

THE
SINCERE CHRISTIAN
INSTRUCTED
IN
THE FAITH OF CHRIST

FROM
The Written Word

BY
BISHOP HAY.

A NEW EDITION
REVISED BY THE VERY REV. CANON STUART.

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INTRODUCTION.

JESUS CHRIST, the eternal wisdom of God, who is himself "*the way, the truth, and the life*," speaking to his heavenly Father, pronounces this sacred oracle, "This is eternal life, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," Jo. xvii. 3. The securing to ourselves eternal life, is the great end for which we were created; it is the "*one thing necessary*," without which we are lost for ever; it is an affair of all others the most important, or rather, it is the only important affair we have to think of; "For what shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Mark viii. 36. Seeing, then, that the knowledge of God the Father, and of Jesus Christ, his Son, in such a manner as we are capable of knowing them in this world, is declared by Christ himself to be the eternal life of our souls, that is, to be the necessary and undoubted means of acquiring that eternal life, and of bringing us to the full knowledge and possession of God in the world to come, how much ought we to esteem that Divine knowledge? How assiduous and careful ought we to be, to get ourselves fully instructed in it? What will it profit a man to know all things else, if he be ignorant of his God and of his Saviour. What though he understand the motions of the stars, the measure of the earth, and all the whole circle of human sciences, if he be ignorant of that important science, the science of the saints, which alone will conduct him to eternal bliss? "If any man consents not," says St. Paul, "to

the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to that doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but sick about questions and strifes of words," 1 Tim. vi. 3. To promote this heavenly wisdom among men, to instruct the ignorant in the knowledge of the Great truths of God and of eternity, has at all times been esteemed by the Christian world as a most sublime employment : and God himself has promised a most ample reward to those who practice it, saying, by his holy prophet Daniel, "they that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that instruct many to justice, as stars from all eternity," Dan. xii. 3. Hence it is, that, in every age, we find men of the greatest genius and learning, who have employed themselves with great zeal in instructing the ignorant in the truths of salvation, both by their apostolical labours during their lifetime, and by the pious monuments of their charity and zeal, which they have left behind them in their valuable writings, for the benefit of future ages. To contribute my mite towards so laudable a purpose, is the design of the present publication ; to which I have been induced by several considerations. I have often thought, that the great truths of Christianity, if digested in a regular orderly method, so that the establishing one point should be a prelude and preparation to the next, would show that divine religion in a more amiable point of view, and be a great ease and help both to those who are to instruct others, and to those who are learners: this idea has been confirmed by frequent experience, and I hoped the advantage I had found from that method might prove equally beneficial to others, if communicated to the world. There are many excellent works published in our language upon different parts of religion ; but I am afraid they too often suppose the generality of their readers better instructed in these

matters than they commonly are, and are written more for the learned, than for the ignorant. The view I have had in this present work is to assist the most unlearned, and beginning with the first rudiments of Christianity, to conduct the reader, step by step, through the whole body of the principal truths of revelation, so that the knowledge of one truth may serve as an introduction to those which follow after. The sacred scriptures are an inexhaustible fountain of heavenly knowledge, but are commonly less used than they might be in illustrating and establishing the truths of religion. A text or two hinted at now and then, seem lost in the multitude of other reflections and reasons which surround them ; but, when the principal stress both of the explanation and proof is laid upon these divine oracles, and a number of them are placed in the proper order for illustrating the point in question, this gives an incredible force to what is proposed, shows that it is God himself who speaks, and cuts off all occasions for human sophistry to enter. This I have had in a particular manner in view in these instructions, and have endeavoured to collect, in one, the several testimonies of the word of God, where the point in question is explained, illustrated, or established ; that, seeing it to be the constant uniform doctrine of the holy scripture, I might bring the fuller and more complete conviction to the mind. Some may perhaps think I have crowded too many texts together on some occasions ; but I have had in view the benefit of those who are to instruct others, that they may have a proper variety out of which to choose what they may find, by experience, to be most adapted to the various capacities of their pupils.

After this brief explanation of the plan and design of this work, I have only two things to recommend to my readers. The first is, to make themselves masters of one chapter before

they proceed to another, to consider it well, to comprehend it, to penetrate the force of the reasons used in it. This will make the understanding of what follows much more easy, and, at the same time, more satisfactory and convincing. The second thing is, when examining the proofs from Scripture brought for any controverted point, not to consider so much how far the wit of man could wrest the meaning of any particular text to a sense different from what it is brought to prove ; but to consider what is the plain, natural, obvious meaning of all the various texts brought together in proof of the point proposed ; for this surely must be presumed to be the sense intended by the Holy Ghost.

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

“THE SINCERE CHRISTIAN,” by Bishop HAY, is so well known and so highly valued that a new edition is sure of a cordial welcome. The Centenary Celebrations make the present an opportune time for such an undertaking. The perusal of his works is the best way of gaining a true appreciation of the learned and saintly Prelate. He laid the greatest stress on the spread of books of instruction and piety. His time and his slender means were largely devoted to this purpose. He was always a firm believer in the apostleship of the Press. Who can tell how enhanced to-day is the glory of his crown in the multitudes that he reached and led to God by his writings? In his introduction he alludes to “the pious monuments of charity and zeal that great men have left behind them in their valuable writings for the benefit of future ages.” “The Sincere Christian” he calls his “mite” for this object. We know how it has served for the last hundred years, not only in Scotland but throughout the English-speaking world, in carrying out the intention of the learned Bishop. Nor is its work yet done. We feel confident that for generations, nay, for centuries, yet to come this zealous Pastor of Souls may continue by his valuable writings instructing the ignorant in the knowledge of the great truths of God and Eternity. The present edition is little more than a reprint of that published by Bishop Murdoch. Its form is the outcome of considerations of cheapness and usefulness. Some

archaic spellings and expressions have been altered and a few short notes added to the text. The Editor has felt that the readers would be most pleased to have the Bishop's own words of instruction before them, although at times his language may be somewhat heavy and uncouth. The *matter* was everything to the author; the *form* or literary clothing of his thoughts gave him little concern. We are glad that Scotland has not forgotten her great restorer of religion in modern times, and we hope that the Hay Celebrations at Fort Augustus in September will call the attention of the Catholic world to the life and works of one deservedly revered as a pious and learned champion of the Christian faith.

A. CANON STUART,

Administrator.

ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL,

9th August 1911.

THE SINCERE CHRISTIAN

INSTRUCTED IN THE FAITH OF CHRIST,

FROM

THE WRITTEN WORD.

CHAPTER I.

OF GOD.

Q. 1. WHAT is *God* ?

A. God is a spirit infinitely perfect, the Creator and Sovereign Lord of all things.

Q. 2. What do you mean by a *Spirit* ?

A. An immaterial being, quite distinct from body. Now God is a most pure uncreated Spirit, without any body ; and those expressions of scripture where mention is made of the hands of God, or his feet, or the like, are only figurative ways of speaking, accommodated to our weak understandings.

Q. 3. What do you mean by *infinitely perfect* ?

A. I mean that all possible perfections essentially belong to God, and are in him in an infinite degree, without bounds or limitation.

Q. 4. What are the *perfections of God* ?

A. Power, wisdom, goodness, justice, mercy, holiness, truth, beauty, eternity, immensity, and numbers of others, of which we can have no idea. So that God is infinitely powerful, infinitely wise, infinitely good, infinitely just, infinitely merciful, infinitely holy, infinitely true, infinitely beautiful, eternal, immense, and unchangeable.

Q. 5. What do you mean by *infinitely powerful* ?

A. I mean that God can do all things whatsoever he pleases, and in what manner he pleases ; so that nothing is impossible or difficult to him.

Q. 6. How does this appear from scripture ?

A

A. On this head the scripture declares, (1.) That "with God all things are possible," Matt. xix. 26; and that "no word shall be impossible with God," Luke i. 37. (2.) That he created this world, and all that it contains, out of nothing, by his word alone; for, "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," Gen. i. 1. "He made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all things that are in them," Ps. cxlv. 6. "In him were all things created, in heaven and in earth, visible or invisible, whether thrones or dominations, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and in him," Col. i. 16. "He spoke the word, and they were made; he commanded, and they were created," Ps. cxlviii. 5. (3.) That he can do in all creatures whatsoever he pleases; for "whatsoever the Lord pleased he hath done in heaven, in earth, in the sea, and in all the depths," Ps. cxxxiv. 6. (4.) That "all things are in his power, and that there is none that can resist his will," Esther xiii. 9; for "he alone is mighty, the King of kings, and Lord of lords," 1 Tim. vi. 15.

Q. 7. What do you mean by *infinitely wise*?

A. I mean that God knows all things, past, present, and to come, even the most secret thoughts of the heart of man, and all things that possibly can be.

Q. 8. How is this proved?

A. His holy word declares, that "there is no creature invisible in his sight; for all things are naked and open in the eyes of him with whom we speak," Heb. iv. 13. "The works of all flesh are before him, and there is nothing hid from his eyes; he sees from eternity to eternity, and there is nothing wonderful before him," Eccclus. xxxix. 24. "For the eyes of the Lord are far brighter than the sun, beholding round about all the ways of men, and the bottom of the deep, and looking into the hearts of man, into the most secret parts; for all things were known to the Lord God before they were created; so also after they were perfected, he beholdeth all things," Eccclus. xxiii. 28. "The heart is perverse above all things, and unsearchable, who can know it? I am the Lord who search the heart and prove the reins," Jer. xvii. 10.

Q. 9. What do you mean by *infinitely good*?

A. I mean, that as God is infinitely perfect and infinitely happy in himself; so he has the most earnest desire of communicating himself and his happiness to his creatures; and in consequence of this, is continually bestowing good things upon them, according as they are capable of receiving them; for

every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from, the Father of lights," Jam. i. 17. And God "giveth to all abundantly, and upbraideth not," Jam. i. 5. All the creatures by whose means we receive any benefit, are but the instruments God makes use of to communicate good things to us; for "there is none good but God alone," Luke xviii. 19.

Q. 10. What do you mean by *infinitely just*?

A. I mean that God gives to all men the necessary means of saving their souls, and will never require anything of us above our strength; so that we only are to blame, if we fail in our duty to him: That, therefore, he will exercise the most impartial justice on all men, according to their deservings, without respect of persons; for, as St. Paul assures us, God will "render to every one according to his works; to them indeed who, according to patience in good works, seek glory, and honour, and incorruption, (*he will render*) eternal life; but to them who are contentious, and obey not the truth, but give credit to iniquity, (*he will render*) wrath and indignation," Rom. ii. 6. That "he will not judge according to the sight of the eye, nor argue according to the hearing of the ear, but will judge in justice," Is. xi. 3; and that "he will not accept of any person, nor receive any gift," Deut. x. 17.

Q. 11. What do you mean by *infinitely merciful*?

A. I mean that God has the most tender compassion for the miseries of his creatures, knowing their frailty and their weaknesses, and is most desirous and ready to deliver them from them; "he wills none to perish, but that all should come to repentance," 2 Pet. iii. 9; "for, as I live, saith the Lord, I will not the death of the sinner; but rather that he should turn and live," Ezech. xxxiii. 11. Hence "the Lord is gracious and merciful, patient and plenteous in mercy: The Lord is sweet to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works," Ps. cxliv. 8; and "his mercy endureth for ever," Ps. cxxxv. Yea, in the midst "of anger he will remember mercy," Hab. iii. 2. For, "as a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust.....But the mercy of the Lord is from eternity to eternity, upon them that fear him," Ps. cii. 13. Hence, "thou hast mercy upon all, because thou canst do all things, and winkest at the sins of men for the sake of repentance; for thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things that thou hast made; for thou didst not appoint or make anything, hating it.....But thou sparest

all, because they are thine, O Lord, who lovest souls," Wisd. xi. 24.

Q. 12. What do you mean by *infinitely holy*?

A. I mean that God is holiness itself, infinitely pure, and free from every spot or stain, or shadow of imperfection. Hence he is called in scripture *the Holy of Holies*, and the blessed in heaven continually adore him under this title, saying, "*Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts*," Is. vi. 3.

Q. 13. What do you mean by *infinitely true*?

A. I mean that God is truth itself; and he never can be deceived himself, and that it is impossible he should deceive his creatures; for, "God is true, but all men are liars," Rom. iii. 4. "God is not like men, that he should lie," Num. xxiii. 19. "God is faithful in all his words," Ps. cxliv. And "heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words, says he, shall not pass away," Luke xxi. 33.

Q. 14. What do you mean by *infinitely beautiful*?

A. I mean that God is beauty itself, infinitely lovely, infinitely excellent: That all the beauty and perfections which we see in creatures, are but emanations of his divine beauty; and, that though all the beauties of the whole universe were collected together in one, it would be infinitely less than a spark of fire is to the sun, or a drop of water to the ocean, if compared to the beauty of God. "Let them know how much more the Lord of them is more beautiful than they; for the first author of beauty made all those things," Wisd. xiii. 3. "For from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, out of Sion the loveliness of his beauty," Ps. xlix. 1. This divine beauty is so great, that all the blessed angels and saints in heaven are enraptured with inexpressible delight in the contemplation of it, and the enjoyment of it makes God himself infinitely and essentially happy. Hence the scripture says "O taste and see how sweet the Lord is; blessed is the man that hopeth in him," Ps. lxxxiii. 9. "They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasures; for with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light we shall see light," Ps. xxxv. 9. "O how great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord, which thou hast hidden from them that fear thee!.....Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy face," Ps. xxx. 20, 21.

Q. 15. What do you mean when you say *God is eternal*?

A. I mean that God had no beginning, and will have no end; that he always was, is, and ever will be; for "thus

saith the High and the Eminent who inhabiteth eternity," Is. lvii. 15. "Thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail," Heb. i. 12. "I am the first and the last,—and behold I live for ever and ever," Rev. i. 17.

Q. 16. Had God *no beginning*?

A. No: God is a self-existent, necessary being; from himself alone, and wholly independent on any other; and, therefore, never had, nor could have any beginning; but must have been from all eternity. Hence he says of himself to Moses, "I AM WHO AM; thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, HE WHO IS, hath sent me to you," Ex. iii. 14. In order to show that he alone is essentially, and that all things else are a mere *nothing* in comparison to him, according to the text, "Behold the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the smallest grain of a balance; behold the islands are as a little dust.....all nations are before him as if they had no being at all, and are counted to him as nothing and vanity," Is. xl. 15, 17.

Q. 17. What do you mean by the *immensity of God*?

A. I mean that God filleth all places and all things, and that he is intimately present in all creatures; for "in him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts xvii. 28. "He is higher than the heavens, and what wilt thou do? he is deeper than hell, and how wilt thou know? the measure of him is longer than the earth, and broader than the sea," Job xi. 8. "Am I, think ye, a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Shall a man be hid in secret places, and I not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill the heaven and the earth? saith the Lord," Jer. xxiii. 23, 24. Hence the royal Prophet cries out to God, "If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there; if I descend into hell, thou art there; if I take to me the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me," Ps. cxxxviii. 8. "O Israel, how great is the house of God, and how vast is the place of his possession! It is great, and hath no end; it is high and immense," Bar. iii. 24.

Q. 18. Is it possible for us to comprehend God?

A. No, no: It is impossible for any creature to comprehend God; for how can finite comprehend what is infinite? how can the creature comprehend the Creator? Hence the scripture says, "O most mighty, great, and powerful, the Lord of hosts is thy name; great in counsel, and incomprehensible in thought;" Jer. xxxii. 18. "Behold God is great, exceeding our knowledge,

the number of his years is inestimable," Job. xxxvi. 26. "He dwelleth in light inaccessible, whom no man hath seen, nor can see," 1 Tim. vi. 16. "The Lord is the everlasting God, who hath created the ends of the earth; he shall not faint nor labour, neither is there any searching out of his wisdom," Jer. xl. 28. "We shall say much, and yet shall want words," but the sum of our words is, He is all. What shall we be able to do to glorify him? For the Almighty himself is above all his works. The Lord is terrible, and exceeding great, and his power is admirable. Glorify the Lord as much as ever you can, for he will yet far exceed; and his magnificence is wonderful. Blessing the Lord, exalt him as much as you can, for he is above all praise. When you exalt him, put forth all your strength, and be not weary: for you can never go far enough," Eccclus. xliii. 29, &c.

Q. 19. Is God capable of changing?

A. No; God is always the same, and altogether incapable of any manner of change whatever. Thus the holy scripture declares, "God is not as man that he should lie, nor as the son of man that he should be changed," Num. xxiii. 19. And God himself says, "I am the Lord, and I change not," Malachi iii. 6. Hence the royal Prophet shows this great difference between God and creatures that, "They shall perish," says he to God, "but thou remainest; and all of them shall grow old like a garment, and as a vesture thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art always the self same, and thy years shall not fail," Ps. ci. 27. And St. James declares, that with "God there is no change, nor shadow of alteration," Jam. i. 17.

Q. 20. Why then is God said to *be sorry*, to *repent*, to *be angry*, or the like?

A. These are only figurative expressions, accommodated to our way of conceiving things, and only mean, that God so acts in his external conduct, as if such changes actually happened in him; but, as "the works of all flesh are before him, and there is nothing hid from his eyes, and as he sees from eternity to eternity, and there is nothing wonderful before him," Eccclus. xxxix. 24, so nothing can be new to him; past, present, and to come, are all continually *present* to him; nothing can happen in time, but he sees from eternity; hence nothing can make any new impression in him, or cause any change to sorrow, anger, or repentance in him.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE BLESSED TRINITY.

Q. 1. WHAT do you understand by the *Trinity*?

A. I understand that there is but one living and true God, and that in God there are three distinct persons, called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Q. 2. What do you mean by *One God*?

A. I mean that the divine Nature, the divine Substance, the Divinity, or the Godhead, which all signify the same, is but one; and, therefore, that God is one; and that there cannot possibly be more than one such divine Nature, nor more than one God, seeing that God is immense and infinite, and filleth all places, and all things.

Q. 3. How does the unity of God appear from scripture?

A. In scripture it is thus declared: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord," Deut. vi. 4. And all the wonderful things that God did for his people, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt, are declared to have been wrought expressly that "they might know that the Lord he is God, and beside him there is no other," Deut. iv. 35. And God himself, by Moses, says, "See ye that I alone am, and there is no other God besides me; I will kill, and will make alive, I will strike, and I will heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand," Deut. xxxii. 39. And by Isaiah, he says, "I am the first and the last, and besides me there is no God," Is. xlv. 6. Hence he expressly commands us, "Thou shalt have no other God but me," Ex. xx.

Q. 4. Can it be shown from the Old Testament that there are three Persons in God?

A. Yes, it can; "For God said, Let us make man to our image and likeness," Gen. i. 26. Where these words, *God said*, show the unity of the Godhead; and these other, *Let us make*, and *to our image*, show the plurality of the Persons. So also, "God said, Lo, Adam is become as one of us, knowing good and evil," Gen. iii. 22, where the same truth appears. Again, "The Lord said to my Lord.....from the womb, before the day star, I begot thee," Ps. cix. 1, 3, where God the Father speaks to God the Son, as to a distinct person. Also God the Son says, "I am appointed King by him over Sion, his holy mountain, preaching his commandment: The Lord hath said to me,

Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Ps. ii. 5, 7. *Lastly*, "By the word of the Lord the heavens were established, and all the powers of them by the Spirit of his mouth," Ps. xxxii. 6, where all the three Persons are expressly mentioned, *the Lord*, who is the Father, the *Word of the Lord*, who is the Son; and the *Spirit of the Lord*, who is the Holy Ghost.

Q. 5. How is the Trinity of the Persons shown from the New Testament?

A. This appears from several texts of scripture; thus, our Saviour says, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, the Spirit of Truth," John xiv. 16, where the three persons are clearly pointed out as distinct Persons, to wit, God the Son, who speaks, *I will ask*: God the Father, of whom he promises to ask; and God the Holy Spirit, who, he promises, shall be given. So also "There are three who bear testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," 1 John v. 7. Here the Trinity of the Persons and the Unity of the Godhead are expressly declared. Hence the Apostles are commanded to baptize, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." *In the name*, and not *in the names*, to show there is but one God, and "of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," to show there are three Persons in God.

Q. 6. Are these three Persons really distinct among themselves?

A. Yes, they are really distinct Persons, as appears from the above sentence, spoken by Jesus Christ, where he says, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter..... the Spirit of Truth," John xiv. 16; for, one *who asks* is evidently a distinct person from the one *of whom he asks*; and the one *who is given* is distinct from him by whom he is given.

Q. 7. How else does it appear that the three Persons are distinct among themselves?

A. Because each of the three has certain personal properties which the others have not, and we can say, with truth, of the one, what cannot be said of the others.

Q. 8. What are the personal properties of the Father which cannot be said of the Son or of the Holy Ghost?

A. That the Father is from no other, neither made, nor created, nor begotten; but is the Origin or Principle from whom the other two Persons proceed, and, therefore, he is called the *first Person*, and the *Father*.

Q. 9. What are the Personal properties of the Son?

A. That he is begotten of the Father from all eternity, and proceeds from the Father only: and, therefore, is called the *second Person*, the *Word*, and the *Son of God*; "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Ps. ii. "The Lord said to my Lord.....from the womb, before the day-star, I begot thee," Ps. cix. 1, 3. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 17. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," John iii. 16.

Q. 10. What are the personal properties of the Holy Ghost?

A. That he proceeds both from the Father and the Son, and, therefore, is *the third Person*, and is called the *Holy Ghost*, and the *Spirit of God*, and the *Spirit of Truth*: Thus, God the Son says, "When the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father," John xv. 26; where it is plain, that the Holy Ghost is sent by the Son from the Father; and, therefore, must proceed from both. Again, he says, "The Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things," John xiv. 26. Here the Holy Ghost is said to be sent by the Father in the name of the Son; in the former texts, he is said to be sent by the Son from the Father, which shows he is equally sent by both, and, therefore, proceedeth or comes from both. Lastly, God the Son says, "*He* (the Spirit of Truth) shall receive of mine, and shall show it you," John xvi. 14.

Q. 11. Does the distinction of the Persons appear in anything else than in their personal properties?

A. Yes, it appears also from this, that God the Father "spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," Rom. viii. 32. And God the Son being thus delivered up by his Father, was made man, and died upon the cross for the sins of the world; but it cannot be said that the Father or the Holy Ghost was delivered up, or made man, and died for us; which evidently shows the Son to be a distinct Person from the Father and the Holy Ghost. In like manner, the Holy Ghost appeared in the form of a dove upon our Saviour after his baptism, Matt. iii. 16; and in the form of fiery tongues upon the apostles on Pentecost, Acts ii. 3; but it cannot be said, that either the Father or Son appeared in this manner; which shows the Holy Ghost to be a distinct Person from them.

Q. 12. Is the second Person really and truly God, equal to the Father from all eternity, and of the same substance or nature with him?

A. Yes, he is; our holy faith assures us of this in the strongest terms. Thus, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.....And the word was made flesh," John i. 1, 14. In which text, the Word, or the second Person, the same that *was made flesh*, is expressly declared to be God, *and the Word was God*. So God the Son declares, "I and the Father are one," John x. 30, that is, *one* in substance, *one* in nature, *one God*. Of the Redeemer, the ruler in Israel, it is said, "His going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity," Mich. v. 2. Of Christ, St. Paul says, "who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God," Philip. ii. 6; and, again, "Christ is over all things, God blessed for ever. Amen." Rom. ix. 5.

Q. 13. Is the Holy Ghost also true God?

A. Our holy faith assures us of this also. Thus St. Peter first said to Ananias, "Why hath Satan tempted thy heart, that thou shouldest lie to the Holy Ghost?" and then adds, "Thou hast not lied to men, but to God," Acts v. 4. The divine perfections also are attributed to the Holy Ghost in scripture, to wit, immensity, "The Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole world," Wisd. i. 7; and omniscience, "The Spirit (*of God*) searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God," 1 Cor. ii. 10; and he is associated with the Father and the Son in baptism, as being the same God with them.

Q. 14. If all the three Persons be God, and at the same time be distinct among themselves, why are they not three distinct Gods?

A. Because they all three, though distinct Persons, have but one and the self-same divine nature, the same divine substance, the same Godhead. The divine nature being infinite and immense, cannot possibly be multiplied or more than one, but is the self-same in all the three Persons; who, therefore, are but one and the self-same God, have all the same divine perfections, and are equal in all things.

Q. 15. But how can we conceive or comprehend this?

A. It is impossible for us to comprehend it. In the simplicity of our heart we believe it is so; because God himself has revealed it. He alone perfectly knows and comprehends himself: it is impossible for us, poor finite creatures, to know more of him than what he is pleased to discover of himself to us. Seeing then that he has revealed that there is but one only God, and that in God there are three distinct Persons, this we are to believe as a certain and divine truth, without presuming to

search further, or to know more about him than he is pleased we should know; for the scripture says, "He that searcheth into Majesty, shall be overwhelmed by glory," Prov. xxv. 27.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE CREATION AND PROVIDENCE.

Q. 1. WHAT do you mean when you say that God *is the Creator and Sovereign Lord of all things?*

A. I mean that this one, only, living and true God, one in substance, and three in Persons, created the heavens and the earth, and all that they contain, all things visible and invisible; and that he still continues to preserve, govern, and dispose of all things according to his own good will and pleasure.

Q. 2. What do you mean by *created all things?*

A. I mean that God made all things out of nothing, by his word alone; for, as the scripture expresseth it, "He calleth those things that are not, as those that are," Rom. iv. 17. "He spoke and they were made, he commanded and they were created," Ps. cxlviii. 5. "And God said, Be light made, and light was made.....And God said, Let the waters that are under the heaven be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was done so.....And God said, Let the earth bring forth the green herband it was done so," Gen. i. And of the Son it is said, "All things were made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made," John i. 3. Also, "In him were all things created, in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible.....All things were created by him and in him," Col. i. 16. Lastly, of the Holy Ghost the scripture says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth..... and the spirit of God moved over the waters," Gen. i. 2. "His spirit had adorned the heavens, and his artful hand hath brought forth the winding serpent," Job. xxvi. 13. "By the word of the Lord the heavens were established, and all the power of them by the spirit of his mouth," Ps. xxxii. 6. "There is one most high Creator, almighty and a powerful King, and greatly to be feared, who sitteth upon his throne, and is the God of dominion, he created her (to wit, *wisdom*) in the Holy Ghost," Ecclus. i. 8, 9.

Q. 3. Had then this world a beginning?

A. Yes it had, and the scripture says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," Gen. i. 1.

Q. 4. What was there before the world began?

A. Nothing but God alone, who had no beginning, but was from all eternity, perfectly happy in himself, and in his own divine perfections.

Q. 5. Why did God create this world?

A. Not out of any necessity, or through force, but of his own free will and good pleasure, and for his own glory "for the Lord hath made all things for himself," Prov. xvi. 4. And, "Every one that calleth upon my name, saith he, I have created him for my glory, I have formed him and made him," Is. xliii. 2. "Hence the saints in heaven continually cry out to him, Thou are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created," Rev. iv. 11.

Q. 6. What do you mean by these words, *for his own glory*?

A. I mean that God, by creating intelligent beings, capable of knowing and loving him, and inferior creatures for their use and benefit, displays to those beings his own divine perfections, his infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, that they may give glory to him, and render him the just homage of love, gratitude, obedience, and praise. Thus the holy scripture, speaking of the creation of man, says, "God set his eyes upon their hearts, to show them the greatness of his works, that they might praise the name which he hath sanctified, and glory in his wondrous acts," Eccclus. xvii. 7, 8.

Q. 7. Does God still continue to preserve all things in the being which he gave them, or can they subsist without him, once they are made?

A. As God alone has being essentially, and of himself, and is independent of any other; so no creature has any being at all of itself, but is wholly dependent upon God; without whose continual conservation no creature could subsist for one instant; so that, were God for an instant to withdraw his almighty hand from any creature, it would immediately fall back to its primitive nothing; for "he upholdeth all things by the word of his power," Heb. i. 3. "He is before all, and by him all things consist," Col. i. 17. And therefore the wise man justly said to God, "How could anything endure if thou wouldst not? or be preserved, if not called by thee?" Wisd. xi. 26. On

this account, God the Son declares that He and his Father are always working, to wit, by the continual preservation of all creatures. "But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh until now, and I work," John v. 17.

Q. 8. Can God destroy the whole world if he will, and in what manner soever he pleases?

A. Most undoubtedly; for, as creatures depend entirely on him, and have their very being and all their powers and faculties only from him, and at his pleasure: so he is sole master, to do with all and every one of them what he wills, nor is there anything that can resist or oppose him.....Hence he says himself, "My word which shall go forth from my mouth, shall not return to me void; but it shall do whatever I please, and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it," Is. lv. 11. And the royal Prophet declares, that, "The Lord is great, and our God is above all Gods; whatsoever the Lord pleased, he hath done in heaven, in earth, in the sea, and in all the depths," Ps. cxxxiv. 5, 6. "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing before him; and he doeth according to his will as well with the powers of heaven, as among the inhabitants of the earth: and there is none that can resist his hand, and say to him, "Why hast thou done it?" Dan. iv. 32. This was the comfort of the servants of God in their distress "We trust, *said they*, in the Almighty Lord, who at a beck can utterly destroy both them that come against us, and the whole world," 2 Macch. viii. 18. And the holy scriptures are full of the wonderful effects of his Almighty power, and of his absolute dominion over all his creatures. There we are informed, that at one time he stopped the course of the sun for several hours; that at another he made it even go back for ten degrees on the dial; and that he deprived it of its light at the death of Christ; that he divided the Red Sea into two, and gave his people a passage through the midst of it on dry ground; that he rained down food to them from heaven in the desert; that he gave them water out of the hard rock; that he changed the waters in Egypt into blood, and at the marriage of Cana into exquisite wine; that he hindered the fiery furnace from touching his faithful servants who were thrown into it, that he raised the dead to life, commanded the winds and sea, cured all diseases, cast out devils, with many other such wonders, in an instant, and by his word alone, so that the scripture justly declares, that "the Lord is terrible and exceeding great, and his power is admirable," Ecclus. xliii. 31; for

“he only is mighty, the King of kings, and Lord of lords,” 1 Tim. vi. 15.

Q. 9. Can creatures produce any effect, or do anything of themselves, without the concurrence of Almighty God.

A. All the powers which creatures have to produce anything are given them by God, and depend entirely on his preservation: they therefore are only as instruments in his hand for accomplishing his will; of which, however, he has no need. They, indeed, can act with his concurrence, according to the powers he has given them; but he is the original cause on which they and all the effects they produce depend. Thus, it is God, “who covereth the heavens with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth, who maketh grass to grow on the mountains and herbs for the service of man,” Ps. cxlvi. 8. Also, “the Most High hath created medicines out of the earth.....but all healing is from God,” Ecclus. xxxviii. 4, 2. For “it was neither herb nor mollifying plaster that healed them, but thy word, O Lord, which heals all things,” Wisd. xvi. 12. So also Isaiah says, “Lord, thou wilt give us peace, for thou hast wrought all our works for us,” Is. xxvi. 12.—And St. Paul, “There are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all,” 1 Cor. xii. 6. “Neither he that planteth is anything, nor he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase,” 1 Cor. iii. 7. For “without me, saith God himself, you can do nothing,” John xv. 5. And “it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to his good will,” Phil. ii. 13.

Q. 10. Does then Almighty God rule, govern, and dispose of all creatures according to his will?

A. He certainly does; all things belong to him; “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof, the world, and all that dwell therein,” Ps. xxiii. 1. He disposes of all things according to his own pleasure, for, “he doth according to his will, as well with the powers of heaven as among the inhabitants of the earth,” Dan. iv. 32. He is the King, Lord and Master of all creatures, and rules and governs them, and everything that happens among them, according to his eternal purposes: “There is one most high Creator Almighty, and a powerful King, and greatly to be feared, who sitteth upon his throne, and is the God of dominion,” Ecclus. i. 8. “He that liveth for ever, created all things together; God only shall be justified, and he remaineth an invincible King for ever,” Ecclus. xviii. 1. “God is the King over all earth. God shall

reign over the nations," Ps. xlii. 8, 9. "The Lord shall reign to eternity, yea, for ever and ever," Ps. ix. 16. "The Lord is a great God and a great King, above all gods; for in his hand are all the ends of the earth, and the heights of mountains are his; for the sea is his, and he made it, and his hands formed the dry land," Ps. xciv. 3. "The Lord he hath reigned, he hath corrected the world which shall not be moved, he will judge the people with justice," Ps. xcv. 10. "He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords," Rev. xix. 16.

Q. 11. Does the care and attention of this Sovereign Lord extend to all creatures without exception?

A. The eternal providence of God watches over all his creatures, the least as well as the greatest, with equal care and attention; for "he made the great and the little, and he hath equally care of all," Wisd. vi. 8. He hath ordered all things in number, weight, and measure," Wisd. xi. 21. "He telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names," Ps. cxlvi. 4. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father," Matt. x. 29. Also, "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? and not one of them is forgotten before God. Yea, the very hairs of your head are all numbered," Matt. x. 30; and without him "a hair of your head shall not perish," Luke xxi. 18.

Q. 12. What do you mean by the Providence of God?

A. The providence of God is his eternal will, by which he disposes of all things whatsoever that come to pass, according to his own pleasure, and conducts his creatures in the way that he sees most proper towards the ends and purposes for which he created them. It includes three things: *first, his infinite wisdom*, by which he knows all his creatures, and all the good of which they are capable, and the ends to which they can serve, as also the ways and means by which they can acquire that good, and arrive at those ends, with the impediments that can hinder them from either. *Secondly, his infinite goodness*, which inclines him to will and choose for them those means of acquiring the ends for which he creates them, that are the most proper and conducive thereto, and the most fit and best proportioned, and conformable to the nature and capacity of each creature, and to remove or diminish the hindrances they may meet with in doing so. And, *thirdly, his infinite power*, by which he most effectually puts in execution, in time, those means, which, from all eternity, he knew and made choice of,

for enabling his creatures to obtain the ends he thus proposed to himself in creating them, Thus the Scripture says, "O Lord God, thou hast done the things of old, and hast devised one thing after another, and what thou hast designed hath been done; for all thy ways are prepared, and in thy providence thou hast placed thy judgments," Judith ix. 4. "For in his hands are both we and our works, and all wisdom, and the knowledge and skill of works," Wisd. vii. 16. "Wherefore, give not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin, and say not before the angel, there is no providence, lest God be angry at thy words, and destroy all the works of thy hands," Ecclus. v. 5.

Q. 13. Can the Divine Providence be ever mistaken, or use improper means for obtaining its ends, or be disappointed in obtaining its designs?

A. No, by no means. It is absolutely impossible God should either mistake the means, or be disappointed in his designs; his infinite wisdom is incapable of mistake, and his infinite power quashes all opposition to his will: "No evil can overcome his wisdom, it reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly," Wisd. vii. 30, and viii. 1. "All things are in his power, and there is none that can resist his will, in what he determines to be done," Est. xiii. 9. "I am God," says he, "who show from the beginning the things that shall be at last, and from ancient times the things that as yet are not done, saying, My council shall stand, and all my will shall be done," Is. xlvi. 10. "For he will do all that pleaseth him, and his word is full of power," Ecclus. viii. 3.

Q. 14. Can anything happen by chance in the creation?

A. A thing is said to happen by chance, when it is supposed to happen without any cause, or without being foreseen or suspected, or without design or intention. Now, with regard to men, numbers of things happen, as it were, by chance in some one or other of these ways; but, with regard to God, this is absolutely impossible; for the scripture assures us, that "nothing upon earth is done without a cause," Job. v. 6; that his infinite wisdom "sees from eternity to eternity;" that "nothing is hid from his eyes:" that "he knows the works of all flesh," (see above, Chap. 1, Q. 8.) So that it is impossible for anything to happen but what he foresees from all eternity; and that "he has made all things in wisdom," Ps. ciii. 24, and that he orders "all things in number, weight, and measure," Wisd. xi. 21. Consequently, everything that happens is foreknown

by him, enters into the plan of his operations, and is disposed by the Divine Providence, according to his eternal purposes. Hence, "lots are cast into the lap, but they are disposed of by the Lord," Prov. xvi. 33; and this the royal Prophet well knew, when he said, "Thou art my God, my lots are in thy hands;" Ps. xxx. 16: "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, whithersoever he will he shall turn it," Prov. xxi. 1. Thus, it was not by chance that the asses of Saul were lost, or that the Ishmaelite merchants passed by when Joseph's brethren were going to kill him, but by the particular disposition of God's providence, for accomplishing the ends he had in view.

Q. 15. Does then the Providence of God dispose of, and direct every thing that happens in the creation?

A. Yes, it does; it extends to all creatures, and to all things, whether good or evil; all which it disposes of and directs in the way and manner which he knows to be most conducive to his own wise ends and purposes; so that, whatever be the immediate cause by which any thing is done or produced, Almighty God is the first supreme disposer of the whole, and against whose will nothing that is, or happens, could possibly exist. In this, however, he acts in the most admirable manner, without encroaching in the smallest degree on the free-will of man, or hindering second causes from going on in their natural course; but making use of man's free will and all second causes to accomplish most sweetly, but, at the same time, most assuredly whatever he pleases.

Q. 16. How does the Providence of God manifest and exert itself for the good of his creatures?

A. The scripture assures us, that God is the author of all good to his creatures, and "that every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of light," Jam. i. 17. And this he manifests chiefly in three ways: *First*, In providing for, and bestowing upon all and every one of his creatures, whatever is necessary for, and conducive to, their good and happiness, conformable to their state and condition, and according to the ends he has in view for them. *Secondly*, In preserving them or delivering them from the evils that are contrary to these ends. *Thirdly*, In guiding and governing them towards these ends. All which the scripture points out to us in the clearest and most affecting manner. And, *1st*, that he provides all the good things that we enjoy: "The eyes of all hope in thee, O Lord, and thou givest them meat in due season! thou openest thy hand and fillest with thy blessing every living

creature," Ps. cxliv. 15, 16. "Who provideth food for the raven when her young ones cry to God, wandering about, because they have no meat?" Job xxxviii. 41. "Who hath sent out the wild ass free," says God, "and who hath loosed his bonds? to whom I have given a house, in the wilderness, and his dwelling in the barren land," Job xxxix. 5, 6. "Behold the birds of the air, for they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them.—Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they labour not, neither do they spin; but I say to you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these; and if the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe, how much more you, O ye of little faith?" Matt. vi. 26, &c. "All things work together for good to them that love God," Rom. viii. 28; and therefore, "cast all your cares on him, for he hath care of you," 1 Pet. v. 7. "Cast thy care upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee, he will not suffer the just to waver for ever," Ps. liv. 23. "It was neither herb nor mollifying plaster that healed them, but thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things," Wisd. xvi. 12. *2dly*, That he preserves and delivers his creatures from evil: "God is our refuge and strength, a helper in troubles, which have found us exceedingly," Ps. xlv. 1. "Blessed is he who hath the God of Jacob for his protector—who executeth judgment for them that suffer wrong; who giveth food to the hungry: The Lord looseth them that are fettered; the Lord giveth sight to the blind; the Lord keepeth the strangers; he will support the fatherless and the widow," Ps. cxlv. 5. "The Lord healeth the broken of heart, and bindeth up their bruises," Ps. cxlvi. 3. "He hath given his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways: in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," Ps. xc. And, indeed, the whole scripture is full of this truth, and of the most striking examples of his Divine providence, in preserving his creatures from evil, and even of turning the trials of his servants to their greater good; witness his conduct towards his people in the wilderness, the history of Joseph, Job, Daniel, the three children, Elijah, and many others. *3dly*, That he guides and governs his creatures towards their good, and the ends he has in view for them: The Divine wisdom "goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her, and she sheweth herself cheerfully to them in the ways, and meeteth them with all providence," Wisd. vi. 17. "In all thy ways think on God, and he will direct thy steps," Prov. iii. 6. "Thus

saith the Lord—I am the Lord thy God, that teach thee profitable things, that govern thee in the way that thou walkest,” Is. xlviii. 17. “The Lord ruleth me, and I shall want nothing. He has set me in a place of pasture. He hath brought me up on the waters of refreshment; he hath converted my soul. He hath led me on the paths of justice,” Ps. xxii. 1.

Q. 17. How does the providence of God enter into the evils of His creatures?

A. The evils of His creatures are of two kinds; to wit, the evil of sin, and the evil of suffering. *The evil of sin* resides in the perverse will of man consenting to any thing which is against the law of the Almighty: All evils of this kind God only permits. *The evil of suffering* includes all the afflictions, pains, and miseries, by which His creatures suffer, whether in mind or body: All evil of this kind, from whatever immediate occasion it arises, is all ordained, intended, and expressly willed by Almighty God.

Q. 18. How does God permit the evil of sin?

A. The scripture assures us, that God hates sin, that he abhors it as a most grievous injury done to himself, that he cannot look upon iniquity, and that he expressly forbids his creatures ever to commit it, under the severest and most dreadful punishments. Hence it is manifestly impossible that he should ever will sin, or intend it in any creature, and much less that he should be the cause or author of it; for this would be acting against himself, which is totally inconsistent with His infinite perfection. Seeing, however, that sin actually is committed by his creatures, and his laws, numberless times, are transgressed by them, all which God could hinder, if he pleased, but does not hinder, it necessarily follows, that he only permits this to happen. That is to say, God has endowed some of his creatures with knowledge and free-will, and from them he requires a voluntary service; he sets good and evil, life and death before them, and leaves them to the freedom of their own will to choose the one or the other; he proposes to them the most powerful motives to induce them to choose the good, and threatens them with the worst of miseries, to deter them from choosing the evil: “Consider,” says he, by the prophet Moses, “that I have set before thee this day life and good, and on the other hand, death and evil”; and a little after, “I call heaven and earth to witness this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; choose therefore life, that both thou and thy seed may live,” Deut. xxx. 15, 19. And the wise

man assures us, "that God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel.—He hath set water and fire before thee; stretch forth thy hand to which thou wilt. Before man is life and death, good and evil: that which he chooseth shall be given him," Ecclus. xv. 14, 17, 18. He is always ready, however, to assist them to choose and execute the good; for "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but with the temptation will also make issue (that is, *a way to escape*) that you may be able to bear it," 1 Cor. x. 13; but he will not force them to this, nor oblige them to good against their free-will. When, therefore, they choose the evil, he leaves them to their own choice, and permits the sin they commit; for "he hath commanded no man to do wickedly, and he hath given no man license to sin," Ecclus. xv. 21. But in thus permitting sin we must not imagine he does so either out of sloth, impotence, or negligence. Man often permits things that are disagreeable to him out of mere indolence, or through carelessness and indifference, or because he cannot help it; it is not so with God. God is incapable of sloth or carelessness, and is far from being indifferent about what his creatures do; at the same time, he is perfectly able to hinder and prevent them from sinning, if he pleases. But he permits sin, because it is his will to permit it, because he has the most just and wise reasons to permit it, because it enters into the plan of his providence, and contributes to the great end of his creating this universe; and therefore he has, from all eternity, resolved and decreed to permit it; and in permitting it, he displays, in the most admirable manner, his Divine perfections, by making it an occasion of infinitely greater good, both for exalting his own glory, and advancing the perfection of his creatures.

Q. 19. What do you mean when you say that God wills the *evil of suffering*?

A. That all the pains, sufferings, and afflictions of whatever kind that any creature endures, whether in mind or body, are all ordained, decreed, and sent upon them by God; that he expressly wills all their sufferings, is the chief cause and author of them, and the first and sovereign source from which they flow, whatever be their immediate causes or occasions. This is a truth everywhere displayed to us in the sacred scriptures. "Good things, and evil, life and death, poverty and riches, are from God," Ecclus. xi. 14. "The Lord killeth and maketh alive, he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth back again. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich, he humbleth and he

exalteth," 1 Kings (Sam.) ii. 7. "See ye that I alone am, and there is no other God besides me; I will kill and I will make alive, I will strike and I will heal; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand," Deut. xxxii. 39. "I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil, I the Lord do all these things," Is. xlv. 6, 7. "Shall there be evil in a city which the Lord hath not done?" Amos iii. 6. And wherever we find Almighty God foretelling by his prophets the sufferings and calamities of his people, he always declares himself to be the author of them: "I will visit you with poverty.....I will send in upon you the beasts of the field to destroy you.....I will bring in upon you the sword, I will send the pestilence in the midst of you.....I will destroy your land—I will scatter you among the Gentiles," Lev. xxvi. "I will raise up evil against them," and the like, are the expressions he uses on such occasions. And hence we find, that all the holy servants of God, whenever they met with any disasters, immediately referred them all to God as the sovereign cause and author of them, and received them all with resignation, as coming from his hand. Thus Job, in the midst of his severe afflictions, cried out, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; as it hath pleased the Lord so is it done; blessed be the name of the Lord," Job i. 21. And a little after he adds, "If we have received good things at the hand of God, why should we not receive evil?" Job ii. 10. So when God, by his prophet Samuel, foretold to the high-priest Eli, all the ruin and misery that he was to send upon his family, he immediately replied, "It is the Lord, let him do what is good in his sight," 1 Kings (Sam.) iii. 18. David also, when cursed by Semei, acknowledged this great humiliation to be from God, and said, "The Lord hath commanded him to curse David, and who shall dare say, Why hath he done so?" 2 Kings (Sam.) xvi. 10. And Christ himself acknowledged all his sufferings as coming from God his Father, when he said, "The cup that my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" John xviii. 11. Hence, Solomon, comprehending all the goods and evils of this life, under the expression of *the good and the evil day*, says, "for God hath made both the one and the other, that man may not find against him any just complaint," Eccelus. vii. 15.

Q. 20. But how is it consistent with the goodness of God, to render his creatures miserable by sufferings and afflictions?

A. It is impossible that the infinite goodness of God should render his creatures miserable, from any pleasure he takes in

their sufferings as such ; or, that he should directly intend, or will their sufferings, as an object which is in itself agreeable to him. He, therefore, never can send any affliction upon them, but with a view to some greater good, relating either to his own glory, which is the supreme end of the creation, or the happiness of the creatures themselves : either for the exaltation of his own divine justice in punishing sinners, or for the correction of the wicked, or for the preservation and improvement of the good ; either in punishing past sins in those whom he afflicts, or in preserving them from sin for the time to come. Hence all the sufferings of this life are the effects of sin ; and the voluntary abuse we make of our free-will, is the cause that obliges or moves the Almighty God to send them upon us. Thus the holy Sarah, in her prayers to God, says, "For thou art not delighted in our being lost ; because, after a storm, thou makest a calm ; and after tears and weeping, thou pourest in joyfulness," Tob. iii. 22. Where we see that God takes no delight in our sufferings, and only sends them with a view to our good, bringing out of them peace and joy. So also, "God made not death, neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living, for he created all things that they might be, and he made the nations of the earth for health ; and there is no poison or destruction in them ; nor kingdom of hell upon earth (for justice is perpetual and immortal). But the wicked with works and deeds have called it to them," Wisd. i. 13. "As I live, saith the Lord, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live," Ezech. xxxiii. 11. And, therefore, he declares, by another prophet, "Destruction is thy own, O Israel, thy help is only in me," Hos. xiii. 9.

Q. 21. That all those sufferings which arise from natural or innocent causes ; such as diseases, famine, pestilence, death, and the like, are sent expressly from God, and that he is the principal cause and author of them, is easy to conceive ; because there is no sin in these things, and the occasions of them are incapable of sin ; but as for those sufferings which arise from our own sins, or from the sins of others, from their malice, hatred, injustice, or cruelty, how can God be the author of these, since they rise not from natural or innocent causes, but from wickedness and crimes, of which God cannot possibly be the author ?

A. This difficulty often proves a stumbling-block to souls, and runs them into a most pernicious delusion ; for falsely imagining that God cannot be the author or cause of those sufferings

which arise from the crimes of men, they attribute them solely to the mistake, hatred, or malice of their fellow-creatures, and seek from this a sanction to their own impatience under them, and to all the excesses of their unbridled passion and desire of vengeance. But this is a very great mistake; for it is a most certain truth, that though God only indeed permits those crimes. of which our sufferings are the effects; yet these sufferings he as positively wills, and has from all eternity as expressly decreed to send upon us, as any others which flow from the most innocent occasions. To understand this, we must carefully distinguish between the sin committed, and the effects which flow from it. The sin resides precisely in the perverse will of him who commits it. The effects which flow from the sin are the sufferings which it occasions in others. The sin in him who commits it, God only permits; because he is incapable of willing sin, or of being the cause or author of it; yet from all eternity he foresaw it, and from all eternity, for his own most wise and just reasons, decreed to permit it. Now, what were these reasons? He foresaw that this sin, if permitted, would be the occasion of sufferings to others. He takes no pleasure in the sufferings of his creatures, and would never allow them to be afflicted, unless for some good end, either in justice or mercy. It is impossible that any sufferings should come upon them against his will; for "not a hair of our head falls to the ground without him." It is no less impossible that he should be indifferent whether his creatures suffer or not; his infinite goodness forbids this. We must, therefore, conclude, that as all the sufferings of this life, as we have seen above, Question 20, are either punishments or benefits; and all punishments and benefits are expressly willed and decreed from all eternity by God the punishments by his justice, the benefits by his merey; consequently, though God only permits the sin in the one who commits it, yet he expressly and positively wills the sufferings of others which are the effects of it; and the reason why the sin is so permitted is, that it may be made use of as an instrument in the hand of God, for executing upon those who suffer by it what he has decreed from all eternity to inflict upon them. Hence, we find in scripture, that when God Almighty foretells, by his prophet, the sufferings and afflictions he is to send upon any one, he always declares that he is the author of these sufferings, even though the means by which they are inflicted are of the most criminal nature. Thus, when the prophet Nathan reprov'd David for the sins of adultery and murder

which he had committed, he says, in the name of God, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thy own house, and I will take thy wives before thy eyes, and give them to thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of the sun," 2 Kings (Sam.) xii. 11. Here is a most severe sentence passed upon David by the Divine justice, which God foretells he himself would execute upon him; and, therefore, which he positively wills and decrees that David should undergo. His infinite wisdom could have executed this sentence by many different means; but he foresaw that David's own son Absalom, pushed on by his ambition, would rebel against his father, and abuse his wives. God could easily have hindered Absalom from committing such crimes, or have prevented the execution of them; but he thought proper to leave him to the freedom of his own will, and make use of his crimes as the instrument in his hand for executing the punishment he had decreed to inflict upon David. When Jeroboam, king of Israel, provoked God to anger by his idolatry, the prophet Ahias declared to him in the name of God, the punishment which God had decreed to send upon him. "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will bring evils upon the house of Jeroboam, and I will sweep away the remnant of the house of Jeroboam as dung is swept away, till all be clear," 3 Kings xiv. 10. How was this sentence executed? By rebellion and conspiracy, and the most shocking cruelty. "In the reign of Nadab, son of Jeroboam, Baasa conspired against him, and slew him, and reigned in his place; and when he was king, he cut off all the house of Jeroboam. He left not so much as one soul of his seed till he had utterly destroyed him, according to the word of the Lord, which he had spoken, in the hand of Ahias the Silonite," 3 Kings xv. 27. The crimes of Baasa, in conspiring against his sovereign, and killing him, were the effects of his own ambition, and his cruelty in murdering all the family of Jeroboam, was a stroke of his worldly policy to secure his possession of the throne, but, whilst he was thus gratifying his own passion, he was, though unknown to himself, only an instrument of the Divine justice, in punishing the sins of Jeroboam, and executing the decrees of the Almighty on the family of that unhappy prince. No doubt, God could have prevented the crimes of Baasa, and have executed the sentence he had pronounced on Jeroboam by other means; but knowing Baasa's perverse heart, he permitted him to follow its suggestions; so that the crimes he committed were from himself, by God's permission; but the

effects they produced in the family of Jeroboam, were expressly willed, decreed, and foretold by Almighty God. In like manner, when Satan, by God's permission, had brought so many miseries upon Job, and reduced him to the most distressing situation, appearing a second time before God, "The Lord said to Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job.....still keeping his innocence? But thou hast moved me against him, that I should afflict him without a cause," Job ii. 3. In which words God himself declares, that he was the author of his afflictions; Satan, and the other means he made use of, being only the instruments in the hands of God for executing his will. Many other examples of the same kind are found in holy writ: but the following one is particularly conclusive on this head. When St. Peter and St. John, after being taken up and examined about the cure of the lame man, were set at liberty, and returned "to their own company, they related all that the chief priests and ancients had said to them. Who having heard it with one accord, they lifted up their voices to God, and said, Lord, thou art he that didst make heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are in them, who by the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of our father David, hast said, "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the people meditate vain things; the kings of the earth stood up, and princes assembled together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For, of a truth, there assembled together, in this city, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Israel, to do what thy hand and counsel decreed to be done," Acts iv. 23, &c. And St. Peter, in his first sermon to the Jews on Pentecost, affirms the same truth, in these words: "Jesus of Nazareth.....being delivered up by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, you, by the hands of wicked men, have crucified and slain," Acts ii. 24. In both which places it is positively declared that all the sufferings and death of Christ were expressly decreed by God, who had foretold long before, that it should be so, by the mouth of his holy prophets; yet the sins of the Jews and Gentiles, in what they did to Christ, were of the deepest dye; these sins were not from God, but from the malice of their own hearts, and the abuse of their free-will; this God only permitted, but he expressly willed the consequences of their crime, in the sufferings and death of Jesus. The same thing is to be said in all such cases: whatever troubles and afflictions come upon us by the malice, or hatred, or mistakes, or sins of others, or even of ourselves, we are to

consider them all as positively willed and sent upon us by Almighty God ; the sins committed he only permits, but our sufferings which flow from these sins he expressly wills, and has from all eternity, decreed to send upon us ; and, whereas, if he thought proper, he could send them upon us by many other ways, yet knowing the voluntary abuse which we or our fellow creatures will make of our free-will, this he permits, and makes our sins, by this means, instruments of executing his will in us. And this is precisely the light in which all the holy servants of God consider their afflictions ; for from whatever immediate source they arise, they receive them all as from the hand of God ; they look upon the malice and crimes of those who injure them merely as the instruments which he makes use of for their punishment, or correction and advancement in virtue, and as such they love them and do them good. To the examples of this truth mentioned above, Q. 19, add these others : When Joseph made himself known to his brethren, considering all the cruel treatment he had received from them as the orders of the Divine Providence, he comforted them, and said, “ Be not afraid, and let it not seem to you a hard case that you sold me into these countries, for God sent me before you into Egypt for your preservation.” He repeats the same a little after, and adds, “ not by your counsel was I sent thither, but by the will of God,” Gen. xlv. 5, 8. And after his father’s death, when they were afraid he would revenge the injuries they had done him, and sent a message to him, asking forgiveness, he wept for concern on their account, and said, “ Fear not ; can we resist the will of God ? you thought evil against me ; but God turned it into good, that he might exalt me as at present you see, and might save many people. Fear not, I will feed you and your children ; and he comforted them, and spoke gently and mildly,” Gen. l. 19. And our Saviour, as he received the cup of his passion in no other light but as sent him by his Father, and considered his enemies only as the instruments made use of by his Father for that end ; so he also earnestly prayed for them with his last breath upon the cross, instead of having any resentment against them. Oh, happy those who seriously consider these truths, and imitate these holy examples. They already enjoy a foretaste of heaven itself, even in the midst of this valley of tears ; no evil can come near them ; for what the mistaken world calls *evil*, is to them a real good, a source of joy and consolation. In everything they see the finger of God, in everything they adore his Divine Providence, in everything

they rejoice for the accomplishment of his will, and hence they learn, by the most endearing experience, that "all things work together for good to them that love God," Rom. viii.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE CREATION AND FALL OF THE ANGELS.

Q. 1. WHO are the principal creatures that God made in the world ?

A. Angels and men.

Q. 2. Why are they the principal or chief of all others ?

A. Because they are endowed with understanding and free-will, by which they are capable of knowing and loving God, of which none of the other creatures are capable.

Q. 3. For what end then were the other creatures made ?

A. For the use and benefit of man, to excite him to love, praise, and adore his Creator, for the numberless services he receives from these creatures.

Q. 4. Who are the angels ?

A. Pure spirits without any body : "He made his angels spirits," Ps. ciii.

Q. 5. In what state did God create the angels ?

A. In a most excellent and happy state ; for 1. He made them of a spiritual and incorruptible nature. 2. He gave them a most sublime understanding, capable of, and endowed with, exceeding great knowledge. 3. He made them "*mighty in strength*," Ps. cii. 20. And 4. Besides these natural excellences, he adorned them with the supernatural gift of his Divine grace and heavenly beauty.

Q. 6. For what end did he create them ?

A. That they might be always in his own presence, "their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven," Matt. xix. 10 ; assisting at his throne, for, "thousands of thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him," Dan. vii. 10 ; and executing his orders throughout the rest of the creation, for they "executed his word, hearkening to the voice of his orders," Ps. cii. 20.

Q. 7. Did they continue in this happy state ?

A. The greatest part of them did, and are now confirmed in

glory : but many of them fell from it, by sin, and are now devils in hell.

Q. 8. What was the sin by which they fell ?

A. It was pride, arising from the great beauty and sublime graces which God had bestowed upon them. For, seeing themselves such glorious beings, they fell in love with themselves, and forgetting the God that made them, wanted to be on an equality with their Creator.

Q. 9. What were the consequences of their crime ?

A. They were immediately deprived of all their supernatural graces and heavenly beauty : they were changed from glorious angels into ugly devils ; they were banished out of heaven, and condemned to the torments of hell, which was prepared to receive them.

Q. 10. Who was the chief of these fallen angels ?

A. He was called *Lucifer* before his fall, which signifies one that carries light along with him, from the exceeding great splendour with which God had adorned him above his fellows ; and since his fall, he is called *Satan*, or the Adversary, because he is the enemy of both God and man ; he is also called the *Devil*.

Q. 11. What account doth the scripture give of all this ?

A. It is as follows : In the prophet Ezechiel, under the figure of the king of Tyre, the beauty and fall of the angels is thus described : “ Thus saith the Lord God, Thou wast the seal of resemblance, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty : Thou wast in the pleasure of the paradise of God.....Thou wast a cherub stretching out thy wings.....Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day of thy creation until iniquity was found in thee. Thou wast filled with iniquity ; thou hast sinned, and I cast thee out from the mountain of God and destroyed thee, O covering cherub. And thy heart was filled up with thy beauty. I have cast thee to the ground,” Ezech. xxviii. And the prophet Isaiah speaks to Lucifer, the chief of the fallen angels, under the figure of the king of Babylon : “ How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer.....Thou said'st in thy heart I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit in the mountain of the covenant, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the height of the clouds. I will be like the Most High. But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, into the depth of the pit,” Is. xiv. 12. And, at the last day, the judge will say to the wicked, “ Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,” Matt. xxv. Their fall is also thus described

by St. John : " And there was a great battle in heaven, Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels. And they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven ; and the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world," Rev. xii. ; for " God spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them, drawn down by infernal ropes, to the lower hell into torments," 2 Pet. ii. 4. " And the angels who kept not their principality, but forsook their own habitation, he hath reserved under darkness, in everlasting chains, unto the judgment of the great day," Jude, verse 6. " And the devil, who seduced them, was cast into the pool of fire and brimstone, where both the beast and the false prophet shall be tormented day and night, for ever and ever," Rev. xx. 9.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE CREATION AND FALL OF MAN.

Q. 1. WHAT kind of a being is man ?

A. Man is a being composed of soul and body.

Q. 2. What is his body made of ?

A. The dust of the earth.

Q. 3. What is his soul made of ?

A. It is created by God out of nothing.

Q. 4. For what end did God create man ?

A. To know, love, and serve him during the short course of his pilgrimage in this world, and then to be taken up to heaven, and be happy in the possession and enjoyment of God himself for all eternity.

Q. 5. Is this possession of God in heaven due to the nature of man ?

A. By no means ; it was wholly an effect of the infinite goodness of God, to create man for such a glorious and supernatural end ; to communicate to him the riches of his mercy, and make him supremely blest in the clear vision and enjoyment of himself for ever.

Q. 6. Who were the first of mankind that God created ?

A. Adam and Eve, who are our first parents, and from whom all mankind are descended.

Q. 7. In what manner did God create them ?

A. He formed the body of Adam "out of the dust of the earth, and then breathed into him the breath of life," Gen. ii. 7; that is, created his soul out of nothing to animate that body, "and Adam became a living soul," *Ibid.* "Then causing a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, he took out one of his ribs, filling up its place with flesh; and the Lord God built the rib which he took from Adam into a woman, and brought her to Adam," Gen. ii. 21.

Q. 8. To whose image and likeness did he create man ?

A. "God created man to his own image; to the image of God he created him; male and female he created them," Gen. i. 27.

Q. 9. In what does this likeness consist ?

A. In several things; for (1.) As there is but one only God, and three persons in one God: so in man there is but one soul, and in this one soul there are three powers, the will, memory, and understanding, by which man in some sense, resembles the ever blessed Trinity. (2.) As God is a spirit and immortal, so the soul of man is a spirit and will never die. (3.) As God is the Sovereign Lord of all things, and does in all creatures whatever he pleases; so he endowed man with free-will, and made him the visible sovereign over all the other creatures of this earth. "Let us make man," says God, "to our image and likeness; and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth," Gen. i. 26.

Q. 10. In what state did God create our first parents ?

A. In the state of innocence, grace, and happiness.

Q. 11. What do you mean by *the state of innocence* ?

A. That, at their creation, they were free from the smallest pollution of sin, and pure and unspotted before God, "This I know, that God made man upright," Eccles. vii. 30.

Q. 12. What do you mean by *the state of grace* ?

A. That they were adorned with the grace of God, called also *original justice*, or *righteousness*, which God communicated to their souls, making them beautiful and truly holy before him. Thus St. Paul, exhorting us to be renewed in the spirit to that original justice in which our first parents were created, says, "Put on the new man, who, according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth," Eph. iv. 24.

Q. 13. Was this original righteousness due to their nature ?

A. By no means: it was a free gift of the goodness of God.

Q. 14. Why did he bestow it upon them ?

A. Because, as he was pleased, out of his great goodness, to create them for a supernatural end, to wit, the enjoyment of himself in heaven: so out of the same goodness, he bestowed original justice upon them, as the necessary help to enable them to attain that end.

Q. 15. What benefit did they receive from this original justice?

A. (1.) It sanctified them, or made them truly holy before God, objects of His delight and complacency. (2.) It subjected all their senses, appetites, and passions, to reason. (3.) It rendered their reason and their whole soul subject to the will of God; and, (4.) It was the source and support of the happiness they enjoyed.

Q. 16. What do you mean by *the state of happiness*?

A. That being free from all stain of sin, and adorned with original justice, they were, on that account, free from all sufferings, and enjoyed a perfect happiness both in soul and body, suitable to their nature, and the state they were in.

Q. 17. In what did this happiness consist?

A. Chiefly in the following particulars: (1.) They were endowed with great knowledge of everything relating to their state and the rest of the creatures. Thus "God created manand created of him a helpmate like to himself; he gave them council, and a tongue, and eyes, and ears, and a heart to devise, and he filled them with the knowledge of understanding; he created in them the science of the spirit; he filled their heart with wisdom, and showed them both good and evil," Eccles. vii. 5. (2.) They were free from all those passions and irregular desires and appetites which so violently torment our souls; for, "God made man upright," Eccles. vii. 30, and of course they enjoyed a perpetual peace and serenity of mind. (3.) Their hearts were inclined to all good, and their wills united to God by holy love. (4.) Their bodies were free from all sickness and pain, and enjoyed a perpetual health. (5.) They were not subject to death; but, after serving God for a time upon earth, were to have been translated, both soul and body, without passing through the gates of death, to enjoy him for ever in heaven; for "God created man incorruptible," Wisd. ii. 23.

Q. 18. Where did God place our first parents when he had created them?

A. "The Lord God had planted a paradise of pleasure from the beginning, wherein he placed man whom he had formed. And the Lord God brought forth from the ground all manner

of trees, fair to behold and pleasant to eat of.....And the Lord God took man, and put him into the paradise of pleasure, to dress it and to keep it," Gen. ii. 8, 9, 15. This was a garden planted by the hand of God, and filled with everything that could make them happy.

Q. 19. Were they allowed to eat of all the fruit of this garden ?

A. They were allowed to eat of everything this garden produced, except the fruit of one tree, which God forbade them, under pain of death, to touch. And God "commanded him saying : Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat ; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat ; for in what day soever thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death," Gen. ii. 16.

Q. 20. What means, *thou shalt die the death* ?

A. It means, in the day thou eatest of that fruit, thou shalt immediately die the death of the soul, by committing a mortal sin ; thou shalt be subjected to the death of the body, and return to the dust from whence thou art made ; and after that to the death both of soul and body, in hell-fire, for all eternity.

Q. 21. Why did God lay this command upon them ?

A. To exercise their obedience, and be a continual testimony of their subjection to God, and of their dependence upon him.

Q. 22. Did our first parents continue in this happy state ?

A. No : they fell from it, by transgressing this easy command of God, their Maker, and eating this forbidden fruit.

Q. 23. Who tempted them to commit this crime ?

A. Satan, the chief of the fallen angels ; who, appearing to Eve in the serpent, seduced her to eat of the fruit, and she having eaten it herself, carried it to her husband and persuaded him to do the same.

Q. 24. What account does the scripture give of this ?

A. "And the serpent said to the woman, Why hath God commanded you that you should not eat of every tree of paradise ? And the woman answered him, saying. Of the fruit of the trees, that are in paradise we do eat ; but of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of paradise, God hath commanded us that we should not eat, and that we should not touch it, lest perhaps we die. And the serpent said to the woman, No, you shall not die the death ; for God doth know, that in what day soever you do eat thereof, your eyes shall be opened, and you shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And the woman saw that the tree was good to eat, and fair to the eyes, and delightful to behold, and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave to her husband, who did eat," Gen. iii.

Q. 25. What moved the devil to tempt them to this sin ?

A. Envy at their happiness ; for “ God created man incorruptible—but by the envy of the devil death came into the world,” Wisd. ii. 24 ; and it was by tempting them to this sin that death was introduced : for, “ by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death,” Rom. v. 12.

Q. 26. What were the consequences of their disobedience ? Did they become as gods ?

A. Quite the reverse. Instead of that, they immediately “ lost their innocence,” bringing upon themselves the dreadful guilt of mortal sin : they were deprived of the sublime treasure of “ original justice ” ; for by this sin the grace of God was banished from their souls ; and they lost “ their happiness,” and became miserable both in soul and body. In consequence of all which, they became objects of the wrath and indignation of God, whom they had offended, slaves of the devil, whose service they had voluntarily preferred to the service of God, and they lost all right and title to eternal happiness.

