is to disseminate the word, to proclaim the gospel, to assert the laws and ordinances, and to promote the glory of her heavenly benefactor. These spiritual privileges, these temporal advantages, and more than I could enumerate, are bestowed by God upon the Church of England—and now the question presents itself:—

Has God granted us these blessings, these inestimable blessings, for our ease or for his own glory? If it is for our ease, then let us take it, and “eat, and drink, and be merry;” and let us say to our souls, we have “goods laid up for many years.” But if God has granted us these great national blessings for his glory, let any man who calls himself a Christian, ask, is the glory of God

promoted in this land? and whether is it more promoted among that vast majority whom we denounce as superstitious and idolatrous; or among those, who, with a religion founded on the truth of God, are content to let them quietly remain so, without a single effort to enlighten, to improve, to reform them?

We are ready enough to extol our Church; and when we look to the principles of that Church, they cannot be too highly extolled; but every word we utter in the praise of our religion, falls back upon the heads of those who profess it. Where had been the religion of the Church of England, if the Reformers had been like those who are their degenerate successors?—They opposed the errors of that awful superstition when our kings, when our queens, when all that were high in office professed it—when all the existing authorities in Church and State, were armed with all the powers of persecution, with which the law could invest them; and they opposed it, not with carnal weapons, but with weapons drawn from the armoury of God, and mighty to the pulling down of the strong holds of Satan in our land—they opposed it even to the death. We, with every existing authority, and every power in Church and State, and all that government and law, and every increased and superadded capability of diffusing knowledge, and communicating instruction can afford us; have allowed it to grow and strengthen and increase around us: it is building its temples, it is increasing its votaries, it is vindicating its superstitions, it is paralyzing all the powers of instruction and education.

in our country; it is openly telling us in the face of law, and truth, and reason, and liberty of conscience, and all that men have hitherto held sacred and inviolable as the chartered rights of British subjects, and of British Christians; that our population shall not be instructed in the laws of God—that His word shall be shut out from the mind of our country—that his salvation shall not be made known to our benighted countrymen; but that they shall live and die in the superstitions, which oppress, impoverish, degrade, and destroy them in time and eternity; and we indeed sit still, telling the world of the excellence of our religion, and tamely permitting all this to pass, not only unopposed, but scarcely noticed around us. When it is proposed to awaken us from our lethargy, to bring before the people the wrongs they are enduring, the spiritual oppressions they undergo, to call their teachers to a bold, and faithful and open discussion of their errors in the presence of the people; to avail ourselves of the privileges, the opportunities, the blessings which the protection of our laws, the genius of our Constitution, the spirit of public discussion, the freedom of the Press afford us—indeed, “it is neither prudent nor proper”—nay, it is very “fanatical and enthusiastic,” to attempt the Reformation of Roman Catholics! When our temporal concerns are endangered—when our political existence as a national Church is threatened—when Roman Catholics are to get power that may trench on our security—when there is no fear of irritating or provoking Roman Catholics: then we start up, then we are all life, and energy, and vigour—then the Church is all excellence, and Popery

is all iniquity—we can assemble, we can debate, we can discuss, we can denounce, we can subscribe, we can petition, we can demand, we can do any thing. But when the glory, the honour, the pure and spiritual worship of the God of all our blessings and our mercies, is the point in question; and when the salvation of the immortal souls of the vast majority of these our poor unhappy countrymen, whom we will proclaim as idolaters to all Europe, is at stake; then there is not a man to appear, there is not a meeting to be held, there is not a point to be discussed—then the Roman Catholics are not to be offended—then we are not to be uncharitable—there is not a guinea to be given—then every man who moves, is a zealot and a fanatic, and a promoter of tumults, and a disturber of the peace and quiet of the country!! Are tumults, and dangers, and deaths, to be braved, when the political interests of religion are at stake; and all exertion to be deprecated when the salvation of man, when the spiritual character of our Church, when all that can make her worthy of the national pre-eminence which her God has conferred on her is the matter at issue? What is it, in the just and spiritual view of the question, which ought to make any religion worthy to be set up by a Christian government as the established religion of the nation? Is it not that her doctrines, her principles, her confessions, should be purely scriptural and holy—her forms of worship, her government, her discipline, modelled, as far as human wisdom can effect, according to the word and will of her Creator? When it is asked, is this the case of the Established religion of this country? we

answer—we believe it to be more so, than of any that ever has appeared as a national religion on the face of the earth. If then this is the case—if the laws demand that it should be supported and maintained by the nation; and that, for the national benefit, for the national happiness, for the temporal and eternal welfare of men, and for the glory of God—is it fit that the vast majority of those, at least in this part of the empire, who profess a system of superstition the most awful in the world, should be left by us in blind and total ignorance of any blessings, any advantages, that the national religion which they are called on by the laws to support, possesses over that superstition in which they are educated by their priests? They tell the poor deluded people, that the religion of the Established Church is heresy and falsehood. What efforts have been made to disabuse the minds of that people, and to prove to them the heresy and falsehood of their own? What is the plain and simple state of the case? After various national miseries, disasters, convulsions, and revolutions; a religion has been given to us, through the great and infinite mercy of God, as the established religion of this land, which derives its very name from solemnly protesting against the awful apostacy and superstition of the Church of Rome—a religion, which secures to us the possession of all that is to be valued by us as men, as freemen, and as Christians. To give to it stability, it is founded on the holy Word of the Eternal God—to afford it security, it is incorporated with the laws and constitution of the country—to invest it with authority, it is endowed

with honour, and dignity, and wealth—and to give it opportunities of usefulness, the whole kingdom is parcelled out under the superintendence of its Dignitaries, and under the instruction of its Ministers, and each individual is made tributary to their support, that they, in return, may be instrumental to his temporal and everlasting happiness.

Now, what has been the conduct of us Protestants? We have not only been accustomed to denounce the Antichristian errors of the Church of Rome in various formularies and articles of our religion—not only have all our Bishops and Ministers solemnly vowed to “be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God’s Word;” but as we considered the awful principles of Rome, not only subversive of man’s everlasting happiness, but utterly incompatible with the preservation of those political, moral, and social privileges and blessings, which our own religion secured to us; we have been accustomed in the most solemn manner as a nation, by our legislators, by our lords spiritual and temporal, by all the persons who represented the people of the land, by all those whom we have been taught to consider great, and venerable, and sacred, in rank, in character, and office—before they could be individually qualified to enact one law, or perform one legislative or judicial act in our realm, we have been accustomed to denounce, in the face of all Europe, the Roman Catholic religion as idolatrous and superstitious. I do not touch on the politics of this question: I speak

of it in a moral and religious point of view ; and I simply ask, have all these venerable characters in the nation—has the British nation, by these, its highest, most venerable, most dignified, most sacred authorities—been thus, in the face of Europe, proclaiming a truth, or proclaiming a falsehood ? They, and the nation have done one or the other ; and that, in all the “pomp and circumstance” in which the first and greatest nation in the world could perform the most solemn act of qualifying its legislators for the enactment of its laws. If they have been proclaiming a falsehood in the face of Europe—if they have been falsely charging so many millions of British subjects, with the guilt of idolatry and superstition—then, what a shame, what a blot, what a brand of moral and political turpitude, has such conduct stamped upon the laws of Britain ! The late repeal of those laws, instead of being wrung by a popular wrestle from the reluctant grasp of the majority of the nation, ought to have been carried by England, with her Monarch at her head, and laid, with tears of repentance and contrition, at the feet of the Pope of Rome. But if, on the contrary, the laws of England have enacted what was just and true—if these the highest officers and the most august authorities, the most sacred functionaries within her realm, have been proclaiming a truth—a truth which is ratified by every formulary of her Church—a truth which is established by the holy Word of her Creator—when they have denounced the millions of her subjects as idolatrous and superstitious—then, when we ask, what has England done for these victims of idolatry, what has England

done for these votaries of superstition? and when the facts cry out from every corner of the land, NOTHING—when all the guilt and misery of Ireland echoes from every rock around her shore the answer, NOTHING; then, I say, if the falsehood of such a denunciation were a blot upon her laws, the truth of it stamps a tenfold blot on her religion: not, indeed, on the principles of our Church, for they are pure, and just, and holy; but on the degeneracy of those who call themselves by her name. We have solemnly proclaimed them idolaters—we have done more: we have visited on them the penalties of their idolatry; but we have done nothing to reform them from that idolatry. We have been peremptory in the infliction of the penalty, but we have been utterly regardless of the consequences attendant on the crime—we have been clamorous in calling for the continuation of that penalty, because we felt that its removal would endanger our own temporal interests, but we have tacitly acquiesced in the continuance, the prevalence, the increase, the accumulation of that guilt, which has been fatal alike to the everlasting interests of our fellow-creatures, and derogatory, nay, insulting to the honour, the majesty, the glory of our God.

We have not thought it a necessary part of our law to denounce the idolatries and superstitions of the worshippers of Juggernaut; but we have sent over a Bishop, and appointed an Episcopal Church at Hindostan, who feel missionary labours to be a part of their duty. We have not considered it necessary to de-

nounce the various idolatries and superstitions which the atrocity of the slave trade has imported from the ill-fated shores of Africa; yet we have established a Society for Missions to our Western possessions. We have denounced the superstitions and idolatries of more than six millions of our fellow-subjects, our countrymen, our neighbours—we have a religion established by law, the best, the purest, the holiest in its theory, that ever blessed a nation—with all the security that the laws and that the power of Britain could afford it—with all the influence and all the weight that rank and wealth, and talent, and learning could invest it—with all the opportunities that could be afforded to our Ministers from collision with those very idolaters, from the labours of whose hands and the sweat of whose brows they have derived the very necessaries of their existence; but one faithful, honest effort of Christian fidelity, and Christian zeal, and Christian love, we have never made to awaken, to enlighten, or to save them. The law of the land has obliged them to contribute to the support of our religion; but neither the laws of man, (and our Church is not deficient in her care upon that subject,) nor the laws of God, have been able to stir us up to one honest, faithful effort of Christian charity, and Christian truth, to shed one ray of light upon the darkness and the superstition which has enveloped and degraded them.

Let me put a case to the conscience of every man who professes to call himself a member of the Church of England, and who desires to refer her welfare and

her prosperity to the only source to which a real Christian can refer it, viz. the favor, the mercy, and the protection of her God. Let me suppose the Church of England transplanted, exactly as she is constituted at this moment, to the shores of Hindostan—that a tract of country around Calcutta, equal to the kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, was allotted for the sphere of her labours—and that her revenues were drawn from that country, exactly as they are from this. Let me suppose that the votaries of Hindoo superstition, and the dwellings of both people and Brahmins, were mixed among the members of our church, exactly in the same proportion, as to number and abodes, that the Roman Catholics and their priests are mingled with the Protestants of Ireland. Now let me imagine that this had been the case for centuries; that we had been enjoying all the blessings and privileges, with which we have been surrounded in these favoured islands; and that we had maintained the privilege of legislating entirely for ourselves, bearing a public testimony as we have done, in the senate, and the Church of England, against the awful superstitions and idolatries of those by whom we were surrounded.

Now, let me suppose that all this time, while we were triumphing in the conscious superiority of our Christianity, we were permitting our poor fellow-creatures to live and die around us in all the guilt and wretchedness of their superstitions—that we listened with indifference to the splash of the victim in the Ganges—that we viewed with unconcern the smoke

of the Sutte—that we visited as a curiosity the temple of the Hindoo Idol, and saw the devotee expire beneath the wheels of his car—that we passed, as a trifling occurrence, the relics of the departed pilgrim, and saw, without a sigh, the vulture feeding on his corpse—if, at the end of centuries, the question had been asked, “What efforts the Church had made to awaken, to enlighten, to reform these poor idolaters—to arrest the progress of their superstitions—what effort to instruct them in the genuine religion and morality of the Divine revelation?” and that the only answer which the fact supplied was—NONE. Nay, if the same undoubted testimony, the stubborn fact, evinced that the number of these idolaters was increasing around us in a direct ratio of the increase of their population—that their temples were erecting side by side of our own—that many of our greatest men were contributing to their erection; and not only so, but that, for some state policy, we had actually, as a Christian Government, provided and maintained a college for the education of their Brahmins, and thus become accessaries and partakers in the guilt of their superstitions—that these superstitions were not only professed, but vindicated, and maintained in our public Journals, dividing the press of the empire with ourselves. And now, if the increase of numbers, wealth, and influence, and talent, had raised these idolaters so much in the scale of importance in the nation, that it was considered necessary to its security, that they should be admitted to participate in the administration of its political concerns, and of those of our own very Church; with

what face could we object on the score of the superiority of our religion—with what face express any very anxious apprehensions for its security, or any very ardent aspirations for its preservation? Why start up at this juncture, in all the fervor of religious zeal and political trepidation, to pour contempt on their religion, and to exhaust all language in eulogizing our own? If theirs had been so monstrous, why no attempt for its extermination? If our own so excellent, why no attempt for its diffusion? Why use such strength of language, such energy of passion, in deprecating superstitions and idolatries, which we had not only, not endeavoured to enlighten and dispel, but which we had encouraged and diffused, by affording the means and facilities for the education of their Brahmins, and the propagation of their principles? Could we vindicate our consistency at the tribunal of human judgment, or could we venture to expect the care and the protection of our God? I ask, in such circumstances, is there one man in the nation who would have the presumption to say that the members of such a Church, who had acted so criminally, who had so apostatized from all the obligations of a body professing the pure and holy religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, could lift up their head and look for or expect the protection of that God, whose truth, whose Word, whose glory, and whose kingdom we had surrendered, without an effort, to the dominion of the Prince of Darkness!

I turn from the shores of Hindostan, and cast my

eyes on the superstitions of the Church of Rome in this unhappy country—I turn to the members of the Established Church, who are content to let them go on, and who have been content to do so, without one effort to enlighten and reform them—I turn to that Protestant Government, which, from a policy unworthy the name of a nation, whose Government was incorporated with a Church like ours, has been patronizing, fostering, and educating the Priests of that superstition; and I say to them all—

“Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur.”

We have not seen, indeed, the life of man sacrificed in idolatry; but we have seen the truth and worship of Jehovah, as much dishonoured, and the human intellect as much debased, as in any system of superstition, upon earth. We have not seen a number of wretched heathens going to worship on the banks of the Ganges, but we have seen millions of men, of our countrymen, going to worship at wells and lakes, with absurdities equally unchristian, and only suited to Pagan superstitions. *We have denounced them as superstitious and idolatrous, but we have made no effort to reform them.* We have not seen the public procession, of millions bowing down before the shrine of an idol of wood; but we have seen a man, a worm of the dust, pretend that he could make—not an idol of wood, but that he could embody in a bit of paste the “*whole body, blood, soul, and divinity,*” of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the Creator of the heavens and earth—that God whom we profess to adore as our Redeemer and our Judge—

that he could shut Him up—and hold Him in his hand in a box—lift Him up—and proclaim Him to be Jesus Christ, before the millions of our nation, who bow and fall prostrate on the earth before this idol. We have seen this in our country—we have seen it in places of worship erected, and erecting more and more, in pomp and magnificence around us—We have seen it in the public ways—in the streets of our towns—in the very face of day we have seen this—We have denounced the people as idolatrous and superstitious—we have inflicted on them the penalty of that idolatry and superstition, but we have done nothing to reform them! Nay, we have done what we could to establish and confirm them—we have enacted laws—we have contributed money, to pay for the education of those, who were to train up the people in this very idolatry and superstition; and if those who pay for the education of men in sciences, and arts, and letters, are justly to be admired as the patrons and protectors of that literature which they promote; it remains for sophistry to prove, that the members of the Church of England, instead of being the enlighteners and reformers, are not the patrons and promoters of idolatry and superstition.

Let this fact be just submitted to the wisdom, the judgment, the common sense of any man who desires to weigh the conduct of the members of the Protestant Church, even in the highest department of the nation, in the sober balance of religious principle, or even of ordinary consistency. For many years we have seen the gravest, wisest, and most exalted of the Bri-

tish islands—the whole aristocracy of England, and Ireland, and Scotland, and all the representatives of the people in the British senate, standing forth before the nation, to qualify themselves for the enactment of the laws of England, by the most solemn denunciations against the superstitions and idolatries of the Church or Rome; yet, the very use which they have made of this legislative authority, acquired by the denunciation of these superstitions, is to enact laws, and to tax the country, for the education and instruction of men, to teach and propagate the superstitions which they denounce!!! I challenge the history of Europe to produce such a specimen of inconsistency in religion, and anomaly in legislation, as that which the Protestant religion and the penal laws, contrasted with the establishment of the College of Maynooth, present to the eye of the statesman and the Christian. The laws enact, that the Established Religion be supported by the property conferred upon the Church; and the laws enact, that men shall be educated, who instil into the majority of the people of Ireland, that that religion is a heresy, and that all who belong to it, *ipso facto*, are accursed! The laws impose taxes on the nation to promote the education of the people; and the laws impose taxes on the nation, to train up men who will not permit the people to be educated!! The laws ordain, that the nation should support a religion, whose object is to diffuse the word of God among the people; and the laws ordain that the nation should educate a body of men for the purpose of denying the word of God, and preventing its diffusion!!! I enter not into any view of

the question, except as it stands connected with the religion of the country. But “the Priests indeed should be educated somewhere, and it was better to educate them at home than abroad;” as if a man should argue that rebels would certainly import their arms, or find them somewhere; and it were better at once to supply them from the Tower. Surely, if ever the hand of a retributive Providence were exhibited in the visitation of their crime upon a country, it has been exhibited against those who, with the pretext of protecting the Protestant Church from the influence of Popery, have multiplied the number, and patronised the education of Priests, and thereby have aggravated, without one counteracting effort to relieve, the religious, moral, and political degradation of the Irish poor. Who are the men that have by their determination, their religious zeal, worthy indeed of a better cause, constrained the British Protestant government to renounce their public denunciation of the superstition and idolatry of the Roman Catholic religion, and to permit the Roman Catholics to legislate for the Protestant Church? Who are they? The poor forty-shilling freeholders—the Roman Catholics, whom that Protestant Church has so criminally neglected? Who are the men that have instigated, impelled, and marshalled them in their determination and their zeal? The Roman Catholic Priests, whom that Protestant government has so criminally educated. When we talk of the Protestant Church being in danger, let us learn to examine, where the cause of the danger lies—let us probe the wound—let us trace it to the bottom. If we have been dealing faith-

fully with the God of our mercies—if we have used any of these innumerable blessings which He has showered upon us for the promotion of his glory, and the salvation of millions of our poor benighted countrymen—If we have held up the truth of his everlasting Gospel, as it is professed and embodied in the principles of our religion, as the one and only beacon-light of the immortal soul—if we have endeavoured to set up that beacon, amidst the darkness of superstition and of infidelity in our nation—then let us not fear, God will maintain our cause, and “if God be for us, who can be against us?” But, if on the contrary, the innumerable blessings which we have received from God, have been used for our own security and ease—If the spiritual glory of Jehovah in our church has been forgotten, in the vain imagination of her temporal greatness and stability—if the salvation of millions of our countrymen has been not only totally neglected by us—but if, for our own ideal temporal preservation, we have absolutely trained up men to destroy their immortal souls, in that which we acknowledged and proclaimed to be superstition and idolatry—men, who not only brought them up in utter darkness, but who availed themselves of all the power and influence of that education which we have afforded them, to shut all light and truth completely out from the mind of our country—If, so far from having held up the truth of the everlasting Gospel, that Gospel is a by-word and a taunt among vast multitudes of those who profess to call themselves members of our Church; and if they are absolutely as ignorant upon the very founda-

tions of the hope of man's immortal soul, as those whom they denounce as victims of superstition ; and if superstition and infidelity \* stalk abroad in the land, pouring out their poison into all the channels of publicity, unchecked by our laws, and unstopped by our religion—if there has arisen such a total indifference to truth and falsehood, that every superstition, and every blasphemy is to be tolerated by the law of opinion under the specious pretext of an infidel liberality : and if the votaries both of superstition and infidelity can now walk in without a bar, and give their counsel and decision, on every point of legislation connected with the religion which God has granted to us, as established in the land—And if this has all accrued through our guilty disregard of the principles and duties of that religion, in neglecting to proclaim, assert, maintain, and vindicate the one exclusive only hope and refuge of the everlasting Gospel—in opposition to all the refuges of superstition, and all the audacious presumptions of infidelity—then, I say, that the effects and influence of secondary causes, are all too contemptible as objects of our apprehension for the established religion. It is not the hosts of dissenters or infidels in England, nor the millions of Roman Catholics in Ireland, whom we have to fear ; no, nor any synod of laymen, who may take upon themselves to sit in judgment on the Church ; no,

\* At this very moment, Carlile is selling openly in his shop in London, the very identical publications for which a few years ago he was imprisoned ; and when I was in England last summer, he and Taylor were holding public lectures by advertisement on infidelity, in Manchester, in Liverpool, and in other populous towns, without one law to restrain, or one champion of Christianity to oppose them !!!

nor any parliamentary enquiries; it is the God of judgment, and holiness, and faithfulness, and truth, the living God, we have to fear. Let us beware, let us fear, lest his address be gone forth against us, especially against us, ministers, to whom the responsibility peculiarly and awfully pertains. “ *And now, O ye Priests, this commandment is for you: If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.*” Mal. ii. 2. We talk of Britain, and the British constitution, as security for our established religion! We talk of a bubble—the breath of a few fellow-worms could demolish that venerable fabric in a night, if God were pleased to withdraw the protection of his mercy from us. I think and feel as her minister for the Established Church, and as one who yields to none within her pale, in a cordial and faithful attachment to her principles, her forms, her government, and all the pure and scriptural basis on which I know she is founded; and as far as human observation can go, whether we look at the spreading of infidelity, the increasing influence of Popery, the paralysing power of liberality, which verges in varied degrees to either of these extremes; and, worse than all, at the awful ignorance, and contempt, and opposition, to the truth of the Gospel, in vast multitudes of those who profess to belong to our Church; she seems indeed in danger, not perhaps for a few short years, but in proportion as the system of general undermining, which now is rapidly

going on, advances to the point when defence will be impracticable, and the ruin will burst even under our very feet. It seems to me, therefore, of great importance, to call the attention of any who take an interest in the welfare of our established religion, to consider what chiefly tends to this lamentable apathy on the subject of Popery in this country, and to the progressive ruin of our venerable Established Church; and I do not fear to assert, that it arises from an awful neglect of the very vital principles of the Christian faith; from an ignorance of the fundamental falsehood of that superstition, and from an ignorance of the fundamental truth by which our own religion is distinguished from that of Rome. The truth is, that with the name of Protestants, we have lapsed into an accordance with the fundamental principle of Popery; a vast body of those who call themselves members of our Church, are in principle, though not in form, agreed with the members of the Church of Rome. This is a point, on which it is of deep importance to be distinct and explicit, and it is my earnest desire to be so.

I believe it will be granted that if a man is so ignorant of divine truth, as to be unable to answer this question, "*How does the Bible teach that the soul of man is to be saved?*" he must be in a state of lamentable ignorance indeed, on the very foundations of religion; so that it matters little by what name he is called. Now I assert, without fear of refutation, that the vast body of Protestants are just as ignorant as Roman Catholics upon that subject, and just as incom-

petent to give a Scriptural answer to that question : and if any man who denies the fact, shall give his own answer to the question, he will abundantly confirm it in the ignorance which he exhibits. Ask a Protestant (would to God it were confined to the ignorant and unlettered alone, perhaps the majority of exceptions might be found among them) how his soul is to be saved ? he will tell you, that "*if he strives to do his duty, he hopes that God will accept his endeavours and that he will be saved through Jesus Christ.*" I give one of the most favourable answers which any man who enquires and listens will hear. Ask a Roman Catholic the same question, the answer is precisely of the same tendency. If you enter into a detail of what this duty is, which they are to do ; and what those endeavours are which God will accept, a difference as to the *authorities, ordinances, and worship* of their respective religions will appear : they differ as to *the nature of the works to be performed* ; but it is *in the performance of works* they hope for their salvation ; allowing, however, that these works can be accepted only through the merits of Jesus Christ. Here is the fundamental falsehood of that religion which they call the religion of Christ—they consider *that man is to be saved in whole or in part by his works, his duties, moralities, alms, religious observances, or something in short which he is to do for himself* ; that his sins are to be taken away, and that he is to be recommended to the favour of God, by his contrition, his tears, his fastings, his prayers, some evidences which he gives of his goodness or intentions to amend his life, or some

practical amendment of his character : they consider that the Lord Jesus Christ has introduced a sort of mild, and mitigated dispensation ; in which the *endeavours* of a *sinner to save his soul, are, as they call it, mercifully to be accepted through Jesus Christ* ; thus totally overturning the very foundations of the gospel of Christ ; which are laid in the guilt, the condemnation, the sentence pronounced, and hanging over the head of the sinner, and his utter inability by any effort, or series of efforts, to save, to help to save, or to justify his soul ; and that the unsearchable riches, and grace, and mercy of his God, proclaim to him in this lost condition, pardon as a guilty rebel, through the righteousness and atonement of his Surety—his Redeemer. Thus the great fundamental question of the justification of the soul of man before his God, is become a point of almost as general ignorance among too many of us, as among the members of the Church of Rome : we have adopted a sort of morality, which though it be borrowed from the letter of the Bible, is destitute of the only spirit, and motive, and principle which the Bible acknowledges ; and we have mixed enough of something about the merits, and atonement of Christ with it, to give it the name and semblance of Christianity : but the great distinctive principles of God's eternal truth are too generally derided and despised. The lost condition of the sinner, which is the very foundation of the scheme of redemption ; and the full, free, and finished pardon of sin proclaimed freely “without money and without price,” to sinners, through Jesus Christ, in whom whosoever believeth, shall be saved, washed in the blood,

and covered with the righteousness of the Redeemer, which is imputed to the believer as his own—are truths, derided by thousands, and tens of thousands amongst us ; the mercy which, by pardoning iniquity, fully and freely gives, in that very pardon the motive and principle of moral action to the soul : this, is scoffed at ; and the righteousness of man is almost universally believed to be the *cause*, instead of being, as it can only be, *the effect and consequence* of his being justified by the righteousness and atonement of his Redeemer, through faith before his God. Salvation by grace, and salvation by works, are mixed up among many members of our church in various shades and degrees—from the superstitions of the Church of Rome, to the infidelity of the Socinian : the piety of many among us sinks into superstition, and the liberal and enlightened religion of others approximates to infidelity : the honest faithful principles of our reformation, the fundamental principles of our venerable Established Church, as expressed in her Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, are a standing jest, among some of the enlightened members of our religion ; the fashion is, that since on all hands it is agreed that morality is to be the end of true religion, it is of little consequence what the way is by which we go, provided we come to the end : faith in speculative points, has nothing to do with morals : let us leave *speculation* to the saints and evangelicals, and biblicals, and let us give our attention to the *practical* points of religion. Here the awful ignorance of Protestants is lamentably exhibited, as if the solemn *facts* which Jehovah reveals were mere theories, because we

do not actually see them—as if it were of no importance to our everlasting happiness whether or not we give the lie to that revelation—as if it were not a *fact* of dreadful certainty, that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men”—that the actual sentence of his curse hangs pronounced over their heads, as certainly, and far more so, than the sentence of the earthly judge hangs over the convicted murderer—and that “except a man be converted,” and “flee from the wrath to come,” he *must perish*. As if the proclamation of atonement made, and pardon given, through the Lord Jesus Christ to every sinner that depends on *him*, was a speculation, and that men might scoff at their Creator’s mercy, and yet be in a state of salvation through what they call their own good works, which Jehovah testifies again, and again, and again, can never justify the soul; for “if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” Justification “by faith, without the deeds of the law,” Luther called the “*Articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiæ*.” It is more—it is the only hope of salvation revealed in the Bible to man: the sinner who looks not to that, has no more ground for hope in the word of God; whatever else he may believe, or think he believes, than the infidel who denies it; every particle of his religion is impregnated with some fatal error: the whole Messiahship of Christ—the whole character and moral attributes, and moral government of God—the genuine morality of the Christian faith, on which, perhaps, he particularly prides himself, he is fundamentally ignorant of: the doctrines of the apostles are a riddle

to him, and it is no wonder that the Bible seems to him an unfit book for the poor, for the greater part of it is unintelligible to himself; no wonder he fears to trust without a preacher to explain them, those apostolic truths, which he is forced to explain away to make them comprehensible to himself: to him, indeed, the Bible is "*an ocean without chart or compass;*" he goes forth to eternity, alas! upon "*a voyage of discovery,*" his own opinions and errors are foundered in the first epistle of St. Paul that he opens; and he will cry out against that book, as dangerous to the principles of religion, which he is utterly at a loss to reconcile with the principles of his own mind. But justification "by faith, without the deeds of the law," not only independent of, but in diametric opposition to man's own righteousness, as the condition of his acceptance, as distinct from it, as the obedience of the Lord Jesus unto death, is distinct from the attempt which any sinner can make to fulfil the law of his Creator, is the very life, and soul, and essence of all true religion; it is the Thermopylæ of Christian truth, the pass, in which, if all the world were in arms against it, the Christian will stand with better than Spartan armour, and more than Spartan spirit, to maintain his post, or fall in its defence: and while it is the fashion among an awful majority of those who call themselves members of the Church of England, to cry out against it as Calvinistical—Methodistical—Puritanical—Evangelical, &c. I fear not to assert, not only that it is the foundation on which the Established Church is built, that it is the doctrine of her Articles, and the doctrine of her Homilies, but I

add further, it is so inseparably interwoven into every part of her spiritual liturgy, that the man who does not hold it for his own soul, when he comes to Church to join in the services of our public worship, is using language with his lips, which must be foreign from his heart, and cannot be drawing near to worship his Creator, as he must be worshipped, namely, “in spirit and in truth.” If this should ever meet the eye of a man who is unhappily offended at it—to him I particularly address myself, and call on him dispassionately to consider the solemn subject—the most solemn which a man can contemplate : I beseech him to consider it not in reference to the opinion of his poor fellow worms, but to the judgment of his God. He does not believe, I assume, that the obedience of the Lord Jesus to the moral law, as a surety for sinners, is imputed to the sinner that believes, and accounted to him as his own, so as to give him the merit of full obedience in the sight of God. He does not believe that the blood of Jesus is a full atonement for the sinner’s guilt, so that he that depends on it, stands absolved and acquitted from all his iniquity ; in other words, that a sinner is “*accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and not for his own works or deservings;*” but he thinks that his own works must co-operate, in some degree or other, with what he calls his faith, before he can entertain a well grounded hope that he will be saved. I suppose he will grant that his works, to be really good, must be in conformity to God’s holy law, unless he denies that law to be the standard of good and evil : and now let us place this

man on his knees, to call his Creator to attend to his confessions and petitions. He calls him, frequently to witness, that he is a "*miserable sinner*," one who has "*erred and strayed from God's ways like a lost sheep, who has followed too much the devices and desires of his own heart; who has offended against his holy laws; who has left undone those things which he ought to have done; and who has done those things that he ought not to have done; and that there is no health in him.*" I believe he will hardly venture to say, that if he sincerely confesses this, in spirit and in truth,—which is indeed the actual condition of every man who utters it,—he will have much consolation from a view of his own goodness. Now in a few seconds after, when the minister proclaims the glad tidings of great joy, that God "*pardoneth and absolveth all them that truly repent, and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel,*" he says, "*O come let us sing unto the Lord, let us heartily rejoice in the strength of our salvation.*"