Q. 27. In what respect did they become miserable as to their soul ?

A. Their understanding was darkened, and subjected to ignorance and error ; their will was turned away from God, and violently bent upon evil ; and their passions rebelled against reason, and tormented their minds.

Q. 28. How did they become miserable as to their bodies ?

A. Their bodies were subjected to all manner of sickness and diseases, to innumerable pains and torments, to death itself in this world, and to be reduced to the dust from which they were made, and at last both soul and body to hell fire.

Q. 29. What does the scripture say of this ?

A. “ And to the woman God said, I will multiply thy sorrows and thy conceptions ; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, and thou shalt be under thy husband’s power, and he shall have dominion over thee. And to Adam he said—Cursed is the earth in thy work ; with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the earth out of which thou wast taken ; for dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return,” Gen. iii.

Q. 30.¹ Are all mankind born under the guilt of this sin of our first parents ?

¹ The author does not intend here to express his mind about a doctrine which

A. Yes, they are; for "by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned," Rom. v. 12.

Q. 31. What is this sin called in us?

A. Original sin.

Q. 32. Why so?

A. Both because we derive it from our first parents, who were the origin or beginning of all mankind, and also because we contract it from the first origin of our being, that is, the very moment we are conceived in our mother's womb, according to that of the prophet, "Behold I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," Ps. l. 7.

Q. 33. Are we also subjected to all these miseries, both of soul and body, which this sin brought upon our first parents?

A. Yes, we are; "for we are by nature children of wrath," Eph. ii. 3, being all born under the guilt of this their sin, and deprived of that original justice in which they were created, and on that account subjected to the dominion of Satan, and without any right or title to heaven, where we can never enter so long as this original guilt remains upon our souls: Our minds are darkened with error and ignorance, as experience itself shows; "the thoughts of our hearts are bent upon evil at all times," Gen. vi. 5; by which we are daily hurried on to the numberless sins we commit ourselves: And as for the torments and pains to which we are liable, both in mind and body, who can enumerate them? "Man born of a woman," saith Job, "living for a short time, is filled with many miseries," Job. xiv. 1. "For what profit hath man of all his labour and vexation of spirit, with which he has been tormented under the sun? All his days are full of sorrows and miseries, even in the night he doth not rest in mind; and is not this vanity?" Eccles. ii. 22, 23.

had not been defined by the Church when he wrote, viz. "The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary." A diversity of opinion was tolerated, although it is clear that the difference was rather apparent than real owing to the fact that some of the terms employed in debate were not sufficiently precise and definite, and a clear distinction between "active" and "passive" had not yet been drawn. The doctrine was solemnly defined as an article of faith by Pope Pius IX. 8th Dec. 1854, in the following terms:—"By the Authority of Our Lord Jesus Christ, of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, We declare, pronounce and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a special grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of Mankind was preserved free from all stain of original sin, has been revealed by God and therefore is to be firmly and steadfastly believed by all the faithful."—ED.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE PROMISE OF A REDEEMER, AND THE STATE OF
MANKIND TILL HIS COMING.

Q. 1. WAS man, in his fallen state, able to make up his peace with God, and remedy his own miseries ?

A. No: Fallen man was utterly incapable to take any effectual step towards that end, and much less to attain it.

Q. 2. Why so ?

A. Because, to make up his peace with God, it was necessary the Divine justice should first be satisfied for the grievous injury done to God by his disobedience in preferring the suggestions of Satan to the command of God. And to remedy his own miseries, it was necessary he should regain the grace of God which he had lost by sin, and which was the source of all his happiness; neither of which was it possible for man, in his fallen state, to do.

Q. 3. Why could he not satisfy the justice of God for the offence he had committed against him ?

A. Because, considering on the one hand the vileness of man, who of himself is a mere nothing; and, on the other, the infinite Majesty of God, whom this nothing had so grievously injured, the malice of the offence was in a manner infinite; and therefore the Divine justice required a satisfaction of infinite value to equal the offence, and make up the offender's peace; now man, a poor sinful creature, was incapable of this in the smallest degree.

Q. 4. Why could not he of himself regain the grace of God ?

A. Because the grace of original justice, which he lost by sin, was a free gift of the goodness of God, to which man could have no right nor title, even when innocent, and was a gift of infinite value; but by his fall he was become positively unworthy of that or any other grace, and utterly incapable of doing any thing that could move God to bestow it upon him.

Q. 5. Was it possible for the good angels to make up man's peace with God, and bring a remedy to his evils ?

A. No: It was impossible for any mere creature, though ever so pure and holy, to satisfy for the offence committed by man in the manner the Divine justice required, or to obtain for him the grace he had lost by sin. None but God himself could apply an effectual remedy to so great an evil.

Q. 6. What then must have become of our first parents, if no remedy had been found ?

A. They, and all of us their posterity, must have been lost for ever.

Q. 7. Were they left then, by the Divine justice, to the punishment they deserved, without all remedy ?

A. God Almighty, out of his incomprehensible justice was pleased to pursue the fallen angels with immediate punishment without remedy : but out of his infinite goodness he had pity and compassion on fallen man, and provided a Redeemer for him.

Q. 8. Who is this Redeemer ?

A. No less a person than God the Son, whom the Father promised to send into this world in the fulness of time to remedy all the evils of their fall.

Q. 9. When was this promise first made ?

A. When passing sentence on our first parents after their fall ; he even then showed the greatness of his mercy by promising to send them a Redeemer, who should overcome their enemy that had seduced them, saying to the serpent, " I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and thy seed, and her seed ; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel," Gen. iii. 15. And St. John tells us that, " for this purpose, the Son of God appeared, that he might destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8.

Q. 10. Was it long after the fall before this promise was fulfilled, by the coming of the Redeemer ?

A. It was about four thousand years after the creation and fall before he appeared in the world, though the promise of sending him was frequently renewed, during that time, to the holy servants of God, and all the circumstances of his appearance and office were revealed to several among them, and by them communicated to others.

Q. 11. In what condition was mankind during that long space of time ?

A. Soon after the world began to be peopled, men began to forsake God, and follow the bent of their corrupted nature ; and though God always had a succession of good people who adhered to him, yet vice at last became so universal, that, " God seeing that the wickedness of men was great on the earth, and that all the thoughts of their heart were bent upon evil, at all times, it repented him that he had made man upon the earth : and being touched inwardly with sorrow of heart, he

said, I will destroy man, whom I have created, from the face of the earth.—But Noah found grace before the Lord, for Noah was a just and perfect man in his generation, and he walked with God.—And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me, the earth is filled with iniquity through them, and I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of timber planks—behold I will bring the waters of a great flood upon the earth to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life under heaven.—And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt enter into the ark, thou and thy sons, and thy wife, and the wives of thy sons with thee, and of every living creature of all flesh, thou shalt bring two of a sort into the ark, that they may live with thee.—For yet a while, and after seven days, I will rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy every substance that I have made from the face of the earth. And Noah did all things which the Lord commanded him.....And after seven days the waters overflowed the earth.....All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the flood-gates of heaven were opened; and the rain fell upon the earth forty days and forty nights.....And the waters overflowed exceedingly, and filled all the face of the earth—and they prevailed beyond measure upon the earth, and all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered. The water was fifteen cubits higher than the mountains which it covered. And all flesh was destroyed that moved upon the earth.....And all men and all things wherein there was the breath of life on the earth, died.....And Noah only remained, and they that were with him in the ark,” Gen. vi., vii.

Q. What became of them after this?

A. When the waters of the deluge were abated, and the earth was again dried, “God spoke to Noah, saying, Go out of the ark, thou and thy wife, thy sons, and the wives of thy sons, and all living things that are with thee of all flesh.....bring out with thee, and go ye upon the earth; increase and multiply upon it,” Gen. viii. 15. And they did so, “and God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, Increase and multiply, and fill the earth,” Gen. ix. 1.

Q. 13. After so dreadful an example of the Divine justice, did the posterity of Noah continue faithful to God?

A. For some time they did; but at last the effects of corrupt nature, and the delusions of Satan, began again to prevail, and by degrees spread over the whole world, insomuch that, after some time, the very knowledge of the true God was almost

extinguished from the face of the earth, and mankind was drowned in idolatry and all manner of crimes, worshipping idols instead of God, and sacrificing their own children to devils; of which the scriptures give us the following description: "They did works hateful to God by their sorceries and wicked sacrifices; they were merciless murderers of their own children, and eaters of men's bowels, and devourers of blood; the parents sacrificing with their own hands helpless souls," *Wisd. xii. 4.* St. Paul also describes the state of their idolatry before the coming of Christ, in these words: "They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things; they changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator," *Rom. i. 23.* And as the Holy Ghost declares, "That the beginning of fornication is the devising of idols, and the invention of them is the corruption of life," *Wisd. xiv. 12.* So the apostle goes on to declare the shocking abominations which were the consequences of their idolatry: "as they liked not to have God in their knowledge. God delivered them up to a reprobate sense, to do those things which are not convenient, being filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, covetousness, wickedness, full of envy, murder, contention, deceit, malignity, whispers, hateful to God, contumelious, proud, haughty, inventors of evil things," &c., *Rom. i.* Such is the description which the word of God gives us of the deplorable situation that mankind was in before the Redeemer was sent among them.

Q. 14. Why did Almighty God leave mankind in this sad condition, and so long delay the coming of the Redeemer.

A. To teach us, by sad experience, our own extreme perverseness, and the dreadful corruption of our nature by sin; to cure the deep wound of pride which sin had made in our souls, by letting us see what we are capable of when left to ourselves; to convince us of the great need we have of a Redeemer, and to make us receive him with the greater readiness when he should come amongst us.

Q. 15. Did God totally abandon mankind to their wicked ways during all that time?

A. Far from it; for, (1.) He raised up holy men from time to time, to warn the wicked of their evil ways, and exhort them to repentance. (2.) He often punished them in a visible and dreadful manner for their crimes, as when he drowned the whole world by the deluge; and rained down fire and brimstone

from heaven to consume the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. And (3.) When wickedness was still more and more spreading over the face of the earth, he chose a whole people, whom he separated from the rest of mankind, and, by a special providence, preserved from the general corruption.

Q. 16. Who was this so highly favoured people?

A. The posterity of his faithful servant, Abraham, whose fidelity and obedience God tried many different ways, and finding him always constant and uniform in his duty, he made choice of him to be the father of his chosen people, renewed to him the promise of the Redeemer, and assured him that he should come of his posterity: "And the Lord appeared to Abraham, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God: walk before me and be perfect; and I will make my covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly..... And thou shalt be father of many nations..... And kings shall come out of thee..... And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and between thy seed after thee, in their generations, by a perpetual covenant, to be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee," Gen. xvii. And again, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord," to Abraham. "I bless thee, and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is on the sea shore, thy seed shall possess the gates of their enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice," Gen. xxii. 16.

Q. 17. What did God do for this people, the posterity of Abraham.

A. He multiplied them into a great nation. He watched over them by a special providence, and wrought numberless and most amazing miracles in their favour, and for their defence. He settled them in a most excellent land, "flowing with milk and honey," as the scripture expresses it. He gave them by his servant Moses a holy law to direct them, written with his own hand on tables of stone. He taught them the way in which he would be worshipped by them, revealing to them his holy religion for that end. He gave them his holy scriptures for their instruction and consolation. He sent among them from time to time, his holy prophets to declare his will to them, and keep them steady in his service. He often renewed his promise of a Redeemer to several of his holy servants among them, and foretold by his prophets all the circumstances of his coming, and what he was to do for mankind. For all which see their whole history in scripture.

Q. 18. How was this people called ?

A. They were sometimes called *Israelites* or the *Children of Israel*, from the name of one of their patriarchs ; sometimes *Jews*, from one of their principal tribes, out of which the Redeemer was to come ; and sometimes *the People of God*, from the care and protection which God had of them, choosing them for his inheritance from among all the nations of the earth, and preserving them from that deplorable corruption into which all the other nations fell.

Q. 19. Did this people always continue faithful to God, and grateful to him for such special protection shown by him to them ?

A. Far from it ; they often rebelled against him, forsook his service, and fell into idolatry and other abominations for which he most severely punished them, till, by their repentance, they regained his favour, and returned again to the faithful observance of his law.

Q. 20. What kind of religion did God institute among them ?

A. The full and perfect manifestation of the will of God to man was reserved to be the work of the Redeemer ; but to this people, God gave an imperfect revelation of the truths of eternity, such as the grossness of their minds, and the hardness of their hearts, were able to receive : their religion, therefore, principally consisted in the several kinds of sacrifices of beasts and other creatures, which God instituted to be offered for his honour, and in their obedience to the law he had given them.

Q. 21. Had these sacrifices of beasts and other creatures any worth or value in themselves before God ?

A. All these sacrifices, and indeed all the religion which God instituted among this people, were but types and figures of the Redeemer then to come, and of the perfect religion which was afterwards to be instituted by him, and as such they were agreeable to God ; and when offered by the people with a view to the Redeemer, and with faith in him, were most beneficial to them ; for, from the beginning, "there is no other name under heaven given to man whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus only," Acts iv. 12. So that, from the beginning, before the Redeemer appeared among men, none could be saved but by faith in him, who was then to come ; as none can be saved since his coming, but by faith in him, as already come.

Q. 22. In what condition were the Jews when the Redeemer came among them ?

A. They still retained the knowledge and worship of the true God, according to the law of Moses; but had corrupted the true sense of the law in many things, by human opinions, and were divided into several different sects among themselves.

Q. 23. In what condition was the rest of mankind when the Redeemer came into the world?

A. All the other nations of the earth, who, in Scripture language, are called *the Gentiles*, at the time our Saviour appeared, and for many ages before, were sunk in those miserable vices which are mentioned above, Q. 13, and wholly ignorant of the God that made them, and of everything else concerning their eternal salvation, and upon which our salvation depends.

Q. 24. What are those truths of eternity of which they were so ignorant, and the knowledge of which is so necessary for salvation?

A. They may all be reduced to these heads; the knowledge of the one true living God that created us: the way of worshipping this great God according to his will; the cause of all our miseries, which is sin or disobedience to his law; the only remedy of sin, and of all our miseries, which is the grace of a Redeemer; the great end for which we were created, which is the possession and enjoyment of God in heaven; and the means on our part to obtain this end of our being, which are *faith* and *obedience*. Of these great and important truths, all nations of the earth were wholly ignorant, the Jews only excepted; and they had by their depraved opinions in many things, corrupted even that imperfect knowledge of them which God had given them.

Q. 25. Could not man, by the strength of reason and study, have attained the knowledge of these things?

A. No; that was absolutely impossible; for these truths are all supernatural; they belong to another world; they do not fall under our senses or reason, so as to be examined or investigated by them; and some of them flow entirely from the free will and appointment of Almighty God: so that it was impossible man should ever come to the knowledge of them, except God himself had discovered them to him. And this is proved to a demonstration by experience itself, not only from the ancient heathens before the Redeemer came, among whom there were many great men remarkable for their strength of genius and learning, who yet could never acquire any rational knowledge of the above great truths, though they often applied themselves with great assiduity to study them; but also from many different nations in the remoter regions of the globe, to

whom the revelation of these truths has not yet reached, and who, though endowed with sense and reason not inferior to our own, have never been able, to this day, to come to any degree of knowledge about them.

Q. 26. Did then Almighty God ever reveal those truths to mankind?

A. He did; and it was one of the principal offices of the Redeemer, to bring from heaven to men the knowledge of these Divine truths, and to deliver them from the miserable darkness in which they had been involved. The deplorable situation they were in before he came, with the admirable light he brought among them, is thus beautifully described in the holy scriptures. Isaiah, foretelling this happy effect of his coming, says, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; to them that dwelt in the region of the shadow of death, to them light is risen," Is. ix. 2. And God thus speaks to the Redeemer by the same prophet, "I have given thee for a covenant of the people for a light of the Gentiles; that thou mightest open the eyes of the blind, and bring forth the prisoner out of prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house," Is. xlii. 7. Zacharias also, in his prophecy at the birth of St. John the Baptist, says of the Redeemer, "Through the bowels of mercy of our God, the Orient from on high hath visited us, to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to direct our feet in the way of peace," Luke i. 78. The holy Simeon holding the Redeemer, then a child, in his arms said, he was the salvation of God, "which thou, O Lord," said he, "hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel," Luke ii. 31. And the Redeemer himself, when he appeared to St. Paul, and authorised him to carry the light of his revelation to the Gentiles, said he sent him to the nations, "to open their eyes, that they may be converted from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and a lot among the saints by the faith that is in me," Acts xxvi. 18. Hence the same holy apostle, describing the misery and blindness of the Gentiles, says, "They walk in the vanity of their mind, having their understandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of our hearts," Eph. iv. 18. But that God, by the Redeemer, "has made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light, and delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath

translated us into the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins," Col. i. 12. St. Peter declares to Christians, that is, to the followers of the Redeemer, "You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people, that you may declare his virtues who hath called you out of darkness into his admirable light; who in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God," 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Q. 27. What are the principal offices of the Redeemer?

A. They are chiefly these two: (1.) To redeem us from our sins, and from the captivity of Satan, to which mankind has been reduced by sin. (2.) To enlighten our minds, by revealing to us the great truths of eternity, which we could never have known without such a teacher, and upon the knowledge of which our eternal happiness depends.

Q. 28. What is the Redeemer's name?

A. *Jesus Christ*. The name *Jesus* signifies a *Saviour*, and was given him by God himself, as foretold by the Prophet Isaiah, many ages before his coming, when he said, "Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name," Is. lxii. 2. And it was brought immediately from heaven before he was born; for, when the angel discovered the mystery of his incarnation to St. Joseph, he said, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins," Matt. i. 21; and not only from their sins, but also from the fatal effects of sin, the slavery of Satan, and the torments of hell. The name *Christ* signifies *anointed*, and implies that the Redeemer is anointed with all kind of grace, and with the Divinity itself; for "in him it hath well pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell," Col. ii. 9; and "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," Col. ii. 9. By this divine unction he is consecrated to be "a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech," Ps. cix. 4; as also, "to be king over Sion his holy mountain," Ps. ii. 6; and "to reign in the house of Jacob for ever"; for "of his kingdom there shall be no end," Luke i. 32. It also implies, that he is anointed with all the graces of the Holy Ghost according to Isaiah, "and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness, and he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord," Is. xi. 2. Hence St. Peter says, that "God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power," Acts. x. 38.

CHAPTER VII.

OF JESUS CHRIST OUR REDEEMER.

Q. 1. Is it necessary to know Jesus Christ the Redeemer ?

A. It is most necessary to know both what Jesus Christ is, and what he has done for us ; “ for there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved,” Acts iv. 12. And Christ himself, speaking to his eternal Father, says, “ this is eternal life, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent,” John xvii. 3.

Q. 2. Who is Jesus Christ ?

A. Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second Person of the ever Blessed Trinity, who, taking our nature upon him, became man, in order to redeem lost man.

Q. 3. Where doth it appear that Jesus Christ is God the Son, the second person of the Blessed Trinity ?

A. From many plain texts of Scripture. Thus the angel declared to the blessed Virgin Mary, before he was conceived in her womb, “ The holy One that shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God,” Luke i. 35. St. Peter, inspired by God himself, said to Christ, “ Thou art Christ the Son of the living God,” Matt. xvi. 16. St. John declares “ that the Word was God,” and that this “ Word,” or Son of God, “ was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,” John i. 14. St. John the Baptist, by particular revelation from the Holy Ghost, says of Jesus Christ, “ I saw, and I gave testimony that this is the Son of God,” John i. 34. God the Father at the transfiguration, by a voice from heaven, declared “ This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” Matt. xvii. 5. All the miracles he performed are recorded in the gospel in proof of this truth. “ Many other signs Jesus did ; but these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,” John xx. 30. And St. Paul declares, that “ Christ is over all things God blessed for ever,” Rom. ix. 5.

Q. 4. Is Jesus Christ true man ?

A. Jesus Christ is also true man ; for, whereas he was always God, equal to his Father from all eternity, when the fulness of time was come, he became man, by taking our nature upon him, and uniting it to his Divine nature in his

own person ; so that he is also true man, having the nature of man, that is, having a soul and a body like unto us. Thus, “the Word,” or Son of God, “which in the beginning was with God, and was true God, was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” John i. “Jesus Christ being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God ; but debased himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in fashion found as a man,” Phil. ii. 6. God sent his own son in the likeness of “sinful flesh,” Rom. viii. 3. “For nowhere doth he take hold (that is, *take upon him the nature*) of the angels ; but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold,” Heb. ii. 16. “And hence we are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ once—for this man offering one sacrifice for sins, for ever sitteth on the right hand of God,” Heb. x. 10, 12. “Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he (*Jesus Christ*) also himself in like manner, partook of the same, that through death he might destroy.....the devil,” Heb. ii. 14. And that he has a human soul as well as a body, he assures us himself, when he says, “My soul is sorrowful even unto death,” Matt. xxvi. 38. Lastly, Jesus Christ himself declares he is a true man, capable of being put to death, when he says, “You seek to kill me, a man who have spoken the truth to you,” John viii. 40.

Q. 5. Was Jesus Christ, in his human nature, subject to all the infirmities of man ?

A. Yes ; Jesus Christ, as man, was pleased to subject himself to all our infirmities and miseries, sin only excepted, of which he was incapable ;—that he might thereby manifest to us the more abundantly, the infinite riches of his goodness and mercy towards us. Thus he subjected himself to suffer hunger, and thirst, and weariness ; to be afflicted with grief and sorrow of mind ; to be tempted and tried, to suffer pain and torment in his body, and to undergo death itself, and that in the most cruel and ignominious manner. “It behoved him in all things to be made like to his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest, with God, to make a reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that wherein he himself hath suffered and been tempted, he is able to succour them also that are tempted,” Heb. ii. 17. “For we have not a high priest, who cannot have compassion on our infirmities, but one tempted in all things like as we are ; yet without sin,” Heb. iv. 15. For “he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth,” 1 Pet.

ii. 22. On the contrary, "he was holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners," Heb. vii. 26.

Q. 6. Why did Jesus Christ subject himself to all the infirmities of human nature?

A. That he might be able to suffer for our sins; for, whereas the Divine justice demanded a satisfaction for sin equal to the injury done to God by sin, which none but God could give; and, on the other hand, God himself was incapable of suffering in his own nature, in order to give that satisfaction; therefore, he took our nature upon him, with all its infirmities, that, in his flesh, he might be able to suffer and die for us: Christ "his own self bore our sins in his body upon the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live to justice;—by whose stripes you are healed," 1 Pet. ii. 24; "Christ also died once for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might offer us to God, being put to death, indeed, in the flesh," 1 Pet. iii. 18. "Christ therefore suffered in the flesh," 1 Pet. iv. 1; and Isaiah long before his coming hath foretold, that "he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins.....and by his bruises we are healed," Is. liii. 5.

Q. 7. What was it that moved Almighty God to provide such a Redeemer for lost men?

A. It was the effect of his pure love and mercy towards us. He was not obliged to do it; he might have pursued us with all the rigour of his justice, if he had been pleased to do so, as he did the fallen angels; but he had compassion upon our miseries, and, of his own free will, out of pure love to us, provided the Redeemer for us. Thus Isaiah, foretelling the sufferings of the Redeemer, says, "He was offered because it was his own will," Is. liii. 7. And Jesus Christ says on this subject, "No man taketh away my life from me, but I lay it down of myself; and I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again," John x. 18. And, therefore, though his enemies, on different occasions, "sought to apprehend him, yet no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come," John vii. 30. "Now that it was pure love for us, and compassion for our miseries, which moved God to send us such a Redeemer, is often declared in holy writ; "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting. For God sent not his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by him," John iii. 16. "By this hath the charity of God appeared towards us; because God hath

sent his only begotten Son into the world that we may live by him. In this is charity : not as though we had loved God ; but because he first loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins," 1 John iv. 9. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his exceeding great charity, wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead by sins, hath quickened us together in Christ (by whose grace you are saved).....that he might show, in the ages to come, the abundant riches of his grace in his bounty towards us in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii. 4. "In this we have known the charity of God ; because he hath laid down his life for us," 1 John iii. 16. "God commendeth his charity towards us ; because, when as yet we were sinners, according to the time, Christ died for us," Rom. v. 8. "Christ also loved us, and hath delivered himself for us an oblation and a sacrifice to God," Eph. v. 2. And in this we see the greatness of his love for us ; for, as he himself declares, "greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends," John xv. 13.

Q. 8. In what manner did God the Son take the nature of man upon him.

A. He made choice of the blessed Virgin Mary to be his mother, and, when the fulness of time was come, in her sacred womb, and of her most pure blood, a human body was formed, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, and a most perfect soul was created to animate this body ; and in the same instant of time, the Divine Nature was united to this soul and body, in the person of God the Son, by the power of the Most High, which overshadowed this blessed Virgin for that purpose—Jesus Christ, God and man, being thus conceived in her sacred womb, remained there for the space of nine months, and then was born of her in the stable of Bethlehem, she still remaining a pure virgin.

Q. 9. What account does the scripture give of this ?

A. St. Paul says, that, "when the fulness of time was come, God sent his Son, made of a woman," Gal. iv. 4 ; to show that he took flesh of her, or that his body was formed of the substance of her body : so also the scripture says that he was born of Mary, "Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ," Matt. i. 16. And that she was a Virgin, both when she conceived and when she brought him forth, was foretold, long before, by the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Behold a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel," Is. vii. 14 ; "which,

being interpreted, is, God with us," Matt. i. 23 ; and, in what manner this was done, is thus told by St. Luke : " And the angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a Virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David ; and the Virgin's name was Mary. And the angel being come in, saith to her, Hail, full of grace, our Lord is with thee : blessed art thou among women. And when she had heard, she was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said to her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God : Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus : he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High..... And Mary said to the angel, how shall this be done, because I know not man ? And the angel answering, said to her : The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, and therefore, also, the holy One which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God..... And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word," Luke i. 38.

Q. 10. Has Jesus Christ two natures ?

A. Yes ; Jesus Christ has two natures ; the nature of God and the nature of man, united together in one person, which is the person of God the Son ; for, as the Athanasian creed expresses it, " as the rational soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ."

Q. 11. How does it appear from Scripture that there is but one person in Christ ?

A. Because the same person who is there declared to be Christ, according to the flesh, is also declared to be God, thus, St. Paul, speaking of the Israelites, says, " of whom is Christ according to the flesh, who is over all things God blessed for ever," Rom. ix. 4. He also says, that the same person, " who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal to God, was made in the likeness of man, and in fashion found as a man," Phil. ii. 6 ; and Jesus Christ himself, who says, on one occasion, " I and the Father are one," John x. 30 ; says at another time, " I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I," John xiv. 28 ; where the same person of Christ, the same *I*, declares that he is one and the same with the Father, speaking of himself *as God*, and as to his Divine nature ; and that he is also inferior to his Father, speaking of himself *as man*, and as to his human nature ; so that in these expressions

is declared both that there is but one person in Christ, and that in this one person the two natures are united.

Q. 12. Does it appear from any other texts of scripture that there are two natures in Christ, the divine and human natures?

A. Most evidently; for, as we have seen above, that Christ is both true God, and true man, all the texts which show those two truths, show that he has both the nature of God, and the nature of man: for, being true God, he must of necessity have the nature of God, and being true man, he must of necessity have the nature of man, since the being any thing and the having the nature of that thing is one and the self-same.

Q. 13. Will this union of the divine and human natures in the person of Christ be ever dissolved?

A. It will never be dissolved; for the holy scripture assures us, that Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is "a priest for ever," and that he is a "King for ever": that he will reign over his faithful, and over all his enemies, "for ever"; that all things are subjected to him, and that "of his kingdom there shall be no end." Thus, "the Lord hath sworn, and he will not repent, thou art a priest for ever," Ps. cix. 4; which St. Paul declares was said by God the Father to Christ in these words: "So also Christ did not glorify himself to be made a high priest, but he that said to him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," as he says also in another place, "Thou art a priest for ever," Heb. v. 5; and a little after adds, that Christ is made priest, "not according to the law of a carnal commandment, but according to the power of an indissoluble life; for he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever," Heb. vii. 16. And with regard to his kingdom, Isaiah says, "A child is born to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulders.....His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace; he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it, and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and for ever," Is. ix. 6, 7. And Ezechiel, speaking of Christ's kingdom, says, "Thus saith the Lord God—and my servant David shall be king over them, and they shall have one shepherd—and David my servant shall be their prince for ever," Ezech. xxxvii. 24, 25. Hence the angel Gabriel says to the blessed Virgin, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS—and the Lord God shall give him the throne of his Father David, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob

for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end," Luke i. 31. The Jews themselves were very sensible of this truth, and therefore said, "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever," John xii. 34. From all which St. Paul declares, that "Jesus Christ, yesterday and to-day he is the same for ever," Heb. xiii. 8.

Q. 14. Is the Blessed Virgin truly and properly the mother of God?

A. Yes, she is truly and properly the mother of God; because she conceived in her womb, and brought forth, in due time, that Divine Person who is both true God and true man, as the angel declared to her, when he said, "Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son—and the Holy One which shall be born of thee shall be called the son of God," Luke i. Now, to conceive and bring forth a son is surely to be his mother. It is true the Divinity of Jesus Christ was from all eternity, and as God he was begotten of the Father before all ages, without any mother; so that it cannot be said that the Blessed Virgin begot the Divine nature of Jesus Christ. But this is no-wise necessary to make her the mother of God; for our own mothers do not beget our souls, yet they are truly our mothers, both as to soul and body, because our souls, though created immediately by Almighty God, are united to our bodies in our mothers' womb, where we are conceived, and in due time brought forth by them. In like manner as the Divine nature was united to the human nature in the person of Jesus Christ within the womb of the Blessed Virgin, and he who is true God, was conceived and born of her; this makes her, as here explained, truly and properly the mother of God. Hence St. Elizabeth, inspired by the Holy Ghost, gave her this sacred title, when she said, "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Luke i. 43.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE OFFICE AND DIGNITIES OF THE REDEEMER.

Q. 1. WHAT do you mean by *the Office of the Redeemer*?

A. I mean all that Jesus Christ did, said, and suffered, for the Redemption of mankind, in quality of our Redeemer; which contains all the mysteries of his birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, and ascension.

Q. 2. Where was our Saviour born?

A. In the stable of Bethlehem, of which the scripture gives this account: "In those days there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that the whole world should be enrolled. And all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city: And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled, with Mary his espoused wife, who was with child. And it came to pass, that, when they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered; and she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapt him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn," Luke ii. 1.

Q. 3. When was our Saviour born?

A. On the twenty-fifth day of December, the most inclement season of the year.

Q. 4. What are we principally to observe in this account of the birth of Jesus?

A. *First*, the wonderful and over-ruling providence of God, which makes use of the very vices and passions of men to accomplish his own designs. Augustus Cæsar, the Roman Emperor, was moved by his pride and avarice to cause all his subjects to be numbered throughout his vast empire. In obedience to this decree, Joseph and Mary, who were living in Galilee, at a great distance from Bethlehem, the city of their family, came to that city to be numbered with their own family, just about the time of her being delivered; all which was so disposed by the Divine providence, in order to accomplish what had been foretold by the prophets, that Christ should be born in that city. "And thou Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Judah; out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel," Mich. v. 2.

Secondly, The infinite love of Jesus Christ to us, in beginning at so early a period, even at his very first entrance into the world, to suffer for us, and to give us, in his most tender infancy, the most perfect example of poverty, humility, and mortification; those darling virtues of his, which he knew were so necessary for us to practise, in order to cure all the spiritual maladies of our soul.

Q. 5. How did he practise these virtues at his birth?

A. He practised humility, in being rejected by all the rich and great ones in Bethlehem, none of whom would admit his Virgin Mother to their houses, notwithstanding her condition of being great with child, which obliged her to take up her abode in a stable, where he chose to be born. He practised poverty, in ordering matters so by his Divine providence, that he should be born at a distance from the place where his mother dwelt and on that account be deprived of all those conveniences which the poorest people have on such occasions; so he chose to be born in a stable instead of a palace, and laid in a manger instead of a soft bed. He practised mortification, in being exposed to much pain from the inclemency of the weather at that cold season, from the open stable in which he was born, and the hard manger in which he was laid.

Q. 6. What became of him after he was born?

A. In his infancy he was circumcised, in obedience to the law, Luke ii. 21. He discovered himself to the shepherds by an embassy of angels from heaven, to show that he came to be the Saviour of the Jews, Luke ii. 9. He afterwards manifested himself to the Gentiles by a star from heaven, to show he was also come to be the Saviour of the Gentiles, Matt. ii. And he was persecuted by King Herod, who hearing of his birth from the wise men, sought to destroy him, Matt. ii. After this he lived in private with his Virgin Mother, and St. Joseph, her spouse and guardian, and "subjected himself to them," Luke ii. 51; and continued to live in a poor, private, and retired manner, till he was thirty years of age, faithfully observing all the law of Moses, to give us an example of humility, submission, and obedience; and because he came, as he himself tells us, "not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it," Matt. v. 17.

Q. 7. At the thirtieth year of his life what did he do?

A. He then began his public life, preaching the gospel, doing good to all, healing their diseases, casting out devils, and working the most stupendous miracles, to prove his divine mission, and that he was the Messiah, or Saviour to the world, promised

to mankind from the beginning : " God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the devil," Acts x. 38. " He was a prophet mighty in work and word before God and all the people," Luke xxiv. 19. " The spirit of the Lord," saith he himself, " is upon me, wherefore he hath anointed me ; to preach the gospel to the poor he hath sent me, to heal the contrite of heart, to preach deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward," Luke iv. 18. And when St. John the Baptist sent two of his disciples to him to ask if he was the Christ, he appealed to the miracles which he then wrought in their presence ; " and answering, he said to them, Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, to the poor the gospel is preached," Luke vii. 22. Hence the testimony given of his public employment in the gospel is this : " And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases among the people.....And they brought to him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and such as were possessed by devils, and lunatics, and those that had the palsy, and he healed them," Matt. iv. 23. " And there came to him great multitudes, having with them the dumb, the blind, the lame, maimed, and many others ; and they cast them down at his feet, and he healed them," Matt. xv. 30. " And whithersoever he entered into towns, or into villages, or cities, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch but the hem of his garment, and as many as touched him were made whole," Mark vi. 56.

Q. 8. Were the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ a full and sufficient proof of his divine mission, and of his being the Redeemer ?

A. They certainly were a full and convincing proof of it, for several reasons : (1.) Because the very miracles he wrought had been foretold many ages before by the prophets, as the signs of the Redeemer. Thus Isaiah says, " Behold your God will bring the revenge of recompence. God himself will come and save you ; then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped ; then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free," Is. xxxv.

5. All which are the very things that Jesus did, as proofs of his being the Redeemer. (2.) Because the works which Jesus did, were done in the name of God the Father, on purpose to prove that he was the Messiah. Thus when "the Jews came round about him, and said to him, How long dost thou hold our souls in suspense; if thou be Christ, tell us plainly? Jesus answered them, I speak to you, and you believe not; the works that I do in the name of my Father, give testimony of me," John x. 24. Now it is impossible that Almighty God should allow any miracles to be wrought in his name in favour of falsehood. (3.) Because the works he did were such as none but God alone could perform; and, therefore, he appeals to them as the highest proofs that he is the Son of God. "Do you say," says he, "of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not: but if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in the Father," John x. 36. "The works," says he again, "which the Father hath given me to perform, the works themselves which I do, give testimony of me that the Father hath sent me; and the Father himself who hath sent me, hath given testimony of me," John v. 36. Also, "The words that I speak to you, I speak not of myself. But the Father who abideth in me, he doth the works. Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? otherwise believe for the very work sake," John xiv. 10. Lastly, Because Christ declares that the Jews were inexcusable for not believing him on so glaring a proof as his miracles were. "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin. He that hateth me, hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no other man hath done, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen, and hated both me and my Father," John xv. 22.

Q. 9. How long did Jesus Christ continue in his public ministry?

A. For about three years; and then he delivered himself up to the will of his enemies, to be put to death for the sins of the world.

Q. 10. How did this happen?

A. From the beginning of his public life, the chief priests and princes of the Jews had conceived an implacable hatred against him; the sanctity of his life, the purity of his doctrine,

and the splendour of his miracles, which gained him the hearts of all the people, embittered theirs with the most malignant envy, and they continually sought an opportunity to destroy him.

Q. 11. How could they destroy or hurt him, who was God as well as man, and had all creatures at his command?

A. So long as he pleased, they could not touch a hair of his head; for though "they sought to apprehend him; yet no man laid hands upon him, because his hour was not yet come," John vii. 30. But, when his own time was come, he said to his disciples in the garden, "It is enough, the hour is come; behold the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners," Mark xiv. 41. And when he was taken in the garden, he said to his enemies, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness," Luke xxii. 53, that is, the hour in which he was pleased to deliver himself up to their will; for, as St. Paul assures us, Christ loved us, and delivered himself up for us an oblation and a sacrifice to God, for an odour of sweetness," Eph. v. 2. St. Peter also declares, that "he delivered himself to him that judged him unjustly," 1 Pet. ii. 23; and Christ himself declared to Pilate, "Thou shouldst not have any power against me, unless it were given thee from above," John xix. 11.

Q. 12. When, therefore, his hour was come, what did he suffer for us?

A. To show the greatness of his love for us, and the plenteous redemption which he brought us, he was pleased to suffer, during his passion, every kind of torment with which human nature could be afflicted. He suffered in his soul, in his body, in his goods, in his honour, in his reputation. He suffered in all his senses, and in all his members; he suffered from all kind of persons, from the highest to the lowest, all were combined against him; he suffered also from his own friends, being betrayed by one of his bosom friends, denied by another, and forsaken by all the rest.—Having gone through all these different torments with the most amazing patience, meekness, and charity, at last, to crown the whole, he was nailed to a disgraceful cross, and died a cruel and ignominious death, between two thieves; as is related at large in the four gospels.

Q. 13. What became of him after his death?

A. Death is the separation of the soul from the body; and to assure us that Christ died a true and real death for us, all the

four gospels declare, that after hanging in torments on the cross for three long hours, "He bowed down his head, and gave up the ghost," John xix. 30, that is, he gave up his soul, and died. Now, after his death, "Joseph of Arimathea, who also himself was a disciple of Jesus, went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus; and Pilate commanded that the body should be delivered; and Joseph taking the body, wrapt it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new monument, which he had hewn out in a rock, and he rolled a great stone to the door of the monument, and went his way," Matt. xxvii. 57. In what manner this was done, is thus related by St. John:—And Nicodemus "also came, he who at first came to Jesus by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pound weight. They took, therefore, the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now there was a garden in the place where he was crucified, and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein no man had yet been laid; there therefore they laid Jesus, because the sepulchre was nigh at hand," John xix. 39.

Q. 14. And what became of his soul when it left his body?

A. It descended into hell; which word, in the original Hebrew language, is *sheol*, and signifies *a place below*, or in the bowels of the earth. It is thus interpreted by St. Paul, when he said, that "Christ descended to the lower parts of the earth," Eph. iv. 9. And, therefore, hell is applicable to all the different places that are there.

Q. 15. How many places does the scripture point to us as in the bowels of the earth, which go by the general name of *hell*?

A. Chiefly these three, (1.) The place of the damned, which is called in scripture, *Gehenna*, and the *abyss*, or *bottomless pit*, and *hell-fire*; this is hell properly so called, as being the deepest of all, and at the greatest distance from heaven. St. John, describing a vision he had of this place, says, that when "a star that fell from heaven opened the bottomless pit, the smoke of the pit arose, as the smoke of a great furnace," Rev. ix. 2. And again, "the beast.....shall come out of the bottomless pit, and go into destruction; and the inhabitants of the earth shall wonder," Rev. xvii. 8. (2.) The prison of Purgatory, where the souls of those "who have not made agreement with their adversary, whilst in the way with him; and, therefore, are cast into this prison," are detained till they are cleansed from all smaller stains and imperfections, and have fully satisfied for what they owe to their adversary, the Divine justice, by "pay-

ing the utmost farthing," Matt. v. 25. (3.) The prison of Limbo, where the souls of those saints were detained, who died before Christ came into the world. To this last place it was, that the soul of Christ descended at his death, to preach redemption to these blessed souls, to free them from their long captivity, and carry them up with him to heaven.

Q. 16. Had none of the ancient saints gone to heaven at their death?

A. They had not; and this is expressly declared by Jesus Christ himself, who, in his conversation with Nicodemus, says, "No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended from heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven," John iii. 13. In which words he positively says, that at that time when he was speaking, no man had ever gone to heaven, but he himself alone, whom he calls "the Son of Man," and whose blessed soul, from its union with the Divine nature, was always in heaven, that is, was always enjoying the clear vision of God. This is also declared by St. Peter, in his first sermon to the Jews, after receiving the Holy Ghost; where, proving the ascension of Jesus Christ to the right hand of God, from this prophecy of David, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand," he shows that this prophecy could not be understood of David himself; "for," says he, "David did not ascend to heaven," Acts ii. 34. Now, if David did not ascend to heaven, neither did any other who died before our Saviour. And St. Paul, speaking of all the saints before Christ, expressly affirms, that "All these being approved by the testimony of faith, received not the promise, God providing some better thing for us, that they should not be perfected without us," Heb. xi. 39, 40.

Q. 17. Are we not told in scripture that Elijah was taken up to heaven when he left this world?

A. As all the places beneath us in the bowels of the earth go by the general name of *Hell*; so, in scripture language, all the places above us go by the general name of *Heaven*. Hence St. Paul tells us, that he was "taken up to the third heaven," 2 Cor. xii. 2, which shows that there are different places above that go by that name. Now the most noble of all these is that glorious heaven where God shows himself in all his majesty and beauty to the blessed; for the scripture tells us that Christ, at his ascension, "is set on the right hand of the throne of majesty in the heavens," Heb. viii. 1, "at the right hand of God," Rom. viii. 34. Of which throne he himself says, "To

him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with me in my throne, as I also have overcome, and am set down with my Father in his throne," Rev. iii. 21. Before which throne, St. John "saw a great multitude, which no man could number," standing in the sight of the Lamb; and adds, that "they are before the throne of God, and serve him night and day in his temple, and that they shall no more hunger or thirst, neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall rule them, and lead them to the living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," Rev. vii. 15. Now that this heaven of heavens is above all other places that go by the name of heaven, St. Paul assures us, when he says that the place to which Christ ascended was "above all the heavens," Eph. iv. 10. When, therefore, our Saviour declares that "no man hath ascended into heaven" before him, he means the highest heaven where God is seen and enjoyed by the blessed; where he himself, as man, always was, in this sense, that he always enjoyed the beatific vision, by reason of his union with the Divine nature; but Elijah, and also Enos, were only taken up to some of the lower heavens, where they shall remain till the last days, when they shall come again, and be put to death by antichrist; but where they do not enjoy the vision of God.

Q. 18. Why had no man gone to that heaven where God is seen and enjoyed, before Christ?

A. Because the gates of heaven were shut to man by Adam's sin, and could not be open to us till the price of our redemption should be paid, which was the blood of Jesus shed upon the cross.

Q. 19. Were these blessed gates open again to man when that price was paid?

A. Yes, they were: and hence, in the hymn called *Te Deum*, acknowledged and used by the Church of England, it is said to Christ, Who, "when thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers."

Q. 20. How is that place called in which the souls of the saints were detained, who had died before our Saviour had paid the price of our redemption?

A. In the creed and in the scripture, it is called by the general name of *Hell*. Thus, when Jacob believed that his son Joseph was dead, and that a wild beast had devoured him he said in his grief, "I will go down to my son into hell mourning," Gen. xxxvii. 35, where it is evident that, by the word

hell, he could not mean the grave, since he believed that his son was devoured by a wild beast; and, therefore, that even his body was not in the grave, much less his soul; and he says, he “would go down to him,” to be with him, to be where he was, to enjoy his company. The same language was used by Joseph’s brethren when he wished to detain Benjamin, that if they should return without him to their father, “thy servants,” said they, “shall bring down his grey hairs with sorrow into hell,” Gen. xlv. 31. It is also in scripture called the “lower part of the earth”; so St. Paul speaking of Christ’s going down to this place, says, “He descended to the lower parts of the earth,” Eph. iv. 9. Hence, when the soul of Samuel appeared to the witch of Endor, and she was astonished and cried out, Saul asked her, “What hast thou seen? The woman answered, I saw a god ascending out of the earth. And he said, What form is he of? and she said, An old man cometh up, and he is covered with a mantle—And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disturbed my rest, that I should be brought up?” 1 Kings (or Samuel) xxviii. 15. Which expressions show that the place of rest where the soul of Samuel had been, was in the bowels of the earth. The wise man also giving the praises of Samuel, concludes thus, “And after this he slept, and he made known to the king, and shewed him the end of his life, and he lifted up his voice from the earth in prophecy,” Ecclus. xlvi. 23. It is likewise called in scripture *Abraham’s bosom*, because it was a place of rest and peace, for the blessed souls there had no sufferings, but rather were comforted after all their sufferings in their mortal life. Thus the rich glutton in hell, “lifting up his eyes when he was in torments he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.....And Abraham said to him, Son, remember that thou didst receive good things in thy lifetime, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented,” Luke xvi. 22. Finally, in the language of the church, this place is called *Limbus*, to distinguish it from the hell of the damned, and from Purgatory.

Q. 21. How does it appear that Christ went down to this place?

A. The Creed affirms, that, at his death “he descended into hell.” Christ himself expressly foretold it when he said, “As Jonas was in the whale’s belly three days and three nights: so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights,” Matt. xii. 40. St. Paul also declares it thus: “Now that he ascended, what is it, but because he also descended

first into the lower parts of the earth," Eph. iv. 9. And St. Peter assures us that, "in his spirit, he went and preached to those spirits who were in prison," 1 Pet. iii. 19.

Q. 22. For what purpose did Christ descend to this place?

A. *First*, that he might preach the gospel to these holy souls, and bring them the happy tidings that the price of their redemption was paid, and the time of their deliverance was come, which they had for so long a time desired with so much ardour. Thus St. Peter having told us, that "he went and preached to those spirits that were in prison," 1 Pet. iii. 19, a little after adds, "The gospel was preached also to the dead, that they might be judged indeed, according to men in the flesh, but may live according to God in the spirit," 1 Pet. iv. 6. And this the Divine wisdom, God the Son, foretold long before, by the mouth of the wise man, saying, "I wisdom.....will penetrate to all the lower parts of the earth, and will behold all that sleep, and will enlighten all that hope in the Lord," Ecclus. xxiv. 45. *Secondly*, That he might deliver those blessed souls from their long imprisonment in which they had been detained, as was foretold by the prophet, saying, "Thou also by the blood of thy testament hast sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water," Zach. ix. 11. *Thirdly*, To carry them up to heaven at his ascension, as the first-fruits of his redemption, and the triumphs of his victory over sin and death, as was foretold by David, saying, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive," Ps. lxvii. 19, which prophecy is also cited by St. Paul, Eph. iv. 8; who also says, that, after his death, "having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them confidently, triumphing openly over them in himself," Col. ii. 15.

Q. 23. Did his presence occasion great joy to those holy souls?

A. Most undoubtedly. These holy souls had nothing more at heart than to be delivered out of their long confinement, and admitted to the clear sight and enjoyment of God. This was the great object of all their desires; and the delay of this was the only thing that could give them any pain, according to that of the wise man, "Hope that is deferred afflicteth the soul," Prov. xiii. 12. But, as it is there immediately added, "Desire when it cometh is a tree of life"; so the sight of the Redeemer coming in among them, the beholding the beauty of his Divine presence, and getting from him the happy tidings that their redemption was paid, and the day of their release was come,

was indeed “a tree of life to them,” filled them with the most exquisite joy and gladness and turned their dreary prison into a paradise of delight, according to what our Saviour said to the good thief upon the cross, “This day thou shalt be with me in paradise”; because he was, at his death, to follow Jesus Christ to this place, and there enjoy his Divine presence, and all the fruits of his redemption.

Q. 24. How long did Christ continue dead?

A. Part of three days, to wit, from Friday about mid afternoon till Sunday morning.

Q. 25. On the third day after his death, what did he do?

A. He rose again from the dead, that is, his blessed soul by his own Divine power, returned into his body, was reunited to it, and raised it to life again; “I lay down my life,” said he, “that I may take it up again. No man taketh it away from me, but I lay it down of myself; and I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again,” John x. 17. And when the Jews asked a sign from him of his authority for cleansing the temple of those who profaned it, “Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up—But he spoke of the temple of his body; when, therefore he was risen again from the dead his disciples remembered that he said this,” John ii. 19. The history of what happened at this great event is thus given by St. Matthew: “And behold there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and coming, rolled back the stone, and sat upon it, and his countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow: and for fear of him the guards were struck with terror and became as dead men.—And the angel answering said to the women, Fear not you, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified: He is not here, for he is risen, as he said. Come and see the place where the Lord was laid,” Matt. xxviii. 2.

Q. 26. Is the resurrection of Jesus an important article of the Christian faith?

A. It is one of the most important and fundamental articles of the Christian religion, and the ground-work and proof of all the rest. Hear how St. Paul speaks of it on occasion of some that denied the resurrection of the dead, in order to confirm and show the importance of this article of our faith: “I delivered to you first of all what I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures; and that he was buried and rose again according to the scriptures; and that he

was seen by Cephas, and after that by the eleven: then was he seen by more than five hundred brethren at once, of whom many remain until this present, and some are fallen asleep..... Last of all, he was seen also by me.....Now, if Christ be preached that he rose again from the dead, how do some among you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? for if there be no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen again. And if Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have given testimony against God, that he hath raised up Christ, whom he hath not raised up, if the dead rise not again; for if the dead rise not again, neither is Christ risen again; and if Christ be not risen again, your faith is vain, for you are yet in your sins.....But now Christ is risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep," 1 Cor. xv. 3.

Q. 27. How comes the resurrection of Christ to be of so great importance to the Christian faith?

A. Because it is the most convincing proof that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that his doctrine is divine and true. For (1.) During his public ministry, he often foretold that he would be put to death, but that he would rise again the third day: "I lay down my life," said he, "that I may take it up again," John x. 17. "From that time forth Jesus began to show to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the ancients, and the scribes, and chief priests, and be put to death, and the third day rise again," Matt. xvi. 21. "And Jesus said to them, The Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of men, and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall rise again," Matt. xvii. 21. Now this prediction was spread among the people before his death, insomuch that, after he was laid in the grave, "the chief priests and the Pharisees came together to Pilate, saying, Sir, we have remembered that that seducer said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, the sepulchre to be guarded till the third day, lest his disciples come and steal him away, and say to the people, he is risen from the dead, so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said to them, Go guard it as you know; so they departing made the sepulchre sure stealing the stone, and setting guards," Matt. xxvii. 62. Seeing, then, that he did rise again, as he had foretold, this evidently shows that he is the very person whom he called himself, the Messiah, the Son of God, made man for the redemption of the world; for, who other but

God could raise himself to life? who other but God could foretell beforehand that he was to do so? (2.) When the Pharisees pressed him to give them a sign of his being the Massiah, and of the authority by which he acted, he referred them to his resurrection, as the most convincing sign of any: "An evil and adulterous generation," said he, "seeketh for a sign; and a sign shall not be given it but the sign of Jonas the prophet; for as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights," Matt. xii. 39. Destroy this temple of my body and in three days I will raise it up again," John ii. 19. (3.) Because the Apostles were most assiduous and earnest in establishing this point as the most essential article of Christianity, and alone sufficient to convince the world of the truth of it. This was the great scope of their preaching, and the miracles they wrought were chiefly intended to conform and establish this article. Thus, when St. Peter cured the lame man, he said to the people, "But the author of life you killed, whom God hath raised from the dead, of which we are witnesses, and his name, through the faith of his name, hath made this man strong" Acts iii. 15. Again, "with the great power, did the apostles give testimony of the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord," Acts iv. 33. And in the first sermon which St. Peter preached to the Jews on Pentecost, after the coming of the Holy Ghost, at which no less than three thousand were converted, he insists in a particular manner on this article, and proves it from the prophecy of David, which he cites at large, and especially from these words: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor suffer thy holy one to see corruption"; on which he speaks thus: "Him God hath raised up, having loosed the sorrows of Hell, as it was impossible that he should be holden by it." Then reciting the prophecy, he goes on, "Whereas, therefore, he (*David*) was a prophet—foreseeing he spoke of the resurrection of Christ, for neither was he left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up again, whereof all we are witnesses," Acts ii. 32.

Q. 28. How long did Christ continue upon earth after his resurrection?

A. For the space of forty days, and then he ascended up, in a glorious manner, into heaven, in the sight of his apostles and other disciples, of which the scripture gives this account: "He showed himself alive (*to them*) after his passion, by many proofs, for forty days, appearing to them, and speaking of the kingdom

of God, and eating with them," Acts i. 3. And on the fortieth day, after having instructed them in all the mysteries of his kingdom, "opening their understandings that they might understand the scriptures," Luke xxiv. 45, he gave them commission "to preach the gospel to all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19; and power to work all miracles in confirmation of their doctrine, Mark xvi. 17. He then "led them out as far as Bethania, and lifting up his hands, he blessed them; and it came to pass, whilst he blessed them, that he departed from them, and was carried up into heaven," Luke xxiv. 50; and a cloud received him out of their sight. "And while they were beholding him going up to heaven, behold two men stood by them in white garments, who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking up to heaven? this Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come as ye have seen him going up to heaven," Acts i. 9.

Q. 29. Why did Christ ascend to heaven?

A. *First*, To take possession, even as man, of that eternal glory which his Father had prepared for him in heaven, as the reward of all he had done and suffered for his Father's glory, and in obedience to his will, according to what he said himself to the two disciples going to Emaus, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?" Luke xxiv. 26. How great this glory was he also shows by the prayer he made to his Father, when he said, "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and now glorify me, O Father, with thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with thee," John xvii. 4. To receive this divine, this infinite glory, Jesus Christ "ascended above all the heavens," Eph. iv. 10; his Father "setting him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, above all principality and power, and virtue and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and he hath put all things under his feet," Eph. i. 20; and has bestowed the highest dignities upon him suitable to that immense glory which he enjoys, and conformable to all he did and suffered in obedience to his Father's will. (2.) To prepare a place in his kingdom for all his faithful followers, and draw up our hearts to heaven after him. Thus comforting his apostles, who were in great affliction at the news of his going to leave them, he said, "Let not your hearts be troubled—in my Father's house there are many mansions; if

not, I would have told you, that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I shall go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am you also may be," John xiv. 1. And in his prayer for his followers, he says to his Father, "Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me, that they may see my glory which thou hast given me," John xvii. 24.

Q. 30. What are these dignities which Jesus Christ "as man, is honoured with in heaven by his Father"?

A. Chiefly these following: (1.) His very name itself; for as, "He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore God hath exalted him, and hath given to him a name which is above every name, that in the name of JESUS every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father," Philip. ii. 8. (2.) The royal dignity of being King over all creatures with the most absolute power and dominion over them. This he foretold by the royal prophet saying, "I am appointed King by him over Zion his holy mountain.....The Lord said to me—ask of me and I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the world for thy possession, and thou shalt rule them with a rod of iron," Ps. ii. 6. "He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth," Ps. lxxi. 8. And in the gospel he says to his Apostles, "All things are delivered to me by my Father," Matt. xi. 27; "all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. And to his Father he says, "Father—glorify thy Son, that thy Son may glorify thee, as thou hast given him power over all flesh," John xvii. 1. Hence St. Peter concludes his first sermon to the Jews thus: Therefore let all the house of Israel know most assuredly, that God hath made this same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ," Acts ii. 36; and in his epistles he says, that, "he is on the right hand of God swallowing down death, that we might be made heirs of life everlasting; being gone into heaven, the angels, and powers, and virtues, being made subject to him," 1 Pet. iii. 22. St. Paul also assures us, that to this end Christ died and rose again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living, Rom. xiv. 9. And how great and tremendous his majesty is, appears from this description given of him by St. John: "And I saw heaven opened, and beheld a white horse, and he that

sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and with justice does he judge and fight: and his eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns, and he hath a name written which no man knoweth but himself; and he was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood, and his name is called *The Word of God*—And out of his mouth proceeded a sharp two-edged sword, that with it he may strike the Gentiles: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and he treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness of God the Almighty; and he hath on his garment and thigh written, *King of kings, and Lord of lords*," Rev. xix.

Q. 31. What are the other dignities of Jesus Christ?

A. They are, (3.) That he is the Head of the church, which is his body, and of which we all are members: "He hath put all things under his feet, and hath made him head over all the church, which is his body," Eph. i. 22; "that.....we may in all things grow up in him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body," Eph. iv. 15. "We being many, are one body in Christ, and members one of another," Rom. xii. 5. "Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member," 1 Cor. xii. 27. "Christ is the head of the church; he is the Saviour of the body.....Christ cherisheth the church, for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones," Eph. v. 23, 30; "for he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he may hold the primacy," Col. i. 18. (4.) He is the Sovereign Judge of all mankind: neither doth the Father judge any man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men may honour the Son as they honour the Father.....and he hath given him authority to execute judgment, "because he is the Son of Man," John v. 22, 27. Hence St. Peter declares, that he and the other apostles received an express command from God, "to preach to the people, and to testify that he (*Christ*) it is, who is appointed by God to be the judge of the living and of the dead," Acts x. 42.

Q. 32. In what manner does Christ perform the office of Head of his Church?

A. In several ways, but particularly these following: (1.) By the continual protection of his Divine providence; of which the royal prophet says, "Behold he shall neither slumber nor

sleep that keepeth Israel. The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy protection upon thy right hand. The sun shall not burn thee by day, nor the moon by night; the Lord keepeth thee from all evil," Ps. cxx. 4. And Zacharias, speaking of the glories of the Church, and the providence of God over her, says "I will raise up thy sons, O Sion, above thy sons, O Greece, and I will make thee as the sword of the mighty; and the Lord God shall be seen over them.....and the Lord of hosts will protect them.....the Lord their God shall save them in that day," Zach. ix. "In that day shall the Lord protect the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and he that hath offended among them shall be as David (*to wit, shall return to God by sincere repentance as David did*), and the house of David as that of God, as an angel of the Lord in their sight. And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of prayers," Zach. xii. 8. Now this continual protection is exercised by ordering and disposing all things for the good of his church, and the sanctification of her members, establishing her in justice and judgment, defending her from all her enemies, preserving her in peace, and increasing her dominion to the utmost bounds of the earth; all which was foretold by the prophets many ages before Christ came into the world. Thus, "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, he shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to establish it with justice and with judgment, from henceforth, even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this," Is. ix. 6. "Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to shame.....For thy maker is thine husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel, the Lord of the whole earth shall He be called.....And thou shalt be founded in justice: depart far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear, and from terror, for it shall not come near thee.....No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that resisteth thee thou shalt condemn," Is. liv. "I will make thee to be an everlasting excellence, a joy unto generation and generation; and thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and thou shalt be nursed with the breasts of kings, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob," Is. lx. "This shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after

those days, saith the Lord, I will give my law in their bowels, and I will write it in their heart; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people," Jer. xxxi. 33. These and many other such glorious promises made to the church, Jesus Christ fulfils as Head of the church, by his Divine providence, watching over her at all times, "loving her and cherishing her," as St. Paul expresses it, Eph. v. 25, 29. (2.) By the continual communication of his Divine grace to all her members, according to their wants and necessities; for, "To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ," Eph. iv. 7. And, "of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace," John i. 16. He being always ready on his part to communicate his grace to their souls, to beautify, nourish, and enliven them, and to enable them to bring forth good fruit in abundance; just as the trunk of the tree always sends forth the nourishing juice to all its branches, in order to beautify them with leaves and flowers, and enable them to produce good fruit in its season: and this is the similitude which Christ himself makes use of to explain this matter to us, when he says, "Abide in me and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abide in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit," John xv. 4. (3.) By the special protection which he has over her pastors, who are her principal members, and to whom the care of all the others is committed. Over these he watches with a most particular providence, to assist them in the important office of preserving and propagating the great truths of his holy faith, and conveying them pure and undefiled to the latest posterity; for this purpose he has passed his sacred promise that he himself, "will be with them all days, even to the consummation of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20. And, soon after his ascension into heaven, he sent down his Holy Spirit upon them, "the Spirit of Truth, on purpose that he might abide with them for ever, and teach them all truth," John xiv. 16, 17; and xvi. 13.

Q. 33. In what manner did the Holy Ghost first come down upon the Apostles and Christians?

A. Ten days after our Saviour went to heaven, during which time the Apostles, and other disciples, "continued with one accord in prayer, with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren," Acts i. 14; "when the days of Pentecost were accomplished.....suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they

were sitting ; and there appeared to them parted tongues, as it were of fire, and sat upon every one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak," Acts ii. 1.

Q. 34. What were the principal ends for which our Saviour sent the Holy Ghost to his Church ?

A. The scripture points out these following : (1.) To comfort her members in all their distresses and afflictions ; " I will ask the Father," says he, " and he will give you another Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, nor knoweth him ; but you shall know him, because he shall abide with you and be in you," John xiv. 16. (2.) To purify and cleanse them from their sins, and strengthen their souls against all temptations ; " but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God," 1 Cor. vi. 11 ; " for the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus hath freed me from the law of sin and of death.....that the justification of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.....likewise the Spirit helpeth our infirmity," Rom. viii. 2, 4, 26. (3.) To teach and enable them to pray, by which they may obtain all good things from God, " for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings ; and he that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what the Spirit desireth, because he asketh for the saints according to God," Rom. viii. 26. (4.) To adorn their souls with Divine charity, or the love of God, and with all manner of virtues, " because the charity of God is poured abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us," Rom. v. 5 ; and " the fruit of the Spirit is charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continence, chastity," Gal. v. 22. (5.) To enlighten their understandings with the knowledge of heavenly things ; for " the things that are of God no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God ; now we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit that is of God, that we may know the things that are given us from God," 1 Cor. ii. 11. And " the Comforter," says our Saviour, " the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you," John xiv. 26. Hence he is called by Isaiah, " the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of

counsel and of fortitude, the Spirit of knowledge and of godliness, and the Spirit of the fear of the Lord," Is. xi. 2. Which are the sevenfold precious graces which that Divine Spirit bestows upon those in whom he dwells, in such measure and proportion as he sees fitting, and the disposition of their souls is capable of receiving. (6.) To raise them up to the glorious dignity of being the adopted children of God, "for whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God; for you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry, Abba (Father); for the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God," Rom. viii. 14. So that "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," *Ibid.* 9. (7.) To make them the temples of God and of his Holy Spirit: "Know ye not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you; but if any man violate the temple of God, him God will destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which you are," 1 Cor. iii. 16. "Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" 1 Cor. vi. 19. (8.) To bear witness to, and give testimony of Jesus Christ; for, says our Saviour, "when the Comforter cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of me, and you shall give testimony, because you are with me from the beginning," John xv. 26. Now the apostles gave testimony of Jesus Christ, because they declared to the world, as eye-witnesses, what they knew concerning him, and the truths they had heard from him. And the Holy Ghost gave testimony of Jesus Christ, by confirming what the apostles preached, with numberless miracles, which he wrought through them; for, "by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought, among the people.....insomuch that they brought the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that when Peter came, his shadow at least might overshadow them, and they might be delivered from their infirmities," Acts v. 12, 15. Hence St. Paul declares, that "he was the minister of Christ Jesus among the Gentiles.....by the virtue of signs and wonders in the power of the Holy Ghost," Rom. xv. 16, 19; that "his speech and his preaching was not in the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in the showing of the Spirit and in power, that our faith might not stand on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God," 1 Cor. ii. 4;

that though he himself was nothing, yet the signs of his apostleship were wrought in all patience, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds, 2 Cor. xii. 11, 12. "And that his gospel was not in word only, but in power also, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much fulness," 1 Thes. i. 5; for this is the way that the Holy Ghost gave testimony to, or confirmed the doctrine of Christ, preached by the pastors of his church, according to that "the Lord gave testimony to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands," Acts xiv. 3; and "they going forth preached everywhere, the Lord working with all, and confirming the word with signs that followed," Mark xvi. 20; for, "the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy," Rev. xix. 10; which is one of the greatest of miracles. Now, the Holy Ghost gives these miraculous powers to whom and in what manner he pleases; to some he gives one kind, to others another, as St. Paul observes at large, 1 Cor. xii.; but "the manifestation of the spirit is given to every one unto profit," verse 7; and "all these things the same spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will," verse 11. *Lastly*, One of the principal ends for which Christ sent down his Holy Spirit upon his church was, to confirm her and establish her for ever, "building her upon the rock of his Divine protection, so that the gates of hell shall not prevail against her," Matt. xvi. 18; "to abide with her for ever, and teach her all truth," 1 Tim. iii. 15; and to enable her to preserve the purity of the doctrine of Jesus Christ unstained, unaltered, uncorrupted, to the end of ages; so that the words once put into her mouth should never depart from her to the end of time, according to that glorious promise made by the Almighty God, many ages before, and recorded by the prophet Isaias, of the continual assistance of his Holy Spirit, and preservation of the doctrine of the Redeemer for ever: "And there shall a Redeemer come to Sion, and to them that return from iniquity in Jacob, saith the Lord: This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord: my spirit that is in thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever," Is. lix. 20.

Q. 35. Did the Holy Ghost produce all these glorious effects in the apostles and first Christians, when he came upon them?

A. He did in a most eminent degree; for (1.) immediately upon his descent, the apostles became altogether new men: of poor ignorant fishermen that they were before they were en-

lightened by that Divine Spirit with the utmost sublime knowledge of all Divine truths, and became the masters and teachers of the whole world. Their hearts were inflamed with an ardent love of God, and zeal for the salvation of souls, and all manner of Christian virtues, humility, meekness, patience, brotherly love, and the like, shone forth in them in the highest perfection; whereas before they were afraid to stand by their Master in his sufferings, and "all forsook him and fled," when he was taken in the garden; and, during his passion, shut "themselves up, for fear of the Jews." Now they thought it their greatest glory to lay down their very lives for his sake, and went away rejoicing, to be "counted worthy to suffer ignominy for the name of Jesus." Such were the fortitude and grace with which the Holy Ghost endowed them! (2.) The Jews themselves, the hardened Jews, who had for three years resisted all the charms of the sanctity, eloquence, and miracles of the Son of God, immediately upon the coming of the Holy Ghost, were converted from their evil ways in great numbers, renounced their errors, adored as their God that Jesus whom a little before they had crucified upon a tree, embraced his heavenly doctrine with all their souls, and became his most zealous followers. No less than three thousand were converted at once on hearing the first sermon St. Peter preached to them, and five thousand at hearing another. Such power and force did the Holy Ghost give to the word, such light and understanding to those who heard it. (3.) The sanctity of their lives, after their conversion, was no less conspicuous than their conversion itself. The account the scripture gives of them is most affecting, "and they were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayers.....And all they that believed were together, and had all things in common. They sold their possessions and goods, and divided them all according as every one had need; and were continuing daily, with one accord, in the templepraising God, and having favour with all the people," Acts ii. 42. "And the multitude of the believers had but one heart and one soul; neither did any one say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but all things were common to them.....for neither was there any one among them that wanted. For as many as were owners of lands and houses sold them, and brought the price of the things they sold, and laid it down before the feet of the apostles; and distribution was made to every one according as he had need," Acts iv. 32, "and every

day they ceased not in the temple, and from house to house, to teach and preach Christ Jesus," Acts v. 42.

Q. 36. By what means may we invite and draw down the Holy Ghost to our souls, so as to receive the blessed effects of his presence?

A. The scripture points out to us these following: (1.) We must live innocent lives, flying from all sin, especially sins of malice, and all breaches of charity to our neighbour and all duplicity and deceit; for the Holy Spirit, who is the spirit of "wisdom, will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins; for the holy spirit of discipline will fly from the deceitful, and will withdraw himself from thoughts that are without understanding, and he shall not abide when iniquity cometh in," Wisd. i. 4. (2.) By self-denial, and mortification of our passions, we must divest ourselves of the wisdom of the flesh; for, "the wisdom of the flesh is death"; but the wisdom of "the Spirit is life and peace; because the wisdom of the flesh is an enemy to God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be, and they who are in the flesh cannot please God," Rom. viii. 6. Consequently, so long as we willingly adhere to the wisdom of the flesh, we cannot expect the Spirit of God will come to dwell in us. Now, the wisdom of the flesh is that which esteems and seeks after all the pleasures of the flesh, and in eating and drinking, and all carnal delight and sensual enjoyments, and seek satisfaction and happiness in them. This, therefore, we must mortify and destroy; for, as the scripture declares, "the sensual man perceiveth not the things that are of the Spirit of God; for it is foolishness to him, and he cannot understand," 1 Cor. ii. 14; and, therefore, "If you live according to the flesh, you shall die; but if by the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live," Rom. viii. 13. (3.) We must also divest ourselves of the spirit of the world, which bears an essential opposition to the Spirit of God. St. Paul shows this opposition, when he says, "we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God," 1 Cor. ii. 12. Nay, our blessed Lord declares, that "the world cannot receive the Comforter, the Spirit of truth," John xiv. 17. Again, the scripture assures us that "the wisdom" of this spirit "of the world, is foolishness with God," 1 Cor. iii. 19; that "the friendship of this world is the enemy of God; whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of this world, becomes an enemy of God," Jam. iv. 4. And the beloved disciple exhorts us in this earnest manner,

“Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in this world, is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life which is not of the Father, but is of the world; and the world passeth away and the concupiscence thereof,” 1 John ii. 15. We must therefore mortify all inordinate love of the world, all pride, vanity and ambition, and all attachment to riches and honours, to all which the spirit of the world strongly inclines and ties us, if we wish the Spirit of God should come and dwell in our souls. (4.) Another powerful means to draw down this divine Spirit to our heart is, to have a sincere love for Jesus Christ, and to give proof of it by keeping his commandments, this being the very condition he requires of us for this purpose. “If you love me,” says he, “keep my commandments, and I will ask the Father and he will give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, the Spirit of truth,” John xiv. 16. (5.) Lastly, by fervent and earnest prayer, we must endeavour to move the Father to send his Holy Spirit upon us, prayer being a most powerful means for obtaining this Holy Spirit from the Father; for, “if you being evil,” says our Saviour, “know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father from heaven give the good Spirit to them that ask him?” Luke xi. 13.

Q. 37. In what manner does Jesus Christ exercise the office of Judge of the living and the dead?

A. Chiefly in three ways: (1.) While men are in this life, Jesus Christ, as supreme Judge, rewards those who serve him faithfully, and improve the talents and graces he gives them, both by the temporal rewards he often bestows upon them, and also by giving them still more abundant graces; according to what is recorded by St. Luke, when he ordered a pound (*a piece of money*) to be taken from the slothful and unprofitable servant, and given to the faithful servant, who had doubled what his Lord had given him by his diligence and industry: “To every one,” says he, “that hath, shall be given, and he shall abound,” Luke xix. 26. That is, to every one that hath, and makes a good use of what he hath, as that profitable servant did, more shall be given, that he may still more and more abound. In this manner he punishes those who abuse his graces, both by temporal miseries which he often sends upon them, and especially by withdrawing these graces from them, and leaving them to the hardness of their own hearts, to follow

their own inventions, according to what he adds on the same occasion : “and from him that hath not,” (that is, who is unprofitable in what he hath, as that slothful servant was) “even that which he hath shall be taken from him,” *Ibid.* Now, to bestow rewards and punishments, is an act of judicial power, and presupposes a judgment made of the merits of the persons. (2.) At the particular judgment of each one immediately after death, when the soul shall be presented before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, and receive that sentence from him which his justice sees fit. (3.) At the day of general judgment, when he shall come “with great power and majesty,” to judge all mankind, and confirm their eternal doom.

Q. 38. Shall every man be judged immediately on his death?

A. Yes : for the scripture says, “It is easy before God in the day of death, to reward every one according to his ways ; the affliction of an hour maketh one forget great delights, and in the end of a man is the disclosing of his works,” Ecclus. xi. 28. And still more expressly, “It is appointed for men once to die, and after this the judgment,” Heb. ix. 27. The same truth is also strongly pointed out to us by the parable of the unjust steward, whom his master called to account, and put out of his stewardship at the same instant of time. Now when we die, our stewardship is at an end ; therefore, then is the time when we must give an account. Besides, it is certain that the rich glutton was condemned to hell immediately at his death : and likewise Lazarus, at his death, was carried by angels to Abraham’s bosom, a place of rest and peace ; but, to punish or reward according to justice, necessarily requires a previous act of judgment, which therefore must have happened at the hour of their death to the rich glutton and to Lazarus.

Q. 39. If each one be judged at his death, what need is there of the general judgment at the last day?

A. Several causes are assigned for this : (1.) To vindicate the Divine Providence before all creatures. In this life, “the works of the Most High are glorious, and secret and hidden,” Ecclus. xi. 4. Proud haughty man, not being able to comprehend them, impiously presumes to call the conduct of the Almighty to the bar of his human reason, and often proceeds so far in his censures upon it, as sometimes “to say in his heart, there is no God,” Ps. xiii. 1 ; sometimes to deny his Divine Providence and concern about his creatures, and “to say in his

heart, God hath forgotten, he hath turned away his face, not to see the end," Ps. x. 11; or to doubt of his providence, by saying, "How doth God know? he judgeth as it were through a mist; the clouds are his cover, and he doth not consider our things," Job xxii. 13; and sometimes even to deny his justice, and greatly "provoke God, by saying in his heart he will not require it," Ps. x. 13. Nay, the secrets of the Divine Providence are so amazing, especially in the adversity of the good, and the prosperity of the wicked, that even holy people are confounded, when they consider it, as David was, when he said, "Behold these are sinners, and yet abounding in the world, they have obtained riches; and I said, then have I in vain justified my heart, and washed my hands among the innocent.....I studied that I might know this thing; it is a labour in my sight, until I go into the sanctuary of God, and understand concerning their last ends." Now it is at the last end, that all this mystery will be discovered; at the general judgment, when God will appear in all his majesty in the presence of all mankind, and when all the wondrous ways of his Divine Providence shall be revealed, and his justice manifested in all his doings; for "he hath prepared his throne in judgment; he shall judge the world in equity, he shall judge the people in justice.....the Lord shall be known when he executeth judgment," Ps. ix. 17.

(2.) To do justice to Jesus Christ himself in his human nature, and to fulfil the promises made to him by his Father for this end: for whereas "he became a worm and no man, the reproach of men, and the outcast of the people, so that all that saw him laughed him to scorn," Ps. xxi. 7; "and was despised, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity," Is. liii. 3; "so as at last to humble himself to death, even the death of the cross," Phil. ii. 8, and suffered all this for the glory of his heavenly Father; justice requires that he who was so much humbled before men, should also be glorified before them, according to that promise related by the prophet, "Behold my servant shall understand, he shall be exalted, and extolled, and exceeding high," Is. lii. 13. This will be done before the whole universe at the general judgment, as foretold by the same prophet, "Behold my servant, I will uphold him; my elect, my soul delighteth in him; I have given my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.....he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.....he shall set judgment on the earth," Is. xlii. 1. At that great day will fully

be accomplished these sacred promises made to him by his Father, "The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thy enemies thy footstool. The Lord will send forth the sceptre of thy power out of Sion, rule thou in the midst of thy enemies; with thee in the principality in the day of thy strength, in the brightness of thy saints," Ps. cix. 1; for "this man offering one sacrifice for sins, for ever sitteth on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting until his enemies be made his footstool," Heb. x. 12. Again, "One in a certain place hath testified, saying.....thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet: for, in that he subjected all things to him, he left nothing not subject to him. But now we see not as yet all things subject to him," Heb. ii. 6, 8; but this shall be completely done at the end, at the day of judgment, "when he shall have brought to nought all principality, and power, and virtue, for he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; and the enemy death shall be last destroyed," 1 Cor. xv. 24. At that great day then, all things shall be perfectly subjected to him, and at the "sacred name of Jesus every knee shall bow" before him, "of those that are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father," Phil. ii. 10. (3.) To do justice to all his holy saints, that they who in this life have, for his sake, suffered numberless afflictions and calamities before men, might be glorified and rewarded by him before the whole universe, in a manner worthy of himself, and so as to justify, in the eyes of all mankind, the whole of his conduct towards them. At present, by a particular disposition of the Divine Providence, the elect of God, who are the righteous, are often confounded with the wicked, and not to be distinguished from hypocrites: his saints, who are the meek and humble of heart, far from being honoured and respected, are often despised and insulted; his servants, who are the poor in spirit, instead of being relieved and comforted, are abandoned and neglected: but will it be always so? By no means; "the poor man shall not be forgotten to the end, the patience of the poor shall not perish for ever," Ps. ix. 19; "thou wilt be a helper to the orphan..... the Lord hath heard the desire of the poor; thy ear hath heard the preparation of their heart, to judge for the fatherless and for the humble," Ps. x. 14, 17. At that great day the just shall be separated from the wicked, and placed on the right hand of the Judge in great glory; all their glorious virtues and

acts of piety shall be manifested to men and angels, and they shall be enriched with eternal treasures; and so admirable will their exaltation be, that their enemies, the wicked, who oppressed and afflicted them in their mortal life, seeing their great glory, "shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the suddenness of their unexpected salvation; saying within themselves, repenting and groaning for anguish of spirit: These are they whom we sometimes had in derision, and for a parable of reproach; we fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honour; behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints," Wisd. v. 1. (4.) To execute judgment upon the whole man; for, at a particular judgment after death, the soul alone is judged; but, as both soul and body are companions, in all man does in his mortal life, it is fitting, that, at the resurrection, when both shall be rejoined, both shall be judged, and both together receive their eternal doom.

Q. 40. What account does the scripture give of the general judgment?

A. As this is one of the most important truths revealed by God to man, he has been pleased to give us a most minute and awful description of every thing concerning it: "The great day of the Lord is near," says the prophet Sophonias, "it is near and exceeding swift, the voice of the day of the Lord is bitter, the mighty man shall there meet with tribulation. That day is a day of wrath, a day of tribulation and distress, a day of calamity and misery, a day of darkness and obscurity, a day of clouds and of whirlwinds, a day of the trumpet and alarm against the fenced cities, and against the high bulwarks; and I will distress men, and they shall walk like blind men, because they have sinned against the Lord, their blood shall be poured out as earth, and their bodies as dung," Soph. i. 14. In like manner the prophet Isaiah describes it in these awful terms, "Behold, the day of the Lord shall come, a cruel day, and full of indignation, and of wrath, and fury, to lay the land desolate, and to destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and their brightness shall not display their light; the sun shall be darkened in his rising, and the moon shall not shine with her light; and I will visit the evils of the world, and against the wicked for their iniquity, and I will make the pride of infidels to cease, and will bring down the arrogance of the mighty.....for this I will trouble the heaven, and the earth shall be moved out of her place, for the indignation of

the Lord of hosts, and for the day of his fierce wrath," Is. xiii. 9. And how justly it deserves this awful description will appear from the history given of it; whether we consider the signs that will go before the judgment itself, or the sentence of the Judge which shall conclude the whole.

Q. 41. What are the signs that shall go before the day of judgment?

A. The scripture lays them down as follows: "When you shall hear of wars and seditions, be not terrified; these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet presently; nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be great earthquakes in divers places, and pestilences and famines, and terrors from heaven, and there shall be great signs," Luke xxi. 9. "Now, all these are the beginning of sorrows," Matt. xxiv. 8; "and because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold.....and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to all nations, and then shall the consummation come," *Ibid.* verses 12, 14; "and there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, by reason of the confusion of the roaring of the sea and of the waves. Men withering away for fear and expectation of what shall come upon the whole world," Luke xxi. 25; for, "I will show wonders in heaven and in earth, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke; the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord doth come," Joel ii. 30; "And immediately after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be moved," Matt. xxiv. 29. "And the heavens departed as a book folded up, and every mountain and the islands were moved out of their place; and the kings of the earth, and the princes, and the tribunes, and the rich men and the strong men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and they say to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" Rev. vi. 14. After all those dreadful forerunners of this great day, a raging fire like a torrent shall spread over the whole world, and execute the final sentence of destruction upon all creatures that shall then be on the face of the earth, and reduce the

whole to smoke and ashes. "Our God shall come manifestly, our God shall come and shall not keep silence; a fire shall burn before him, and a mighty tempest round about him," Ps. xlix. 3. "Clouds and darkness are round about him, justice and judgment are the establishment of his throne; a fire shall go before him, and shall burn his enemies round about. His lightnings have shone forth to the world, the earth saw and trembled, the mountains melted like wax at the presence of the Lord of all the earth," Ps. xcvi. 2. "The day of the Lord shall come as a thief, in which the heavens shall pass away with great violence, and the elements shall be melted with heat, and the earth and the works that are in it shall be burnt up," 2 Pet. iii. 10. "The day of the Lord cometh, because it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and whirlwinds Before the face thereof a devouring fire, and behind it a burning flame; the land is like a garden of pleasure before it, and behind it a desolate wilderness, neither is there any one that can escape it," Joel ii. 1. These are the forerunners of this great day, which shall precede the judgment, and bring along with them the final destruction of this world.

Q. 42. What account does the scripture give of the judgment itself?

A. The account given of the judgment contains the resurrection, the appearance of the Judge, and the judgment. For, first, the angel of God shall come down from heaven to summon all the posterity of Adam to rise from the dead, and come to judgment: "And he shall send his angels with a trumpet and a great voice, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them," Matt. xxiv. 31. "For the Lord himself shall come down from heaven with commandment, and with the voice of an Archangel, and with the trumpet of God," 1 Thess. iv. 15. "And in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again incorruptible..... And this corruption must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality," 1 Cor. xv. 52. "And the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and hell gave up the dead that were in them," Apoc. xx. 13. "The hour cometh wherein all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that have done good shall come forth unto the resurrection of life, but they that have done evil unto the resurrection of condemnation," John v. 28. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the

last day I shall rise out of the earth, and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God, whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another," Job xix. 25.

Then all mankind shall be assembled together in the valley of Josaphat, within sight of Mount Calvary, that where he underwent the greatest excess of his sufferings and humiliations, there he may appear in full splendour of his majesty and glory, according of the prophet, "And I will gather together all nations, and will bring them down to the valley of Josaphat—for there will I sit to judge all nations round about," Joel iii. 2, 12. "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and majesty," Matt. xxiv. 30. For "Jesus Christ shall be received from heaven with the angels of his power in a flame of fire, yielding vengeance to them who know not God, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," 2 Thess. i. 7. "Behold he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him; and all the tribes of the earth shall bewail themselves because of him," Apoc. i. 7. "Behold the Lord cometh with thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to reprove all the ungodly for all the works of their ungodliness, whereby they had done ungodly, and for all the hard things which ungodly sinners have spoken against God," Jude, verse 14. "He put on justice as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head: he put on the garments of vengeance, and was clad with zeal as with a cloak.....As unto vengeance as it were to repay wrath to his adversaries, and a reward to his enemies," Is. lix. 17. And so great will be the splendour of his majesty, that "the moon shall blush, and the sun shall be ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and be glorified in the sight of his ancients," Is. xxiv. 23.

The Judge being now seated in his glory, the grand separation shall be made of the good from the bad. At present, the kingdom of Christ in this world is likened, in scripture, to a *barn floor*, in which the good corn and chaff are mixed together in one heap; to a *field of corn*, in which the good grain and tares grow up together till the harvest; to a *net* cast into the sea, and enclosing all kinds of fishes, both good and bad; and to a *flock* composed both of sheep and goats; because in this life the just and the unjust, the saints and the sinners the

children of God and the children of Satan, are mixed together in one body, and seldom to be distinguished the one from the other; but at that great day, the Judge, "whose fan is in his hand, will thoroughly cleanse his floor, and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire," Matt. iii. 12; and when the harvest comes, "the Son of Man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity," Matt. xiii. 41; "for at the end of the world the angels shall go and separate the wicked from among the just," *Ibid.* verse 49; which is thus particularly described in St. Matthew, "And when the Son of Man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty, and all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left," Matt. xxv. 31. This separation will be made without any respect of persons, and purely according to what each one deserves; so that parents and children, husbands and wives, friends and companions, shall then be separated from one another for ever, and the one placed on the right hand, the other on the left; for "in that night there shall be two men in one bed (*intimate friends*), the one shall be taken and the other left; two women shall be grinding together (*fellow-servants*), the one shall be taken and the other shall be left; two men shall be in the field (*dear companions*), the one shall be taken and the other shall be left," Luke xvii. 34. What joy and delight will then fill the hearts of the righteous! but what anguish shall pierce the souls of the wicked! "The wicked shall see and shall be angry, he shall gnash with his teeth and pine away," Ps. cxi. 10. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out," Luke xiii. 28. (See above Q. 39, p. 75.)

The separation being made, the judgment will follow, which is thus described in scripture: "I beheld till thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days sat down: his garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like clean wool; his throne like flames of fire, and the wheels of it like a burning fire; a swift stream of fire issued forth from before him; thousands of thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him; the judgment sat, and the books were opened," Dan. vii. 9. "And I saw a great white

throne, and one sitting upon it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was no place found for them : and I saw the dead, great and small, standing in the presence of the throne, and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged by those things which were written in the books, according to their works," Rev. xx. 11. These books are the books of conscience, from which the whole conduct of every one during his mortal life, all the sins he has ever been guilty of, however secret and hidden from the eyes of the world, shall then be manifested in their most glaring colours, before the whole universe, before God and his holy angels ; for "every idle word that man shall speak, they shall render an account of it in the day of judgment," Matt. xii. 36. "There is not anything secret that shall not be made manifest, nor hidden that shall not be known, and come abroad," Luke viii. 17 ; for "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ—and then every one of us shall render an account to God for himself," Rom. xiv. 10, 12. The Lord will come, "who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsel of hearts," 1 Cor. iv. 5 ; and then shall be fulfilled what was spoken by the prophets against sinners, "thy nakedness shall be discovered, and thy shame shall be seen ; I will take vengeance, and no man shall resist me," Is. xlvii. 3. "Behold I come against thee, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will discover thy shame to thy face, and will show thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to kingdoms, and I will cast abominations upon thee, and will disgrace thee, and will make an example of thee," Nahum iii. 5. Oh, how miserable a condition will the Christian sinner be in at that day, when he shall find himself thus covered with all his sins, and condemned in this great judgment as a traitor to his God, a rebel against the King of heaven, and a murderer of Jesus Christ ! when the men of Nineveh shall rise up against him and condemn him ; and the people of Sodom and Gomorrah shall be more mercifully dealt with than he.

Q. 43. What effect will all these things have upon the just ?

A. Our Saviour, after describing to the apostles the signs that shall go before this great day, says to them, "But when these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is at hand," Luke xxi. 28. And the scripture says that at that day, "the just shall stand with great constancy against those that have afflicted them, and taken

away their labours—they shall live for evermore, and their reward is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the Most High,” Wisd. v. 1, 16. Every circumstance of this awful day will contribute to their honour and happiness, and they shall be exalted in great glory; “for behold the day shall come kindled as a furnace, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall set them on fire, saith the Lord of Hosts; it shall not leave them root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name the Son of Justice shall arise, and health in his wings, and you shall go forth, and shall leap like calves of the herd, and you shall tread down the wicked, when they shall be ashes under the sole of your feet, in the day that I do this, saith the Lord of Hosts,” Mal. iv. 1. And this their happiness shall be completed beyond expression, when the sentence of eternal bliss shall be pronounced by the great Judge upon them.

Q. 44. What account does the scripture give of the last sentence?

A. Christ himself declares it to us in these words: “Then shall the King say to them that shall be on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”.....Then shall he say to them also that shall be on his left hand, “Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.”—And immediately shall these two sentences be executed; for “these *last* shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just into life everlasting,” Matt. xxv. 34. “At the end of the world the Son of Man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; then shall the just shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father,” Matt. xiii. 41. Thus the whole posterity of Adam shall receive their eternal doom either in heaven or hell, in eternal happiness or eternal misery.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE BENEFITS OF OUR REDEMPTION.

Q. 1 WHAT are the benefits which we receive from the Redeemer.

A. They are all comprehended in these three general heads, to wit, satisfaction or propitiation, redemption, and impetration. That is to say, that, by the infinite merits of what he did and suffered for us, he fully satisfied the Divine justice for our sins ; he rendered God propitious to us, and inclined to mercy ; he redeemed us from sin, from the tyranny of the Devil, and from the torments of hell ; and he obtained for us all spiritual benedictions and graces in this life, and the kingdom of Heaven in the life to come.

Q. 2. Were the merits of Christ of infinite value ?

A. By the word *merit*, is understood the right or title that one person acquires by his services to receive any favour or reward from another. This right may either be a right of *congruency*, or a right in *justice*. A *right or title of congruency* is, when the person to whom the service is done, is nowise obliged to reward it, by any promise or agreement ; but is at liberty to reward it or not as he pleases, and in what manner or proportion he sees proper. A *right in justice* is, when the person to whom the service is done, is bound by promise or agreement to reward it ; for by this the other, who does the service, acquires a full right and just title to the reward. Now, what Jesus Christ did and suffered for the glory and service of his Father, was of infinite value in itself, and deserved an infinite reward ; and his eternal Father himself laid these sufferings upon him, and engaged, on his undergoing them, to give the reward which he demanded for them, both in regard to himself and us. Hence the merits of Christ were of infinite value ; and he has acquired a full title in justice to everything he demands from his Father in reward of them.

Q. 3. How comes the merit of what Christ did and suffered to be of infinite value in itself ?

A. This arises chiefly from three causes : (1.) The infinite dignity of his person ; for the more exalted any person is, the more meritorious and valuable is any act of obsequiousness which

he does to please another. (2.) The infinite value of what he gave and dedicated to the service of his Father, which was no less than the actions, sufferings, life and death of God made man. (3.) The fervour of his charity and love with which he served his Father; for from the moment he was conceived in his mother's womb till the moment he expired on the cross, everything he did, said, and suffered was all done out of the most perfect obedience to his Father's will. Thus, "when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not; but a body thou hast fitted to me! Holocausts for sin did not please thee. Then said I: Behold I come: in the head of the book it is written of me, that I should do thy will, O God," Heb. x. 5. And this his fervent charity to do the will of his Father was so agreeable to him, that St. Paul immediately adds, "By the which will we are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ once," verse 10. This perfect obedience he carried on through the whole of his life, in everything he did; so that it was "his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and to perfect his work," John iv. 34. "I do nothing of myself," says he, "but as the Father has taught me, I speak these things.....for I do always the things that please him," John viii. 28. And he laid down his life at last, in the midst of torments, from the same Divine motive of obedience to his heavenly father; "he humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," Phil. ii. 8. Now, a person of such dignity offering to his Father a gift of infinite value, and employing himself with such infinite love, and through such dreadful sufferings for his Father's glory most certainly deserves an infinite reward for such services; and, therefore, his merits are in themselves of infinite value.

Q. 4. How does it appear that God the Father laid all the sufferings of Christ upon him, and promised him a reward for them?

A. This is expressly declared by the prophet Isaiah, who also assures us that this was done in punishment for our sins, to make up our peace with God, and heal our bruises. "Surely he hath borne our infirmities and carried our sorrows, and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted; but he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed.....And the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all.....for the wickedness of my people have I struck him.....and the Lord was pleased to

bruise him in infirmity." Then follows the promise of the reward, "If he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed, and the will of the Lord shall be prosperous in his hand. Because his soul hath laboured, he shall see and be filled; by his knowledge shall this my just servant justify many, and he shall bear their iniquities; therefore will I distribute to him very many, and he shall divide the spoils of the strong," Is. liii. Hence Jesus Christ claimed from his Father an infinite reward as his due or what he had done for him, to wit, the eternal glorification of his human nature in heaven, promised in the words of the prophet, "he shall see and be filled. I have glorified thee on earth," says he, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do; and now glorify thou me, O Father, with thyself, with the glory which I had, before the world was, with thee," John xvii. 4. And he made the same demand for all his faithful followers, who should believe in him. "Father: I will, that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be with me, that they may see my glory which thou has given me," verse 24.

Q. 5. What is properly meant by the satisfaction and propitiation of Christ?

A. To give satisfaction for an offence committed, is to offer to the person offended some gift or service, which is equal or more agreeable to him than the offence was disagreeable. The rigour of justice demands that the satisfaction be equally agreeable to the displeasure given by the offence; and, if it be more so, the satisfaction is superabundant. In either case, the person offended is appeased, and satisfied, and willing to be reconciled with the offender, and to forgive the offence.—Now, what Jesus Christ did and suffered, was of infinite value in the eyes of his Father, and therefore infinitely agreeable to him; and, as it was the condition required by the Divine justice, to satisfy for the sins of men; therefore, his satisfaction was not only equal to the offence, but infinitely superabundant; and, on that account, fully appeased the wrath of God against man, made him willing to be reconciled with man, and to forgive the offence received by his sins. In as much as this satisfied the demands of justice, it is properly called *satisfaction*; and, in as much as it rendered God propitious, or inclined to mercy, it is called *propitiation*. Now the scripture everywhere proposes the sufferings and death of Christ, as a satisfaction to the justice of God, and on that account taking away the effects of his

justice against man, and, as a propitiation for our sins, appeasing the wrath of God, and reconciling us with him. Thus St. Paul declares, that "God hath set forth Jesus Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to the showing of his justice, through the remission of former sins, through the forbearance of God, for the showing of his justice in this time," Rom. iii. 25. But that justice being now satisfied by the sufferings of Christ, he hath "blotted out the hand-writing of the decree that was against us, and he hath taken the same out of the way, fastening it to the cross," Col. ii. 14. St. John also says, "Jesus Christ the just, he is the propitiation for our sins," 1 John ii. 2. "And God loved us first, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins," 1 John iv. 10; "when enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son," Rom. v. 10; "all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Christ," 2 Cor. v. 18; "Christ is our peace," says St. Paul, "and died both for Jews and Gentiles, that he might reconcile both to God in one body by the cross," Eph. ii. 14, 16; "It hath well pleased the Father, through him, to reconcile all things to himself, making peace through the blood of his cross," Col. i. 20. "The God of our Fathers," said St. Peter to the Jews, "hath raised up Jesus, whom you put to death, hanging him upon a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins," Acts v. 30. In Christ "we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins," Eph. i. 7.

Q. 6. What is understood by the redemption of Christ?

A. To redeem is, properly speaking, to buy anything again, which was formerly one's own, but had gone from him to the possession of another; and, when applied to men, signifies, to buy one out of slavery who had been formerly free. Now God, at the beginning, created man in a state of freedom, serving God indeed, but with voluntary obedience, and out of love as a son, not by force, and out of fear as a slave; for to serve God is the only true liberty. But man, by sin, withdrawing himself from the easy service of God, became the servant of sin, according to that of our Saviour, "Amen, amen, I say unto you, that whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin," John viii. 34, and was so tyrannized over by that cruel master, that "all the thoughts of his heart was bent upon evil at all times," Gen. vi. 5, "Without his being sufficient of himself, as of himself, to think any good," 2 Cor. iii. 5. Besides, as in

committing sin, he had been overcome by the devil, and obeyed him in preference to God; therefore he was also enslaved to the devil; for "by whom a man is overcome, of the same also is he the slave," 2 Pet. ii. 19, and, "to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are whom you obey," Rom. vi. 16, and being by this means entangled in the snares of that cruel master, "was by him held captive at his will," 1 Tim. ii. 26. Not that God had lost his supreme dominion and power over man; but that he justly delivered him up to be tyrannized over by sin and Satan, as the executioners of the Divine justice, in punishment of his voluntary leaving the easy and delightful service of his heavenly Father. Nor did the miserable slavery of man end with this life; for, as by sin he had become an object of the Divine vengeance, he was condemned by the justice of God to suffer the eternal punishment of hell in the life to come, under the never ending tyranny of Satan. Now, from this miserable and never ending slavery, Jesus Christ came to redeem us, by paying a price for us of infinite value to the Divine justice; for "you were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as gold or silver.....but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled," 1 Pet. i. 18. "But Christ being come.....neither by the blood of goats, nor of calves, but by his own blood, entered once into the holies, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of goats and of oxen, and the ashes of an heifer being sprinkled, sanctify such as are defiled to the cleansing of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the Holy Ghost, offered himself without spot to God, cleanse our conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb. ix. 11, for "he also partook of flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him who had the empire of death, the devil; and might deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage," Heb. ii. 14.

Q. 7. What is the principal effect of our redemption by Christ?

A. As the first cause and source of our slavery is sin; because by sin we are enslaved to the devil, and condemned to hell; so the principal effect of our redemption by Christ, is the delivering us from sin, by which we are, of course delivered both from Satan and Hell. Hence the scripture always speaks of this as the greatest of benefits, and Christ is styled our Redeemer and Saviour chiefly on this account. Thus the

angel Gabriel declared to St. Joseph, before he was born, "thou shalt call his name JESUS, (or *Saviour*;) "for he shall save his people from their sins," Matt. i. 21. "A faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners," 1 Tim. i. 15. For this he was raised up and exalted by his Father; for "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins," Acts 5, 31. "To him all the prophets gave testimony, that through his name all receive remission of sins who believe in him," Acts, x. 43. "Be it known, therefore, to you, men and brethren, that, through him, remission of sins is preached to you, and from all the things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses," Acts xiii. 38. Him God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood—for the remission of former sins, Rom. iii. 25. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the remission of sins," Eph. i. 7. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John i. 7. "But you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. vi. 11. "The blood of Christ cleanses our consciences from dead works," Heb. ix. 14. Jesus Christ "hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," Apoc. i. 5. Now, whereas, our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirit of wickedness in high places," Eph. vi. 12. Against "the devil, who goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8. And whereas, "for this purpose, the Son of God appeared, that he might destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8; by delivering us from our sins; consequently, by so doing, he also has delivered us from the tyranny of that cruel master, and taken our nature upon him, "that through death he might destroy him who hath the empire of death, that is, the devil; and might deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage," Heb. ii. 14. And, therefore, he himself declares, "now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out," John xiii. 31. In consequence of this, we are also delivered by him from that eternal punishment to which we must otherwise have been condemned for our sins; for "Christ died for us; much more, therefore, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from wrath through him," Rom. v. 9; "who hath delivered us from the power of

darkness," Col. i. 13; and "who hath delivered us from the wrath to come," 1 Thes. i. 10.

Q. 8. Was it necessary that Christ should do and suffer as much as he did, in order to purchase this redemption for man?

A. Far from it; for, considering the infinite dignity of his person, and the ardent charity with which he always acted according to his Father's will, the smallest action or suffering of his was of infinite value in itself, and sufficient to redeem ten thousand worlds. But such was the will of the Almighty, that he should do and suffer so much, and at last die on the cross, and shed the last drop of his precious blood for us, that by this means he might the more efficaciously demonstrate the greatness of his love for us; for "greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friend," John xv. 13; and "God commendeth his charity to us; because, when as yet we were sinners—Christ died for us," Rom. v. 8. Also that he might the more abundantly glorify his eternal Father, by the super-eminent greatness of his merits, and the more perfectly accomplish the work his Father gave him to do, in redeeming mankind; and that he might the more effectually encourage and excite us to love him, and repose a perfect confidence in his infinite goodness. Hence we find it expressly declared in scripture, (1) That what Christ did for our redemption, was not only sufficient, but superabundant. Thus Jesus Christ "is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world," 1 John ii. 2; "with the Lord there is mercy, and with him plentiful redemption," Ps. cxxix. 7; "by one oblation he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. x. 14. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, according to the riches of his grace, which hath superabounded in us," Eph. i. 7. "But not as the offence, so also is the gift; for, if for the offence of one many have died, much more the grace of God, and the gift in the grace of one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.....where sin abounded, grace hath abounded more," Rom. v. 15, 20. "God who is rich in mercy, for his exceeding great charity wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead by sins, hath quickened us together in Christ.....that he might show, in the ages to come, the abundant riches of his grace, in his bounty towards us in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii. 4. (2.) That it was the express decree of the Almighty, that he should lay down his life, in order to procure the redemption of mankind. "If he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed," Is. liii.

"This same Jesus being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you, by the hands of wicked men, have crucified and slain," Acts ii. 23; said St. Peter to the Jews in his first sermon. "For of a truth," said the whole church to God, "there assembled together in this city, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, Herod and Pontius Pilate, and the Gentiles, with the people of Israel, to do what thy hand and thy counsel decreed to be done," Acts iv. 27. Hence Christ himself speaking of his passion to his apostles, always speaks of his sufferings and death, as what he must undergo. "From that time forth Jesus began to show to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things.....and be put to death," Matt. xvi. 21; and to the disciples, after his resurrection, he said, "thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise again the third day," Luke xxiv. 46. That it was on this condition he was to bring forth much fruit by the redemption of mankind, and enter himself into glory, he shows in these texts: "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified: Amen, amén, I say unto you, unless the grain of wheat fall into the ground and die, it remaineth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit," John xii. 23; and, "ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into his glory?" Luke xxiv. 26.

Q. 9. What is meant by the benefits of Christ's impetration?

A. It means that Christ, by the infinite merits of his passion and death, obtained for us all spiritual benedictions and graces in this life, all the means necessary for obtaining eternal happiness, and eternal happiness itself in the life to come. Insomuch, that it is only in and through him that any favour, grace, or blessing is bestowed upon us by God, or that anything we do can be agreeable or acceptable to God, or conducive to our eternal salvation. Hence we find it declared in scripture, that all the graces we receive from God, and our salvation itself, flow only from this source. Thus (1.) with regard to all graces in general, St. Paul says, "He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how hath he not also with him, given us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. And therefore, "blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ," Eph. i. 3. For, "of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace," John i. 16, "and in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and you are filled in him, who is the head of all principality and power," Col. ii. 9. "As all things of

his divine power, which appertain to life and godliness, are given us through the knowledge of him who hath called us by his own proper glory and virtue, by whom he hath given us most great and precious promises, that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature," 2 Pet. i. 3. (2.) The grace of our election ; for he hath chosen us in him (*Christ*) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in his sight and charity, who hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children, through Jesus Christ," Eph. i. 4. (3.) The grace of our vocation ; for "he hath delivered us and called us by his holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the times of the world," 2 Tim. i. 9..... "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession Jesus," Heb. iii. 1. "For God is faithful, by whom you are called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord," 1 Cor. i. 9. "In whom we are called by lot, being predestinated according to the purpose of him, who worketh all things according to the counsel of his will," Eph. i. 11. (4.) The grace of justification, to wit, that sanctifying grace, which applying to our souls the fruits of efficacy of the blood of Jesus, washes and cleanses them from all the defilements and pollutions of sin, adorns us with the heavenly beauty of holiness, and makes us just before God ; for "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sins," 1 John i. 7, but "we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," Rom. iii. 24, who by one oblation, perfected for ever them that are sanctified," Heb. x. 14. Indeed, "such some of you were (*to wit, guilty of many crimes*), but you are washed, but you are sanctified, but you are justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. vi. 11. "Who is made to us from God, wisdom and justice, and sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i. 30. (5.) Habitual grace, by which we remain in Christ, and he in us, which dignifies all our good works, and makes them acceptable and agreeable to God, and consequently meritorious of eternal life, and by which they become the works of Christ himself, as the fruit produced by the branches are chiefly the fruit of the vine from which the branches received their nourishment. "Abide in me," says Christ, "and I in you. As the branch cannot bear the fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine ; so neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you the branches ; he that abideth in me, and I in him,

the same beareth much fruit ; for without me you can do nothing," John xv. 4. What that fruit is, St. Paul tells us, saying, "but now being made free from sin, and become servant to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end everlasting life," Rom. vi. 22. "For the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice, and truth," Eph. v. 9, to wit, all manner of good works ; and therefore, St. Peter exhorts us to labour the more, that by good works "we may make our calling and election sure," 2 Pet. i. 10. (6.) Eternal glory in the salvation of our souls, which is represented to us as the end of all these other graces, and the ultimate effect in us of our redemption through Jesus. "Christ died for us, when sinners, much more, therefore, being now justified through his blood, shall we be saved from wrath through him." Rom. v. 9. For, "whom he predestinated, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he glorified," Rom. viii. 30. "According to his mercy, he saved us by the laver of regeneration, and the renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom he hath poured forth upon us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour ; that being justified by his grace, we may be heirs, according to hope, of everlasting life," Tit. iii. 5. "The grace of God is life everlasting in Christ Jesus," Rom. vi. 23 ; "for God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to the purchasing salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us that we may live together with him," 1 Thess. v. 9. "And being consummated he became the cause of salvation to all that obey him," Heb. v. 9, and therefore we have a confidence in "the entering into the Holies by the blood of Christ, a new and living way, which he hath dedicated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh," Heb. x. 19, 20. Lastly, that Jesus Christ alone is the source of our salvation, is expressly declared by St. Peter : "neither is there salvation in any other," says he, "for there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus only," Acts iv. 12. And, as "there is" but "one God," so there is but "one Mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a redemption for all," 1 Tim. ii. 5.

Q. 10. Why is Jesus Christ called a Mediator ? .

A. Because he is truly the Mediator of God and man, in the most perfect sense of the word. A mediator is one who acts between two, either to obtain pardon from the person offended to the offender, or to obtain some benefit from the one to the other. Now a mediator may procure this pardon or benefit

either by paying an equivalent price for it, and so obtaining it in his own right through justice, or by the force of intercession and prayers as a favour. Man, by sin, had grievously offended God, and was an object of his wrath and indignation; Jesus Christ appears as a Mediator to obtain pardon from God to man; to purchase this he paid a price of infinite value, the merits of all his sufferings, and death upon the cross, by which he acquired a right and title, in justice, to demand the pardon from his Father, and all other graces for us; but that nothing might be wanting to the perfection of his Mediatorship, to his sufferings and death he also joined most fervent prayers for the same end. Hence the scripture says, "therefore he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of his death for the redemption of those transgressions which were under the former Testament, they that are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance," Heb. ix. 15; and, "in the days of his flesh, offering up prayers and supplications with a strong cry and tears, to him that was able to save him from death, was heard for his reverence," Heb. v. 7. By the former he is a Mediator of Redemption, and the only Mediator between God and Man; by the latter he is also a Mediator of Intercession, but so that he has a right in his own person, to claim what he asks for us as his own due. When one man intercedes with God for another, he is also a Mediator of Intercession, but such an one has no right nor title in himself to demand what he prays for, but must expect to be heard only through mercy and favour; yea, this very mercy and favour he can look for only in and through the merits of Jesus Christ; so that all good to man must come from that source alone, whatever be the immediate instruments or means of applying to it.

Q. 11. As Jesus Christ has done so much for the salvation of mankind, will all mankind be saved?

A. Far from it; on the contrary, the light which the holy scriptures give us on this point expressly declares, that "many are called, but few are chosen"; which alarming truth Jesus Christ repeats on two different occasions, and further assures us, in the plainest terms, that "wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who walk therein, but oh, how narrow is the gate," says he, "and strait the way, that leadeth to life, and few there are who find it!" Matt. vii. 13. By which it is plain, that the number of those who are lost is much greater than of those who are saved.

Q. 12. How comes this? Does not God will all men to be saved?

A. He certainly does. St. Paul declares it in the plainest terms: "God will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 6.

Q. 13. Did not Christ die for all mankind?

A. Most assuredly; "Jesus Christ gave himself a redemption for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6; "and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world," 1 John ii. 2.

Q. 14. How comes it then that such numbers will be lost?

A. From their own fault alone. To understand this, we must observe, that, as God created man a free agent, he therefore required from him a free and voluntary service, as we have seen above at large, Chap. III. Q. 18. But man, abusing his free-will, rebelled against his God, and by that means forfeited all the favours God had bestowed upon him in this life, with all title to that eternal reward which he had prepared for him in the life to come; and also became utterly incapable of taking the smallest step towards the making up his peace with his offended Creator. Now, though Jesus Christ, by what he did for us, fully satisfied the Divine justice for the offence committed against God, rendered him propitious, and willing to be reconciled with us, and obtained grace to enable us to do on our part what should be required of us to complete our reconciliation; yet, it is manifest, that, if we still continue in our rebellion against God, and refuse to return to his service, and to perform the conditions which he requires on our part for being received again into favour, it is impossible the fruits of the merits of Christ should be applied to our souls, so as to reinstate us in the favour of God, or secure our salvation. We lost his favour by the voluntary abuse of our free-will, and it is impossible to recover it without our voluntary performance of what he requires from us for that end. Though Christ died for all, and obtained so many benefits for us all, yet he forces none to accept of these benefits against his will; nor will all he did avail us, unless his merits be applied to our souls; which will never be done so as to bring us to heaven, unless we, of our own free-will, perform the conditions which he requires, and use the means which he has appointed for this purpose. Hence the scripture expressly declares, that "Christ is become the cause of eternal salvation to all that obey him," Heb. v. 9. Now, as God wills all to be saved, and as Jesus Christ

died for all ; therefore God, through the merits of Christ, gives to all men, in the way he sees proper and suitable to their state, the necessary helps of his grace, to enable them to perform the conditions he requires from them, and by that means to secure their salvation. But, alas ! the greatest number still continuing to abuse their free-will, refuse to co-operate with that grace ; and hence, as they do not perform the conditions required, they are therefore lost for ever !

Q. 15. What are the conditions which God requires of us to be saved ?

A. They may all be reduced to two general heads : (1) To believe what Christ teaches : and (2) To obey what he commands ; or, in other words, Faith and Love ; for by Faith we believe and by Love we obey. Hence St. Paul lays down these two conditions as the only means by which we can reap any benefit from the redemption of Christ : “ In Christ Jesus,” says he, “ neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith that worketh by Charity,” Gal. v. 6.

CHAPTER X.

OF FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.

Q. 1. What is Faith ?

A. Faith, taken in the general sense of the word, is our belief of any truth founded on the testimony of others. To understand this, we must observe, that there are different ways by which we can come to the knowledge of any truth. For some things can be known only by *experience*, that is, by the testimony of our two principal senses of *touching and seeing* : and this is generally the first source of our knowledge, and a very extensive one : by this we know the existence of all things about us, with all their sensible qualities and properties, and the like. Other things there are which can only be known by *reason* ; that is, when, from known principles, we argue and draw conclusions which lead us to the knowledge of numberless truths, which the senses alone could never have acquired. Lastly, there are other things which can never be known, either by reason or experience, but only by hearing the testimony of those who

know them ; and the belief we have of such things is called *Faith*. By this means alone we can acquire the knowledge of all past matters of fact, and of things that happen at a distance from us, and of all such things as do not fall under the examination of our senses, and are above the comprehension of human reason.

Q. 2. How many kinds of faith are there ?

A. Two kinds ; human faith and Divine faith. Human faith is when we believe any thing we learn from the testimony of man ; and Divine faith is when we believe any thing on the testimony of God.

Q. 3. Is faith a certain means of acquiring knowledge ?

A. The certainty of what we learn from the testimony of others depends upon the authority of those who give the testimony, that is, upon their knowledge and veracity. Two things are necessary to make us certain of what we hear from another ; that he be not mistaken himself in what he relates, and that he speak exactly according to the knowledge he has of the matter. Where we are persuaded of these two things, we can have no reasonable doubt of the truth of what we hear ; but, if either of these be wanting, we can have no certain faith in such testimony. Now, though in the ordinary course of life, the testimony of other men is a very general and extensive source of knowledge, and in many cases, must be entirely depended upon : yet, as all men are liable to be mistaken themselves, or to deceive us ; therefore human faith, properly speaking, cannot be said to carry an absolute certainty along with it. But with Divine faith the case is otherwise ; for, as it is simply impossible that God should be deceived himself, and no less impossible that he should mean to deceive his creatures ; therefore, every thing we know, from the testimony of God, we know with the most absolute certainty of its being true.

Q. 4. What description do the scriptures give of Divine faith ?

A. St. Paul says, that “faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that are not seen,” Heb. xi. 1. He calls it “the substance of things to be hoped for,” because the happiness we hope for in the next life is above all human comprehension ; so that neither experience nor reason can give us any idea of it, and it is only by Divine faith we know it ; but this Divine faith, founded on the infallible testimony of God himself, gives us such a feeling conviction and

persuasion of the greatness of it, that it renders it in a manner present with us, as St. Chrysostom observes, so as to support and encourage us under all our afflictions, as if we already possessed it. He calls it also "the evidence of things not seen"; because though it be possible for us to see with our eyes, or comprehend by our reason the great truths of eternity, which Jesus Christ has revealed to us, yet his Divine revelation gives us a more convincing evidence of their truth than if we saw them with our very eyes themselves. And it is in preferring his Divine word and authority in revealing them, to any thing our senses or reason can oppose to the contrary, that the merit of our faith precisely consists; because by this we do the greatest homage to the infinite wisdom and veracity of God, while we humble the proud idol of our own judgment to his holy word, "and most wise understandings in obedience to him"; hence Jesus Christ says to St. Thomas, "because thou hast seen me, Thomas, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and have believed," John xv. 29.

Q. 5. What is faith in Jesus Christ?

A. It is the firm belief of all those heavenly truths which he has revealed to man, concerning God and eternity, and the salvation of our souls.

Q. 6. Could not man have acquired the knowledge of these heavenly truths by his own strength?

A. No: It was impossible for man, by his own abilities, ever to have attained the knowledge of them; as we have seen above, Chap. vi. 9, 25. These truths are above nature, they belong to another world, and many of them depend solely upon the will and good pleasure of God, and, therefore, could never have been known to man, unless God had revealed them to him. Hence the holy scripture says, "hardly do we guess aright at things that are upon earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us, but the things that are in heaven who shall search?" Wisd. ix. 16. And Christ himself, who assures us that life eternal consists in "knowing the only living and true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent," John xvii. 3; declares also, that "no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him," Luke x. 22. So that Jesus Christ himself, the Son of God, made man, is the heavenly teacher, by whom the knowledge of the Father, and of all the truths of salvation, is communicated to us.

Q. 7. Can we depend upon the truth of what he teaches?

A. Most undoubtedly; for as he is God, a being of infinite wisdom, who essentially knows all things, it is manifestly impossible he should ever be deceived himself, or make the smallest mistake in anything he says; and as he is a God of infinite truth, nay, *truth* itself, and, at the same time, *infinitely holy*, incapable of the smallest imperfection, it is no less impossible for him ever to deceive his creatures, by telling them any falsehood; so that whatever he says must be absolutely and infallibly true.

Q. 8. Are we then obliged to believe whatever he teaches?

A. Most certainly; for, as every thing taught or revealed by him is absolutely true, whenever we know any thing to be his doctrine, we must either believe it to be a real truth; or, by refusing to believe it, suppose him guilty of telling a lie, which would be a manifest impiety, and the highest injury done to his infinite wisdom and veracity.—Hence the scripture says, “he that believeth not, maketh God a liar, because he believeth not the testimony which God hath given of his Son,” 1 John v. 10. Now, how can we expect any part with Christ, if we make God a liar?

Q. 9. Does he require of all men to believe in him, as a condition of salvation?

A. Yes, he does; as he is the only Saviour of mankind, who by shedding his precious blood redeems all men from their sins, and from the slavery of Satan, so all who wish to partake of his salvation must acknowledge him as their Redeemer, and believe in him; nay, this belief, or faith in him, is the very first step towards our salvation, the foundation and ground-work of all the duties we owe him.

Q. 10. How so?

A. Because it is self-evident, that we can neither love him, nor hope in him, nor honour him, nor obey him, except we first believe in him, and receive in faith what he teaches. Yet, he has expressly declared, that unless we love him and obey him, there is no salvation for us; and St. Peter assures us, that “there is no other name given to men under heaven, by which we can be saved, but the name of Jesus only,” Acts iv. 12.

Q. 11. In what way were those saved who lived in the world before the time of Christ?

A. From the beginning, there never was any other name given to men by which they could be saved, but the name of Jesus only; so that all that ever were saved from the beginning, were saved only by believing in Jesus Christ the Redeemer,

who was then to come, and obeying the law which God then gave them; as now we can be saved only by believing in the same Redeemer, who is already come, and obeying the law of his gospel.

Q. 12. Is it enough to believe in the person of Jesus Christ, "that he is the Son of God made man," in order to be saved?

A. We must not only believe in his person, but we must also believe all that he has revealed, his whole doctrine; for, how can we believe that Jesus Christ is God, if we refuse to believe any one thing that he says, and by that means suppose him either ignorant or a liar?

Q. 13. But is it not enough to have the faith of Peter: now his faith was, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," for which Christ pronounced him *blessed*, and yet this was only faith in his person?

A. The faith of Peter is certainly sufficient; and at that time, Peter only made profession of his faith in the person of Christ, because that was the only point proposed by our Saviour, when he said, "Who say ye that I am?" and it is the chief article of our faith in Christ, upon which all the rest depend. But the faith of Peter was by no means confined to this only; for, afterwards, when some of the disciples left him, because they would not believe the sublime doctrine he was teaching them concerning the blessed Eucharist, and Christ asked his Apostles, "Will you also leave me?" Peter immediately answered, "Lord to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life," John vi. 69; which shows how firmly he believed his words also, even in things he did not understand, as well as the Divinity of his person.

Q. 14. Is the necessity of faith or belief of Jesus Christ and his doctrine declared in the scripture?

A. As the virtue of faith in Jesus Christ and his doctrine is the foundation of all other Christian virtues, and of all Christian duties, Almighty God has been pleased that it should be laid down in the holy scriptures in the clearest and plainest terms.

Thus, with regard to his person, "This is his command, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John iii. 23. "He that believeth not is already condemned, because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God," John iii. 18. "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God remaineth in him," John iii. 36. "Many seducers are gone out into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh: this is a seducer and an

antichrist," 2 John, verse 7. "He that believeth not, makes God a liar, because he believeth not the testimony which God has given of his Son," 1 John v. 10.

With regard to his word or his doctrine, when he gave his apostles the commission to go and teach all nations those things which he had commanded them, he immediately adds, "He that believes and is baptised, shall be saved, and he that believes not, shall be condemned," *Matt. ult. Mark ult.* And on another occasion he says to them, "Whosoever shall not hear you or receive your words, when you depart out of that city, shake off the dust from your feet; verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city," *Matt. x.* "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words," *says Christ*, "in this sinful and adulterous generation, of him also the Son of Man shall be ashamed when he shall come in the glory of his Father, with his holy angels," *Mark viii. 38; Luke ix. 26.* "He that revolteth and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God," 2 John ix. "Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," *Thess. i.* In all which plain testimonies, we see, that the receiving his words, the embracing his doctrine, and the obeying his gospel, are laid down as necessary conditions of salvation, without which "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," will undoubtedly be our portion.

Lastly, With regard to faith in general, both in his person and doctrine, and to the great crime and punishment of unbelievers, the scripture speaks thus: "Without faith it is impossible to please God," *Heb. xi. 6;* "as for unbelievers, and murderers, and fornicators, and adulterers, their portion shall be in a lake burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," *Rev. xxi. 8.* Hence the holy apostle St. Jude says, in the beginning of his Epistle, "It is necessary to write, to beseech you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints"; and then goes on, in the rest of his short epistle, to expose, in the strongest colours, the wickedness and punishment of those who corrupt this true faith by false doctrine; and St. Paul, writing to the Galatians, pronounces a curse, and repeats it a second time, upon any one who shall dare to change

the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or in any one article teach another gospel than what he had already taught them. Gal. i.

Q. 15. As true faith in Jesus Christ, or the belief of all those divine truths which he has revealed, is so strictly required by Almighty God from all as a condition of salvation, how can we possibly know what those truths are which he has revealed, and which we are obliged to believe?

A. This can only be known by means of that rule which Jesus Christ established for that purpose.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE RULE OF FAITH.

Q. 1. HAS Jesus Christ left us a rule by which we may know the truths he has revealed?

A. He has; and it is only by following this rule that we are preserved in that one true faith, of which the scripture says, there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism," Eph. iv. 5; and "without which faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6. Hence St. Paul, exhorting all to be of the same mind, that is, to believe the same truths, and to have the same faith, commands us to continue in this rule, as the means to be so; "Nevertheless," says he, "whereunto we are already arrived, that we be of the same mind, let us also continue in the same rule," Philip iii. 16.

Q. 2. Have we any description of this rule in the scriptures?

A. Yes we have; the prophet Isaiah, foretelling the glory of Christ's kingdom, describes this rule by which we are to walk under the gospel, as a *high-way*, plain, open, and easy to walk in; as a *way of holiness*, containing everything necessary for making those holy who walk in it; as a *certain and secure way*, in which even fools shall walk without danger of error; and, finally as a way that *leads to eternal happiness*. The prophet's words are these: "And a path and a way shall be there, and it shall be called the holy way.....and this shall be to you a straight way, so that fools shall not err therein.....they shall walk there that shall be delivered; and the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and shall come into Sion, with praise, and

everlasting joy shall be upon their heads ; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow, and mourning shall flee away," Is. xxxv. 8.

Q. 3. What may be drawn from these words of the Prophet ?

A. That the rule which Jesus Christ has left for instructing us in what we are to believe and do, in order to be saved, has these three properties. (1.) It *is easy and plain*, fitted for all capacities. (2.) It *is universal*, and contains all revealed truths. (3.) It *is certain*, and may be securely depended upon.

Q. 4. Was it becoming the wisdom and goodness of God to leave us such a rule for our guide in these things ?

A. It was not only becoming him to do so, but it was absolutely necessary for the end he proposed. For how could he require of man to believe his truths and obey his law, under pain of damnation, if he had not left us some *plain and certain* means by which we might know what *all* these truths are, and what his law requires of us ?

Q. 5. What is the rule of our faith left us by Jesus Christ ?

A. The Christian world, as it stands at present, is divided into two great bodies in regard to this point. All, indeed, agree in this, that the holy scriptures, being dictated by the Holy Ghost, are truly the word of God, and therefore are infallibly true in what they teach, both as to what we are to believe, and as what we are to do in order to be saved. But, as the divine truths contained in them cannot be known without understanding the true sense of these sacred writings ; hence the great question arises, *How is the true sense of the scripture to be known ?* One of the two great bodies of Christians, to wit, the Protestants, affirm, that the true sense of the scriptures may be sufficiently known in all things necessary to salvation, by every man of sound judgment, who reads them with humility and attention ; and therefore, they hold, that the rule left by Jesus Christ to man for knowing what we are to believe, and what we are to do, in order to be saved, is *the written word alone, interpreted by every man of sound judgment*. The other great body of Christians, namely, the Catholics, affirm, that the true sense of the scriptures cannot be sufficiently known by any private interpretation, but only by the public authority of the church ; and therefore, they hold that the rule left us by Jesus Christ is *the written word, as interpreted by the church*.

Q. 6. How shall this great question be decided ?

A. This is indeed a very great and important question, on the solution of which the whole difference between the Protestants and the Catholics depends. But the decision of it is far from being difficult ; it is shown in a very plain and simple manner, by comparing each of these two rules with the three qualities, which, as we have seen above, both scripture and reason show us the rule left by Jesus Christ must have, and seeing to which of these rules those qualities belong. Now the qualities or the properties of the rule left by Jesus Christ are, that it is *plain and easy, comprehensive*, containing all truths, and *certain*, so that we can depend upon it.

Q. 7. Is the written word alone a plain and easy rule, fitted for all capacities ?

A. A little attention will show that it is far from it ; for (1.) It is impossible it should be such to those who cannot read ; and yet what vast multitudes of these are there in the world ? To them it can be no rule at all ; for they cannot make the least use of it. Before printing was invented, which was not far above thirteen hundred years after Christ, there were none but written books in the world ; and, of course, very few learned to read at all ; not, perhaps, one in some thousands. What must the great bulk of mankind have done during all that time, if the written word alone be only the rule ? Did Jesus Christ leave a rule for knowing his truths, which could be used only by the learned, whilst yet he obliges all, without exception, to believe these truths, under pain of condemnation. (2.) With regard to those who can read, and who pretend to follow the written word alone, as they interpret it for themselves, we see from experience that they can never agree among themselves about the sense of it ; but run into the most opposite and contradictory interpretations of it, which is the most convincing proof that it is far from being plain and easy ; nay, on the contrary, that it is in many things hard to be understood, and obscure. (3.) The scripture itself affirms, in express terms, that, in the epistles of St. Paul, there “are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, to their own destruction,” 2 Pet. iii. 16. In which text it is plainly declared that the scriptures are “hard to be understood” ; and that not only the *unlearned*, but also the *unstable*, who presume to interpret them according to their own judgment, instead of finding their true sense, pervert and *wrest* them to false mean-

ings; and by so doing, bring *destruction* on themselves. Consequently, this rule of the written word *alone*, is by no means a plain and easy rule fitted for all capacities; but, on the contrary, it is a most dangerous thing for any one to pretend to follow it as his rule; for the number of the unlearned is immense, and among those who are learned, who can answer for his own stability? Would Jesus Christ ever have left such a hard and dangerous rule to poor mortals?

Q. 8. Is the written word *alone* a comprehensive rule?

A. It is far from it; there are several things believed and practised by all Christians, for which no authority is found in scripture; nay, which are contrary to the express words of scripture; we shall only mention these three. (1.) The law of God laid down in Scripture, commands the seventh day of the week which is Saturday, to be kept holy, and no manner of work to be done on it. There is not, in the whole Bible, one single text annulling that law, or dispensing with it; and yet all Christians think it lawful to break that law, by working upon the seventh day, and think it a duty to keep holy the first day of the week, or Sunday, in its place. (2.) The scripture expressly forbids to eat blood, or things strangled, as a command of the Holy Ghost, Acts xv. 28. And yet this law is broken every day by Christians, without any scruple, though they have not the smallest authority from scripture to do so. (3.) All Christians believe the scripture to be the word of God, written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; and this belief is the very ground-work of religion to those who follow scriptures alone as their rule; yet there is not the smallest proof from the scriptures themselves of their being so. Nay, it is simply impossible to prove, from the scriptures, that the books therein contained were written by those whose names they bear; that these writers were inspired by God; that the books as we have them, are such as were written by them, without addition, diminution, or corruption; or that the translations made of them are faithful, and agree with the originals. The scriptures then are far from being a comprehensive rule, and far from containing all revealed truths, since the above particulars, and many others, are not to be found in them.

Q. 9. Is the written word *alone* a certain rule?

A. It fails here no less than in the two former properties. The true sense of scripture is, indeed, a most certain and infallible rule; but it is evident, that those who interpret it by their own private judgments, can have no certainty that the

sense they put upon it is the true one; for (1.) The scripture itself declares, "that the unlearned and the unstable wrest it to their own destruction," 2 Pet. iii. 16. Now how can any man be certain that he is not of this number. He may say he thinks he is right, but he can have no certainty. Nay, he cannot *reasonably* even think he is right; for (2.) Those who follow their own interpretation as their rule, are perpetually disagreeing among themselves, and giving the most contrary and often contradictory interpretation to the same text. How then can any man among them *reasonably* think, that the sense he puts upon it is right, when he sees it contradicted by numbers of others, every way as well qualified to understand it as himself? (3.) Very often the same persons alter their opinion about the sense they put on scripture; and what they believe to be true sense to-day, they reject as false to-morrow, being continually *carried about with every wind of doctrine*. Now, what certainty can they have for their opinion at one time more than another? Their very change is an evident acknowledgment that they were wrong before, though they then were persuaded that they were right. What certainty can they have for being right now? (4.) All those who follow this rule have the whole weight of the Catholic church against them, which condemns all their *peculiar* interpretations of scripture as false and erroneous. What security then can they have of being right, when such a numerous and respectable body of Christians condemns them?

Q. 10. What is the consequence of these reasonings?

A. That seeing the written word *alone*, as interpreted by every man's private judgment, has not one of those qualities which the rule of our faith ought to have; therefore, this cannot be the rule left us by Jesus Christ, for teaching us the truths revealed by him.

Q. 11. What is the rule of faith held by the Catholics?

A. The Catholics hold, that Jesus Christ, well knowing that the dead letter of the scriptures could never answer the purpose of a rule, by which men could come to the knowledge of the truth revealed by him, if left to every private person to interpret them according to his own fancy; and that, on the contrary, such private interpretation must prove an unavoidable source of contentions and divisions among them, was therefore pleased to authorise the pastors of his church to be the interpreters of his word, and the depositaries of all the sacred truths he had revealed to the world: That he gave them power

and commission to teach the people the truths of salvation, and requires all to receive their faith from them; and, in consequence of this, they hold that the rule of faith ordained by Jesus Christ *is the word of God as interpreted by the Church*; that is, by the great body of the pastors of his church, spread throughout the world.

Q. 12. Is this rule *plain* and easy, and fitted for all capacities?

A. Nothing can be more plain, or more adapted to the infirmity of human nature. For, let a person be ever so illiterate, and of ever so mean a capacity, if he have but the smallest degree of common sense, he can always be instructed in what is necessary for him to know, by the living voice of his pastors, who can vary the manner of their instructions in every different shape, to adapt them to his capacity, and make him comprehend them. It was by this means *alone* that thousands and thousands, in all ages, have been instructed in the true faith, and in the practice of all Christian duties, though they had never learned to read a single letter. It is by this means *alone* that thousands are daily instructed in the truths of religion, who, though they have learned to read, have neither judgment nor capacity to understand what they do read; and it is by this means *alone* that all, even the most learned, have been instructed in the first rudiments of religion in their infancy. So that this is evidently a plain easy rule, fitted for all capacities, and for persons of all ages, conditions, and sexes.

Q. 13. Is this rule *comprehensive*, so that all revealed truths can be learned by it?

A. It is; for, as Jesus Christ taught all revealed truth to his apostles by word of mouth, so it was perfectly easy for them to teach their disciples every thing they had learned from him in the same manner. Thus, from generation to generation, the pastors of the church, being thoroughly instructed in all revealed truths themselves by those before them, can communicate the whole, without exception, to their people. And, in fact it is by this means alone, we know for certain that the scriptures are the word of God; that the books we have for scripture are genuine; that it is lawful to keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh, though there be no authority for doing so in the scripture; and that it is lawful to eat blood and things strangled, though contrary to the express command of the scripture; and, in general, it is by this means alone we come to know the true sense of scripture, and every

other point of religion which the written word either does not, or could not contain.

Q. 14. Is this rule *certain*, so that we may safely depend upon it?

A. It is in this that the beauty and excellency of this rule chiefly shine forth, and show it to be the rule left us by Jesus Christ, and truly worthy of his Divine wisdom and goodness. The certainty of this rule appears chiefly from three considerations: (1.) From the nature of the rule itself; for this does not consist in the private opinion of a few particular persons, but in the unanimous doctrine of the great body of the pastors of the church spread throughout the whole world. Now, these pastors are exceedingly numerous; they are spread throughout all nations, and they differ from one another in their country, language, manners, government, and worldly interests, and even in their opinions about other matters of knowledge and learning. When, therefore, they all agree in giving us the same interpretation of scripture, or in declaring to us any truth of religion, is it not infinitely more certain to follow their decision, than to trust to our own private judgments in opposition to them? Would not a man be a fool to prefer his own interpretation of the civil law of the land, in opposition to the unanimous decision of the whole body of judges and lawyers? Besides, does not such unanimity, in so delicate a matter as religion, in which experience shows how jealous men commonly are of their own opinions, evidently show the finger of God to be there? What but an over-ruling Providence could keep such multitudes of men united in religion, who so widely differ in every thing else? Among those who do not follow this rule, we can scarce find two of the same opinion in every article, though of the same nation and language, yea though of the same family; which evidently shows the uncertainty of their rule. How is it possible, then, that such vast multitudes, so every way differing in all things else, should agree in every article of revealed truths; if the rule they follow were not perfectly secure? This will still further appear, if we consider, (2.) The method they observe in declaring these truths; for, when the pastors of the church declare any article of religion, they never give it as their own private opinion, or as what they believe on their own private judgment, but they all protest and declare, that what they teach their people is precisely the same, without addition or diminution, which they received by tradition from their forefathers. Their predecessors, from whom they

learned these truths, declared the same thing ; and pledged their salvation for the truth of their declaration ; every preceding generation did the same, till we arrive at the apostles themselves ; assuring us, in all ages, that they hold it as a damnable sin to add or diminish one single iota from *the faith once delivered to the Saints*. Now, it is manifest, that a body of people, faithfully observing this rule or tradition, can never vary, alter, or change, any article of their religion ; and, therefore, that the faith they hold at present is the self-same that was held in all preceding ages, and first taught by Christ and his apostles. But what renders the certainty of this rule beyond all dispute is, (3.) The sacred charter of infallibility promised by Christ to his Church, and laid down in the plainest terms in the holy scriptures themselves.