Now, I put it to the conscience of any man on earth, how he can sincerely call the "Searcher of hearts" to witness that he is a "*miserable sinner*"—that is, a miserable *transgressor of God's law*—and yet call Him to witness, too, that he not only expects salvation, but that *he rejoices in the strength of that salvation*, which he is to derive in some degree or another from his obedience to that law !!! In proportion as he is sincere in the humiliating confession of his guilt and misery, so in proportion must he be insincere in saying, "he rejoices heartily in the strength of his salvation;" for

in truth, he must greatly fear that he could not obtain it; while on the contrary, in proportion as he feels this confidence and joy which he expresses in the strength of his salvation, so must he be insincere in expressing such a humiliating sense of his condition as a sinner, which on his own principles, must preclude him from the attainment of that salvation. Yet the Liturgy of our Church puts this into the lips of every one of her members, brings the holiest man that ever adorned her bench down upon his knees, in company with the vilest criminal that ever crawled into her aisle, and allows him no character in his Maker's sight, no conscience of any character, but that of a "miserable sinner," while still she makes him "rejoice in the strength of his salvation"—a paradox inexplicable in the mouth of him who is ignorant of the salvation that is in Christ; but the genuine heartfelt language, of every man who believes the Gospel of his Redeemer, and who, while he cries, "*enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord! for in thy sight shall no man living be justified,*" yet can "heartily rejoice in the strength of his salvation" in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I do not profess to write a scholastic treatise on the subject, but I leave it to the conscience of any man who cavils at the statement I have made, and I entreat him not to think how he may find out some arguments to answer a fellow-worm, but how he can kneel down with his Bible in his hand, and reconcile his prayers with his principles before the Judge of quick and dead. Indeed, if the Church of England did not maintain

this fundamental truth, that "*we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings*"—she would have no pretensions to the title of a Church of Christ—she would be an apostate Church, and every man who knew and loved the salvation of his Redeemer, would protest against her as firmly as against the Church of Rome. But it is the very vital article of her spiritual existence; and it is the ignorance of this, and the neglect of this great, essential truth of Christianity by her members, that has left us to this day so criminally negligent of that awful superstition, whose every error is to be referred to her apostacy from this great truth of God; and her substitution of refuges of lies, for that Refuge, that only Refuge of guilty man, a crucified, and risen, and ascended Saviour. I know there are multitudes who profess, or who affect to deny that this is the religion of the Church of England; but the Articles, the Homilies, and the Liturgy, those venerable and sacred depositories of her principles must be written over again, before any sophistry can disprove it; and the Bible on which they are founded must be banished out of the land, before such proof can be admitted by those who truly love her. I am aware, that it has been attempted by some, to throw discredit upon our venerable Homilies, and dis sever them from our Articles and Liturgy, as authoritative standards of our Church doctrines: and I am utterly astonished to see that this has been attempted, where it ought least to be expected. I am not surprised at some similar attempts from other quarters, but I might ex-

press my wonder, that any man, especially one who has subscribed, and who ought to be among the first to support our Articles, one of which declares, that the Books of Homilies “contain a godly and wholesome doctrine,” (Art.35) and another (Art.11)—on this very doctrine of justification by faith, refers to the Homily for an explanation of that fundamental principle; I might express my surprise that such an one, should make this attempt, and gravely quote the words of the 35th Article, “*necessary for these times,*” to found on them this ingenious argument (if it is to be called so). “Why talk of *these times* as involving a necessity, if other times were not contemplated when the necessity might cease!!!”—That writer informs us, that this necessity arose from the scarcity of licensed preachers—he says, “hence the *necessity*, as during the sixth and ninth centuries, of appointing Homilies to be read in the Churches, by those *who could not preach*, or who *might have preached injuriously.*” I might answer this, by stating that, that same Article which we subscribe in the nineteenth century, and from which he quotes, states, “*we judge them to be read in Churches by the ministers, diligently and distinctly*”—would to God, the admonition were universally attended to!—But grant the whole weight due to the assertion, and much more—that these Homilies were written at that time to supply the incompetence of preachers—does it, therefore, follow that they did not contain that godly and “*wholesome doctrine*” which they were said to do? or, that because they were written by our venerable Reformers, when the times made it necessary

that they should compose sermons for incompetent and ignorant preachers; that they did not, therefore, set forth the truth of God's word in those sermons to the people, which no time can ever change? Does the writer mean to tell us, that the Reformers embodied one set of truths in our Articles and Liturgy, and set forth something different from these truths in our Homilies—referring from an Article to a Homily for a doctrine, and not setting forth that doctrine in that Homily? Common sense—the internal evidence of the documents themselves does not admit such an argument to stand for a moment.

But when the writer seems to shift this argument, and to apply the term *time* not to the preachers but to the doctrine—when he says, “the Homilies were regarded but as plain discourses, *well suited at the time when they were set forth*, for the instruction of the people”—the question immediately occurs, what difference does lapse of time make in the truth of God? Is it meant to be conveyed, that what was true and suitable, as applied to the souls of men in the reigns of Edward and Elizabeth, is false and unsuitable in that of George the Fourth? Is our Church a sort of Ackermann's repository for theology, in which our divinity is to change with the fashion of the day?—or is the truth of the living God set forth or not, in the documents of our venerable religion?—that truth, which like its Author, is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” Where is the Established Church to turn for support—where is she to look for protection, as far, at least, as human

authority can afford it, when one, from whom she ought to expect, whatever the weight of talent, and learning, and station, could contribute, informs us, that a congregation “*would sometimes be perplexed to retain its gravity, during the most guarded recitation, provided it were a faithful one of any of our Homilies, taken at a venture*”—and that “*they are not merely unapplied, but inapplicable to their original purpose—not only disused, but unusable, as a system of pulpit instruction.*” To this I answer, as a minister of the Established Church, and I trust there are multitudes who can assert the same, *I have used, I have preached* her Homilies on salvation, on faith, and on good works—before large and crowded congregations; I have preached them fully, and literally, and faithfully, and *that* not to the *entertainment*, but to the *edification* of my hearers; to the edification of those who were anxious to inquire into the truths of their religion, and of the word of God; to the confusion of those, of whom there are, alas! but too many, who presume to call the doctrines of the salvation of Christ novelties, or sectarian, or some other appellation, which unbelief applies to them; and who would fritter away the holy principles of our Church into a something, little better than a system of Heathen ethics, with just enough of Christ in it to make it pass for Christianity. I add, as a minister of the Established Church, I should boldly and confidently preach those Homilies again, if I were called to do so before the first congregation in the United Empire; and though I grant, that their language wants the classic polish of the nineteenth century, yet, if I saw any

man in that congregation, presume to sneer at the solemn truths which they contain, if there were weight or gravity in the sacred office of a minister, and in the holy responsibility of him who stands up as an ambassador for God, I would make that scoffer feel, that in presuming to laugh at the truths in the Homilies of our Church, he would be laughing at some equally solemn truth contained in the word of his Creator. I will add, moreover, that so far from these Homilies being of this "*unusable*" description, I could point out, I lament to say, sermons, admired in this, our liberal and enlightened age for classic taste and polish; the best of which is to be no more compared with the least valuable of those Homilies which I have mentioned, as instructing men either in the doctrines or the precepts of the Gospel of Christ, than the Offices of Marcus Tullius Cicero, are to be compared with the Epistles of St. Paul. I will add farther still, that I give any man the range of ancient and modern theology, and I defy him to produce in any age of the Church, from that of the Apostles to the present hour, a sermon, I care not by whom composed, in which the doctrine of man's justification before God is more fully, clearly, explicitly, and scripturally, set forth in the same compass of words, than in the "Homily on Salvation," of the Church of England.

If our Homilies, and the principles of our Homilies were held up as they ought to be, it would not be a question among us, whether we were to leave the Roman Catholics perishing in their ignorance, and guilt,

and superstitions around us ; it is nothing but the truth of God, that can teach the heart the value of that truth for the immortal souls of men ; and it is no wonder that we are careless or blind, as to the falsehood of the religion of others, when we are so awfully regardless of the great and solemn truths of our own. If a man were to make an appeal to the members of our Church to dissent from her—if he wanted to bring her into open contempt, I know not how he could more effectually reason in support of his object, than to tell them that the means of instruction which she appoints are ludicrous, nay, “ unusable.” I am not aware, that any Dissenter has ever presumed to make such a statement as to the Homilies as this—if I do not more directly refer to the quarter from whence it has come, and that my notice of it should seem deficient in respect, I can only answer, that while I feel called on by the subject on which I treat, to refer to those venerable standards of our Church’s faith, and to notice with reluctance, such an unwarrantable attempt, to undermine their deserved authority and weight, I consider it the most respectful course to decline any direct reference to the author of a publication, of which it can only be said, that the sincere regret that it had ever issued from the press, must be accompanied by a hope as sincere, that it may be consigned to its merited oblivion for ever.

The Homilies of the Church maintain in clear and explicit language, the fundamental principle of man’s salvation by the redemption of Christ. This funda-

mental principle, the Church of Rome effectually denies—every ordinance of that Church is founded on a denial of this salvation—she is, therefore, Antichristian; and the man who is regardless of the religion of that Church, is regardless of the very foundation of salvation for his fellow-sinners.

But, there are many members of our Church who profess to be quite aware of the evils of the Church of Rome, and who employ their time, and talents, and means, and energies, in active and zealous efforts in the cause of religion, who are, nevertheless, opposed on principle to a direct and open exposition of the errors of the Roman Catholic Church; and while they deserve every credit for the purity of their intentions, it is important to examine the soundness of their principles, and the grounds on which they endeavour to justify their opposition to the Reformation Society. “Are there not,” say they, “numerous engines—a vast machinery at work in the country, for the demolition of the Church of Rome?—have we not the Association for Discountenancing Vice—the Bible Society—the Sunday School Society—the Kildare-street Society—the London Hibernian Society—the Irish Society—the Tract Society, and others?—every one of these is undermining the Church of Rome—every Bible that is circulated—every tract that is disseminated—every school that is established—every child that is taught to read, is making a progress in the mine that is sapping her foundations—why then, not

proceed in this quiet secret way, so likely to ensure success—why provoke open discussion and controversy, which is not likely to be productive of good?”

There is a seeming plausibility in this argument, but in truth, it is but seeming at best—let us examine it a little :—There is not one of these Societies that holds out to Roman Catholics that principle which nevertheless is secretly entertained in the breasts of the men who use this argument—and their conduct in this respect is calculated to keep them in ignorance of the awful state in which they are before God, for it deals very unfaithfully with their immortal souls. Not one of these Societies proceeds avowedly on this principle, that its object is *to make proselytes*. The Association chiefly confines its labours to members of the Church of England. The Bible Society says, “ We attack no man’s church, we interfere with no man’s religion, but as you all profess to call yourselves Christians, and that your religion is the best, and most consonant to this book, we ask you to join in circulating a volume, in which you will give a currency to all the principles of your religion which it contains.” This is a fair and an invaluable principle, for it puts it home to the consciences of men to ask, whether or not their religion is that of the Bible? But, except so far as it may bring the Bible within reach of Roman Catholics, it does not awaken them to the errors of their religion—and as they consider our version, which the Society circulates, a mistranslation; except where controversy has awakened a thirst of inquiry, I believe the impression which it has

produced has amounted to nothing worth notice, certainly nothing tangible, on the Roman Catholic population.

Not one of the Education Societies professes, that they *wish to make proselytes*—many individuals who belong to them openly disclaim the intention—and under this neutral flag, they allure the Roman Catholic children to their schools—they prohibit catechisms or other books of a Protestant character, with the exception of the Scriptures—but it is their secret wish and opinion, that these scriptural instructions will ultimately convert the Roman Catholics; and they calculate with such certainty on this, that they urge the sure prospect of success, as a reason why they oppose the principle of the Reformation Society. That these Societies have all been productive of infinite good, and have received a divine blessing, I fully believe, and I trust an increased blessing may rest on the labours of them all. But while they have contributed in many instances to awaken a spirit of investigation, and open a field for the cultivation of the infant mind of our country, the facts demonstrate, that they have produced, during all their years of labour, no decisive effect on the Roman Catholic superstition in Ireland. The principle on which they proceed, as far as it is calculated to draw children to their schools and keep them there, may operate well—but when put forward as a motive to prevent the open exposition of Roman Catholic error, as it regards the population of the country, it is totally contrary to all principles of justice, and truth, and charity—for the question is simply resolvable into this—are the Roman Catholics in

fatal error on the foundation of man's salvation or not? The men who say they are not, are utterly ignorant either of their religion, or of the Bible, or of both—the men who admit that they are, and proceed on the principle of holding out to Roman Catholics as an inducement to send their children to the schools, that they do not mean to proselytise them—what do they do?—They tacitly tell these poor people, that they may continue in their superstitions with impunity! and thus, provided the children are sent to the schools, the poor parents may be dying in their blindness and ignorance at home: and while the Scriptures are put into the hands of the child to teach him, that salvation is to be found only in the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; the poor parents, and all the other members of the family, are left to turn to the refuges of guilt and superstition, which their Church sets before them, and to spend, perhaps, their last shilling in purchasing, as the last hope of their immortal souls, a pretended remedy—a fiction of Satan from their fellow-worm; instead of being told to turn from these vanities to the salvation that is revealed to them, in the Word of their Creator. I will not ask is this Christian fidelity?—I will not ask is it Christian charity?—but I will ask, is it common honesty?—If the Word of that God whom we profess to serve, tells us, “If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again,” *Exod. xxiii. 4*,—what does that Word pronounce on those who can willingly permit the immortal soul of their neighbour to perish, without an effort to rescue him—nay, who can tell him plainly and openly

they do not wish to make the effort—they do not wish to proselytise him?—what fallacy is it intended by this to impose on the Roman Catholics?—is it that they are *so safe* in their religion, that there is no occasion to convert them?—or is it, that though you think they are *not safe*, yet you do not desire to promote their salvation? But, perhaps, it may be said, there is no intention to deceive them; I believe it: but though I do not impute such an intention to any of those who proceed upon this system, yet I do say, that however unintentional, such is, and must be the effect of it. The Priest tells the people you are enemies to their religion; the people answer on their own authority, that you “have no wish to proselytise them.” They know, indeed, that you consider them in *some degree* wrong, because you are not of their Church—but they must conclude, you do not think them *fatally* in error, because you say you do not wish to convert them. But what argument is it for a man who calls himself a Christian to use, that he does not intend to deceive his blind and superstitious neighbour, into a supposition that he is not wrong—why does he not use all honest, and faithful, and earnest, and anxious means, to undeceive him, and to convince him that he is gone astray, and to convert him from his error? If a man sees his fellow-man, walking blindfolded to the edge of a precipice, does he discharge the office of humanity, if he refuses to warn him of his danger?—But if, so far from warning him, he tells the poor victim, “I do not wish to turn you from the path you are walking in,” I believe it will be granted, that he is not only devoid of the humanity

which would preserve his life, but guilty in the judgment both of God and man, of being accessory to his death. It remains for those who hold out to Roman Catholics, that they do not wish to proselytise them, to show how their principle is not chargeable with a criminality as great as this, but aggravated in proportion as the immortal soul is of greater value than the body, and the abyss of everlasting death more terrible than the Tarpeian rock. The result proves, that no blessing is to be expected on such weak, and worthless, and temporizing policy. The Priests through every part of the country, either prevent the Roman Catholic children from going to the schools, or sweep them away sometimes in fifties, and hundreds at a time. The fear of these men, who pretend to hold the eternal destinies of these poor creatures in their hands, operates to prevent them from acting in opposition to their will—and you tell the people you do not wish to rescue them from this domination! If you are afraid to tell them that their Priests are leading them to eternal ruin—how is it to be supposed the poor people will discover it? when you are afraid to let them see you think so—how can they be led to think so? when you tell them you do not want to deliver them—where are they to look for deliverance, or how to discover their need of being delivered?—are you to wait for the tardy operation of a system, which the whole energy of Priestcraft is combined to obstruct, and *that*, when even the system you propose, is totally inapplicable to the adult population of the country?—and are you by such a weak, timid, unfaithful, and unchristian policy, to let the

very impression rest on the minds of the people which gives strength to that energy, and facility to those powers of obstruction? While so many members of our Societies hold out that they are not desirous to proselytise—how different is the language of Roman Catholic Priests themselves! and shall they openly and avowedly act upon a principle of endeavouring to make proselytes to the awful errors of their superstition; while we who derive the name of our very religion, from *protesting* against those errors, as openly tell the Roman Catholics, that we do not want to make them proselytes to the truth of God? Let the following just and able argument, from a Roman Catholic Priest, put such men to the blush for adopting a crooked policy, which gives all the weakness of fallacy to truth, and rejecting that plain, honest, direct, straight-forward course, which gives even the strength and semblance of veracity to error.

In a sermon preached by Dr. Baynes, a Roman Catholic Bishop, at Bradford, in Yorkshire, 1825, entitled "*Faith, Hope, and Charity,*" we meet the following clear, and unanswerable argument:—" *And here, my Christian Brethren, I cannot refrain from offering a few remarks on what is usually called proselytism—this word is become odious, and all men seem eager to disclaim its import, as if it were a crime—yet, what is meant by proselytism? If it means converting others to the true religion—what were the Apostles themselves but makers of proselytes? What did Jesus Christ give them in charge to do, when he bade them go and teach all nations, but every where to make pro-*

*selytes? For what were the Apostles persecuted—put to death, and crowned with the glory of martyrdom, but for making proselytes—what Christian could lay claim to the rewards of charity, who, convinced of the truth of his religion, and of the inestimable blessings it imparts, refused, or neglected to make others partakers of it—concealed his treasures from the objects of distress, and covered under a bushel the light which was wanted to guide the steps of his benighted fellow-traveller ?”*

Let those who are the advocates of this temporizing system, read and answer these arguments, and ask themselves whether they are to concede the reasoning and assumption of apostolical precedent and principle, to propagate the errors of superstition, which it is their duty to follow and adopt, in disseminating the blessings of salvation? Do I then mean to say, that the Association for Discountenancing Vice, should abandon its catechetical instruction of the Protestant population, and become a Controversial Society—that the Bible Society should abandon its principle of neutrality, holding up the Word of God without note or comment, as the only standard of genuine Christian truth, and to be circulated by all who call themselves Christians—that the Sunday School Society should introduce controversial tracts and books among the children, and that the Kildare Place Society, and that the London Hibernian Society should follow its example? — No — on no account—let all these Societies pursue their course, and continue their plan of operation;

it is wise, it is consistent with the soundest and best principles, to “keep the noiseless tenor of their way ;” and I trust a divine guidance and blessing may direct and accompany the labours of them all. They hold a place, a most important post of incalculable benefit to the country—let them still continue to state, and to act on the statement, that their object is to promote a scriptural education, and that they will instruct the children in the Word of their God—but this I say, let them not tell us that this is sufficient for the wants of our country—let them not tell us, that because in their respective spheres of operation, these Societies are proceeding as far as the Priests will permit them, in sowing that seed in some waste spots of the mind of Ireland, which we trust will yet spring up, and bring forth fruit, that therefore, when “the fields are white unto the harvest,” instead of praying the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers,” they should with a timid and unfaithful policy, endeavour to weaken the hands of those who are ready to go—let me ask, when they teach these children to read the Word of God in a system, which confessedly does not bring in any explicit manner before their minds, the awful errors of their religion—is it not desirable, that some efforts should be made to convince them of those errors, that these children, of whom thousands are now adults, and their numbers daily increasing, who have grown up and left those schools, and still through the want of some means of information, are continuing under the dominion of that superstition in which they have been educated—is it not desirable, that their minds should be awakened to consider the actual

meaning of the words which they have heard, or read, or have committed to memory, in contradistinction to the dogmas of their superstitions? is it not necessary that the parents of these poor children who have neither enjoyed the advantages of a Bible, or a school, should have opportunities of hearing the great principles of salvation discussed, and of availing themselves of the education which their children have received, in hearing these truths read to them from the Word of God? If the mere learning Scripture by rote in schools, is to convert Roman Catholics—why, I would ask, are thousands who have been so taught in scriptural schools for ten, or fifteen years that are past, why are they still in the communion of that superstitious and apostate Church? Let us take one individual who has gone to any of these schools, and who has read and learned portions of Scripture, and who has now left these institutions, and remained in the bosom of the Church of Rome—why, I would ask, does this individual continue under the dominion of his Priest?—if merely reading portions of the Sacred Volume will convert him—why is he not converted? Because, while careful and anxious pains have been taken to instil into his mind the superstitions of his Church, and while he has been confirmed in these by a false show of scriptural authority on the part of his Priest—no pains have been taken to bring before his mind the great and fundamental falsehoods of his Church, in open faithful contrast to the Word of God. He has been told, “that Protestants do not wish to make a proselyte of him,” and even if the poor crea-

ture should discover from the light of God's truth, the superstitions of his Church, he has no rallying point to fly to—there are none to shelter him—no body of men to whom he can turn for support—none, under whose honest, and fearless, and uncompromising advocacy of truth, he can derive countenance and confidence in the opinions he may have formed, or be assisted in the difficulties in which he is involved—he dare not without the loss certainly of his character, most probably of his means of subsistence, perhaps of his life, avow his doubts, his anxieties, his convictions, or his resolutions. Is this right? Granting to these schools more than all the efficacy which the experience of so many years has proved, we can fairly attribute to them, let us ask, is it just or equitable, to give to the youth of our country enough of light to let them see they are going astray, without holding up a beacon to guide them in the way that they ought to go? to give them enough of knowledge to awaken doubts, and fears, and anxieties, respecting their religion, while, with all the counteracting influences of early prejudices, and feelings, and prepossessions; and all the superadded terrors and apprehensions of priestly and ecclesiastical authority—they see none come boldly forward, to denounce the superstitious dangers that they apprehend—to summon their Priests and their dogmas to the test of truth, and to convince them that all the imaginary powers of their Priesthood and their Church, when brought into the light of God's eternal Word, may become as much a subject of their contempt, as the figure that frightened the baby in the dark, becomes an object of its laughter

when it sees it in the light of day. Let us not call ourselves judicious—let us not call ourselves apostolical—let us not call ourselves faithful men—when we act this weak, unscriptural, disingenuous, unchristian part. Is every man then to become a controversialist? all may not feel disposed or competent, to enter into that arduous, but necessary field of labour—but let them not therefore depreciate the scriptural standard of our duty; let them not deny that it is the clear, decisive path of a Christian ministry, to call their erring neighbours to the consideration of those truths, on which their everlasting happiness depends. We cannot open our Bibles and see the injunctions delivered to Prophets and Apostles, and the scriptural detail of the attention paid to those injunctions, by men who were inspired by the Holy Ghost, both in the doctrines which they taught, and in every step which they took for the propagation of those doctrines; without seeing it the clear, the well-defined, the Scriptural, the imperative duty, of all who profess to labour in the Gospel of Christ, to hold forth the word of Life to those that are in darkness, to reach forth the bread and waters of Life, to those who are ready to perish, and to strain their every nerve to burst those chains of ignorance, and guilt, and superstition, with which Satan binds the understandings, and the consciences, not only of their fellow-creatures, but of their countrymen, their neighbours, their acquaintances, their friends. Surely if it is too much to ask, that every man who knows the value of eternal truth will assist, it is not too much to demand that no man who knows its value will venture

to oppose—and if men cannot aid with their talents, they can perhaps with their purses, for the sending out of readers, for the publication of tracts, for the expenses of discussions—they can with their endeavours, to circulate tracts—to give facilities to those who are engaged in any way, in the service of their God in various departments—they can aid, with their countenance and support—they can assist, if they will, with their prayers—they can, in short, show by some indications, whether they chuse in this great important cause, to stand on the Lord's side, or to take the alternative which He leaves to our consciences and souls—“he that is not with me, is against me.”