Q. 15. How does this infallibility of the church appear from scripture ?

A. Among the numberless passages that show this, we shall here consider only these following : (1.) Almighty God, by the prophet Isaiah, lays down the covenant he makes with Jesus Christ and his Church in these beautiful terms : “ There shall come a Redeemer to Sion, and to them that return from iniquity in Jacob, saith the Lord. This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord. My spirit that is in thee, and my words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed’s seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever,” Is. lix. 22. Here two things are promised, as a covenant made by God with the Redeemer, in the most absolute and unconditional manner : first, that the Spirit of the Lord should never depart from the Redeemer, nor from his posterity ; and, secondly, That the words put into his mouth, and by him revealed to his seed, should never depart from his mouth, nor from the mouth of his seed, from henceforth and for ever. The seed or posterity of the Redeemer are his followers, or his church ; consequently, Almighty God here engages his most sacred promise that the Holy Ghost shall ever remain with the church of Christ, and that the true doctrine of revealed truths shall never cease to be held and taught by her ; for they shall never “ depart out of her mouth.” (2.) This divine promise is renewed and confirmed by Jesus Christ himself in the gospel, in both its parts ; for, speaking to the pastors of his church, in the persons of the apostles, he says, “ I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with

you for ever, the Spirit of truth," John xiv. 16. And a little after he adds, "but when he, the spirit of truth, is come, he shall teach you all truth," John xvi. 13. Here we see a positive promise that the "Spirit of truth" should be sent upon his church, and "abide with her for ever," and that the office of this spirit should be "to teach her all truth." Now, the first part of this promise was visibly accomplished on Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost came down upon the apostles and first Christians; it was frequently after repeated in the same visible manner upon the first converted Gentiles, Acts x., and other converts. There can be no doubt, then, of the perfect accomplishment of the other parts of it also, that he will continue with the church "for ever," and "teach her all truth." (3.) Jesus Christ declares, "that he builds his church upon a rock," and positively assures us, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against her," Matt. xvi. 18. Now, what he means by saying he builds his church upon a rock, he himself explains, when he says, "Whosoever heareth these my words, and doeth them, shall be likened to a wise man that built his house upon a rock, and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and they beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock," Matt. vii. 24. Christ, then, is the wise builder, and by building his church upon a rock, gives her an absolute security against all storms, tempests, or assaults whatever that may be made to destroy her; therefore, he assures us, that she shall never fail, never cease to be his church, and, consequently, never be corrupted, never fall into error. In the other part of this text, he confirms this conclusion, positively declaring, that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against her."

Q. 16. What is the consequence of these reasonings?

A. That, seeing that the church of Christ, teaching her children by the mouth of her pastors, is a *plain easy way* of instructing them in *all the truths of religion*, and that with the *most perfect certainty*; so that even fools can walk without danger of error under her direction; therefore, she is the rule left us by Jesus Christ, by which we are to know what we are to believe, and what we are to do, in order to secure our salvation, by which also we know the scriptures themselves, and the true sense of them.

Q. 17. Are there any other direct proofs to show that the church is this rule?

A. Yes: we have also these following, among many others:

(1.) Because Jesus Christ did not give his apostles any commission to write the gospel; but only to teach and preach it; which plainly shows that his intention was, that preaching and teaching by the living voice of his pastors should be our rule, and not the dead letter of the scripture. (2.) It is a certain truth, that it was by preaching and teaching, and not by writing, that the world was converted unto Christianity; that several of the apostles wrote nothing at all; and that those among them who did write, never converted any person or nation by their writings; but first converted them, and established the faith among them by their preachings, and then wrote to those whom they had before converted, for their instruction, on some particular occasion, and for their consolation. (3.) Because the scripture nowhere sends us to the scripture itself, as to our rule; but on the contrary, it expressly declares, that "no prophecy of scriptures comes by private interpretation," 2 Pet. i. 20. (4.) Because the scripture, as we shall see by and by, sends us only to the church and to her pastors for our instructions; and obliges all, under the severest penalties, to submit to her doctrine in all things relating to religion. (5.) Because the same scripture expressly assures us that the different pastors of the church were instituted and ordained by Jesus Christ, on purpose to bring us all to "the unity of the faith," and prevent us from "being carried about by strange doctrines," Eph. iv. All which will more fully appear, by considering what the scripture itself teaches concerning the church, after we have explained more at large the nature of tradition.

Q 18. What is meant by tradition?

A. The handing down from one generation to another, whether by word of mouth, or by writings, those truths revealed by Jesus Christ to his apostles, which either are not at all contained in the holy scriptures, or at least are not clearly contained in them; of which we have seen above several instances.

Q. 19. What is the principle upon which tradition proceeds?

A. It is the laying down, as an invariable rule, to be observed in every generation, firmly to adhere to the doctrine received from the preceding generation, and carefully to commit the same to the succeeding generation, without addition or diminution.

Q. 20. Was this principle of tradition established by the apostles?

A. It was most firmly established by them, and they used the most efficacious means to preserve it.

Q. 21. What were these means?

A. We find these following laid down in their sacred writings: (1.) They warmly exhorted the faithful, and strictly commanded them to stick close to the doctrine which they had delivered to them, and to teach the same inviolate to those after them. Thus, "O Timothy," says St. Paul, "keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding the profane novelties of words, and oppositions of knowledge, falsely so called, which some promising, have erred concerning the faith," 1 Tim. vi. 20. "Hold the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith, and in the love which is in Christ Jesus. Keep the good things committed to thy trust by the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in us," 2 Tim. i. 13; "And the things which thou hast heard of me before many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also," 2 Tim. ii. 2. "Continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, and which have been committed to thee, knowing of whom thou hast learned them," 2 Tim. iii. 14. Such are the injunctions which he laid upon the pastors of the church in the person of his disciple Timothy. And to show that the bishops or chief pastors, are particularly charged with the obligation of adhering to the doctrine delivered to them from the apostles, when relating to Titus the qualities of these chief pastors, among others, he says, that a bishop ought to "embrace that faithful word which is according to doctrine, that he may be able to exhort in sound doctrine, and convince the gainsayers,—who must be reproved, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre's sake," Titus i. 9; where we see the strict charge laid upon the pastors, both to adhere to the true doctrine themselves, and to defend it against seducers. The same injunction adhering to the doctrine they had received, by tradition, from the apostles, he lays upon all the faithful in these words: "Therefore brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word, or by our epistle," 2 Thess. ii. 14. St. Jude also writes his epistle on purpose to enforce this duty on the faithful, and says, "I was under a necessity to write to you, to beseech you to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," Jude, verse 3. Such strong and repeated injunctions laid upon all, and especially upon the pastors of the church, who are appointed by Jesus Christ to be the guardians and teachers of the faith, could not

fail to make the deepest impression upon their minds, and have in all ages been considered as the great rule of their conduct in preserving the true doctrine inviolated.

(2.) Not content with laying such strict commands upon the faithful to adhere firmly to the old doctrine handed down from the beginning, they also warn them against all broachers of new doctrine, describe their manners, foretell their reprobation and damnation, and command the faithful to avoid them. St. Paul writes to Timothy: "Now the Spirit manifestly saith, that in the last times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, and having their consciences smeared," 1 Tim. iv. 1. What an impression must this description make upon the minds of all serious Christians! what a horror must it raise in them against all innovations! "Know this also," says the same Apostle, "that on the last days shall come on dangerous times; for men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers,—lovers of pleasure more than of God; having an appearance indeed of godliness, but denying the power thereof; now these avoid, for this sort they are—who resist the truth, men corrupted in mind, reprobate concerning the faith," 2 Tim. iii. 1. St. Peter also is very strong upon this head, when he says, "There shall be among you lying teachers, who shall bring in sects of perdition, (*damnable heresies*, as the Protestant translation has it)—bringing upon themselves swift destruction—whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their destruction slumbereth not," 2 Pet. ii. 1. St. Paul also to the Romans saith, "Now I beseech you, brethren, to mark them who cause dissensions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and to avoid them; for they that are such serve not Christ our Lord, but their own belly," Rom. xvi. 17; and in his Epistle to Titus, he says, "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid; knowing that he that is such an one is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment," Titus iii. 10. Again, to Timothy he said, "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to that doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but sick about questions and strifes of words.....corrupted in mind, and destitute of the truth," 1 Tim. vi. 3. St. John also speaks to the same purpose, saying, "Whosoever revolteth, and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.....If any man come to you, and bring not this doctrine,

receive him not into thy house, and say not unto him, God speed you; for he that saith to him, God speed you, communicated with his wicked works," 2 John 9. Could any thing more efficacious have been said, than these oracles of the Holy Ghost, to excite in the hearts of the faithful the strongest aversion to every the smallest deviation from the doctrine they had received. Could anything more firmly establish the sacred principle of tradition?

(3.) But to settle this principle upon the most solid footing, besides what is above, these sacred writers pronounce a dreadful curse upon and deliver over to Satan all those who shall dare to alter or corrupt the faith once delivered to the saints, though but in one single article. Thus when some false brethren, in St. Paul's absence, had persuaded the Galatians, that it was necessary to join circumcision with the gospel, he wrote his epistle to them, on purpose to correct this delusion; and, though it was but an error in one point, and that in every thing else they adhered to his doctrine; yet he calls it a "removing from the grace of Christ.....and a perverting the gospel of Christ," Gal. i. 6, 7. And then he adds, "but though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you, besides that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed; as we said before, so I say now again, If any one preach to you a gospel, besides that which you have received, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 8. So also he mentions two heretics of his own time, who erred only in one point, and says, "Their speech sprcadeth like a canker, of whom are Hymeneus and Philetus, who have erred from the truth, saying that the resurrection is past already, and have subverted the faith of some," 2 Tim. ii. 17. But he had told his disciples before in what manner he had dealt with Hymeneus and Alexander, who "had made shipwreck of their faith; whom," says he, "I have delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme," 1 Tim. i. 20. Nothing sure could more effectually imprint in the minds of the faithful, the firmest attachment to the truths of the gospel, than this judgment of the apostle, or more excite their attention and solicitude, to preserve these sacred truths whole and undefiled, and to deliver them entire and uncorrupted to their posterity.

Q. 22. All this is exceedingly strong indeed; but how is it applied to show the preservation of the truths revealed by Jesus Christ throughout all ages?

A. It is manifest, from these scripture oracles, that the great

principle or rule of tradition, was laid down and established by God himself at the beginning, and that it was delivered by the apostles to their disciples, along with the other truths of the gospel, as the fence and barrier, ordained by God for the preservation of the faith throughout all generations; and it is no less manifest, that, by the faithful observation of this rule, it is impossible the faith should ever be corrupted as long as the world endureth. For, if the Christians of the second age believed nothing as revealed truths, but what they had received from their predecessors of the first age, then it is manifest that the faith of the first and second age was perfectly the same. And if those of the second age delivered the same entire and uncorrupted to those of the third age, then the faith of the third age must infallibly be the same with that of the two preceding ages; and the same must necessarily be the case with every succeeding age to the present, and will be to the end of the world.

Q. 23. Is it certain that the church always adhered to this rule of tradition, and never deviated from it?

A. Nothing can be more certain, for several reasons. (1.) Because the church, in the apostolic age, most certainly adhered to it, as all the above testimonies of scripture show. In every succeeding age, she always professed her constant adherence to it, as the acts of all her councils, and the writings of all the holy Fathers in every age declare; and in the present age, she openly avows the same thing, and protests that she received this rule, along with the other truths of Christianity, from those before her, as handed down to them from the preceding generations; therefore she never, in any age, deviated from it. (2.) Because this rule, as we have seen, is so strongly, so frequently, and under such dreadful penalties, inculcated in the holy scriptures, that it is morally impossible the whole Christian world should, in any age, renounce it, unless we suppose that the whole world should at once renounce all concern for their salvation. (3.) Because it is evidently impossible that a deviation from this rule should creep in by degrees: for the first that should begin to teach such a deviation, would undoubtedly be forthwith condemned by those who adhered to it. (4.) Because, in fact, the church, in every age, condemned all who broached new doctrines by this rule alone, as is manifest from the history of all her councils, and the writings of Christians in all ages, some of whom, as St. Vincent of Lerins, and Tertullian, have written whole books upon this very subject, as the easiest and

most expeditious means to confute all novelties in doctrine. (5.) Because it is manifest, from the writings of the Christians in every age since the apostles, that the doctrine of faith has been uniformly the same in the Catholic Church throughout all ages; and that those revealed truths which the apostles delivered by word of mouth, and did not commit to writing, as well as the true sense of their sacred writings themselves, have been handed down throughout every age, not only by the constant teaching of the pastors, but also by the writings of great numbers of her members, many of whom were renowned for their great sanctity, as well as for their great learning. Which evidently shows that she has never deviated from this rule; and that by adhering to it, the sacred "words of God, once put into her mouth, have never departed from her," as God, in his covenant with her, had expressly promised by the prophet Isaias, chap. lix.

Q. 24. Can it be evidently proved that the church never altered or corrupted any of the truths revealed to her at the beginning?

A. We observed in the last question, No. 5, that this is manifest from the writings of Christians, in all preceding ages, and in all the different Christian nations of the world. In which writings we uniformly find the same sacred truths taught, explained, and inculcated, which the church teaches at this day. It also follows as a necessary consequence, from the principle of tradition, which she follows, of never changing, adding to, nor taking from, the sacred body of Divine truths, received from her predecessors; but delivering the same inviolate and uncorrupted to her children in every generation; for it is self-evident, that a church which constantly adheres to this rule, can never alter her faith. Besides, as her attachment to the principle and practice of tradition, is itself one of the points delivered by tradition, it is evident, that a church which at present professes to believe and follow that principle, must always have exactly observed it, and made profession of observing it; and consequently must always have maintained the same faith. Add to all this the great number of those who were concerned in the preservation and observance of this rule, spread from the very beginning, throughout vast numbers of different countries and nations, and differing from one another almost in every thing but religion. Add, also, how tenacious men commonly are of their religion; especially those who believe it an article of their religion itself, never to alter any

one iota of it. Join to this how attentive the church has always been, in every age, to oppose and reject every attempt made to alter or corrupt her doctrine; and it will easily appear how impossible it is that she should ever make any change in any one point of revealed truths. And if we also consider the promised assistance of the Holy Ghost, to teach her all truth, and abide with her for ever, this puts the matter beyond the possibility of any doubt.

Q. 25. In what does this promised assistance of the Holy Ghost properly consist? To what does it extend?

A. To understand this, we must observe that Jesus Christ revealed to his apostles, by word of mouth, all those divine truths, both regarding faith and morals, which God was pleased to communicate to mankind. This he himself declares, when he said, "But I have called you friends; because all things whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known to you," John xv. 15. Now these truths the apostles taught to the world, partly in their writings and partly by word of mouth: but, as both are equally the word of God, and revealed by him; therefore, both are equally to be received and believed. "Therefore, brethren," says St. Paul, "stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by epistle," 2 Thess. ii. 14. In these sacred traditions, both written and unwritten, there are many things not so clearly and explicitly expressed as others. There are many things in them, as the scripture itself expresses it, "hard to be understood"; and there are also numberless other things, essentially connected with what is there expressed, which are not mentioned there at all; but which, nevertheless, are implicitly revealed by God, in those others with which they are necessarily connected. When, therefore, any difficulty arises about any point of doctrine, the church immediately has recourse to revelation, contained in the written and unwritten word, in scripture and tradition, and examines the point in question by this sacred rule; in doing which, she is so effectually assisted by the Spirit of God, as infallibly to discover whether or not the point in question be contained in, connected with, or conformable to, revelation. If it be, she adopts it as a sound doctrine; and if not, she condemns it as false and erroneous. So that the church never proposes to her children any new article of faith; but only brings to light, and unfolds the truths originally revealed by Jesus Christ; but which, till her declaration, had been only obscurely or ambiguously contained in scripture and tradition;

and this is the principal thing in which the Holy Ghost gives her his infallible assistance. All this is manifest, from our Saviour's own declaration. "He had made known to his apostles all things whatsoever he had heard of his Father; but many of those things were little understood by them, and many of them so delivered, that they could not understand them; at least as to the full extent of what his words imported. To remedy this, he promises to send them the Holy Ghost, and shows what his office should be, in these words: "But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you," John xiv. 26. And again, "I have yet many things to say to you: but you cannot bear them now;—but when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth," John xvi. 12. This then is the office of the Holy Ghost; and, as Christ declared that he "would abide with his church for ever," this office he continually performs, teaching the pastors of the church all truth, and bringing to their mind, as occasion may require, all those things which are contained in the revelation Christ made at the beginning to his apostles.

Q. 26. What conclusion follows from all this?

A. From this we still more fully see the perfect security we have in relying upon the authority of the church, as the guide and rule which Jesus Christ has ordained to conduct us in the way of Salvation, and by which alone we can come to the certain knowledge of all those Divine Truths which he has revealed, whether with regard to faith or manners.

Q. 27. Is it therefore necessary for the Christian people to be well instructed in what our holy Faith teaches concerning the Church?

A. The knowledge of the church is certainly one of the most necessary points of the Christian religion, because the church is the very foundation of all the rest, being the sacred rule appointed by Jesus Christ by which we come to the knowledge of all the truths of revelation, even of the scriptures themselves, and of the true sense and interpretation of them; the church is the organ of God, by which he speaks to his people, and discovers to them the great truths of eternity; and the true doctrine concerning the church being once properly established, an end is immediately put to all uncertainties, doubts, and controversies about religion. Hence we find, that, in the Apostles' Creed, after professing our belief in the ever blessed Trinity,

the Incarnation, and other mysteries of our Redemption, the very next article is that of the Holy Catholic Church; it is immediately subjoined to them, and next in importance to those sacred truths; and, therefore, to be firmly believed as a truth revealed by God, as firmly as those other sacred truths of the Trinity and Incarnation; it stands upon the same ground with them, the Divine revelation; and is the sacred canal by which the revelation of these divine truths is conveyed to us.

Q. 28. Is this article of the creed, *The Holy Catholic Church*, a proof of the continual existence of the church upon earth?

A. It is certainly a most convincing proof both of the continuance of the church of Christ, and of all those sacred prerogatives with which her Divine Spouse has adorned her. For the Apostles' Creed is universally admitted by Christians of all denominations to contain the fundamental articles of the Christian religion, as revealed by Jesus Christ to his apostles, consequently all the articles of the creed are Divine truths; and, as the church of England teaches in her thirty-nine articles, *ought thoroughly to be received and believed, for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy scripture*, Art. viii.; therefore they must be true at all times and in all places. Consequently, as it was a Divine revealed truth, when the creed was made by apostles, that Christ had then a *Holy Catholic Church* upon earth; so it is no less a Divine truth, that he has a Holy Catholic Church upon earth at present, that he had such a church ever since the creed was made, and will have to the end of the world. And as this church never could cease to be the true church of Christ, so never could she cease to be what Christ at first made her, nor fail in any of those sacred prerogatives with which Christ at first adorned her: consequently, she is always holy, always catholic, always a visible body, consisting of pastors teaching, and people taught by them; always one, always apostolical, always infallible in what she teaches, for these, as we have seen in part, and shall see more fully by and by, are the sacred prerogatives which he bestowed upon her. For, if ever she lost any of these, she could no longer be the church of Christ, and then that article of the creed would be false, which it is blasphemy to suppose.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE CHURCH.

Q. 1. What is the Church of Christ ?

A. It is the congregation or society of all the true followers of Jesus Christ throughout the whole world united together in one body, under one head ; for “we being many,” says St. Paul, “are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another,” Rom. xii. 5. “And there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd,” John x. 16.

Q. 2. In what are all the members of the church united together, so as to compose *one body in Christ* ?

A. Chiefly in these three things : (1.) In one and the same faith, believing and teaching all those Divine truths, which Jesus Christ revealed, and his apostles taught, and no other ; for there is but “one Lord, one faith, one Baptism,” Eph. iv. 5 ; and of the church, in the time of the apostles, it is said, that “they were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles,” Acts ii. 42. (2.) In the participation of those sacraments which Jesus Christ ordained for the sanctification of our souls ; thus, St. Paul, speaking of the sacrament of baptism, says, “In one Spirit, we were all baptized into one body,” 1 Cor. xii. 13 ; and of the holy Eucharist he says, “Because the bread is one, all we, being many, are one body, who partake of that one bread,” 1 Cor. x. 17. (3.) In being all governed by one head, and by pastors under him, ordained and authorised by Jesus Christ ; for he himself declares, that all who belong to him “shall be one fold, and one Shepherd,” John x. 16.—And St. Paul assures us, that all the different orders of pastors, apostles, evangelists, and teachers, were ordained by Jesus Christ himself “for edifying the body of Christ,” Eph. iv., that is, for building up and preserving the Church in one body.

Q. 3. Of whom is the church composed ?

A. Of pastors teaching, and of the people who are taught.

Q. 4. Who are the pastors of the church ?

A. The successors of the apostles, ordained and authorised by Jesus Christ to teach the people the truths of salvation, and to rule the church.

Q. 5. How do you prove that Jesus Christ authorised the pastors to teach the people ?

A. From his own commission to them, laid down in several

places of the holy scripture, as follows: (1.) He declares, that he himself *was sent* by God his Father, *to preach the gospel*, Luke iv. 18; and he says to his apostles, "As my Father hath sent me, I also send you," John xx. 21. (2.) He revealed to his apostles all Divine truths: "All things," says he to them, "whatsoever I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you," John xv. 15. And before he left the world, he gave them commission to teach the same to all nations; "Go ye," says he, "unto the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Mark xvi. 15; and again, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations.....teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. xxviii. 19.

Q. 6. Was this commission of teaching to continue with the successors of the apostles?

A. Most certainly it was; for, (1.) When Christ gave the apostles this commission "to teach all nations," he immediately added, "And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20. Now, as the apostles neither did, nor could teach all nations in their own persons, nor were to continue upon earth till the end of the world, it is manifest that this commission was not confined to their persons, but given to their office, that is, to them and their successors in office, who should continue to the end of the world, and complete the work of teaching all nations which the apostles began. (2.) St. Paul was not one of those to whom the above commission was given personally, and yet he declares of himself, "I am appointed a preacher and an apostle, (I say the truth, I lie not,) a doctor of the Gentiles, in faith and truth," Tim. ii. 7; and "that Christ sent him to preach the gospel," 1 Cor. i. 17. (3.) St. Timothy was ordained by St. Paul to be a pastor of the church, and a successor of the apostles, and St. Paul conjures him faithfully to discharge this duty of teaching: "I charge thee before God and Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead, by his coming and his kingdom, preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, reprove, intreat, rebuke with all patience and doctrine," 2 Tim. iv. 1. (4.) He also orders the same Timothy to appoint others to succeed him in the same office of teaching; "The things," says he, "which thou hast heard of me, before many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also," 2 Tim. ii. 2.

Q. 7. In what light do the scriptures represent to us the pastors of the church?

A. (1.) As the *ambassadors of Christ*, sent by him to declare to us his will, and reconcile us with God. "For Christ, therefore," says St. Paul, "we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us. For Christ we beseech you, be reconciled to God," 2 Cor. v. 20. (2.) As the *organs* of Christ by whom he speaks to us, "He that hears you," says Christ, "hears me, and he that despises you despises me," Luke x. 16. (3.) As the angels of God, from whom we are to know his law; for, "the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth, because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts," Mal. ii. 7. "I preached the gospel to you heretofore," says St. Paul, "and you received me as the Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus," Gal. iv. 13. Great, indeed, is this dignity; but woe to those priests who vilify it by their conduct!

Q. 8. Are we obliged to hear the pastors of the church, and to receive the doctrine of our faith from them?

A. Nothing is more strongly commanded, or more clearly expressed in scripture, than this obligation; for, (1.) The pastors are expressly authorised by Christ to teach us; consequently, we are obliged to be taught by them. (2.) They are instituted by Jesus Christ on purpose to keep us all in the unity of the faith; consequently we are obliged to receive our faith from them. (3.) When Christ gave the commission of teaching to the pastors of his church, he immediately adds, "He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be condemned," Mark xvi. 16; consequently, we are obliged by Jesus Christ himself to believe what the pastors of his church teach, under pain of damnation. (4.) He further declares to the pastors of his church, "He that hears you hears me, and he that despises you despises me, and he that despises me despises him that sent me," Luke x. 16. (5.) He condemns those that "will not hear his church as heathens and publicans," Matt. xviii. 17. That is, as "worshippers of the devil," for such were the heathens; and "as people abandoned by God," and given up "to a reprobate sense," for such the publicans were reputed among the Jews. (6.) The Holy Ghost gives the same command to all by the mouth of St. Paul. "Remember your prelates, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow.....and be not led away by various and strange doctrines," Heb. xiii. 7, 9. (7.) St. John, speaking of himself, and the other pastors in his time, gives our submission to them as the sign to distinguish the Spirit of truth from the Spirit

of error, and of our belonging to God. "We are of God," says he; "he that knoweth God heareth us, he that is not of God heareth not us; in this we know the Spirit of truth and the Spirit of error," 1 John iv. 6.

Q. 9. What are we to think of any doctrine which is contrary to what the church teaches?

A. As, by what we have seen above, we are undoubtedly assured that Jesus Christ will never permit his church to fall into error, or teach false doctrine, but will continue to preserve the sacred truths which he revealed to her, and put into her mouth, at the beginning, unchanged and uncorrupted to the end of the world; so it is evident that the doctrine which the church teaches is infallibly true; consequently, any doctrine which is contrary to this must necessarily be *a false doctrine*; and, if false, it cannot be from God, for *God is truth, and cannot deny himself* by speaking contrary to the truth.

Q. 10. From whom then does all false doctrine come?

A. Our blessed Saviour says to the Jews who opposed his doctrine, "You are of your father the devil.....he abode not in the truth, because truth is not in him.....for he is a liar, and the father thereof," John viii. 44. St. Paul also assures us, that, "in the last times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy," 1 Tim. iv. 1; and St. James says, "Be not liars against the truth; for this is not wisdom, descending from above, but earthly, sensual, devilish," Jam. iii. 14, 15.

Q. 11. What other powers belong to the pastors of the church besides that of teaching?

A. They are also commissioned and authorised by Jesus Christ to rule and govern the church, and have received from him all the spiritual powers of the priesthood for this purpose.

Q. 12. How is it proved that the pastors are authorised by Jesus Christ to rule the church?

A. From the words of St. Paul, who, speaking to the chief pastors of the church at Ephesus, says, "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood," Acts xx. 28.

Q. 13. In what does this power of ruling the church consist?

A. It includes the whole of their authority, and is described by St. Paul, Eph. iv. 12. under three heads; for he declares, that the different orders of pastors were instituted by Jesus

Christ (1.) "For the perfecting the saints"; that is, for conducting souls in the road of Christian perfections, by prescribing such rules to them, and giving them such advices as are necessary or conducive to that end. (2.) "For the work of the ministry"; that is, for the preaching of the word, and the administration of the sacraments. (3.) "For the edifying of the body of Christ"; that is, for regulating all the exterior of religion, by prescribing such rules and ordinances as they judge necessary for the decent performance of all the outward service of the church, for preventing or punishing all scandals, and for keeping the Christian people in virtuous discipline; so that every thing may contribute to give edification to the whole body, and to promote the honour of God in his church.

Q. 14. For what end did Christ give such powers to the pastors of the church?

A. St. Paul goes on, in the same place, to tell us, that all this was done by Christ; (1.) To bring "all to the unity of the faith." (2.) To enable us all "to become perfect men." And, (3.) "To prevent our being tossed to and fro like children, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive," Eph. iv. 13, 14.

Q. 15. Are the people obliged in conscience to obey the commands of the pastors of the church in things concerning religion, and subjected to their authority?

A. Most certainly they are; for (1.) St. Paul says expressly, "Let every soul be subject to higher powers, for there is no power but from God, and those that are, are ordained of God. Therefore, he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation," Rom. xiii. 1. Now if this be so with all lawful powers, though they be immediately of human institution, and may be changed and altered by man, both as to their form, and the extent of their authority; how much more must it be with regard to the pastors of Christ's church, whose power is immediately from Christ himself, instituted expressly by him, and which can be altered by no other whatsoever. Hence (2.) Jesus Christ himself says to the pastors of his church, in the persons of his apostles, "He that hears you hears me, and he that despises you despises me," Luke x. 16. (3.) He declares the greatness of the sin of disobeying his church in these strong terms: "He that will not hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen and a publican," Matt. xviii. 17. (4.) St. Paul

“went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches”; and the means he used to confirm them was by “commanding them to keep the precepts of the apostles and the ancients,” Acts xv. 4. Hence (5.) He expressly requires this obedience and subjection to our pastors, when he says, “Obey your prelates, and be subject to them, for they watch, as being to render an account of your souls,” Heb. xiii. 17.

Q. 16. Who is the chief Pastor, or Head of the church?

A. Jesus Christ is the invisible supreme Head of the church; for God “hath put all things under his feet, and hath made him head over all the church, which is his body,” Eph. i. 22; and therefore he assures us, that he is “with her all days, even to the consummation of the world,” and that he animates her by his holy Spirit, “the Spirit of truth, who abides with her for ever; and by this means he communicates to her, and to all her members, the heavenly influence of grace and charity, to preserve them in life, and enable them to bring forth fruit, as the vine communicates the nourishment to the branches,” John xv.; for “the charity of God is poured abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us,” Rom. v. 5. But, though Christ be thus the invisible Head of the church himself, yet he has also been pleased to appoint another under him to be his vicegerent upon earth, the chief pastor among men, and the visible head of his church.

Q. 17. Whom did Christ appoint for this high office?

A. St. Peter the apostle, and his successors after him.

Q. 18. How does it appear from scripture that Christ made St. Peter visible head of the church?

A. From these following testimonies, among many others: (1.) Christ gave him the name of *Peter*, which signifies a *Rock*; and declared, that upon him, as a “rock, he would build his church,” Matt. xvi. 18. (2.) Christ gave to him in particular, and to none of the other apostles, “the key of the kingdom of Heaven,” Matt. xvi. 19. Now, the power of the keys is the emblem of supreme power and authority, according to that of the prophet, “I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulders, and he shall open, and none shall shut, and he shall shut, and none shall open,” Is. xxii. 22. This was prophesied of Christ himself, who also says on this subject, “Thus saith the Holy One, and the True One, he that hath the key of David; he that openeth and no man shutteth; shutteth and no man openeth,” Rev. iii. 7; consequently, by saying to St. Peter, “to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven,” he manifestly

communicates to him this supreme power, as to his vicegerent upon earth. (3.) After his resurrection, he gave him the formal commission to feed his whole flock in these express words, "Feed my lambs; feed my sheep," John xxi.; by which he constituted him the chief pastor of his fold, of which he had said before, "There shall be one fold and one shepherd," John x. 16. (4.) When Satan sought to have the apostles in his power, "that he might sift them as wheat," Christ prayed only for St. Peter, "that his faith should not fail," and left him as head of the whole, "to confirm his brethren," Luke xxii. 31. (5.) In the lists of the apostles given in the gospel, St. Peter is always named first in order, and the rest are named sometimes in one order, sometimes in another; yet it is certain St. Peter was not first called to Christ, for his brother Andrew was called before him, and introduced him to Christ. (6.) St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, in their lists of the apostles, take particular notice of the name of *Peter*, which Christ gave him, for his own name was Simon, which indicates the particular privilege annexed to that name; and therefore St. Matthew expressly calls him the *first*. (7.) St. Peter acted in this supreme capacity as head of the church, both when he called the brethren to deliberate about choosing one in the place of Judas, Acts i., and also when he gave the definitive sentence in the council of Jerusalem, after "there had been much disputing," Acts xv. 7; but when he had spoken, all "the multitude held their peace," verse 12, and submitted to his decision, as did also St. James, who assented to, and confirmed what he had said. (8.) The writers of Christianity, and holy fathers in every age, have always attested it as a truth revealed by God, that Jesus Christ did constitute St. Peter prince of the apostles, and visible head of his church. (9.) It is an undoubted fact, that his successors have always claimed this supreme authority, and have exercised it throughout the whole church, as occasion required, in every age, from the very beginning. Now, considering the nature of man, it is evidently impossible that any one bishop of the church should have acquired such authority over all the rest, even in the most different nations, and the most distant kingdoms, or that he could have exercised it every where among them, if it had not been given him from the beginning, and ordained by Jesus Christ.

Q. 19. Why did Christ institute one visible head of his church upon earth?

A. Because, as the church is a visible body, or society of men, it was most becoming they should have a visible supreme head among them, like to the members of whom the body is composed. Besides, as the church was ordained to be spread over all nations, differing from one another in language, customs, government, and everything else, except religion, it would have been morally impossible to have kept them all united in one body, if there were not one common visible head or supreme authority among them, to which all must submit. So that this head of the church is the centre of unity, by which the church of Christ, throughout the whole world, is joined in one body.

Q. 20. Who are the successors of St. Peter as head of the church?

A. The bishops of the city of Rome, of which St. Peter was the first bishop, and suffered martyrdom in that city for the faith of Christ, leaving his successors there the heirs of all his power and authority.

Q. 21. Wherein consists the power of the bishop of Rome, as head of the church?

A. As he is appointed by Jesus Christ to be the supreme head and pastor of the church under him, to be the spiritual father and teacher of all Christians, with full power to feed and govern the whole flock: therefore he is the supreme judge and lawgiver, in all things relating to religion, whether as to faith, manners, or discipline. The primacy, both of honour and jurisdiction, over all the other bishops, belong to him; and all the members of the church are obliged to pay the greatest respect, veneration, and obedience to his decrees and orders in all things belonging to religion.

Q. 22. How is the head of the church commonly called?

A. He is called the *Pope*, which word signifies *Father*, and is given to the head of the church; because, being the Vicar of Jesus Christ, he is the common spiritual father of all Christians.

Q. 23. As the power of teaching resides in the pastors of the church, does the infallibility of the church, preserving the true doctrine, reside only in them?

A. The promises of infallibility in preserving the true doctrine of Jesus Christ are of two sorts. Some are made of the church in general, such as these, "I will build my church upon a rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her. My words which I have put in his (*the Redeemer's*) mouth, shall

not depart out of his mouth, nor out of the mouth of his seed, from henceforth and for ever." "The church is the pillar and ground of truth." By these promises infallibility is secured to the whole church, pastors and people; so that they shall never cease to believe and profess the true faith of Jesus Christ. But whereas the people are commanded to receive the faith from their pastors, and to believe what they teach; so that the faith of the people depends upon the teaching of the pastors; therefore the second class of promises are made to the pastors in particular; for to the pastors, in the persons of the apostles, our Saviour said, "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world"; "the Father will send you the Spirit of truth, to abide with you for ever, and teach you all truth." By which both pastors and people are assured, that Jesus Christ, and his holy Spirit, will always remain with the pastors of his church, and so assist them by the continual protection of his over-ruling providence, in the great work of teaching the people, that they shall never alter nor corrupt the true doctrine of Christ, but teach it whole and undefiled, to the end of time.

Q. 24. In whom then does the infallibility properly reside?

A. In the body of the pastors, joined with their head.

Q. 25. How so?

A. In either of these two ways: (1.) When the pastors of the church are called together by the chief pastor, in a general council, to decide anything about religion, whether, regarding faith or morals, they are then infallible in their decisions, and their decrees are considered as dedicated by the Holy Ghost, according to the example of the apostles, in their council at Jerusalem, who begin their decrees with these words, "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us," Acts. xv. (2.) When the head of the church, without calling together the other pastors, publishes any decree concerning faith or morals, and this decree is accepted and received by the body of the pastors, either expressly or tacitly, it then becomes a decree of the whole church, and of the same infallible authority, as if it had been made in a general council.

Q. 26. When the head of the church publishes any decree concerning faith, or morals, to which he requires submission from all the faithful, is he himself infallible in what he there teaches?

A. This is not proposed as an article of Divine faith, nor has the church ever made any decision concerning it. Great numbers of the most learned divines are of opinion that in

such a case the head of the church is infallible in what he teaches ; but there are others of a contrary opinion, who think that his decree is not to be considered as infallibly certain, till the body of the bishops receive it, either by their express approbation, or by their tacit submission to it, by which it becomes a decree of the whole church, whose infallibility is undoubted.¹

Q. 27. On what grounds do those divines found their opinion, who believe that the Pope himself, when he speaks to all the faithful, as head of the church, is infallible in what he teaches ?

A. On several very strong reasons, both from scripture, tradition, and reason.

Q. 28. What proofs do they bring from *scripture* ?

A. These following : (1.) Because this privilege of the particular direction and assistance of God, in teaching true doctrine, was given to the High Priest in the old law ; and the synagogue being only a figure of the law of grace, and of the church of Christ the same privilege must certainly be given to the High Priest of the church also ; otherwise the type would have been more perfect than the reality, the shadow more privileged than the substance. Now, that the High Priests were so privileged in the old law, appears from this, that the people were commanded, in all their disputes about religion, to have recourse to them as the supreme judges ; and God assured them, that they should declare “ to the people, the truth of the judgment,” and commanded them “ to do whatsoever they shall say, that preside in the place which the Lord shall choose, and what they shall teach, according to his law, and to follow their sentence ; and not to decline to the right hand nor to the left ” ; and then concludes, “ But he that will be proud, and refuse to obey the commandment of the priest, who ministereth at that time to the Lord thy God, and the decree of the judge, that man shall die, and thou shalt take away the evil from Israel.

¹ In the constitution “ Pastor æternus ” 18th July 1870, Pius IX., with the approval of the sacred Council of the Vatican, solemnly teaches and defines as a dogma divinely revealed, the infallibility of the Roman Pontiffs. “ We teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed that the Roman Pontiff when he speaks *ex cathedra*,—that is, when in the discharge of office of pastor and doctor of all christians by virtue of his apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith and morals to be believed by the universal Church—by the divine assistance promised to him in Blessed Peter enjoys that infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer wished that his Church be provided for defining doctrine regarding faith or morals : and that therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiffs are irreformable of themselves and not from the consent of the Church.”

And all the people hearing it shall fear, that no one swell with pride," Deut. xvii. 8.

(2.) Because Jesus Christ said to St. Peter, whom he constituted the head of his church, "Thou art Peter (*that is, a rock*), and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against her," Matt. xvi. 18. From this text, as we have seen above, the infallibility of the church, in always teaching the true faith, is most solidly proved; and the grounds of this proof are given by Christ himself, when he says that the firmness and stability of the wise man's house, against all storms and tempests, winds and rains, was precisely owing to this; "for it was founded on a rock," Matt. vii. 25, that is, on a solid and immoveable foundation. Seeing then that St. Peter, as head of the church, is the rock, under Christ, on which she is built, and seeing that she is therefore infallible, because built on a rock, it necessarily follows that the foundation itself must be infallible also.

(3.) Because our Lord said also to St. Peter, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and thou being converted, confirm thy brethren," Luke xxii. 32. Here our Saviour shows the rage of Satan against all his followers; but, to disappoint him, Christ prayed for St. Peter, in particular, that his faith should not fail, and then commissions him, as the head, to confirm all the rest. Now, when our Saviour prayed to his Father to raise Lazarus from the dead, he said, "Father, I give thee thanks that thou hast heard me, and I knew that thou hearest me always," John xi. 41. If, therefore, the prayer of Christ was always heard by his Father, the above prayer, that the faith of Peter should not fail, was without doubt heard also. Whence it follows, that St. Peter, as head of the church, and consequently his successors in office, shall never fail in faith, nor teach false doctrine. Besides, our Saviour, in the very text itself, shows that this very prayer for Peter was heard by his Father; "I have prayed for thee," says he, "you have nothing to fear." In consequence of my prayer, you shall be confirmed in the faith, and when you are so, "strengthen your brethren, and confirm them also." Now, this very mission of confirming others, necessarily presupposes that the prayer of Christ was heard, by which Peter was confirmed in the faith himself. Neither does the subsequent fall of Peter, in denying his Master that very night, in the smallest degree, weaken this argument, but rather corroborates it; because it

shows that this promise of our Saviour, that Peter's faith should not fail, was made to him, not as a private person, but as the head of the church; and, therefore, to stand firm in all his successors; because, like all the other promises made to the church itself, it was not to take place till the coming of the Holy Ghost, who was sent on purpose to establish the church, and fulfil all the promises Christ made to her, and for that end to "abide with her for ever."

Q. 29. What proofs of the infallibility of the head of the church do they bring from *tradition*?

A. From the testimonies of the Holy Fathers, from the very earliest ages, which shows that this was the belief of the church in their days. Thus Origen, a celebrated writer in the third age, explaining the text, "Thou art Peter," &c., says, "It is true, though not said expressly, that neither against Peter, nor against the church, shall the gates of hell ever be able to prevail; for, if they could prevail against Peter, in whom the church is founded, they would also prevail against the church." St. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, in the second age, confutes all heresies, and all false doctrine, from the authority of the Holy See alone; "By declaring," says he, "the tradition and faith of that church which she received from the apostles; and has handed down to our days," Adv. Her. l. 3, cap. 5. And then adds, "To this church all must have recourse; for in her the apostolical tradition is always preserved. So St. Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, from the text, "Thou art Peter," concludes thus: "According to this promise, the apostolical church of Peter remains immaculate, free from all seduction and heretical circumvention." Great numbers of others are omitted for brevity's sake. Only we must add St. Augustine, who, when the Pelagian heresy was condemned by the Pope, says "The answer of Rome is come; the cause is ended," Sermon 3 de Verb. Apost.

Q. 30. What proofs are brought from *reason*?

A. The proofs from reason are founded on facts, and on principles received by all members of the church as Divine truths; for, (1.) There never was an instance of any Pope who proposed any doctrine to be believed by the Church, that was contrary to the sacred truths of faith revealed by Christ; for though there have been a few, and only a few Popes, that were bad men in their own practice; yet the most inveterate adversaries of the Catholic faith could never yet show that any Pope ever taught bad doctrine. (2.) Never yet did any Pope issue any decree concerning the truths of faith or sound morality, but it was

immediately received by the great body of the bishops, as containing the most solid and wholesome doctrine. (3.) Many different heresies that have arisen in different ages in the church, have been proscribed and condemned by the authority of the head of the church alone, both before the first general council was held, and since. (4.) In all controversies of moment that have arisen in the church about points of faith, the bishops have always had recourse to the head of the church, as the supreme tribunal for settling them; and, if the obstinacy of the party condemned by him made it advisable to have recourse to general councils, these councils never were found to do anything else, after the most mature examination, but to confirm the sentence already passed by the head. Besides, (5.) It is a truth received by all catholics, as Tournley, a French divine, who writes against the infallibility of the Holy See, expresses it, "That as the Roman and apostolical See is the bond of Catholic unity and of Catholic communion, no man can be held to be a Catholic unless he be joined with that See in the unity of faith and doctrine." And then, showing that this union is of two sorts, both in the external profession and the internal assent of the mind, he concludes, "To be united in both ways with the See of Rome, was always necessary, and looked upon in all ages as the most certain sign and proof of true faith and pure doctrine," tom. 1. De Eccl. a 6. This same truth is handed down from the very beginning in the writings of the holy Fathers, in every age, in the strongest terms. Thus St. Jerom, writing to the Bishop of Rome, says, "I am joined in communion with your Holiness, that is, with the chair of Peter: Upon that rock I know the church is built: Whoever eats the lamb out of this house is profane; whoever is not in his ark shall perish in the deluge.....whosoever gathers not with thee scatters; that is, he who is not of Christ belongs to Antichrist," Epist. 56, ad Damas. And St. Augustine, in his psalm against the Donatist schismatics, says to them, "Come, brethren, if you have a mind to be ingrafted in the vine. 'Tis a pity to see you lie in this manner lopped off from the stock. Reckon up the prelates in the very See of Peter; and in that order of Fathers see which has succeeded which. This is the rock over which, the proud gates of hell prevail not." (6.) The same celebrated Tournley acknowledges, that, if a division among the bishops should happen about any point of faith, "Without doubt," says he, "we must adhere to that part which is united with the head, which is always to be esteemed the better and the sounder part."

From all which, the infallibility of the head of the church naturally flows; for, if Christ obliges all to be united with him in faith and doctrine, he surely is obliged to preserve him from teaching false doctrine. From the command of Christ to hear his church under pain of being considered as heathens and publicans, it is justly inferred that the church can never go astray. This argument has an equal weight, when applied to the obligation of being united with the church's head in faith and doctrine.

Q. 31. These are very strong arguments indeed: but what proofs do the others bring for their opinion, that the head of the church is not infallible.

A. They bring not one text of scripture to prove it; but only show some objections against the above texts, by which they think that the infallibility of the head of the church is not proved by them; and all their other arguments from tradition are much of the same nature, and tend rather to invalidate the proofs taken from tradition, of his infallibility than directly to prove the contrary.

Q. 32. What consequences flow from these scripture truths concerning the church of Christ?

A. The consequences that necessarily flow from all that has been said in this and the preceding chapter, are chiefly these three: (1.) That the church of Christ is the sacred rule of faith, and the supreme judge of controversy, instituted and ordained by him to preserve inviolated, to the end of time, all those Divine truths which he revealed to man, and on the knowledge and belief of which the salvation of our souls depend; and that she is fully qualified by her Divine Spouse to discharge this office, so as to pronounce sentence upon *every point of revelation, clearly and distinctly*, and with *infallible certainty*. (2.) That this Church of Christ is one body, having one and the same faith, and governed by one and the same supreme church authority; so that whatever sect is divided from this body, by professing a different faith from her is no part of the church of Christ, but, at best, a human invention; and the faith they profess, as differing from hers, is all falsehood and error, arising from the father of falsehood and lies. (3.) That the church of Christ is the only road to salvation; both because it is only in her communion that the true faith of Christ can be found, "without which it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6; and because Christ has declared, that all who refuse to *hear her* are condemned by him *as heathens and publicans*, and

that those who despise her pastors, despise Christ himself and his Father who sent him.

Q. 33. Are there any other direct proofs from scripture to show that out of the church of Christ there is no salvation?

A. Yes, there are several; of which we shall only mention these two here: (1.) Christ, speaking of those who were not yet joined in the communion of his church, but whom he foreknew would make a good use of the graces he would give them for that purpose, says, "Other sheep I have who are not of this fold, them also I MUST BRING, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd," John x. 16; where he plainly declares, that all those of his sheep, who are not yet of his fold, must be brought into it, as a necessary condition of their salvation. (2.) In consequence of this settled disposition of the Divine Providence, no sooner did the apostles begin to preach the gospel, than immediately "the Lord added daily to the church such as should be saved," Acts ii. 47; which evidently shows that all who are not added to the church, are out of the way of salvation.

Q. 34. Is it lawful to have any communication in things of religion with those who are separated from the church of Christ?

A. By no means; all communication or fellowship in religious duties with those who are out of the church of Christ, is repeatedly and strictly forbidden in the word of God, both by Christ himself and by his holy apostles.

Q. 35. Among the many different sects of Christians who pretend to be the church of Christ, how can one distinguish which is really the true church?

A. By the marks laid down in the holy scriptures by which the true church of Christ can easily be distinguished from all separate congregations.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH.

Q. 1. What are the marks of the church of Christ laid down in the scriptures?

A. They are chiefly these four, as declared in the Nicene Creed, that she is *one, holy, catholic and apostolic*?

Q. 2. How does it appear that the church of Christ is *one*?

A. This we have seen in the preceding chapter, where the church is shown to be one body, of which Christ is the head, and that all her members are united to him in his body, by having all one and the same faith, being all in one communion, and subject to one supreme church authority. It also appears manifest, from the manner in which the church is constantly represented to us in scripture, for there she is called the kingdom of God "that shall never be destroyed, that shall not be delivered up to another people.....but shall stand for ever," Dan. ii. 44. She is also called, "the city of the living God..... the church of the first born," Heb. xii. 22, of which God says, by his prophet David, "The Lord hath chosen Sion, he hath chosen it for his dwelling. This is my rest for ever and ever, here will I dwell, for I have chosen it," Ps. cxxxix. 13. St. Paul also calls it "the house of God, the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth," 1 Tim. iii. 15. Seeing, therefore, that this kingdom, this city, this house of God, shall never be destroyed, but shall stand for ever, it necessarily follows that she can never be divided against herself, cannot possibly consist of jarring sects, or separate communions, contradicting and condemning one another, but must always be one body, and all its members must be perfectly united in one faith, and one communion; for Christ himself expressly declares, "That every kingdom divided against itself shall be made desolate; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand," Matt. xii. 25. St. Paul also shows this unity of the church, when he affirms, that "We being many, are ONE body in Christ," Rom. xii. 5; and that there is but "one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism," Eph. iv.; and Christ himself, in plain terms, says, that "there shall be one fold and one shepherd," John x. 16, which clearly shows that all the members of the church of Christ make up but *one body* having all *one faith*, and are governed by *one shepherd*.

Q. 3. How is it proved that the church of Christ is *holy*?

A. By holiness is understood that the church of Christ teaches nothing but what is holy and tends to holiness; that she proposes and enforces to her children the most powerful motives to induce them to become holy; that she affords them the most efficacious means to enable them to be holy, and that great numbers of her children, by following her instructions and using these means, do actually become holy. Now, that all this is essential to the true church of Christ is manifest from many texts of scripture: (1.) The prophet Isaiah, foretelling the

glories of the church, as the *way* or rule to conduct us to eternal happiness, says, "and a way shall be there, and it shall be called the holy way," Is. xxxv. 8; or, as the Protestant translation has it, "the way of holiness," and that "the unclean shall not pass over it," to show that it is both holy in itself and conduces to *holiness* all those that walk therein, and brings them at last to eternal happiness; for it is added, "they shall walk there that shall be delivered; and the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and shall come to Sion with praise; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall flee away," verses 9, 10. (2.) David also foretells the holiness of the church, when he says, "Holiness becomes thy house, O Lord, unto length of days," Ps. xcii. 5. (3.) St. Paul assures us, that Christ died for this very purpose, to purify his church and make her holy: "Christ loved the church," says he, "and delivered himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot nor wrinkle, nor any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish," Eph. v. 25. (4.) The same holy apostle also teaches, that Christ died for the sanctification of her members, and that he "gave himself FOR US, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and might cleanse to himself a people acceptable, a pursuer of good works," Titus ii. 14; and hence St. Peter says, "You are a chosen generation, a holy nation, a purchased people," 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Q. 4. How does it appear that the church of Christ is *Catholic*?

A. The word *Catholic* signifies *universal*, and means that the church of Christ is not confined to one corner of the world, or to one nation, as the Jewish church was, but is made for all nations and for all countries, so as to embrace the whole world; which is explained in the following manner, from the scripture: (1.) That the church was instituted by Jesus Christ to be diffused through all nations, and propagated to the utmost bounds of the earth. Thus he gave the pastors of the church express commission to carry the light of his gospel everywhere; "Go ye," says he, "and teach all nations," Matt. xxviii. 19. "Going into the world, preach the gospel to every creature," Mark xvi. 15. "And you shall be witnesses to me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and even to the uttermost parts of the earth," Acts i. 8. Yea, Christ himself assures us, that he suf-

ferred for this very end; "Thus it behoved Christ to suffer," said he to the eleven, "and to rise again from the dead the third day; and that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," Luke xxiv. 46. (2.) That the church being intended for his purpose, and being of this diffusive nature, must possess in herself those means and qualifications which are necessary for propagating the faith of Christ among all nations, and for converting all mankind to Christianity. These in the beginning were apostolical men, men burning with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, who leaving all to follow Christ, cheerfully sacrificed their own ease, and their life itself, and underwent all dangers and difficulties, in order to convert souls to Christ: men eminent for their holiness of life, and on whom God bestowed the gift of miracles, as proofs of their commission, and to confirm the truth of what they taught. Apostolical men of this kind then must never be wanting in the true church of Christ, as the means appointed by him for converting the world to his church. Thus the prophet Isaiah foretells the perpetuity of apostolical pastors in the church, and their continual zeal for the propagation of the gospel, in these words: "Upon my walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen all the day and all the night; they shall NEVER hold their peace. You that are mindful of the Lord, hold not your peace," Is. lxii. 6. And the success of their labours is thus described, "Thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night, that the strength of the Gentiles may be brought unto thee, and their kings may be brought," Is. lxii. 6. That the gift of miracles shall not be wanting to many of these apostolical labourers, Christ himself assures us; for when he gave the apostles and their successors the commission of teaching all nations, he immediately adds, "And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name, they shall cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay their hands upon the sick and they shall recover," Mark xvi. 17. And that this gift of miracles was chiefly promised to those who preached the word, in confirmation of what they taught, is plain, from the first performance of the promise; for it is immediately added, that, "they going forth preached everywhere, the Lord working withal, and confirming the word with signs that followed," verse 20. Upon another occasion, he says, with an oath, "Amen, amen, I say unto you,

he that believeth in me, the works that I do he shall do also, and greater than these shall he do, because I go to the Father," John xiv. 12. (3.) In consequence of this, the church must, from the beginning, be propagating the faith of Christ, and "from time to time, be converting nations, till at last she be spread over the whole universe; thus, "from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, my name is great among the Gentiles," Mal. i. 11. "All the ends of the earth shall remember, and shall be converted to the Lord, and all the kindreds of the Gentiles shall adore in his sight; for the kingdom is the Lord's, and he shall have dominion over the nations," Ps. xxi. 28. "Ask of me, and I will give thee the Gentiles for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," Ps. ii. 8. And of the kingdom of Christ, according to the Protestant translation, Isaiah says, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever," Is. ix. 7. And, in the New Testament, to omit many others, St. Paul says to the Colossians, "The truth of the gospel is come to you, as also it is in the whole world, and bringeth forth fruit and groweth," Col. i. 6. From all which it is evident, that to be Catholic or universal, is an essential quality of the church of Christ; that she is not, and cannot be confined to one corner or station, but is more or less spread over all the known world, and is the church of all nations.

Q. 5. How does it appear that the church of Christ is *Apostolical*?

A. By the word *Apostolical* is meant, that the church of Christ was founded by the apostles, and received the doctrine of her faith, the powers of the priesthood, and the mission of her pastors from them at the beginning, and that she must continue to the end of the world in the profession of the same faith and doctrine, and in a continual uninterrupted succession of the priesthood, and mission of her pastors so that the apostolical doctrine, priesthood, and mission, remain with her for ever. Now that the church shall always preserve the apostolical doctrine, we have seen above, when explaining the rule of faith; and that she shall never want a succession of true pastors, inheriting the same priestly powers and mission which she received at first from the apostles, is manifest from these considerations: (1.) Because true pastors, properly em-

powered, and lawfully sent, are a necessary part of the church and instituted by Jesus Christ, "for the perfecting the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ," Eph. iv. 12; consequently, such pastors will never be wanting in her, according to that of the prophet: "Upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen; all the day and all the night they shall never hold their peace," Is. lxii. 6. (2.) Because the scripture assures us, that "no man taketh the honour of the priesthood upon himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was," Heb. v. 4; much less can any man possess the powers of the priesthood, unless they be given to him by those who have power to give them. Thus St. Paul writes to Titus, "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou should'st set in order the things that are wanting and should'st ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee," Titus. i. 5. (3.) That none who have these priestly powers can lawfully exercise them, unless they be authorised and commissioned to do so by being lawfully sent. Thus the apostles received their mission from Christ, who said to them, "As my Father sent me I also send you," John xx. 21. In like manner they sent others to succeed themselves, with power also to send others after them, as St. Paul and Barnabas were sent by the pastors of the church at Antioch, and their doing so was declared to be the work of the Holy Ghost, "Then they, fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away. So they being sent by the Holy Ghost, went to Seleucia," Acts xiii. 3. St. Paul himself sent Titus, as above; that is, authorised and commissioned him to govern the church in Crete, and ordain pastors in it under him; and he says, in another place, "How can they preach unless they be sent?" Rom. x. 15. This, then, is the door by which the true pastors of Christ's flock enter, to wit, when lawfully ordained and sent, or commissioned by the chief pastors of the church. For all who take that office upon themselves, without entering by the door, are declared by Christ himself to be "thieves and robbers," John x. 1. From all which it is manifest, that, as true pastors are an essential part of the Church of Christ, and will never be wanting in her, therefore, there will be in the church a continued uninterrupted succession of transmission of the priestly powers and mission given at the beginning by Jesus Christ himself to his apostles, to the end of time.

Q. 6. Are there any other proofs to show that these four marks belong to the true church of Christ?

A. There are several other texts of scripture, besides those mentioned above, which show it; and it is also proved from the creeds: For the Apostles' Creed contains, as an article of Divine Faith, that the church is *holy and Catholic*. "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic church." And the Nicene Creed contains all the four; and I believe "one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church." Now the church of England affirms, in the eighth of her 39 articles, that these "creeds ought thoroughly to be received and believed, for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy scripture."

Q. 7. Are there any other marks of the Church of Christ besides these four contained in the creed?

A. There are also two others which deserve a particular notice, because they serve, in a most convincing manner, to distinguish the true church of Christ from all separate congregations; and these are, that she is *perpetual* in her duration and *infallible* in her doctrine. We have seen above, in the chapter on the rule of faith, that the church of Christ is infallible in what she teaches; that "the words once put in her mouth at the beginning shall never depart from her from henceforth and for ever"; that Jesus Christ is "with her pastors to the end of the world," and that the "Holy Ghost," the "Spirit of truth, abides with her for ever," to "teach her all truth." All which not only show her infallibility, but also her perpetual duration to the end of time. But, besides these, we have also many other testimonies of scripture, which directly prove that the church of Christ can never fail, but will continue in being upon earth, as long as the world endureth. Thus, Christ shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end, Luke i. 32. And this was foretold long before by the royal Prophet in these words, spoken by God himself: "Thy seed will I settle for ever, and I will build up thy throne unto generation and generation—I will make him my first-born high above the kings of the earth, and I will keep my mercy for him for ever, and my covenant faithful to him. And I will make his seed to endure for evermore; and his throne as the days of heaven. And if his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgment; if they profane my justice, and keep not my commandments, I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their sins with stripes; but my mercy I will not take away from him, nor will I suffer my truth to fail; neither will I profane my covenant, and the words that proceed from my mouth I will not make void. Once have I sworn by

my holiness : I will not lie unto David ; his seed shall endure for ever ; and his throne as the sun before me ; and as the moon perfect for ever, and a faithful witness in heaven," Ps. lxxxviii. 5, 28. Now, what this covenant is which God makes with Christ, the true David, we are told by the prophet Isaiah as follows : " And there shall come a Redeemer to Sion, and to them that return from iniquity in Jacob, saith the Lord. My spirit that is in thee, and my words that I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever," Isa. lix. 20. In which texts we see a most solemn promise of Almighty God, both that the seed of Christ, his holy church, shall continue for ever, and that she shall never fail to teach the true doctrine once put in her mouth. The prophet Daniel also declares the perpetuity of Christ's kingdom upon earth in these strong terms : " In the days of those kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people ; and it shall break to pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and itself shall stand for ever," Dan. ii. 44.

Q. 8. In which of all the Christian societies, which at present divide the Christian world, are all these marks of the church of Christ found ?

A. The smallest attention will immediately show that they are all to be found in the Catholic church, and in no other society of Christians whatsoever, and, therefore, that she alone is the true church of Christ : for,

(1.) The Catholic church is *one* body, whose members are all united together in one and the same faith, in being all of the same communion, and governed by one and the same supreme authority. And this is the more to be remarked, when we consider, that, though those of her communion be exceeding numerous, and spread throughout the whole known world, and differ from one another almost in every thing else, in their country, in their language, in their customs, in their government, and in their worldly interests, yet they are all most perfectly united in religion : they everywhere believe the same divine truths, profess the same faith, teach the same doctrine, preach the same gospel ; so that, wherever any one of that church goes, throughout the whole world, he always finds himself at home with those of that communion, as to religion. But, on the other hand, no sooner does any sect break off from that

church, and several have done so in all preceding ages, then immediately the curse of division seems to be entailed upon them. We need only consider those of our own day, in the followers of Luther and Calvin, who are divided and subdivided without end, and every day are splitting more and more, in so much that, even in those who are of the same country, under the same government, using the same language, having the same customs, and the same common interest, yea, very often in the same family, you will scarce find half a dozen that believe the same in all points of religion. The different sects among them mutually condemn one another, and refuse to join in communion; and those who live under the same denomination seldom or never have in all points one common faith. No wonder; the Catholic church has in its own bosom the principle of union among all its members; a fixed, invariable, and infallible rule, instituted by the Son of God to bind it together; whereas the very principle upon which all separate sects proceed, leaving every one at liberty to judge according to his own fancy, without any fixed ground to stand open, must necessarily lead them to endless divisions.

Neither do they differ in matters of small importance only, but in tenets which they themselves hold to be of the greatest consequence to Christianity: such as church government, the blessed Eucharist, free-will, and the like; so that, according to some, it is a divine truth, that Jesus Christ instituted bishops, priests, and deacons, with due subordination, to govern his church; but, according to others, that is a falsehood and an error; for they hold it of divine truth, that Jesus Christ put all the pastors of the church upon a perfect equality. According to some, none have power to preach the word, and administer the sacraments, but such as are lawfully ordained by a bishop, who has received his authority by a continual uninterrupted succession from Christ and his apostles. According to others, any one that takes it into his head to become a minister, may preach the word, and administer the sacraments as lawfully, and as validly, as any bishop in England. The Lutherans teach as a divine truth, that the true body and blood of Christ are really and substantially present in the blessed Eucharist, along with the bread and wine. The Calvinists reject this as a false doctrine, and hold, that there is nothing in the holy Eucharist but mere bread and wine, as a figure of the body and blood of Christ; and so of other articles. And these different sects have often carried their differences about such matters to

such a height, as to excommunicate and anathematize each other, and scarce look upon one another as Christians. Thus Luther, the great apostle of the Reformation, anathematized Zuinglius, for denying the real presence, and declared him to be totally possessed by Satan on that account. Several attempts were made by these jarring sects to bring about a re-union among themselves, and conferences were frequently held for that end by deputies; but all to no purpose; however they pretended to agree in words, every one followed his own way. Their worldly interest was the mainspring of their wanting an agreement, as they were afraid, when disunited, of being overpowered by those Catholic states against which they had rebelled; and therefore, their agreement was only in appearance. For whenever that fear was over, they divided as much as before, and have still continued to divide and subdivide more and more to this day. Ashamed, however, of the contemptible figure they make on this account, when compared with the unity of the Catholic church, the modern shift they have fallen upon, is the vain pretence, that all their different parties, though holding such opposite and contradictory faiths, make up but one church of Christ; as if Christ had revealed one thing to one party, and the very reverse to another, and both their opposite tenets were equally the truths of God! There is, indeed, one point, and only one, in which they all agree, and that is, their inveterate aversion and opposition to the Catholic church; for, as Herod and Pilate, though enemies, combined together against the Lord and against his Christ; so all the various sects that ever separated from the spouse of Christ, however much they disagree among themselves, have never failed to join together in one, in opposition to her, and to combine, as much as in them lay, to her destruction.

(2.) With regard to *holiness*: This shines forth in the Catholic church in the most eminent degree. The whole body of her doctrine hangs together with such most perfect symmetry, like the stones in the arch of a bridge, every part supporting and supported by each other, that the smallest flaw or shadow of contradiction can never be found in it. An evident sign of its truth! And every article of her faith is so holy in itself, and so conducive to true holiness, that she challenges her greatest adversaries to show the smallest stain in any part of what she really teaches; and the most convincing proof of their being unable to do so is, that, not daring to attack her true doctrine, they, by calumny and misrepresentation, lay things

to her charge which she detests and condemns, and then fight against phantoms of their own raising. As for holy persons, she justly glories in having great numbers of such in her communion, whose eminent virtues have been the admiration of all who knew them, and have been frequently attested by God by innumerable miracles wrought through their means, and at their intercession. On the other hand, no sooner did any sects break off from her communion, and set up a separate faith, than evident contradictions and falsehoods appeared in their tenets. Many of them tended to the subversion of moral virtue, or were injurious to the divinity ; and as for holiness of life among their members, attested by miracles, they never so much as pretend to it : Nay, the general cry among them is to disclaim and deny all miracles whatsoever, since the primitive ages, conscious of their own inability to procure them.

(3.) The Catholic church *alone* possesses, as her undivided property, the glorious character of *Catholic*. In her communion *alone* great numbers of holy apostolical men have abounded, in all ages, who leaving all they possessed, or could expect in this world, and burning with zeal for the conversion of souls to God, have dedicated themselves entirely to carry the light of the gospel to those who “sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,” and to bring heathen nations to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. In consequence of this, from the very beginning, she has always been extending the sacred standard of the gospel : and by her *alone* were all the Heathen nations converted, that have as yet been ever brought to the Christian faith ; and though, in different ages, several who had enjoyed the happiness of being in her communion, have, through the unsearchable judgments of God, been cut off from it ; yet scarce did this ever happen, but other nations, in much greater numbers were called in their place to her bosom. Witness the great defection in these latter ages, which scarce began, when the discovery of the East and West Indies opened a door to carry the gospel to these parts, where numbers without number, were converted to her faith ; in so much, that at present she is spread over the whole known world. In many flourishing countries, no other religion is known, and in others where a different religion is established, great numbers of her communion are generally to be found ; by all which, the very name of *Catholic* is so appropriated to her, that no other sect pretends to assume it. On the other hand, all the various sects which are separated from her, are seldom to be found entire through-

out one whole nation ; they are generally confined to one province or corner, they take particular names from their founders, or tenets, or some particular circumstances regarding them ; and, in several parts of Christendom, their very names are unknown and unheard of.

(4.) The Catholic church *alone* is truly *apostolical*, not only in the continual preservation of the sacred doctrine delivered by the apostles to her at the beginning, which, by the very rule of her faith, can never be altered ; but also in the constant uninterrupted succession of lawful pastors, with all the sacred powers of the priesthood and mission, derived from the same source. This is so palpable a truth, that the church of England (which alone, among the modern religions that have been separated from the old way, claims the power of ordination) acknowledges, that whatever she has of the priestly powers, she received from the Roman Catholic church, in which alone they have been transmitted to the present time, without interruption, from the apostles. It is true, indeed, that the church of England claims the power of holy orders in her ministers, but this is at best but a very dubious point, and absolutely denied by the Catholic church. As for all the other different sects, they do not so much as pretend to it ; and their first beginners, conscious of their own total want of the priestly powers, endeavour to turn the whole into ridicule, rejecting the very name of *Priest* from their communion, and taking upon themselves an authority to which they could show no title ; much less could they derive their assumed authority from the apostles. They paid no regard to the words of St. Paul, "How shall they preach unless they be sent ?" Rom. x. 15 ; but taking this upon them out of their own head, they classed themselves with those false prophets of whom Almighty God complains, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran ; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied," Jer. xxiii. 21. They did not enter by the door appointed by Jesus Christ, and used by the apostles ; what then can they say, to show they are not the thieves and robbers, mentioned in St. John x. 1, instead of true pastors ?

(5.) The Catholic church *alone* has had a perpetual being from the times of the apostles to this present day, without the smallest alteration or innovation of her faith, in any one article of revealed truths. Her most inveterate adversaries are forced to acknowledge her existence for many ages before the Reformation ; but they could never possibly show any period

when she first began to be what she now is. Some carrying her up to the fifth, fourth, third, or second ages; and some allowing her to have begun to put on the form she now has even in the time of the apostles. But she justly laughs at all their jarring systems against her; and, as she certainly was the true church of Christ, when St. Paul wrote his epistle to the faithful of the city of Rome, and declared, that "their faith was spoken of through the whole world," Rom. i. 8, so she holds that she has never ceased to be so since that time. The very rule of faith she follows, the promises of Jesus Christ, the history of all ages, the writings of the great lights of Christianity, commonly called the *Holy Fathers*, in every age of the church, which remain to this day, the numbers of heresies which have always broke off from her, and the fruitless attempts of her adversaries to show the contrary, convincingly prove that she is still the same; and that her faith has never varied. On the other hand, all the separate communions that ever have been, or are at present in the Christian world, can never carry up their existence beyond a certain period long after the apostles. They all went out from the great body of Christians that was before them, and had been from the beginning. Those who began in the earlier ages of the church, are long since sunk into oblivion, and have now no being at all. Those of more modern date were many ages after Christ, before they were so much as heard of in the world, and their authors, separation, and particular tenets, the opposition they met, their subsequent divisions, and subdivisions, among themselves, are all recorded in the histories of their times, and show how far they all are from having even the shadow of any claim or pretence to a perpetual existence from the times of Christ and his apostles.

(6.) As for infallibility in preserving the sacred truths of faith once delivered to the saints, the Catholic church is the only society of Christians which not only lays claim to it, but has always exercised it, and acted, upon all occasions, as alone possessing that high prerogative. Whereas, all others, separated from her communion, are forced not only to reject all claim to it themselves, but even to deny that Christ left that privilege to his church; and they make their separation upon no other pretence, but that the church before them had actually fallen into errors. So that the very ground-work of their defection is, that the gates of hell have prevailed against the church of Christ; that the "words once put in her mouth," have gone

out of her mouth; that "Jesus Christ has not continued with her pastors, in teaching all nations"; that the "Spirit of truth has failed to teach her all truth"; that she is no more "the pillar and ground of truth": in a word, that God Almighty has abandoned his church, and broken his covenant with her, and failed to fulfil all the sacred promises he made her. While they thus deny infallibility to the church of Christ, they reject, indeed, all claim to it themselves; but tell us forsooth, that we must take their fallible word for it, and, in opposition to all God's sacred promises, must believe, because they say so, that the church of Christ has fallen even into damnable errors, and that they are sent to reform her.

Thus it appears, that all the marks and characters of the true church of Christ are to be found in the Catholic church, and in her *alone*: therefore, we justly conclude, that she *alone* is the true church of Christ, the house of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth, out of whose communion there is no ordinary possibility of salvation; and, consequently, that from her we are to receive the true faith of Christ, that is, the knowledge of those great truths of eternity which he revealed to the world, and the belief of which, he requires of all, as an essential condition of salvation.

Q. 9. Is this true faith, or the belief of those sacred truths which Christ revealed, sufficient alone to save us?

A. By no means; it is, indeed, one condition, and a most necessary one, being the foundation of all other duties; but it is not the only condition. In order to obtain salvation, Christ absolutely requires not only that we believe what he has taught, but also that we obey what he has commanded in his holy law. Thus he expressly says, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," Matt. xix. 17; and St. Paul assures us, that "Christ is become the cause of eternal salvation to all that obey him," Heb. v. 9.

Q. 10. On what must our obedience be grounded?

A. On charity, or the love of God, which must be the motive of our obedience, according to that of our Saviour, "If you love me, keep my commandments," John xiv. 15; and hence St. Paul declares, that in Christ Jesus nothing will avail us without these two essential conditions of *faith* and *love* that shows itself by works: "In Christ Jesus," says he, "neither circumcision, availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith that works by charity," or love, Gal. v. 6. Again he says, "Though I should have all faith, so that I could

remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. 2. St. James also declares, that "faith without works is dead, being alone," and that, "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," Jam. ii. 17, 24. All which clearly shows that these two conditions, *faith and obedience through love*, are both expressly required by Almighty God as conditions of salvation; and these two include the whole sum of our duties.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE LAW OF GOD IN GENERAL.

Q. 1. WHAT is the law of God?

A. It is the manifestation of his will to men, declaring what he requires of them to do and to avoid, in order to please him and save their own souls.

Q. 2. In what light ought we to consider the law of God?

A. We ought to consider it, (1.) As our *rule and guide*, given to direct us in our pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world, and to conduct us to true happiness both here and hereafter. (2.) As our *judge*, because it is by this law that we will be judged at the last day, and be either rewarded with eternal happiness, or condemned to eternal misery, according as we have obeyed this law, or transgressed it in our present life.

Q. 3. When did God give his law to man?

A. At three different times; *first*, at the creation, by what is called *the light of nature*, or of *reason*; by which he imprinted in the heart of man the sense of *right* and *wrong*, and knowledge of *good* and *evil*, and gave him that inward monitor his *conscience*, moving him to do the one and avoid the other. By the sin of Adam, and the subsequent corruption of our nature, this light was greatly diminished; and, as the world advanced in years, the wickedness of man becoming greater and greater, it was still more and more darkened, so as in the generality of mankind to be almost extinguished; for which reason, when the posterity of Abraham were grown into a great nation, and God took them under his particular protection, to preserve them from the general corruption, he made a *second* publication of his law

to them, comprising the whole in Ten Commands, which he wrote on two tables of stone, and gave them for their rule and direction. It continued to be so for many years; but their carnal hearts, in process of time, getting the better of their duty, they very much corrupted the sense and meaning of the law, by the interpretations they put upon it; for, as the law, itself was given in few words, and contained many duties which were not clearly expressed in it, they explained it, with regard to these duties, in the way most agreeable to their own inclinations; and, therefore, when Jesus Christ came into the world, he published it a *third* time in his gospel, with the full explication of its true sense and meaning; and established it on such a solid foundation in his church, that it shall continue now uncorrupted among his followers to the end of the world as the sum of all their duties, and the guide to conduct them to eternal happiness.

Q. 4. Are we strictly obliged to obey the law of God and his gospel?

A. Undoubtedly we are; because, (1.) God, who is the law-giver, is our sovereign Lord and Master, who created us out of nothing, and gave us all we are or all we have, who has the most absolute dominion over us, and can do with us whatever he pleases; consequently, we are wholly at his disposal, and, therefore, are strictly obliged to do whatever he requires of us. (2.) We have seen above, that he has made our obedience to his law one essential condition of our salvation; and, consequently, if we refuse this obedience, we shall be punished with eternal misery. (3.) Because the scripture assures us, that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with the angels of his power, in a flame of fire, yielding vengeance to them who know not God, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction," 2 Thes. i. 7.

Q. 5. Are we obliged to obey the whole law in order to be saved?

A. We are; for the holy scripture says, "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, but offend in one point, is become guilty of all," Jam. ii. 10, that is, he becomes a transgressor of the law in such a manner, that the observing of all the other points will not avail him to salvation.

Q. 6. Are we able, by the strength of nature alone to keep the commands of God?

A. By our own natural strength alone, without the help of

God's grace, we are not able to keep the commands, nor indeed so much as to think a good thought towards our salvation. Thus the scriptures declare, "that we are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God," 2 Cor. iii. 5. "And no man can say, the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. xii. 3, that is, no man can say it, so as to be conducive to his salvation. And our Saviour himself, to show our total inability of doing any good of ourselves, and without his divine assistance, says, "Without me you can do nothing," John xv. 5; and he confirms the same truth by the similitude of a vine, and its branches, saying, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in me," verse 4.

Q. 7. Are we able to keep the commands by the help of God's grace?

A. Yes, we are; and God, who requires us to keep his commands, is never wanting on his part to give us sufficient grace for that purpose. The truth of this is shown from several reasons, (1.) The scriptures are full of the warmest exhortations to all to keep the commandments, which certainly would be unbecoming the divine wisdom, if it were impossible to keep them with the help of God's grace, or if that grace were ever refused us. (2.) God everywhere obliges man to keep his commandments, under pain of eternal punishment. Now, it is totally inconsistent with his justice, and makes God a cruel tyrant, to say he would punish us for breaking his commands, if it were impossible for us to keep them. (3.) We read of several in the scripture who actually did keep them perfectly, and are highly praised on that account, such as Abraham and Job, and particularly the parents of St. John Baptist, of whom the scripture says, that "they were both just before God, walking in ALL THE COMMANDMENTS and justifications of the Lord without blame," Luke i. 6. (4.) God himself declares in the very first command, that he "shews mercy to thousands of those that love him and keep his commandments," Ex. xx. 6. (5.) And St. Paul assures us, that God is never wanting on his part to give us all necessary assistance to keep them, saying "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear, but will make also, with the temptation issue," (that is, *a way to escape*) "that you may be able to bear it," 1 Cor. x. 13.

Q. 8. How are the ten commandments divided?

A. Into two tables: Of which the first consists of three

commands, and contains all the duties we owe to God ; and the second contains the other seven, in which are laid down all the duties we owe to our neighbours and to ourselves.

Q. 9. Why do you say the first table contains only three commands ?

A. Because, though some people divide the first command into two, and by this means make four in the first table ; yet in reality it is only one and the same ; for when God says, "Thou shalt have no other Gods but me," he plainly forbids to worship any other being whatsoever *as God*, but himself alone ; and when afterwards he says, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven thing, &c. Thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them : for I am the Lord thy God," he only explains in particular what he had before declared in general terms, and forbids the worship of idols as gods.

Q. 10. But what need was there for this particular explanation ?

A. Because, as the worship of idols was then raging in the world, and the people of Israel were exceeding prone to this vice, as appears from their whole history, Almighty God thought it proper, by the above explanation adjoining to their law, to caution them in particular against this so detestable a breach of it.

Q. 11. How then do you make out all the ten commands, if this be joined in one ?

A. Those who divide this first command into two, are obliged to join the two last into one ; for, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife," and "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods," which they join in one, are manifestly two distinct commands.

Q. 12. How can this be shown ?

A. Because they forbid the internal acts of two different and distinct sins ; the one a sin of *lust*, the other a sin of *injustice* ; and, as the external acts of these sins are forbidden by two distinct commands, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," and "Thou shalt not steal," because they are two distinct sins ; so the inward acts, or desires of these vices, being equally two distinct sins, equally require to be forbidden by two distinct commands.

CHAPTER XV.

OF THE COMMANDS OF THE CHURCH.

Q. 1. What do you mean by the commands of the church ?

A. The commands of the church, in general, signify all those laws, rules, and regulations, which the pastors of the church have made for the *perfecting of the saints*, for *the work of the ministry*, and for *the edification of the body of Christ* ; but what is meant in particular by the commands or precepts of the church, are six general laws, which are of more eminent note in the church, both on account of their antiquity, having been observed, as to their substance, from the very first ages, and on account also of their universality, as obliging every member of the church, without exception, whom they concern.

Q. 2. Are the people obliged, in conscience, to obey the laws of the church ?

A. We have seen this obligation proved at large in the chapter on the church, (which see), and hence it is the constant doctrine of the church, that all her children are obliged in conscience to obey her commands ; that it is always a sin wilfully to transgress them, and a mortal sin if it be done in a matter of moment or out of contempt. And the council of Trent, one of the greatest and most respectable general councils that have been in the church, condemns, and pronounces *anathema* upon all those who shall teach the contrary. This obligation will appear still more fully if we consider the light in which the sacred scripture considers these commands.

Q. 3. In what light does the scripture consider the commands of the pastors of the church ?

A. It considers them as the commands of God himself, more than as the commands of men. For, (1.) Christ declares to the pastors of the church, "He that hears you hears me" ; consequently, they are the ministers of Christ, by whom he discovers his will to his people. (2.) When the apostles and other pastors, in the council of Jerusalem, gave orders to abstain from "blood, and things strangled," they began their decree in this manner : "It has seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things," Acts. xv. 28 ; where they plainly affirm that this command of abstinence was a command of the Holy Ghost, though published by this decree of the pastors of the church. (3.) St.

Paul also, writing to the Thessalonians concerning the commands he had laid upon them, says, "You know what precepts I have given you by the Lord Jesus"; and a little after he adds, "Therefore, he that despises these things, despiseth not man, but God, who also hath given his Holy Spirit in us," 1 Thess. iv. 2, 8; alluding to what our saviour said, "he that despises you despises me." (4.) Our Saviour also declares to the pastors of the church, in the persons of his apostles, "whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," Matt. xviii. 28; consequently, when the pastors of the church make laws to the Christian people, and bind them, by their commands, to do what they judge necessary for "the edification of the body of Christ," the people are bound in heaven to obey these commands, as being ratified and confirmed by God himself. (5.) When we consider the six principal commands of the church in particular, we shall see that the duties prescribed by them, are duties which God himself expressly demands from us, and that all the part the church has in them, is only to determine the particular time, place, or manner in which we ought to practice them, lest, if left to ourselves, we should neglect them entirely.

SECTION I.—*Of the first Command of the Church.*

Q. 4. What is the first command of the church?

A. *To hear Mass on Sundays and Holidays and to rest from servile work.*

Q. 5. What is the end and design of this command?

A. To direct us in the manner in which we ought to employ the time set apart for the service of God.

Q. 6. Does God himself require that we should set apart some of our time to be wholly dedicated to his service?

A. He does; and has expressly commanded one day in seven to be allotted for that purpose. Besides which, under the old law, he also ordained six great solemnities to be kept holy throughout the year, in memory of the great temporal favours he had bestowed upon his people, as is related at large in the twenty-third chapter of Leviticus, and in the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth chapters of the book of Numbers; all which he commanded to be kept with the same strictness as the Sabbath itself, and two of them lasted for eight days together.

Q. 7. Are these holidays of God's appointment under the old law, binding upon Christians under the gospel?

A. By no means: They were instituted in memory of the

particular temporal benefits bestowed on the people of Israel, and were binding on them alone ; and, like the rest of the exterior of their religion, which was all a figure of the good things to come under the gospel, they were figures of the Christian holidays, which were to be ordained by the church of Christ, in memory of the spiritual benefits bestowed by him on Christians, and therefore were fulfilled and done away when the Christian religion was established.

Q. 8. By whom are the Christian holidays appointed ?

A. By the church of Christ ; which also, by the authority and power given her by her Divine Spouse, ordained the Sunday, or first day of the week, to be kept holy, instead of Saturday, or the seventh day, which was ordained to be kept holy among the Jews by God himself.

Q. 9. For what end does the church appoint holidays ?

A. For the same ends for which the seventh day, and the holidays of the old law, were instituted by God himself, whose example in this she follows. These ends are, (1.) To dedicate a portion of our time to the service of God alone, to whom the whole belongs. (2.) To have leisure from our worldly affairs to apply ourselves more earnestly to the concerns of our souls. God takes to himself the glory of having these days dedicated to his service, as is most due ; but he gives all the profit to us. (3.) To keep up the continual remembrance of the great spiritual benefits we have received from God in the different mysteries of our redemption, and to adore and thank God for them ; as we would be very apt to forget them entirely, were it not for the return of these holy solemnities. (4.) To honour God in his holy saints, and to be encouraged by their example, and helped by their prayers, to live a life of virtue and piety. (5.) That those who have little or no leisure on other days, on account of the duties of their state of life, to be instructed in their religion, may have time, on these holidays, for so necessary an employment.

Q. 10. In what manner does the church command these holidays to be kept ?

A. In the same manner as the Sundays ; by abstaining from all unnecessary servile works, and employing such a portion of the day in the exercises of piety and devotion, that we may be truly said to keep *the day* holy, and particularly to assist at the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

Q. 11. Why are the holidays commanded to be kept the same way as Sundays ?

A. Because (1.) the intention of instituting both Sundays and holidays is the same. (2.) God commanded the holidays of the old law to be kept in the same way as the Sabbath ; and as these were only figures of the Sundays and holidays of the new law, if this was done in the figure, where only temporal benefits were commemorated, much more ought it to be done in the substance, which regards the great spiritual benefits of our redemption.

Q. 12. Why is hearing Mass only, and no other particular exercise of piety commanded on Sundays and holidays ?

A. We are commanded, both by the law of God and the law of his church, to keep these days holy ; but as all the various exercises of piety are not always fit for every one ; therefore it is left to each one's own devotion, to spend these days in such exercises as may be most proper for himself. Yet, as the assisting at the holy sacrifice of Mass is the duty of all, especially upon these days ; therefore, the church obliges all her children, by an express command, to do so. Not as if this alone were enough to keep the day holy, but that this must be done by all as an essential duty of the day ; other pious exercises being left to each one's devotion.

Q. 13. Would it be a mortal sin to work upon holidays ?

A. It would, except necessity, or the small quantity of the work done, excused from the guilt of a grievous sin ; because it would be a transgression of the laws of the church of Christ, whom he commands us to obey, under pain of being condemned as Heathens and publicans. It would also be a profanation of those sacred days, set apart for the service of the Almighty, by doing what is expressly forbid to be done upon them.

Q. 14. Would it be a mortal sin to omit hearing Mass on a Sunday or a holiday ?

A. Most certainly, unless we were hindered by a just necessity ; for it would be a transgression of the law, a disobedience to the highest spiritual authority upon earth, and a depriving God of that homage which we are commanded to give him on these sacred days.

Q. 15. What is the proper idea of this first precept of the church ?

A. It is this, that Almighty God absolutely requires in general some certain portions of our time to be set apart for his service, and the concerns of our souls : that he has himself appointed one day in seven to be allotted for that purpose, and has left power to his church to determine others as circum-

stances may require; and that the church, in virtue of this power, having appointed several holidays, we ought to consider them as determinations of the general law of God himself, of giving a portion of our time to him.

Q. 16. But is it not a great loss to the people to want their work on these days?

A. In answer to this, let us consider, (1.) Is it not an infinitely greater loss for their souls, to lose the grace and favour of God, by robbing him of that portion of their time which he demands from them, and by bringing upon themselves the guilt of mortal sin? (2.) How many days and hours do they throw away in idleness and sinful occupations without any regret? Is it not a shame for Christians to throw away their time, with pleasure, when serving the devil, and ruining their souls; and only then to regret it when spent in the service of God, and the concerns of salvation? (3.) Has not God a thousand ways to make up that loss, by giving a blessing to their affairs, and making things proceed prosperously with them? And is it not a criminal distrust in his Providence, to imagine he would let us be hurt in our affairs, by our attention to his service; especially when he has often promised, in his holy scriptures, to bless our temporal affairs, if we be careful to sanctify the days set apart for his service; and has expressly said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his justice, and all these things shall be added to you," Matt. vi. 33. (4.) Has he not often threatened, in his holy scriptures, to punish us in our temporal affairs, if we profane his holy days? Has he not numberless ways to put these threats into execution, unknown to us? And will not this be an infinitely greater loss than that of a day's work? Where then is our faith, if we be deterred from our duty by such unchristian fears?

SECTION II.—*Of the Second Command of the Church.*

Q. 17. What is the second command of the church?

A. *To fast during the time of Lent, on Ember days and Vigils, and to abstain from flesh on Fridays and Saturdays.*

Q. 18. What is the end and design of this command?

A. It is to direct us in the times and manner in which we are to perform the duty of fasting, which God, by a general command, lays upon all.

Q. 19. What is meant by fasting?

A. The not taking our usual food, either as to the quality or

quantity of it. The not taking our usual food as to the quality, or the abstaining from certain kinds of food, is properly called *abstinence*; the diminishing the usual quantity of our food, is properly called *fasting*; though fasting, in general, always includes both.

Q. 20. Is it agreeable to the spirit of religion, and to the word of God, that we sometimes abstain from certain kinds of food, for some good end?

A. Nothing can be more so; for (1.) The very first command that God laid on man, and the only command he laid upon him in the state of innocence, was a command of abstinence, forbidding our first parents to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge in the garden of Paradise. (2.) When Noah came out of the Ark, God gave him leave to eat animal food; but expressly commanded him to abstain "from flesh with blood," Gen. ix. 4. (3.) When God brought his people out of Egypt, he laid a more strict command upon them, of abstaining from leavened bread, during the seven days of the solemnity of the Passover. He even forbade them to have it in their houses, under pain of death. See Exod. xii. 15. (4.) He commanded his priests, under pain of death, to abstain from wine and all strong drink, when they went to serve in the tabernacle. Lev. x. 9. (5.) He laid a strict command on all his people, to observe a perpetual abstinence from several of the most delicate kinds of animal food; and ordered them to look upon all these forbidden creatures as unclean, and an abomination, declaring that the eating of them would defile their souls, and render them unclean; "Do not defile your souls," says he, after showing what they should abstain from, "nor touch ought thereof; for I am the Lord your God; be holy because I am holy," Lev. xi. 43. (6.) He commanded them, under pain of death, to abstain from eating the blood of any animal. Lev. vii. 26. (7.) The Nazarites were commanded to abstain from wine and every thing that belongs to or comes from the grape, during all the time of their sanctification, Num. vi. 2, 3. And the mother of Sampson was ordered to abstain from wine, and all intoxicating liquors, during the time she was with child of him; because he was to be a Nazarite from his mother's womb, Judg. xiii. 7. From all which, it is manifest, that abstinence from particular foods, especially such as are more agreeable to flesh and blood, and more nourishing to the body, whether continually, or for a time, is most agreeable to religion, and to the word of God; and that when done in obedience to proper authority, and for a

good end, it contributes to sanctify the soul, and unite us to God.

Q. 21. Did the people of God, in the old law, observe exactly this command of abstinence ?

A. To the shame and confusion of Christians now-a-days, who are so negligent in this duty, the servants of God, in the old law, observed it with such exactness, that they choose rather to die, upon occasion, than to break it. Thus Eleazar, a venerable old man, when a Heathen King wanted him to eat forbidden meat, and "he was pressed to open his mouth to eat swine's flesh, he, choosing rather a glorious death than a hateful life, went forward, of his own accord, to the torment.....and when he was ready to die with the stripes, he groaned, and said, O Lord, who hast the holy knowledge, thou knowest manifestly, that, whereas I might be delivered from death, I suffer grievous pains in body ; but in soul I am well content to suffer these things, because I fear thee, 2 Mach. vi. 18, 30. After him seven brothers, with their mother, suffered most cruel torments, and cheerfully went to death for the same cause, the mother herself exhorting them to constancy, as is related in the following chapter. In like manner, Daniel and his companions, in their captivity, chose rather to live upon pottage and water, than "be defiled with the king's table, and with the wine which he drank," Dan. i. 8, 12 ; contrary to the abstinence which their religion required from them. And the same holy prophet, when he wanted to obtain understanding from God, had recourse to voluntary abstinence from things not forbidden by the law, but pleasing to flesh and blood, as a most powerful means to get his petition granted. "In those days," says he, "I Daniel, mourned the days of three weeks ; I ate no pleasant bread, and neither flesh nor wine entered my mouth ; neither was I anointed with ointment till the days of three weeks were accomplished," Dan. x 2. And this voluntary abstinence was so agreeable to God, that at the end of three weeks, an angel was sent from heaven to tell him all he desired to know, who said to him, "From the first day that thou didst set thy heart to understand, to afflict thyself in the sight of thy God, thy words have been heard, and I am come for thy words," verse 12. Could any thing more evidently show the great advantage of abstinence, and how agreeable it is in the sight of God ?

Q. 22. Is there any authority for practising abstinence in the New Testament.

A. There is the strongest authority for it, from the apostles

themselves; for they being met in council at Jerusalem, gave out an express command to the new converted Gentiles, "to abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled," Acts. xv. 29. And declared at the same time this command was dictated by the Holy Ghost.

Q. 23. But does not St. Paul say, "that it is the doctrine of devils to forbid to marry, and to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving"? 1 Tim. iv. 3.

A. Certainly, St. Paul cannot mean that the apostles taught the doctrine of devils, when they commanded "to abstain from blood and things strangled," Acts. xv. 29. But what St. Paul condemns, is the doctrine of those heretics, who taught that flesh and wine were evil in themselves, because not created by the true God, but by an evil principle; and, therefore, in confutation of these heretics, he adds, that "every creature of God is good, and nothing to be rejected that is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God, and by prayer," 1 Tim. iv. 4. These heretics were the Manicheans foretold here by the apostle, and who, when they afterwards appeared, were loudly condemned by the church for this their impious doctrine; but it is evident this doctrine has nothing to do with abstaining from some of the good creatures of God, which are more pleasing to our corrupt natures, from the motive of obedience, or of self-denial and mortification, at particular penitential times.

Q. 24. What then does St. Paul mean when he says, "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, eat, asking no questions for conscience's sake"? 1 Cor. x. 25.

A. He is there speaking of those who, from a scruple of conscience, were afraid of eating meat that had been offered to idols. Against this he argues strongly in the eighth chapter; and resuming it here, he concludes, that whatever is publicly sold in the shambles, they should buy and eat, without asking any questions or troubling their minds whether it had been offered to idols or not. But it is manifest, that this has nothing to do with abstaining from particular meats, at a time, for a good end.

Q. 25. Is there any command of God obliging us to fast?

A. There is a general command obliging all to practice of fasting; but without prescribing the particular times or manner of doing it.

Q. 26. How does this command appear from scripture?

A. In several ways; (1.) God expressly requires fasting, as a condition with which our repentance ought to be accompanied, in order to please him. "Be converted to me," says he, "with your whole heart, in fasting and in weeping and in mourning," Joel ii. 21. (2.) Our Saviour assures us, that after his ascension, his followers should fast: "The days will come," says he, "when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then they shall fast," Matth. ix. 15. (3.) He also gives us rules about the intention with which we ought to fast, and promises a reward for doing it. "When thou fastest," says he, "anoint thy head and wash thy face, that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret, and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee," Matth. vi. 17. (4.) St. Paul requires fasting, among other virtues, as necessary to make us true servants of God; and exhorts us to it, "Let us in all things," says he, "exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience.....in labours, in watchings, in fastings," 2 Cor. vi. 4.

Q. 27. Do we find that the servants of God practised fasting?

A. Through the whole history of religion, we find that all the servants of God have been most assiduous in the practice of this holy virtue. The forty days' fast of Moses and Elias, are well known to all. The royal Prophet assures us, that "his knees were weak with fasting, and that he mingled ashes with his bread, and tears with his drink." Daniel prayed to God "in fasting, sackcloth and ashes," Dan. ix. 3. Judith was remarkable for her constant fasting. Anna the prophetess is commended in the Gospel, because she "served God night and day in fasting and prayer," Luke ii. 37. St. Paul tells us, that his life was spent "in hunger and thirst, and often fasting," 2 Cor. xi. 27. The apostles "ministered to the Lord, and fasted," Acts xiii. 2. And "when they had ordained priests in every church, they prayed with fasting," Acts xiv. 22. All which shows, that they considered fasting as a necessary duty, which God required from his servants. To this practice we are also encouraged by the example of Christ our Lord, who fasted forty days and forty nights in the desert, without tasting bread, or drinking water.

Q. 28. Is fasting of any benefit to those who practise it?

A. Many and great are the advantages of fasting; for, (1.) It obtains pardon of sins, as we see in the Israelites, 1 Kings vii. 6. And in the Ninevites, Jonas iii. And God requires it

of sinners, in order to find mercy: "Be converted to me in your whole heart in fasting," Joel ii. (2.) It causes our prayers to be heard, as we have seen above in Daniel, ix. and x. chapters. Judith assured her people of this truth; "Know," says she, "that the Lord will hear your prayer, if you persevere in your fasting and prayer before the Lord," Judith iv. 12. And the angel Raphael declared to Tobias, that "prayer is good when joined with fasting." (3.) It obtains great strength against the temptations of the devil; some of which, as Christ himself assures us, "cannot be cast out by prayer and fasting"; and St. Peter requests us "to be sober and watch," as the best preservative against his infernal assaults. (4.) It also obtains many temporary blessings; thus king Jehosaphat being exceedingly afraid, at the multitude of his enemies, "betook himself to pray to the Lord, and proclaimed a fast to all Juda," 2 Chron. xx. And on this account, gained a most miraculous victory. Esdras, being much afraid on his journey, says, "Wherefore, we fasted and prayed to the Lord, and it happened prosperously to us," Esdr. viii. 23. Nehemias being to intercede with the king for his people, says, "I wept and lamented many days, and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven," 2 Esdr. i. 4, 11; and he found mercy with the king, and got all he desired. Esther, by her fasting, obtained the preservation of her people, and so of many others.

Q. 29. Why did not Almighty God determine himself the time and manner of fasting?

A. For a very obvious reason; because the circumstances of times, and places, and people's constitutions, are so various and changeable, that no particular rules could be laid down to agree to all; and therefore, it was necessary, that the determining the times and manner of fasting should be left to be accommodated to these circumstances, and to be altered as circumstances might require.

Q. 30. To whom has God given power to determine this?

A. To the apostles and their successors, the pastors of the church, to whom, as we have seen above, he has given the full power and authority of making laws and regulations for the Christian people, "for the work of the ministry, the perfecting the saints, and the edification of the body of Christ," Eph. iv.

Q. 31. Why was it not left to each one in particular to fast as he pleased?

A. Alas! the backwardness and aversion which too many have to the practice of this duty, and the too general

neglect of it, even when we are obliged by the command of the church to perform it, too clearly proves, that if it were left wholly to ourselves, we should soon give it up entirely ; and therefore, it was highly necessary that a living judge should be appointed, with power to enforce the exercise of so useful and necessary a duty, and prevent its being entirely neglected.

Q. 32. What is the part that the church acts in her command of fasting ?

A. It is to ordain the particular times and the manner, in which we are to obey the command of fasting, which God himself lays upon all in general. So that, properly speaking, the obligation of fasting is laid upon us by God himself, and the times and manner of doing it are prescribed by the church according to the circumstances.

Q. 33. Are the people then obliged to fast, when and in what manner the church commands ?

A. Most undoubtedly ; they are obliged to it, under pain of mortal sin ; because as God has not specified the times and manner of fasting, but left this to be done by his church, to whom he has given power and authority for this purpose, if we transgress her orders, we resist the ordinances of God ; of which the scripture says, “ He that resists, purchases to himself damnation,” Rom. xiii. 2. We despise the voice of Jesus Christ speaking to us by the pastors of his church ; “ For he that despises you,” says he, “ despises me, and he that despises me, despises him that sent me ” ; and, for refusing to hear his church, we will be classed by him with *heathens* and *publicans*.

Q. 34. What is the rule prescribed by the church for fasting ?

A. The practice of the church has been different, in this respect, in different ages, according to circumstances ; and even in the same age it is not exactly the same in all places, especially with regard to the point of abstinence. In the primitive ages, the general rule of abstinence, and fasting days, was to abstain from flesh, and all white-meats that come from flesh, and from wine ; and the general rule for the quantity was, to take only one meal in four-and-twenty hours, and not to take it till the evening. Thus St. Basil, in his First Homily on Fasting, says, “ You eat no flesh, you abstain from wine, and you wait till the evening before you take your food.” But in process of time, the fervour of Christians becoming cold, this ancient rule of fasting was much relaxed, insomuch that, at present, the general rule of abstinence is, (1.) On all fasting days out of

Lent, and on all Fridays and Saturdays throughout the year,¹ to abstain from flesh and broths, or other thing made of flesh, and, (2.) During Lent, to abstain from flesh, and any thing made of flesh, and also from all white-meats, as they come from flesh, such as eggs, milk, butter, cheese, &c. And the general rule for the quantity is, (1.) To take, indeed, but one full meal in the day, but, (2.) To take it about midday, and not before, and, (3.) A small collation is allowed at night, as a moderate support to the weakness of nature till next day at noon.

Q. 35. Does this general rule of fasting take place everywhere throughout the church ?

A. In general it does ; though there are some exceptions in particular places, especially in those countries where people have little or nothing else to eat with their bread but white-meats, these are more or less permitted in Lent itself, and in some places eggs also, by a particular ancient privilege.

Q. 36. Does this great indulgence of the church make her children more fervent in observing this easy rule of fasting, which she lays upon them by her present discipline ?

A. The rule of fasting which the church prescribes at present, is easy indeed, when compared with the ancient practice ; and this ought, in all reason to excite her members to comply, with the greatest exactness, with what is required of them. No doubt, there are great numbers everywhere who observe it with the greatest attention ; but, it must be owned, with regret, that is not the general custom ; on the contrary, to consider the dissolute opinions with regard to the obligation of fasting, and the consequent practices which everywhere prevail, one would be apt to fear that both the spirit and practice of fasting are every day more and more flying away from amongst us. So many complaints we daily hear, of the difficulty and hardship of it ; and so many inconveniences found in observing it ; such weakness of faith as to the spiritual benefits and advantages of it ; such unchristian ideas of the greatness of the obligation of complying with it ; and, in consequence of these dispositions, such liberties are everywhere taken in violating this duty, both as to the quantity and quality, which we daily see among us, must give the utmost grief and concern to every serious Christian, and calls upon all, who have any zeal for the glory of God, and especially on those whose duty it is to conduct others in the road to salvation, to contribute all they can, at

¹ There are Lenten Indults and dispensations differing in different countries on this disciplinary matter of fast and abstinence.—ED.

least, by their prayers and example, to stop the growing evil ; lest, if that powerful means of appeasing the wrath of God be banished from amongst us, his offended justice should fall upon us with redoubled vengeance. What would have been the fate of Ninive, if fasting had not interposed to preserve it ?

Q. 37. Why do not the pastors of the church exert the authority Christ has given them to remedy this evil ?

A. The late learned and pious Head of the church, Pope Benedict XIV., was very sensible of this evil, and of the fatal consequences of it ; and in order to put a stop to its progress, he issued out two different decrees, addressed to all the bishops of the church, containing several salutary regulations, which with all the weight of his authority, as supreme Head of the church, and Vicar of Jesus Christ, he enjoins to be observed by all her children throughout the whole world. And, in his introduction, he shows the high esteem we ought to have for this sacred duty, and laments the present unhappy dispositions of Christians with regard to it in the following manner :—

“ We make, no doubt, Venerable Brethren, but that it is well known to all those who profess the Catholic Religion, that the fast of Lent has always been looked upon as one principal point of orthodox discipline throughout the Christian world. This fast was of old prefigured in the law and in the prophets, and consecrated by the example of our Lord Jesus Christ ; it was delivered to us by the apostles, everywhere ordained by the sacred canons, and retained and observed by the whole church from her very beginning. As we are daily offending God by sin, in this common penance we find a remedy ; and, by partaking of the cross of Christ, we perform, by this means, some part of what Christ did for us ; and, at the same time, both souls and bodies being purified by this holy fast, we are more worthily prepared for celebrating the most sacred mysteries of our redemption, the passion and resurrection of our Lord. This is, as it were, the ensign of our spiritual warfare, by which we are distinguished from the enemies of the cross of Christ, and by which we avert from ourselves the scourges of the Divine vengeance, and are daily strengthened with the assistance of Heaven against all the powers of darkness. Hence, if this sacred fast should come to be despised, it will certainly prove a detriment to the glory of God, and a disgrace to the Catholic Religion, and expose the souls of the faithful to great danger : Nor can we doubt, that this is one great cause of the calamities and miseries that oppress both state and particular persons. But, alas, how

different, how opposite is the prevailing practice of many at present, to the ancient respect and reverentia, observance of this holy time, and of other fasting days, which was so deeply imprinted in the hearts of all Christians from the very beginning," &c. So far our holy Father, out of his great zeal for the glory of God and the good of our souls. Is it possible to read, with attention, what he here says, without being penetrated with the like pious sentiments?

Q. 38. What are the regulations which this learned Pope prescribes?

A. He observes that one great cause of the present relaxation of this ancient discipline, is the too importunate demands of many people to be dispensed with in the rule of fasting, or their imprudently taking dispensations at their own hand, and the too great easiness of their pastors in granting them, and, therefore, to put a stop to this he declares; (1.) That it is unlawful, and a sin, for any person, audaciously to usurp the power of dispensing with himself in these laws of the church. (2.) That none ought to importune their pastors to grant such dispensation, and endeavour, as it were, to extort it from them. (3.) That no dispensation ought to be given without a real and just cause. (4.) That when a dispensation is granted to eat flesh on fasting days, it is absolutely forbidden to eat fish at the same time. (5.) That a dispensation to eat flesh on a fasting day, does not free the person from the strict obligation of eating but one meal: And, (6.) He enjoins all pastors, and burdens their conscience with it, as they must account to their great Judge, to use all proper caution and discretion in granting these dispensations.

Q. 39. What rule is to be followed in taking the collation at night?

A. When the time of taking one meal on fasting days was changed from the evening to about mid-day, the custom of taking a small collation was then introduced, chiefly for two reasons; first because it was found too hard upon many constitutions to want food from mid-day to mid-day, and, secondly, because many could not get their night's sleep without some little food upon their stomach; and the collation was intended merely as a support to this weakness of human nature. Hence, as it is an infringement on the ancient rule of fasting, for a particular reason, it plainly follows, that it ought to be such, both as to the quantity and quality, as is merely necessary for answering the end proposed. At first, it consisted only of a

little bread and drink ; but as the heart of man is always prone to gratify and indulge the cravings of the sensual appetite, by degrees, greater liberties were taken, and became customary. However, to put a stop to farther relaxation, the late Pope Benedict XIV., and his successor Clement XIII., being severally applied to for this purpose, both declared, that, even when a dispensation was granted for eating flesh or white-meats at dinner, on any fasting days, this was by no means to be extended to the collation at night. Conformable, then, to this regulation, it follows, that, in those countries where milk, and things that come from milk, are used on fasting days, by the common law of the place, and eggs only as a privilege, or by a dispensation, though the former may be used also as a collation, yet eggs certainly cannot. As for the quantity to be used at collation, this must depend a great deal upon circumstances, though the general voice of divines agree that it ought not to exceed about eight ounces.

Q. 40. But what if any person, from his particular constitution of body, could not sleep with so small a quantity ?

A. There is a very easy remedy for that ; let him take his collation about mid-day, and his full meal at night.

Q. 41. Who are exempt from the obligation of fasting ?

A. Both Almighty God and his church, in laying upon us the obligation of fasting, intend by it to promote the real good of our souls, but by no means to destroy, or even to impair the health of our body, or to hinder us from the lawful, and much less from the virtuous employments of our state of life. On this account, all those are exempted from the law of fasting, as to the quantity, whose state of health, or weakness of age, or the necessary duties of their state of life, render fasting improper for them, such as young people under the age of twenty-one ; because, till about that age, nature requires full sustenance for the growth of the body ; also decrepit old people, who are able to take but little at a time, but require it frequently ; women with child, and those that give suck, because they have to support and nourish their child as well as themselves ; people whose state of life subjects them to hard labour of body, which requires full nourishment to support them under it, such as husbandmen, smiths, wrights, and others such ; also those who are obliged to make journeys on foot, or assist the sick. But though these are exempted from the obligation of fasting, as to the quantity, yet they are still obliged to observe the rules of abstinence, unless some other particular reason require the con-

trary, as is often the case with people in sickness, where not only the quantity, but also the quality of the food, must be dispensed with, as their disease, according to the opinion of physicians, may require it. On the other hand, where a person, on account of his health, is dispensed from the rule of abstinence, yet he is still obliged to observe the rule of fasting, as to the quantity, unless some other cause require a dispensation in this also. And when any such dispensation is given, it is sometimes enjoined, and always supposed that they make up for this indulgence by other works of piety, such as more frequent prayer, and works of mercy towards their fellow creatures in distress.

Q. 42. Is the pretence of health always a just excuse from fasting?

A. Where it is real, it is certainly a most just excuse, as is commonly the case with those who are actually sick; but, where the fear of hurting the health is alleged as a motive to be dispensed from this duty, it is much to be suspected that it is often a mere pretext, without reality, and that such fears are much greater than the danger. For there is daily experience of people, who were for some time afraid of hurting their health from abstinence, and on that account always seeking dispensations, but who, upon a fair trial, have found their health much bettered by it; and, in the strictest orders of religious people, it is found, that the members are generally the most healthy, and the longest livers; so true it is as the word of God declares, that "by surfeiting many have perished, but he that is temperate shall prolong life," *Ecclus. xxxvii. 34*; and, from this experience, many wise men of the world have even advised people to have one fasting day every week, merely on account of preserving their health. It is true, indeed, that, at the beginning of Lent, the change of diet, and the diminishing the usual quantity of food, may occasion a little uneasiness for a few days; but experience shows, that this soon goes off, and no further hurt is felt from it. People therefore would do well to be very certain of the reality of this motive before they give way to it, lest what appears a just cause to them may prove a very insufficient one before God, and bring upon them the guilt, besides depriving their souls of all the benefits of this holy exercise.

Q. 43. Is the fear of being ridiculed or laughed at by others a sufficient excuse for eating forbidden meat on days of fasting or of abstinence?

A. The scripture says, "There is a shame that bringeth sin,

and there is a shame that bringeth glory and grace," Eccclus. iv. 25. When a person is ashamed to do an evil action contrary to his duty, and therefore abstains from doing it, that is "a shame which brings glory and grace"; but when a man is ashamed of doing his duty for fear of being laughed at, and ridiculed by others, and therefore acts contrary to his duty, that is, "a shame which bringeth sin," and therefore can never be an excuse. Of this last shame our Saviour says, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this sinful and adulterous generation, the Son of Man shall be ashamed of him when he shall come in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels," Mark viii. 38. Now, there is no part of the words of Christ, that is, of his doctrine, which he more inculcates, than obedience to his church: and therefore, to be ashamed of obeying her, for fear of the laughter of men, is a crime for which Christ will be ashamed of us at the last day. Besides, experience itself shows, that, when a person transgresses this command of the church, by eating flesh on forbidden days, for fear of being laughed at, and in weak compliance with those of another religion, it, for the most part, exposes him the more to their laughter and contempt; for they look upon him as a person of no conscience, who acts contrary to his profession and principles: whereas, when one stands firm to his duty on such occasions, though they may joke with him for a little on that account, yet in their heart, and when they speak seriously, they esteem and regard him the more.

Q. 44. But what answer should be given to those who say, in the words of our Saviour, "It is not that which goeth into the mouth that defiles a man," and that flesh is as good upon Fridays and Saturdays as on any other day, and is as much the creature of God?

A. Ask those who say this, If eating the forbidden fruit defiled our first parents? or if the Jews would have been defiled if they had eaten leavened bread on forbidden days? Ask them, what Almighty God means, when, after forbidding his people to eat several kinds of creatures, he concludes, "Do not defile your soul, nor touch ought thereof?" Lev. xi. 43. Ask them, If the first Christians would have been defiled, if they had eaten blood, or things strangled, after the prohibition of the apostles? Ask, if all these forbidden meats were not as good in themselves as any others, and as much the creatures of God? But those who make this objection, only show their own gross ignorance; for the sin of eating flesh on forbidden days does

not consist in supposing any evil to be in the meat itself at those times more than at any other, but in disobedience to the command of God and his church, and in preferring our own unbridled appetite, or the fear of the world and what men will say, to the will of the most high God, and to the obedience which we owe to his commands.

SECTION III.—*Of the Third and Fourth Commands of the Church.*

Q. 45. What is the third command of the church ?

A. *To confess our sins, at least once a year, to our own pastor.*

Q. 46. What is the fourth command of the church ?

A. *To receive the Holy Communion at least once a year, and that about Easter.*

Q. 47. What is the end and design of these two commands ?

A. To direct us as to the time when we are obliged to obey the general command, given by our Lord himself, of approaching the sacraments of confession and communion.

Q. 48. Has Jesus Christ given a general command for all to approach the sacrament of the confession ?

A. He has: For, as he has instituted the sacrament of confession as the ordinary means by which our sins are to be forgiven, and we restored to the favour of God, it follows of course that he obliges all to receive this sacrament, otherwise their sins will not be forgiven. And, though it be true, that, when a person cannot possibly get an occasion of receiving it, a perfect contrition, or repentance for sin, arising from a perfect love of God, and accompanied with an earnest desire of receiving the sacrament itself, is sufficient to cancel the guilt of sin, without actually receiving the sacrament; yet this perfect contrition is so difficult to be had, and so seldom to be met with, and one is so apt to be deceived who thinks he has it, that the command of approaching the sacrament obliges all, without exception, whether one thinks he has a perfect contrition or not; the receiving it, when it can be had, being a condition expressly required, without which there is no forgiveness.

Q. 49. Has Jesus Christ given a general command for all to receive the holy communion ?

A. He has: For he expressly says in the gospel, "Except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you," John vi. 54; consequently, all those who are come to the years of discretion, and capable of dis-

cerning what they here receive, are commanded to receive these divine mysteries, under pain of eternal death, if they neglect it.

Q. 50. How often are we obliged to obey these divine commands of receiving the sacraments of confession and communion?

A. This our Lord has not determined himself, because different circumstances make it necessary to follow a different practice; and, therefore, no general rule could be laid down to answer all times. But this he left to be done by his church, which could vary her rules for practice as the circumstances might require. Accordingly, we find, that in the primitive ages, the rule was to receive the holy communion every day; afterwards it came to be every Sunday; in process of time, as the fervour of charity began to wax cold, it became more seldom: and at last, the church, in the general council of Lateran, made a decree, by which she obliges all her children, who are capable of it, to receive these holy sacraments of confession and communion at least once in the year, and that the communion be about the Easter time, in memory of the great Paschal solemnity. So that, by the third and fourth commands, the church only fixed the particular time at which the general command laid upon us by Jesus Christ, obliges us to its observance.

Q. 51. Would it be a grievous sin to neglect our Easter duties?

A. Most certainly it would be a grievous mortal sin to omit them through negligence, and without a just cause; because it would be a breach of the general command laid on us all by Jesus Christ, and also of the command of his church, which obliges us to put that general command of Jesus Christ in execution about the Easter time.

Q. 52. What if a person be not properly prepared to go about these duties at the Easter time?

A. It is always in his power, with the help of God's grace, and the assistance of his pastor, to prepare himself for them; and, therefore, the same command that obliges him to perform them, obliges him also to prepare himself for them: so that his neglecting to prepare himself is itself a sin, and a continuing in a state of sin.

Q. 53. But what if a person endeavours to prepare himself, but cannot get it properly done in time?

A. He must then follow the advice of his pastor, who has power to defer his communion till he be properly prepared; and,

provided he be truly sincere in his endeavours, this delay will be no fault in him.

SECTION IV.—*Of the Fifth Command of the Church.*

Q. 54. What is the fifth command of the church ?

A. *To pay Tithes to our Pastors.*

Q. 55. What is the end and design of this command ?

A. It is to direct the Christian people in discharging the obligation they lie under of supplying the temporal necessities of their pastors, who dedicate their whole time and labour to the spiritual good of the souls committed to their care.

Q. 56. From what does this obligation arise ?

A. Both from the law of nature, and from the positive law of God, both in the Old and New Testament.

Q. 57. How does it arise from the law of nature ?

A. This will easily appear from considering what a pastor of souls is ; for a pastor of souls is one chosen by a special vocation of the Divine providence, and ordained for men in the things that “ appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins,” Heb. v. 1. That is, he is one whose business is to attend to the immediate service of God, and to the care of the souls of the people committed to his charge. The duties of his vocation are many and weighty. He is obliged to offer up daily prayers and frequent sacrifices for both these ends ; to instruct the ignorant ; to preach the gospel ; to assist the sick and dying ; to comfort the afflicted ; to administer the sacraments, and to be ready at all times, both by night and by day, to answer the calls of his flock, when their spiritual need require his assistance. That he may have nothing to take up his mind or time from these essential duties, he is prohibited, and binds himself by vow, from entering into the married state, lest the cares and solitudes that attend it should hinder him from the necessary duties which he owes to God and his people. He is also strictly forbidden to follow any worldly business, trade, or employment : for “ no man,” says St. Paul, “ being a soldier of God, entangleth himself with secular business, that he may please him to whom he hath engaged himself,” 2 Tim. ii. 4 ; because, were he to engage in any of these, he neither could attend to the service of God, as his office requires, nor to the necessary care of the souls of his people. When, therefore, a person following the vocation of God, engages in this sacred state, and out of a zealous charity for the salvation of souls,

dedicates himself entirely to the spiritual service of his people, How is he to live? How is he to be maintained? He is not an angel: He is composed, like other men, of a frail corruptible body, which must be supported. He cannot apply to any way of making a livelihood for himself, his whole time and employment being taken up with the duties he owes to God and his flock. It therefore plainly follows, from the very light of nature itself, that those who receive the spiritual fruits of his labours for the good of their souls, are obliged, in justice, to supply the temporal necessities of his body. And, indeed, if the civil magistrates and soldiers are entitled, in justice, to be supported by the people, because they are employed in promoting their temporal good, even though they may have other means of providing for themselves, how much more justly are the pastors of their souls entitled to the like support from the people, who labour for their eternal good, and are deprived of every other means for providing a livelihood, that they may attend with the greater diligence to that great end of their calling? Hence St. Paul makes use of this very argument, and says, "Who serveth as a soldier at any time, at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard and eateth not the fruit thereof? who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" 1 Cor. ix. 7.

Q. 58. How does this obligation appear from the command of God in the old law?

A. It is laid down there in the strongest terms; for no sooner did Almighty God institute a religion among his chosen people, than he spoke to Moses saying, "Take the Levites out of the midst of the children of Israel, and thou shalt purify them." Then, after describing the rite of their purification, he says, "And Aaron shall offer the Levites as a gift in the sight of the Lord, from the children of Israel, that they may serve in his ministry.....and thou shalt separate them from the midst of the children of Israel, to be mine.....to serve me for Israel in the tabernacle of the covenant, and to pray for them," Num. vii. 6, 11, 14, 19. Here we see the whole tribe of Levi chosen, by a special vocation of God himself, for his immediate service, and to be the priests and pastors of the people. Being thus dedicated to Almighty God, he would not allow them to have any portion, possession, or inheritance in the land with the other tribes: for the "Lord said to Aaron, You shall possess nothing in their land, neither shall you have a portion among them. I am thy portion and inheritance in the midst of the children of

Israel," Num. xviii. 20. How then did he provide for their maintenance? He made a law that the tenth part of every thing belonging to the people, should be consecrated and devoted to God. He it was that gave them all that they possessed, and he required, that they should give back a tenth part of the whole, as a tribute to him. "All tithes of the land," says he, "whether of corn, or the fruits of trees, are the Lord's.....of all the tithes of oxen, or of sheep, or of goats, that pass under the shepherd's rod, every tenth that cometh shall be sanctified to the Lord," Lev. xxvii. 30, 32. The first-fruits also of all their substance he reserved for himself: "Thou shalt give me," says he, "the first-born of thy oxen and sheep," Ex. xxii. 30; and, "thou shalt carry the first-fruits of the corn of thy ground into the house of the Lord thy God," Ex. xxiii. 19; and he was so strict in demanding this tribute from them, that he forbade them to taste these things themselves, until they had offered their first-fruits to God: "You shall not eat either bread, or parched corn, or frumenty of the harvest, until the day that you shall offer thereof unto your God. It is a precept for ever throughout your generations, and all your dwellings," Lev. xxiii. 14. This was the portion which God reserved for himself; and all this he ordered to be given to his priests and Levites, who were his portion, from among the people, as a support and maintenance to them for their service. "And the Lord said to Aaron, Behold I have given thee the charge of my first-fruits. All things that are sanctified by the children of Israel, I have delivered to thee, and to thy sons, for the priestly office, by everlasting ordinances.....and I have given to the sons of Levi, all the tithes of Israel in possession, for the ministry wherewith they serve me in the tabernacles of the covenant," Num. xviii. 8, 21. And he was so jealous of this right, which he had reserved for himself of these things, that he declares their neglect in complying with this duty, to be an afflicting of God himself, and which he would punish, by sending the curse of poverty upon them, and, on the contrary, protests to them, that, if they be exact in giving him what thus belonged to him, he would bless them with plenty of all good things, even to abundance. "Shall a man afflict God?" says he, "for you afflict me. And you have said, wherein do we afflict thee? In tithes, and in first-fruits: and you are cursed with want. And you afflict me, even the whole nation of you. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house; and try me in this, saith the Lord, if I open not to you

the flood-gates of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, even to abundance," Mal. iii. 8.

Q. 59. How does this obligation appear from the gospel?

A. We have seen above, that St. Paul makes use of the argument drawn from the law of nature, to enforce this duty. But he does not stop there; he goes on, in the same chapter, to show that it is an express command of God, and a law of Jesus Christ under the gospel, that the pastors of his church should be maintained in their bodily necessities by their flock. "Know ye not," says he, "that they who work in the holy place, eat the things, that are of the holy place, and they that serve the altar, partake with the altar? So also hath the Lord ordained, that they who preach the gospel, should live by the gospel," 1 Cor. ix. 13. Here we see the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of his apostles, declares, that this duty is ordained by Jesus Christ; and, in fact, we find it expressly ordained by him, when he sent the apostles to preach the gospel to the Jews: "Go," says he, "Behold I send you as lambs among wolves; carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes.....into whatever house you enter.....in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they have; for the labourer is worthy of his hire," Luke x. 3, 5, 7. In which words, he commands this duty, and lays down the natural reason of justice on which it is established. Hence St. Paul repeats the same obligation on different occasions. Thus, "if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they ought also, in carnal things, to minister unto them," Rom. xv. 27; and "Let him that is instructed in the word, communicate to him that instructeth him in all good things," Gal. vi. 6. Also "Let the priests that rule well, be esteemed worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine; for the scripture saith, Thou shall not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, and the labourer is worthy of his hire," 1 Tim. v. 17. This scripture he also cites for the same purpose to the Corinthians, and applies it thus, "Does God care for the oxen? or doth he say this for our sakes? For these things are written for our sakes." And a little after he concludes, "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we reap your carnal things?" 1 Cor. ix. 11. Thus we see how strongly, both the law of nature and the written law of God, both in the Old and New Testament, inculcate and enforce this duty upon us.

Q. 60. How then does this law of the church interpose in it?

A. This duty was so liberally and so cheerfully complied with, in the primitive ages, that there was no need of any further authority to enforce it; and the necessities of the pastors of the church were amply supplied by the voluntary offerings of the people; but, in process of time, the charity of many waxing cold, and a worldly spirit getting in among them, they became more remiss in the observance of this duty, and several abuses were practised in it; and, as our Saviour had only ordained, in general, that "those who preach the gospel, should live by the gospel," without specifying any particular quantity to be given by the people for this purpose; therefore the church interposed her authority, and made a law, requiring a certain portion, called tithes, to be contributed by the people for the decent support of their pastors. This law was confirmed and promulgated by the civil powers of all Christian nations; some in one form, some in another, according to the different genius and circumstances of the people; so that the duty of supporting the pastors is established by all different kinds of laws, natural, divine, and human, civil and ecclesiastic.

Q. 61. Is this law strictly observed in the church?

A. It is universally observed in all countries where the Catholic religion is established; but where it is not established, and especially where it is exposed to persecution, it is not enforced. In these places, the pastors study more the salvation of souls in such difficult circumstances, than their own worldly convenience, and content themselves with the scanty subsistence that Providence otherwise provides for them, and with such voluntary benefactions and offerings as it pleases God to inspire their people to give them. In this they imitate the example of that great model of all apostolical men, St. Paul, who, after having, by repeated arguments, established this right which pastors have, from the law of God and nature, to be maintained by their flocks, declares, however, that he never exacted any maintenance from them himself, nor writes so strongly upon it with any view of exacting it, but only to inform them of their duty concerning it; for, after declaring that, "so hath the Lord also ordained, that they who preach the gospel, should live by the gospel," he immediately adds, "but I have used none of these things, neither have I written these, that they should be so done unto me; for it is good for me to die rather than to make my glory void," 1 Cor. ix. 15.

SECTION V.—*Of the Sixth Command of the Church.*

Q. 62. What is the sixth command of the church ?

A. *Not to solemnize marriage at certain times, nor to marry within forbidden degrees of kindred.*

Q. 63. What are the times in which it is forbidden to solemnize marriage ?

A. From the first Sunday of Advent to the Epiphany ; and from the first day of Lent, or Ash Wednesday, to Low Sunday, both included.

Q. 64. Why does the church forbid to solemnize marriage at these times ?

A. Because the time of Advent and Lent are times set apart for humiliation, penance and prayer ; and therefore, it is quite contrary to, and inconsistent with, the spirit of those times, to be employed in feasting, drinking, and dancing, which generally accompany the solemnizing of marriage.

Q. 65. Would it be a sin to be present at marriage feasts in these forbidden times of Advent and Lent ?

A. It would : because St. Paul declares, that not only they are worthy of death who do things forbidden by the law, but also they who consent to those who do them. Now, to be present at such meetings, in these forbidden times, is not only to consent to them, but also to encourage them ; besides the great offence and scandal it gives to others.

Q. 66. Why does the church forbid marriage between those who are within certain degrees of kindred ?

A. Nature itself has an abhorrence to marriage-connexions between those who are nearly related in blood, which nothing but absolute necessity could excuse, as was the case at the first propagation of mankind ; but afterwards Almighty God made several laws forbidding such near connexions among his chosen people : even the Heathens themselves had an aversion to them, from the very feeling of nature. The church, therefore, enforces this dictate of God and nature, by the particular law she has made for this purpose. For, as the light of nature only points out, in general, that people should not marry who are nearly connected in blood, the church determines the particular degrees to which this prohibition is to be extended, and forbids marriage as far as the fourth degree of kindred, counting in a direct line from the common stock in which the parties are united in the same father and mother.

Q. 67. How is this to be understood ?

A. The father and mother are the common stock ; their children, to wit, brothers and sisters, are in the first degree of kindred, because they are one degree from this common stock ; the children of brothers and sisters, or cousin-germans, are in the second degree of kindred, because they are two steps or degrees from the common stock ; the children of cousin-germans are in the third degree of kindred, because they are three degrees from the common stock ; and the children of these last are in the fourth degree of kindred, being four steps from the common stock ; in which they are united in the same father and mother. Within these degrees the laws of the church prohibit marriage to be contracted ; as also between those who are connected by affinity from lawful marriages within the same degrees.

Q. 68. What do you mean by affinity from lawful marriage ?

A. The scripture declares that husband and wife "are not longer two but one flesh," Matt. xix. 5 ; consequently the blood relations of the one become equally connected with the other ; and this connection which the husband contracts with the blood relations of his wife, and which the wife contracts with those of her husband, is called affinity.

Q. 69. Is the same connexion contracted by cohabitation between people not married, and the relations of each other ?

A. It is ; for the scripture says, "Know ye not that he who is joined to a harlot is made one body ; for they shall be," says he, "two in one flesh," 1 Cor. vi. 16.

Q. 70. Does the prohibition of marriage extend to the fourth degree of affinity, from cohabitation without marriage.

A. No ; it only extends, in this case, to the second degree.

Q. 71. Why is the prohibition of marriage extended to the fourth degree of kindred ?

A. Chiefly for two reasons ; (1.) That, by this means people being obliged to marry at a greater distance from their own blood relations, marriage connexions may be the more extended, and different families be the more united in the bonds of human society and Christian charity. (2.) Because people, who are nearly connected in kindred, being frequently in one another's company, and upon a family footing among themselves, there is great danger that they might be guilty of unlawful familiarities and crimes, were they encouraged to it by the hopes of marriage ; but all such hopes being cut off by the prohibition of marriage between such relations, this puts an efficacious bar against such unlawful doings.

Q. 72. What is the effect of this prohibition of marriage between such relations ?

A. It renders all marriages between them *null and void* in the sight of God ; so that, were two people, within the prohibited degree, to marry one another, though they should live as man and wife, and even be esteemed as such in the eyes of men, yet they would be living in a state of fornication and incest before God.

Q. 73. How can the prohibition of the church hinder the validity of marriage if the parties consent between themselves ?

A. In the same way that this is done by the civil laws of any state ; for both the one and the other have power to put such conditions to the contract of marriage, that, if these be not performed, the marriage is void and null in the eyes of the law. Thus, in some countries, the consent of parents is required as a condition, without which children cannot legally contract marriage ; and, by the law of England, except the parties be married by a parish minister of the church of England, it is no marriage at all in the eye of that law, and in both cases the delinquents are deprived of all the legal and civil benefits of their marriage. In the same manner, by the laws of the church of Christ, except the parties be without the forbidden degrees, the marriage is void and null before God, by whose authority these laws are made.

Q. 74. Does the church never dispense with the strictness of this prohibition ?

A. All the laws of the church are made for the edification, and not for the destruction or hurt of her children : therefore, where there are just and solid reasons, the church dispenses with this prohibition, especially in the third and fourth degrees, but very seldom, and not without the strongest reasons, in the second.

Q. 75. To whom does it belong to grant such dispensations ?

A. It properly belongs to the Head of the Church, and to others by commission and authority from him.

Q. 76. Have priests, who are the immediate pastors of the people, this authority ?

A. In countries where the Catholic religion is exposed to persecution, and the number of the faithful but small, their immediate pastors have this commission communicated to them by their bishops, with regard to their own flock, in the third and fourth degrees ; but, to dispense in the second degree, or cousin-germans, is reserved to the bishops only.

Q. 77. Why are the priests empowered to do this in the third and fourth degree ?

A. Because in such countries the reasons for doing it more frequently occur, especially that of encouraging the faithful to marry with one another, which, it were to be wished, were always done, for many strong reasons.

Q. 78. Why are the dispensations in the second degree reserved to the bishops only ?

A. Because the church has a particular aversion to the marrying of persons so nearly connected, and because experience shows that such marriages seldom or never prove fortunate ; and, therefore, the power of dispensing in them is reserved to the bishops, that the people may from this conceive the greater aversion to engage in them, and that the greater difficulty of obtaining the dispensation may deter them from attempting it ; for it is expressly enjoined to the bishops not to grant dispensations in the second degree, but for the most urgent cause.

Q. 79. Would it be a grievous sin for two cousin-germans to marry without such dispensations ?

A. It would be a very grievous mortal sin, and the marriage itself would be void and null.

Q. 80. If a bishop should give such dispensation without a just cause, would it be valid ?

A. He would himself commit a grievous sin to grant it without a just cause, and the dispensation itself would be of no effect before God.

Q. 81. Is there anything more to be observed concerning the commands of God and his church ?

A. What we have seen is sufficient to give us a general idea of the most necessary things our faith teaches concerning the laws of God. But there are numberless things to be considered on each particular duty, of which we ought to endeavour to acquire as perfect a knowledge as possible by daily and serious meditation on this holy law ; that by so doing we may the more efficaciously be excited, and the more powerfully enabled perfectly to keep it, and effectually to avoid the most dreadful of all evils, the transgression of the law of God by sin.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF SIN.

Q. 1. WHAT is sin ?

A. Sin is any thought, word, deed, or omission against the law of God.

Q. 2. How is sin in general divided ?

A. Into original sin and actual sin.

Q. 3. What is original sin ?

A. It is the sin of our first parents, under the guilt of which we are conceived, and come into this world ; as we have seen above. Chap. V. Q. 30.

Q. 4. What is actual sin ?

A. Actual sin is that which we commit ourselves.

Q. 5. Who are guilty of actual sin ?

A. Those who willingly commit or consent to any thought, word, or deed which the law of God forbids, or who willingly omit any duty which the law of God enjoins.

Q. 6. How is actual sin divided ?

A. Into mortal sin and venial sin.

SECTION I.—*Of Mortal Sin.*

Q. 7. What is mortal sin ?

A. Mortal sin is a grievous transgression of the law, whether this grievousness arise from the nature of the thing done, from the circumstances in which it is done, or from the will of the Lawgiver, who strictly requires the observance of what is commanded, as was the sin of our first parents in eating the forbidden fruit.

Q. 8. What are the effects of mortal sin ?

A. It banishes the grace of God from our souls, renders us hateful and abominable in the sight of God, and worthy of eternal punishment. For this reason it is called *mortal*, because it kills the soul in this life, by depriving it of the sanctifying grace of God, which is the spiritual life of the soul, and condemns us to eternal death in the life to come.

Q. 9. Is mortal sin a great evil ?

A. It is the greatest of all evils, because infinitely opposite to the infinite goodness of God. It is a bottomless pit, which no created understanding can fathom ; for as none but God

himself can fully comprehend his own infinite goodness, so none but God himself can perfectly comprehend the infinite malice and enormity that is found in this opposite evil. It is the parent both of the devil and of hell; for hell was only made for mortal sin, and Lucifer was an angel of light till he was transformed into a devil by mortal sin.

Q. 10. From what does the malice of mortal sin chiefly appear?

A. From several important considerations: (1.) From the greatness of the injury done to God; (2.) From the hatred with which God abhors it; (3.) From the severity with which he punishes it, even in this world; (4.) From the ingratitude it contains against Jesus Christ; (5.) From the sad effects it produces in our souls in this life; and, (6.) From the loss of heaven, of which it deprives us, and the torments of hell, to which it condemns us in the life to come.

Q. 11. How does the malignity of sin appear from the injury done to God?

A. Because it strikes directly at God himself: it is a rebellion and high treason against him, and involves in its bosom a most injurious contempt of all his Divine perfections. The greatness of its malignity in this view will appear from the following considerations:—(1.) God is a being of infinite perfection, of infinite goodness, of infinite dignity, of infinite majesty, infinitely worthy in himself of all possible honour, love, and obedience; in comparison of whom all created beings are but a mere nothing. When, therefore, such wretched worms of the earth, as we are, presume to offend and insult this God of infinite dignity, by transgressing his command, and preferring ourselves or any creature to him, the malice of such an action is in a manner infinite; for we find among ourselves, that the grievousness of any injury always rises in proportion to the dignity of the person offended above the one that injures him. An injury which would be thought of very small consequence, if done by a common person to his companion, would be thought a great offence if done by him to a magistrate, still more if done to a prince or peer of the realm, and still more grievous if done to the majesty of the king. Seeing, therefore, that the dignity and majesty of God is infinitely above all creatures, an injury done to him must rise in proportion to his dignity, and, in this respect, be of an infinite malice.