There is one favourite objection of some, who affect to be peculiarly *judicious*, in their opposition to the Reformation Society, which it is important to notice—“*We do not think it prudent, say they, to irritate or provoke Roman Catholics, by openly telling them of their errors; we would rather try gently, and silently, to steal instruction on them, than plainly, and avowedly to alarm them in this way—it savours too much of enthusiasm, and overheated zeal.*” It will be a discovery in morals, at least, not inferior to that of steam in mechanics, when the human mind shall be revolutionized, in such happy imperceptible degrees, as to be brought to renounce the most inveterate prejudices; without feeling the transition from its errors, and to embrace at once all that is right, without ever suffering alarm at the apprehension of having been wrong. As to enthusiasm and zeal—we have a happy Laodicean temperature amongst us, which saves us from the danger of

any overheated exertions, at least, in this field of apostolic labour. We seem to have tempered our Christianity, if not with the morality, at least, with the moderation of Stoical philosophy—

“ Insani sapiens nomen ferat, æquus iniqui,  
Ultra quam satis est—virtutem si petat ipsam,”

And as to standard of that “*satis*”—let the state of Popery in Ireland determine it. But let us come to fact—what impression does this *gentle, moderate, unobtrusive, Christian* forbearance produce on the minds of Roman Catholics?—the very impression that it ought to produce—it inspires them with a thorough contempt for our conduct, and our religion—it supplies them with unanswerable arguments against the best indirect efforts we could use, and teaches them to believe, that they can discover in the worthlessness of our principles alone, the cause of our apathy in not making any effort for their propagation.

I would call the attention of those who take an interest in this subject, to a speech which is said to have been delivered by a Mr. Macabe, a Roman Catholic Priest, at a Bible Meeting in England, in 1829, from which I make the following extract:—“ *It is nearly three hundred years, since the beauty of the Protestant religion beamed on England—pray has no attempt been ever made to impart to Ireland the blessings of this sublime religion, and to banish the erroneous superstitions, immoral, and idolatrous mass of Popery from the island? Has no attempt been ever made to penetrate the clouds of darkness and ignorance that*

overshadow the land, or to dissipate the mist of error that envelopes the people? O yes, Ladies and Gentlemen.—What would you think of the following plan? Suppose four Archbishops, eighteen Bishops, and from two to three thousand Clergymen, all well educated gentlemen, brought up in the pure Biblical principles of Protestantism—suppose these men to declare in the presence of heaven, on the day of their ordination, that they felt themselves called by the Holy Ghost, to labour in the vineyard of the Lord, to preach the pure principles of Protestantism—suppose every man of these to have taken an oath on the day of his ordination to establish, or to contribute to establish, a school in his parish, and that the sum he should contribute was specified in the oath—suppose one or two of these men thus prepared, placed upon every five miles square of Ireland, would not this be a good plan to begin with? Yes, you say, but they should have something to support them, otherwise the time that should be employed in eradicating Popery, might be devoted to provide sustenance for themselves and families.—True—What would you think of giving these holy men one-sixth of all the land in the kingdom, and the tenth of the produce of the remaining five parts? Would not that be a decent maintenance? Now, Ladies, this has been done in Ireland two hundred and fifty years ago, and a regular succession of these men and means, has been continued to this day! And what is the fact?—That the number of Catholics has increased, and the number of Protestants diminished. I have not told you all. During nearly two

centuries of this period, the laws came powerfully to second the exertions of these Apostolic men. Government declared to them, 'in order that you meet with no opposition, and may have an open clear field for your operations—we will not allow a Popish Priest, nor even a Popish schoolmaster, to appear, to dispute an inch of territory with you—if one or the other should show himself on hill, or valley, we will pursue him, catch him, and ship him off on a voyage of discovery.' Yet strange to say, Popery has gained ground, and Protestantism is sadly straitened. This formidable array of rank, wealth, talent, and apostolic zeal, is still in the land, and yet if any credit be due to Parliamentary returns, they are now a staff without a regiment, shepherds without flocks—you have the unanimous authority of the gentlemen who address you this day, that clouds and darkness overshadow the land, and a mist of ignorance the people—they have not told you what these men have done to cure all this; nor can I; except that they have built steeples, to penetrate the clouds, and blown hunting horns, to dissipate the mists. Now, Mr. —, I identify myself for a moment, with this benevolent assembly, and I ask you with what face one of these Irish parsons can come here, and ask an English audience to give them money, in order that by the means of Navy officers, raving Missionaries, and a few bad Catholics, bribed from among the poor—the work may be done for which your brethren are so well paid, and ought to be well calculated to perform. Go, Sir, first exert your zeal in another quarter, sound the trumpet of the Lord among

*your careless brethren—awaken those sleeping shepherds—rouse those dumb dogs that never bark before you apply to us.’*

Now, making every allowance for all the acrimony, and the misrepresentation of this statement, I ask, is there not enough of truth in it, to make all men who love the cause of the Redeemer, and the interests of the Established Church, ashamed, that a Roman Catholic Priest could have it in his power, to stand up and taunt us with such a total apathy, such a criminal indifference, both to the errors of the Romish religion, and the value of our own, that with every advantage that talent, and learning, and station, and wealth, and influence, and law, and opportunity could give us, we have so entirely neglected to propagate the one, and to reform the other? Is there not enough to show to those who advocate the weak, and disingenuous, and unchristian policy, of holding out to Roman Catholics that “they are not anxious to proselytise their children,” or to alarm or reform themselves; that their system is only calculated, to draw down contempt on a cause, which they are afraid, or ashamed to vindicate, or to avow? Let them remember, that religion is either everything, or nothing—a cunningly devised fable, or a truth of infinite and everlasting value. An ignorance of its importance to our own souls, alone, can account for an indifference in communicating it to others, and a full, clear, scriptural conviction of the truth of the apostolic doctrines of eternal life, must ever be accompanied with an apostolic courage in their defence, and an apostolic fidelity and zeal in their diffusive propagation

Since I have written most of the foregoing remarks, a sentiment which bears directly against all that I have set forth, as to the duties and responsibilities of the Established Church, has issued from the press; and obtained no ordinary degree of circulation and celebrity, as coming from the high authority of the Lord Bishop of Ferns. To affect an ignorance of this sentiment in writing on this subject, would be a want of candour and truth; to pass it without notice, would seem to make light of that weight, which it must carry from his Lordship's pen; and, to accede to it, would be to abandon all the conclusions, at which my judgment and conscience, can arrive on the subject. If I could feel that it were right to do so in such a solemn cause, I trust I should most gladly renounce them, and recal every sentiment I have expressed; yet, feeling as I do, the deep and eternal importance of the subject, not only to the immortal souls of Roman Catholics, but to that venerable Church of this realm, whose temporal interests the Lord Bishop of Ferns has so zealously stood forward to defend, I am constrained, though with great hesitation and deep reluctance, to examine the principle which his Lordship has set forth. Aware of the reproach to which a minister of the Established Church exposes himself, in venturing to oppose the sentiment of a superior—and that there are many who will be ready to speak of him, as contumacious, and opposed to Episcopal authority, with many other expressions of equal severity, I think it right to anticipate and answer them. And, first, with respect to the correspondence in which his Lordship has expressed the senti-

ment to which I allude, I trust I shall not be considered as identifying myself either in judgment, or feeling, or in any respect, with the persons against whom his Lordship's letters were directed. I must say, I think there never was a time when such an attack on the Established Church was less called for; and giving to the persons who commenced, and the noble Earl who conducted, it, all the credit which they claim for attachment to our religion, I think, that zeal was never exhibited as less under the direction of sound judgment, or discretion, as it referred to the general question, or of the feeling which ought to have been preserved, to the individuals, whose names, and circumstances, were brought before the public. I therefore disclaim every thing connected with this correspondence, in referring to an insulated passage in the Lord Bishop's letter: and with respect to Episcopal authority, I can truly say, there breathes not a man who venerates more deeply that sacred office. If I were asked, what I consider the highest, noblest, holiest, and most august authority with which a man can be entrusted on this earth, I should say—the office of a bishop of the Church of England; and I trust there is not an individual within her pale, who would bow to all the “godly admonitions” of a bishop, I will not say merely with more sincere canonical obedience, but with a more cordial, and genuine deference of all the feelings of the heart; but there are points of conscience and of duty, in which there is a higher tribunal than that of human authority to be referred to—where principle feels it must be at issue with the word of our Creator, or with that of an earthly su-

perior—in such a case as this, obedience were a crime, remonstrance is a duty, and I humbly trust that I shall be excused, even by the Lord Bishop of Ferns himself, of an unwarrantable intention to offend against the respect, which is due to his Lordship's high and holy office, or to himself; when I say, that, on considering with the most anxious attention which I can bestow on any subject, the state of the Established Church in England and Ireland, it is my full and decided conviction, that a practical, and (I must say what I feel) a criminal adherence on the part of our Church, to the principle which his Lordship has laid down, is the cause of all those calamities, which, at this day, threaten the very existence of the Establishment in this country; and that I consider the principle, so directly opposed to the solemn vow and obligation of a minister—so opposed to our duty to God, and our duty to our neighbour, that if I were placed as a minister in any parish, I should feel it my duty to my church, to my Roman Catholic parishioners, and to Him, whose tribunal I must ever hold superior to any power on earth, to act in a line directly opposite to that which his Lordship points out. His Lordship's sentiment is this, in speaking of “the duty of the clergy towards their Roman Catholic parishioners:”—“*They ought to watch for any indications of a disposition in them, to listen to their instructions, but they should abstain from obtruding on them controversial topics, when they appeared disinclined to listen to them, as being a mode of proceeding which never will be successful in making converts.*”—Bishop of Ferns' Fourth Letter to Lord Mountcashel. What-

ever of good sense, kind feeling, sound judgment, and discretion, in conducting controversy, his Lordship might intend to recommend by this; so far as they are consistent with an honest, faithful zeal, for the salvation of the immortal souls of men, I cordially desire to respect and approve; but the principle which his Lordship lays down, puts Christian fidelity to the souls of Roman Catholics, entirely out of the question. What is one of the most prominent evils of their system? It is this:—that it shuts up, habitually, the human mind, in such a dungeon of dark submission, to a supposed infallible authority, that a single ray of light let in, is painful to the sensibility of its superstitious fears—like him who shivered when the sun shone on him, it shrinks from the least impingement of the light of truth.

If his Lordship means, then, that we are to watch till Roman Catholics evince a disposition to come to our houses, or our Churches for instruction, to seek voluntarily for the truths of our religion, as if their own were in error, he means to preclude every effort to bring salvation to the Roman Catholics of Ireland—to evince, in this way, a disposition to receive the instructions of a heretic, were, in the very act, a crime—it were an implication, or rather, a confession, that their Church might err—it were to hesitate—it were to doubt—it were to investigate; where hesitation is guilt—where doubt is infidelity—where investigation is apostacy—and, if unrenounced, is death. What “indications” like these, of “a disposition to listen to our instructions” are we to watch for in such a case? Such indications were a proof that the evil were, of itself, in progress of

correction; and to watch for these, would be like a physician at the death bed of his patient, waiting with his medicine, till he saw him convalescent. If the clergy of the Established Church wait with the Gospel of Christ in their hands in silence, till such indications in Roman Catholics appear, truly we can only say—

“ Rusticus expectat dum defluit amnis;”

such advice, or such official instruction, is to seal up our lips in everlasting silence on the subject.

When, I would humbly ask, in the centuries that have gone by, have such indications been exhibited?—have they, indeed, appeared, and have not our bishops and clergy taken the advantage of them? I have never heard that such a charge could be made against us. Criminally negligent on the subject as we have been, I have never heard of a minister of the Established Church who would refuse to give instructions, to the best of his ability, to any Roman Catholic who might have “indicated a disposition” to profit by them, so that his Lordship’s principle leaves us just where we have been; but herein has our criminal neglect of duty to Roman Catholics been exhibited—that we have been exactly doing as his Lordship advises us; we have been waiting in this neglect of their immortal souls, repeatedly pledging ourselves, in the most solemn manner, that we believed them superstitious and idolatrous, and protesting, with all due ecclesiastical regularity, against that superstition and idolatry, but waiting for some “*indications of a disposition in them to listen to our instructions, and abstaining from obtruding upon them controversial topics, when they appeared disinclined to*

*listen to them.*" This expression, "*controversial topics,*" is so very indefinite, that it may comprehend many topics, in which his Lordship's advice might be extremely judicious; but it likewise comprehends others on which that advice is pregnant with ruin to the immortal souls of Roman Catholics, and in my view (I must speak faithfully according to my conscience) with a total abandonment of our duty. There are unquestionably topics of controversy, which it is unnecessary to obtrude upon Roman Catholics, because they may not fundamentally affect their salvation; but let us omit these, and strip the subject of all extrinsic useless matter, and come at once directly to the pith and marrow of the case. Let me ask this simple question—a question which is the first to be determined on the point—a question which requires to be stirred up as much among Protestants as among Roman Catholics.—*Can Roman Catholics really depend for their salvation upon those refuges which their Church sets before them, and be in a state of salvation before God?*—I speak not of individuals, or of what they actually depend on, I presume not to judge them—I hope, and trust, that many of them may really depend on Christ alone, instead of those refuges of lies. But the man who is a Protestant, and who affirms that they can depend on the hopes of salvation propounded by their Church, and yet be in a state of salvation before God, I say that man, I care not who he be, is either totally ignorant of their religion, or if not, he is ignorant of his own religion—and ignorant of himself, and ignorant of his Bible, and ignorant of his God—and, I am, therefore, the more

surprised, that the Lord Bishop of Ferns, who so perfectly knows this solemn and awful fact, as to the spiritual condition of the Roman Catholic religion, should lay down such a principle for the clergy of the Established Church. It is an express prohibition to obtrude the Gospel of Christ on Roman Catholics—for what is the fact? The Gospel of Christ is a direct controversy against almost every principle of the Church of Rome—if the Gospel is to be preached to Roman Catholics, there is hardly a point of their superstition that does not imply a direct denial of it. Take these texts—“This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” 1 Tim. i. 15—“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses,” Acts xiii. 38, 39—“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; as it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree,” Gal. iii. 13. Each of those texts, and every similar text, which contains within itself expressly, or by implication, the essence of the Gospel, stands in flat eternal controversy against the Church of Rome—for if the Lord Jesus “came to save sinners”—if through Him “is proclaimed forgiveness of sins”—if “by Him all who believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses”—if He “hath redeemed sinners from the curse of the law”—then all the means of salvation which that Church proposes—

her masses—her penances—her purgatories—her intercession of Saints—nay, the very best morality which she can inculcate—the very mutilated commandments that she borrows from the Bible, when used as a plea of merit before God, are all in direct hostility to the Gospel—for they are all built on this one fundamental falsehood, that man by his priest, or his church, or saints and angels, or himself, is to perform some work or works, for the purpose of procuring that salvation, which it is the whole burthen of the Gospel, to proclaim as the free, full, and perfect gift of God, through Jesus Christ to man, not as he is a righteous, or meritorious creature ; but as a condemned, a ruined, and a helpless sinner.

Now, if his Lordship intends to exclude *the Gospel* from his meaning, in the term “*controversial topics*,” his Lordship’s advice evidently implies a contradiction, since the Gospel of Christ, which on this supposition he permits us to obtrude on them, is the most “*controversial topic*” that can possibly be obtruded on the Church of Rome, and, indeed, the only one worth obtruding on her. But if his Lordship means to include *the Gospel of Christ* in the meaning of this term, and that we may deduce as a particular from this universal admonition, that we ought to “abstain from obtruding” *the Gospel of Christ* “upon Roman Catholics, when they appeared disinclined to listen to it,” I trust I may be permitted to say, without offence, which I should much regret to give, that when we read the divine commission from our Lord to his Apostles, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every

creature; he that believeth, and is baptised, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned;" we must either forget the sacred authority from which this commission was issued; and we must forget the awful consequences for man's immortal soul, which that authority declares, are suspended on the execution of it; or, we must renounce all pretensions to derive our sacred office under the sanctions of that authority; before we can reconcile it to our duty, to abstain from the faithful discharge of that commission, towards those, whom the laws both of God and man have committed to our care. I say the laws both of God and man—the only difference between the commission to the Apostles, and to us, is, that instead of being sent as Missionaries with the Gospel to the world, our sphere like our powers is circumscribed in narrower limits. The Roman Catholic is placed within a narrow compass, under the immediate superintendance of the minister of the Church of England—the laws of our land—and wise and excellent they are, have parcelled out the cottages of those poor immortal beings, into divisions, or parishes, in the midst of which, they have appropriated to him a residence; they have made them to bring of the offerings of their ground, and the produce of their toil to his support, and they have reminded him, in every blessing which he enjoys, in time; that he is indebted to those who have furnished it, in some remuneration of blessings connected with eternity.

I must here lament, that I differ also widely from the Lord Bishop of Ferns, when his Lordship says, that

“the Roman Catholics undoubtedly do not contribute to the support of our clergy.” His Lordship is most certainly right in the principle, that the sum that is appropriated to tithe, would, if unappropriated to that purpose, be added to the rent of the land—but what of that? does it prove that money *is not given* to a certain purpose, to say, that *if it were not*, it would be given to another?—It is a matter of fact that *it is set apart* for tithe, and that the Roman Catholic *does pay it* to the clergyman; and if it were not a matter of fact, it is a matter of feeling; the people consider that it is so; and even if they did not, are the responsibilities of religion to be measured by a computation of political economy? Shall the rents of lands tithe free, form an item in the great account at the tribunal of our God? and if not, who shall dare to place it in the per-contraside of his spiritual ledger, to balance the neglect of setting forth that Gospel to his fellow-creatures, which it is his office, his duty, his most solemn obligation to proclaim; and which in proportion to the sanctity of that office, the importance of that duty, and the solemnity of that obligation, it is criminal, it is unpardonable in him to neglect. It is difficult to pronounce which are more imperative on the Bishops and Clergy of the Established Church—the vows on this subject under which they stand engaged; or the commands of that God on which those vows are modelled. They stand individually and collectively, most solemnly bound to God and to our Church, to “*be ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines, contrary to God’s word*”—and our

Bishops are bound in addition, "*both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others so to do*"—we have every one declared, "*I will do so, the Lord being my helper.*" I would humbly ask, is it to "be ready with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away" error, to wait until error *indicates a disposition to be driven away?* Is it faithful diligence in the ministry to abstain from preaching the Gospel, to those who are perishing in ignorance and superstition, until they manifest *some inclination to listen to us*, when their disinclination, arises from that very same erroneous doctrine, which we have sworn to use all diligence to banish and drive away? I do not presume to press any further questions on this solemn obligation; nor to institute any comparison, between the pledge to encourage others to the discharge of it, and the principle which the Lord Bishop has laid down. But if we can forget the solemn responsibilities to which we have voluntarily pledged ourselves—shall we not remember those, which are laid on us before the tribunal of that God, at which there can be no evasion, and from which there is no appeal. What saith the word of Jehovah?—"Son of man I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, and speakest not to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity: but his blood will I require at thine hand," Ezek. iii. 17, 18. This solemn, this tremendous ad-

monition, was given 595 years before the birth of our Redeemer, that is, 2425 years ago.

I give the history of the Church in the Old and New Testament, for the period of time which they comprehend—I give all the records of ecclesiastical history to this hour, and I challenge any man to lay his finger on a ministry, through all that lapse of years, to which that solemn warning more forcibly applies, than to the Bishops and Clergy of the Church of England in these countries. If ever there was a watchman set upon a tower, to receive the word at the Lord's mouth, and to give to sinners *warning from Him*—if ever that watchman was set upon a tower, in a citadel of providential security, and on an eminence of lofty, and commanding exaltation, that watchman is a minister, and still more, a Bishop of the Church of England. If a Church founded on the immutable word of the eternal God—if purity of doctrine, according to the word of our Creator, in the Established Formularies of that Church, to which it is our inestimable privilege to belong—if truth in those Articles of religion, to which we have subscribed, and soundness of doctrine in those Homilies, according to which, (however sophistry may evade it) we are pledged to teach—if scriptural and holy principles, embodied in a form of worship, in which it is our high vocation to administer the ordinances of God—if the most solemn exhortations that men can give, and the most solemn vows that men can make, and the most solemn pledges that men can offer, not to their fellow-creatures, but to their God—if these

can constitute the responsibility of a spiritual watchman, then, where can a man be found to whom such deep responsibility attaches, as to a Minister, and still more to a Bishop of the Church of England? If our Church has been identified with the Constitution of the greatest nation in the world, protected with all the security, which the laws of that nation could confer on that Church—if an equitable portion of her wealth has been appropriated to the support of our ministry, and a portion as equitable to maintain the high and holy office, and dignity, of our Bishops—if the crozier has been placed next to the sceptre in her kingdom, that the pastor of the sheep might stand nearest in his train to “the Father of his people”—if our religion has been justly exalted, to “rear her mitred front in senates”—if by the incorporation of the spiritual, into the legislative authority of the country, she has been placed at the very fountain, as the guardian angel of the land—that the springs of Christian truth, and Christian principle, and Christian morals, mingling their hallowed influence with all her laws, and all her institutions, might be propelled from the heart to the head, and circulate through all the members, in every vein and fibre of the constitution—if all these manifold blessings, and privileges, and immunities, and dignities, and honours proclaim, that God has erected a lofty tower—beautiful in its architecture—commanding in its elevation, and mighty in its strength, on which to place His spiritual watchmen in our land—who was ever placed on such a station as a Minister—who on such a majestic eminence as a Bishop of the Church of England? If the

Lord were to demand of the assembled world—"who are they that I have placed as my watchmen upon earth, to whom I have entrusted the most talents for my service?" though we had asked the rocks and mountains to fall on us, they must yawn above our heads, and throw up on their mighty elevations before men and angels, the Bishops and the clergy of the Church of England.

Now, let us ask, what use we have made of these talents in reference to the Roman Catholics of this country?—I speak not of our own flocks—I shall suppose we had fed them as the most faithful shepherds—let us turn to the case of our fellow-creatures, our countrymen, our neighbours. I will ask, where on the surface of the globe, are there to be found a people, in a more miserable spiritual condition, than the Roman Catholics of Ireland?—If the Bible be the revelation of Jehovah's will to man—where, let me ask, is the conformity between the sacred volume and the religion of Roman Catholics? What has it to boast, but the name of Christianity—but I enter not here into the guilt and ignorance and superstition of the system; I take it on our own showing—we assume the very name of our religion, from solemnly protesting against the errors of this Church—there is not a man in our ministry, from the lowest to the highest, that has not in the most solemn manner, denounced the superstition, and idolatry of the Church of Rome; and our responsibility to God, shall be demonstrated out of the lips of every one of us: to every one of us might He say, "out of

thine own mouth will I judge thee." Now, what have we done in their behalf? have we taken "the word of the Lord at his mouth, and given them warning from Him?" If we are not ourselves, to be found liars before God, in charging them with crimes, of which they never have been guilty, and if idolatry and superstition are crimes before Jehovah, when "He saith unto the wicked, thou shalt surely die; and we give him not warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his way, and when that same wicked man dies in his iniquity," shall not God "require his blood at our hands?" I write it not in a spirit of controversy—still less do I presume to write it in a spirit of reproach, but I desire to write it, with a feeling of deep, and solemn humiliation, as one who has need of contrite repentance on the subject, as much as any of those, who can be implicated in the awful charge; but, I believe, if ever God required the blood of a neglected people, from the guilty hands of those, who have left them to perish in their sins, that God will require the blood of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, at the hands of the Bishops and Clergy of the Established Church—and I believe, if ever God had a controversy with a people, he has it at this day with our Church, for this our guilty neglect, our abandonment of that part with which He has entrusted us in this land. I fear not with dauntless confidence to assert, that if we, the ministers of the Church of England, had done our duty in this country, according to the invaluable principles of our religion—if we had maintained the truths, that God entrusted to us, for the salvation of this people, we should not only

have escaped the calamities, which we have too much cause to apprehend, but those that have darkened and desolated our country, for the years that have gone by. If we, the ministers of the Church of England, had stood forward, not in the attitude, (as we certainly seem to them to have done, however unintentionally) of oppressors, but in that of benefactors of the Roman Catholic population—if, instead of resting the security of our Church, of which we have been justly taught the guilt, and folly, upon the laws of man; we had rested it, as we ought, in faith, upon the word, and power of our God—if we had boldly, and faithfully, and firmly, but kindly, and temperately, and anxiously, asserted, and vindicated, the high and holy principles of our faith, as the only hope for the immortal souls of men—if we had used the means, the influence, the talents, the opportunities we possessed, to bring before the people the testimony of their Creator's word, in direct and systematic contrast with the awful superstitions in which they are taught to rest both their moral principles, and their hopes of everlasting life—if by education, by the visits of pastoral superintendance, and instruction—by tracts—by the word of God—and above all, by open, candid, faithful exhortation and discussion, calling on those teachers who are "*blind leaders of the blind,*" to bring their doctrines into the light of God's eternal truth, we had endeavoured to give to Roman Catholics the Gospel; not imagining we discharged our duty, by preaching a few sermons, where they could never hear them; but going both to preach and to exhort them where they could hear—still less,

supposing that we discharged that duty, by railing at a religion, which, if our reprehensions were founded in truth, it was our most bounden duty to reform. But without pretending to point out all the varied means afforded us—if, in short, we had kept our most solemn vow—if we had “*used all faithful diligence*”—nay, if we had even made an effort to keep it—if we had used any “*faithful diligence, to drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God’s word,*” and if our Bishops had “*both privately and openly called upon, and encouraged others so to do,*” I fearlessly maintain that, as certainly as we have a right to believe that the Lord is faithful to his holy truth and promise—as certainly as his “*word shall not return to him void*”—as certainly as we may expect, that his blessing shall rest on the faithful use of his appointed means—as certainly as he has blest exertions under circumstances less promising, and less auspicious, to which England is herself indebted for her Church; and the world, for the propagation of Christianity—so certainly should Ireland have been rescued, from all the miseries she has endured, through the awful effects of this superstition, which has degraded her into a state of internal agitation, and misery, and convulsive, and religious, and moral, and social, and political debasement, and crime, unparalleled in the history of any nation, which has ever pretended to civilization, not to say, to Christianity.