(2.) God is our Creator, who gave us our very being; our souls and bodies, and all our powers and faculties, are the work of his hands; consequently, he has an indisputable and unalien-

able title to all our service. He is our first beginning and last end, who made us, and made us for himself, and for his own glory. He is our Father, to whom we owe infinitely more than to our natural parents. He is the sovereign Lord of us and of all creatures, the King of the whole universe, who has the most absolute dominion over us, and can do with us whatsoever he pleases. We depend totally upon him for our continual preservation, and for everything else that we possess and enjoy ; when we had lost ourselves by sin, he redeemed us and bought us with a great price, even his own most precious blood. Each of these ties gives God a most supreme right to all honour, love, and obedience from us, which it were the height of injustice to deprive him of ; but sin, at once, breaks through all these ties together, and most sacrilegiously alienates from God, what, on so many titles, is so strictly his. Parents, what do you feel in your own breasts, when your children insult you, and despise your will ? Masters, what is the indignation of your hearts, when your servants disregard your orders, and reproach you ? Kings, what feeling have you of the injury you receive when your subjects rebel against you ? Judge, then, what, and how great must be the injury done to God by sin, in whom all these titles are reunited, in a manner infinitely stronger than is possible for them to be between man and man ! Hear how he complains of it himself, "The son honoureth the father, and the servant his master ; if, then, I be a Father, where is my honour ? If I be a Master, where is my fear ? saith the Lord of hosts," Mal. i. 6. Moses also says of his people, "They have sinned against him, and are none of his children in their filth ; they are a wicked and perverse generation. Is this the return thou makest to the Lord, O foolish and senseless people ? Is not he thy Father, that hath possessed thee, and made thee, and created thee ?" Deut. xxvii. 5.

(3.) God is our only true friend, our best and kindest benefactor, who has loved us with an eternal love, and every hour is bestowing the greatest favours on us ; all we have, all we are, all we expect, is the pure effect of his goodness and love. To injure, then, so loving a friend, to insult and outrage him by sin, contains the malice of the blackest ingratitude ; of which God thus complains ; "For even the man of my peace, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, hath greatly supplanted me," Ps. lx. 10.

(4.) To all the above ties of justice and gratitude, by which

we are bound to love and serve God, is superadded that of the sacred vow we made in baptism, by which we were solemnly dedicated to him, and engaged to his service, and became heirs of his kingdom; which vow also is broken by sin, and augments its malice by the basest perfidy.

(5.) Let us consider now the nature of sin itself, in opposition to all those sacred ties, and we shall clearly see how inconceivable a malice it must contain. For by sin we withdraw ourselves from this sovereign good; we condemn and despise him in the highest degree, by preferring our own will and our passions, to his Divine will; we insult his supreme dominion over us; we are guilty of the highest injustice, ingratitude, and perfidy towards him; we undervalue all his promises, laugh at his threats; we esteem the perishable riches, vain honours, and filthy pleasures of this world, more than him our supreme good; and we prefer the devil himself, and the pleasing him, before the God of infinite goodness who made us!

Q. 12. How does the malice of sin appear from the hatred with which God abhors it?

A. From a very simple reason: For, as God is a God of infinite goodness, he must necessarily love everything that is good, and cannot possibly hate anything but what justly deserves to be hated; now, the hatred which God has to sin is inconceivable, and expressed in the strongest terms in his holy scripture; consequently sin must be a monstrous evil, which a God of infinite goodness so violently hates and detests. "Thou art not a God," says David, "that willest iniquity; neither shall the wicked dwell near thee, nor shall the unjust abide before thy eyes; thou hatest all the workers of iniquity," Ps. v. 5. "To God the wicked and his wickedness are hateful alike," Wisd. xiv. 9. "The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord," Prov. xv. 9. "Thy eyes are too pure to behold evil, thou canst not look upon iniquity," Hab. i. 13. "Evil thoughts are an abomination to the Lord," Prov. xv. 26. "Every proud man is an abomination to the Lord," Prov. xvi. 5. And the prophets, especially Jeremiah, and Ezechiel, are full of the like expressions.

Q. 13. How does the malice of sin appear from the severity with which God punishes it in this world?

A. Because, as God is a God of infinite justice, it is impossible he should punish sin more than it deserves; nay, as in this life his infinite mercy is above his justice, he generally punishes it in the present time less than it deserves. Nothing,

therefore, can show us more clearly the enormity of sin, than the severity with which he pursues it, even in this world, of which there are several very remarkable instances in holy scripture. And (1.) "One sin, in a moment, stripped our first parents, and all their posterity, of that original justice, innocence, and happiness, in which they were created, and of all the gifts of Divine grace with which they were adorned; it wounded them in all the powers of the soul, it gave them up to the tyranny of Satan, it cast them out of paradise, condemned them both to a temporal and eternal death, and, in the meantime, let loose upon them that innumerable army of all manner of evils, both of soul and body, under which their posterity groan to this day. (2.) "God, seeing that the wickedness of men was great on the earth, and that all the thoughts of their heart were bent upon evil at all times, it repented him that he had made man upon earth. All being inwardly touched with sorrow of heart, he said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth," Gen. vi. 5; and, accordingly, he destroyed the whole world, in punishment of sin, by the waters of the deluge. (3.) When the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was multiplied, and became exceeding grievous, the Lord could not bear it longer, because it cried to heaven for vengeance; "And the Lord rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven, and he destroyed these cities, and all the country about, all the inhabitants of the cities, and all things that spring from the earth," Gen. xix. 24. (4.) When Cora and his companions rebelled against the authority of Moses and Aaron, and claimed to themselves the priesthood, Almighty God was so displeased with them for this crime, that he punished them in a most dreadful manner. For "the earth broke asunder under their feet, and opening her mouth, devoured them, with their tents, and all their substance; and they went down alive into hell," Num. xvi. 31. Many other such examples are found in scripture, both regarding the whole nation of the Israelites, and also many particular persons, which show, to a demonstration, the great and inconceivable malignity of sin, from the severe punishments with which a just and merciful God pursues it, even in this world. But, above all others, the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ clearly manifest this truth; for there we see the Divine justice of God the Father inflicting the most dreadful torments upon his own innocent Son, for sins not his own, but ours, for which he had taken upon him to satisfy our

offended Creator. What then must the enormous malignity of the monster *sin* be, which a just and merciful God punishes in so unheard-of a manner in his own innocent Son ?

Q. 14. How does the malice of sin appear from the ingratitude it contains against Jesus Christ ?

A. The obligations we lie under to Jesus Christ are immense, and beyond conception. We must then have been eternally miserable without him : he could in all justice have left us to our unhappy fate ; he had no need of us, he was perfectly happy in himself ; he could have created thousands of worlds to serve him, though we had never been ; he had no force obliging him to do anything for us ; he was perfectly master to do as he pleased. Out of pure mercy, then, and compassion for our miseries, he undertook to save us ; and who can conceive what this undertaking cost him ? Count one by one his dreadful torments, from his agony in the garden, till he expires upon the cross ; see the God of heaven, made man, agonizing in the garden, buffeted, blindfolded, spit upon, and the most ignominious, insulting, and blasphemous things done against him ; see him scourged at a pillar, tormented with a crown of thorns, and nailed to a disgraceful cross ; consider the humility, the meekness, the patience, and, above all, the infinite love for our souls with which he bears all these severe afflictions ; behold to what an excess his love for us goes, when he bows down his head and expires upon the cross for our salvation. Does not such immense love, shown in so endearing a manner, and tending not only to free us from eternal damnation, but to procure for us everlasting joy and happiness, demand from us, in the strictest manner, every possible return of gratitude and love, we can make to such a kind benefactor ? What shall we say, then, of the monstrous ingratitude of sin, which not only refuses to make him any return of gratitude and love, but takes a most hellish pleasure in wantonly renewing all his sufferings, and, as his holy word expresses it, “ crucifying again to themselves the Son of God, and making a mockery of him,” Heb. vi. 6. Hear how he complains of this by his prophet David : “ If my enemy had reviled me, I verily would have borne with it ; and if he that hated me had spoken great things against me, I would perhaps have hid myself from him ; but thou, a man of one mind, my guide and my familiar, who didst take sweetmeats together with me, in the house of God, we walked with consent !” Ps. liv. 13. How aptly do all these expressions point to Christians, who are the familiar friends of Jesus Christ, feast

at his table, attend him in the house of God, &c. What a monster of ingratitude, then, is sin in a Christian?

Q. 15. How does the malice of sin appear from its effects on our souls in this life?

A. The effects which sin produces on our souls are many, and most miserable indeed, and show to a demonstration the horrid malignancy of that fatal poison which is the cause of them. To understand them properly, we must consider, (1.) That a soul in grace is beautiful, like an angel, and a delightful object in the eyes of God, and of his saints. Such a soul, in the language of the scripture, is a Queen, the daughter of a King, the spouse of the Lamb, and her beauty is thus described: "The Queen stood on thy right hand in gilded clothing, surrounded with variety. Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear—and the King shall greatly desire thy beauty; for he is the Lord thy God—all the glory of the King's daughter is within in golden borders, clothed round with varieties," Ps. xlv. 11. See also the beauty of the spouse of Christ described throughout the whole fourth chapter of the Song of Solomon: and, among the rest, he says, "How beautiful art thou, my love, how beautiful art thou!—thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee," verses 1, 7. And, in the Revelations, it is said of the spouse of the Lamb: "It is granted her that she should clothe herself with fine linen, glittering and white; for the fine linen are the justification of the saints," Rev. xix. 8. What a noble idea does all this give us of the heavenly beauty of a soul in grace! What an esteem, and high value, ought we to put on that happy state! But no sooner does mortal sin enter into such a soul, than immediately all the heavenly beauty is lost, the grace of God is banished from her, and she becomes an object of horror and detestation in the sight of God, and of his saints, ugly and filthy like the devils: "He that doth these things is abominable before God," Deut. xxii. 5. "How much more abominable and unprofitable is man that drinketh iniquity like water?" Job. xv. 16. "They are corrupted, and become abominable in iniquities," Ps. lii. 2. "A perverse heart is abominable to the Lord," Prov. xi. 20. "They are become abominable, as those things were which they loved," Hos. ix. 10. What a malignant monster then must sin be?

(2.) In consequence of this beauty, and of the love which God has for a soul in the state of grace, he raises her up to the most exalted dignity of being a child of God, a spouse of Jesus

Christ, a temple of the Holy Ghost; so that by grace she is intimately united with God, who dwells in her, in a most especial manner. "Know ye not," says St. Paul, "that you are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?—the temple of God is holy, which ye are," 1 Cor. iii. 16. "If any one loves me," says Jesus Christ, "he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and he will come to him, and will make our abode with him," John xiv. 23. What an exalted dignity is this? what a happiness, to have God himself dwelling in us as our father, our friend, our spouse, our protector. "If God be for us, who is against us?" Rom. viii. 31. But, alas! the moment such a soul consents to mortal sin, she loses at once all this dignity and happiness; the grace of God is banished from her; God himself forsakes her, and she becomes a slave of Satan, a vessel of filth and corruption, the habitation of unclean spirits. What a dismal change! what a sad misfortune to be deprived of her God. "Woe to them," says Almighty God, "when I shall depart from them," Hos. ix. 12. What a malignant monster is sin, to cause such a direful calamity.

(3.) The grace of God in the soul is "a living water springing up to eternal life," John iv. 14. It is an inexhaustible source of heavenly riches, which sanctifies all the good works of the just man, and makes them meritorious of eternal life. It is that bond of union by which we abide in Jesus, and he in us. Now, "he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit," says our blessed Redeemer, John xv. 5. When, therefore, a soul continues for a space of time in this happy state, what immense treasures may she not lay up for eternity! But if after she has long exercised herself in holy works, and laid up stores of riches in heaven by their means, she should at last fall into one mortal sin, such as the venomous poison of that monster, that in an instant it consumes all the treasures of her past virtuous life, and reduces her to a most deplorable state of the most abject poverty. This God himself declares in these strong terms: "If the just man turns himself away from his justice, and do iniquity, according to all the abominations which the wicked man useth to work, shall he live? All his justices which he had done, shall not be remembered. In the prevarication by which he hath prevaricated, and in his sin which he hath committed, in them he shall die," Ezech. xviii. 24. To such as these our Saviour says, "Thou sayest I am rich, I am made wealthy, and I have

need of nothing ; and thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," Rev. iii. 17.

(4.) The grace of God is the spiritual life of the soul, and is preserved by innocence and a good life ; according to that, "Keep the law and counsel, and there shall be life to thy soul, and grace to thy mouth," Prov. iii. 21, and the wisdom of God says, "He that shall find me, shall find life, and shall have salvation from the Lord," Prov. viii. 35 ; and as the human person is beautiful and comely while in life, so a soul that is alive by the grace of God, is beautiful and comely in his sight. But the moment sin enters the soul, the life of the soul is destroyed. It wounds, hurts, and kills the soul, and renders her more hideous and loathsome in the eyes of God, than a dead carcase is in the eyes of man. "He that shall sin against me," says the wisdom of God, "shall hurt his own soul ; all that hate me love death," Prov. viii. 36. "When concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin ; but sin, when it is completeth, begetteth death," James i. 15, wherefore, "flee from sin as from the face of a serpent ; for if thou comest near them, they will take hold of thee ; the teeth thereof are the teeth of the lion, killing the souls of men," Eccclus. xxi. 2. And of some more grievous sins in particular, the scripture says, "They lie in wait for their own blood ; they practise deceits against their own souls ; so the ways of every covetous man destroy the souls of their possessors," Prov. i. 18. "He that is an adulterer for the folly of his heart, shall destroy his own soul," Prov. vi. 32. "Refrain your tongue from detraction, for an obscure speech shall not go for nought : and the month that belbeth, killeth the soul," Wisd. i. 11. Behold the fatal venom of the monster sin !

Q. 16. How does the malice of sin appear from the loss of heaven, and the condemnation of the sinner to hell ?

A. From this plain reason, that, as heaven is a place of infinite happiness, and never-ending bliss, great must the malignity of sin be, which alone can deprive us of that kingdom, and banish us for ever from all good. And, as hell is a place of infinite misery, and never-ending woe, dreadful must the malice of sin be, which alone condemns a soul to that never-ending torment. Now, sin is the only thing that can do either of these things. All the malice of man, though joined with all the rage of devils, can never deprive us of heaven, nor bring us to hell, if we be free from the guilt of sin. But the malice of

sin is so dreadful, that one mortal sin alone is sufficient for that purpose ; for,

(1.) That sin for ever banishes us out of heaven ; is thus declared in holy writ : “ Know ye not that the unjust shall not possess the kingdom of God ? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liars with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God,” 1 Cor. vi. 9. “ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are fornication, uncleanness, immodesty, luxury, idolatry, witchcraft, enmities, contentions, emulations, wrath, quarrels, dissensions, sects, envy, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like, of the which I foretell you, as I have foretold unto you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God,” Gal. v. 9. “ Know this and understand, that no fornicator, nor unclean, nor covetous person, which is a serving of idols, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God,” Eph. v. 5. “ Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see God,” Heb. xii. 14.

(2.) That sin condemns those who are guilty of it to the eternal torments of hell, is no less manifestly declared in these Divine oracles. Thus the portion of sinners is described by the Prophet : “ Their land shall be soaked with blood, and their ground with the fat of fat ones.....the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the ground thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch ; night and day it shall not be quenched, and the smoke thereof shall go up for ever and ever,” Is. xxxiv. 7. And Christ himself thus assures us, “ At the end of the world, the Son of Man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth,” Matt. xiii. 40. For “ they shall be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire, where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not extinguished.....for every one shall be salted with fire, and every victim shall be salted with salt,” Mark ix. 44, 48. And at the last day the Judge shall say to the wicked, “ Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels,” Matt. xxv. 41. “ But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, they shall have their portion in the pool, burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death,” Rev. xxi. 8.

Q. 17. These truths are dreadful indeed, and show beyond reply what a monster sin must be; but is it not amazing that Christians who believe these truths, should ever dare to sin?

A. Amazing it certainly is to the highest degree; but the reason is given us in the holy scripture, to wit, that they never think seriously upon these things; bewitched by the pleasures, and vanities, and amusements of this world, they spend their lives in a continual round of unprofitable and hurtful dissipations, and never find a moment's time seriously to consider the great truths which their holy faith teaches them. On this account, these truths make no impression upon them; they easily forget them, and, therefore, lead the lives of heathens, as if they believed no such things. Thus the scripture says, "With desolation is all the land made desolate; because there is none that considereth in the heart," Jer. xii. 11. And again, "The harp, and the lyre, and the timbrel, and the pipe, and the wine are in your feast; and the work of the Lord you regard not, nor do you consider the work of his hands.....therefore hath hell enlarged her soul, and opened her mouth without any bounds, and their strong ones, and their people, and their high and glorious ones, shall go down into it," Is. v. 14. That is, as Job expresses it, "They take the timbrel and the harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ; they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to hell," Job xxi. 12. Oh! that men would be wise and think on these things!

SECTION II.—*Of Venial Sin.*

Q. 18. What is venial sin?

A. It is a smaller transgression of the law, a more pardonable offence, which, though it does not kill the soul as mortal sin does, nor deserve eternal punishment; yet it obscures the beauty of the soul before God, and displeases him, and deserves a temporal chastisement.

Q. 19. How is this explained?

A. The grace of God, which beautifies the soul, may be in the soul in a greater or less degree; and of course, the soul may be more or less beautiful in the eyes of God, more or less pure, more or less holy. Now, the malignity of mortal sin is such, that it banishes the grace of God entirely from the soul, and makes it positively ugly and loathsome in his sight; whereas venial sin does not banish the grace of God away from

the soul; but it obscures its lustre, diminishes its splendour, and stains its brightness. It does not make the soul positively hateful to God; but it makes her less pure, less holy, less beautiful, and consequently less agreeable in his sight. It does not destroy friendship between God and the soul, so as to make them enemies; but it cools the fervour of that charity and love which subsisted between them, and begets a degree of indifference on each side; and, as even the smallest venial sin is in some degree against the will of God, therefore it displeases him, and is disagreeable to him, and deserves to be punished by him.

Q. 20. How does it appear from scripture that there are such venial sins, which do not break our peace with God.

A. That is plain from many places of scripture. (1.) It is said, "The just man shall fall seven times, and shall rise again," Prov. xxiv. 16. Now, by these falls cannot be meant mortal sins, otherwise he would be no longer *the just man*, but only smaller imperfections, such as even good people are apt to fall into, but which do not break their peace with God. To the same purpose St. James says, "In many things we all offend," Jam. iii. 2; and St. John, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1 John i. 8; where both these apostles put themselves among the number of those who sin; yet nobody will say that they committed mortal sins, and were separated from Christ, or in a state of damnation; on the contrary, St. Paul assures us of himself and brethren, that "nothing should ever be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord," Rom. viii. 38; nay, he declares, that "there is now no condemnation (that is, *nothing worthy of damnation*) to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh," Rom. viii. 1. Now, the apostles were the friends of Jesus Christ; and, therefore any sins or imperfections in them were by no means mortal, or such as deserved damnation. The same truth we learn from our Lord's prayer; for in it he requires of his apostles, as well as of his followers, to pray, "forgive us our sins"; now, we cannot suppose the apostles, and all the great saints of God, had mortal sins of which to ask forgiveness; yet they were not free from smaller imperfections, which being sins, stood also in need of forgiveness. (2.) The scripture makes the distinction between mortal and venial sins in very plain terms. Thus, our Saviour says, "Whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of judgment, and whoso-

ever shall say to his brother, Raca (*a word expressing contempt*), shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire," Matt. v. 22; where he expressly distinguishes the different degrees of guilt in sin, and declares, that the smaller degrees deserves not hell fire, but the greater do. Again, he says, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it at the day of judgment," Matt. xii. 36; but an idle word does not deserve hell fire; for even a word of anger does not deserve it, as he told in the former text; yet, an idle word is sinful, because we must give an account of it in judgment. Some sins are compared by Jesus Christ to beams in the eye, and others to small motes, Matt. vii. 3; which shows the great difference between mortal and venial sins; for a beam in one's eye must destroy the sight entirely, whereas a mote only weakens it. To the same purpose, he says, "You pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have let alone the weightier things of the law.....blind guides, who strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel," Matt. xxiii. 23; yet, at the same time, he tells them, that even these smaller things ought to be done, and, therefore, it was a sin to neglect them, though only like a gnat in comparison of a camel, when compared to greater crimes.

Q. 21. Are there different kinds of venial sin?

A. Venial sins, in general, are divided into two kinds; (1.) Such as arise from human frailty, surprise, or inadvertency, and from objects to which the person has no inordinate attachment. (2.) Such as a person commits willingly and deliberately, or out of an ill custom, which he is at no pains to amend, or with affection to the sinful object.

Q. 22. Is venial sin a great evil?

A. Venial sins of the first kind, to which all men are more or less subject, and which rise from human frailty, without any inordinate attachment to them, show, indeed the corruption of our heart and our great weakness, and, on that account, ought to be the matter of our daily humiliation before God; but they are less evil in proportion as they are less deliberate, and less voluntary. But venial sins of the second kind, which a person commits deliberately and with affection, or out of an unresisted custom, though even these be but small sins in comparison of mortal sins, yet are very great and pernicious evils.

Q. 23. How can the evil of deliberate venial sin be shown?

A. From the following considerations: (1.) It is an offence voluntarily committed against a God of infinite goodness and

infinite majesty, and on that account alone, is a greater evil than all the miseries any creature can endure in this side of time, insomuch, that no man living can be allowed, by any power in heaven or earth, to commit any one venial sin, though to save a kingdom, or even to save the whole world; because an evil done to the Creator, is, in itself, a greater evil than the destruction or annihilation of the whole creation.

(2.) Deliberate venial sins, especially if often repeated, show that the person who commits them has but a very weak and languid love for God, when he makes so lightly of offending him. True love has this constant property, that it makes the lover exceedingly attentive to please the beloved object, even on the most minute occasion, and studiously to avoid even the smallest thing that can displease him; and nothing more plainly proves the weakness of one's regard and affection for his friend, than when he shows an indifference about pleasing him, even in little matters. What kind of love, then must those have for God, who, provided they can but escape his avenging justice, care not how much they displease him?

(3.) They not only show the weakness of our love to God, but the oftener they are repeated, the more they cool and weaken it; for our love to God is always in proportion to the grace of God in our souls; the more the grace of God abounds in our souls, the more we love him; and the greater our love is to him, the more his grace abounds in us: Now, as every deliberate venial sin weakens and obscures the grace of God in our soul, of course it also weakens and cools the fervour of our love for him. And as a little dust or smoke, though it does not blind, yet prejudices the sight of the eye; so the least deliberate venial sin obscures the spiritual sight of the soul, and abates the fervour of heavenly desires. Besides, the more we gratify our affection to those creatures which are objects of our venial sins, the more our love for them must increase; and the more our love increases towards any creature, the more it must of necessity diminish towards God; for "no man can serve two masters."

(4.) In consequence of this weakening and cooling of our love to God, the love of God diminishes and cools towards us; our indifference about pleasing him makes him the more indifferent towards us; the oftener we deliberately offend him, the more he is displeased with us; and to show how dangerous this is for a soul that, by venial sins, falls away from her first fervour, hear what Jesus Christ says to one in this state: "I

know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience.....and thou hast endured for my name, and hast not fainted. But I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first charity. Be mindful, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and do penance, and do the first works. Or else I come to thee, and will move thy candlestick out of its place, unless thou do penance," Rev. ii. 2, &c.

(5.) The more a person goes on repeating such sins, the more indisposed he becomes for receiving new graces from God ; and God being the more displeased with him, withdraws his more abundant graces from him, in just punishment of his repeated infidelity, as he himself declares, in very affecting terms, to one in this state : " Thus saith the faithful and true witness, who is the beginning of the creation of God : I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot ; I would thou wert cold or hot ; but, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and made wealthy, and I have need of nothing ; and thou knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked," Rev. iii. 14. Such souls are nauseous and loathsome to God, and though he does not throw them off all at once, yet he begins to vomit them out of his mouth, by withdrawing his graces from them, of which they have rendered themselves unworthy ; and thus leaving them more and more to themselves, at last, if they do not alter their conduct, he rejects them entirely. Because they are not guilty of any gross mortal sin, and perform some outward duties of devotion, they fancy themselves in a good way, but Almighty God forms a very different judgment of them.

(6.) The great evil of venial sin also appears from the severe punishments the Divine justice has often inflicted, in this life, upon sins which appear to us to be of a venial nature. Witness Lot's wife, turned into a pillar of salt, for indulging a natural curiosity ; Moses deprived of going into the Holy Land, for a small diffidence in striking the rock ; Oza struck dead for touching the ark, to support it when in danger of falling ; David losing seventy thousand of his people by the plague, for his vain curiosity in numbering them ; Agrippa consumed alive with worms, for taking pleasure in hearing himself praised ; with many others. Now, if a God of infinite justice punished such sins so severely, they must certainly have deserved such punishment, and, therefore, are far from being small evils.

(7.) This is further shown from the way those are treated after death who die guilty of such sins ; for so displeasing in the sight of God is the guilt of the least venial sin, that no soul stained with it can ever be admitted to his presence till its guilt be purged away. God is a Being of infinite purity himself, and none but the pure, "the clean of heart, shall see him," Matt. v. 8 ; and, therefore, into the heavenly Jerusalem "there shall not enter anything defiled," Rev. xxi. 27 ; when, therefore, a soul leaves this world stained with the guilt only of venial sins, she is condemned to all the torments of purgatory, till she be perfectly cleansed by them from all stain, and rendered fit to be admitted to the Divine presence ; and how dreadful this cleansing shall be, appears from what the prophet declares concerning it, "Every one that shall be left in Sion, and shall remain in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, every one that is written in life in Jerusalem ; the Lord shall wash away the filth of the daughter of Sion.....by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning," Is. iv. 3. How dreadful that purgation by the very "spirit of judgment and of burning" ! How great an evil that stain which requires such a purgation !

(8.) The great and fatal evil of venial sins consists in this, that it disposes and leads on the poor soul to the gulf of mortal sin, according to the express declaration of the word of God, "He that contemneth small things shall fall by little and little," Ecclus. xix. 1, and "he that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in that which is greater ; and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is great," Luke xvi. 10. And for this several reasons are assigned : (1.) Experience teaches, that the greatest things we know, both in the order of nature, and in the order of grace, commonly take their rise from small beginnings ; rivers from springs, trees from small seeds. "Behold how great a fire a small spark kindleth," James iii. Our bodies begin from a point ; a drop of water neglected, causes the fall of a house ; slight distempers disregarded, bring on great diseases and death ; the most learned man begins by the alphabet ; the greatest saints were not born so, but arrived at sanctity by degrees ; so also the greatest sinners begin by smaller sins, which neglected, draw on to greater. A little motion of anger indulged, led Cain to murder his own brother ; an impure glance of the eye encouraged, dragged on a David to adultery and murder, and an inordinate attachment to riches, uncorrected, brought Judas to

betray his Master. (2.) All the foregoing reasons show the same thing; for, by venial sins indulged, we become more disagreeable to God, our love to him is weakened, and his to us; we are rendered more unfit for receiving his graces, and they are given more sparingly; our passions become stronger, and we grow weaker; and then what is to be the consequence when the time of temptation comes, but that we fall into mortal sin? (3.) Venial sins lead us on step by step towards mortal sin, and take off by degrees our horror at it. It would be impossible for one to step from the ground to the top of a high stair all at once; taking one step after another, he goes up with the greatest ease. A modest person would be shocked at the proposal of any of the greatest crimes of impurity: but, if she gives ear to words of a double meaning, and takes pleasure in them, this will easily pave the way to bad thoughts; from this it is but a step to desires; and if these be encouraged, they will lead on to undue liberties in actions, and so step by step she will be carried on to every excess. (4.) By committing small sins without remorse, or with affection, we contract a custom of transgressing the law, which, the more it is indulged, the stronger it will become. (5.) It is certain that our nature, if left to itself, would lead us into all crimes; and we have no other way to hinder this, but by curbing its desires. Now, experience teaches us, that the more we yield to these desires, the stronger they become; the more liberty we give nature, the more unruly she grows. (6.) Many venial sins are of such a nature, that they become mortal, if often repeated: such are all sins of injustice, working upon forbidden days, and the like. (7.) It is often very difficult to distinguish where the limits are, between mortal and venial sins; and therefore a person who indulges himself in these last, exposes himself to the continual danger of falling into the former. Now, "he that loveth the danger shall perish in it," Ecclus. iii. 27. (8.) A thing that is in itself only venial, very often, from the circumstances becomes mortal.

Q. 24. How can a thing, in itself venial, become mortal, from the circumstances?

A. From different causes: (1.) If his affection who commits it be so great towards the object of a sin in itself venial, that he would be ready to offend God mortally, rather than not to do it, his doing it with such a disposition is a mortal sin. (2.) If one commits a venial sin for an end mortally sinful; for example, if one should steal a little poison of small value, in

order to poison his neighbour, this intention makes the stealing the poison itself a mortal sin, though he should be prevented from using it as he intended. (3.) If one commits a sin in itself venial, but which, by mistake, he believes to be mortal, it becomes a mortal sin to him. (4.) If a sin, in itself venial, be the occasion of great scandal, it becomes mortal to the person who commits it, on account of its scandal. (5.) If a venial sin be committed out of a contempt of the Divine law, this contempt makes it mortal sin.

Q. 25. What are the proper remedies of sin ?

A. There are two principal remedies for the great evil of sin ; one on the part of man, which is a sincere repentance ; the other on the part of God, which is the Grace of Jesus Christ. These two remedies are both of absolute necessity ; for it is impossible that we should be delivered from the guilt of our actual sins, without a sincere repentance ; and it is impossible for us to repent as we ought, without the assistance of Divine grace ; and, though we have a sincere repentance, that alone cannot deliver us from our sins, without the infusion of sanctifying grace into our souls. So that the grace of our Saviour is the great remedy which alone can heal the wounds which the soul receives from sin, and wash away its guilt ; and repentance on our part is a condition absolutely required, to dispose the soul for receiving that grace, and without which it is impossible that this grace should be bestowed upon us.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF REPENTANCE.

Q. 1. WHAT is repentance ?

A. Repentance, which is also called penance, is the sincere conversion of the heart from sin to God. To understand this, we must observe, that in sin there are two great evils, which Almighty God himself describes with astonishment in these words, "Be astonished, O ye heavens ! at this.....for my people have done two evils ; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and have digged to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water," Jer. ii. 12. In every mortal

sin, then, there are these two enormous evils, to wit, the turning away from God, who is infinitely good, and the very fountain of goodness and life, and the embracing, in his stead, the monster sin, by the allurements of some deceitful appearance of an imaginary happiness, justly compared to a broken cistern that can hold no water, but only filth and mud. Wherefore repentance, which is the opposite of sin, and the destroyer of sin, must have these two opposite conditions, the turning away from sin with horror, detestation, and sorrow, for having offended so great a God, and the returning back to God, to embrace him by love, and faithfully to obey his holy law.

(Q.) 2. What are the principal parts of which true repentance is composed?

A. The principal parts of true repentance are these three. (1.) A sincere regret and sorrow of heart for our having offended so good a God by sin. (2.) A firm and determined resolution of never offending him again, followed by an effectual change of life and manners. (3.) A voluntary punishing of ourselves for the sins we have committed, in order to repair the injury done to God by sin, and satisfy, in some measure, his offended justice.

SECTION I.—*Of the Sorrow of Repentance.*

Q. 3. What is meant by sorrow for having offended God by sin?

A. Sorrow is a painful feeling of the mind, when any evil comes upon ourselves, or upon those we love; and, if we ourselves have been the occasion of bringing evil upon those we love, our displeasure and pain at their suffering are still the greater. When therefore we have a sincere love of God, and consider our sins as a grievous outrage and injury, by which we have offended him; and, on that account, feel a regret in our heart, a pain and displeasure in our minds; that pain, that regret, that displeasure, is the sorrow which constitutes true repentance. Hence this sorrow is founded on a sincere love of God, a hatred, and a detestation of sin, as being an offence and injury to God.

Q. 4. What are the qualities which this true sorrow of repentance ought to have?

A. Chiefly these following: (1.) It ought to be *internal*, that is, seated in the heart and mind; not a mere outward sorrow of words or other external signs, nor even a more sensible sorrow,

which some tender affectionate people are very apt to have, and which shows itself in sobs and tears, but without any real change of the heart ; but it ought to be in the mind and heart ; *in the mind*, by a full conviction of the evil of sin, and the injury it is to so good a God ; and *in the heart*, which, having a sincere love of God, feels a real pain and regret for having ever displeased him. Where this is, there true sorrow is, though there be neither sighs nor tears ; but where this is not, the sighs and tears will be of no avail. (2.) It ought to be *supernatural*, that is, rising from supernatural motives, through the grace of God. A person may be sorry for his sins ; because by them he has brought disease, or loss, or disgrace upon himself. A sorrow of this kind will never find mercy with God. This is a mere sorrow of the world ; but not a sorrow according to God. Now the scripture tells, that it is only “the sorrow that is according to God, which worketh penance steadfast unto salvation ; but the sorrow of the world worketh death,” 2 Cor. vii. 10. The sorrow of true repentance must arise from our having offended so good a God, from our ingratitude to Jesus Christ, from the danger our sins have put us in, of being eternally separated from God whom we love, of being eternally condemned among his enemies to hell fire, from the fear of God’s judgments, and from the horror of sin, on account of its opposition to God. These are supernatural motives which our faith teacheth us, and which, by the help of God’s grace, excite the true sorrow of repentance in our souls. (3.) It ought to be *exceeding great*, that is, our sorrow for having lost our God and his grace by sin, ought to be greater than if we had lost all that we love in this world ; because, as our sorrow for the loss of any good is always in proportion to the love and esteem we bear towards that good ; our sorrow and regret for having lost God by sin, ought to be greater than if we had lost all things else, seeing we are obliged to love God above all things. (4.) It ought to be *universal* ; that is, we ought to have this sorrow for all and every one of our sins, without exception ; for, if we love any one mortal sin, though we should perfectly hate all others, we can never be said to have true repentance. (5.) It ought to be accompanied with a firm resolution of sinning no more, and a willingness to satisfy for past sins ; of which afterwards. (6.) It ought also to be accompanied with a firm hope, in the mercy of God, of obtaining pardon.

Q. 5. Is this sorrow absolutely necessary for true repentance ?

A. It is the very essence of true repentance, as appears from innumerable testimonies of scripture. Thus David says to God, "If thou hadst desired sacrifice, I would indeed have given it; with burnt-offerings thou wilt not be delighted; a sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit; a contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," Ps. l. 18; where we see that no outward means of appeasing the wrath of God, even by sacrifices appointed by himself for this purpose, will find acceptance with him, unless they be accompanied with a true sincere sorrow of the heart, which humbles it, and breaks it, as it were, to pieces, and with affliction of the spirit, or regret of the mind, for having offended so good a God; but that an afflicted spirit, and contrite heart, will never be despised by him. So also the scripture says, "When thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him; yet so, if thou seek him with all thy heart, and with all the affliction of thy soul," Deut. iv. 29. Again, the prophet Moses says to his people, "Now, when thou shalt be touched with the repentance of thy heart—and return to him—the Lord thy God will have mercy on thee," Deut. xxx. 1, 2, 3. So likewise Jeremiah exhorts sinners in these words to true repentance: "Gird thee with sackcloth, O daughter of my people, and sprinkle thee with ashes, make thee mourning as for an only son, a bitter lamentation," Jer. vi. 26. And God himself, by his prophet Joel, "Now, therefore," saith the Lord, "be converted to me with all your heart in fasting and in weeping, and in mourning, and rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, patient, and rich in mercy," Joel ii. 12. Such was the true sorrow of David, which he describes in these words: There is no "health in my flesh, because of thy wrath; there is no peace for my bones, because of my sins; for my iniquities are gone over my head, and as a heavy burden are become heavy upon me.....I am become miserable, and am bowed down even to the end: I walked sorrowful all the day long," Ps. xxxviii. 4. Such was the repentance of King Ezekias, when he said to God, "I will recount to thee all my years in the bitterness of my soul," Is. xxxviii. 15. Such, in fine, was the repentance of all true penitents, who found mercy with God, the Ninivites, the humble publican, St. Mary Magdalen, St. Peter, &c.

Q. 6. How many kinds of this sorrow are there?

A. It is considered as divided into two kinds, which agree in all the above mentioned qualities, and differ only in the

motives from which they arise, and in the effects they produce. Of the supernatural motives mentioned above, some are most perfect and excellent, because founded on charity, or the pure love of God for himself alone; as when we are sorry for our sins, purely because by them we have offended so good a God, whom we love above all things, without any attention to the evils sin brings upon ourselves. Such was the sorrow of St. Mary Magdalene, of whom our Saviour says, "Many sins are forgiven her, because she has loved much." A sorrow that arises from this motive is a perfect sorrow, and is called *perfect contrition*. Others of the supernatural motives above mentioned, are less perfect, because they include an attention to our own interest, accompanied with an initial, and less perfect love of God, considering him more as being good to us, than as infinitely good in himself. Of this kind are our fear of losing heaven, or of being condemned to hell; our fear of the judgments of God, and the like. A sorrow for sin, which arises from these motives, is therefore called *imperfect contrition* and *attrition*.

Q. 7. How does contrition and attrition differ in their effects?

A. Perfect contrition, as it arises from a perfect love of God for himself alone, is so pleasing in his sight, that the moment a person has it, God is reconciled to him, and forgives his sins; for as the scripture says, "Charity," or the perfect love of God, "covereth a multitude of sins," 1 Peter iv. 8; and such was the effect it had in St. Mary Magdalene. This, however, is to be so understood that such contrition does not free a person from having recourse to the sacrament of penance, where it can be had; the command of receiving that sacrament being laid upon all without exception. Attrition, on the other hand, in no case obtains of itself the remission of sin, but only disposes the soul for receiving that grace by means of the sacrament of penance.

Q. 8. Is this sorrow for sin, which arises from the fear of hell, or of God's judgments, or of losing heaven, a virtuous and laudable sorrow?

A. Most certainly: It is a gift of God, and therefore David prays for it: "Pierce thou my flesh," says he, "with thy fear: for I am afraid of thy judgments," Ps. cxviii. 120; and Christ himself commands us to have this fear of God: "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will show you whom you shall fear; fear ye

him who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say to you, fear him," Luke xii. 4.

SECTION II.—*Of the purpose of not sinning more.*

Q. 9. What is meant by a purpose of not sinning more?

A. It is a firm and resolute determination of the will, of carefully avoiding all sin for the time to come, and all the dangerous occasions of sin, arising from the same supernatural motives on which our sorrow for sin is grounded. In fact, this purpose and resolution is a necessary consequence of our sorrow, and an essential part of true repentance; for it is impossible sincerely to hate sin, as the greatest of all evils, and to be heartily sorry for having offended God, by being guilty of it, without being also firmly resolved to fly from that monster for the future, and to use every necessary means for avoiding it.

Q. 10. What are the effects of this sincere purpose of amendment?

A. A total change of our whole behaviour; "a putting off, according to our former conversation, the old man; and a being renewed," not only "in the spirit of our mind," but also, "putting on the new man, who, according to God, is created in justice, and holiness, and truth," Ephes. iv. 22; or as the same apostle expresses it more particularly, "Now, put you also all away, anger, indignation, malice, blasphemy, filthy speech out of your mouth; lie not one to another, stripping yourselves of the old man, with his deeds.....Put ye on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy and benignity, humility, modesty, patience—but above all things have charity, which is the bond of perfection," Coloss. iii. 8. So that true repentance changes the whole man, his sentiments, his affections, his behaviour; makes him love what he did not love before, to wit, God and his holy law; and makes him hate what he loved before, to wit, his sinful pleasures and employments. And this is the great favour which Almighty God promises to bestow upon his people by the prophet Ezechiel, saying, "I will give them one heart, and will put a new spirit in their bowels; and I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my commandments, and keep my judgments, and do them; and that they may be my people and I may be their God," Ezech. xi. 19.

Q. 11. Is this conversion and change of life strictly required of true penitents ?

A. Nothing is more strongly inculcated throughout the whole scripture, as a necessary condition of being reconciled with God. Thus, "As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways ; and why will you die, O house of Israel ?" Ezech. xxxiii. 12. And to show wherein this turning consists, he says, "Cast away from you all transgressions, by which you have transgressed, and make to yourself a new heart and a new spirit, and why will you die, O house of Israel ?" Ezech. xvii. 31. "When you stretch forth your hands, I will turn away my eyes from you," says God to sinners, "and when you multiply prayer I will not hear, for your hands are full of blood" ; that is, you are hateful to me by reason of your sins. But what must be done to find favour ? He immediately adds, "Wash yourselves, be clean, take away the evil of your devices from my eyes ; cease to do perversely, learn to do well, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge for the fatherless, defend the widow, and then come and accuse me, saith the Lord. If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow ; and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool," Is. i. 15. "Seek the Lord," says the same holy prophet, "while he may be found ; call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked man forsake his way and the unjust man his thoughts, and let him return to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for he is bountiful to forgive," Is. lv. 6. And no wonder that this conversion should be so strictly enjoined ; for how can we expect that God should be reconciled with us, if we still go on to offend him ? This is what we would not do ourselves to one that injures us. Hence we find, that all true penitents were remarkable for the great change of their lives ; David, St. Paul, St. Mary Magdalene, Zachæus, and others.

Q. 12. But, considering the weakness of human nature, the strength of evil habits, and the violence of temptation, how is it possible for one to be thus thoroughly changed all at once ? Such a perfect change is the work of years ?

A. This perfect conversion to God is no doubt the effect of the grace of God, more than the work of man ; and Almighty God has not been wanting to give the world examples of the power of his grace, in giving some sinners all at once a perfect conversion of the whole man, as in those last mentioned. But

this is not the ordinary course of his divine providence. A change of the heart, a firm and determined resolution of the will never more to offend God, is absolutely and essentially required in true repentance. This resolution, though it greatly fortifies the superior will against all passions, evil habits and temptations, yet does not entirely, and at once, destroy them, and, therefore, does not give the sinner an absolute security against all relapses into sin, which, indeed, we can never have in this life: but this resolution of amendment, if it be sincere, must work an effectual change, at least in the following particulars: (1.) In avoiding, with the utmost care, all dangerous occasions of sin; for, if he expose himself to the danger, that clearly shows he has no sincere resolution to avoid the sin, seeing the word of God assures us, that "he that loves the danger shall perish in it." (2.) In being most attentive to resist all temptations, especially at the beginning; for, if he willingly entertain, and dally with the temptation, it is evident that his horror for the sin is not what it should be. (3.) In using the proper remedies, especially such as are prescribed by his spiritual director for breaking his passions, and destroying his evil customs; because, if he be sincere in desiring the end, he must be assiduous in using the means. (4.) In being most earnest in the duties of prayer, spiritual reading, assisting at Mass, frequenting worthily the sacraments, and the like; as these are the most assured helps to avoid sin, and fortify the soul against it. When a penitent sinner is assiduous in these particulars, his conversion is real, and there is no fear, if he persevere, but he will avoid falling back to his sins, and, in time, get the perfect victory over them; but, if he be negligent in these things, and take little or no more care to avoid sin than he did before, his conversion is but a pretence, and by no means such as will find favour with God.

SECTION III.—*Of Doing Penance for Sin.*

Q. 13. What is meant by doing penance for sin?

A. The voluntary punishing of ourselves, in order to satisfy the justice of God for the offences committed against him.

Q. 14. Does sin of its own nature require to be punished, or is punishment inflicted only as a warning to others and for the correction of the guilty themselves?

A. Some people, of free-thinking principles, in these modern times, seem much inclined to suppose, that sin requires little or

no punishment in itself, and that the principal, if not the only design of punishing is to correct the guilty, and be a warning to others. But the whole conduct of the Divine providence, as well as the feelings of our own heart, manifestly show, that sin, of its own nature, essentially requires to be punished, and that wherever the guilt of sin is found, the justice of God acquires a full and perfect right to punish the offender. For, (1.) When great numbers of the angels fell into sin, the justice of God pursued them with immediate punishment, and condemned them to hell-fire, which was prepared for that purpose. This, sure, was not for their correction, but for their eternal destruction; neither was it as a warning to others, for there were no others to be warned by it, the good angels, by their allegiance, being then confirmed in eternal happiness. So severe a punishment, from a God of infinite goodness, clearly shows that the guilt of their crime most justly and necessarily required it. (2.) The punishment inflicted on all mankind for the sin of our first parents, in being deprived of original justice, shows the same truth beyond reply; this punishment was not for the correction, but for the destruction of the whole race of Adam, which would have effectually followed, if the goodness of God had not provided a remedy; neither was it for warning, for there were no others to be warned by it, all were already involved. (3.) The eternal torments of hell, inflicted upon all impenitent sinners, no less clearly show the same thing. (4.) The holy scripture everywhere speaks of the punishment inflicted by God on sinners, as being what their sins necessarily deserve from God's justice, without the smallest hint of its being sent for correction or warning, though this, no doubt, is also commonly intended in the punishments of this life. Nay, in some places, it is said, that certain more enormous sins cry to heaven for vengeance, and that justice absolutely demands they should be punished. Correction and warning, therefore, are but accessory causes of punishment, but the essential source of punishment is the malignity and guilt of sin, which necessarily deserves and demands it; and justice absolutely requires this satisfaction by the punishment of the guilty. (5.) As God is a being of infinite justice, it is impossible he should always, and on every occasion, punish sin wherever he finds it, even with temporal punishments, and much more with eternal torments, if sin, of its own nature, did not justly require it; because, in numberless instances, especially in the eternal punishment, his doing so could neither serve for correction nor

warning; and, as he is a being of infinite goodness, it is impossible he should take pleasure in the torments and sufferings of his creatures, if the order of justice did not absolutely require it. Yet we find it frequently declared in scripture, that it is the fixed rule of his justice to render to every one according to his works, rewards for doing good, and punishment for sin; and sin is everywhere held forth as the primary cause of all our sufferings, both in this life and in the next.

Q. 15. Is it a rule of God's justice never to let sin go unpunished?

A. It is, as appears from the following declarations of holy writ, "I feared all my works," says Job, "knowing that thou didst not spare the offender," Job ix. 28. And again, "Far from God be wickedness, and iniquity from the Almighty; for he will render to a man his work, and according to the ways of every one he will reward him," Job xxxiv. 10. "God hath spoken once; these two things have I heard, that power belongeth to God, and mercy to thee, O Lord! for thou wilt render to every man according to his works," Ps. lxi. 12. "I am the Lord," the great God himself, "that search the heart and prove the reins; who give to every one according to his way, and according to the fruit of his devices," Jer. xvii. 10. "For God is great in counsel and incomprehensible in thought, whose eyes are open upon all the ways of the children of Adam, to render unto every one according to his ways and according to the fruit of his devices," Jer. xxxii. 19. Christ himself assures us, that the Son of Man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he will render to every man according to his work," Matt. xvi. 27. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body, according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil," 2 Cor. v. 10. And St. Paul, addressing himself in particular to sinners, on this subject, says, "According to thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up to thyself wrath, against the day of wrath, and revelation of the just judgments of God, who will render to every man according to his works. To them, indeed, who, according to patience in good works, seek glory and honour, and incorruption, (he will render) eternal life; but to them that are contentious, and who obey not the truth, but give credit to iniquity, wrath, and indignation. Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that worketh evil.....but glory, honour, and peace, to every one that worketh good," Rom. ii. 5.

Q. 16. How does it appear that the sufferings of this life are in punishment of sin ?

A. This also is everywhere taught throughout the holy scripture ; thus "justice exalteth a nation, but sin maketh nations miserable," Prov. xiv. 34 ; and when our Saviour cured the sick man at the pool of Bethsaida, he said to him, "Behold thou art made whole ; sin no more, lest some worse thing happen to thee," John v. 14. So also the wise man, speaking of the miseries of this life, says, "Such things happen to all flesh, from man even to beast, and upon sinners are sevenfold more. Moreover, death and bloodshed, strife and sword, oppressions, famine, and affliction ; and scourges, all these things are created for the wicked," Ecclus. xl. 8. Besides, we find that all the dreadful instances of God's justice, in sending extraordinary sufferings upon men, are declared in scripture to be the just fruits of their sins : Such as the deluge, the destruction of Sodom, the plague, famine and war, so often sent upon his people, untimely death of particular persons, loss of children and the like ; and, lastly, that God often threatens sinners with all these, and other such temporal miseries, in punishment of their sins. Not that the punishing of sin is the only reason why God sends these temporal miseries upon his creatures : In this life, mercy is always mixed with justice ; and, for the most part, has in view the correction, improvement, and warning of souls, along with the punishment of the sin ; but that sin is the radical source from which all these miseries flow.

Q. 17. What do we learn from these truths ?

A. We learn (1.) That it is a fixed rule of God's justice, that every sin must be punished. (2.) That the final punishment of sin will be in the next world. (3.) That the punishments sent on sin in this life are always mixed with the views of mercy, either for a warning to others, or to move the sinner himself to repentance, that by means of true repentance, he may be delivered from the eternal punishment due to his sins.

Q. 18. Whence arises the obligation of our punishing ourselves for our sins ? and how comes this to be a part of true repentance ?

A. By the appointment and express command of God, who has laid down our doing penance for our sins, as a necessary part of true repentance, and requires at least the sincere will to do it, as a condition of obtaining pardon.

Q. 19. How does this appear from holy scripture ?

A. From the following testimonies : (1.) "Gird yourselves

with haircloth, lament and howl, for the fierce anger of the Lord is not turned away from us.....wash thy heart from wickedness, O Jerusalem! that thou mayest be saved," Jer. iv. 8, 14. "Gird thyself with sackcloth, O daughter of my people! and sprinkle thee with ashes: make thee mourning as for an only son, a bitter lamentation," Jer. vi. 26. "Be converted, and do penance for all your iniquities, and iniquity shall not be your ruin," Ezech. viii. 30. "Now, therefore, saith the Lord, be converted to me with all your heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning," Joel ii. 12. In all which texts, we see that the doing penitential works is joined with the other conditions of true repentance, as necessary to avert the anger of God, and find mercy with him. (2.) When all the people went out to St. John the Baptist, to be baptized by him, he said, "Ye offspring of vipers, who hath shown you to flee from the wrath to come?" And immediately teaching them the means to avoid the wrath, he adds, "Bring forth, therefore, fruits worthy of penance," Luke iii. 7. St. Paul also declares, that the great subject of his preaching to the Jews, "that they should do penance, and turn to God, doing works worthy of penance," Acts xxvi. 20. Now, by doing works worthy of penance, cannot be meant the "*not committing sin*"; for this is not doing any work at all, but only the abstinence from evil work; neither can it mean the doing "*works of virtue and piety*," as such; for to this we are obliged, whether we have ever been sinners or not. "By *works or fruits worthy of penance*," then, can only be understood the doing works of virtue or piety out of a penitential spirit, and with a view of punishing ourselves for past sins; and the doing such good works, especially as are most contrary to our self-love, with the same intention. And hence, when the people asked the Baptist, "What then shall we do?" he recommended them one of the principal penitential works, to wit, alms-giving, and mercy to others: "He that hath two coats (says he) let him give to him that hath none, and he that hath meat, let him do in like manner," Luke iii. 11. (3.) Our blessed Saviour, when he entered upon his public life, began to "preach and to say, Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt. iv. 17. And to show the necessity of doing so, he says in another place, "Except you do penance, you shall all likewise perish," Luke xiii. 5. In like manner, when the Jews, who were converted at St. Peter's first sermon, asked, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Though the scripture expressly observes, that "they had compunction in

their hearts"; yet St. Peter answered, "Do penance, and be baptised for the remission of your sins," Acts ii. 37, 38. Which shows, that the compunction or sorrow of the heart alone, is not sufficient; and that doing penance is also required. St. Paul also, in his famous sermon to the great council of Athens, says, "God now declareth to men, that all should everywhere do penance," Acts xvii. 30. It is true, that in all these texts, the Protestant Bibles, instead of *Do penance*, translate it *repent*, meaning by that, the sorrow of the heart alone, without any outward penitential works. But we must observe, that the Christian world, in all former ages, understood these passages as commanding the *doing penance*; so that this translation is a novelty; besides, it is manifest, from other parts of scripture, that the repentance which Christ requires, is a sorrow of the heart, accompanied with the penitential works painful to self-love. Thus Christ himself condemns the people of Corasaim and Bethsaida, for not "doing penance, sitting in sackcloth and ashes," after the works he had done among them, as the people of Tyre and Sidon would have done, if they had received the like favours, Luke x. 13. And he lays it down as an essential condition of our belonging to him, that we "deny ourselves, and take up our cross and follow him," Matt. xvi. 24. Finally, that the doing penance is the true sense of the above texts, appears beyond all contradiction, from the examples both of saints and sinners, who are recorded in the scripture to be most assiduous in performing that duty.

Q. 20. What examples have we of this in the scripture?

A. St. Paul, as we have just seen, affirmed, in his sermon at Athens, that "God now declareth to man, that all should everywhere do penance; where, by saying *all* and *everywhere*, he shows, that none are excepted; the just as well as the sinners being obliged to it: sinners, as a very necessary part of that repentance, by which they move God to mercy, and avert his just anger; and the just, as a satisfaction to God for their former sins, which his mercy has pardoned; those that have sinned, in punishment of their past sins; and those who have lived in innocence, as the best preservative of that treasure, and the most effectual means to obtain great favours from God. Hence we find the most striking examples of each in scripture; (1.) Of sinners. Of Achab king of Israel it is said, "there was no such another as Achab, who was sold to do evil in the sight of the Lord," 3 Kings xxi. 25; therefore God, at last, sent the prophet Elias to him, to denounce the most dreadful

punishments which he had decreed to send upon him: 'And when Achab had heard these words, he rent his garments, and put haircloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and slept in sackcloth, and walked with his head cast down.' See here the penitential life he led, which so moved the compassion and mercy of the Almighty, that he said to Elias, with a kind of surprise and pleasure, "Hast thou not seen Achab humbled before me? therefore because he has humbled himself for my sake, I will not bring the evil in his days," 3 Kings xxi. 27. King Manasses, in punishment of his sins, was overcome by the Babylonians, and they took him and carried him bound with fetters and chains to Babylon. And after that he was in distress, he prayed to the Lord his God, and did penance exceedingly before the God of his Fathers; and he entreated him and besought him earnestly; and he heard his prayer, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom," 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11. The wickedness of the people of Ninive was so great, that God was resolved to destroy it; and he sent his prophet Jonas to preach, "Yet forty days, and Ninive shall be destroyed. And the men of Ninive proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth from the greatest to the least.....and the king cast away his robe from him, and was clothed in sackcloth, and sat in ashes.....and God saw their works, that they were turned from their evil way; and God had mercy with regard to the evil which he had said that he would do them, and he did it not," Jonas iii. 4. From this example of the Ninivites our Saviour takes occasion to inculcate the necessity of doing penance in the strongest terms, "The men of Ninive," says he, "shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they did penance at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here," Matt. xii. 41.

(2.) Of saints and holy people who had been sinners. David, after his repentance for his unhappy fall, even though he knew his sin was pardoned, yet led a most penitential life, which he thus describes, "I am poor and needy, and my heart is troubled within me. I am taken away like the shadow when it declineth; and I am shaken off as locusts: My knees are weakened through fasting," Ps. cviii. 22. "My bones are grown dry like fuel for the fire; I am smitten as grass, and my heart is withered, because I forgot to eat my bread; through the voice of my groaning my bone hath cleaved to my flesh..... I have watched and am become as a sparrow, all alone upon the house top.....for I did eat ashes like bread, and mingled

my drink with weeping; because of his anger and indignation," 1's. ci. 4. St. Paul had been a persecutor of the church of Christ; but when he was perfectly reconciled to Christ, and made an apostle, his constant preaching to the Jews was the necessity of doing penance; now, to understand that the penance he preached was not a mere sorrow of the heart alone, but such a sorrow as manifested itself by doing works worthy of penance, see his own example; though he was a chosen vessel, an apostle, a friend of Christ, that had been taken up to the third heaven, yet he says, "I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection; lest, perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a cast-away," 1 Cor. ix. 27. St. Paul! the chosen vessel! is afraid of losing his soul! and, as a necessary means to prevent that, "chastises his body and brings it into subjection!" Can anything more incontestably show the necessity of doing penance? and that a repentance which brought forth such fruits of penance was the repentance so constantly inculcated by this apostle?

(3.) Of those who had preserved their innocence, at least, from mortal sin. Job, an upright man, and one who feared God, and avoided evil, yet says of himself to God, "I have spoken unwisely.....therefore I reprehended myself, and do penance in dust and ashes," Job. xlii. 3. 6. Judith, a most holy woman, who was "greatly renowned among all, because she feared the Lord very much, neither was there any one that spoke an ill word of her," Judith viii. 8, yet, after her husband's death, led a most penitential life, for "she made herself a private chamber in the upper part of her house, in which she abode, shut up with her maids; and she wore hair-cloth upon her loins, and fasted all the days of her life, except the Sabbaths and new moons, and the feasts of the house of Israel," ver. 5. Daniel, a most holy young man, and a prophet, describes his penitential works thus: "I set my face to the Lord my God, to pray and make supplication, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes," Dan. ix. 3; and again, "In those days, I Daniel mourned the days of three weeks, I ate no pleasant bread, and neither flesh nor wine entered into my mouth, neither was I anointed with ointment till the days of three weeks were accomplished," Dan. x. 2. St. John the Baptist, though sanctified in his mother's womb, led a most austere and penitential life in the wilderness. And Anna, the prophetess, is praised in scripture, because she "departed not from the temple by fastings and prayers serving night and day," Luke

ii. 37. *Finally*, we frequently read in the Acts and epistles of the apostles, of their fastings and watchings. Now, what could induce so many, both saints and sinners, to employ themselves so much in doing a thing so contrary to flesh and blood, so disagreeable to our natural inclinations, so destructive to self-love, as all the penitential works here recited most certainly are, but the full conviction, that all sins, great and small, must be punished, that the justice of God would let none go unpunished, and that he required of all, as a part of true repentance, that they should co-operate with his Divine justice in punishing themselves?

Q. 21. But is it not injurious to the infinite satisfaction paid by Jesus Christ to the Divine justice for our sins, to say that we are still obliged to do penance for them? are not his sufferings more than sufficient to satisfy for the whole world?

A. To this it is replied, (1.) That Jesus Christ himself, and his holy apostle St. Paul, did not think it injurious to the satisfaction paid by him for our sins, when they so strongly inculcated the necessity of our doing penance in their preachings, and when St. Paul confirmed it by his example. (2.) Jesus Christ not only suffered in the flesh for our sins, but he was also oppressed in the garden with the most dreadful sorrow that ever entered into the heart of man, on seeing the sins of the whole world laid upon himself, and from the clear knowledge he had of their enormity, and the greatness of the offence done to God by them: He also shed streams of tears on our account, and poured forth most fervent prayers to obtain mercy for us. Now, this sorrow, these tears, and these prayers of Jesus Christ, were of no less infinite value than his bodily sufferings, and sufficient to cancel the sins of ten thousand worlds. Shall we, therefore, say, that no more sorrow, tears, nor prayers are required from us? or that it is injurious to the infinite merits of his sorrow and tears, and of the prayers which he offered up for our sins, to say that we are still obliged to be sorrowful, to weep, or to pray for them? (3.) The sorrow, tears, prayers, and sufferings of Christ, are, doubtless, of infinite merit before his eternal Father, and the most superabundant satisfaction to the Divine justice for the sins of men; but, to operate their effect in us, they must be applied to our souls, and this is only done efficaciously when we perform the conditions Christ demands for this end; for Christ "is become the cause of eternal salvation to all that obey him," Heb. v. 9, and to none else; for those "who obey not the

gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction," 2 Thess. i. 8. Now, as all agree that notwithstanding the sorrow, tears, and prayers of Christ, we are strictly obliged to be sorrowful, and to pray for our sins, as a condition required for applying the merits of the sorrow and prayers of Christ to our souls, and that we do so, without the least injury to his sorrow and prayers; so all the above testimonies and examples of holy writ clearly prove, that notwithstanding all his sufferings for our sins, we are still strictly obliged, by his command, to suffer for them, by punishing ourselves, as a condition required for getting the merits of his sufferings applied to us, and that without the least prejudice to the infinite satisfaction paid by his sufferings. But, (4.) If we consider the matter properly, we shall see, that, instead of injuring the satisfaction of Christ, we highly honour it by doing penance for our sins. For, suppose a man owing a sum of money which he was utterly unable to pay, and that, therefore, his surety being pursued by the creditor, was obliged to pay the whole, would it not be most ungrateful, if the debtor should leave his surety in the lurch entirely, and refuse to pay him, at least as far as he could? And would it not be highly becoming, as well as strict justice in the debtor, and, at the same time, show the grateful sense he had of his obligation to his surety, that he be careful to repay him, at least, as far as he is able? This is just our case, and the application obvious; especially, as we have seen, that our Divine Surety expressly requires this of us. And indeed, if Jesus Christ, the innocent, the holy Lamb of God, suffered so much for the sins of others, does not every motive of decency, gratitude, and justice demand that the guilty sinners should suffer something themselves? Hence we find, that eternal life is promised only on condition that we suffer with our innocent surety; we are "heirs, indeed, of God, and joint heirs with Christ; yet so if we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified with him," Rom. viii. 17; "a faithful saying; for, if we be dead with him, we shall live also with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him," 2 Tim. ii. 11. And St. Peter assures us, that "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow his steps," 1 Pet. ii. 21; which manifestly shows, that among the many other views Christ had in suffering, one expressly was, to encourage us, by his example, *to follow his steps*, by voluntary sufferings for our sins. So that by doing penance for our sins, we truly honour the sufferings of Christ in the

way in which he requires we should honour them; and hence the scripture says, "The dead that are in hell, whose spirit is taken away from their bowels, shall not give glory and justice to the Lord; but the soul which is sorrowful, for the greatness of the evil she hath done, and goeth bowed down and feeble; and the eyes that fail, and the hungry soul, giveth glory and justice to thee, O Lord," Bar. ii. 17.

Q. 22. If it be so absolutely necessary to do penance for our sins, and to imitate the sufferings of Jesus Christ, who shall be saved? for do we not see wickedness and vice everywhere reign, and penitential works in a manner banished from among us? Does not self-love everywhere prevail, and every one study nothing but his own interest, ease, pleasure, and convenience? Nay, have not the generality of mankind even a settled aversion to penance? And do not even those who acknowledge and believe the obligations of it in theory, commonly strive all they can to avoid it in practice?

A. In answer to all this, it can only be said, that these too true observations are the most convincing proof of that dreadful sentence of Jesus Christ, that "many are called but few are chosen"; and that "many walk in the broad road that leads to destruction, and few in the narrow path that leads to eternal life."

Q. 23. What advantage, then, have we from the infinite satisfaction paid by Jesus Christ for our sins, if we be still obliged to do penance for them?

A. Immense and admirable are the advantages we receive from the satisfaction of Christ: For, (1.) It is through the merits of his sufferings *alone* that any penitential works we do can be acceptable to God; for if our penitential works were separated from the merits of Christ, they would be good for nothing, neither of value before God, nor of any profit to our souls; but being united to the merits of Christ, they acquire a supernatural value and dignity, which makes them available to our salvation; so that the satisfaction paid by Christ, sanctifies our sufferings, gives them a supernatural lustre, and raises them to a great value before God, through which they are accepted by the Divine justice as a satisfaction on our part for our sins; just as the sorrow, tears, and prayers of Christ sanctify these actions in us, and make them agreeable to God; but, without his sufferings, this could never possibly have been the case, nor could we have found any acceptance with God, though we had suffered all the torments of hell for all

eternity. (2.) It is the satisfaction of Christ *alone* that delivers us from the eternal punishment due to our sins, changing it into the small temporal punishment which he demands from us ; for, without him, nothing we ever could do, or suffer, could possibly have delivered us from these never-ending torments. (3.) In the sacrament of baptism, Almighty God, with the utmost unbounded mercy, applies the merits of Christ to our souls without all restriction, and accepts of his satisfaction in its full extent so as to deliver us at once from all our sins, both original and actual, and from all the punishment due to them ; makes us his adopted children, and gives us a full right and title to his eternal kingdom. So that, though a person had been guilty of ever so many sins before baptism, yet if, after receiving this sacrament worthily, he should immediately die, nothing could hinder him from the immediate possession of eternal bliss. Here the Divine justice gives up all its claim against the offender himself ; being perfectly satisfied with the satisfaction of Christ, so fully applied for that purpose ; here the infinite merits of Christ have their full effect ; and here the mercy of God appears in all its lustre.

Q. 24. Why does not God treat sinners in the same manner when they repent of the sins committed after baptism ?

A. It does not belong to us to inquire into the reasons of the Divine conduct ; our great care should be to be satisfied with, and adore what he has done ; and all the testimonies which we have seen above prove, beyond reply, that it is his will to treat us in a different manner for the sins we commit after baptism, than for those before it. Yet a little reflection will show us, that his conduct in this is most reasonable, and that both justice and mercy concur to require it. For, with regard to justice, we must observe, that, when we are first received into his favour by baptism, for the sake, and in honour of the infinite merits of Jesus Christ, he treats us with unlimited mercy. Justice with regard to the offender, seems to forget its own rights entirely ; for all that he requires of us, to entitle us to such amazing mercy, is to believe in Jesus Christ, and be sorry for having offended him, with a solemn promise of being faithful to him for the future ; and even this faith, repentance, and promise, he does not actually require from us when we are baptised in our infancy, but is content with the promise made in our name. Now, if, notwithstanding all this goodness, we should afterwards return to sin, and break this solemn vow we made, this contains such a contempt

of God, after having experienced so much favour, such a horrid malice, after having full knowledge of the evil, and such unparalleled ingratitude, after having received such inestimable benefits from his bounteous mercy, that, in all justice, the sinner deserves the most rigorous punishment; and it would be unreasonable, and, in some degree, even unjust, to receive him again into the possession of the same glorious privileges, upon the same easy terms as before; and, therefore, the Divine justice here resumes all its rights against the sinner, and absolutely requires he should now suffer in his own person. Even among ourselves, we see this is what common sense dictates to us. If, on receiving any great injury, we should cheerfully forgive our enemy, be heartily reconciled to him, and do him good offices, without requiring any other satisfaction than his asking pardon, and promising amendment; yet, if this person should repeat the same, or other great injuries, would we receive him into our friendship on the same easy terms? Hence the great council of Trent says, "The fruits of the sacrament of penance are different from those of baptism; for by baptism we put on Christ, and become in him altogether a new creature, receiving the full and entire remission of all our sins; but (if we lose this happy state by sin) we can by no means acquire the same newness and integrity by the sacrament of penance, without great weeping and labours upon our part, the Divine justice so requiring it," Sess. xiv. cap. 2.

Q. 25. But does not this seem to exclude mercy entirely?

A. By no means; the mercy of God, even here, appears in the strongest light. For, considering the dreadful evil of sin, when committed after baptism, a sinner, by committing it, forfeits all title to mercy, and God could, without the least injustice, condemn him to the eternal punishment his sins deserve, treating him with the same rigour of justice with which he treated the fallen angels. It is therefore the effect of infinite mercy in God to be willing to receive us again into favour on any terms: and it is through the infinite merits of Christ alone that he is moved to do so. In baptism he forgets his justice with respect to the sinner, and applies to us the infinite effects of mercy alone; but when, after so much goodness from him, we return to our sin, and by so doing render ourselves altogether unworthy of any mercy, he alters his conduct towards us; he is still willing, through the merits of Christ, to receive us into mercy, but it is upon condition that we endeavour

to satisfy his justice also. He treated the fallen angels with the most rigorous justice, without mercy; in baptism he treats us with the most unbounded mercy, without regard to the interests of his justice; but, in being reconciled to us for sins committed after baptism, he positively requires that justice and mercy should go together, and be no more separated. Through the merits of Christ, on our sincere repentance, he grants us mercy, he forgives us our sins, and the eternal punishment due to them; but he absolutely demands, that, by penitential works, we punish ourselves for our shocking ingratitude, and satisfy the Divine justice for the abuse of his mercy. So that the effect of mercy here is not to free us entirely from the punishment, as in baptism, but to change the eternal punishment which we deserve, and which we cannot undergo but to our utter destruction, into a temporal punishment which we can perform, and the performance of which is attended with the greatest advantages to the soul. What still further shows how much it is the effect of the greatest mercy itself to require the doing of penance from us, is this, that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb. x. 31, even in regard to temporal punishments; as appears from the many examples in scripture of the severity with which his justice punishes sinners in this life, even for sins which to us would seem but small. Almighty God, in commanding us to do penance, remits, in a manner, his own right to punish us, and puts it in our own hands, accepting of small things done willingly of ourselves, in place of much more severe chastisements which we would have to suffer, if afflicted by his Divine justice. What were all the penances done by Achab and the Ninivites in comparison to what God had decreed to inflict upon them himself? And yet, because they punished themselves by these small afflictions, he remitted the greater. Besides all this, the great design of the Divine mercy, in pardoning sinners, is doubtless to procure their salvation. Now, pardoning past sins would not effectually procure this, if proper care were not taken to prevent the sinner from falling back to sin again. Seeing, therefore, that all the unmerited mercies bestowed on him in baptism were not sufficient for this purpose, there is a necessity of taking a more severe method after this, in order to secure his perseverance; and this is done by laying him under the necessity of doing penance for his past sins, which, on many accounts, is the most powerful means to fortify him against relapsing?

Q. 26. What are the advantages that doing penance brings to the soul?

A. (1.) *It makes us sensible of the grievousness of our sins.* Our great misfortune is that we have not a just notion of sin; we think, too, too lightly of it; and, if we had nothing to suffer for it in this world, we would be apt to lose all horror at it entirely, and consequently would take no care to avoid it; but, when we see that Almighty God absolutely requires that we should do penance for sin, and that there is no remission of the guilt of sin without a sincere and efficacious resolution to do penance for it, this opens our eyes, lets us see that there is something more dreadful in sin than we imagined, puts us in mind experimentally of what we have to expect in the next life, since a good and just God requires sin to be so strictly punished here, and consequently makes us more cautious and careful to avoid it. (2.) *The very pain of doing penitential works is a great check to our proneness to sin,* and experience teaches, that those who diligently punish themselves for the faults they commit, find in this a great and powerful help to amendment. (3.) *A great number of the penitential works strike directly at the very roots of our sins,* and weaken and extirpate these inordinate affections, and vicious inclinations, from whence our sins chiefly proceed. (4.) *Many of them also tend to destroy the bad habits of sin* which we have contracted, by obliging us to the practice of the contrary virtues. (5.) *They powerfully appease the wrath of God enkindled by our sins,* and by showing the fervour and sincerity of our repentance, more perhaps than any other thing we can do; they move him to be more liberal in his graces to us, to enable us effectually to preserve our innocence, and make progress in solid virtue.

Q. 27. What is the conclusion to be drawn from all these truths?

A. It is comprehended in these following particulars: (1.) That the doing penance for our sins is a necessary part of true repentance. (2.) That by sin we contract a heavy debt of punishment due to the divine justice, both temporal and eternal. (3.) That our repentance for our sins is not sincere, neither will it obtain the remission of the guilt of sin, nor of the eternal punishment due to it, unless it be accompanied with a sincere will and resolution to discharge the debt of temporal punishment by doing penance. (4.) That, therefore, this debt of temporal punishment remains due, even though the guilt of sin and its eternal punishment be remitted. (5.) That as justice

absolutely demands this debt from sinners, it must be paid either by voluntary penance inflicted on ourselves, or by more severe sufferings sent by God, and received by us in a penitential spirit. (6.) That if a person should die in the grace of God, but before this debt be discharged, he will be thrown into the prison of purgatory, where he shall remain till he has paid the utmost farthing. (7.) That, as no man can know the full amount of this debt, and is perhaps daily increasing it by his daily venial sins and imperfections, it is therefore the greatest Christian Wisdom to endeavour constantly to discharge some part of it, by leading a daily penitential life of self-denial and mortification, according to what our Saviour himself enjoins us, saying, "Be at agreement with thy adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest, perhaps, the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen, I say to thee, thou shalt not go from thence till thou pay the last farthing," Matt. v. 25. The present life is the way, the Divine justice our adversary, God the judge, purgatory the prison. And to the same purpose the church of Christ, in one of her greatest and most respectable general councils, declares, that "The whole life of a Christian ought to be a perpetual penance," Council of Trent Sess. xiv. on Extreme Unction, Introduct.

SECTION IV.—*On the Spirit of Penance.*

Q. 28. What is meant by the spirit of penance ?

A. The spirit of penance is nothing else but that sincere sorrow and contrition for our sins, the necessity of which we have seen above; it is "that sorrow according to God which worketh penance steadfast unto salvation," 2 Cor. vii. 10. The effects which this sorrow worketh in the soul, arise from the various lights which it brings to the soul, in the view of which it excites the sinner to the exercise of those penitential works which contribute most powerfully to secure his eternal salvation. For, (1.) The true spirit of penance shows the sinner, in their true colours, the multitude and grievousness of his sins, excites a horror and detestation of them, and a proper sense of his own demerits for being guilty of them, and makes him willing to undergo any sufferings as a just punishment for them. In this view the spirit of penance is a spirit of justice, condemning the criminal to condign punishment. (2.) It shows the sinner the greatness of the injury done to the great God of

heaven by sin, fills him with grief and sorrow for having so often and so grievously offended and dishonoured so good a God, excites in him a sincere desire of repairing the honour of God to the best of his power, and for this purpose makes him cheerfully condemn himself to the works of humiliation and penance. In this light, the spirit of penance is a spirit of restitution and satisfaction, by which the honour of God injured by sin is repaired. (3.) It convinces the sinner that his own flesh, that is, his unmortified passions and affections, are his greatest enemies, as well as the declared enemies of God, having so often dragged him into sin, and put him in danger of eternal damnation; it therefore excites in his soul a just hatred against these his mortal enemies, by which he rigorously *chastises his body, and brings it into subjection*, both as a just punishment for past offences, and to prevent its betraying him again, *lest he should at last become a cast-away*. So the spirit of penance is a spirit of hatred and revenge against our self-love in all its branches. (4.) It gives the sinner a just sense of all the sufferings of Jesus Christ, and of the infinite obligations we have to him; shows him the horrid ingratitude of renewing these sufferings by sin, and excites in his soul a tender compassion, and ardent love, of Jesus Christ, a sincere sorrow for having been the guilty cause of so much torment to him, and an earnest desire of resembling him and bearing the cross along with him; in consequence of this, it makes him cheerfully condemn himself to works of penance, that he may honour the sufferings, and follow the example of his beloved Master. In this view, the spirit of penance is a spirit of compassion and love of Jesus Christ, and of conformity to his holy example.

Q. 29. What are the signs by which we may know if we have the true spirit of penance?

A. "By their fruits ye shall know them." The surest signs that this holy spirit resides in the soul, are the effects it produces. These we have in a great measure seen already, but they are minutely enumerated by St. Paul, in these words: "Behold this self-same thing, that you were made sorrowful according to God, how great carefulness doth it work in you; yea, defence, yea indignation, yea fear, yea desire, yea zeal, yea revenge," 2 Cor. vi. 11. (1.) *Carefulness*; to wit, about the great concerns of salvation, convincing the sinner of the supreme importance of that great affair, and of the vanity of all other pursuits; and, therefore, makes him careful and diligent to secure it. (2.) *Defence*; this carefulness is not an

idle anxiety of mind, but an active principle, which makes us use all necessary means for defending our soul against all its enemies, by prayer, spiritual reading, frequenting the holy sacraments, and other such helps to salvation. (3.) *Indignation*, and hatred against sin, and all the dangerous occasions of sin, which the spirit of penance makes us fly from and avoid, though otherwise as useful or dear to us, as a hand or an eye. (4.) *Fear*, to wit, of the judgment of God, and of hell fire, and especially the fear of ever offending again so good a God, which is the beginning of true wisdom, and makes us “work out our salvation with fear and trembling.” (5.) *Desire*, to wit, of flying as far from sin as possible, and of daily advancing our soul in the union and love of God, giving “us a hunger and thirst after justice.” (6.) *Zeal* for the glory of God, and for destroying all his and our real enemies, to wit, our own unmortified passions, by self-denial and mortification; and for promoting his honour to the utmost of our power, considering the infinite obligations we have to his goodness. (7.) *Revenge*, vindicating the rights of the Divine justice, by cheerfully punishing ourselves for our past sins. Happy those in whom all these blessed fruits of the true spirit of penance are found?

Q. 30. What are the means by which we may obtain the spirit of penance?

A. (1.) The spirit of penance is the gift of God, as our holy faith teaches; for when St. Peter gave an account to the brethren of the conversion of the Gentiles, in the person of Cornelius and his friends, “they glorified God, saying, God then hath also to the Gentiles given repentance unto life,” Acts xi. 18. And St. Paul exhorts Timothy, “with modesty to admonish them that resist the truth, if peradventure God may give them repentance to know the truth,” 2 Tim. ii. 25. Nay, it is one of the most necessary gifts we can receive from God, for without it there is no salvation for sinners. Now, the scripture assures us, that “our heavenly Father will readily give his Holy Spirit to them that ask it,” Luke xi. 13. Consequently the first and principal means to obtain the holy spirit of penance, is humble and fervent prayer. This the holy servants of God well knowing, were assiduous in their prayers for this purpose. “Convert me, O Lord, and I shall be converted,” said Jeremiah, “for thou art my God,” Jer. xxxi. 19; and David, “Convert us, O Lord! and we shall be converted, show thy face, and we shall be saved,” Ps. lxxix., where this prayer is frequently repeated. (2.) We must avoid and

fly from all those things which would hinder the spirit of penance from coming to our souls; such as idle company, dissipating diversions, plays, dancing, jesting, profane reading, and vain apparel, &c. All which things dissipate the heart, fill the mind with a world of idle ideas, carry off the thoughts from everything serious, and are quite opposite to, and destructive of, the spirit of penance; and, therefore, are particularly unbecoming, and unworthy to be thought of in penitential times. (3.) We must apply ourselves seriously to the consideration and practice of those things which promote and excite the true penitential dispositions in the soul; such as serious meditation on the last things, and the great truths of eternity, the practice of self-denial and mortification, with works of charity and mercy; for experience shows, that as those who live pleasant lives, and pamper the body, never acquire the true spirit of penance whilst they live in that manner; so those who practise the works of penance, soon obtain the true spirit of it. (4.) Serious and frequent meditation on the great evils of sin, which contributes in a particular manner to excite the true spirit of penance in the soul by giving us a just sense of the heinous evil of sin, of the greatness of the injury done by it to God, and of the dreadful consequences it has with regard to ourselves; and the want of this knowledge, or the failing to reflect upon it, is one of the principal causes why we fall so easily into the misery of sin.

SECTION V.—*Of the Works of Penance.*

Q. 31. What is understood by works of penance?

A. By works of penance is understood any kind of punishment which the sinner willingly undergoes, in order to satisfy for his sins; and, as the nature of punishment requires that it be painful and afflicting to self-love; so anything whatsoever that is naturally painful and afflicting to us, and which we willingly undergo with the view of doing penance for our sins, is a penitential work.

Q. 32. Why do you say *that is naturally painful and afflicting to us*?

A. Penance or punishment is what naturally gives pain; if it gave no pain it would be no punishment. Now it may sometimes happen, that a penitential work which naturally gives pain, yet in certain circumstances may give a person no pain at the time he uses it; but it does not cease on that

account to be a penitential work even to that person. Thus some find no difficulty in abstaining from flesh; others find little or no pain in fasting; yet if these people, when obedience requires it, perform these works out of a penitential spirit they are truly penitential works to them. In like manner, a person may be so far advanced in the love of God, and in the virtue of holy mortification, as to have, in a great measure, conquered the natural inclinations of flesh and blood, and even to find pleasure in those things which are naturally painful to us; yet this is so far from lessening the value of the penitential works of that person, that it greatly increases it, and shows the ardour of his love to God, from which they proceed.

Q. 33. Why do you say, *with a view of doing penance*?

A. Because, though the work be ever so painful, yet, if we undergo it without the view and intention of doing penance, it will be no penance at all; and, if done with any bad view, will even be displeasing to God: as our Saviour expressly declares, of all the three great penitential works of fasting, alms-giving and prayer, if they be done with the view of gaining "praise from men," Matt. vi. The reason is, because, in order to be a penitential work, it must proceed from the spirit of penance. This is the root, this is the principal part of penance, without which the exterior works signify nothing. And God Almighty puts such a value upon this internal disposition, that though the external work be but very small, yet, if it proceed from, and be accompanied with, a true penitential spirit, it becomes of great value before him. What can be of less value than to give a cup of cold water to a thirsty person? Yet Christ himself declares, that, if done for his sake, it shall not want its reward. In like manner, what can be a smaller penitential work, than to deprive one's self of a drink of water? Yet it is recorded in sacred writ, as a very great action of David, that when three of his valiant men, at the risk of their lives, brought him water out of a cistern, which he had taken a longing for, "he would not drink, but offered it to the Lord," 2 Kings (Sam.) xxiii. 16. This ought to be a great comfort to those who are not able to do great things: let them do the little they can, with a true penitential spirit, and it will be accepted.

Q. 34. Into how many classes are penitential works divided?

A. Into three classes, (1.) Those which we are commanded to undergo, under pain of sin, if we disobey. (2.) Those which are left to our own free choice, according to our particular

wants, without any other command but the general one of doing penance for our sins; and (3.) Those which we are forced to undergo by the order of Providence, whether we will or not; but it is left to ourselves to make the proper penitential use of them.

Q. 35. What are the penitential works which we are commanded to undergo, under pain of sin, if we disobey?

A. Chiefly these following: (1.) The *confession of our sins in the sacrament of penance*. This is a great penance and humiliation to our corrupt nature, and to all the branches of self-love; but it is imposed upon us by Almighty God, in place of that shame and confusion which will begin with sinners at the last day, and last for all eternity, and which is one of the greatest punishments of sin in the next life. Now, as the penitential works of this life are laid upon us by the justice and mercy of God, in exchange for those of eternity; therefore he has been pleased to appoint the momentary shame and confusion of confessing our sins here to one man like ourselves, in exchange for that eternal confusion which we must otherwise undergo in the next life. Hence, this is a penance laid by God himself upon all, without exception of persons, who have offended God by mortal sin; and it is commanded with such strictness, that the guilt itself of the sin will not be washed away from our souls, unless it be properly complied with. (2.) *All those penitential works which our pastor enjoins us in the sacrament of penance*. This also is a penance which we are obliged to perform, by the express command of God; and it is, without doubt, one of the most profitable for our souls; because, being a part of the sacrament, it is sanctified by the grace annexed to the sacrament; and therefore, raised up to a much higher value in the sight of God, than other penitential works, though perhaps more painful, which we might do of our own choice; and besides, it has also the merit of obedience annexed to it, which gives it a still greater value before God. Now, the obligation we lie under of performing this sacramental penance, is shown from the words of our Saviour to the pastors of his church, in the persons of the apostles, when he said, "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven," Matt. xvii. 18. For as by the latter words, he assures us, that when our pastor looses us from our sins here on earth, we are loosed from them in heaven; so by the former part of this text, he equally declares, that when we are

bound on earth by them to do our penance, this obligation is ratified in heaven; for the general term *whatsoever*, includes all. But we must not imagine, that, when we have faithfully performed our sacramental penance, we have by it discharged all we owe to the Divine justice. Alas! what proportion is there between the penances commonly enjoined in the sacrament, and the sins by which we have offended God? In ancient times the penances imposed on sinners were exceedingly severe, and often continued for years together; but, as charity waxed cold among Christians, the church was obliged to moderate this discipline, lest the weakness and tepidity of Christians should neglect to perform them at all. At present, then, the penances imposed in the sacrament are but small; the rest is left to the penitent's own devotion, and, if he is deficient, it must be made up by God himself, either here or hereafter, to his cost. (3.) *The public fasts commanded by the church*: These also we are obliged, by the command of God, faithfully to observe; and, if we do so with a true penitential spirit, they will prove exceedingly useful to discharge what we owe to the Divine justice; especially as by them we also partake of what the whole church is doing at the same time.

Q. 36. What are those works of penance which are left to our own choice?

A. They are divided into three classes, and consist in punishing ourselves either in our external senses, or in the passions and affections of the mind and heart, or in the flesh. The two first are seldom attended with any danger from excess, and in them consists the exercise of that self-denial and mortification of the will, so much recommended in the gospel, and so strictly required by Jesus Christ from his followers; and, therefore, in practising them, we are sure of doing what is most agreeable to God. The third class contains bodily mortifications, by which, with St. Paul, we "chastise the body and bring it into subjection"; but, as the indiscreet use of these may be attended with consequences dangerous to the health, proper caution and advice ought to be taken in practising them. The practice of each class is as follows: (1.) As to the external senses of seeing, hearing, tasting, &c., by them we offend God many ways; and the doing penance in them consists in depriving them of what is agreeable to them, even though the object be innocent, but especially if it be sinful or dangerous. Thus, Job made a covenant with his eyes, that he should not so much as think upon a virgin," Job. xxxi. 1. And David

would not hear another speak ill of his neighbour in his presence, "The man that in private detracted his neighbour, him did I persecute," Ps. c. 5. Daniel also says of himself, "Desirable bread I did not eat, and wine and flesh did not enter my mouth." It also consists in forcing the senses to undergo what is disagreeable to them, but not hurtful; as David did when "he mingled ashes with his bread." To this class also belongs the doing penance in the tongue, by silence, speaking ill of none, defending the absent, and the like. (2.) As to the passions and affection of the soul, as they are the principal springs of all our sins, the doing penance in them is of a very wide extent, and of the greatest necessity for the amendment of our life, as well as for the punishment of past offences. The chief way of doing penance here, is to force ourselves to the practice of those virtues which are contrary to our vicious affections; to mortify avarice by alms-deeds; hatred by speaking well of, doing good to, and praying for our enemies; pride by acts of humility and obedience; gluttony by eating things disagreeable to the taste; drunkenness by a total abstinence from strong drinks, and the like. Under this class comes also the mortifying all idle curiosity of seeing or hearing new things which do not belong to, nor concern us; and all vanity in dress, furniture, and the like. (3.) As to bodily penances, they are all included under the three general heads of prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds, in all their branches; which are all most profitable, in many respects to those who properly practise them. Under this head are included some particular kinds of bodily penances taken notice of in scripture; such as *haircloth*, of which it is recorded, that Judith wore a haircloth next her loins all the days of her life," Judith viii. 6. And David says of himself, "I was clothed with haircloth, I humbled my soul with fasting," Ps. xxxiv. 13. "I covered my soul with fasting.....I made haircloth my garment," Ps. lxxviii. 11, 12: and when he saw the destroying angel causing the plague among his people, in punishment of his sins, "both he and the ancients, clothed in haircloth, fell down flat on the ground," 1 Chron. xxi. 16. So also, in the famous siege of Samaria, the king "rent his garments, and passed by upon the wall, and all the people saw the haircloth, which he wore within next his flesh," 4 Kings vi. 30. This was the way these holy people took to do penance for their sins, and appease the wrath of God. St. John the Baptist also, though a most innocent soul, is a great model of this kind of penance, being

clothed with a garment made of hair. *Watching* is another kind of penance, much recommended by examples in scripture: "O God, my God," says David, "to thee I watch by break of day," Ps. lxii. ; and, "I rose at midnight to give praise to God," Ps. cxviii. Of the truly wise man, also, it is said, "He will give his heart a resort, by daybreak, to the Lord, and will pray in the sight of the most high," Eccus. xxxix. 6 ; and the manna, "which could not be destroyed by fire, being warmed with a little sunbeam, presently melted away, that it might be known to all that we must prevent the sun to bless thee, and adore thee at the dawning of the light," Wisd. xvi. 27. Our Saviour himself watched whole nights in prayer ; St. Paul exhorts us to approve ourselves as servants of Christ, "in fasting, in watching" ; 2 Cor. vi. 5 ; and tells us that it was his own practice to chastise his body, "in labour, in toil, in many watchings," 2 Cor. xi. 27. In all which we see that this holy penitential work of watching consists in moderating the quantity of our sleep, in interrupting it, and getting up early in the morning to praise God and pray to him. *Hard lying* also is another penitential work pointed out to us strongly in the word of God. When David's child was sick, he "fasted and lay upon the ground," seven days, to move God to mercy, and to obtain the life of the child. Among the penitential works by which Achab found mercy with God, one was, that he "slept in sackcloth" ; and Joel exhorts the people to have recourse to the same means of finding mercy, "Gird yourselves and lament, O ye priests.....go in and lie in sackcloth, ye servants of my God," Joel i. 13. Ah, if the saints of God did penance in this manner, what ought we sinners to do ?

Q. 37. What are those penitential works which we must undergo whether we will or not ?

A. All the miseries and troubles to which we are daily exposed in this life, and which we cannot avoid. Were we diligent in performing the penitential works contained in the former classes, we might easily discharge a great part of the debt we owe to the Divine justice ; but, alas ! our backwardness in that is most deplorable, and therefore Almighty God, out of his infinite goodness, sends us many trials and afflictions of different kinds, as it were, to force us to our real good. Now, what sufferings he sends are surely the most proper for us ; and, as we must unavoidably undergo whatever he sends upon us, it becomes an easy matter to discharge our debt by their means ; all that is required, is to bear them with a penitential

spirit, receiving them with patience and submission from the hand of God, and taking them as a penance sent by him for our sins. Penitential works of this class are innumerable. (1.) The toils and labours of our state of life, are a penance laid upon us by God from the very fall of Adam, in punishment of which, God said to Adam, "cursed is the earth in thy work with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life; in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt earn thy bread," Gen. iii. What a field of penitential works does this give to servants, husbandmen, and tradesmen? &c. (2.) The inclemencies of the weather, heat, and cold, rain, frost, snow, &c., afford to all an abundant matter for the same purpose. (3.) Distractions, aridities, and desolations in time of prayer, are a just punishment for the many times we have been deaf to the calls of God, resisted his graces, and filled our heads with idle, unprofitable or sinful thoughts; but, if borne with a penitential spirit, will be an effectual discharge of the debt we have contracted by these faults. (4.) Your children are obstinate, and a torment to you; remember how you behaved to your parents, and your negligence in bringing up your own children well, and take the pain they give you as a penance sent from God for these sins. (5.) Servants, your masters and mistresses are harsh and ill-natured: Masters, your servants are disobedient and careless; what noble opportunities does this give to each, of offering up a daily penance most acceptable to God? Sicknes and pain attack you; here also is a large and excellent field for making up your accounts with God to your great advantage. And so of all the other crosses, which God sends upon us in this life, and which there is no avoiding, but which may easily be turned to the best account in the way of doing penance for our sins. But oh! how contrary is our conduct in all these cases to what it ought to be? And how often do we abuse these occasions which God sends us of making up our peace with him; and turn them into occasions of increasing our guilt and our debt, by our impatience and murmuring under them! How unreasonable is our conduct in this respect! How great our folly!

SECTION VI.—*Of the effects of true Repentance in the Remission of Sin.*

Q. 38. Does true repentance remit sin, or wash it away from the soul?

A. By no means ; the remission of sin is solely the work of God, and nothing but his grace can wash away the stains of sin from the soul.

Q. 39. What part then has repentance in the pardon of sin ?

A. (1.) It disposes the soul for receiving from God the pardon of sin ; for without repentance the soul is utterly incapable of being restored to the favour and mercy of God, seeing that, as long as the soul loves sin, God will infallibly hate her. (2.) It efficaciously moves God to grant us pardon, because, as Jesus Christ has merited for us the pardon of our sins, on condition of a sincere repentance on our part, and, as God has repeatedly promised pardon to the repenting sinner, consequently, true repentance can never fail to obtain from God the pardon of sin ; he is bound in justice to Jesus Christ, and in fidelity to his own promises, to grant it. Besides, true repentance is itself a gift of God ; it is his holy grace that first moves the sinner to it, it is holy grace which enables the sinner to complete it, insomuch that, without the grace of God, it is impossible for us to have true repentance ; consequently, when God gives to a sinner the grace of true repentance, undoubtedly he will also give the pardon of his sins, with a view to which the grace of repentance was given him.

Q. 40. What is meant by the pardon or remission of sin ; in what does it consist ?

A. We have seen above, that sin defiles, pollutes, and stains the soul in a most miserable manner, and renders her ugly and hateful in the sight of God, like to the very devils themselves ; and loathsome to him and his holy angels, as a dead carcase is in the eyes of man. Now, as long as these pollutions and defilements of sin remain in the soul, it is impossible God should be reconciled with her. When, therefore, upon the sinner's sincere repentance, Almighty God, through the merits of Christ pardon his sins, he washes away, and cleanses the soul from all these pollutions of sin by his justifying grace ; this renders her beautiful and agreeable to God, and restores her to his friendship and favour. So that the pardon or remission of sin, properly speaking, consists in delivering the soul from the guilt of sin, adorning her with the grace of God, and restoring her to his favour.

Q. 41. How does it appear that Almighty God takes away and destroys all the stains and guilt of sin from the soul when he pardons sin ?

A. This is manifestly shown from many clear testimonies of scripture. (1.) From those which expressly affirm it: thus God promises by his prophet, "I will pour upon you clean water, and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness," Ezech. xxxvi. 25. God "will turn again and have mercy on us; he will put away our iniquities, and he will cast all our sins into the bottom of the sea," Mich. vii. 19. Before David fell, he said to God, "Thou has tried me by fire, and iniquity hath not been found in me," Ps. xvi. 3. But after his unhappy fall he prayed, "Wash me yet more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sins.....and blot out all my iniquities," Ps. l. 4, 11. And afterwards, describing the pardon he had got, he said, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our iniquities from us," Ps. cii. 12. The angel also touched Isaiah's lips with a coal, and said, "Behold this hath touched thy lips, and thy iniquity shall be taken away, and thy sins shall be cleansed," Is. vi. 7. St. Peter also, in his sermon to the Jews, says, "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out," Acts iii. 19. (2.) From those texts where this is expressly declared to be the benefit obtained for us by Jesus Christ; thus, he is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world," John i. 29. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John i. 7; for "he hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood," Rev. i. 5; "for if the blood of goats and of oxen, &c., sanctify such as are defiled, to the cleansing of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ cleanse our conscience from dead works?" Heb. ix. 14. (3.) From those texts which declare this to be done from the sacrament of baptism; thus, "Arise and be baptised, and wash away your sins," Acts xxii. 16; and St. Paul, speaking of different grievous sins, says, "And such some of you were, but you are washed, but you are sanctified, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God," 1 Cor. vi. 11.

Q. 42. By what means does Almighty God wash our souls from the guilt of our sins, when he grants us pardon for them?

A. By his holy grace, or Divine charity, which he pours down into the soul by his Holy Spirit, and which both washes away all the stains and pollutions of sin, and also beautifies the soul, and makes her just and holy in his sight; "because the charity of God is poured abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us," Rom. v. 5.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

Q. 1. WHAT is the grace of God ?

A. It is a supernatural gift of God, not at all due to us ; a Divine quality communicated by God to the soul, which cleanses her from all the stains of sin, and renders her beautiful and agreeable in the eyes of God. It is also a Divine help, which excites us and enables us to do good and avoid evil.

Q. 2. How many kinds of grace are there ?

A. It is principally divided into two kinds : actual grace and sanctifying grace.

Q. 3. What good does actual grace do to us ?

A. It fortifies and strengthens the soul.

Q. 4. What good does sanctifying grace do to us ?

A. It washes and beautifies the soul.

SECTION I.—*Of Actual Grace.*

Q. 5. What is actual grace ?

A. Actual grace is an internal supernatural help, which God communicates to the soul, to enable us to do good and avoid evil.

Q. 6. How does this actual grace operate on the soul ?

A. (1.) By enlightening the understanding, to see what ought to be done or avoided, and inclining the will towards what is good, or averting it from evil ; and, on this account it is called *exciting* grace, and *preventing* grace. It is called *exciting* grace, because, it excites and invites us, as it were, to do good and avoid evil ; and it is called *preventing* grace, because it is wholly the work of God in our souls, and precedes every deliberate or voluntary act of our own, as experience itself teaches us ; for we feel those holy inspirations arise in our souls, without anything done by us to procure them or having it in our power to hinder them ; though, when they come, we have it always in our power either to comply with them or to resist them. (2.) When we freely comply with this first motion of actual grace, it continues to fortify and strengthen us to go on and perfect the good work we have begun ; and on this account it is called *concomitant* grace ; because it accompanies us during the whole action, and *strengthening* or *helping* grace, because it helps our weakness, and enables us to perform it.

Q. 7. What does the scripture say of this actual grace ?

A. Our Saviour says himself, "Behold I stand at the door and knock." See here the exciting grace ; and he immediately adds, "If any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me," Rev. iii. 20. Behold the helping grace, or the continuation of his actual grace, when we comply with the first motions it works on our souls. To the same purpose St. Paul says, "It is God who worketh in you, both to will and to accomplish, according to his good pleasure," Phil. ii. 13. God worketh in us to *will*, by his exciting grace, without which we could never of ourselves have a good thought : and to *accomplish* by his helping grace, without which we can do nothing. David was very sensible of this when he said, "My God, his mercy shall prevent me," Ps. lviii. 11. And again, "Thou hast held me by my right hand, and by thy will thou hast conducted me," Ps. lxxii. 24. "And thy mercy shall follow me all the days of my life," Ps. xxii. 6. On this subject St. Paul also says, "He who hath begun the good work in you shall perfect it," Phil. i. 6. To show that it is God who first begins, and then enables us by his help to perfect the good work.

Q. 8. Can we, by our own natural strength, without the help of God's grace, do any thing towards our salvation.

A. No ; we cannot of ourselves, and without the grace of God, do the least thing towards our salvation, neither in thought, word, nor deed ; nor so much as have a good motion in our heart towards God, but which must first be excited in us by him. As this is a point of the greatest importance, the foundation of true Christian humility, and the source of all good to our souls, it is necessary to establish it in the strongest manner ; the more so, because our pride, the deepest and most dangerous wound our nature has received from sin, recoils at this truth, and endeavours to hide it entirely from our eyes. From this unhappy blindness towards ourselves, and towards our own weakness and misery, innumerable evils flow to our poor souls : wherefore we must consider fully what the word of God teaches us concerning this great Christian truth.

(1.) No man can take the smallest step to come to Jesus Christ unless he be moved and assisted thereto by God. This our Saviour declares in express terms, "No man can come to me," says he, "except the Father who hath sent me draw him," John vi. 44, and not by compulsion, nor by laying the free will of man under any necessity, but by the strong and sweet

motions of his heavenly grace; and, therefore, a little after repeating the same truth, he says, "No man can come to me, unless it be given him of my Father," verse 66. To show that this grace is not a force or constraint put upon us, but a gift of God, an effect of his mercy, enlightening our minds to see, and inclining our wills to do what is good, and when we consent to and comply with that inclination, assisting us to complete the good work. To the same purpose St. Paul says, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy," Rom. ix. 16. Because no natural will nor endeavour of our own can ever lead us towards Christ, unless we be excited thereto by the preventing mercy of God.

(2.) We cannot have true faith in Jesus Christ, nor believe the sacred truths of eternity with Divine faith, without the help of his grace. Thus St. Paul declares, "To you it is given for Christ to believe in him," Phil. i. 29. And again, "by grace you are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God," Ephes. ii. 8. Hence the church of Christ, by the mouth of her general councils, pronounces anathema upon those who teach, that "without the preventing inspiration and help of the Holy Ghost, a man can believe as he ought." Conc. Trid. Sess. 6. can. 3.

(3.) A sinner cannot, by his own strength, repent of his sins as he ought, unless he receive the grace of repentance from the mercy of God. This we have seen above, in the preceding chapter xvii. sect. 4; to which add what St. Paul writes to the Ephesians, attributing his favour entirely to the mercy, grace, and love of God: "God," *says he*, "who is rich in mercy, for his exceeding great charity wherewith he loves us, even when we were dead by sins, hath quickened us together in Christ, by whose grace ye are saved," Eph. ii. 4.

(4.) "We can neither think a good thought, nor speak a good word, which can be useful towards our salvation, without the assistance of God, for we are not sufficient to think any thing of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God," 2 Cor. iii. 5. "Wherefore I give you to understand.....that no man can say the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. xii. 3. And hence the wise man says, "It is the part of the Lord to govern the tongue," Prov. xvi. 1; to show that we can never speak what is good and conducive to our salvation, unless the Lord guide and assist us in what we say.

(5.) We cannot do a good action, nor produce any good fruit

conducive to eternal happiness, without the help of God. "I am the vine," says Jesus Christ, "you the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing," John xv. 5. He does not say, without me you can do little; because this would suppose we could do something of ourselves; but he absolutely says, "Without me you can do nothing," to show that, whether little or much, we cannot do it without his assistance.

In a word, whatever we do towards our salvation, whatever progress we make in virtue or Christian perfection, all flows from the mercy and grace of God through Jesus Christ. It is he "who worketh in us both to will and to accomplish according to his good pleasure," Phil. ii. 13. "It is he who begins the good work in us, and who also perfects it," Phil. i. 6. And hence St. Paul acknowledges, that all the good that is in him, and all the good works he had wrought, flowed from this Divine grace and mercy; "By the grace of God," says he, "I am what I am, and his grace in me hath not been void; but I have laboured more abundantly than all they; yet not I, but the grace of God with me," 1 Cor. xv. 10.

Q. 9. Why does the apostle say, *the grace of God with me*?

A. By these words he shows, that, although Almighty God is always the first to begin the good work in us, by his exciting and preventing grace; and, although it is God who carries on the good work in us to its perfection, by his assisting grace; yet it is not the grace alone that does it, but that we also co-operate with this grace, freely consenting to its motions in our soul, and willingly performing the good work to which it inclines and assists us. Almighty God *will cure your infirmities*," says St. Augustine; but "you must be willing yourself; he heals all that are infirm, but he heals none but those who are willing to be cured," in Ps. 102. n. 6. He stands at the door of our heart and knocks, by his preventing grace; but we must yield to his call, and open the door of our heart to him, if we want him to come in and sup with us; for, as the same St. Augustine says, "He that made you without you"; that is, without any co-operation on your part, "will not justify you without you"; that is, without your will and co-operation.

Q. 10. Is it in our power to resist this grace of God, and not consent to it?

A. Most certainly. The grace of God does not force us, nor take away our free-will; but it helps our weakness, and enables us to will and do what we could neither will nor do without it;

consequently, whether we consent to the motions of his grace, or resist them, in either case we act with the full freedom of our will; when we consent, we have it in our power not to consent, and when we resist, we have it in our power to consent. Free-will is an essential part of our nature with which we were created; for "God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel. He added his commandments and precepts: If thou wilt keep the commandments and perform acceptable fidelity for ever, they shall preserve thee. He hath set water and fire before thee; stretch forth thy hand to which thou wilt. Before man is life and death, good and evil; that which he shall choose, shall be given him," Ecclus. xv. 14. This liberty and free-will with which God created man, was greatly diminished by original sin, and our power of doing good exceedingly weakened, from the violence of concupiscence let loose in our souls by that sin. Now, the grace of Jesus Christ cures this infirmity, fortifies and perfects our liberty, excites us to do good, and enables us to perform it: but by no means forces us. Nay, fatal experience itself teaches us, that we too often resist the motions of grace; which alas! is the source of all our woe.

Q. 11. Why do ye say, that without the help of God's grace, *we can do nothing towards our salvation?*

A. That is to say, that whatever good action we may do by the mere strength of nature, and without the aid of the grace of Jesus Christ, it can ever, in any manner, conduce to our eternal salvation; because "there is no other name given to men under heaven, by which we can be saved, but the name of Jesus only, neither is their salvation in any other," Acts. iv. 12. Consequently, whatever we do independent of him, however laudable it may be in itself, or in the eyes of men, can in no way contribute, neither mediately nor immediately towards our salvation. Nothing can conduce, in any degree, towards our salvation, but through the merits of Christ. The merits of Jesus Christ are applied to our souls only by his grace; whatever, then, we do in union with his grace, partakes of his merits; and, whatever we do without his grace, and by the force of nature alone, partakes not of his merits, and, therefore, can be of no use towards our salvation; hence he himself says, "Without me you can do nothing"; namely, nothing conducive to salvation; and St. Paul says, "No man can say, Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Spirit; to wit, no man can say it, so as to conduce to his salvation.

Q. 12. But can man do anything good at all without the grace of God ?

A. Observe, although our nature was greatly vitiated by sin, yet it was not totally corrupted and lost to all good. There still remain in us some sparks of that original rectitude in which we were created ; and hence, among the numberless vicious dispositions of the heart of man, there are few or no persons to be found who have not some good natural inclinations, some to one moral virtue, some to another. Thus some are naturally inclined to compassion, some to generosity, some to honesty in their dealings, and so of others. Now, though these good natural dispositions will not be able to support a man, when they are occasionally opposed by other violent passions ; yet in ordinary cases he can act according to them, and, when he does so, he performs a good moral action ; and this he certainly may do by the strength of nature only ; and though such actions can in no respect conduce to salvation, which is a supernatural reward ; yet they do not fail to receive from God some temporal recompense ; for the Divine justice “ will render to everyone according to his works.”

Q. 13. As we cannot possibly do anything conducive to our eternal salvation, without the actual grace of God exciting us, and aiding us thereto, does God bestow this grace upon all men without exception ?

A. It would certainly be the height of impiety to suppose that God would lay his commands upon us his creatures, and oblige us to obey them, under pain of eternal damnation, the most dreadful of evils, and at the same time refuse to give us those helps without which it is impossible for us to observe them. Nothing can be more contrary to every idea we have of the wisdom, goodness, and justice of God, than such a supposition. Seeing, then, that God commands all men without exception, to do good, and avoid evil, he certainly gives to all such helps of his grace, as he sees necessary to enable them to do so, and by doing so to save their souls. This truth is laid down to us in the scripture as follows : “ Wisdom preacheth abroad, she uttereth her voice in the streets ; at the head of the multitudes she cries out, in the entrance of the gates of the city she uttereth her words, saying, O children, how long will you love childishness, and fools covet those things which are hurtful to themselves, and the unwise hate knowledge ; Turn ye at my reproof : behold I will utter my spirit to you, and will show you my words,” Prov. i. 20. So speaks the

wisdom of God in all places, and to all men, reproving them for their evil ways, inviting them to good, and promising the Divine Spirit to those that give ear to his invitations. Again, "Thou hast mercy upon all, because thou canst do all things, and winkest at the sins of men, because of repentance. For thou lovest all things that are, and hatest nothing of the things that thou hast made—but thou sparest all because they are thine, O Lord, who lovest souls," *Wisd. xi. 24*. Here we see that God loveth all that he has made, consequently all men without exception; that he spares them, and has mercy upon them; consequently he gives to all, without exception, such helps of his grace, at least, as are necessary for enabling them to repent, and do good, and save their souls, if they co-operate with them: otherwise his loving them, having mercy on them, and sparing them, would be nugatory, and to no purpose. To the same purpose Jesus Christ says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man shall hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him and sup with him, and he with me. To him that shall overcome I will give to sit with me on my throne," *Rev. iii. 20*. Christ then knocks at the hearts of all; there is no exception; and if any man opens, be he what he will, if he gives Christ entrance, and co-operating with him, shall overcome, eternal glory shall be his reward. On this account, it is said of Christ, that he is "the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world," *John i. 9*; consequently, every man, without exception, is enlightened by Christ; for, "to every one of us is given grace, according to the measure of the giving of Christ," *Eph. iv. 7*. That is, he gives to some more, to some less, as he thinks proper, but to all what is sufficient for their needs, if they comply with what he gives. He is master of his own gifts, and may give more abundantly to whom he pleases, as he did to the Jews of old, of whom it is said, "He hath not done in like manner to every nation," *Ps. cxlvii. 20*; and he gives five talents to one, two to another, and only one to a third; but that one was sufficient for him who received it, and therefore he was justly condemned for not improving it. Besides these general proofs, which show that God gives to all men the graces absolutely necessary for their salvation, there are also several plain testimonies of scripture which prove the same, in particular, of each of the three classes into which mankind are divided, to wit, true believers who are in the state of grace, true believers who are in the state of sin, and unbelievers.

Q. 14. How is this shown with regard to those who are in the state of grace?

A. That the just who are in the state of grace, and in friendship with God, are never deprived of such helps of the actual grace of God as enable them, if they themselves be willing to co-operate with them, to keep all the commandments of God, and persevere in the state of grace, is an article of divine faith, which assures us, (1.) That "God is able to make all grace abound in you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work," 2 Cor. ix. 8; "for I can do all things in him who strengtheneth me," Phil. iv. 13. (2.) That the stronger the temptation is, the greater grace is given to enable the just man to overcome it, for "to envy doth the spirit covet that dwelleth in you; but he giveth greater grace," James iv. 5. (3.) That God hath pledged his sacred promise to give them his grace; for "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able, but will make also with temptation issue (that is, *a way to escape*) that you may be able to bear it," 1 Cor. x. 13; and the Church, in the great council of Trent, defines this: "If anyone shall say that the commands of God are impossible to be observed by a just man, who is in the state of grace, let him be anathema," Sess. vi. can. 18; and hence assures, that "God does not forsake those who are justified by his grace, unless he be first forsaken by them," Sess. vi. ch. 11; for "God does not command impossibilities, but by commanding us" *to do any thing*, "he admonishes us to do what we can, to pray for what help we need, and then he helps us to make us able," *Ibid.*

Q. 15. Why does the council say, *to pray for what help we need*?

A. It is to show us, that the grace enabling us to pray is never wanting, and this grace, if well used, will never fail to obtain all other necessary helps, according to our Saviour's ample promise, "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you"; and, consequently, that it is always in our own power to keep the commandments of God, and overcome all temptations of breaking them, seeing we always have either the actual assistance of God's grace enabling us to do so, or the grace of prayer, by the proper use of which that actual assistance will certainly be obtained.

Q. 16. How does it appear that Almighty God gives the

necessary assistance of his grace to true believers who are in the state of sin ?

A. Two things God requires of people in this state ; first, to repent of their past sins, and return to his friendship, and, secondly, not to go on in a sinful course, but to keep his commandments. Now, as God expressly requires both these things from them, the proofs of the preceding case evince in this also, that he gives such sinners the necessary helps to enable them to do both ; to which the following proofs are added : “ As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his evil way and live. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways ; and why will you die, O house of Israel ? ” Ezech. xxxiii. 11. Now, if God so earnestly wills the life of the sinner, and so pressingly invites him to turn and live, he must necessarily give him grace to enable him to do so. The same reason holds for what St. Peter says, “ The Lord dealeth patiently for your sake, not willing that any should perish, but that all should return to penance,” 2 Peter iii. 9 ; and our Saviour warmly invites all such to come to him, and, consequently, gives them the necessary graces to enable them to follow his invitation, “ Come to me,” says he, “ all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you,” Matt. xi. ; besides, all the above general proofs have particular place here.

Q. 17. But what if the sinner be blinded and hardened in his sin ?

A. Nothing, to be sure, is more deplorable than the state of a blinded and hardened sinner. A blinded sinner is one who has taken up some false and dangerous opinions, and is so positive and fixed in them, that he shuts his eyes to everything that can undeceive him. A hardened sinner is one whose passions and affections towards some bad objects are so strong, that he contemns and resists all the admonitions which God sends him, whether by the interior motions of his grace, or the exterior call from his holy word, good books, exhortations of pastors or the like. Now, this most unhappy state is in itself, a sinful state ; for it is a sin to have our mind or heart tied to any false or sinful object ; it is also a consequence and punishment of former sins ; and, what is no less deplorable, it is the cause and source of other sins. Yet, notwithstanding this is so great an evil, God Almighty, through the riches of his mercy, does not entirely abandon such sinners, but visits them from time to time with his holy calls, both by exterior

trials, and the internal motions of his Holy Spirit, with which if they will concur, they might work out their conversion. This appears from what St. Stephen said to the blind and obdurate Jews, "You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and in ears, you always resist the Holy Ghost," Acts vii. 41; which shows that the Holy Ghost did not entirely withdraw the offers of his grace from them, but that they obstinately resisted and rejected them. St. Paul also, speaking to such sinners, says, "Knowest thou not that the benignity of God leadeth thee to repentance; but according to thy hardness and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the just judgment of God," Rom. ii. 4; where we see that the goodness of God does not give over entirely moving such sinners to repentance; but their hard heart rejecting all his calls, justly increases the measure of their guilt and punishment.

Q. 18. Why do you say *that he does not entirely abandon them?*

A. Because though God, out of his infinite goodness, does not wholly leave such sinners while they are in this life; yet in just punishment of their repeated abuses on mercy, he withdraws his more powerful graces from them, visits them seldomer, and sometimes leave them for a while entirely. On this account, their blindness towards spiritual things becomes greater, and the hardness of their heart more confirmed. And in this sense it is said in scripture, that God sometimes hardens sinners, blinds them, leaves them to their own inventions, gives them up to their lusts, or to a reprobate sense, and the like; which is certainly the greatest of all punishments which he inflicts upon sinners in this life, but what such sinners most justly deserve for their repeated abuses of mercy.

Q. 19. How comes this to be so dreadful a punishment?

A. Because, as we can do no good of ourselves without the grace of God, so, left to ourselves, without the aid of his holy grace, there is no manner of crimes into which we would not plunge ourselves headlong. Hear how the scripture shows us what we are of ourselves, "God saw that the wickedness of men was great upon the earth, and that all the thought of their heart was bent upon evil at all times," Gen. vi. 5. "And the Lord said, the imagination and thought of man's heart are prone to evil from his youth," Gen. viii. 21. "The heart is perverse above all things, and unsearchable, who can know it?" Jer. xvii. 9. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts,

murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies," Matt. xv. 19. See also the description which St. Paul gives, Rom. i. and iii., of the abominations which the heathens fell into, "in times past, when," as he tells us, "God suffered all nations to walk in their own way," Acts xiv. 15. Therefore, to be left to ourselves, and deprived of the grace of God, is to be left in the hands of our greatest enemy, so as to be hurried on by him to certain damnation.

Q. 20. How does it appear that God gives to unbelievers such helps of his actual grace as are sufficient to enable them to arrive at salvation?

A. Besides the general proofs brought above, which show that he does this to all men, without exception, there are also these two following: *First*, "God will have men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 3. He wills all to be saved, as the great end for which he created them; and to come to the knowledge of the truth, as a necessary condition of salvation, because, "without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6. Now, infidels, or unbelievers of all kinds, have not this knowledge of the truth. Seeing, therefore, that God expressly wills they should get it and be saved, consequently he gives them such graces as are sufficient, if they co-operate with them, to bring them to it. *Secondly*, Jesus Christ, "gave himself a redemption for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6; and "he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world," 1 John ii. 2; for "he is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful," 1 Tim. iv. 10: consequently all must receive, in some manner or other, the fruits of his redemption: with a view to their salvation, by means of his grace; therefore, all Infidels, Jews, Turks, and Heathens receive from God, in such measure and manner as he sees proper, such graces as are sufficient; if they co-operate with them, to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, and to salvation.

Q. 21. What is the tendency of all those actual graces which God bestows upon all mankind?

A. The ultimate tendency of them all is to procure the salvation of souls; but their immediate tendency is different, according to the different people who receive them. In unbelievers the immediate end of these graces is to enable them to observe the law of nature, by avoiding evil and doing good; which, if they comply with faithfully, greater and greater graces of the same kind would be given them, till at last the Divine

wisdom would bring them, in such manner as he sees proper, to the knowledge of the truth and to the faith of Jesus Christ. In the faithful who are in a state of sin, these graces tend immediately to excite them to repentance, and bring them to the grace of justification. In those who are justified and in the state of grace, the actual graces they receive, enable them to persevere in that happy state, by obeying the commands of God, and to secure their salvation.

Q. 22. Whence comes it that these noble effects are so seldom produced in the greatest part of mankind?

A. Not from any deficiency in the graces we receive, which are all fully sufficient for producing these effects in our souls; but from the perverse will of man, which resists these motions of the grace of God, refuses to comply with them, and renders them of no effect.

Q. 23. But cannot Almighty God give us such grace as would effectually overcome that perverseness of our will?

A. No doubt, Almighty God has an absolute power over the heart of man, and in the treasures of his infinite wisdom and mercy, has such superabundant and suitable helps and graces to give him, as would infallibly procure his free and willing consent to whatever God requires from him. This power he exercised in a most miraculous manner in the conversion of St. Paul, St. Mary Magdalene, and others. Hence the scripture affirms, "that God works in us both to will and to do, according to his good pleasure"; and God himself says, "I will give you a new heart and a new spirit.....and I will put my Spirit in the midst of you, and I will cause you to walk in my commandments," *Ezech. xxxvi. 26*; also the Wise Man says, "The heart of the king is the hand of the Lord, whithersoever he will he shall turn it," *Prov. xxi. 1*. Now this supreme dominion which God has over the heart and will of man, as our sovereign Lord, he exercises not by forcing our will or infringing on our liberty, but by giving us such abundant and suitable graces as he infallibly knows will procure our ready consent, and effectually enable us to do what he pleases, and cheerfully to walk in his commandments. Thus David says, "I have run in the way of thy commandments, when thou didst dilate my heart," *Ps. cxviii. 32*. And the Holy Ghost pronounces that man "blessed, that could have transgressed and hath not transgressed, and could do evil things, and hath not done them; therefore are his goods established in the Lord," *Ecclus. xxxi. 10*; where it is manifest, and expressly affirmed that when, through the grace

of God, we observe his commands, we have it in our power to transgress them, and when we abstain from evil we have it in our power to do it; and therefore, that the grace by which we do good and avoid evil, and by which God *causes* us to walk in his commandments, and *turns* our heart whithersoever he pleases, does by no means force us, or hurt our free will, but strengthens and rectifies and perfects it. On this account, those graces of God which man resists, and to which he refuses his consent, are called, in the language of divines, *sufficient graces*, because they are always sufficient to enable us to do what God requires we should do when he gives them, though by our resistance we do it not; but those graces to which we consent, and with which we co-operate, are called *efficacious graces*, because the happy effects for which they are given are actually produced in our consent and co-operation with them.

Q. 24. Is Almighty God obliged to give us these superabundant and efficacious graces?

A. Observe: man of himself has no manner of right, claim or title to any grace from God at all; being by nature born in sin, and a child of wrath, he is the just object of God's justice, but has nothing in himself which can give him the smallest claim to favour. So that God has no obligation, on the part of man, to give him any grace at all. But as God has a sincere will for the salvation of all men, and as Jesus Christ died for the salvation of all, and through the merits of his death, obtained for them all such graces as are necessary for enabling them to procure their salvation; therefore, God Almighty becomes obliged to his own goodness, which thus wills all to be saved, and to Jesus Christ, who has bought for us the necessary helps to salvation, to bestow on all mankind such graces as are necessary and sufficient for enabling them to work out their salvation, if they consent to, and co-operate with them; and these, as we have seen at large, he actually gives to all, without exception: so that, whoever is lost, is lost through his own fault, for not making the use that he might make of the graces which God bestows upon him. But as for those other superabundant graces, God is, properly speaking, obliged to give them to none; they are the effects of his pure mercy, and he gives them to whom he pleases; he is sole master of his own gifts, and distributes them according to his own pleasure; and, as it is impossible for men to comprehend his unsearchable judgments in the distribution of his graces, so none can find fault with what he does, or say to him, "Why doest thou so?" This we

know for certain, and this is fully sufficient for us to know, that God gives to all what is necessary ; that we have it in our power to be saved, if we will ourselves ; that the grace of prayer is never wanting to us, and that, if we make a good use of the graces God gives us, and pray as we ought for more, we shall undoubtedly obtain whatever we stand in need of ; that therefore, if we be lost, it is wholly our own fault, and if we be saved, we owe this to his infinite goodness only, through the merits of Jesus ; according to what he says by his prophet, " Destruction is thy own, O Israel, thy help is only in me," Hosea xiii. 9.

Q. 25. On what occasions does God commonly bestow his grace upon men ?

A. Times and moments are in the hands of the Almighty, who bestows his gifts when and how he pleases, and is not tied to occasions ; but of this we are sure, that the necessary helps of his grace are always ready when our wants require them. We may also be assured, that he will never refuse them when we pray in a proper manner for them. Besides this, we know, from experience, that our merciful God frequently sends us pious thoughts and holy inspirations, from time to time, without any other rule than his own good pleasure ; and did we attend as we ought, to our own interior, and keep our heart free from all inordinate attachments to creatures, unbiassed by depraved affections, and undisturbed by passions, we would receive these holy inspirations oftener, and be much more sensible of them. But the most ordinary occasions on which God sends us the most touches of his grace are to accompany his external graces.

Q. 26. What do you mean by external graces ?

A. All those external helps to salvation which God has appointed ; such as the great mysteries of our redemption, a Christian education, the good examples of others, miracles, the preaching of his word, the exhortations of our spiritual directors, reading good books, and the like ; all which are intended as helps to our salvation ; and, when we either read, see, hear, or meditate upon them, are generally accompanied by the proper interior graces, in order to render them profitable to our souls. Thus David was brought to a sense of his sin, and to repentance, on the reprehension he received from Nathan, by the internal grace accompanying that reprehension. The Ninevites did penance at the preaching of Jonas : the good thief was converted at seeing the wonderful patience of Jesus ; and so of others without number.

Q. 27. Can these external helps be of any use without internal graces?

A. No, they cannot; "It is the Holy Ghost," says St. Augustine, "that operates internally, in order to make the external help of service," Civ. Dei, l. 15. c. 6. And we read of a sermon of St. Paul's at which only one woman was converted, of whom it was said, "whose heart the Lord opened to attend to those things that were said by Paul," Acts xvi. 14.

Q. 28. What consequences flow from this?

A. Two very important consequences, (1.) That as these external graces are the most ordinary occasions on which Almighty God speaks to the heart, we ought to be extremely assiduous in the daily use of them, meditating often on the great truths of religion, reading pious books, hearing the word of God, and the like. (2.) That, as none of these helps can be of benefit to ourselves, nor can any of these means used by us to others, be of any service to them, except God be pleased to accompany them with his internal grace, we ought, therefore, to be extremely careful, upon all such occasions, to pray earnestly to God beforehand for his benediction; for "Paul may plant, and Apollo may water, but it is God, alone that gives the increase," 1 Cor. iii.

SECTION II.—*Of Sanctifying Grace.*

Q. 29. What is sanctifying grace?

A. St. Peter calls it a "participation of the divine nature," 2 Pet. i. 4. And St. Paul calls it in one place "the charity of God which is poured abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost," Rom. v.; and in another, "the justice of God by faith of Jesus Christ upon all them that believe in him," Rom. iii. 22. The wise man calls it "a vapour of the power of God, and a certain pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty; and that no undefiled thing can come near it," Wisd. vii. 25. From all this it appears that the sanctifying grace of God is a communication which God makes to our souls of himself; and it is called *grace*, because it is a free gift of his mercy through the merits of Christ; it is called *justice*, because by it our sins are washed away from us, the disorders of our souls rectified, and our souls rendered just and holy in his sight; and it is called *charity*, because it enables us to love God above all things, and our neighbour as ourselves.

Q. 30. Can this be explained by any examples?

A. The two following examples are used for this purpose. First, that of iron and fire: Iron of its own nature is of a blackish ugly colour, is very cold, and very hard; but, when it is heated in a strong fire it loses all its ugly appearance, and becomes bright and shining like the fire itself. It also becomes burning hot, and at the same time soft and ductile, so as easily to be formed into any shape the workman pleases. In like manner, a soul in the state of sin is ugly and hateful in the sight of God, cold and tepid towards all that is good, and of itself hard and obdurate in its evil ways; but, when the great God communicates himself to such a soul, by his justifying grace, all her defilements are washed away, and she becomes just and beautiful before him. She is also warmed with his holy love and with true devotion, and becomes pliable to his blessed will in obedience to his commandments. And this explains what St. Paul means when he says, "As many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ," Gal. iii. 27; because by the grace of justification received in baptism, the justice and sanctity of Christ is poured forth into our souls, which makes us resemble him, as the iron inflamed with the fire, resembles the fire itself. The other example is of the soul and the body of man: A dead body, without the soul, is a loathsome spectacle, incapable of doing any vital action and tending of itself to nothing but rottenness and corruption; but, when the soul is united to the body, it becomes alive, and has all the beauty of the human form, easily performs all the actions of life, and is preserved from corruption. In like manner a soul in the state of sin is a dead soul, and loathsome to behold in the eyes of God and of his holy angels. She is incapable, by any strength of her own, of performing any vital action of the spiritual life conducive to her eternal salvation, and of herself, tends only to run farther and farther into the corruption of sin; but, when the grace of God is poured down into such a soul she becomes alive, and beautiful in his sight, can easily perform the duties of the spiritual life, meritorious of eternal salvation, and is strongly fortified against all the corruption of sin. Hence this grace of God is called *habitual grace*, because it remains constantly in the soul, unless it be destroyed by mortal sin; "because his Spirit dwelleth in you," Rom. viii. 11. It is also called *sanctifying grace*, because it sanctifies the soul, that is, makes it holy and pure before God; and it is called *justifying grace*, because it justifies, that is, cures the disorders of the soul, and renders us just and upright in the eyes of God.

Q. 31. What is meant by justification ?

A. It is when the soul passes from the state of sin to the state of grace.

Q. 32. What is meant by being in a state of sin ?

A. To be in a state of sin is to be polluted by the guilt of mortal sin, deprived of the grace of God, and at enmity with God.

Q. 33. What is it to be in a state of grace ?

A. It is to be cleansed from the guilt of sin, adorned with the grace of God, and in friendship with God.

Q. 24. What are the effects which sanctifying grace produces in the soul ?

A. They are many and most excellent, (1.) It washes away all the stains and guilt of sin from the soul, through the merit of the blood of Christ, which it applies to the soul, according to that, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin," 1 John i. 7. See above chap. xvii. Q. 41.

(2.) It cures all the deadly infirmities of the soul as the prophet declares in these words : "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all he has done for thee ; who forgiveth all thy iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases," Ps. cii. 2. And hence our Saviour calls himself the Physician of souls, when he says, "They that are in health need not a physician ; but they that are ill.....for I am not come to call the just, but sinners," Mat. ix. 12. Not that grace takes away all the effects of sin from the soul ; for concupiscence, or that proclivity to sin which followed upon the loss of original justice, still remains ; neither does it destroy those bad habits which we have contracted by actual sin ; but it strengthens the soul against both, and enables us to fight against them, and overcome them : for these effects of sin are not sins in themselves, except in as far as we consent to them ; but when we faithfully resist them they cannot hurt us, but are the field of our victory, and the increase of our crown.

(3.) It beautifies the soul, and renders us agreeable and delightful in the eyes of our Creator ; resembling Jesus Christ by the union we have with him through grace ; just as the fire when it thoroughly penetrates a piece of iron, not only takes away all its natural blackness, but makes it shining and bright, and glowing like the fire itself. Hence the scripture says, "he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in his sight in charity," Eph. i. 4. And on this account "the Lord loveth the just," Ps.

clxv. 8, "for his soul pleased God," Wisd. iv. 14; and why? "How beautiful is the chaste generation with glory!" Wisd. iv. 1.

(4.) It makes us temples of the Holy Ghost, who dwells in a particular manner in the soul of the just. "Know you not," says the apostle, "that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?.....for the temple of God is holy, which you are," 1 Cor. iii. 16. "Know you not that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God!" 1 Cor. vi. 19.

(5.) It makes us the adopted children of God; "for whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God..... you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry (Abba) Father; for the Spirit himself giveth testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God," Rom. viii. 14, because by the inward motions of Divine love, and the peace of conscience which the children of God experience, they have a kind of testimony of God's favour, which strengthens their hope of salvation, and their confidence in God as their loving Father. St. John speaks of this dignity with amazement, "Behold," says he, "what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be the sons of God!" 1 John iii. 1.

(6.) It makes us heirs of the kingdom of heaven, giving us a right and title, as sons, to that eternal inheritance; for, "if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God, and joint-heirs with Christ," Rom. viii. 17. "And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore he is now no more a servant but a Son; and if a Son, an heir also through God," Gal. iv. 6.

(7.) It adorns the soul with the habits of all Christian virtues, according to the riches of his grace, "which hath superabounded in us in all wisdom and prudence," Eph. i. 7, and particularly in these divine virtues of faith, hope, and charity; for thus the word of God describes the admirable virtues which accompany the spirit of wisdom, and which he communicates to the soul in which he dwells, by sanctifying grace: "I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came upon me.....Now, all good things come to me together with her, and innumerable riches through her hands.....For she is an infinite treasure to men, which they that use become friends of God.....For in her is the spirit of understanding.....For she is a vapour of the power of God, and a certain pure emanation of the glory of the

Almighty God ; and, therefore, no defiled thing cometh near her.....She conveyeth herself into holy souls, and maketh friends of God and prophets : For God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom ; for she is more beautiful than the sun, and above all the order of the stars ; being compared with light, she is found before it.....It is she that teacheth the knowledge of God.....And if a man love justice, her labours have great virtues ; for she teacheth temperance, and prudence, and justice, and fortitude, which are such things as men can have nothing more profitable in life.....Her conversation hath no bitterness, nor her company any tediousness, but joy and gladness ; and there is a great delight in her friendship, and inexhaustible riches in the works of her hands," Wisd. vii. viii. through the whole. Behold what an amiable description of the admirable benefits which the Divine wisdom communicates to the soul in which she dwells, by sanctifying grace, and which she never fails effectually to produce in those who faithfully co-operate with her holy inspirations, and study in all their doings to act by her light and direction.

(8.) It gives a dignity, value, and merit, to all our good works, which makes them most acceptable in the sight of God, and worthy of an ample reward from him, both of an increase of grace in this life, and of eternal glory in the life to come. For, when a soul is united with Jesus Christ by his grace, the good works which that soul performs, in obedience to his holy will, and from a pure intention of pleasing him, are now no longer the works of corrupted sinful man, but are the works of the friends of God, fruits produced from the branch united to the vine, which is Christ, receiving all their nourishment from the vine, and dignified by his merits communicated to them by grace. Thus he himself says, " I am the vine, you the branches ; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit," John xv. 5. And to show that these good works obtain an increase of grace, here he says, " Every branch in me that beareth fruit, he (*my Father*) will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit," John xv. 2 ; and that they procure both an increase of our sanctification here, and at last eternal life, St. Paul assures us in these words, " But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end everlasting life ; for the wages of sin is death ; but the grace of God everlasting life, in Christ Jesus our Lord," Rom. vi. 22. Hence the holy scripture everywhere proposes the kingdom of heaven as

a reward and recompense given by a just God to the good works done in the state of grace. Thus God said to Abraham, when he was ready to sacrifice his son, "By my own self have I sworn, because thou hast done this thing—I will bless thee," Gen. xxi. 16. "I myself will be your reward," said he upon another occasion, "exceeding great," Gen. xv. 1. "Be glad," says Jesus Christ, "and rejoice, for your reward is great in heaven," Matt. v. 12. So he promises an open reward from our heavenly Father, to "prayer, fasting, and alms," Matt. vi. And at the last day he will say to the good, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you; for I was hungry, and ye gave me meat," &c., Matt. xxv. "A cup of water given in his name shall not lose its reward," Matt. x. 42. "Our present tribulation worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory," 2 Cor. iv. 17. Hence St. Paul says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; for the rest there is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just Judge, will render to me at that day," 2 Tim. iv. 7. Now, all this is the effect of the sanctifying grace of God, who crowns his own gifts in us; and, therefore

(9.) It brings us at last to eternal happiness, if we persevere in the state of grace to the end; for "being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him," Rom. v. 9. And "they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift, and of justice, shall reign in life through one Jesus Christ," *Ibid.* verse 17. For, "according to his mercy he saved us by the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom he poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we may be heirs according to hope of life everlasting," Titus iii. 5.