Those laws which have been a source of aggravated evils to this land, had long since been abolished, not by a convulsive enactment of the legislature, but by the

gradual triumph of the Eternal Word—and instead of having a superstition to legislate for our Church, our Church had long since triumphed over that superstition, not by the laws or sword of man, but by “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” The arrogance of priestcraft, instead of having been strengthened by the authority of man, would have fled before the presence of the Lord of Hosts—the chains of penal enactments and of Papal darkness, had melted together in one common mass, within the blaze of everlasting truth, and our poor enslaved countrymen, had long since burst their temporal and spiritual bondage, and breathed the air of genuine freedom, in the twofold emancipation, of the full enjoyment of the British Constitution, and the “glorious liberty of the children of God.” Human laws may afford, as they have often done, a temporary security to the religion of Christ, but they never were intended as the instrument of its propagation; we have abandoned ourselves criminally, to the fancied protection of those laws, and we have forgotten the cause of Him, to whose mercy we were indebted, for a religion so worthy of protection—we have rested on an arm of flesh, and if we awake not from our lethargy, we shall experience the fate of him “who maketh the arm of flesh his trust.” We cry out “*the Church is in danger.*” Why is she in danger? Because her watchmen have been asleep. As far as Popery is concerned, we have been “dumb dogs lying down, loving to slumber,” lolling in our watch-towers, instead of “lifting up our voice like a trumpet.” If the ministers of the Church of England have not maintained the high and holy principles

of their religion—if they have let four fifths of the population of their country live, and die, in what they have called their God to witness, they believed to be a superstition, without one effort to reform them—can we blame our statesmen, and our senators, for adopting in their politics, the example we have set in our religion ; and for not giving much credit to the expression, of our fears, and apprehensions of a danger, in the midst of which we have been slumbering so profoundly, that we have never even dreamt of the application of a remedy ? With what face are we now to stand up, and reprove that infidel liberality, which places all religions, and no religion on a level, when we have given such a practical proof, that we did not consider the worst, worth the trouble of endeavouring to reform, nor the best, worth the labour of endeavouring to diffuse ? Oh ! if there be a time, when the servants of the Lord of life and death, shall give an account of their stewardship—and if the talents, with which He has entrusted them, were not given to be put up in a napkin—nor the light which he had bestowed on them, given to be put under a bushel—if He will call the watchmen whom He has set upon the towers, to a fearful reckoning, for neglecting the duties of their watch ; it were well before it be too late, that we consider, what shall be the fate of the Bishops, and Clergy of the Church of England, who are leaving their neighbours to perish, in guilt and ignorance around them—to consider, whether greater criminality attaches to the ignorant votaries of a superstition, or to those, who, professing to see their guilt and danger, have left them, if not without a sigh, at

least without an effort of mercy, to their fate. What blessing of God can we expect on our Church, when we are content by our criminal indolence, to let it seem a matter of indifference, whether the majority of our nation, are called on to embrace the blessings of eternal truth, or left to perish in the most awful superstition? We can whine, and we can complain, and we can pour petitions to our Legislature, to prevent Roman Catholics from obtaining that share of political power, which we say, will affect the temporal security of our religion; but in the very midst of millions of those Roman Catholics, we can sit down, utterly careless and indifferent, whether or not they embrace the sacred truths of the Gospel embodied in that religion, and which alone can render it worthy of protection and preservation.— Yet we can complain, “the Church is in danger;” what wonder that she is in danger, when we have neglected the only means of her security? even a Heathen might instruct us, what we may expect under such circumstances—“*Non votis neque suppliciis muliebribus auxilin deorum parantur—vigilando, agendo, bene consulendo, prosperè omnia cedunt, ubi socordiæ tete atque ignaviæ tradideris, nequicquam Deos implores irati infestique sunt*”—the strength, indeed, of a Christian is in prayer, but to pretend to pray and despise the appointed means of receiving an answer, is nothing but a mockery of God. What wonder, that infidel liberality has stood up in our land, to confound all principles of truth and falsehood, in one indistinguishable mass—to confound that toleration of *persons*, which it is the spirit of the Gospel to inculcate, with that toleration of *principle*, which it is a renunciation of the Gospel to

endure? What wonder, that, that liberality should be deified in our land, when there have been found among us those, who have dared to minister at her apotheosis, to stand up in the face of a Christian nation, and fritter away, the very meaning of the terms, idolatry and superstition? What wonder that the statesmen of England should confess, that the Roman Catholics of Ireland, had driven them to the wall with their politics, when the Bishops and Clergy of the Church, proclaim by their conduct, that they have reduced them to the same dilemma with their religion? What would Cranmer, or Latimer, or Ridley, or Jewell, or Hall—or what would Tillotson, or Stillingfleet, or Secker say, if they could arise from their graves, and see four-fifths of our country, overspread with the superstitions of Rome, and hear it given out *ex-cathedra*, that we “should abstain from obtruding” the Gospel of Christ, on the wretched population that are bowed beneath the domination of that anti-Christian yoke—“when they appeared disinclined to listen to us?”—Where, I would humbly ask, had the Church of England been—where had the Reformation of Europe been—if our Reformers, or if Luther, had adopted such a principle as this? Where had the religion of Christ been, if such had been the principle of the Apostles of our Redeemer? Those martyred messengers of the everlasting Gospel, whose bones have whitened on the plains of Europe, the ashes of our Reformers scattered to the winds of heaven, bear an answer to the question through all the quarters of the world. We are worthy truly, to bring up the rear of “the noble army of martyrs!”

But it matters little what these men would say to such a principle—they were but our fellow-worms—but what saith the word of the Eternal God, in that very chapter where he assigns the post, and details the duty of the spiritual watchmen? Ezek. iii. 4—7, “*Son of man go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them. For thou art not sent to a people of a strange speech, and of an hard language, but to the house of Israel: not to many people of a strange speech, and of an hard language, whose words thou canst not understand: surely, had I sent thee to them, they would have hearkened unto thee. But the house of Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me: for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted.*”

Now, here we have a case directly in point—a minister of God, sent to the people of his own country—a people in rebellion against God—a people too, “*as disinclined to listen to him,*” as any Roman Catholic Priest, can be, to listen to the Gospel. The Lord sends him on a *home mission*; and does the Lord lay down such a principle as this for his servant—that “*he is to abstain from obtruding controversial topics on them, when they are disinclined to listen to him?*” Mark what a contradiction to it is His word—“*Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant, harder than flint, have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. And go, get thee*

*to them of the captivity, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, thus saith the Lord God, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.*”—Ezek. iii. 8—11.

He then addresses the Prophet in the character of a watchman, as I have quoted before, and that we may know the more clearly, not only how widely different is such a principle from the sacred word; but how awful are the consequences of its adoption, the Lord addresses another of his servants thus—“*I will utter my judgments against them, touching all their wickedness, who have forsaken me, and have burnt incense unto other gods, and worshipped the works of their own hands.* (What an exact description of the Church of Rome.) *Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee : be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them*”—Jer. i. 16, 17. Here the Lord anticipates not only “*disinclination to listen,*” but opposition to the Prophet, and not only opposition, but indignation—threats—all that could cause dismay—yet, lest his servant should turn from his Master’s work, He warns him, “*be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them*”—to turn aside, and to be dismayed before man, is to fall in with a more terrible enemy, it is to encounter confusion from our God—and truly, if the Church of England be, as it most certainly is, the site of the Lord’s watch towers in this land, it behoves the men who stand upon them, to hear the word of Him who has placed them there. If we forget the

“*respice finem*,” of the great accountabilities attached to our positions—if we presume to climb without the Gospel trumpet in our hands—if we do not blow the warning as our God commands us from our watch tower, though a man were to stand aloft in the most exalted station in the Church, it were to be feared that he should find, when it was all too late to find it—

“ ————— Numerosa parabat  
Eccelsæ turris tabulata, unde altior esset  
Casus, et impulsæ præceps immane ruinæ.”

But the Lord Bishop of Ferns founds his principle on this, that to “*obtrude controversial topics on Roman Catholics, when they appear disinclined to listen to them*,” is “*a mode of proceeding which never will be successful in making converts*”—it were to be desired that his Lordship had proposed some better “mode of proceeding,” which would not have left us either this, or the alternative, of leaving the Roman Catholics of Ireland, to perish in their ignorance and superstition, and to overwhelm all truth in our land, as they seem to threaten. But his Lordship will excuse me for saying, that the Apostles of the living God, or to speak, in other words, the Holy Ghost, has left us on record a far different opinion; and I say it with deep regret, but with a full confidence that I only assert the fact—that the whole history of the establishment of the Christian faith, is a standing refutation of his Lordship’s principle. Without again recurring to the passages quoted, of the Lord’s address to the Prophets, I would humbly ask, do not all the Acts of the Apostles, furnish us not

only with their authority but their example, for this very "*mode of proceeding*," which his Lordship condemns? Was not this the "*mode of proceeding*" of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. when the Apostle Peter stood up, in the face of those who had embrued their hands in his Master's blood, and charged them boldly with the tremendous fact, that they "*had taken, and by wicked hands had crucified and slain Him.*" This surely was a "*controversial topic*," and as unpalatable too, as could be "*obtruded*" upon man—yet the Lord had inspired, and the Lord blessed this obtrusion of it, on that very day, to the conversion of three thousand souls! Was it not the same, which that Apostle, in conjunction with his colleague John, adopted at Solomon's porch, as recorded in the next chapter of the Acts, iii. ? when he thus testified against the assembled Jews; "*ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you, and killed the Prince of Life whom God hath raised from the dead,*" &c. &c.—when in the midst of this faithful testimony, "*the Priests and the Captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them,*" and "*laid hands on them, and put them in hold until the next day,*" Acts iv. This surely indicated no small disinclination on the part of the Jewish Church to have these topics *obtruded* on them, and conveyed a stronger expression of disinclination too, than the Roman Catholics could exhibit in this country; but what was the result? "*howbeit many of them which heard the word believed.*" Here again, we see converts were made by this "*mode of proceeding.*"

Let us follow the Apostles now in their next step, v. 5. “*On the morrow their rulers and elders and scribes, and Annas, the High Priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the High Priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.*” Now this was, at least, as formidable an array, as Dr. Doyle and all his Deans, Priests, and Professors of the College of Carlow—yet what did the Apostles—did they “abstain from obtruding controversial topics” upon this assembly, “when they appeared disinclined to listen to them?” No. They boldly testified of the Lord Jesus, and against their wickedness—“*This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner, neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.*” And when those authorities threatened, and commanded them not to teach in the name of Jesus—they gave them that answer, which every servant of God should give to a similar command from any authority, “*whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye;*” and when the Apostles all assembled together, and conferred on this matter, having applied to the opposition which the doctrine of the cross encountered, the prophecy contained in the second Psalm, they prayed, “*And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants that with all boldness they may speak thy word—and when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God*

*with boldness.*" Here we see inspired men praying, not for grace to "watch for any indication of a disposition" in the enemies of Christ, "to listen to their instructions," and that they should "abstain from obtruding upon them the Gospel where they appeared disinclined to listen to them," which, if this principle was scriptural, must have been the subject of their prayer—but they prayed for *more boldness to proclaim salvation in spite of all opposition;* and the same Spirit that dictated that prayer, answered it accordingly, with a greater measure of holy boldness, and undaunted zeal in their Master's cause. Is it necessary to pursue the argument further, to show that the mind of the Eternal God is unchangeable in the ordinance of preaching His holy word? Let us follow these Apostles into the next chapter, which proves, that the blessing of the Lord rested upon a firm and faithful adherence to his word, and shows that, "*Believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women,*" Acts v. 14.—That when "*the High Priest rose up, and all they that were with him, which is the sect of the Sadducees, and were filled with indignation, and laid hands on the Apostles, and put them into the common prison—the Angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors,*" and gave them another charge, in opposition to such a principle, "*go, stand, and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life;*" and when the Apostles obeyed the command, and went to preach in the temple, and when the captain and officers brought them before the council, so far from abstaining from obtruding the Gospel on them, they

again confronted the authority of God with theirs—*“We ought to obey God rather than men.”* Again, they charged them with the murder of the Lord Jesus, and proclaimed, *“repentance and remission of sins”* to them in his name. And they were so enraged at the faithful testimony of the Apostles, that *“they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them”*—but when the advice of Gamaliel diverted them from their purpose, then *“when they had called the Apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of the Lord Jesus.”* But here again, that charge was disregarded, for *“daily in the temple and in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ,”* in direct opposition both to the inclination and commands of all the persons of weight and authority in the land.

Now, what was the effect of this “mode of proceeding?” which I presume is as fair a specimen, of that which his Lordship condemns as can be found in the page of Sacred or Church History—we see in the very next chapter, Acts vi. 7—*“The word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly;”* but this was not all—for even of those Priests who were not only the most *“disinclined to listen,”* but the most violent in their opposition, it is added, *“and a great company of the Priests were obedient to the faith.”* Let us trace the proceedings of some others of our Lord’s inspired teachers—did Stephen *“watch for any indications of a disposition to listen to his instructions,”* when his bold and fearless

testimony drew on him that indignation, that could only be quenched in his blood? Acts vii. Did Paul do so, when after his conversion he *preached Christ in the synagogues*, and “*increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus,*” when “*the Jews took counsel to kill him,*” and “*watched the gates day and night to kill him,*” and when “*the disciples took him by night and let him down by the wall in a basket,*” to save his life? Acts ix. Did that holy Apostle watch for these “indications,” when he stood up to preach in the synagogues at Salamis, when he boldly withstood the sorcerer at Paphos, “*Oh! full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the Devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right way of the Lord?*” Did he abstain from obtruding controversial topics in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, when he proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation as opposite to the religion of the Jew, as to that of the Roman Catholic, or of any man who rests as they do on his Church, or his Priest, or his own righteousness for his salvation? “*Be it known unto you men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses,*” and when he gave them the solemn warning, “*Beware lest that come upon you, which was spoken of in the Prophets, behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish, for I work a work in your days—a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you*”—and did not the Lord bless this “mode of proceeding” in making

converts, when "*the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath,*" although "*when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming,*" and they "*stirred up the devout and honourable women, and the chief men of the city, and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts,*" Acts xiii. Did the Apostle adopt this policy in his visit to Iconium, where he went from thence, Acts xiv. "*and so spake, that a great multitude both of the Jews, and also of the Greeks believed. But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made their minds evil affected against the brethren.*" Did the Apostle therefore, retreat, when he saw they "*were disinclined to listen to his instructions?*"—far from it; on the contrary, "*long time therefore abode they, speaking holdly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace.*" In short, throughout the whole history, we see the inspired Apostles adopting the very mode of proceeding, which the Bishop of Ferns forbids, and the Lord bore testimony to the propriety of that proceeding.

Now, let us ask, is the Gospel changed in its importance, or its necessity for man—or is man changed in his character, and his need of salvation as a sinner—or is Jehovah changed in his truth, and his faithfulness, and his power—or is the Bible to be the standard, and the holy Apostles the models for a Christian ministry and a Christian Church? It is unnecessary to go

further; I need not follow the Apostle to Lycaonia, where he was stoned, Acts xiv.—to Philippi, where he was beaten and imprisoned, Acts xvi.—to Athens, where he “*disputed in the synagogue with the Jews and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him.*” I am afraid that Paul, if he could come among us, would be called a sad intemperate, irregular, injudicious fellow in Ireland.—Oh, for a little of the spirit that rested on him!—Oh, for a little of his holy uncompromising zeal, fidelity and boldness!—Oh, for his mantle to drop on some of us, till the ears of indolence, and apathy, and infidelity, and ignorance, and superstition, might tingle through the land! We need not go with him to the Areopagus, where he was mocked, Acts xvii. to Corinth, where “*he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks,*” though “*they opposed themselves and blasphemed,*”—Acts xviii. “*indicating a disinclination to listen to him*”—to Ephesus, where he “*spake boldly in the synagogue for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God,*” and where he “*disputed daily in the school of one Tyrannus, by the space of two years*”—nor do I find him blamed in the page of inspiration, though Demetrius stood up to complain, that, “*this Paul had turned away much people, saying, that they be no gods which are made with hands,*” whether silver, or paste, or wood—though the whole city was moved into a tumult, and though the mass of its inhabitants cried out for about two hours, “*great is Diana of the Ephesians*”—and neither in the midst of the tu-

mults which his faithful testimony excited at Jerusalem, when they "*bound themselves with an oath, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had slain him*"—nor in his bold and fearless address to the trembling Felix—nor in his unshrinking appeal at the tribunal of Festus—nor in his powerful defence before that monarch, whom he "*almost persuaded to be a Christian*"—nor in one of all his "*tumults, his labours, his watchings, fastings;*" his "*perils by his own countrymen, his perils by the Heathen, his perils among false brethren*"—nor in the whole picture of his stupendous Apostolic labours, and his splendid and magnificent Apostolic character—is there one trait to be discovered, which does not stand out, in high and prominent relief, to bear a testimony against the principle, that it is the duty of a man, who calls himself a minister of God, to stand in the midst of a guilty, and ignorant, and superstitious people, or rather indeed to lie down among them, and "watch for any indications of a disposition in them to listen to his instructions," and "abstain from obtruding on them controversial topics," or in other words, the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, on which their salvation depends, "when they appear disinclined to listen to him;" which seems to me much the same, (if, indeed, the judgments and the mercies of Jehovah, are to be counted realities among us, in this liberal and enlightened age,) as if we saw a house on fire in the night, and should be desired, to watch for any indications of the family awakening, and to abstain from alarming them, until they seemed inclined to be getting up! And as to the conclusion, that this "mode of proceeding will

never be successful in making converts ;” I must again affirm, with great reluctance, when I consider the authority from whence the principle comes, but with the most decisive confidence in the truth of my assertion ; that the whole history of the Acts of the Apostles, as given in the word of God—the whole history of Christianity throughout the world, from the Churches of the Apostles, to that, to which it is our high privilege to belong—the very existence of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, is an overwhelming refutation of such a principle ; which, if it be adopted in Ireland, as we have pursued it hitherto, leaves no prospect but a continuation of the wretchedness and misery of this land in time ; and the broad road, crowded with those who are neglected, and those who neglect the salvation of the Lord, the unawakened sinner, and the careless watchman, issuing in the yawning gulph of ruin for eternity.

As I sensibly feel, that nothing but a deep conviction, that a man was standing firmly on the word of the high and holy God, could justify any imputation on a principle, laid down by a superior in the Church ; so I shall not leave that impregnable and lofty ground, to enter into any discussion, which might naturally arise, from an abstract consideration of his Lordship’s sentiment—I shall not stop to examine, how it could be rationally expected, that “indications of a disposition to listen to instructions,” could be discovered ; except in the practical, and experimental application of those instructions—nor how far, as long as men “abstain from

obtruding controversial topics” on others, they can ever measure their inclination or disinclination to listen to them—nor shall I inquire, even though the strongest and most general “disinclination to listen,” were expressed on the part of the Roman Catholics—how it could still be justifiable in men, who have most solemnly pledged themselves to the use of “all faithful diligence to drive away error,” to abandon that diligence to which they stand pledged—nor how it could be justifiable, in those who stand as solemnly pledged to “call upon and encourage others” to this work, in defiance of that pledge, to discourage and dissuade them—in those who are bound as ministers of God, under the most solemn responsibilities, to make light of those responsibilities, which they must carry with them to the bar of their Creator—nor how far it would be irreconcilable to a principle of Christian charity, because there was a general disinclination on the part of Roman Catholics, still to abstain from the use of means, which might be blessed to the salvation of multitudes of that body, who might form an exception, and be anxious to hear—nor shall I inquire, how far that very disinclination, ought to be a stimulus to increased exertion, as the most inveterate disease requires the most active treatment.

I shall leave these points unexamined, and come to the practical application of his Lordship’s principle, on the very ground which his Lordship lays down, and I do not hesitate to assert, that if every other argument were null and void, and that the Bishops and Clergy of the Church of England, were to act even on the ad-

mission, which, if I do not overstrain his Lordship's words, seems implied in them—namely, that if there were any “indications of this disposition to listen to our instructions,” for which we ought to “watch,” that in that case, we ought to give the people those instructions: then I say, if this be the standard of clerical duty, low, and unapostolical as it is, yet even here, we stand utterly inexcusable both before God and man, for a total failure in our duty towards the Roman Catholics. For I am confident in affirming, as I am borne out by the fact in my affirmation; that no body of men could evince, under the circumstances, a more anxious desire to listen, than the Roman Catholics of Ireland, to instructions given to them in that manner, and on those occasions, in which alone, we have any rational ground to claim or expect their attention. And here let me ask, what “indications of a disposition to listen,” are we to expect from Roman Catholics—are we to suppose that they will come into our churches and cathedrals, whenever we chuse to give it out, that it is our good pleasure to expose the errors of their religion? Such an expectation is unreasonable and unjust, for several reasons:—First, because there is a natural prejudice in the minds of Roman Catholics, against coming into a Protestant place of worship. Secondly, because if any might wish to go, it exposes them to the objection, of preparing to turn Protestants, among their more bigotted neighbours. Thirdly, because it exposes them to the indignation of their Priests—and fourthly, because they naturally think and say, that it is very easy for us to stand up and attack their religion, when no one dares to

answer us, or to defend it—but that, if one of their Priests had a power and privilege of answering us, he would soon show us, how contemptible our reasoning was, and vindicate their Church from our aspersions. These and other causes, make it absurd for us to suppose, that we could produce an effect on the Roman Catholic mind of Ireland, by preaching against Popery in our churches—besides preaching, as in a spirit of hostility, against Popery, ought not to be the ground of our appeals to our Roman Catholic countrymen. It ought to be preaching in a spirit of anxiety for their immortal souls—calling upon them in every way, and by every means, most likely to awaken their attention, and to engage their regard, to investigate, to examine by the test of reason, and Scripture, the awful errors of that fatal superstition, in which they have been so unhappily brought up; and as it is to their reason, to their understanding, to their feelings and affections, and to the word of truth we ought to appeal—it is clear, that, that appeal, ought not to be confined to the slow process of printed controversy, which few of them will take the trouble of reading, even if it could be brought within their reach—nor to sermons in churches, which fewer still will hear—but that we should make it a point of ministerial duty, personally to visit and speak to our Roman Catholic parishioners, and to read the Scriptures, and preach to them in every place where they can be induced to come and hear—and still more, to hold regular stated discussions with them and their Priests, or to give stated invitations to them, if they wish to discuss, and that, in a spirit not of hostility, but of

bold, honest, faithful, and at the same time, kind, gentle, affectionate, and patient investigation of the subject.

Now, let us ask, has this been in any respect tried in Ireland—and have the Roman Catholics shown these “indications of a disposition to listen,” for which the Lord Bishop of Ferns desires us to “*watch?*”—I fear not to affirm, that wherever it has been tried, they have evinced a disposition to listen, beyond all, on which the most sanguine anticipation could have ventured to calculate. What, I would ask, has been the disposition exhibited in Carlow—what was the anxiety several years ago, when there were discussions with the Priests, as to the distribution of the Bible, when Roman Catholics in crowds came to hear that important question, of the right of conscience brought to the test of truth and reason? What, on a more recent occasion, when these two gentlemen arrived as a deputation from the British Reformation Society—laymen too, who have come here to Ireland, I am ashamed to say, to set us an example of our duty—to teach us both what we ought to do, and what we might expect from exertion, Mr. Gordon and Mr. Finch? What was the indication of a disposition to listen, on the part of Roman Catholics, when they went to Carlow—when they went plainly, and honestly, and openly, and avowedly, by public advertisement, to bring the doctrines of the Church of Rome to the test of the word of God; and when it was open to Dr. Doyle, and all the members of Carlow College, and all the Priests, and any layman of

respectability, to come forward and reply to their charges? What disposition did the Roman Catholics evince at this public meeting—at night too—in successive evenings—when if they wished to exhibit any indications either of resentment or displeasure, they had time, numbers, opportunity to do so? What did they do? they came in crowds, till there was no room to admit those who wished to come and attend—they listened with propriety, with decency, with civility, with attention, with gratitude. What Priest came forward to oppose? Not one. Now if we only wait for “indications of a disposition to listen,” what more can we expect than this?—yet, what advantage has been taken of it—what has been done, or what is doing in Carlow, that emporium of Romish superstition? Nothing.

Dr. Doyle may sit and reign there, “*illâ se jactet in aulâ*”—he may tell the poor people of that country, that the truths they are to receive, have been settled for them by the Church, “*causa finita est*”—he may praise them for taking the Bible in a pair of tongs, and putting it into the fire. The Pope may blasphemously call it “*the Gospel of the Devil.*” But while the poor are ready to listen, there are none of us to come, and tell them of the salvation of that Bible—none to seek to give them that light of truth, that liberty of conscience, which our ancestors have purchased for us, with their labours and their lives. Their College may flourish, and their Professors parade in their vestments, and train up successors to enslave the mind of Ireland, and impede the dissemination of God’s eternal truth, and

there are none to call them before the people to the test of that truth—none “ready with any faithful diligence to drive away these errors,” or disturb the deep tranquillity of their dark dominion, and yet we complain that our Church is in danger! What wonder that it is?—It would be impregnable, if we contributed but half as much to its security by our exertions, as we do by our neglect, to the security of the Church of Rome. But it is not at Carlow alone, these indications have been exhibited on the part of the Roman Catholics to listen—they have been exhibited through all Ireland at times, and in places, and under circumstances, that are calculated to astonish any man, who knows the power of their Priests, and the infatuating power of the principles of their religion. Mr. Gordon and Mr. Finch, and some who have faithfully assisted them, have put it totally out of the power of any person, who wishes to be guided by fact, rather than by theory, to say, that the Roman Catholics of Ireland are disinclined to listen—they went to places, which we should call some of the most hopeless stations of Roman Catholic bigotry—they went at a time, when we should suppose, that a state of political agitation would have rendered experiment not only fruitless, but dangerous—when some of the warmest advocates for exertion in the cause, considered it not only injudicious, but perilous to attempt it. They went to Ennis, when the tumult of Mr. O’Connell’s election had not yet subsided—when the print of that gentleman’s public prostration before the Bishop, was yet fresh in the dust—when their Bill had not been introduced into Parlia-

ment—when the political excitement of the Association and the Brunswick Clubs was at the zenith; yet at that time, they went plainly, honestly, openly, by public advertisement, to bring the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church to the test of the word of God, and not only so, but at night too, when not only if the people had not been inclined to listen, but if they had been inclined to attack, and to insult, or to injure them, they had abundant opportunity to do so.—Yet, what did they do? they listened with attention and with respect, and there was not a Priest to stand up to venture on a vindication of their principles. They went to Limerick, to Tralee, to Nenagh, to Waterford, to Mountrath, to several parts of Ireland, both in the north and south—to every place, where it was the most unlikely that they should be received, yet whether opposed or not, in argument, as they were in some few instances—they were universally listened to by Roman Catholics, even when some individuals, as at Mountrath, endeavoured to excite a tumult against them, and the only opposition they encountered to frustrate the formation of a branch of their Society, I write it with regret and shame, was from a Dean of the Church of England, in the City of Londonderry!!!

I appeal to the clergymen who accompanied them, or assisted at those meetings, to men whose testimony, whose judgment and whose character would carry weight to all who know them—I appeal to the laity—I appeal to all the gentlemen from whom they derived assistance, and I ask, if it be our duty “to watch for an indication on

the part of Roman Catholics, of a disposition to listen to our instructions," whether they could possibly have anticipated such a disposition, as exists in every quarter of the country, when faithful honest exertion calls it forth. What was it in the metropolis in the months of November and December, 1828, January and February, 1829, when the very highest state of public excitement stimulated every passion in the human breast—when their ears were ringing with the harangues of the Association on one side, and of the Brunswick Clubs on the other—when those who addressed them, absolutely trembled, (I speak from experience) lest some inadvertent word might receive a political construction from the auditory—yet even then—at night—in the midst of the Rotunda—crowded with an assembly, of whom, at least, the half were Roman Catholics—no preacher in a congregation was ever listened to, with more solemn and attentive silence, than were those who addressed them, plainly, simply, faithfully, but kindly, on the errors of their religion. The interruptions that an individual might occasion, only served to exhibit the determination of the body, not to let their attention be diverted from the momentous topic before them—and if this was the case, when every feeling in the minds of Roman Catholics was excited in political hostility against Protestants—what is to be expected from exertion now? Let us look back to the æra of the Reformation, and let us ask, if when the advantages of printing were hardly universally felt—when there was scarcely a Bible to be found—when books were inaccessible—when the capability of reading was almost

unknown in the humbler classes of life, and scarce even in the higher—when the channels of appeal to the public were comparatively few—when the avenues to their notice were all guarded by the Priests—when the whole civil and ecclesiastical power and authority, enforced by the most tyrannical and tremendous sanctions, were all devoted to the cause of Rome—if, even under these circumstances, the boldness and fidelity of a few poor Monks could produce, under God, such an influence, as to effect a reformation in a great part of Europe, from the awful superstitions of that Church—shall we, with the word of God in our hands—with books at our command—with all the powers of the press at our service—with a people educating, or thirsting for education—with capabilities of appealing through a thousand avenues, and pouring instruction through a thousand channels into the ear of our country—with all that wealth, and talent, and learning, and opportunity, and influence, can command, and all the facilities, and the protection, that an enlightened, liberal Government, and a free Constitution, and an Established Church can afford—shall we, with all these means, and advantages, and blessings, sit down, and surrender the population of our country, over to the domination of a superstition in one sense the most deplorable that ever enslaved the mind of man? A superstition that involves, and has involved our countrymen in reference to their eternal interests, in the most awful and systematic rejection of their Creator's word—mutilation of his law, abandonment of his Gospel, and denouncement of his revelation—and a superstition which, in

reference to the interests of time, has plunged our country to this hour, in all the miseries of ignorance, and poverty, and want, and discord; which has marked her progress with misery and desolation, and written her history, in characters of tears and blood.

If the Bishops and Clergy of the Church of England, persist in the line of conduct they have hitherto adopted, with respect to the Church of Rome; if the Church is in danger, it is neither, I repeat it, to Dissenters, or to the Church of Rome, we are to trace it, but to that criminal neglect which our God shall justly return upon our own heads. If the outward privileges, and gifts, and blessings, with which he has been graciously pleased, in his providence, to endow the Church, which in its principles is "the pillar and ground of His truth," should be withdrawn; it shall be but a just retributive return upon the heads of those who grasped the outward privileges with avidity, but did not consider the truth worthy of fidelity in its defence, or zeal in its propagation. What then is to be done? It were a task too difficult, for an insignificant individual to presume to say—a child can point out a leak in a vessel, which threatens her destruction, but it may require all the strength and experience of the whole ship's crew to stop it, and to save her. It is a question that is to be applied to the understanding, and to the conscience, and to the heart of every Bishop, and of every Minister within the pale of our Church—what, but individual principle, can feel the weight of individual responsibility—and what, but united energy

and wisdom, guided and governed by Divine word and power, can make the efforts that are necessary for the salvation of our countrymen, and for the preservation of those blessings and privileges, which we derive from such a religion, and so established in our land ?

Let us calmly and dispassionately consider the state of the Roman Catholic religion, and the state of the Established Church—let us again recur to that question—let it be printed in capital letters, and placed on the covers of our Bibles; to be answered individually by us, as we shall answer at the bar of our God—**“CAN ROMAN CATHOLICS DEPEND FOR THEIR SALVATION UPON THOSE REFUGES WHICH THEIR CHURCH SETS BEFORE THEM, AND BE IN A STATE OF SALVATION?”** I take it for granted, there is not a Protestant divine in the Church, so totally ignorant of that religion, and so awfully ignorant of his Bible, as to answer that question in the affirmative; for nothing but a radical ignorance of one or both, could possibly dictate it. Let every individual for himself, then consider on his knees, the miserable condition of these poor people, when the only scriptural hope of their salvation is, *that they really do not rest on the principles of their Church*—and as the fact of Jesus Christ having been crucified for sinners, is admitted, and expressed in their services, it is only in the charitable trust, that God in the riches of his mercy, may have preserved the minds of any of them from the poisonous neutralizing superstitions that are mixed with this in their

religion, and may have enabled them to rest their souls on their Redeemer, in opposition to the refuges of lies which their Church sets before them—that we can entertain on solid scriptural grounds, the slightest hope of their salvation. It is only as the solemn sense of personal duty, and personal accountability to God for our neglect of them, shall be awakened in the breast of every Bishop, and every Minister, that any thing like a united effort can be made in their behalf. Let us remember, that we wear the robes of our ministry, whether the gown of the Minister, or the lawn of the Prelate, on the solemn pledge of labouring to drive away the fatal superstitions that overwhelm our wretched countrymen. If, when we were asked that solemn question, “*Are you ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines, contrary to God’s word, and both privately and openly to call upon, and encourage others to the same?*”\* If any Minister, or if any Bishop had refused to make the solemn pledge, “*I am ready, the Lord being my helper*”—that Minister had never been invested with the sacred gown, nor that Bishop with the pure and holy lawn of the Church of England—and shall we give such solemn pledges to gain the high authority of our office, and then abandon them, when we have attained the object?—Have these words no meaning—or have we no respect to it? Oh! we have forgotten our solemn duties and responsibilities—we

\* I use the question put to the Bishops, as including the obligations of all orders in the Church.

have been deceived by the names of things—we have mistaken the law of public opinion, which branded Popery as a superstition, and in which we acquiesced, for that law of God, of Christian fidelity, of Christian responsibility, of Christian duty, and of Christian love, which bound us by every obligation, human and divine, to promote the instruction and reformation of our countrymen, but which we have totally neglected.—We imagined our Church secure in that contemptible, and transitory political ascendancy, (how contemptible, and how transitory, the annihilation of it has evinced!) which, as it was based on human laws, has sunk with the quicksand foundation on which it stood; and we forgot in this, that high and holy ascendancy of our Church, which the truth of the eternal God alone can give to a religion, and which human laws and human power, can neither give nor take away. We have merged the mighty majesty and the authority of God, in the mimic majesty and authority of man, and let us beware, lest our God shall teach us in the desertion of the one, the dreadful sacrifice we have made in the abandonment of the other. What is the actual state of our Church—are not the protections which the laws have hitherto extended over the Church of England, gradually withdrawing or withdrawn—is not the law of public opinion keeping pace with the law of the land; so that dissenting from our religion is considered of as little importance, as changing the place where you purchase your commodities? Where is that high and dignified spirit of respect and homage, for all that is august, and venerable, and sacred, in our Established

religion, which, but a few years ago, would as soon have contemplated the dissolution of the British Constitution, the annihilation of the British Empire, as the separation of the Established Church, from being an integral part and parcel of its existence? What public paper does not now hold forth, as a matter of presumptuous speculation, the dismemberment of our Church, and the spoliation of our ecclesiastical property? Is not the standard of public principle, if we can call it by that name, sinking into that bathos of nominal liberality, but of real infidelity, that one sort of religion is little better than another—and are we so weak and blind, as not to see the facility of imperceptible, but inevitable transition from this principle to the next, which must obtain alike in Popery as in Dissent, that the property of the majority should never be given to support the religion of the minority in a country. I appeal not to that feeling, which is too base to be entertained for a moment, that we are called on to exert ourselves, for the defence of the property of the Church. But I say to every man, who is sensible of the invaluable blessing of such a “pillar and ground of truth,” as the Established Church is in this Empire, that we are called on, if there be any thing responsive in our breasts, to exert ourselves to maintain, to assert, to vindicate, and to advance the great and holy principles of our religion. We are called on to advance them, as the cause of our God—we are called on to advance them, as those with which He has entrusted us for his own glory, and for the salvation of our fellow-men—we are called on to advance them, for the everlasting

interests of those, who are bowed beneath the domination of a superstition, which debases the intellect, corrupts the morals, and destroys the immortal souls of our countrymen, our neighbours, our companions, our friends, perhaps our relations—we are called on, by all the responsibilities that man can incur, by all the claims on our feelings of humanity, and Christian love, which our fellow-men can possess—by all the solemn pledges which man can make to his religion, and by all the warnings, and denunciations, and commands, which he can receive from his God. We are called on by all these, to stand forward, if we have a claim to the name of Christians, I might say of men, and to marshal the principles of eternal truth against those of superstition, and of infidelity in our country—it is not in the hostility of the Dissenter, nor in the superstition of the Roman Catholic, nor in the latitudinarianism of the Infidel, but it is in the neglect and apathy of the man, who professing a regard for our religion, is deaf to these calls to exertion in his sphere, whatever it be, it is in him we must recognize the worst and most dangerous enemy to the Established religion in this country.

Let us cease to take the law of public opinion for our guide on the subject, instead of the law of our God, or the pure and holy principles of our religion. The miserable state of this wretched, distracted country, has set up a sort of political standard of zeal for our Church. A political hostility to Popery has been mistaken for the distinctive mark of the Protestant religion; it has superinduced among us, what never ought to have ex-

isted in a Christian Church—a political hostility to Roman Catholics ; and it has superseded what never ought to have been forgotten for a moment—a determined, uncompromising, unflinching opposition to their superstitions—founded, not on antipathy, but on a principle of love to the people—not on a contemptible consideration of the temporal concerns of our own religion, but on a deep and solemn anxiety for the eternal interests of our fellow men. Accordingly, a pamphlet, or a speech, or a sermon, or some sort of generally expressed or understood opinion, hostile to the political advancement of the Roman Catholic claims, has been sufficient to stamp a man as a zealous defender of the Protestant religion—it has advanced more than one to wealth and dignity in our Church—while the same individual, who would labour with all the powers of his mind to prevent Roman Catholics from going into the British senate, would let them go on in multitudes around him, professing a superstition, calculated to hurry them into perdition, without a sigh for their fate, or an effort to prevent it. Yes : had we been but half so zealous to prevent our Roman Catholic countrymen from going in their guilt into eternal death, as we have been to prevent their admission into the Parliament of England, our Church and our country had presented a different spectacle this day. But while we have time given us to repent, let us awake to a sense of our guilt, our danger, and our duty ; let us remember that the principles of a religion cannot be worth defending, if they are not worth diffusing ; and if we profess a genuine regard for the interests of our Church, let us remember that it is

more than suspicious in its origin and in its tendency, if it is not expressed in zeal for the temporal and eternal interests of our fellow-creatures, and for the advancement of the glory and the kingdom of our God. There is one, indeed, in our land, who, in the face of contempt, and scorn, and insult, from Roman Catholics, and of no small reproach, too, for want of *judgment*, and *discretion*, and *charity*, among those who ought to have known the truth of his principles, and followed his example, had the courage, the integrity, the fidelity, to announce to the Church of Rome the tremendous fact, that their Church was a "CHURCH WITHOUT A RELIGION." He spoke a truth as certainly as the Bible is the revelation of Jehovah; and he has acted, in the lofty station which he fills in our Church, with a consistency commensurate with the solemn tenour of his assertion. He has privately and publicly encouraged and supported those who have been anxious to maintain the truths of their religion in opposition to the awful errors under which our poor countrymen are groaning. He has granted every facility which his influence and his power could command, to maintain the doctrines of the Established Church, not only within his own diocese, but he permits his clergy to labour in a missionary sphere; under proper provisional restriction for the care of their own parochial duties, through all this blind and benighted country. Another, worthy indeed, of the exalted rank which he holds, has made his diocese a sort of missionary station for the use of the Roman Catholics within it; and he has desired all his clergy to be ready to labour, and to assist each other in that

sacred call of Christian duty ; and, knowing the imperative necessity of using the language which the people understand, he has recently determined, that, after a given period, sufficient for the acquirement of the Irish language, he will not ordain any man for his diocese who cannot preach in their native tongue to the Roman Catholics ; and he has been honoured with the reproach of a Bishop of that Church, who informs his Grace of the “ disinclination ” of the people to listen to the instructions of his clergy—these exertions and these encouragements to labour against the superstitions of Rome, are considered among some of us, as quite unnecessary—as uncharitable too ; there is *no need of offending our Roman Catholic brethren*—they only “ *believe a little more than we do,*” as others only “ *believe a little less :*” *such injudicious zeal is only calculated to disturb Christian peace :* nay—but it is calculated to disturb unchristian apathy, to awaken unchristian indolence, to set a bright example to unchristian negligence. The principles of such men will be appreciated—their characters will be respected—their memory will be revered ; when the diffusion of God’s eternal word shall have raised the law of opinion to its proper standard, and when it shall have stamped the timid, the temporizing, the unchristian policy, that has guided so many of us, with the just and awful brand of a guilty neglect of the salvation of our fellow-men, and an abandonment of the truth and glory of our God.

Let us ask, if in a church of which the Lord could testify, “ *I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy*

*patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil, and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars, and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.*" If in such a church, the Lord could say, "*Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember, therefore, whence thou art fallen and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come to thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent,*" Rev. ii. 2-5—if the Lord could make this charge, and issue this denunciation against such a church as this, What, let us ask, have we to learn from it for ourselves?—what works, what labour, in a nation, four-fifths of which are apostatized from God, has the Lord seen in us? Have we "tried them which say they are apostles, and are not," and proved them to be liars? No; but we have let them go on deceiving the nation with their lies—would to God that were all! We have instructed them in the lying system which they were to teach—we have supplied funds to educate them in these lies, and sent them among the people to proclaim them—and if a church in which the Lord vouchsafed to notice the reverse of all this, was threatened with the removal of her candlestick, because she had left her first love, is it to be wondered at if the light of ours is now twinkling in the socket? I will venture to put this case to the judgment and consciences of all the divines of the Church of England—Suppose in these days, when infidel charity is so much the fashion, that some advocate of *liberality* were to bring into parliament a bill, to

alter that single question in our services of the ordination of priests and the consecration of bishops, and to have it put thus—“*Are you ready with all faithful diligence to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God’s word, AMONG WHICH YOU ARE NOT UNCHARITABLY TO RECKON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIGION.*”

What should we say to this? should we not all cry out that the Church was about to be subverted—that all distinctions between Protestantism and Popery were about to be done away—that there was in fact a practical abandonment of all the distinctive character of our religion—would not all the Protestant feeling in the British nation, rise up like one man, against this gross renunciation of the principles of the Church of England? But let us ask if it be so dangerous and so disgraceful to admit such a principle in theory, what is it not only to admit, but to adhere to it in practice? If we acknowledge the justice of the sentiment, “*quod factu fædum est, idem est et dictu turpe,*” how much more must we confess the irresistible conclusion, that, if it were a shame and a reproach, and an abandonment of our religion to admit it even in expression, it is more and worse than this to reduce it to wilful, deliberate, and inveterate practice in our Church—nay, to justify, to vindicate, to recommend it, in other terms, perhaps, and softer phrases, but with equal renunciation of the principle that ought to actuate, to influence, and to inspire us.

What difference there is between *telling us we ought to except the errors of the Roman Catholic Church, from those which we pledge ourselves at our ordination, to "use faithful diligence to drive away,"* and telling us after our ordination, that we are "*to abstain from obtruding controversial topics on Roman Catholics, when they appeared disinclined to listen to them,*" I confess I am not enough of a casuist to comprehend. But though I have taken this sentiment from the Lord Bishop of Ferns, and have ventured, I trust not in any manner derogatory to the dignity of his Lordship's high and holy office, or to the vast solemnity of the subject, to impugn that sentiment as coming from a bishop of the Established Church; yet I by no means intend to impute to his Lordship any *peculiar* neglect or apathy on the subject: on the contrary, he has had a few sermons preached in his diocese on the errors of the Roman Catholic Church, and has written something against them; but what is this in such a cause? and when, with all this, his Lordship can lower the standard of our duty to the level of such a principle as this, what must be the state of our Church in general, in reference to the errors of our countrymen? It must be confessed with grief and shame, and would to God that facts could warrant an overwhelming refutation of the statement; that whether we consider the awful errors of the Roman Catholic religion, their direct opposition to the revealed truth of the eternal God, and the deadly and destructive ruin which they entail on the immortal souls of men—or whether we consider the infinite value of that religion which the providence of Jehovah

has established in this country—a religion founded on His own immutable and glorious Gospel—or the vast weight of those obligations, with which we are bound to maintain that religion—or the solemnity of those pledges which we have given, to “*use all faithful diligence in driving away all erroneous and strange doctrines,*” while we know that those of the Romish Church were principally intended—or whether we consider the extraordinary privileges and blessings with which we have been favoured, and the opportunities, and facilities which we have enjoyed, of discharging every duty, and fulfilling every responsibility, and redeeming every pledge; in short, in whatever point of view we consider the subject, with reference to their religion, or our own,—their wants, or our duties,—man, or God,—time, or eternity—it must be stated, I say, with feelings of shame and sorrow, that in regard to the Roman Catholic religion, we have been living, if not wilfully, determinately, or obstinately—to say the least, ignorantly, carelessly, and sinfully, in the practical neglect of the most solemn branches of our duty to our religion, to our country, to our fellow-creatures, and to our God. What are we to do then? “*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,*” Rev. ii. 7. Let us hear what the Spirit saith to that church at Ephesus—“*Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works,*” Rev. ii. 5. What were the “*first works*” of the church of England?—what were her “*first works*” in the days when she bore from every pulpit, her faithful testimony against the superstitions

of the Church of Rome? when her Cranmers, and Latimers, and Ridley's, and Hoopers, and Jewells, and Halls, blew the trumpet from the watch-towers in the land? when that fidelity in endeavouring to promote a reformation, was acknowledged as the primary duty of a Christian Church, which the ignorance and infidelity of some in the nineteenth century, can now denominate "*a crusade?*" What were the "*first works*" of the Church of England, when that spiritual form of worship was composed, which is now but tolerated by some among us—one of the creeds of which, can be unblushingly impugned, where it ought to be chiefly venerated and maintained; and suffered to be attacked with impunity, by those who ought to lay down their very lives in its defence? What were her "*first works*" when those very Articles of religion were composed—the faithful fundamental principles of which, on the very ground of the salvation of the human soul, are now a by-word and a scoff, among many of those who are nominally members of her communion? What were the "*first works*" of the Church of England, when those excellent and venerable Homilies were composed, which are now forsooth, "*not only disused but unusable,*" in this enlightened age; in which, one of our polished classic congregations "would sometimes be perplexed to retain its gravity, during the most guarded recitation, provided it were a faithful one, of any of them, taken at a venture"—what were her "*first works?*" They were labours of apostolical truth—they were works of apostolical fidelity, and boldness, and scriptural purity, and wisdom—they converted,

under the blessing of God, a nation—and they established, under His blessing, a religion which has made that nation the first and greatest in the world—a religion, which, by the sacred influence of its principles, and the holy standard of its morals, preserved that nation, as a nation, uncorrupted and unshaken, amidst the prostitutions and convulsions of all the rest in Europe—which preserved her venerated Monarch, unmoved in principle and in power upon his throne—which kept the vestal fire of pure eternal truth, still safe and unextinguished on her altars, when every altar and every throne beside, was trampled beneath the feet of infidelity, and anarchy, and despotism. What were the “*first works*” of the Church of England? They were the works of those, who considered an apathy as to the religion of their fellow-men, a virtual abandonment of their own; who felt that a disregard of the progress of superstition, was a contempt for the truth, and the injunctions of divine revelation; that it was a criminal neglect of the eternal interests of their fellow-creatures, and a compromise of the honour and glory of their God—they were the works of men who endeavoured to provide, in our Church, for a perpetuity of that principle which actuated themselves in its enlargement, and which was sealed with the divine blessing in its establishment in the country—with what success they made the effort, the past and present state of Ireland proclaims—they left us in their revered writings, public documents of their principles, which some who ought to be the last to do so, have endeavoured to bring, at least, into disuse, if not into contempt among us—

they left us in their conduct, a lofty standard of example, which some who ought to be the last to do so, have attempted to level, even lower than that, which superstition itself recognizes and confesses, as the duty of a Christian Church—they left us sacred pledges, to be given by all who should succeed them in the ministry, of faithful zeal in the advancement of our own religion, and in the reformation of those, who were in darkness and ignorance around us—pledges which we all have solemnly given, and which, the Roman Catholic religion of Ireland exhibits a melancholy proof, that we have as universally disregarded. Oh! that He, who is gracious and full of compassion, long suffering, and of great goodness, may speak to every one of our hearts His solemn admonition, “*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches.*” Oh! that He may speak to the heart and conscience of the Church of England—“*Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*” What then is to be done? Let every man who considers the solemnity of the vows which he has made, when he lays his head upon his pillow, in his Glebe, or in his Palace, reflect thus with himself—“these temporal blessings—this property—this house—these spiritual mercies—this station—this high and holy office, and dignity, I have received from the Church of my country, under my solemn pledge, to diffuse the truths she maintains, and to reform the errors against which she protests. What have I done this day in

the discharge of this? I have pledged myself ‘*to use all faithful diligence*’ to fulfil it, and ‘*to call on and encourage others so to do.*’ Have I used any such diligence this day, or is it my intention to use any to-morrow?—I am set as a watchman on this tower by the Lord—have I ‘*lifted up my voice like a trumpet*’—have I spoken to ‘*warn the wicked from his way,*’ or do I intend to do so—do I care whether or not he perishes in his iniquity—or shall I not hear and fear, when the Lord saith, that if he does so perish, ‘*his blood he will require at my hands?*’”

Let me suppose the minds of all in our sacred office, impressed with such reflections as these, and if they be not just, our religion is only “*a cunningly devised fable*”—then, let me ask, what is to be done—what steps are to be taken—what are the members of our Church to do, if it be granted that it is our duty, individually and collectively, to labour for the spiritual instruction and reformation of our Roman Catholic countrymen? It is not possible to lay down general rules, which must vary according to the age, the capabilities, the talents, the situation, the present avocations and employments, of every Minister in the Church; of whom many, who feel deeply interested on the subject of the Roman Catholic errors, do not see clearly how they should commence; and others are so entirely engaged in the duties of their own parochial charge, that they could only contribute a portion of assistance in a well regulated system of reformation; but there are efforts which might be made—which ought to be made—

unless some more simple and effective be devised, which would tell in a little time in every diocese, and in every parish in Ireland. I should humbly venture to say, that the following could, under a divine blessing, be easily and effectively adopted.

Let every Bishop in Ireland, either ordain or select from the clergy in his diocese, two men, who shall give themselves exclusively to this work; and since the labours of the Parochial Clergy among their Protestant Parishioners, preclude in several instances, even when they are most anxious, the necessary exertions, let these two men in every diocese be set apart exclusively, as Missionaries to the Roman Catholics—let them go on *a continual mission* through their diocese, with full authority to preach, not only in every pulpit, but in every barn, and every house, and every place, where the Lord shall open a door for them—nor let the idea of irregularity operate in such a case; if Bishops give the necessary license, no place will be irregular—let us remember that, that Apostle, of whom the best among us is not worthy to unloose the latchet of his shoes, went about teaching, not only publicly, but from house to house, and that he disputed daily in the market-place—let us remember, it is far more irregular, that we should leave our fellow-creatures perishing in ignorance and superstition, than that we should preach to them the glad tidings of salvation in any place, where their prejudices will permit them to hear us; and let us recollect, that the application of a rule, which may be of much importance in the discipline of a regularly

Established Church, to the circumstances of this miserable and neglected country, is only an abuse of it, and a violation of principles infinitely higher than a point of discipline, even of the first and most imperative duties of Ministers of the Christian religion. Let these Missionaries go in regular rotation through every parish in the diocese, and let their stay in each, be regulated by the number of Roman Catholic inhabitants, the work to be done, and the opportunities which the Lord affords them for their labour. Let them have general notices printed, which they can carry with them every where, leaving merely blanks for time and place, that they will either preach or open a discussion, as it may be, on some given doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, on such a day, and at such a place, inviting the Roman Catholics to hear, if it be a sermon, and the Priest of the parish to come and discuss, if he wishes, if it be a discussion, or allowing any respectable layman the same privilege. Let them carry with them short tracts on the different points, which they intend to bring before the notice of the people, and which, if properly and systematically arranged, may serve at all times for universal diffusion—let these tracts consist of quotations, not from far-fetched subjects, and learned authors, that the poor know nothing of, but from their own catechisms, which they, and their children have been taught; and let these extracts be brought into plain, clear, and simple contrast with the truths of the Sacred Scriptures—and let each tract be so arranged, as to serve for a little text-book for their sermons, or their discussions, and after their sermon or discussion is

over, let these tracts be distributed among the people, who will thereby both have their minds furnished with truths to reflect on, and their memories refreshed with those which they have heard, and their attention called to their own catechisms, and to a comparison of them with the word of God. Let these Missionaries take their stand upon the holy word of God—let them not permit the subtlety of Priests, or the snare of their own learning, to withdraw them in discussion to the names and authorities of men—let them hear no authority, and rely on no authority, but “*thus saith the Lord,*” “*to the law and to the testimony*”—let this be their rock, and this their sole foundation. Let them arrange with the Parochial Ministers of three or four adjacent parishes, as to the exact time of their discussions, and let these Ministers attend, to aid the Missionaries, and to aid each other at these seasons. Let the Priests have due notice of each day of discussion, and let the people see that there is every opportunity afforded them to defend the errors of their Church, if they shall feel that they are competent to do so. Let them keep up a correspondence with their Bishop, informing him of their routes and destinations every week, that he may know where to communicate with them, and that they may have the benefit of his direction and advice, if necessary—let them be confined to their respective dioceses, as thus, they will be better acquainted with the peculiar local circumstances of each parish; and if it should seem advisable to exchange for some time the sphere of their labours, let this be regulated at the discretion of the Bishops, who

could grant their licenses as they might consider right. If the labours of any individuals seemed peculiarly acceptable or peculiarly blest to the conversion of Roman Catholics, it might be very important to enlarge the sphere of their usefulness.

How are these Missionaries to be supported? Clearly by the Bishops and Clergy of their respective dioceses. Is it much that a Bishop and his Clergy should contribute jointly £300. per annum, £150. to each of these men who were labouring in their Master's service, and helping them in their respective spheres. Let their expenses too, be borne by the hospitality of those Clergymen who could accommodate them, and by the Bishop himself, in his turn—if "*use hospitality one to another without grudging,*" is a general Christian precept, how much more should it be applied to a Christian ministry towards each other; and if a Bishop should be "*a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men*" generally, how much more of those who so labour, and in such a cause? But this is a point in which the Bishops and Clergy of our Church would be more forward to act, than any writer could be to suggest—if the principle were once admitted, that the Missionaries be employed, the contribution for their support would be easily arranged.

What sort of teachers ought these Missionaries to be? What in doctrine, and what in life? What in their capabilities, acquirements, and conduct on their mission? Most important questions. What sort of

teachers in their doctrine? There was a time when it were unnecessary to have asked the question. There was a time when it were enough to have answered such a question with, "*what doctrine should they preach but the Gospel of Christ? which is a synonymous term for the doctrines of the Church of England.*" But now, in these "latter days," when the Homilies are become "*in some respects obsolete*" and "*unusable*" in our Church, it is necessary to enter a little into explanation, and to go back a little to first principles. I shall not attempt to enlarge on every topic of Divine truth, which should be comprehended within the scope of such Missionary instructions; but I shall confine myself to one single point, on which the main foundation of all Popish error rests, as I have elsewhere more fully stated, and on which the main hinge of all the controversy turns—I mean, the fundamental Article of man's Justification before God; and on this point, I fear not to say, that unless a man maintains in plain and Scriptural truth, the fundamental principle of the salvation of the human soul, that "*man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law*"—in the words of Scripture, Romans iii. 28. that "*we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith, not for our doings or deservings*"—in the words of our 11th Article. "*That no man can, by his own acts, works, and deeds, (seem they never so good) be justified, and made righteous before God; but that every man of necessity is constrained to seek for another righteousness or justification to be received at God's own hands; that is to say, the*

*forgiveness of his sins and trespasses, in such things as he has offended; and this justification or righteousness, which we receive of God's mercy and Christ's merits, embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God for our perfect and full justification.*"—"So that Christ is now the righteousness of all them that do truly believe in him. He for them paid their ransom by his death. He for them fulfilled the law in his life; so that now, in him, and by him, every true Christian man may be called a fulfiller of the law"—in the words of one of these same "*unusable and obsolete*" Homilies, 1st Part, Hom. on Salvation. I say, if a man does not fully, clearly, and Scripturally, hold and maintain this truth, which is the essence of the Gospel of Christ, in opposition to the Popish doctrine of salvation, by man's works, whether moral, ceremonial, or religious, that man is totally unfit, and incompetent to preach to Roman Catholics, or to enlighten or convert them. If he could succeed by his arguments, and his eloquence, and his learning, in convincing them of the falsehood of some of their grosser superstitions, nay, if he could bring them to hold every principle that he maintains himself—to leave the Roman Catholic Church, and to become zealous professors of the Protestant religion; still they remain unenlightened—still ignorant—still unconverted, in the genuine sense of the word: they have left one form of religion for another—a form of superstition, if you please, for a form of sound words: but it is but a *form*—they have not fled for refuge to lay hold on that hope which the Bible sets before them—that one, that

only hope, *salvation through the righteousness and atonement of a crucified and risen Saviour*. A Protestant, who holds not this hope for his own immortal soul, differs in nothing but in name from a Roman Catholic. Nay, Popery has many consolations (if refuges of lies can be called such) for her conscience, that such Protestantism as this does not possess. Popery is nothing but the conglomeration of those vain hopes and refuges, which avarice and superstition have invented, and ignorance and guilt embraced, gradually accumulating through successive ages, to supply that mighty want of an immortal sinner, *peace of conscience towards an offended God*, and of which her apostacy from the Gospel of the Redeemer, had left the Romish Church stripped, and destitute, and naked; and these vain hopes and refuges, are the rags in which the mother of harlots clothes herself; she boasts herself of these—she buys, she sells, she rejoices, and she perishes in the midst of them. The Protestant faith has cast these off, and turns back the sinner for salvation to his Bible and his Redeemer, to that Gospel which reveals Him as the “*LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*”—His precious blood as the fountain for our sins—His exceeding great and precious promises, as the consolation of our consciences, and the refuge of our souls. The Protestant that rests not his justification upon Him, has but “the form of godliness, but he denies the power thereof:” he has the name of Protestantism, without the enjoyment of its blessings, and the corrupt principle of Popery, without the delusive consolation of its superstitions; and to send out such a man to preach to

the Roman Catholics of Ireland, would be sending a man to enlighten others, who needed to be enlightened himself—would be like sending a man who bowed in the temple of the “unknown God” at Athens, to reform the worshippers of “Diana of the Ephesians.” I know how very unpopular this statement must be—I fear that there are too many who will feel a deep offence at it—but it is the offence of the Cross of Christ—and oh, may but my soul have grace and strength, never to be ashamed of it in life or death!—I say then as to doctrine, that Missionaries to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, must preach in all its truth and fulness, the Gospel of the blessed Jesus—or they but go forth to “sow the wind and reap the whirlwind among them.”

What sort of men should they be in their lives?—Men who should “*not count those lives dear, so that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry they have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God,*” Acts xx. 24—they should “*be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might,*” Eph. vi. 10—they should “*be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves,*” Matt. x. 16—they should “*neither be afraid of men’s words, nor dismayed at their looks,*” Ezek. ii. 6—they should “*speak the Word of God with boldness,*” Acts iv. 31—they should “*endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ,*” 2 Tim. ii. 3—they should “*contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered to the saints,*” Jude 3—while at the same time, they should be “*gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meek-*

ness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth," 2 Tim. ii. 25—they should "follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness"—they should "fight the good fight of faith," 1 Tim. vi. 11, 12—"watch in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist," (even though the name of *evangelical* is a reproach among us)—"make full proof of their ministry," 2 Tim. iv. 5. Such men as these, alone are fitted to go forth on a mission like this, and "who is sufficient for these things?"

What sort of men should they be in their capabilities, acquirements, and conduct on their mission? They should be men, competent to address their auditory with plainness, simplicity, and power—men, who following the great apostolical exemplar, should go among the people, "*not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto them the testimony of God, but determined not to know any thing among them, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified,*" 1 Cor. ii. 1, 2—they should be competent both to speak with readiness, simplicity, and precision in discussion, and still more, to lecture with facility on the Word of God—for this is not only necessary in addressing the people on their mission, but if discussions are conducted as they ought to be, exposition of the Scripture will constitute the most important part of them. It is here that the utter incompetence of the Roman Catholic Priests, will be most clearly and effectively demonstrated to the people—they will endeavour

to involve the questions at issue, in the subtleties of distinctions or logical quibbles, and to lead their opponents into the endless and perplexing labyrinths of decrees of Councils and opinions of Fathers, and into the useless and varied contradictions of human authorities, &c. &c. and in the use of these weapons, with which alone their Church can be defended, several of the Roman Catholic Priests, men of learning, and genius, and ability, are perfectly competent to meet any of the most able opponents, who could be arrayed in discussion against them; and when we permit them to lead us into such absurd and hopeless questions, we may have learned in some discussions, which have been held already, what worthless fruits we shall reap from our labour. But when they are called on to take the Word of the living God and expound it, and reconcile it to their system—when they are held firmly with an unclenching grasp, to that only test of eternal truth—when they are summoned to wield the “*sword of the Spirit,*” it is then their weakness is exhibited—it is the sword of a giant, in the hand of a baby—it can but hurt or wound itself, but is unable to inflict even a scar upon another. I do not say this to undervalue the learning, the talents, the industry, the zeal, of any of the Roman Catholic priesthood—it is their system, that miserable system in which their minds have been enthralled and trammelled, which renders the effort impracticable to the capacities of man, and places it beyond his power to reconcile it to the Word of God; and it is by bringing the Bible to bear upon the superstitions of their Church—by a clear exposition of its

eternal truth, in close comparison with their common and acknowledged doctrines, handing over the Bible to the Priests in turn, to reconcile those doctrines to the Word of God—it is thus, and only thus, that full, effective operation can be given to the system of public discussion, on the errors of their religion. I say these Missionaries should be fully competent to lecture with readiness on the Word of God, and they should be both aware of, and prepared to answer the passages which the Church of Rome adduces to maintain her errors—they should, of course, be able to preach extemporaneously, as the nature of their mission makes it indispensable; and should be able to avail themselves of every opportunity which may present itself, of appeal, of argument, of illustration, of application, “*by manifestation of the truth to commend themselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God*”—indeed, if our ministers do not generally cultivate a talent of extemporaneous exposition of the Scriptures, I know not how they can be qualified to engage in the Roman Catholic controversy.

I understand that there are some persons in our Church, who affect to make light of this, nay, who are very much opposed to it. I have heard, that there have been some attempts made in one quarter, to prevent ministers from expounding the Scriptures in their parishes to their flocks, unless from a written exposition, and that a pledge has been demanded to this effect, that they would never speak extemporaneously on the Word of God!! Far be it from me to depreciate the

exertion of talents, so often and beneficially exhibited in the service of God, as in the composition of written sermons—far be it from me to undervalue, either the opinions of those, who prefer this mode of preaching for themselves, or the labours of those, who, from either want of early habit of cultivation, or perhaps, from diffidence of their own capability, perhaps from constitutional defect, do not feel competent to speak, except from a written sermon—far be it from me to reflect on some, who have been the brightest ornaments of the Church, and of the nation ; but, I cannot hesitate to assert, that the absence of the exercise of the talent of extemporaneous exposition, or preaching, necessarily limits the usefulness, and circumscribes the labours of a minister ; and, if he should possess a talent, so highly important in his sacred vocation among his own flock, so indispensable in labouring among the Roman Catholics of Ireland, an attempt to suppress its exertion, is an attempt to extinguish one of the most important beacons that could lighten the night of ignorance and superstition that broods over this unfortunate country. Is it a time, when all the varied energies, and talents, and gifts, and acquirements, which the Church of England can call into action, should be summoned forth ; when every man that loves his country, or his Church, or his fellow-creature, or his God, should “*stir up the gift of God, which is in him.*” 2 Tim. i. 6 ; and manifest a desire to “*shew himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,*” 2 Tim. ii. 15 ; when not only the Establishment of our Church itself, but the moral and religious principles of the nation are

enthralled by superstition and infidelity, and by a laxity of public principle, that verges to each, and vacillates between both—is this a time, to attempt to silence the ministers of our Church, in whatever line of exertion within the sphere of their duty, their talents, and acquirements, enable them to labour? and when wolves, in this long dark night of superstition have been preying on our flocks in Ireland, and we have been “dumb dogs” in our folds, in the midst of their depredations, is this a time to muzzle us, if we at length awaken, to stand up and bark? I know not to what pass our Church is to come, if every Methodist preacher on his circuit, whom we are ready enough to despise, for want of an academical education, is to hold a vantage ground over the ministers of our Church, in which we are not to be allowed to cope with him in exposition of the Sacred Scriptures. Writing sermons, generally is profitable—sometimes necessary—notes for sermons and lectures are always important, and to many, indispensable; but it is utterly impossible, that a minister could write lectures and sermons at full length, as he ought to expound and preach in his parish. A minister in good health and strength, ought to preach at least, twice on the Sabbath day, and to lecture and catechise in his schools, or in his Church as necessity and convenience may require, at least three or four times every week, besides reading and expounding in the cottages among his poor; and it is not too much to say, that no man of any nerve or constitution, could survive long, in writing out and delivering sermons, and lectures in such a ratio. I have known it tried on a smaller

scale by a man of more than ordinary constitution, in the midst of youth and strength and vigour, who was forced from failure, both of health and time, to adopt a system of preaching and lecturing from notes, as being the only one practicable in such a case.

We hear persons affect to say, that it is indecorous to speak without deliberate composition, on such solemn and difficult subjects, as those of eternity. What! are men to be competent to all the range of public business in forensic advocacy and legislative debate—are they to be ready from such vast and varied fields of laws and statute books, and cases, and precedents, and histories—from all the calculations of political economy, and all the resources of the commercial, the financial, the foreign and domestic relations and dependencies of Britain—of the states of Europe—of the Eastern and Western hemispheres—are they to be prepared, not only to express their own opinions on all these, but to encounter all, that industry and talent, equal to their own, can urge against them—are they to be prepared to do so in a moment, without time to deliberate or to reflect—would incompetence for this unfit them for their station—have we to admire some of the finest efforts of the human mind, in the unpremeditated bursts of eloquence and genius on such occasions, in the senate, and at the bar—from such men as our Burkes, our Grattans, our Currans, our Bushes, and our Norths? And shall the ministers of the high and holy God, holding in their right hands, the charter of eternal life, be unable to acquire a capability of standing up to pro-

claim their Master's message to his creatures, those great and glorious truths which are supposed to engross the whole attention of their minds, and to influence the whole details of their life and conversation? and this too, when the concerns of all the kings and statesmen on the earth, in comparison, are only less contemptible in their nature, than they are inferior in their clearness, and simplicity, and power of influencing the mind, and the eternal interests of man—what are all the businesses of all the little nations, compared with the occupations of an ambassador of Christ, but something infinitely less than the bustle of an ant-hill, compared with all the theory and arrangement of the British constitution?—what are all their clearness, their simplicity and power, in carrying an influence into the mind and destinies of man; but the fire and the smoke, and the complex machinery of the little steam-boat, that labours through the bosom of the ocean, compared with the beam of noon-day sun, that plays upon its wave, the light and buoyant cloud that sweeps along its surface, or the mighty wind of heaven that heaves it up from its foundation?

If a man is either enabled from natural talent, or if he can be rendered competent by education, to speak on any subject, how is it possible that he is to be unfitted to expatiate in such a field as this? Indeed, if he is ignorant of the fundamental principles of the everlasting Gospel—if he is attempting to reduce the great and glorious system of rich unmerited salvation, which it proclaims to sinners freely, through a crucified

Redeemer, to a miserable barter of merit with his God — if he is attempting to reduce the great and glorious system of Christian morals, which the Gospel gives with its principle and with its motive, of faith, and love towards a gracious and reconciled God, to the wretched level of a system, little better than that of Epictetus, or of Plato—if he is turning the joy of the pardoned and liberated captive, into the apprehensions of the imprisoned culprit, trembling under the consciousness of his guilt, and the approaching horrors of his trial, and his condemnation—if he is turning the willing obedience of the grateful, happy prodigal, restored to his father's house, into the reluctant, grudging toil of the captured and the wretched slave ; I wonder not that such a man as this, should find it difficult to preach extemporaneously : it is a mighty work of thought, of labour, of talent, of learning, and of time, with all the resources that education can bestow, to borrow enough of perverted Scripture from the word of God, to give to the productions of such a system, the outward appearance and garb of Christianity. But he who knows, and who rejoices in the hope of the everlasting Gospel, for his own immortal soul, however invaluable he may feel (for indeed they are invaluable) the various resources for the work of his ministry, which education, and talent, and study, and labour, can supply ; while on many, many subjects of his vocation, he feels he has occasion for them all ; yet, when he takes his Bible in his hand to tell of salvation to his sinful fellow-men, he can speak with the unstudied simplicity and feeling of a man who comes express with a reprieve ; he carries

in his right hand a pardon from the King of kings; he knows the danger of the culprit, and the glory of the deliverance; his heart is big with the blessing of his message, it will burst, and flow with freedom from his lips—a stream of ideas and of language spring spontaneously from the fountain of eternal truth, and pour a flood of consolation through a thousand channels such as these—“*This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*” 1 Tim. i. 15. “*Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*” Mat. xi. 28. “*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.*” Isaiah lv. 1. “*If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.*” John vii. 37. “*Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.*” John vi. 37. These are the messages of mercy with which to speak to our Roman Catholic countrymen—the light and breeze of heaven is to be poured into a dark and pestilential dungeon, the waters of salvation are to be turned into a waste, and parched, and thirsty desert. We want the free, the bold, the ready, mighty simplicity, of plain, clear, faithful Gospel truth for our country: and to bring the subtle, fine-spun, laboured distinctions of theology, to enlighten it, is like holding up a farthing taper to the blast, for a beacon on a lee shore, in a night of storm.

I cannot feel it a digression from my subject, to dwell upon extemporaneous preaching, as an indispensable qualification for Missionaries to the Church of Rome, and for all men who would engage effectively

in the controversy. To say that they should be able to preach in the native language, in those parts of Ireland where it is spoken, is superfluous; except to those who deny that religion is to be addressed to the understandings, to the consciences, and to the hearts of men. If I were desired to point out the field in which were laid the noblest path of philanthropic patriotism, of Christian love and apostolic zeal, that ever was trodden by the foot of uninspired man—the field in which was to be reaped the richest golden harvest of blessing, in the prosperity of our country, in the temporal and eternal happiness of our fellow-creatures, and in the service, and glory, of our religion and our God; I would say to my young friends, who have either entered, or who are about to enter the sacred office of the ministry, “Go, learn that language, the meaning of which alone is sense, and the very sound of which is music to the ears of three millions of your poor enslaved, benighted countrymen—go, ‘*put on the whole armour of God,*’ and ‘*set your faces like a flint*’—go forth in the simplicity of the Gospel, and in the strength of the Lord Jesus, and preach the truth of the eternal word against the superstitions of Rome, till the sound of the salvation that is in Christ the Lord, shall echo from every rock around the shores of Ireland.” But the talent of preaching, and the preaching of the truth, however important, is, after all, but of secondary consideration, as it regards the capabilities of a Missionary in this sacred cause. *He must be a man of prayer.* If he had the eloquence of an Apollos, and the zeal and talents of a Paul, and if he could speak

the language of the country with a gift like a cloven tongue of fire, still it is written, "*not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.*" And though (as all the great doctrines of eternal truth generally rise and fall together) the influences and operations of the Holy Spirit are considered as enthusiastic, and are as much despised amongst us, as the doctrine of justification, "*by faith, without the deeds of the law;*" yet, it is irrefragably true, that unless the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon the labours of his servants, they might as well preach to the rocks upon the shore, as to those that dwell within the island—"we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word," said the Apostles, Acts vi. 4. Prayer has the precedence here—a Missionary must not only be a faithful preacher of the Apostolic Gospel, but he must *be a man of prayer*, if he is to be a herald of salvation to his fellow-men.

As to the acquirements necessary for this office—perhaps they are by many overrated—a critical acquaintance with some of the best writers on both sides is to be desired—but as far as my weak judgment can see, if I were to name the first book to be studied for it, I should say the Bible—and the second—the Bible—and the third—the Bible. Let the Missionary bring all the doctrines, and all the cavils, and all the pretences of the Church of Rome to the Word of God, let him think out, and find out the answers to them from that Word himself, or those that have been most ably given from it by others. The answers he prepares from that

volume in his study and on his knees, are weapons which, like David, he shall have proved, and which, like David, he shall be able to use—they may be simple, but they must be powerful. As to the aids to be derived from history, and from the fathers, in the controversy, on which some appear to place so much reliance; they seem, to me, impertinent digressions from the mighty point at issue—namely, *whether the hopes of salvation which the men living around us profess, are, or are not conformable to the Word of God.* They may open a wide field for the display of learning and research—they may raise a mighty dust about the question, and it is for this purpose the Church of Rome universally resorts to them; but they preclude the possibility of conclusive conviction in argument, and they are not the scriptural and apostolic weapons for bringing any sinner to the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ. It is “*the preaching of the Cross,*” which alone is “*the power of God, and the wisdom of God;*” it is “*the Gospel of Christ*” alone, which is “*the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.*” As to points of controversy that are either unessential to salvation, or that are not in the Word of God, we should never permit Roman Catholics to draw us into them; and as to those doctrines of eternal life, which that Sacred Volume can determine, it is superfluous to point out the weakness of going to the authority of men, to draw from it that truth, which they themselves could only derive from the word and authority of their Creator—it is like a man sending horses, and cars, and vessels, five, ten, and fifteen miles, to ask for muddy

water from his distant neighbours, while he lives close to the fountain from which they have been obliged to draw it for themselves—I can see nothing more of sense, of utility, of reason, or of religion, in the one than in the other.

Let me not be understood to depreciate either learning, or learned men—let me not be understood to make light of ecclesiastical history, or of the writings of the fathers—they are invaluable in their place; first, as supplying that conclusive chain of external evidence for the authenticity of the canonical Scriptures, which can never be broken, by all the assaults of infidelity or superstition—secondly, as affording proper evidence for other points, on which it may be needful to refer to them—but *those points, are not the doctrines of salvation*; and the Scriptures being admitted as the revelation of Jehovah—it is utterly unscriptural, unapostolical, unworthy of a minister of God, and unworthy of a man who is capable of bringing forward, and maintaining the cause of eternal truth on the authority of his Creator, to turn from that authority to the assertions of any man or men, that live, or ever lived on earth. It is then, and only then, that a man stands forward as the sound, and judicious, and invincible advocate for truth—when having determined with clearness and precision, the difference between points essential, and not essential to the salvation of the human soul—he maintains the latter with obedience and reverence to the authorities constituted in his own Church, and with a becoming forbearance, and a Christian re-

gard to the consciences, and feelings of those who belong to other Churches; but when he asserts and vindicates the former with bold, decisive, uncompromising fidelity, in defiance, if necessary, of every human opinion, and every human power, and rests alone for the confirmation of the truth he teaches, on the sole authority and the sole foundation of the revelation of the eternal God; and if this principle is not adopted and adhered to, in controversy with the Church of Rome, instead of enlightening the minds of men by the word and power of their Creator, I see no end to be attained by it, but that of perplexing and confounding them with the endless contradictions, inconsistencies, and errors of their fellow-creatures. Let the Missionary go forward to his work, in a spirit of prayer, with his Bible in his right hand, and if it be to discussion, with the catechisms learned by the men whom he is addressing, in his left; and if he but wield the sword of the Spirit as he ought, he will serve them as the Prophet served the king of the Amalekites—he will hew them in pieces before God, in every corner of the country.

What, in the last place, ought to be his conduct on his mission? He should go among the Roman Catholics in the character of their advocate and their friend, and if he does not go sincerely in that character, he is not fit to go on such a mission—their advocate, to plead the cause of their temporal and eternal happiness, against the tyranny of a cruel spiritual despotism, that is at war with both—their friend,

to convince them by his manner and his address, that his opposition to their superstitions, springs solely from an anxiety for the interests of their immortal souls. Ridicule is always inadmissible in religious controversy—it may wound and irritate—it never can convince—while he should abstain from all unnecessary severity of expression, in speaking of their doctrines and their Church—he must at the same time avoid the more fatal extreme, of refining away by a false unscriptural delicacy, the awful fact of the guilt and condemnation of those who are living in superstitions, that imply a rejection of that Gospel, in which alone there is hope or salvation for the human soul—he should attack errors, not individuals—principles, not persons.

Let our Missionaries go forth then, in a spirit of prayer, with “*the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ,*” for their doctrine—with the weapons of their warfare, chosen from the armoury of God, with learning enough, to know how to select those that are most effective ; and to use them with address, and power, when selected—with simplicity of heart, and singleness of eye, to the salvation of their fellow-men, and the glory of their Redeemer. Let them go among the people in a spirit of Christian fidelity, and Christian zeal, and Christian love—and if such means were universally adopted, as either these, or something better, which might be adopted by our Bishops ; I firmly believe, that in fifteen years, there would scarcely be a trace of Roman Catholic superstition to be found in Ireland. If this were an exertion too much to expect, if it

were too much to hope, that out of each diocese where all were pledged to this work, two might be set apart to redeem the pledge, let there be two, in two dioceses — nay, let there be for a beginning two or four selected, as fitted for their office, and let them receive general licenses from the bishops, or a royal license for the whole country, and let the bishops and clergy co-operate with them in their turns, as they go on their missionary visits. Let something be done, let some stir be made, some signs, some symptoms, of spiritual life and energy be shown, that we may not seem wholly dead to all the duties, which we owe to our fellow-creatures, our country, and our God.

While a proper system, would produce a powerful effect in the country parts of the nation, it were easy to adopt one as simple, and effective in the metropolis, which might be followed in proportion to their size, in the different cities and towns of Ireland. Let a meeting be held in all the parish churches in Dublin, in regular succession, once every week, or every fortnight; let a public advertisement announce to the Roman Catholics, the doctrines which shall be brought to the test of the Scriptures; let these meetings exhibit the form of a simple scriptural exposition of their errors, but affording an opportunity of making it a discussion if they please; let the catechisms in use in the metropolis, be compared with the Word of God; at the same time, inviting the Roman Catholic priests of the parish, and the professors from Maynooth, to whom the advertisement should be regularly sent, by the Secretary of the Reformation

Society, to come in a spirit of Christian kindness and fidelity, to reconcile, if it be in their power, their doctrines to that Word; and permitting any respectable Roman Catholic layman to speak, under the restriction of previously giving in his name to the Committee: on these conditions the Roman Catholics will crowd to the churches. If all the parochial clergymen do not feel enabled, from various causes, to enter into the controversy themselves, they may, at least, by other means evince an inclination to discharge their solemn ordination vow. Let them give their churches, and their exertions, to awaken an interest among their Roman Catholic parishioners, for whose immortal souls, they shall surely render an awful account before the bar of God. We trust that some may be found, who will devote themselves exclusively to this important cause, and that others shall be found, who will give stated and regular assistance; then, instead of weak and desultory efforts in one little corner of the metropolis, we shall have a universal, a regular, a stated, a systematic, assertion and vindication of the doctrines of the Word of God—a steady light, and beacon burning, to guide our fellow-sinners, our countrymen, and our neighbours, into the path of everlasting life—the Roman Catholics shall see we are really in earnest on the subject; they shall enjoy the privilege of hearing the truths of salvation freely set before them; they shall see the errors of their religion fully exhibited, either in the incompetence of their priests to defend them; or, what must be as conclusively satisfactory to their minds, in the unwillingness of their priests to attempt the defence. We

ourselves shall at last evince some proof that we are about to attend to the solemn vows of our vocation—that we have at length awakened to some sense of the vast responsibilities not only which we have voluntarily undertaken, but which God has laid on us, “*whether we hear, or whether we forbear,*” with reference to the salvation of our countrymen, and our Roman Catholic parishioners, among whom we have been living, as if we had no Gospel and they had no souls. The fearful judgments that hang over the heads of those who are asleep in their watch-towers, may, perhaps, be yet averted—the judgments that seem to threaten the existence of our Church, may be removed—our God may yet be gracious to our land, and spare her, and make her the sanctuary of his truth and his salvation, for our country.

Let these plans, or something more effective still than these, be adopted in unhappy Ireland, and the Lord may make her a bright example of the power and energy of faithful zeal, and apostolic truth, in redeeming and regenerating a nation; as he has left her to this day, a miserable and disgraceful spectacle of that state of religious and moral, of social and political degradation, to which a country that boasts the name of Christianity—a country with every blessing of Providence, of nature, and of grace within its reach, may be reduced, by the power of a guilty superstition on the one part, and on the other by an apathy and indolence, proportionably more criminal, in those who, having received greater gifts for the service of

their Lord, have incurred a higher responsibility in the charge, and a deeper criminality in the neglect of the talents, with which they have been entrusted.

In undertaking to write with so much plainness and simplicity on this momentous subject, I feel, that, not only with reference to the members of the Church of Rome, but what is much more painful, with reference to too many in our own, I have undertaken the most unpopular—the most ungracious—the most thankless—the most invidious office, that perhaps any man in Ireland could voluntarily undertake at this day; and I state the melancholy fact, to show, that I have not sat down rashly, and inconsiderately, to the task—I have counted the cost. I can truly say, that these reflections come from one, brought down to deep and solemn consideration, through many a day and night, of bodily and mental suffering. It has sometimes given an interest to hours of pain and sorrow, to hope, that I might be permitted to offer those reflections, as perhaps my last tribute to a cause, which had deeply lain upon my conscience, and interested all the feelings of my heart. I offer them to the consciences, the judgment, the feelings of my fellow-men, and especially to the members of that Established Church, which I love from every motive that ought to influence the mind of a minister, though one of the most unworthy that bears her sacred garb. I offer them with respect and deference, to the consideration of all the constituted authorities in the Church, and to that of all my brethren in the ministry, assuring them that I have desired to write them in the

spirit of one, who feels that he must soon stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; and beseeching them to lend their attention to them, under the same impression, for themselves. The examples, opinions, and authorities of men, so far as they have been in any respect at variance with our duties, and with the authority of God, can only be duly appreciated by viewing them as we shall view them in that day, when the Judge of heaven and earth shall be seated on "his great white throne." If I have ventured to write anything contrary to his holy will, I trust I shall be convinced of the error, and be most anxious to retract, what I should not dare intentionally to have written. But as far as the opinions of men are opposed to the plain principles of God's eternal truth, I desire to value them no more than the wind that soon shall whistle through the grass on my grave. It is a small matter for a poor dying sinner, to be judged of man's judgment; it may seem however, necessary for the truth's sake, to answer some objections, which a moderate knowledge of the state of religious feeling in this country, must anticipate to a work like this.

There are a vast body of men who will condemn at once, without even a hearing, without exercising either their judgment, their understanding, or their conscience on its contents, any work which throws, what they call, a slur on the Bishops and Clergy, and who would consider the writer an enemy to the Church, if he had only even ventured to hint, that there was a possibility of their having failed in any point of their duty, and

still more, when he states, that they have so totally failed, in a point of such vital importance to their country, and to their religion—there are many who will consider him little better than a heretic, for presuming to question a principle which a Bishop has laid down. With respect to the general charge against the Bishops and Clergy, the question is simply resolvable into this—whether is it true or false? If false, there is an accusation much heavier than that of presumption, to be brought against the writer—if true, the enemy to the Church, is not the man who speaks, but the man who refuses to listen to the truth. We are called on by every warning, which a merciful and gracious Providence can send, to hear “what the Spirit saith unto the Churches;” and it is not by mutual compliments, on our supposed or actual improvement, in the discharge of the duties of our sacred vocation—it is by an honest and faithful investigation of fact, a solemn examination of what that Achan is in our camp, which draws down the displeasure of the Lord upon it, that we can alone expect to avert those evils, which seem to impend over our Established religion.

If it is supposed, that the writer presumes to stand up as an accuser of any of his brethren, or his superiors, as if he were exempted from the accusation, he disclaims the imputation. It pleased God to grant him five years of health and strength, to discharge the duties of the ministry, and he has only cause of grief and shame in acknowledging, that with a conviction of the evils of the superstitions of Roman Catholics, almost as

strong as at this moment—he lived among them totally careless, and negligent of their immortal souls—he does not, therefore, dare to throw a stone at any individual in the Church—he asserts the lamentable existence of an universal evil, in which he has participated, and in pointing out the mote in the eye of any brother, he confesses and laments the beam that has been in his own. In reference to his having ventured, to examine the principles laid down by the Right Rev. Prelate, he trusts, it is a pledge of a desire to be honest, in the discharge of the duty he has undertaken. For if the principle which the Lord Bishop has laid down, be defensible, there is none by whom it can be more ably, and more readily defended—if not, he trusts he shall be more than pardoned by his Lordship, for submitting a sentiment to the test of scriptural examination, which, on a more mature consideration of the solemn duties and responsibilities, that devolve on the Bishops, and Clergy, on this momentous subject, his Lordship will feel, is not to be defended on the ground of the Sacred Scriptures, nor consequently on that of the principles of the Church of England.

There are two extremes, which are equally dangerous to the spiritual well-being of the Church—the one, a presumptuous insubordination to authority—the other, a blind submission to it: the former tends to break the unity of the Spirit, and to disturb the peace, and derange the decency and order of the Church; the latter tends to lull men into a blind and fatal security, even as to the very foundation of their soul's salvation,

and to plunge them into everlasting ruin. The Church of Rome exhibits a melancholy picture of the one, and there are sects of separatists from the Church of England, who afford a sad example of the other. There are points, on which the poorest man in the community ought to be, in some sense, as well-informed as the most learned Prelate, namely, those, on which his everlasting happiness depends—he ought to be as “*wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.*” On those principles, for which man must answer at the tribunal of his Creator, he should learn to think and reason for himself, and that, without infringing on the respect due to those, who are placed in authority above him, or detracting from that reverence with which he ought to receive their opinions and advice, on those points, in which it is his duty, his privilege to attend to them. If Sir Isaac Newton were alive, and to condescend to give me his opinion on the delicate refrangibilities of the prismatic spectrum, I should sit at his feet, and listen like a child—but if he were to attempt to make me believe that black was white, or that it was midnight in the blaze of noon—I should stand up, and look that great philosopher in the face, and tell him, I had eyes to see as well as he, and that on such points as these, he must permit me to prefer their evidence to his authority—where duty, where conscience, where Scripture, where the great abstract principles of truth, carry with them all their weight of clear conviction to the judgment, on points essential to our own salvation, or to that of our fellow-creatures, the authority of one, or of all the men on

earth, should weigh in our estimation but “the small dust in the balance”—in that case the question is not between our equals, or our superiors, and ourselves; but the question at issue is between our fellow-men, and our God. I trust a sense of this, has not led me to overstep in any sentiment or expression, the bounds of that strict propriety, which should limit the most grave discussion of this most momentous subject—if it has, I must lament it as arising from an error in judgment, and not from a deliberate intention. I feel, alas! how compassed with evil is all, even the best that I could aim to do; the snares of our hearts entangle, and their corruptions pollute our every effort in the service of our fellow-creatures and our Creator—we tread a narrow path between the opposite extremes of evil, too happy, if we are kept, through mercy, from falling into either. If the “fear of man bringeth a snare,” the pride of not fearing him, may bring perhaps, a greater; and if there is criminality in the indolence that would neglect our duty, there is an arrogance and insolence of heart, in the zeal that would awaken and reprove it. While I desire then to submit these reflections to the consciences of my brethren in the ministry, I can but say, I pray they may be cleansed in “the fountain open for sin and for uncleanness”—beseeching the God of grace and mercy, if they be in the main, agreeable to the tenor of his sacred truth, to accompany them by his Spirit, to the hearts of those to whom they apply; to pardon and overrule the many evils which belong to them, as coming from the writer, and to cast them into that precious atoning blood, which alone can wash

away the stains with which they are all defiled, and unworthy as an offering, to the cause of his eternal truth.

There is one general objection, which I anticipate, and which I wish to answer, less for my own sake, than for that of those who make it. It will be asserted, that this has been written merely to support a party in the Church, and to oppose those who do not belong to it. When I consider the great principle of divine truth, which, in all that I have written, has been set up against the superstitions of Rome—I am aware that there are many, who will call it by an appellation, which they intend to be opprobrious, namely, *evangelical*—I shall make a few observations on this term, and then on that of “*party* in the Church.” And, first, I must bear my feeble but decided testimony against that awful state, of irreverent, and little less than infidel contempt for God’s eternal Word, which induces many members of the Protestant Church, to borrow the very words of Scripture, and use them as terms of contempt and scorn. That names of men, or of parties, be applied to those, who may please to adopt the opinions of individuals as their standard of truth, may be extremely fair—but that the very scriptural duties of ministers—that the very scriptural names of those who shall alone be saved, should be held up, as epithets of ridicule and contempt, in a nation, and in a Church professing Christianity, is a most melancholy fact—it is not, in truth, insulting man, but it is an insult and mockery of God.

If a man is anxious for the dissemination of the Bible, he is called by way of contempt, a "*Biblicai*"—if he asserts and maintains salvation by grace, through faith in Christ, he is denominated an "*Evangelical*"—if he professes to make the Gospel the guide of his public principles, whether he be a clergyman or a layman, he is styled as an epithet of singular contempt, a "*Saint*." What wonder can it be, to any man who reverences the Word of his God, to see the strides of superstition and infidelity, and the gradual but progressive prostration of the Established Church, in a land where the law of public opinion, among those who call themselves Christians, is sunk into such a bathos of ignorance and irreligion. That **THE BIBLE**—the **VERY BIBLE ITSELF**, should be desecrated as a term of reproach—that that Sacred Volume, which is the light, the guide, the hope, the consolation, the salvation of the human soul—which it is man's greatest mercy to receive—his highest privilege to know—his most imperative duty, as well as his everlasting happiness, to believe and to obey, that that Sacred Volume should be desecrated as affording its name for a term of scorn and contempt, is such a brand of guilt and turpitude on the forehead of a land professing Christianity, that it were of itself, without another feature of the character of an individual, or of a Church, enough to stamp it as apostatized, or apostatizing to superstition or to infidelity. If to maintain, that the Sacred Volume of eternal truth is "able to make men wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus"—that it contains all instruction necessary for everlasting life,

and for every moral, and social, and religious obligation—that it is the privilege of all God’s rational and accountable creatures, to search those sacred records, and to bring to them as the test of truth, the instructions of all those who profess to be their teachers—if to maintain that that Holy Volume ought to be universally diffused—that all men who can do so, should be exhorted to read, and to study it—that it is the privilege, and the duty of genuine Christians, to lend their aid for its universal diffusion—if this be to deserve a name of contempt, and if that name be borrowed by ignorance and impiety from the Sacred Volume, then let the name of “BIBLICAL,” be branded on my brow, and if there be any man in the empire who points at it with a sneer, I look him stedfastly in the face; the more exalted he is, the more firmly do I fix my eye upon him, as he is the more deserving both of compassion and of reproof; and I tell that man, that if he himself in this sense, does not deserve that honourable appellation, it is because he is radically ignorant of the value of that Bible for his own immortal soul, he is ignorant of the hope that it reveals, of the salvation that it proclaims; for as there would be an instinctive impulse, in a man who had been rescued in the life-boat from a wreck, to save his drowning ship-mates from the deep; so, never did there exist a man, who knew the blessings of that salvation, which the Bible teaches, for his own immortal soul, who would not rejoice to communicate those blessings to his fellow-creatures; and if this be to deserve reproach, then I repeat, let that title of honour be placed upon my

brow, and I ask no other epitaph to be inscribed upon my tomb; for I hold it not less honourable to him who receives it, than disgraceful to him who applies it as a reproach. Nor is the term *Evangelical* less criminal in its desecration, when applied as a term of contempt, in a land professing Christianity. What is the fact? The *Ευαγγέλιον*—the *Evangelium*—the *Gospel*—that is, good news—that salvation, which God proclaims in his revelation to man, through the righteousness and atonement of a crucified Redeemer, on the reception or rejection of which, his everlasting happiness or misery depends. “Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned,” Mark xvi. 15, 16.

Now this Gospel—the preaching of which is the very office, the very dignity, the glory of an Apostle—which, if a man professing to be a minister of Christianity, does not preach, he is a “wolf in sheep’s clothing”—a “blind leader of the blind”—this Gospel, which the very host of Heaven descended to announce to guilty man, celebrating their angelic message with the chorus of “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men*”—this Gospel, which is the one only hope, and refuge of the sinner’s soul—this Gospel, which all men who call themselves by the name of Christian, profess to venerate as the sum and substance of religion—this very Gospel is used as a term of contempt. A “*Gospel preacher*”—an “*Evangelical preacher*,” in the vocabulary of some,

not among the Roman Catholics, but among those who call themselves Protestants, is synonymous with an *enthusiast*—a *fanatic*—a *fool*, and perhaps an *enemy to the Church*. Of such I will not ask, where are the genuine principles of their religion—where is the reality of Christian truth, but where is the common decency even of the profession of the name of Christian, fled? Is it into such a shameless abuse of principles, or of language we have fallen, that that, which true religion takes from her Redeemer's wounded hand, as the only refuge of her soul—that, which genuine Christianity embraces as her richest blessing in time, and anticipates as her everlasting theme of joy and praise throughout eternity—that that should be taken, by a sort of verbal sacrilege, from the very page of inspiration, and applied as a term of reproach and scorn! If it were a crime to profane the vessels of the temple, what is it to make the salvation of Him, of whom the temple and all its furniture was but a shadow, a subject of contempt and ridicule among us? But I shall be told, that the word "*Evangelical*," is not used as a term of reproach, to men who really preach the Gospel, but merely to men who presume to arrogate the claim of preaching the Gospel to themselves, in contradistinction to others, and that it is their presumption, and not the Gospel of Christ, which is intended to be stigmatised by the appellation. Granting that this is true, is it just—is it right—is it consistent with Christian propriety—with any ordinary regard—any common reverence for the Word of our Redeemer—that the Gospel of his grace should be so desecrated in its application?

If indeed it be applied to falsehood, shall truth and falsehood be so confounded among us, that falsehood is to be honoured with the appellation of truth? And if it be applied to truth, shall the name, the principles of truth, be identified, in scorn and contempt, with falsehood? To apply it to falsehood, is, to say the least, a dangerous, or rather a profane, abuse of words. To apply it as a term of reproach to truth, is a fatal abandonment of the very foundations of religion. If the name of Evangelical be falsely assumed by any, let the false assumption be exposed, but let not the Gospel of Christ be insulted through them.

I enter not into an investigation of this subject; I examine not how, or by whom the language of Scripture is so grossly abused—it is before the tribunal of God, and not at the bar of their fellow-worms, that men are to “*give account for every idle word,*” as well as for “*the deeds done in their body;*” but as it is important always to ascertain principles, and to disentangle the simplicity of truth from the sophistries of error; and as each man who professes to write upon the subject, ought to be clear, distinct, and explicit, in his statement of the Gospel—I say, that if to preach salvation, full, and free, and finished on Mount Calvary, for lost and guilty man—to testify, that eternal life is not, and cannot be, in whole, or in part, the purchase of human merits—that it is not attainable or accessible—no, not the breadth of a single hair—by any works or efforts made by man—but that it has been purchased by the price of the Redeemer’s atoning

blood, and that it is freely given, “*without money and without price,*” to “*whosoever believeth on him;*” that “*by grace man is saved, through faith, and that not of himself, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.*” If to proclaim salvation by grace to man through faith in a crucified Redeemer, in direct and total contradistinction, and opposition to that root of all popish superstition, *salvation by human merits, works, efforts, &c.* if this be to deserve in the estimation of some, as it is to be feared it is, the name of “*Evangelical*” as a term of reproach—if that epithet be affixed to this doctrine by way of contempt, then I can only say, that if a man does not deserve the appellation, though he had all the other learning, that ever adorned the Bench of the Church of England, condensed into the single store of his capacious mind—though he had all the talent and skill to use it, that ever graced the intellect of man—though he could express it in every language ever spoken on the earth, with the inspired intuition of a tongue of fire—though his outward deportment in the eyes of man, were such as to acquire for him the reputation of something more than mortal—though all the wealth of England were concentrated in a single mitre, and that mitre placed upon his brow—“*it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were cast into the depths of the sea;*” for it is written, in characters that shall last, when not only all the wealth and wisdom of the world, but when heaven and earth shall pass away—“**THOUGH I, OR AN ANGEL FROM HEAVEN, PREACH ANY OTHER GOSPEL**

UNTO YOU THAN THAT WHICH WE HAVE PREACHED, LET HIM BE ACCURSED." Gal. i. 8. Alas! let such a poor man sit down, with all his learning and his talents, "to cast the mighty sum"—"*What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*" and when he has finished his computation, then shall he be able to calculate the gains of his rank, his wisdom, and his wealth, if he has not been an "EVANGELICAL" preacher of the salvation of Christ to his fellow-sinners. The only prospect of such a wretched man is this—that he shall call the loudest, and the foremost, "on the rocks and mountains to fall on him," and "hide him from him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb."

With respect to the desecratory application of the term "*Saint*," it is enough to make a man tremble at the prospects of a Church that bears the name of Christian, when he thinks that of those who profess to belong to her, in number, in name, in learning, in talent, in rank—I fear to write how many they are, how gifted, and how exalted, who dare to take from the pages of the Sacred Volume, the name which God has given to his people—a name derived from their very union and communion with himself—and to hold it up as an epithet of ridicule and mockery. Ignorance of their Bible might plead, perhaps, an apology with those who do not place that Sacred Book within the range of the education of a gentleman, and who, in these enlightened days, might, perhaps, consider it unnecessary for that even of a Christian; but how shall men plead an

excuse for a contempt of that, which they themselves avow as a principle of their religion, in a form which they call worship, on one day in every seven; but which, in genuine sincerity of heart, they confess to have been a mockery, during the remaining six. They stand up in the temple of the living God, and avow, as a principle of their faith, that they believe in “*the communion of SAINTS;*” they call on that God in the language of supplication, that he would “*make them to be numbered with his SAINTS in glory everlasting;*” but when they leave the sacred walls, the name is only found, accompanied with a sneer of insolent contempt upon their lips, which might strike a man of any sensibility as an unchristian insult to their fellow-creature, if that were not lost in the impiety, of the atheistical contempt of their Creator.

I should blush to mention here the name of that assembly which ought to be held up before the nation, if not as an example of the purity of the Christian religion, at least as a pattern of decency and decorum in its respect for it; in which, if there be some who are known in their public station, to advocate in their language, and to exhibit in their lives, a reverence for religion, above that wretched standard of nominal Christianity into which the nation, as a nation, is degraded—if they stand forward as every man who possesses even the name of Christian ought to do, to support those various institutions that exist, to diffuse the knowledge of salvation through the world—if true religious principle dictates their opinions and determines their deci-

sions—they are stamped and stigmatised as “THE SAINTS!”—the very name, “A SAINT” is a scoff—a shout of laughter perhaps may re-echo its application, and the gentlemen who have ventured in the outward form of Christian supplication to pray on Sunday that He “*who had redeemed them with his precious blood*” would “*make them to be numbered with his saints in glory everlasting,*” evince the next day, that whatever vague ideas they may derive from their religion, of “*the saints*” in the next world, the only knowledge they have of the subject is, to teach them contempt even for the very name in this. What wonder that the Jew, the Infidel, the Heretic, and the Idolater should claim to legislate for such a people as this? There is a sort of lingering respect for admitted principles of truth and virtue, in a country which, even when they have fallen into disuse, will still survive a little, and preserve awhile some semblance, if not some influence of their existence; which, though it cannot supply the place of their energy and life, affords at least a gleam of hope of their revival. But when not only the principles themselves are gone, but even the very respect for their memory is obliterated—when the very names that were once the objects of veneration, become a theme of scorn and contempt, then, not only all the blessings of their influence must be no more, but the hope of their revival seems to be extinguished for ever. Show me a Church, a people, a nation, where the very name of the Gospel of Christ is held up as a subject of reproach—where the very name of *saint* is a term of ridicule, and I will show you a Church, a people, a nation, that is far, far

gone in awful apostacy from God—which seems to have little to look for, but the fulfilment of the threat, “*Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord, and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this.*” It is a melancholy sort of wit whose shafts glance off from the creature and fly at the throne of the eternal Majesty—

“ An atheist’s laugh’s a poor exchange,  
For Deity offended.”

We talk with great affectation of regard for our religion—“ how excellent, how apostolical, is the Church of England !”—and truly if she were but the thousandth part so, in the principles and practice of those who profess to belong to her, as she is in her admirable theory and constitution, she would be a blessing and glory to the nation and to the world. But let any man who ever opens his Bible, imagine if he can, the members of one of the Apostolic Churches, taking that very name, which the Spirit of the living God had given them as their highest honour, and making it an epithet of ridicule and scorn.

Will any man who professes to retain the common decencies of religion, pretend to say, that he could conceive any of the members of an Apostolic Church, whom the Apostle had just addressed as “*saints in Christ Jesus,*” pointing their finger at the rest, and calling them, “*The Saints—the Saints ?*” There is a daring presumption of impiety, there is a sort of blasphemous indecency involved in it, with which the Judge of heaven hath not arraigned the churches in Asia; but it is a standing jest in these “*enlightened days!*” among ———, I should blush to let my pen express what

members of the Church of England. I write not to defend the persons or characters of men, I care not by what name they may be designated; but I write to assert and vindicate the principles of truth, I care not by whom they are invaded. What then is the fact? what is it to be a saint? what is it not to be a saint? There are multitudes among us, who consider the term "saint," as belonging exclusively to those who were inspired, and they accordingly imagine that it is only to be applied to the sacred writers, as *Saint Matthew, Saint Mark, Saint Luke, Saint Paul*, and think it is a sort of gross disrespect, bordering on impiety, to mention their names without this distinctive title: others exhibit their veneration for the fathers, by bestowing this appellation upon them; so we have *Saint Ignatius, Saint Clement, Saint Chrysostom, Saint Athanasius, Saint Augustine*: and there are not wanting writers enough among us, to borrow a few more from the calendar. Now what is the fact? what is the plain Scriptural application of the term? *The poorest, humblest creature, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ during the apostles' days, or who believes in Him at this day, has just as good a title to the name, as an apostle or evangelist—is just as truly a "saint;" and whatever authority there is in the Word of God to apply the title to the one, the same authority is there to apply the same title to the other.* What is a saint? A sinner who is "sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all;" Heb. x. 10; who is brought through grace "by the renewing of the Holy Ghost" to the foot of the cross for pardon and acceptance with his

God; who is “*turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that he may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them who are SANCTIFIED by faith that is in Christ Jesus;*” Acts xxvi. 18; who is “*washed, who is SANCTIFIED, who is JUSTIFIED, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*” 1 Cor. vi. 11. Accordingly, the apostles apply the term *saint*, or sanctified person, to every member of the church of Christ; all their epistles are addressed without distinction “*to them that are sanctified, called to be SAINTS;*” 1 Cor. i. 2; “*to the SAINTS and faithful in Christ;*” Eph. i. 1; “*to all the SAINTS in Christ Jesus;*” Phil. i. 1;—all are alike in Him *saints*, none more or less so than another; so that to be a saint, is simply, in scriptural language, to be a sinner justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, through the influence of the Holy Spirit enlightening and regenerating the heart. Now what is it not to be a saint? It is to be a sinner, unenlightened—ignorant of himself and of his God—unjustified by the blood of Jesus—unwashed in that atoning fountain—unrenewed by that blessed Spirit. What is it not to be a saint? It is to be under the wrath of God—to be “*dead in trespasses and sins;*” Eph. ii. 2; to be “*an alien from the commonwealth of Israel, a stranger from the covenants of promise; to have no hope, and to be without God in the world.*” Eph. ii. 12.

Reader, you may be one of those who have used the name of “*Saint,*” as a term of reproach—you may, perhaps, be a man of rank, and taste, and literature,

and talent; your profane wit, perhaps, may have set a *larger circle* than “the table, in a roar;” but alas! unhappy man, the best that can be said of you, in your present state of ignorance, and unbelief of that Gospel, in which alone there is salvation for the soul, is, that “*the wrath of God abideth upon you,*” John iii. 36—you are “*in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity,*” Acts viii. 23—“*except you repent you must perish,*” Luke xiii. 3; alas! there is but a vapour between you and the gulph of everlasting death—for “*what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away,*” James iv. 14. O fly “*while it is called to-day,*” “*from the wrath to come.*” Where shall you fly in that day, when the mandate shall go forth from the Judge of quick and dead, “*gather MY SAINTS together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice?*” Psalm l. 5. When “*He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other?*” Matt. xxiv. 31. Shall you be found among those, who have been your scoff while here below? Can you belong to them, and sneer at them? *Impossible!* For it is not more certain, that a faithful servant never made fidelity to his master, a subject of reproach to his fellow-servants—that a loyal soldier never made loyalty to his sovereign, a subject of scoffing among his comrades—than that a man who was at peace with his God, or in a state of salvation in his Maker’s sight, never could dare, to admit the contemptuous application of that name, which he would account his highest pri-

vilege, his noblest honour, yea, far beyond all the titles that ever were conferred on man. What are they all in comparison?—what is a peer?—a prince? A cloud—a vapour—a feather—a bubble. The relics of a king of Britain, are lying at this moment in state in his deserted palace! the ashes of a mighty potentate are about to be consigned to the cold and silent tomb! Let an angel, whose voice could reach from pole to pole, take his stand upon that solemn spot—let him plant his foot upon that mournful, but commanding elevation, and let him demand of a nation that professes to call itself by the name of Christian—what is man's most dignified and most exalted title upon earth?—a Monarch—or A SAINT?

With reference to the charge which I have anticipated, that these Reflections have been written to support a party in the Church. This accusation implies in the estimation of some persons, a criminality of no ordinary complexion. Let us examine it a little. A party is either good or bad, in direct proportion to the principles on which it acts, and the ends which it has in view. If it be granted, that there exists a difference between right and wrong principles and objects, and that some men follow the right, and others the wrong; I believe it will be conceded, that of necessary consequence, the individuals who do so, must think and act differently from each other, and so far forth must be of different parties. We all readily acknowledge that there are good and bad parties in every state, and we naturally expect, that a man of any sound and well regulated

mind, will not so far confound what is right and wrong, as not to be able to discriminate between them, when called to think and act, and that he will form his principles and conduct accordingly ; that he will unite himself with the party that is right, and refuse to identify himself with that which is wrong. If there were such a rebellion in the land, that there could be no neutrality, that every man must either range with loyalists or traitors, what man of principle could hesitate in such a cause, to stand fast to his post, for his sovereign and for his country ?

Now, I lay it down as an incontrovertible principle, that the world is in a state of rebellion against its God, and that there is no such thing as a *neutral man* on earth. There may be neutrality in politics, there cannot be any in religion. The Redeemer who declares that, "*the word which he hath spoken, the same shall judge us in the last day,*" John xiii. 48, hath put it totally out of dispute—for he hath said, "*he that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad,*" Matt. xii. 30. Amidst all the varied religions, or forms of religion, and the superstitions which overspread the earth, there are, in the eye of Jehovah, but two classes, to one of which every individual belongs—" *the sheep*" and "*the goats*"—for "*when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory ; and before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them one from*

*another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left,"* Matt. xxv. 31, 32, 33.

Now, although it is very certain, that it is not for man, to presume to draw the line of demarcation, or to pretend to affix to the characters of individuals in general, that seal, which it is the prerogative of God alone to stamp on them; yet it is equally certain, that it is both his privilege and his duty to ascertain those great broad principles of God's revealed truth—whether with reference to points of faith or practice, to which that truth has annexed salvation or condemnation—if not, both human intellect and divine revelation, were alike useless to guide us to eternity. We cannot mark with our imperfect senses, in this twilight state below, the intersection of the circle of light and shadow, as the eye that looks on our globe from another sphere; but if we know not the difference between noon and night, the sun and our sight might as well be both extinguished. Now, I grant as fully as any man can desire, the excessive folly and wickedness of those, who, arrogating an unscriptural importance to certain principles or practices, would endeavour to excite divisions among Christians, and kindle or keep alive a party spirit in the Church, which in such a case as this, it were the part of genuine Christian charity to extinguish; but if to maintain and vindicate the great broad principles, on which alone the soul of man is to be saved—if to point out, and warn our fellow-men against those awful errors, which divine revelation stamps as fatal to man's everlasting happiness—if this be to support a party—me-

lancholy and degraded must be the condition of the Church—if those principles can be peculiar only to a part, which ought to be characteristic of the whole; in such a case, and such a cause as this, a man, who values the salvation of his fellow-men, and the word and glory of his God—if there were but a hundred men to be found to advocate the cause of truth, would take his stand with that hundred—if but fifty, with fifty—if but ten, with ten—if there were but one to be found, he would divide with that single man, and if there were not one to stand beside him, he would stand alone—he would stand, not only without support, but he would stand in the face of every opposition—he would stand alone against a Church—he would stand alone against a nation—he would stand alone against a world—he would smile at its ridicule—he would be undaunted at its rage—

“ Si fractus illabatur orbis,  
Impavidum serient ruinæ.”

I speak of man's privilege, his dignity, his glory, as strong in the truth and the power of his God. Weakness, irresolution, and vanity, are all he has to boast in himself: a bubble on the stream of ignorance and sin—a weathercock in the blasts of folly and temptation. Alas! how little “*valiant for truth*” is his heart! how cold, how senseless, and how dead his spirit!! O “*who art thou that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass; and forgettest the Lord thy Maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth?*” Isaiah li. 12, 13.

If to support the cause of truth—yes, of *evangelical* truth, in its pure and genuine sense—the truth of the everlasting Gospel, as opposed to falsehood, ignorance, and superstition; if this be to support a party, then I admit the charge, and only trust I have faithfully endeavoured to deserve the imputation; the shafts of ridicule, or of rebuke, discharged against an advocate of truth, like arrows aimed directly at the sky, fall down with an accelerated momentum proportioned to their velocity and weight, on the heads of those who shoot them; it is for them to beware of the force of that gravity, which shall return their feathered and pointed weapons on themselves: but as to writing to support or vindicate the character of men, I leave that task to those who may please to undertake it. It is not for me to enter into the question, who, or how many, or how few, maintain the pure and genuine principles of the Gospel in the Established Church. I have stated before, and I repeat the assertion, that a fearful ignorance, or disregard of those principles, can alone account for the indolent, the criminal, the awful, the unchristian neglect of the superstitions of the Church of Rome, which has so long characterised the bishops and clergy of the Church of England: but if we must admit the existence of parties in the Church, that there are some who maintain the doctrines of the Gospel, and some who maintain them not; then, so far is my intention from that of supporting men, instead of truth, that I both intend and feel, that it is on those who profess to maintain the doctrines of the Gospel, that

every charge that man could write upon the neglect of the Church of Rome, must fall with accumulated weight. As to any members of the Church of England, who are ignorant of the Gospel, that is, who maintain the doctrine of salvation, in whole or in part, by works, what can be expected from them? Considered as consistent members of the Church, there is a point, in which they are inferior to the priests of the Church of Rome. A Roman Catholic priest is ignorant, indeed, of the Bible; but, at least, he knows the doctrines of the religion he professes; but a Protestant minister, who maintains salvation by works, is ignorant not only of his Bible, but of the very fundamental principles of his religion. It is not wonderful to hear such men talk of the uncharitableness of holding forth the judgments of God against the superstitions and idolatries of the Church of Rome; not wonderful to see them make light of the guilt and danger of other men, when they are utterly regardless and ignorant of their own; what efforts could they make, could we expect from them, to reform that superstition? They are ignorant of the nature and extent of the evil, from which its unhappy votaries need to be reformed, and of the value and glory of that Gospel to which they require to be brought. There is an infinitely less difference between the religion of any such men, and that of the Church of Rome, than there is between their religion in its best form, and the Gospel of Christ—they are virtually agreed with the former in the foundation of all her errors, and they are opposed to the latter on the very vital principles of its truth—to embrace every

opinion that they can possibly hold, would be no reformation of the Church of Rome, for on the very foundation of man's hope, they want reformation themselves. But it is the truly apostolical, the genuine evangelical character of the principles of the Church of England, and it is the very soundness of the doctrine of those who really maintain them, that exhibits in an awful contrast to their doctrine, the guilt of their conduct towards the Church of Rome. No wonder that worldly men should hold up the testimony of justification "*by faith, without the deeds of the law*" to contempt, when they can see that doctrine, consist with a practical adherence to their own principles and conduct, in the neglect of the salvation of millions, not only of our fellow-creatures, but our countrymen, our neighbours, our friends, our acquaintances. Ask a man who is ignorant of the Gospel of Christ, if he thinks Roman Catholics can be in a state of salvation?—he will tell you, "certainly, if they be honest, well-behaved, moral men, he thinks it most uncharitable to suppose they are not"—is it reasonable to expect, that such a man will make any efforts to reform errors, of the evil and extent of which, he is in a state of utter ignorance? But ask a man who knows the Gospel of Christ, if Roman Catholics true to their principles can be in a state of salvation? and he must answer decidedly—"it is impossible, that in that state they can be saved"—either the Gospel sanction is totally untrue, "he that believeth not shall be damned," or except a man who trusts in the refuges of Popery repents, he must perish. Where then is the faith—where are the works—where the apostolical fidelity—

where the Christian charity—where is the sum and substance of the religion, of the men who know this Gospel, when they pretend to tell us of the horrors of Popish ignorance and superstition, and live in the very bosom of it, without one effort to reform it? Are ignorance and superstition abstract terms—names of things, or names of principles, which have an existence only in the theories of metaphysical speculation? or if they belong to beings—is it worms—or gnats—or dogs—the insects of the hour—or the beasts that perish that are bowed beneath them? or is it our fellow-men, our brethren, our countrymen, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh—immortal beings, hastening on to judgment and to eternity, of whom we say and feel, that they are under the wrath of God? while, though we know the remedy, though we can extol ourselves for our superior knowledge, and pity them as poor, blind, ignorant creatures; yet we can eat, and drink, and sleep, and walk, and laugh, and chat, and transact business among them from day to day, without one genuine, earnest, faithful, honest, cordial, affectionate effort, to awaken their consciences, to enlighten their understandings, and to win their hearts to the sweet and blessed hope of everlasting life that is in Christ Jesus. *Evangelical!* is this Evangelical?—*Apostolical!* is this Apostolical? What principle of the Gospel does it exhibit—which of the Apostles does it follow—what is the practical fact? We see men most busy in their efforts to send the Gospel to distant heathen lands—I blame them not—on the contrary, I very willingly acknowledge it is a most imperative Christian duty—we hear missionaries ex-

tolled for their “works of faith and labours of love”—I join with all my heart in the meed of praise, and thanks for their exertions. But I take all that can be said for missions and for missionaries, and I say, that in proportion to its truth, so is the aggravated weight, with which it falls on the heads of those very men who send them, who will speak most “*evangelically*” for Missionary and Continental Societies, and who will extol their missionaries for their exertions. A missionary ought to be recalled—a missionary ought to be disgraced, if he were to act upon his station in any heathen land, as the very men who profess the Gospel of Christ, the very men who send him out, can act in the midst of the awful superstitions of their own.

Let me suppose a dozen or twenty missionaries in an immense Eastern capital, where there were a vast number of resident English, but a much greater proportion of idolatrous natives—let me suppose, that while these missionaries had large congregations of residents to attend their ministry, and but few native converts—the natives in general evinced a readiness and anxiety to hear, when proper opportunities were afforded them, and that whenever it happened to be announced, that their superstitions should be publicly compared with the Word of God, the poor creatures came in crowds to listen—that their Brahmins were unable to prevent them from attending, and afraid to appear to vindicate their errors. Now, let me suppose, that these missionaries chose to sit down in the midst of such a field, “white even to the harvest,” without attempting to put in a

sickle. Let us imagine some of them so exceedingly prudent and judicious, as to express their doubts, *whether it were the wisest and most scriptural plan, to tell the natives plainly that you wanted to convert them to Christianity! and that therefore they would not engage in it at all!!* while some said, that *indeed it was excellent, and very much wanting, and they begged to have their names on the Committee of the society for enlightening these poor idolaters;* but when the day arrived when this committee was to meet and to transact business, no business was to be done, and “*no quorum*” to be entered on the books. Let me suppose that if a few members of this committee, ashamed of the general neglect of the very vital principles of Christianity, and the salvation of so many immortal beings, did make some efforts to have a public opportunity given to these poor creatures of hearing their superstitions brought to the test of the Word of God; that they found it impossible to get any of these missionaries to stand forward, and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus to them: one gentleman *did not approve of the Society at all*—another *had really too much to do*—another *did not think he was a good public speaker,* (though he could preach well and fluently every Sunday)—another was *not competent to enter on the points of discussion*—another *had a most particular dislike to controversy;*—in short, instead of being every man ready at his post to “*preach the Gospel to every creature,*” to “*contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,*” “*with one heart and with one mind to strive together for the faith of the Gospel,*” not a man,

or scarcely a man, was to be found to come forward to vindicate the glory of his God, and to proclaim salvation to his fellow-sinners. Let me suppose this the actual state of things on any missionary station, and I put it to the conscience of the members of the Church Missionary Society—to the advocates of the Continental Society, whether they would feel it their duty, to come forward before the public, and ask any man to give a shilling to support such a set of men on such a mission. I put the question to their understanding—I put it to their conscience, in the sight not only of the nation, but in the sight of the Judge of heaven and earth—ought not such men to be recalled? Could we utter a syllable in their defence? and if not a word could be spoken for those, who could so totally abandon the primary duties of their vocation—so totally neglect the salvation of their fellow creatures in a heathen land; what is to be said for those who act precisely such a part in our own? If this be not the case in the metropolis of Ireland, then we have neither eyes to see facts, nor honesty and truth to represent them. Let us put away names and parties, let us suppose that every minister preaches the doctrines of the Gospel of Christ, with as much purity as the Apostle Paul, and then let us inquire, what is there of Paul's doctrine—what is there of Paul's precept—what of Paul's example, in our conduct to the Roman Catholics around us? If he speaks of the awful state of those who "*please not God, and are contrary to all men, forbidding them to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway,*" 1 Thess. ii. 15, 16; what would

he say of those, who will not take the trouble of speaking to them that they might be saved? I do not mean to say that those who are so careless, so dead, in this most important cause, see their duty, in this plain, clear, scriptural light, and wilfully set themselves against it; but I assert without fear, that whether they see it or not, their plain path of duty is, to act among the Roman Catholics like missionaries in a heathen land, with this difference, that the laws and habits of speaking, and thinking, and discussing every topic freely and openly, and canvassing every subject boldly and unreservedly, added to the readiness of Roman Catholics, to listen to free, candid, and open investigation, gives a facility of appeal to them in this country, that is not, and cannot be enjoyed, by any missionaries in the world—and leaves us the more inexcusable for our neglect, in proportion to the increased facilities of our access, and the paramount claims of our countrymen—our neighbours, and our friends. A party in the church!! Would to God there were a body to be found in it, that deserved the honourable distinction of a party, in such a cause; a man who knew the importance of that cause, would write for them, would maintain, and vindicate their principles, against any man or men in the nation beside. But who shall dare to impeach them if they are faithful to their duty? It is easy to scribble an empty anonymous tirade in Blackwood's Magazine, but where is the man who will presume to take the canons and catechisms of Rome in one hand, and the Holy Bible, the Articles, the Homilies, and Liturgy of the Church of England, and the oath of her bishops and ministers

in the other, and pretend to stand forward and vindicate our neglect of our country? I put this solemn question once more, I put it to every man who calls himself a preacher of the Gospel of Christ. O! that it were printed on every cottage door in Ireland, and that every bishop, and every minister in the Established Church, were compelled to give an answer to it, ratified by quotations from the Catechisms of Rome and from the Bible. It would do more for this country, than all the classic productions that ever issued from all the universities in the empire. **CAN ROMAN CATHOLICS REST THE HOPE OF THEIR IMMORTAL SOULS ON THOSE REFUGES WHICH THEIR CHURCH SETS BEFORE THEM, AND BE IN A STATE OF SALVATION?** I answer plainly, simply, broadly, directly, in the face of all the charges of folly and fanaticism, and bigotry and uncharitableness, with which ignorance or *liberality*, whether it be that which verges to Popery, or that which verges to infidelity, may assail the assertion—that **IT IS UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE, THAT A ROMAN CATHOLIC CAN BE SAVED, WHO REALLY DEPENDS ON THE LYING REFUGES WHICH HIS CHURCH SETS BEFORE HIM.**

I add, moreover, that all the talents and learning in the empire are utterly incompetent to overthrow the assertion, for this simple reason—It is truth. *The truth of the Christian religion infers the truth of this proposition, and they must stand or fall together.* Now if this be so, I put it to every man acquainted with the

value of the gospel, How can indifference to this awful fact, consist with evangelical or apostolical principles? So far from writing to support evangelical men, I think that in proportion to the evangelical purity of every man's opinions, so in proportion does the guilt of his neglect of Popery, and the inconsistency of his conduct increase. Ignorance of the gospel must necessarily produce a disregard of the evils of Popery: for, the religion of every man who knows not the Gospel of Christ, and who has any principles of religion, how devout soever he may be, is all impregnated with the root and essence of that awful superstition: he expects by his religious and moral duties to recommend himself to the favour of his Creator; the only scriptural means of reforming the Popish religion are necessary for the reformation of his own. But a man who knows and understands the privileges of the Gospel of Christ, and who must, therefore, necessarily see the guilt and danger of Roman Catholics, is, on his own principles, utterly inexcusable before God and man, for his neglect of them, and in his disregard of the evils and consequences of their religion, gives cause to suspect the genuine soundness, at least he evidently exhibits, the want of practical influence of his own in the first duty of Christian charity.

It is, therefore, I will not say, *against* evangelical men, but *to* evangelical men, that I would particularly address a solemn exhortation on this important, this awful subject. I address it to those in Ireland, and in the metropolis especially. I trust if I have written what is false on the subject of the dangers of Popery, they will have the honesty to stand forward and refute

it. But if they know, as they do, that it is true,—that it is not in the power of man to overthrow it, then I call on them, as they shall answer at the bar of God, to give up their criminal indolence in this most interesting, and awful cause. I call on them individually, to consider what account they shall render for their neglect of their countrymen—perhaps their parishioners, who support them—when they shall come to appear at his tribunal. Is it because they hope that their God will not enter into judgment with them? Is it because they hope that all their iniquities have been blotted out by the precious blood of their Redeemer, that they add to the number, that great and aggravated sin, of living in the midst of their countrymen who are perishing in guilt and superstition, without labouring to give to their immortal souls, that hope which they will say, is the joy, and refuge, and salvation of their own? I call on them to awaken from their criminal lethargy—I call on them before another season comes round, when they shall be appealing to the nation to send the Gospel to foreign lands, to stand forth, and set the example of what missionaries ought to be, and to do. There is a field in their native country, such as is not to be found in the world. Let them not be lying down to sleep in the midst of their own harvest, when they have been calling out to the country, to send labourers into another. If a hero in a battle for the king of England could circulate the spirit-stirring word throughout his fleet—*“England expects that every man will do his duty;”* shall there not be one man found to give, nor one to hail the signal, in the battle of the King of kings in

poor unhappy Ireland. Alas ! unfortunate country ! when shall any man be found, to arise and do his duty in your cause ? Your inhabitants, by nature as fine a people as on earth, are bent beneath a yoke of spiritual slavery, that bows their intellect, and all the powers of their immortal souls even to the very dust : their energies, their industry, their morals, their habits, are all alike laid prostrate at its feet ;—your soil and climate, prolific, and salubrious by the favour of your God, from superstition, poverty, and slavery, and sloth, bring forth weeds, and briars, and pestilence, like the neglected minds of your population. Your government, (to the reproach of a Christian government be it recorded) endows a college for the perpetuation of your misery. An institution for the support of ignorance. An university for the suppression of Christianity. A seminary for the propagation of superstition. A prison house, where the giant strength of your young and manly intellect, is betrayed by the harlot in whose lap you have been laid asleep, to be blinded, and to grind for the profit of the tyranny that enslaves you—for the sport of the foe that has put out your eyes. O, miserable country ! what power can emancipate ? What laws can ameliorate ? What commerce can enrich ? What agriculture can improve ? What human energy can save you ? What taper could have dispelled the darkness that heaven judicially inflicted upon Egypt ? What sun could have illuminated the shorn and blinded Samson in his den ? Is there, O my country, a sword of heavenly temper that can hew your bands asunder ? and are there men who boast that they can wield, but who refuse to draw it from the

sheath? Is there One indeed, to be found, who gives “*deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind ;*” and are there those, who profess to have been restored to light and liberty by Him, but who refuse to lead you to his feet ?

O, blot upon the name of Christianity ! When, ye professors of the Gospel, will you awaken to a sense of what you owe to your fellow-creatures, your country, and your God ? Evangelical !—Apostolical !—Is it but a hollow empty sound ? Or do you mean to justify its application in contempt of your profession ? An evangelical man who lets his neighbour perish in ignorance ! An apostolical church, that educates a priesthood to teach her country superstition ! Let us be shown such a man, or such a church in the word of God—and let us then compose a scriptural eulogium on the evangelical principles, and apostolic conduct of any men, of any party in the Church of England, in reference to the Church of Rome.

When Paul visited Athens—a foreign city, “*his spirit was stirred within him when he saw the whole city given to idolatry ;*” he “*disputed in the synagogues,*” he “*disputed in the market daily,*” he confronted Stoics—he confronted Epicureans—he stood up in the midst of the Areopagus—he stood up like a man—like a minister of God—like a bishop of a Christian church—like an evangelist—like an apostle—he stood up to promote the salvation of his fellow-creatures—he stood up to vindicate the honour and glory of his God.

Did he give money to educate the young priesthood of the Parthenon? Did he levy contributions on the churches to promote the service of the temple of "the unknown God?" Did he act thus in a foreign city? and what do we do in our own country? Some of us talk and feel, as if our spirit were stirred within us, when we hear of the idolatries of distant cities too; but not a spirit, not a muscle, not a pulse of our hearts seems to be moved, in the midst of the idolatries of our wretched native land. Is it because a prophet has no honour, he is therefore to have no zeal for the salvation of his own country? We can readily reproach our poor neighbours for their idolatry: nay, some amongst us can be very angry, and give vent to our indignation in "*sesquipedalia verba*," that we are not permitted to swear, they are idolatrous and superstitious; but we can not only remain unmoved, without one feeling of spiritual anxiety among them, but can quietly put our hands into our pockets, and pay our offerings for the education of the priesthood that instructs them in this superstition, within ten short miles of the metropolis of Ireland.

Write to support a party in the church!!! What party in the church can a man support, who sits down to write with honesty upon her conduct to the church of Rome—or rather her conduct to the poor deluded, misguided, unhappy millions of our countrymen, who are bowed beneath the horrors of her superstition? Where were the guardians of the Christian faith? Where were the advocates of Christian truth? Where were

those whom the sacred laws, which incorporated that truth with the British constitution, placed at the fountain head of all legislative authority in the land—where were they, when the contemptible policy of base political expediency, provided for the education of a superstitious priesthood, to suppress all Christian faith and truth in Ireland? Perhaps we shall be told they were at their post; but what can the spiritual peers effect against the overwhelming power of a British government? It might be answered, that the members of a British government ought to be better instructed by their bishops and clergy, than to fall into an evil so at war with the first principles of Christian duty. But it may be affirmed with confidence, that if the bishops of the Church of England stood up to vindicate the principles of their religion, and the glory of their God, on a question such as that, in which they were alike implicated and dishonoured—if the Bishops and the Clergy of the Church of England stood up with that mighty weight of spiritual and temporal authority, which God has so signally entrusted to their hands—there never sat a government in the British senate, there never sat a King since the Revolution on the British throne, that could stem the overwhelming torrent of their moral influence, and energy, and power. If it is not to us the evil is to be attributed in its origin—it is to us it is to be ascribed in its continuance, and in all the accumulated weight of awful consequences, which that superstition has entailed on this miserable and benighted country. If any man will venture to answer No; I ask again, and again, what have we done for

Roman Catholics? And if the very stones of Ireland had tongues and hands, they would rise and point to five millions of an ignorant and superstitious population—they would point to the College of Maynooth, and answer, “Nothing! WORSE THAN NOTHING!!”

There is not a man—I care not who he be—more cordially, loyally, affectionately attached to the king and government of my country; there is not a man—I care not who he be—more cordially, devotedly attached to the genuine, faithful, scriptural principles, and constitution of the Established Church; but in proportion to that attachment to that government and that religion, will I lift my feeble voice against the conduct that disgraces them both: and if it were my last dying testimony, and that I were called to bear it in the face of all the British senate—if I were called to utter it in the presence of all the Bishops of the Church of England, I would say, that no man, who remembers that “*The Lord reigneth,*” can be surprised, that a Protestant government, which can so far forget the primary duties of the Christian religion as to maintain a College for the education of the Popish Priesthood, should be made to shake and reel to its foundation, with the political convulsions of Popish agitation; or that a succession of Bishops, who can tamely permit such an insult to the religion of that God, who has set them up as watchmen in the land, who can permit the education of men to teach this superstition to their country, and live and die without an effort to dispel it, should have their Church over-

whelmed, and their religion trampled in the dust, by the persecuting spirit of Popish superstition. I venerate the office—I respect the talents—I admire the learning—and I do not presume individually to judge the motives of those who fill that sacred office at this day. I write not against persons but principles, and I trust I may be borne with when I say, that I believe there is scarcely a man to be found among us, who will take his Bible, and his solemn oath of ordination and consecration in his hand, and who will write anything, which he will say before the nation, he does not fear to carry as a plea to the bar of God, to prove that he is in the faithful discharge of his sacred and his awful duty, in reference to the superstition that overwhelms this unhappy country. I write, indeed, to advocate the cause of a party, but it is the party of my poor Roman Catholic countrymen. I trust, that though without the power of assisting them myself, I may be instrumental in urging on some, who are competent to the important work; too happy if “*fungar vice cotis—exsors ipse secandi.*”

Before I lay down my pen, I would address a few remarks to some, whose names are celebrated by the voice of fame, for the fervor of their evangelical principles in the sister kingdoms, and especially in the metropolis of England, I would tell them, that while we ought to look to that country with longing eyes, for strength, energy, wisdom, and liberality, to plead and to maintain the cause of the everlasting Gospel, against the awful abominations of an unchristian superstition in this land, we might weep

tears of anguish at our painful disappointment; we might weep at seeing and knowing, not only that we find no help proportioned to our wants in Ireland, but that Popery is making rapid strides in England, without one faithful effort to prevent it, except the little efforts of the Reformation Society; and that the men who can speak, preach, and write about the evils of Popery, on certain political occasions, and who can speak, preach, and write about the Gospel too, from feeling its everlasting importance for the human race; yet in the midst of the increasing and alarming influence and strides, both of Popery and infidelity, these men, can afford to Infidels and Roman Catholics a just pretence of scoffing at the very profession of the Gospel; and while their fellow-men are sinking in guilt and ignorance around them, into the gulph of everlasting death, can contend and squabble, and cause divisions, and make their triflings on subjects of no importance to salvation, the shibboleth of a party, like children fighting for marbles in a house that is on fire. It were easy to enter into particulars—it were painful to specify facts at large — it were out of place to dilate on them as they deserve; but the conduct, language, and publications of some men, who make the highest religious profession, are enough to draw tears from our eyes, if we felt as we ought for the cause of our Redeemer. There seems scarcely an error on points not absolutely essential to salvation, which cannot now be made to consist with a high profession of religion; and there are even some that make us stand in doubt of the men who maintain them. Men can talk of the bless-

ing of diffusing the Word of God, and of publishing the Gospel, without note or comment; but they can contend for the admixture of falsehood with the Sacred Volume, and that, in such a shape, as to give to the nations sunk in infidelity and Popish darkness, apocryphal errors as the inspired truth of revelation! Men can now set forth such frivolous trifling with the great salvation of the Gospel, as to prove that *more of those who are PARDONED shall be LOST than SAVED!* They can gravely call on the world to admit, as gifts of God, such miracles as set Prince Hohenlohe at a distance! They can so write, as to make it a doubt, between their logic and their theology, whether the Lord Jesus Christ is indeed "*a Lamb without blemish and without spot.*" Prophecy is certainly a most valuable department of theological investigation, and we have much cause to be indebted to those who have thrown no inconsiderable light on it in our latter time; but some men will dogmatize with as much confidence on the views which they maintain, as if the veil of futurity was rent asunder before their eyes, and that they were admitted to behold the truths that lie concealed in the secret counsels of the Lord—they will unchristianize those who do not agree with them in their opinions, which, whether those opinions be true or false, is equally far from the spirit of sobriety or wisdom, that ought to actuate believers in the Gospel. Granting that all their views are perfectly correct, were they themselves not Christians before they were led to see them? or are they not adding to that truth, which God has set before sinners as their hope, when they make a knowledge of them, in the least degree essential

to salvation, or characteristic of real Christianity? When we hear from the pulpit, that “*next to the German neology,*” (which is blasphemous infidelity,) “*and only second to that, is the principle that prophecy cannot be fully understood till its accomplishment*”—when we hear a preacher of the Gospel, set forth such a dogma as this, we should ask whether that man could know the value of the truth as it is in Jesus, for his own soul, if there were not publications upon record from his pen that led us to think better of him?—some men can make the Gospel but the mere A B C in their theology. “*Christ crucified*” is but a trifling portion for sinners to preach, or for sinners to hear—“*Christ crucified*” is but a part and parcel of the Gospel—it is *Christ glorified* now, that is to be the salvation of the soul.

It is most true that the same Divine authority that proclaims a crucified Redeemer as the foundation of the sinner’s hope, proclaims a glorified Redeemer as the object of his expectation; but it is as true, that while the holy and inspired messengers of salvation to a guilty, ruined race, were “*determined not to know any thing among them, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified,*” that a different system of preaching, is but setting up to be wiser than God, and gives but another melancholy evidence, of human weakness, and of human folly. Nor is it wonderful to see the fruits, of so departing from “*the simplicity that is in Christ.*” Unscriptural errors in doctrine, necessarily bring concomitant derangement in practice; and hence, a dogmatical presumption and contempt of those, who may not

agree in their views—an insolence of language against persons, scarcely consistent with decent manners, not to say with Christian courtesy or kindness—“*a biting and devouring one another,*” and a practical neglect of the great and primary duties of apostolic labour in an ungodly world, can all be met with, in professors such as these. One would imagine that the coming of the Lord, of which they profess to think so much, were but some tragic scene of man’s imagination, and that Popery and Infidelity were but characters which they dress up in the bombastic drapery of language, to play the *dramatis personæ* on the occasion. Is it possible that men can write and talk with such vast solemnity upon these subjects, and live in the midst of those who are daily perishing in these antichristian apostacies, without making any effort to rescue their fellow-creatures from the impending judgments of the Lord? It is like men standing upon a rock, and apostrophizing tragically to the horrors of the storm, without sending out a boat, or a rope to save the shipwrecked wretches, whom the waves are engulfing beneath them.

If my feeble voice might reach their ears, I would call on all such men to repent of these their sins and negligences, to remember that a spirit of love is the inseparable mark of genuine faith before an ungodly world, that sowing discord, is the work of Satan and not of Christ, and I would call on them to awaken to a sense of their responsibilities and their duties. Popery and infidelity are destroying thousands in the metropolis of England; and what are those champions of the Gospel doing

to oppose them? When on a late occasion, the political privileges were about to be conceded to Dissenters, among whom Socinians, who are but a reputable class of infidels, were shamelessly included; and a little after, when similar privileges were about to be conceded to Roman Catholics, all, or most preachers, of evangelical reputation were up in arms—the walls of St. Stephens were well nigh shaken, with all the thunders of eloquence called forth by the occasion; but, like the dying of the distant thunder, it is all subsided into the stillness of a summer's eve. What have they done against these evils? nothing! Nothing against Popery? nothing! Nothing against infidelity? nothing! High mass is celebrating within their hearing—they have Bishops, Legates, and Nuncios, and Vicars Apostolic—all but the Pope and Cardinals among them. Carlisle is selling his infidel publications, with Mr. Milman's history of the Jews at their head; and he and Mr. Taylor are lecturing on the falsehood of Christianity. There is not a man in the metropolis of England, to bring Popery or infidelity before the bar of truth.

What can they do? Let them go into the places in that mighty city, where the sound of salvation never gladdens the heart of a sinner—let them tell the Roman Catholics of London, that they will bring their errors to the test of the Gospel, and let them do so—let them take the catechisms, that they are taught, and the Bible that they are refused, and let them compare both before them—let them invite their priests, bishops, legates, nuncios, and vicars apostolic to

vindicate those catechisms—let them do this in a faithful, honest, Christian spirit—let them appoint their rules for the promotion of discussion, and the preservation of order—let them advertise the subjects of their investigation—let it be seen, that truth, reason, learning and revelation, are not afraid or ashamed to lift their heads—let them give up those divisions which the word of God marks as characteristic of babes—of those who are “*carnal, and walk as men*”—let them unite “*with one heart and one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel*”—let them “*contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*”—let their simplicity, fidelity, and heaven-awakened zeal for the glory of their Redeemer, and the salvation of their fellow-creatures, extinguish those sparks of discord which their foolish questions kindle among them, as the light of day extinguishes the earthly fires that it shines on—let Christ be exalted, and names and parties brought low—let not men be misled by mistaking the “*mint and anise and cummin,*” for the fundamental principles of eternal life, and let them not take excuse to make light of the one, by observing the undue importance that is given, and the unchristian spirit that is excited in contending for the other.

Finally, if there be indeed but one—one single hope and refuge for the sinner’s soul—if the two great facts be established in the understandings and consciences of men, who have any real title to the name of Christians—that man is a guilty and condemned creature—and

that Christ is a mighty and all-sufficient Saviour; let those, who hold these principles, and who desire to promote the temporal and eternal happiness of their fellow-creatures, and the glory and kingdom of their Lord, take their stand on the high and holy ground of God's everlasting Word—let them stand forth in His name, in His strength, and in His Spirit in the midst of the nation. If men are anxious to send out the Bible to other lands, let them hold up the beacon, of the salvation revealed in that Bible, to those who are sitting in darkness and the shadow of death at home. If men are anxious to send missionaries to preach the Gospel in foreign climes, let there be some, who will set forth that Gospel in its clear distinctive character, to those who are living in utter ignorance of it, in our native land; yea, who are as ignorant of it as any heathens in the world. It is not by preaching the Gospel in our Churches merely, where perhaps, a stated congregation may attend; or where, perhaps, if a man be endued with more than ordinary talents, some strangers may come from curiosity to listen, that any national impression can be produced, that any effect can be wrought on the millions who never enter those churches, who never hear, but who are living and dying around us, in the belief and *practice* of superstitions, abhorrent from the very essence of Christianity. It is by the most clear, open, distinct, unshrinking assertion of that sacred truth, that great salvation, in direct and positive and systematic contrast to the errors by which it is opposed, it is by this alone, that we can awaken men to a knowledge of

its nature and importance, excite a spirit of public enquiry, and lift up the standard of judgment or of opinion in our country—it is by this alone, we can use the means which God has put into our hands, of bringing salvation to the souls of our countrymen, and deliver our own souls, from the guilt of having received a ministration of the Gospel, which we have neither exercised with apostolic zeal or Christian fidelity, for the happiness of our fellow-creatures, or the glory of our God. If any spirit of public enquiry can be excited—any effort of Christian fidelity, and charity awakened—any body, or any individuals aroused to a sense of their solemn and imperative duty by these reflections; and still more, if one immortal soul shall be led to the foot of the Cross for that salvation that is revealed in Christ to sinners, the writer shall feel thankful to that Almighty power, who can bless the feeblest instruments in His service. Whatever is wrong in the principles set forth, or the spirit exhibited in their assertion, he desires with sentiments of unfeigned regret, to acknowledge as his own—whatever is true, just, Scriptural, or faithful to be found in them, he ascribes to the mercy, and commends to the blessing and direction of the Lord, to whom be ascribed everlasting praise, dominion, and glory, world without end. Amen.

THE END.

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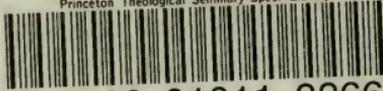
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