From all which, we see what an immense treasure of spiritual riches the grace of God brings to the soul; and consequently, what a great value we ought to put upon it, how diligent we should be to preserve and increase it, and how careful not to lose it. To say all in one word, the grace of God is the great instrument of our salvation; because by it we are delivered from our past sins, and preserved from sin for the time to come. With great reason, then, the wise man put so great a value upon the Divine wisdom, by whom this sanctifying grace is poured down upon our souls, when he said, "I preferred her before kingdoms and thrones, and esteemed riches as nothing, in comparison of her; neither did I compare unto her any pre-

cious stone ; for all gold, in comparison of her, is as a little sand ; and silver, in respect to her, shall be accounted as clay. I loved her above health and beauty, and chose to have her instead of light, for her light cannot be put out, *Wisd. vii. 8.* Such is the esteem every Christian ought to have of the grace of God, as to be ready to part with every thing this world can afford, rather than lose this heavenly treasure, and be separated from the charity of God, which is in Christ Jesus, by consenting to mortal sin. Such was the high esteem that St. Paul and all the saints of God had of it, who all could say, with that holy apostle, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? shall tribulation ? shall distress ? or famine ? or nakedness ? or danger ? or persecution ? or the sword ?.....for I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus," *Rom. viii. 35.* And why so ? because he esteemed the happiness of being united to Jesus Christ, by justifying grace, before every thing else, and utterly despised every thing in this world, in comparison of that heavenly treasure. "I count all things to be but loss," says he, "for the excellent knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but as dung, that I may gain Christ, and be found in him, not having my justice, which is of the law, but that which is of the faith of Christ Jesus, which is of God, justice in faith," *Phil. iii. 8.*

Q. 35. Can the sanctifying grace of God be augmented in our souls ?

A. Yes it can ; and the more it is increased in a soul the more pure, the more holy, the more beautiful the soul is, the more inflamed also, and the more fervent her love to God becomes ; which is explained by the example of iron and fire, mentioned above, in which we see that the more the fire is heated about the iron, the more splendid, the more glowing, and the brighter does the iron become. Thus the scripture says, "The path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forwards, and increaseth even to perfect day," *Prov. iv. 18.* Hence the frequent exhortations to "be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus," *2 Tim. ii. 1,* and "to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," *2 Pet. iii. 18.* And hence the angel in the Revelations cried out, "He that is just, let him be justified still ; and he that is holy, let

him be sanctified still," Rev. xxii. 11; which shows how careful we ought to be, not only to preserve, but also to increase this precious grace in our souls, by fervent prayer, and frequent good works, which obtain from God an increase of grace, and by worthily frequenting the holy sacraments, which are the sacred canals by which he pours it down into our souls.

Q. 36. Can justifying grace be diminished and lost from the soul?

A. No doubt the fervour of our charity may be weakened, the brightness of the soul may be obscured, and her beauty is diminished; and this is the fatal effect of venial sin, and tepidity in the service of God; which, though it does not of itself destroy the habit of charity, yet by diminishing its fervour, disposes and leads on the soul, by little and little, to mortal sin, by which the grace of justification is entirely banished from the soul and lost. Thus we see that a piece of iron, though inflamed to the highest degree, by the force of fire, and glowing and shining with brightness; yet, when taken out of the fire and exposed to the air, gradually loses its splendour, becomes less and less clear and glowing, and at last loses the appearance of fire entirely, and returns to its own blackish colour which it had before.

Q. 37. How does it appear that a person once justified, and in the grace of God, can lose that justification?

A. This is evident from numberless texts of scripture. Thus God said to Moses, "He that hath sinned against me, him will I strike out of my book," Ex. xxxii. 33. He must have been in his books before he sinned, and therefore justified; yet he loses his grace by his sin. "If any one abide not in me," says our blessed Saviour, "he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and be burneth," John xv. 6. "When the just shall depart from his justice, and commit iniquities, he shall die in them," Ezech. xxxiii. 18. Hence the frequent exhortations in scripture to "serve the Lord in fear," Ps. ii. 11. "Let him that thinketh himself to stand, take heed lest he fall," 1 Cor. x. 12. "With fear and trembling work out your salvation," Phil. ii. 12. "Take heed, lest being laid aside by the error of the unwise, you fall from your own steadfastness," 2 Pet. iii. 17. And St. Paul, though a chosen vessel, yet chastised his body and brought it into subjection, lest perhaps he should become a cast-away, 1 Cor. ix. 27.

Q. 38. By what means can we recover the grace of justification, when we have lost it by sin ?

A. The grace of justification is a free gift of the mercy of God, through the merits of Christ ; and therefore, no good works whatsoever, which a sinner performs before justification, can ever merit or deserve that grace from God. Before justification, we are in the state of sin, separated from Jesus Christ ; branches cut off from the vine, rotten members of his body in whom there is no life ; and therefore, incapable of bearing fruit, as he himself assures us ; for, "as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself," says he, "unless it abide in the vine ; so neither can you, unless you abide in me," John xv. 4. Hence the scripture assures us, that we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Rom. iii. 24 ; to show that justification is by no means due to any preceding good works of ours ; for, "if by grace, it is not now by works, otherwise grace is no more grace," Rom. ix. 6. But though no good works done in the state of sin, can of themselves merit or deserve the grace of justification ; yet Almighty God expressly requires certain good works to be done by the sinner, as necessary dispositions for receiving that grace and without which it will never be granted. These dispositions, however, are his own gifts, produced in the soul of the sinner by the help of actual grace, which God freely bestows upon him for the sake of Christ, and with which the sinner co-operating, disposes his soul for the grace of justification ; and, when these dispositions are in the soul, the grace of justification is never refused ; not as due to the sinner, but as due to Jesus Christ, and to God's own fidelity, who has promised, that, when the sinner is so disposed, he will receive him into his favour, and pardon his sins. So that the justification of a sinner is wholly the gift of God, both because the dispositions necessary to prepare the sinner for receiving it, are wholly his gifts, and justification itself is given to these dispositions, not as injustice due to them, but as the gift of God's mercy, through the merits of Jesus, and for his sake.

Q. 39. What are the dispositions required for the justification of a sinner ?

A. The holy scripture clearly points out to us these following virtues, as necessary for this end : (1.) *Faith* in Jesus Christ ; for, "without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. ix. 6. And, therefore, "The justice of God, by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all, that believe in him," Rom.

iii. 22. (2.) *The fear of God*; for, "the fear of the Lord driveth out sin; for he that is without fear cannot be justified," Ecclus. i. 27. (3.) *Hope and confidence in the mercy of God*; for "he that trusteth in the Lord shall be healed," Prov. xxviii. 25. And therefore, "we are saved by hope," Rom. viii. 24. (4.) *A sincere love of God*; for, "he that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is charity," 1 John iv. 8; and, "he that loveth not, abideth in death," 1 John iii. 14. Hence, "many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much," Luke vii. 47. (5.) *A sincere repentance for our sins*; for, "except you shall repent, you shall all likewise perish," Luke xiii. 3. And therefore, "repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out," Acts iii. 19. These are the dispositions pre-required by Almighty God, as necessary for preparing the soul, and making her capable of receiving the grace of justification; and when we are thus prepared, we must (6.) *have recourse to the sacrament of baptism*, if we have not as yet been baptised, or *to the sacrament of penance*, if we have lost the grace received already in baptism. Not, indeed, properly speaking, as if these sacraments were another disposition to prepare us for our justification, but as the sacred instruments, ordained by Jesus Christ, by which the grace of justification is poured down into the soul, when disposed by the above-mentioned virtues.

Q. 40. Will not faith alone serve to dispose a soul for justification?

A. By no means; for we see, from the texts mentioned above, that all these other conditions are required to *drive away sin*, to *heal us*, and to *deliver us from death* as well as faith; besides, St. Paul expressly says, although "I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. 2. And St. James decides this point in express terms, saying, after a long reasoning, to prove what he says, "Do you see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only," James ii. 24. And St. Paul further declares, that "in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith that worketh by charity," Gal. v. 6.

Q. 41. What kind of works do these apostles speak of?

A. Not any works done by the mere light of nature, nor even the works of the law of Moses; for all these were incapable of bringing us to the grace of justification; for "the law brought nothing to perfection," Heb. vii. 19. And "the gifts and sacrifices of the law cannot, as to the conscience, make him

perfect that serveth," Heb. ix. 9; "for it is impossible, that with the blood of oxen and goats, sins should be taken away," Heb. x. 4. Therefore, the works spoken of by these apostles, are faith in Jesus Christ, which is the root and foundation of all Christian works, and those other virtues of fear, hope, love, and repentance, which naturally flow from that faith, as the branches of a tree from the root; and, therefore, St. Paul, after showing the inability of the law, and all its sacrifices, to purify our consciences, concludes, "Let us draw near with a true heart, in fulness of faith.....let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering.....let us consider one another to provoke unto charity and good works," Heb. x. 22. And, writing to the Romans on this subject, he gives this reason: "For we account a man to be justified by faith, without the works of the law," Rom. iii. 28; namely, by that faith which, as he told us above, "worketh by charity," Gal. v. 6; but not by the works of the law of Moses.

Q. 42. In what manner do these other virtues above-mentioned flow from faith as from their root?

A. As the beginning of all good must come from God to our souls, for "no man can come to me," says Jesus Christ, "except the Father, who sent me, draw him," John vi. 44; so, when God, of his infinite goodness, touches the sinner's heart, and moves him to return to him by repentance, the first step which the sinner takes to this great work, is to believe, with a firm faith, all those sacred truths which Christ has revealed, and his holy church teaches. This faith informing him of the severity of God's justice against sin, fills his heart with that wholesome "fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom," Prov. i. 7; and the same faith, teaching him the infinite goodness and mercy of God, and his readiness to forgive repenting sinners, raises him up to a great confidence in God, through the merits of Jesus Christ. Then learning, from the same faith, how infinitely good God is in himself, and how infinitely good to him, in the numberless favours he has done him, especially in the great work of our redemption, conceives in his heart a sincere love and affection towards so amiable a benefactor. Then reflecting on his manifold sins, the enormity of which his faith also discovers to him, he is filled with a hearty sorrow for having so ungratefully offended so good a God; he hates and detests his sins, which are displeasing and offensive to God, and firmly purposes thoroughly to amend his life, and keep the law of his God, and thus he turns to the Lord his God by a

sincere repentance, and applies to the holy sacraments as the happy and effectual means to be restored to his friendship and favour.

Q. 43. But why did St. Peter say only to the Jews, "Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out," Acts iii. 19; without saying a word of these other virtues?

A. Because repentance is the last in order, and, when sincere, includes all the others in it. For, it is impossible to repent as we ought, without believing in God, fearing him, hoping for pardon, and loving God; all which, though not always positively expressed, are virtually at least contained in true repentance.

Q. 44. How can children be justified by baptism since they are incapable of having any of these dispositions?

A. If children, in their infancy, are incapable of having these dispositions, they are also incapable of committing any actual sin themselves, which may stand in need of an actual retraction by repentance; they were never turned away from God by any positive act of their own will, and therefore, he does not require from them any positive act of their will to return to him again, but, out of his infinite mercy, admits them to the grace of justification, by the sacrament of baptism, when presented to it, without any further disposition on their part: and, in the same way, he is pleased to deal with those, who, though grown up, have never had the use of reason. But in all others, who are capable of committing sin themselves, and of having the above dispositions, he absolutely requires they should have these dispositions, without which the grace of justification will not be given them, neither in the sacrament of baptism for sins committed before baptism, nor in the sacrament of penance, for those committed after baptism.

Q. 45. Will not a perfect repentance serve to justify a sinner alone without any sacrament?

A. A perfect repentance, founded in a perfect love of God, is very seldom to be met with in sinners, much less can a sinner be certain that he possesses so great a happiness; yet, if so great a grace should be granted by God to any sinner, there is no doubt, but that God will, at the same time grant him the grace of justification; for, our Saviour says, "if any man love me he will keep my word, and my father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him," John xiv. 23; but, as the proof which Christ here requires of his sincerity of his love, is to obey his commands, *he will keep*

my words; and, as the express command of Christ is, that we receive his sacraments, for the sanctification of our souls; therefore, such a one will not be justified, even by his perfect repentance: nor, indeed, will his repentance be perfect, unless it includes an efficacious will and resolution of applying to the sacraments, from the doing which, nothing can exempt him but the impossibility of getting them. And the reason is, because the sacraments are expressly ordained by Jesus Christ, as the only ordinary means by which the grace of justification is communicated to our souls.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL.

Q. 1. WHAT is a sacrament?

A. A sacrament is an outward sensible action, or sacred sign, ordained by Jesus Christ, as a sure and certain means to bring grace to our souls.

Q. 2. How many things are required to make a true sacrament?

A. Three things: First, that there be some outward sensible action performed; Secondly, That this be a certain means to bring grace to the soul; and, Thirdly, that Jesus Christ be the author of it.

Q. 3. What does this outward action consist in?

A. In something said and something done; the thing done is called the matter of the sacrament, and the words spoken are called the form of it.

Q. 4. To whom does it belong to perform the outward sensible action?

A. The outward action which is properly meant by the word sacrament, is the work of men; and it belongs to those to perform it who are authorized and commissioned by Jesus Christ to do so.

Q. 5. To whom does it belong to bestow the inward grace?

A. The pouring down grace to the soul, which, properly speaking, is the effect of the sacrament, is the work of God, as none but God himself can communicate his grace to the soul?

Q. 6. At what time does God pour down his grace to the soul ?

A. The very same instant that the outward action of any sacrament is completely performed.

Q. 7. Does God ever fail on his part to bestow the grace, when the outward action is duly performed ?

A. On his part he never fails in this ; the connexion between the outward sign performed and the inward grace received, is, on the part of God, infallible, being founded upon his fidelity and immutability. For, having been pleased to ordain these outward forms, to be the instruments, canals, or means by which his grace should be brought to our souls, and having instituted them as an essential part of the Christian religion for this purpose ; by so doing, he has evidently engaged himself always to produce the effect whenever the sacrament is performed according to his appointment ; therefore, as he is unchangeable and faithful to his engagements, he never will fail on his part to do so.

Q. 8. Is grace always bestowed when the sacrament is duly performed ?

A. Alas ! it but too often happens, that the grace of the sacrament is not bestowed, on account of the indisposition of the person who receives it. For, though Almighty God is always ready, upon his part, to bestow the grace, yet if the receiver be indisposed, and his soul incapable of receiving it, the grace will not be given to him, though the outward form be duly administered ; not from any failure on the part of God, but from the indisposition of the receiver.

Q. 9. Can you explain this by any example ?

A. There is a very homely but clear example which explains it exactly, namely, that of writing upon paper. In order to write, there is required a pen full of ink, a hand to apply it to paper, and paper to receive it. Now, when the pen full of ink is applied to the paper by a proper hand, and there is no impediment on the paper itself, the writing never fails to be performed ; but if the paper should be oiled, and by that means rendered indisposed for receiving the ink, though the pen be full of ink, and applied by the most skilful hand to the paper, yet one single letter will not be formed by it ; not from any failure on the part of the pen, or of the hand applying it, but because the paper itself is perfectly incapable of receiving the ink upon it. Now, the sacraments are like the pen full of ink, for, being ordained by Jesus Christ as the sacred canals, through which his Divine grace flows from his blessed wounds to our souls, they contain

that grace in great abundance ; the person who administers the sacrament is like the hand who applies the pen to the paper, and the soul of the receiver is like the paper itself. If then this paper be in a proper state, that is, if the soul be well disposed, these heavenly canals will never fail to communicate to her such a portion of the grace they contain as she is capable of receiving ; but, if the paper be oiled, if the soul be indisposed and incapable of receiving the grace, then the grace cannot be bestowed, because the soul cannot receive it.

Q. 10. Is it necessary to be well disposed when one approaches a sacrament ?

A. Most certainly ; for if he presume to receive any sacrament ill disposed, he not only deprives his soul of the grace of that sacrament, but he also commits a grievous sin of sacrilege, by profaning those sacred instruments of our salvation. On the other hand, the more perfectly he is disposed, by more frequent and more fervent acts of faith, hope, and charity, and other holy virtues, the more abundant grace he will receive ; both because these more perfect dispositions move Almighty God to be more liberal of his graces to him, and they also dilate the capacity of the soul, so as to enable it to receive a more abundant portion of grace from the sacrament.

Q. 11. Can this be explained by any example ?

A. As the sacraments are ordained by Jesus Christ to be the never-failing means of communicating his grace to our souls ; they, therefore, contain in themselves an inexhaustible treasure of heavenly grace, from which the soul of every one, that approaches them worthily, receives as much as it is capable of containing. Now the capacity of the soul depends upon its dispositions ; the more perfect they are, the more the capacity of the soul is dilated, and, therefore, the greater portion of the grace it receives from these heavenly fountains. So that the sacraments may be compared to a fountain of water, and the soul to a vessel which one carries to the fountain of water. The fountain, abounding with water, fills every vessel that is applied to it, so far as it can hold : but the larger the vessel is, the greater quantity of water it will carry away.

Q. 12. Has this comparison any foundation in scripture ?

A. It is entirely taken from the scripture ; for there the grace of God is compared to water, and the sacraments to the fountain of Jesus Christ, from which that heavenly water flows ; thus, " I will pour clean water upon you," says Almighty God, " and you shall be cleansed from all your filthiness,"

Ezech. xxvi. 25; and our Saviour, speaking to the woman of Samaria, says, "He that shall drink of the water that I shall give him, shall not thirst for ever; but the water that I shall give him, shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life," John iv. 13. Isaiah, foreseeing the inexhaustible sources of this heavenly water which were to be ordained by Christ in his holy sacraments, cries out with rapture, "You shall draw water with joy out of the Saviour's fountain," Is. xii. 3. And the prophet Zacharias, on the same subject, says, "In those days there shall be a fountain open to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for the washing of the sinner and the unclean woman," Zach. xiii. 1.

Q. 13. Why do you say that a sacrament is a *sacred sign*?

A. Because the outward sensible action which is used in the sacrament, is not only the instrument or means by which the grace of God is actually communicated to our souls; but, at the same time, it represents to us the nature of that grace which we receive, as the principal thing of which it is the sign; it also puts us in mind of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, through the merits of which, his grace is bestowed upon us, and the eternal salvation of our souls, which is the great end for which he bestows it. Thus, St. Paul says of baptism, "We who are baptised in Christ Jesus, are baptised in his death." See here how baptism is a sign of the death of Christ; and to put us more effectually in mind of this, the church makes frequent use of the sign of the cross in administering the sacraments especially in the most essential part of their administration; which teaches us that the whole virtue of the sacraments flows from the death of Christ upon the cross. The apostle goes on, "For we are buried together with him by baptism unto death; that, as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life"; which shows that the sacrament of baptism is a sign of the grace we receive in it, by which we die to sin, and rise to a newness of life, after the example of the resurrection of Jesus. The apostle adds, "But if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection," Rom. vi. 3; to put us in mind that this holy sacrament is also a sign of our rising again at the last day by a glorious resurrection as the end for obtaining which it was instituted. In like manner, of the holy communion, it is said, "As often as you shall eat this bread and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until he

come," 1 Cor. ix. 20. See how it is a memorial of the death of Christ. Also, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him," John vi. 57; and "He that eateth me, the same shall live by me," ver. 58. See how the action of receiving, under the form of bread and wine, is a sign of the inward grace. *Lastly*, "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath life everlasting, and I will raise him up in the last day," verse 55. See how it is a pledge of eternal happiness.

Q. 14. Why did God ordain these external sensible signs as the means of communicating his grace to our souls?

A. For several very important reasons; and (1.) *In condescension to our weakness*. For, had man been a being purely spiritual, without any body, Almighty God would, doubtless, have bestowed his gifts upon him in a manner suitable to such a being, and therefore, in a manner purely spiritual. But with us the case is very different: We are composed of a body along with a soul; and, in our present state of weakness and corruption, this last is in such subjection to the former, that things purely spiritual seldom make a proper impression upon us; nay, by far the greatest part of mankind are such slaves to their senses, that they seem incapable of comprehending anything but what falls under these organs, so that even the great truths of religion, which they are bound to know, must be suited to their capacity, and made easy and familiar to them by similitudes taken from sensible objects. On this account Almighty God, out of the most endearing condescension to our weakness, has been pleased to ordain the sensible signs, which we call sacraments, as the instruments of bestowing his grace upon us, that, by this means, we might the more easily understand the wonderful things he works in our souls by them.

(2.) *To confirm our faith in his promises*, and be a comfort to our souls. The grace of God, by which we are restored to his friendship, and cleansed from our sins, and, at the same time, strengthened to persevere in his service, is, doubtless, the most important benefit we can receive from him in this life; and when we are so unhappy as to have lost his friendship by sin, nothing, sure, can be a greater comfort to us than to have a well grounded confidence, that we are reconciled to him again. Now, as he has instituted the sacraments with this express promise, that, when they are received by a person properly disposed, he will never fail, on his part, to communicate his grace to the soul, this makes the sacraments a great

source of consolation to us. For, though we have not an absolute certainty of receiving the grace, because we can never have an absolute certainty that our own dispositions are such as they ought to be; yet, as we are absolutely certain of the effects of the sacraments, on the part of God, and can have a very high probability of our own dispositions; this is fully sufficient for a well grounded hope and confidence in God, through the merits of our Blessed Redeemer. Which being all the certainty God allows us in this life, serves, on the one hand, to keep us humble, and to make us “work out our salvation with fear and trembling”; and on the other, gives us a sufficient ground of hope for mercy, and fills us with consolation.

(3.) *To unite all the members of his church in one body*; for no society of men can be united together, unless they be joined by some sensible ties or bonds, which keep them in one. Now, in the church of Christ, the sacraments are the bonds which keep all her members conjoined in one body, and distinguish them from all others who do not belong to her, and are, at the same time, an open profession of their faith in Jesus Christ, by whom they were ordained: “We are all baptized,” says St. Paul, “into one body,” 1 Cor. xii. 13; and “we being many, are one body, who partake of that one bread,” 1 Cor. x. 17.

(4.) *To humble our pride*, and teach us our own misery and unworthiness: when we see that all the dispositions we can have, and all the means we can use, are unworthy of the great and inestimable benefit of the grace of justification, and that we are forced, after all, to submit ourselves to the use of sensible elements for obtaining this favour, and thereby constrained to acknowledge, that it is the effect of the pure mercy and goodness of God alone, through the merits of Jesus Christ, and not given as due to any deservings or merits in us.

Q. 15. Why do you say that the sacraments are sacred signs, *ordained by Jesus Christ*?

A. Because the sacraments do not, of their own nature, signify the grace they contain; neither do they do so from the institution of men; much less can any outward action of itself confer the grace of God on our souls. All this is wholly owing to the good will and pleasure of Almighty God; for he alone can bestow his grace upon us, and he alone can ordain what means he pleases to do so; and seeing he has ordained these determined actions, which we call sacraments, and no other, as the means of bestowing his grace on man; by these alone,

and no other, can we obtain it. Hence it follows, that no power upon earth can change what was ordained by Jesus Christ in the outward forms of the sacraments, without destroying them entirely; for, if any change be made in what he ordained to be done, it is no more the same form to which his grace was annexed; and consequently ceases to be a sacrament at all.

Q. 16. Who are those whom Jesus Christ has authorized and commissioned to administer his sacraments?

A. The administration of the sacraments is one of those sacred powers of the priesthood, which Jesus Christ gave to his apostles, and their successors the bishops and priests of the church; who are, therefore, called the "ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God," 1 Cor. iv. 1, because they are authorised by Christ, as his substitutes, to perform in his name, and in his person, the outward sensible actions, or sacred signs, in which the sacraments consist. So that in the administration of any sacrament, two persons always concur, the minister of the sacrament, who, as the organ of Christ, performs the outward part in a visible manner; and Christ himself, who, as the principal but invisible agent, pours down the inward grace to the soul of the worthy receiver, the very moment that the outward action is performed by his minister.

Q. 17. What things are required in the minister of the sacraments to administer it validly?

A. These three things, (1.) That he be authorized by Jesus Christ to perform it. Thus the bishops or first pastors of the church, to whom the plenitude of the priestly powers belong, are authorized by Christ to administer all the sacraments. The priests, who are called the pastors of the second order, are authorized by their office to administer all the sacraments, except confirmation and holy orders. The deacons receive power, by their ordination, to administer baptism in all its solemnities, by commission from the two former; and the inferior orders, and all lay persons, both men and women, are authorized, in case of necessity, to administer baptism privately. (2.) That he have the intention of doing at least what the church does. (3.) That we perform the sacred sign exactly.

Q. 18. Is it not necessary that the person, who administers any sacrament, be in the state of grace?

A. A person who knows himself to be in the state of sin and in disgrace with God, and who in that state should presume to

administer any sacrament, would be guilty of a very great sin by doing so ; but this would make no difference as to the fruit of the sacrament in the worthy receiver, for the effects of the sacraments are not annexed to the sanctity of the person who administers them, but to the exact performance of the external rite, by a person properly authorized. In this we see the infinite goodness of God, who for our greater comfort, would not let the efficacy of his sacrament depend on the sanctity of the minister ; because this being a circumstance of which we can have no certain knowledge, nor even probable assurance, had this been required, we should have been deprived of all solid ground of hope, and been in perpetual doubts and fears, whether we had received the grace of the sacrament or not.

Q. 19. What kind of grace do the sacraments communicate to the worthy receiver ?

A. Two kinds, justifying grace, and sacramental grace.

Q. 20. How do they confer justifying grace ?

A. If the receiver be in the state of sin, by the sacraments of baptism and penance, he receives the first grace of justification, by which he is cleansed from the guilt of his sins, and restored to the friendship of God. For these two sacraments are instituted for this very end ; to wit, baptism, to cleanse us from original sin, and also from all actual sins, which an adult person may have committed before baptism ; and penance, to cleanse us from all the sins we have committed after baptism : and on this account, baptism and penance are called the *sacraments of the dead*, because they raise the soul from the death of sin to the life of grace. On the other hand, if the person be already in the state of grace, and receive any of the other sacraments, he receives by them an increase of justifying grace, by which his soul is rendered more pure and holy, and more beautiful in the sight of God : and therefore these other sacraments are called the *sacraments of the living*, because they cannot be received worthily unless the soul of the receiver be alive to God, by being in the state of grace. The sacrament of penance also, is sometimes of this number : namely, when the penitent is already in the state of grace, and has only venial sins, by the sacrament of penance, he receives an increase of justifying grace also.

Q. 21. What is meant by sacramental grace ?

A. Sacramental grace is that particular actual grace which is peculiar to each sacrament, and which strengthens the worthy receiver, and enables him to perform those duties, and accom-

plish those ends, for which each particular sacrament was intended. Thus in baptism, we receive strengthening grace to enable us to lead a Christian life; in confirmation, to profess our faith in the midst of all dangers, and resist all the enemies of our souls; in the holy communion, to preserve and augment the life of the soul, and the love of God; in penance, to preserve us from falling back to our sins; in extreme unction, to overcome our spiritual enemies in the hour of death; and in holy orders and matrimony, to discharge properly all the duties of these two states of life.

Q. 22. Have the sacraments any other effect besides the bringing these graces to the soul?

A. Three of them; to wit, baptism, confirmation, and holy orders, produce also another effect, which is to imprint a character or seal in the soul by the operation of the Holy Ghost; of which the scripture says, in Christ, "Also believe you were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise," Eph. i. 13. And again, "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption," Eph. iv. 30. And of confirmation in particular, it is said, "Now, he that confirmeth us with you in Christ, and he that hath anointed us in God, who hath also sealed us," 2 Cor. i. 21.

Q. 23. What is understood by a character?

A. It is a spiritual mark or sign imprinted in the soul, similar to the impression of a seal upon soft wax: which denotes that the person who receives it, is hereby consecrated and dedicated to the service of God, according to the intention for which the sacrament was instituted. Thus the character of baptism denotes, that the person who has it, is consecrated to God as a Christian, is a member of the church of Christ, and entitled to all the other sacraments of the church, as helps to enable him to serve God in that quality. The character of confirmation denotes, that the person who has it, was dedicated to the service of God, as his soldier, and engaged for ever to serve him in that quality; to do which, the grace of that sacrament enables him. The character of priesthood denotes, that the person who has it, is consecrated to God, to serve at his altar, and that he has received all the sacred powers annexed to that high office.

Q. 24. Does this character remain for ever in the soul?

A. Yes; and on that account, the three sacraments which give it, can never be received more than once by the same person; for, if a person be once a baptized, or a confirmed

Christian, or a priest, he remains so for ever : and in the next life, these sacred characters will be a great increase of glory to those who go to heaven, and of misery to those who go to hell.

Q. 25. How many sacraments are there in the church of Christ ?

A. There are seven ; to wit, baptism, confirmation, holy eucharist, penance, extreme unction, holy orders, and matrimony.

Q. 26. How can it be proved that there are seven sacraments ? Is there any text of scripture that says so ?

A. There is not one text of scripture which explicitly declares the nature of the sacraments, or determines their precise number. And in this we see the inconsistency of those who pretend to follow no other rule but scripture, and to believe nothing but what is to be found in plain scripture ; while yet they admit of two sacraments, and reject the rest, though they cannot bring one text of scripture to authorise their doing so. But that there are seven true and real sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ, and left by him in his church, for the benefit of his followers, is proved by two unanswerable arguments. *First*, Because we find in scripture that there are seven outward sensible actions laid down there, as certain means of God's appointment, to bring grace to our souls, as shall be shown, when explaining each sacrament in particular. And, *secondly*, Because the church of Christ in all ages, from the very beginning, has believed and acknowledged the seven sacraments above-mentioned, and has administered them as means of grace to her children.

Q. 27. Are all obliged to receive the sacraments according to the need we may have of them ?

A. Some of the sacraments are only intended for particular purposes and states of life ; and those only are obliged to receive them, who embrace those states, such as holy orders and matrimony ; but the others are intended for the common wants of all Christians ; and, therefore, all are obliged to receive them, otherwise the grace to remedy their wants will not be granted. For, as they are ordained by Jesus Christ as the means by which he bestows his grace upon our souls, and as the ultimate condition for this purpose, presupposing all the other conditions required as disposition, on our side ; and, as he is free master of his own gifts, and may require what condition he pleases from his creatures, in order to receive them, it is not enough

that we perform some of these conditions, we must perform them all; and the sacraments being the last required, and which serve as the very instruments for bestowing upon us the grace intended by them, it is plain that the other conditions, without this, will not be sufficient, and, therefore, that it is absolutely necessary to receive the sacraments, where they can be had, in order to receive the grace annexed to them.

Q. 28. Why are so many ceremonies used in the administration of the sacraments?

A. To understand this, it will be necessary to explain the nature of ceremonies more particularly.

APPENDIX TO THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL.

Of Sacred Ceremonies.

Q. 29. What is properly meant by a rite or ceremony?

A. A rite or ceremony, taken in its most general sense, is an outward action or sign, used by men either for promoting a becoming decency in the necessary intercourse of society, or for bringing to our mind the remembrance of some truth which does not fall under the senses, or for exciting certain affections in the mind of those who are present, or for testifying to others the affections of our souls. Thus, in all courts of justice, there are certain outward forms or ceremonies appointed to be observed as necessary for carrying on the business done there, with regularity and order. The ensigns of royalty in the king, the distinguishing robes and other badges of office used by magistrates, are so many ceremonies which bring to our mind the dignity of their station, and the authority with which they are vested, and excite in us the affections of respect and veneration due to their character. In common life itself, the outward actions of bowing or uncovering the head to one another, are ceremonies by which we testify our mutual regard and esteem; and the very rules of good breeding in company, are but so many rites or ceremonies, by which we express our respect for one another, excite and improve our mutual benevolence, and carry on the intercourse of life with proper decency and decorum.

Q. 30. Is the use of ceremonies necessary in human life?

A. According to the present providence under which we live, and the frame and disposition of human nature, the use of external rites or ceremonies is so absolutely necessary, that it

is impossible to discharge the ordinary duties of society, whether civil or religious, without them.

Q. 31. What is meant by a sacred rite or ceremony?

A. A sacred ceremony is an outward action or sign ordained, by the church of Christ, to be used in the external exercise of religion; and chiefly for three reasons:

(1.) For the greater decency, and for the necessary uniformity in performing all the exterior duties of religion. It is impossible to perform the outward acts of religion; such as administering the sacraments, offering up sacrifice, or the like, without using some external action in doing so, that is, without using ceremonies. Now, in the choice of these, two things ought chiefly to be had in view, *first*, that the most decent and orderly be used; and, *secondly*, that all the members of the church use the same. The majesty of God, and the sanctity of religion, require the first, in order to excite in the minds of men the proper sentiments of reverence and devotion; and experience itself shows how much the sacred ceremonies of religion conduce to this end. The uniformity in religion, so necessary for preserving union among Christians, demands the second; which has also this good effect, that one is never at a loss to join with those of his own religion, in all its duties in whatever part of the world he may be. And this shows how necessary it is, that these ceremonies should be enjoined by the public authority of the church; because if it were left to every one to use such ceremonies in religion as he pleases, neither of these two ends could be procured, but all would be confusion and disorder.

(2.) That by these outward ceremonies, we may give to Almighty God the external worship of our bodies, expressing by their means the internal dispositions of our souls. Thus, by using the sign of the cross, we profess our faith in a crucified Saviour, and that all our hopes are founded on the merits of his death upon the cross; by kneeling, or bowing our bodies, which are postures of humility and supplication, we show our interior dependence on Almighty God, and the respect and reverence we give him, like the humble publican in the gospel; and so of others. Now this external worship is an honour done to God, as it makes manifest to others our piety towards him, and by our example, excites them to the same; and, when it proceeds from their heart, is highly agreeable to him, and what he requires from us; besides, the internal respect and reverence of our souls, are not so little

increased by the reverential posture of our bodies, as experience teaches.

(3.) That by these outward ceremonies, the great truths and instructions of religion may be represented in a sensible and striking manner to the eyes of the people. There are great numbers of people, especially of the lower class, who are of dull and heavy understandings, who never learn to read, nor get any proper education; and, consequently, who are incapable of improving their minds with the necessary knowledge of religion, by their own study. This is at present the case with great multitudes in all nations; but was vastly more so before the invention of printing, when perhaps not one in many thousands knew how to read one letter. For all these it is most necessary to use proper ceremonies, by which the truths of religion may become obvious and sensible to them; that, by seeing these daily performed, the truths represented by them may be the more deeply imprinted in their minds, and become familiar to them. Thus the sacred ceremonies used in the administration of the sacraments, represent either the dispositions with which we ought to receive them, or the effects which they produce in our souls, or the obligations we contract by receiving them, as we shall see more particularly under each sacrament.

Q. 32. By whom are religious ceremonies instituted?

A. They were first instituted by God himself from the very earliest ages of the world; for we find Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam, employed in offering up sacrifices and gifts to God; Noah did the same after the flood, as did the Patriarchs after him. Now, they must have been induced to do this as an act of external worship due to God, and which necessarily required to be done by some external action, indicating the dispositions of their souls, either by the express command of God himself, or by the light of reason impressed on their minds by his Almighty hand; for we find that their doing so was agreeable to God, and met with his approbation. Besides, God Almighty, in express terms, instituted the sacred ceremony of circumcision with Abraham, as a sign of the covenant made with him, and commanded it to be used by all his posterity, under pain of death, as a distinctive mark of his true religion. Of Jacob we read that, after his mysterious dream, "arising in the morning he took the stone which he had laid under his head, and set it up for a title, pouring oil upon the top of it — and he made a vow," Gen. xxviii. 18. And God highly approved

of this religious ceremony used by him, saying, "I am the God of Bethel, where thou didst anoint the stone, and made a vow to me," xxxi. 13. And when afterwards he was pleased to reveal to Moses the whole form of religion by which he required to be worshipped by his people, what a vast number of most august and mysterious ceremonies did he not ordain to be used in all the parts of it, both as memorials of the favours conferred on that people, and as types and emblems of the more perfect religion to be afterwards revealed by Jesus Christ? and these ceremonies he commanded to be observed with the strictest attention, so as to threaten the severest punishments upon those who should profane them.

Sacred ceremonies were instituted, in the second place, by Jesus Christ, and the use of them is highly approved and authorised by his example. In curing the man who had been born blind, "he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and spread the clay upon his eyes; and said to him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloe — and he went, and washed, and he came seeing," John xi. 6. Again, in curing the deaf and dumb man, "Taking him aside from the multitude, he put his fingers into his ears, and spitting he touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he groaned, and said, Ephpheta, that is, be thou opened, and immediately his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosened, and he spoke right," Mark vii. 33. What a number of ceremonies were used by Jesus Christ upon these two occasions! and for what end? they surely were by no means necessary for curing these two men. A word from him was fully sufficient for that purpose; but as his actions are recorded for our example, we have in these two cases his sacred authority in approbation of holy ceremonies. Add to his example his express command and institutions; for at the last supper, when he instituted the holy sacrament, "Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to his disciples," Matt. xxvi. 26. And after he had done so, with all these ceremonies, he gave them express orders to do what he had done, which is literally observed throughout the whole church to this day. Also, on the day of his resurrection, "he breathed on his apostles," and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," to show by that ceremony of breathing upon them, the communication of his Divine Spirit, which he thereby gave them, John xx. Thus Jesus Christ instituted sacred ceremonies by his command, and authorised them by his example; and the church, on that account, has

retained, and uses several of those very rites here related as done by him, upon different occasions, as we shall afterwards see.

In the *third* place, sacred ceremonies were instituted by the apostles and their successors; for, though our blessed Saviour ordained some himself, and authorised the use of them in general by his example, yet he left the determination of particular ceremonies to his apostles, and their successors in office, the pastors of the church, whom he appointed with full authority, to ordain whatever might be proper, according to circumstances, for the edification of the body of Christ," Eph. iv. And we find that many of the ceremonies used at Mass, and in administering the sacraments, were instituted by the apostles themselves, as they were used universally throughout the whole church from the very earliest ages, and are attested by the most primitive writers of Christianity to have been received from them. Of this kind are the sign of the cross, holy water, and the greatest part of the ceremonies of baptism. The church also at different times, has instituted such sacred ceremonies as she judged proper, and as the circumstances required, according to the power left with her by Jesus Christ for that end.

Q. 33. But are not the religious ceremonies used in the Catholic church, contrary to the simplicity and humility of the gospel?

A. This is, indeed, a popular clamour against the church, which has an appearance of piety; but on examination it is found void of all solidity, and void of truth; for (1.) Whatever conduces to preserve order and decency in the worship of God, is not contrary to the humility and simplicity of religion; for right reason teaches us, that order and decency ought to be observed in all things, but especially in what regards the service of the Almighty; and St. Paul expressly commands, that "all things be done decently and according to order," 1 Cor. xiv. 40. And after having given some general rules to be observed at their religious meetings, he concludes, "The rest I will set in order when I come," 1 Cor. xi. 34. Now, all the public ceremonies of the church are ordained for this end, and to preserve uniformity in all the exterior of religion. (2.) Whatever has a connexion with virtue, conduces to our improvement in any virtue, and is used for no other view but to render us more virtuous and better disposed towards the service of God, cannot be possibly against the humility and simplicity of religion; for this can never forbid any external action which is

performed with an humble and sincere heart, in order to honour God. Now, all the ceremonies of religion are intended to excite in our minds a high idea of the magnificence and grandeur of Almighty God, and a just sense of our own misery and wretchedness; and they are used on purpose to give public homage to God, as our sovereign Lord, and to acknowledge our own dependence on him. (3.) The humility and simplicity of the gospel consists in a deep sense of the infinite majesty of God, and of our own unworthiness, and in a total submission to him, seeking his honour and glory, and the accomplishment of his holy will in all things. Now, experience itself teaches, that nothing contributes more effectually to excite in our souls a reverential awe and dread of the Divine Majesty, with a sense of our own nothingness in his presence, than those august and solemn ceremonies which the church uses upon public occasions. (4.) Sacred ceremonies are so far from being contrary to the humility and simplicity of the gospel, that they are grounded on the constitution and frame of our nature, which must be instructed in spiritual things, by means of such helps as fall under our senses: for the same reason that Almighty God, by means of sensible things in the holy sacraments, confers his grace, which is spiritual and invisible, on our souls. For want of paying a due attention to this, many, on pretence of refining religion, and rendering it more spiritual, have begun with retrenching ceremonies which they call superfluous, and from this have proceeded to cut off some of the very essentials of religion: Witness the sacrament of baptism, which many now-a-days are not ashamed to think and teach, is nowise necessary to salvation; yea, that it is superstition to believe it to be so.

Q. 34. Do not many of these ceremonies savour too much of worldly pomp, which nourishes pride instead of humility; such as the ornaments of churches, the magnificence of priestly vestments, and the like?

A. It is surprising to see how ingenious people are to deceive themselves, when they are resolved to be deceived. This also is a common reproach of the enemies of the Catholic church, but shows with how little consideration they speak, when they speak against her. Let us suppose the greatest splendour and magnificence to be used in the cases mentioned, in whose heart can they be imagined to nourish pride and vanity? not in the people who see them, more than the ornaments of a royal palace, or the robes which the king uses, could nourish pride in

the minds of any of his subjects who were seeing them. On the contrary, experience in both cases teaches that they produce the quite opposite effect, and inspire the beholders with sentiments of reverence and respect. Not in the priests who use them, for their sacred vestments, however rich and magnificent they may be, serve only to set before their eyes the passion of Jesus Christ, which they represent, and the sacred virtues of humility, purity, mortification, and love of Jesus Christ, with which his priests ought to be adorned. These are humbling lessons for every priest, which the sacred vestments he uses continually preach to him; very opposite to worldly pride and vanity. And what shows, beyond reply, how far the magnificence and splendour of churches and sacred ornaments are from inspiring sentiments of pride, is, that we learn, from the history of all ages, that those holy saints, who were most remarkable for their profound humility and solid virtue, were, at the same time, the most zealous for the splendour and magnificence of everything relating to the service of God; on the contrary, those who cry out most against those things are generally people divested of all sense of piety or respect for God, full of themselves, and of their own wit and judgment, and whose minds are ulcerated with a malignant envy at seeing that employed for the honour of the Almighty, which they would rather wish they had for themselves. *Finally*, can anything be conceived more splendid and magnificent than what God himself commanded to be done both in the sacred vestments used by his priests in the old law, and the profusion of riches in everything regarding his temple? and shall we accuse him on this account of encouraging worldly pride and vanity in his people? This example of God himself gives the most ample sanction to all the magnificence that can be used in his holy service.

Q. 35. Ought we then to pay a great respect to sacred ceremonies?

A. Most undoubtedly; they deserve a very great respect and veneration to be paid them, both on account of the ends for which they are used, and of the sacred truths and holy instructions which they represent, and of the authority by which they are instituted; and, therefore, the church, in the council of Trent, condemns, and pronounces an anathema on all those who shall presume to say that it is lawful to despise or ridicule, or, by private authority, to alter or change any of the received and approved ceremonies of the church, Sess. vii. can. 13. God himself approves the respect we ought to pay to them, both by

the commendations given in scripture to those who used them, as the humble publican and St. Mary Magdalene; and also by the miraculous victory given to the people of God over the Amalekites, which in a manner wholly depended upon a sacred ceremony used by Moses of holding up his hands in prayer during the engagement; for, "when Moses lifted up his hands, Israel overcame, but, if he let them down a little, Amalec overcame," Exod. xvii. 11. But as Moses' hands were heavy, "Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands on both sides," till a complete victory was gained. And, indeed, those who speak against the sacred ceremonies which the church uses, manifestly discover either the pride of their own heart, in presuming to be better judges of these matters than the church of Christ, which he has authorised to appoint them, or their contempt for her sacred authority, or at least, a gross ignorance of what they are speaking about, and of the sacred and important truths, which these holy ceremonies represent and convey to the mind.

Q. 36. Why does the church make use of the Latin language in administering the sacraments, and in her other public offices of religion?

A. When the Christian religion was first published to the world, the Latin was the vulgar language over all the western parts of Europe, throughout the Roman empire, and all the public offices of the church were performed in that language; in process of time, when many barbarous nations broke in upon and dismembered that empire, they soon altered the Latin vulgar language, and, by mixing it with their own, produced the various languages which are now commonly used in the different European nations. Amidst these changes of the vulgar languages, the church wisely judged it necessary to preserve the use of the Latin in all her public offices, chiefly for two reasons: *First*, to preserve the greater uniformity in the exterior of religion among all her members; from which this great good also arises that all her members, wherever they go, at whatever distance from their own country, find themselves always, as it were, at home in all the exercises of religious duties, as they everywhere find both the selfsame things done, and the same language used, with which they have been accustomed from their infancy. *Secondly*, it is observed, that all living languages are subject to daily changes, both in the way of speaking, and the signification of words; this must have occasioned frequent translations of the public offices, had they followed the changes in the vulgar languages in every country;

and this could not have been done without introducing much obscurity and many equivocal significations: which, of course, would have given a handle to introduce new, and consequently false opinions in the sacred truths of revelation itself. Whereas the Latin being a dead language, fixed in its signification, and incapable of change, the constant use of it in all religious offices contributes in no small degree to preserve the purity of religion itself, and shuts the door against dangerous novelties.

Q. 37. But is not this a loss to the people who do not understand Latin?

A. By no means; for, in the *first* place, the part which belongs to the priest to perform, both in the administration of the sacraments, and in celebrating the holy sacrifice of the Mass, is not to pray along with the people, but to pray for them, and in their name, as their deputy and ambassador to God, and the most part of what he says, and everything he does, is wholly suited to the public character which he bears; so that, though he were to use the vulgar language, the people could not join in saying the same prayers, much less could they do what he does. But, in the *second* place, as they are instructed from their infancy in the nature of what he does, and accustomed to it by daily practice, they have prayers in their manuals, and books of devotion, which are adapted to them, and by which they accompany him through every part of his function, in the manner proper for their state. Neither are they ignorant of the nature of the prayers he says for them, as they have them explained to them in their books of instruction; and therefore can be at no difficulty in joining their prayers and intentions for the same end.

Q. 38. Is this practice authorised from the scripture?

A. It is; for, during the Babylonish captivity, the people lost the knowledge of the old Hebrew language, in which the scripture was written, insomuch that, upon their return to Jerusalem, after the captivity, when Nehemias and Esdras the high priest read the law to the people, they were obliged "to interpret to them the words of the law," Neh. viii. 13; and, from that time forward, the vulgar language they spoke was the Syriac, into which the scriptures were not translated from the Hebrew till after our Saviour's time, and yet all their public offices were taken out of the law, psalms, and prophets, in the old Hebrew. Besides, we find this command given by God himself, "Let no man be in the tabernacle when the high priest goeth into the sanctuary to pray for himself and

his house, and for the whole congregation of Israel, until he come out." Lev. xvi. 17. In consequence of this, it is recorded of Zacharias, St. John Baptist's father, that when, "according to the custom of the priestly office, it was his lot to offer incense, going into the temple of the Lord, all the multitude of the people was praying without, at the hour of incense," Luke i. 9. Where we see, by God's express command, public prayers made by the priest made expressly for the people, and the sacrifice of incense offered for them, and yet not one of them permitted so much as to be present, much less to hear and understand what the priest was saying to God for them; yet they assisted without, at this function, joined in prayer along with it, and doubtless were no less partakers of the benefits of it, than if they had both heard and seen the whole. *Finally*, any apparent inconvenience that may seem to arise from having the public offices of the church in the Latin language, because not understood by the unlearned, is certainly a mere nothing, if compared to the great advantages which are procured by using that language, as we have seen above; and to the unavoidable detriment that would follow, were these public offices subject to all the variety of vulgar languages, and to the changes which they are continually undergoing.

Q. 39. Why is the sign of the cross so frequently made use of in the administration of the sacraments?

A. The sign of the cross is a sacred ceremony which is more frequently used by Catholics, both in the administration of the sacraments, and in offering up the holy sacrifice, and upon numberless other occasions, than any other ceremony whatsoever, and there are several very strong and important reasons for doing so; which are as follow:

(1.) This sacred sign of the cross is a sensible means of keeping us in mind of the two great and most important truths of our holy religion, to wit, the Unity and Trinity of God, and the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ; which two mysteries are the sum of all Christian knowledge: For there are two things in this life which it chiefly concerns us to know; our last end, for which we were created, where all our desires ought to tend, and in which our true and perfect happiness is only to be found; and the way or means by which we can arrive at it. Now, God alone is our last end, in him alone we can find our perfect and essential happiness; and Jesus Christ is the only way by which we can attain the possession of this happiness, for, "he is the way, the truth, and the life; the way

by his example, the truth by his doctrine, and the life of our souls by his grace; and "no man," says he, "cometh to the Father but by me," John xiv. 6. So that it is only by imitating his example, believing and obeying his doctrine, and assisted by his grace, that we can be saved; and, therefore, to know God and Jesus Christ as we ought, is to know all that is necessary to make us eternally happy; this Jesus Christ himself declares, saying to his Father, "This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3. Now, the sign of the cross is a memorial of this wholesome knowledge, and serves to keep us in mind of it, as being the most important thing we have to think upon, or take a concern in, in the whole world; for the words we pronounce when making this sacred sign contain an invocation of the blessed Trinity, one God, and three Persons, and the very sign itself calls to our mind the incarnation and death of Jesus Christ, God made man.

(2.) The sign of the cross is an external profession of our Faith, a distinguishing mark of the members of the church of Christ; it is the livery of Jesus Christ, by which his followers are known and distinguished from Turks, Jews, and Heretics. In making this sign we openly profess that we believe in one God and three Persons; that God the Son was made man, and died on the cross for us, and that we are Catholics, and members of the church of Christ, that is, of that sacred body of which Christ is the head.

(3.) It is also, on many occasions, an external protestation of our hope and confidence in God, through the merits of Christ, "by whom we have access in one Spirit to the Father," Eph. ii. 18. For when we begin our prayers by making the sign of the cross, we by this profess that our only hope of being heard, is through the merits of the cross of Jesus; when we offer up anything to God Almighty, and dedicate it to his service, we sign it with the sign of the cross, to signify that we have no hope of its being acceptable to him, but only through the merits of the death of Jesus; when we bless ourselves or other creatures, we make the sign of the cross, to declare that we expect no blessing from God, but through the passion and cross of Jesus; when we administer any sacrament, we make use of the same sacred sign, to show that all the benefit we expect from the sacrament flows only from the same Divine source, the merits of Jesus.

(4.) It is also a memorial of the infinite love of God towards

us, who out of pure love for us, gave his only begotten Son to die on the cross for our salvation; and as nothing contributes more effectually to inflame our hearts with love towards our friends than the memory of their love to us, hence this sacred sign is an incentive to our love for God and for Jesus Christ; because it is a memorial of his love to us, and of all the great benefits he obtained for us by its means; of his victory over Satan, sin, and hell, his blotting out the hand-writing that was against us, his reconciling us with God, and opening to us the kingdom of heaven.

(5.) It is a great defence against all the assaults of the devil. St. Paul tells us that Jesus Christ, by his death on the cross, "spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them confidently, triumphing openly over them in himself," Col. ii. 15. It was by the cross that the devil was crucified invisibly by Jesus Christ, his hands bound, his power taken from him, and his kingdom destroyed; for this reason he abhors the cross of Christ, and the very sign of it is detestable to him, and, on this account, all the holy Fathers, those ancient and venerable champions of the Christian religion, have left in their writings the warmest commendations of this holy sign, as a most powerful defence and protection against our infernal enemies; and many examples are recorded in the history of the church, in all ages, of its wonderful efficacy in this respect and of numberless miracles being wrought by the holy servants of God by its means.

(6.) It is the sacred mark ordered by God himself to be put upon all those that belong to him, as a means to defend them against the destroying angels in the day of his wrath; which is thus declared in scripture, "The Lord called to the man that was clothed in linen, and had a writer's ink-horn at his loins, and said to him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and mark *Thau* upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and mourn for all the abominations that are committed in the midst thereof. And to the others, (to wit, the six angels that had each one his weapon of destruction in his hand, (verse 2,) he said in my hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and strike; let not your eyes spare, nor be ye moved with pity; utterly destroy old and young, maidens, children, and women; but, on whomsoever ye shall see *Thau*, kill him not," Ezech. ix. 4. *Thau* is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and in the old Hebrew characters was the form of a cross, as our T is to this day, as is attested by St.

Jerome and other interpreters. The same vision was repeated to St. John in the Revelations, who says, "I saw another angel descending from the rising sun, having the seal of the living God : and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth, and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we seal the servants of our God in their foreheads," Rev. vii. 2. All which was prefigured by the blood of the paschal lamb, which God ordered his people in Egypt to "put upon the side-posts and upper door-posts of their houses," Ex. xii. 7 ; as their defence, when he sent his angel to destroy all the first-born of Egypt ; "For when I shall see the blood," says he, "I shall pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you," verse 13. The paschal lamb was a type of Jesus Christ upon the cross ; and the sign of his cross upon our foreheads, is a sign of his precious blood spilt upon the cross for us, which, like the blood of the paschal lamb, preserves us from the destroying angel.

Q. 40. In what manner must we use this holy sign, in order to be partakers of these benefits ?

A. St. Paul, speaking of the ceremony of circumcision, says, "Circumcision profiteth indeed, if thou keep the law ; but if thou be a transgressor of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.....The circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit, not in the letter," Rom. ii. 25, 29. As circumcision was the mark of the people of God under the law, so the sign of the cross is the mark of the followers of Christ under the gospel ; consequently, "The sign of the cross profiteth indeed, if we obey the gospel, if it be planted in the heart and spirit as well as in the body" ; but without this it will only be an empty sign, or rather, will turn out to our greater condemnation. The sign of the cross is the sign of humility, of patience, of meekness, of charity, the darling virtues of Jesus Christ which in the most admirable manner he practised upon the cross. What will it profit, then, to make the sign of the cross upon the body, if these virtues, which it represents, are not seated in the heart and spirit ?

Q. 41. Is the use of the sign of the cross very ancient in the church ?

A. It is ancient as Christianity itself ; and the practice of the primitive Christians in using it, is thus described by Tertullian, a learned Christian writer of the second century : "At every step, at our coming in and going out, when we put on our clothes or shoes, when we wash, when we sit down to table,

when we light a candle, when we go to bed—whatever conversation employs us, we imprint on our foreheads the sign of the cross," *De Coron. Milit. c. 3.*

For all the above reasons, then, this sacred sign is frequently made use of by the members of the Catholic church, both in their private devotions, and in the public exercises of religion, and in a particular manner in the administration of all the sacraments, that it may serve to keep us perpetually in mind, that all the graces and benefits we receive from them, flow only from the merits of the passion and death of Jesus Christ upon the cross, as will appear in explaining the ceremonies of each sacrament in particular.

CHAPTER XX.

OF THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

Q. 1. WHAT is the design or end for which the sacrament of baptism was instituted?

A. The design of this sacrament is to make us Christians, to deliver us from the slavery of Satan, under which we are born, to unite us to Jesus Christ, as members of his body; and to give us a title and right to receive all the other sacraments, and helps of religion in this life, and eternal happiness in the life to come.

Q. 2. How is all this done?

A. By the new birth which we receive in baptism, by which we become the children of God, being spiritually born again by the grace which is here bestowed upon us. In our natural birth from our earthly parents, we are born carnal minded, sullied with sin, subject to eternal death, and aliens from God. In this new birth, which is the work of the Holy Ghost by the sacrament of baptism, our souls are new formed, we become spiritual partakers of the Divine nature, heavenly minded, and fit for the kingdom of God, as his children, and heirs of his kingdom. Thus Jesus Christ explains this when he says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit," *John iii. 6.*

Q. 3. Is baptism a true sacrament?

A. It is; because it has all the things requisite in a sacrament.

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

A. Pouring water on the person to be baptised, and saying, at the same time, these words, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Q. 5. How is this action performed?

A. By pouring water on the person to be baptized, or dipping him into it; and it is the order or custom in the Catholic church to pour or dip three times at the names of the three Divine Persons, though three times be not necessary for the validity of baptism.

Q. 6. What think you of those who administer baptism so slightly, that it is doubtful whether it can in any sense be called an *ablution* or *washing*; for instance, those who administer it with a fillip of a wet finger?

A. Such as these run a great risk of not baptizing at all.

Q. 7. What is the inward grace which baptism brings to the soul?

A. The sanctifying grace of God, by which the soul is regenerated, cleansed from all the stains of original sin, and of actual sin, if there be any; and is made a child of God, a member of his church, and an heir of heaven.

Q. 8. Where do we find that Jesus Christ is the institutor of this sacrament?

A. From the commission he gave to the pastors of the church, in the persons of the apostles, when he said, "Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19.

Q. 9. How is this outward action a sign of the inward grace received?

A. The word *baptize* is a Greek word, which signifies *to wash with water*; therefore, water is poured upon the body outwardly, and these words pronounced, "I baptize thee," that is, I wash thee with water, "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," this represents the inward washing of the soul, by the sanctifying grace of God which is poured down upon it.

Q. 10. What kind of water must be used in baptism?

A. Natural elementary water only, such as is produced by nature, and not by the art of man; and it is all one whether taken from the sea, or a spring, or a river, or a well, or be rain

water, or the like. And in this we see the infinite goodness of God, who was pleased to ordain for the matter of this sacrament, a thing so common in every place, that none might be in danger of being deprived of it.

Q. 11. When are the words to be pronounced ?

A. At the very same time that the water is poured on the one to be baptized, and by the same person.

Q. 12. And must all the words be pronounced ?

A. If the words "I baptize," or "thee," or "in the name," or any of the Divine Persons were omitted, it would be no baptism ?

Q. 13. Who are authorized to give the sacrament of baptism ?

A. The bishops and priests of the church are authorized, in virtue of the priesthood, to administer baptism, and deacons, by commission from them, can do the same, with all its solemnities ; but in cases of necessity, where these cannot be had, any lay person, man or woman, is authorized to do it, which also shows the infinite goodness of Jesus Christ, lest any should be deprived of a sacrament which is so absolutely necessary for salvation, if the administration of it had been wholly confined to the ministers of the church only.

SECTION I.—*Of the Effects of Baptism.*

Q. 14. What are the effects of baptism ?

A. The effects of baptism are these : (1.) It cleanses the soul from the guilt of all preceding sins, whether original or actual. (2.) It frees us from the eternal punishment due to sin, and from all the temporal punishment, also, which the justice of God could command for the sins one may have committed before baptism. (3.) It adorns the soul with the grace of justification, and with all those other graces and virtues which accompany it ; all which we have seen above, Chap. xviii.

Q. 33. (4.) It makes us Christians, imprinting the sacred character of a Christian on the soul ; and, as a consequence of all this, (5.) It regenerates us by a new spiritual birth, making us children of God, members of his church, heirs of heaven, and capable of receiving all the other sacraments, and spiritual benefits which Christ has left in his church, and gives us a right and title to receive them as our needs may require, as also to receive the necessary helps of actual grace to enable us to live a good Christian life, and preserve the sanctity we have

received in baptism. (6.) It gives us a right and title to the kingdom of heaven.

Q. 15. How can it be shown that baptism washes away our sins, and justifies us in the sight of God?

A. From several strong and plain testimonies of scripture. (1.) St. Paul, writing to Titus on this subject speaks thus: "We ourselves, also, were some time unwise, incredulous, erring slaves to divers desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. But, when the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour appeared, not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us by the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom he hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by his grace, we may be heirs, according to hope, of life everlasting," Titus iii. 3. In this beautiful passage, the apostle first acknowledges his former sins, then declares, that the kindness he received from God, in delivering him from them, was not owing to his own deservings, but to the free mercy of God; that the means by which he was saved from them was the "laver or washing of regeneration," the sacrament of baptism, by which he was renewed, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, through the merits of Christ, and that by the grace received in this laver of regeneration, he was "justified," and made an heir of life everlasting. (2.) "Christ loved his Church," says the same apostle, "and delivered himself for it, that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life," Eph. v. 25. See here we are assured that Christ died for his church, on purpose that he might cleanse and sanctify her by means of the sacrament of baptism, which consists in the washing of water, accompanied with the word of life, to wit, the invocation of the adorable Trinity. (3.) At St. Peter's first sermon, when the Jews asked him what they must do, he made answer, "Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins," Acts. ii. 38. (4.) When Ananias came to St. Paul after his conversion, he said to him, "Rise up and be baptized, and wash away thy sins," Acts xxii. 16. (5.) St. Peter compares baptism to the ark of Noah, and observes, that as the ark saved all those who were in it from the water of the deluge, so "baptism being of the like form, saveth you also; not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the examination of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. iii.

21 ; where it is expressly declared that we are saved by baptism, through the merits of Christ, by washing our conscience towards God.

Q. 16. In what manner does baptism free us from the punishment of sin ?

A. As baptism is the first door by which we enter into the fold of Jesus Christ, the first means by which we receive the grace of reconciliation with God, therefore, the merits of his death are, by baptism, applied to our souls in so superabundant a manner, as fully to satisfy the Divine justice for all demands against us, whether for original or actual sin ; and therefore God grants us in it a full and perfect remission for all our past sins, and of all the punishment due to them. So that, though a person had been guilty of the most enormous sins, yet if, upon his sincere repentance, he receives the grace of baptism, and should die in that happy state, his soul would go straight to heaven, having nothing to hinder its entrance into the seat of bliss and happiness. And this is the reason why when grown-up persons are baptized, no penitential works are imposed on them ; which is one great difference between this sacrament and that of penance, in which last, though the guilt and eternal punishment be remitted, yet a debt of temporal punishment still remains to be paid.

Q. 17. Does baptism free us from the infirmities and wounds of our nature occasioned by original sin, to wit, concupiscence, ignorance, and the like ?

A. No. These are more the necessary effects of original sin, than a punishment inflicted for it ; and God is pleased not to take them away by the grace of baptism, but leaves them, (1.) To humble our pride, by the daily experience of our own weakness. (2.) To detach our hearts from this world, and make us consider it as a place of punishment, in which we are exposed to so many afflictions from these infirmities of nature. (3.) To make us long after heaven, where alone we shall be delivered from all our miseries. (4.) To try our fidelity, and exercise our virtue in fighting against these internal enemies, that by gaining the victory we may increase our crown. But baptism is of great advantage to us in this battle ; because, by the sacramental grace peculiar to baptism, the violence of these enemies is greatly restrained, the ardour of our passions is moderated, and copious help is given us to enable us to overcome them.

SECTION II.—*Of the Necessity of Baptism.*

Q. 18. Is baptism necessary for our salvation ?

A. It is doubtless the most necessary of all the sacraments, because without it we are incapable of receiving any other sacrament, and because it is ordained by Jesus Christ as the only means for receiving the first grace of justification, by which alone we can be delivered from original sin, and partake of the merits of Christ's sufferings, so as to become members of his body.

Q. 19. How does this appear from scripture ?

A. From the following testimonies : (1.) Our Saviour in his conversation with Nicodemus, declares that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"; and a little after, he shows how this new birth is bestowed upon us; "Verily, verily I say to thee, Except a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 3, 5. Here we see that this new birth, absolutely necessary for salvation, is bestowed upon us by water; that, by the use of this outward rite, the Spirit of God comes to our souls, to operate in us that spiritual birth; and that these two, the outward rite, and the inward regeneration, are, by the appointment of God, so connected, that if the rite be not used, the new birth will not be bestowed, and, that, therefore, without that sacred rite of baptism, we can never see the kingdom of God. (2.) When our Saviour gave his apostles their commission to teach and baptize all nations, he immediately adds, "He that believeth, and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned," Mark xvi. In which words, we must observe, that our Saviour here, with the same breath, commands the apostles to teach and to baptize all nations; consequently, he requires that all nations should believe the truths taught by the apostles, and be baptized. And, in fact he promises salvation not to faith alone, but to faith and baptism together, which evidently shows the necessity of the one as well as of the other. It is true in what he adds, "he that believeth not shall be damned," he mentions faith alone; but the reason is, he is here speaking only of adults, or those who are of an age capable of being instructed, in whom actual faith, or the positive belief of the truths taught by the apostles, is pre-required as a disposition absolutely necessary for baptism. The want of baptism, then, is necessarily included in their not believing; and these words, in their full sense,

run thus: *He that believeth not and of consequence is not baptized, shall be damned.* (3.) The Jews who were converted at St. Peter's first sermon, believed what he had delivered to them concerning Jesus Christ, and consequently had true faith; they had also *compunction in their hearts*, that is, at least a beginning repentance; but when they asked, "Men and brethren, what must we do?" St. Peter answered, "Do penance, and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of your sins," Acts iii. 37. He saw they believed in Jesus Christ, therefore he made no mention of faith; but he declares they must give proof of the sincerity of their repentance, by doing penance for their sins, and then apply to baptism as the means ordained by God for giving us the grace of justification for the remission of our sins, insomuch that, where it can be had, neither faith nor repentance will do without it. (4.) St. Paul, on his conversion, had true faith in Jesus Christ, was thoroughly converted, and gave himself wholly to Jesus Christ, saying, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" continued three days doing penance in praying and fasting, and yet, after all this, when Ananias came to him, he said, "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sin," Acts xxii. 16. In which words is evidently shown the absolute necessity of baptism for our justification, and that neither faith nor repentance, nor prayer, nor fasting, will do without it, where it can be had.

Q. 20. Why do you say *where it can be had*? Is it possible in any case to be justified without baptism?

A. Properly speaking, it is impossible to be justified without baptism, as all the above clear texts evince; for where it cannot be had actually, it must, at least, be in desire. Now there are two cases in which a man may be justified and saved without *actually* receiving the sacrament of baptism; *first*, if an infidel should become acquainted with the true faith of Christ, and embrace it, but be in such circumstances that it was not in his power to get himself baptized, notwithstanding his earnest desire of that sacrament; if this desire be accompanied with a perfect repentance for his sins, founded in the love of God above all things, this would supply the want of actual baptism, and a person dying in such dispositions would surely be saved. *Secondly*, If any person should suffer martyrdom for the faith of Christ, before he has been able to receive baptism, this will also supply the want of actually receiving the sacrament. In this case the person is *baptized in his own blood*; in the other case, he is said to be *baptized in desire*.

Q. 21. What becomes of young children who die without baptism?

A. If a young child were put to death for the sake of Christ, this would be to it the *baptism of blood*, and carry it to heaven; but, except in this case, as such infants are incapable of having the desire of baptism, with the other necessary dispositions, if they are not actually baptised with water, they cannot go to heaven; our Saviour's words being perfectly clear and express, "Except a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 5. As for what becomes of such unbaptized children, divines are divided in their opinions about it; some say one thing, some another; but as God Almighty has not been pleased to reveal it to his church, we know nothing for certain about it.

Q. 22. As baptism is of such absolute necessity for salvation, can a person receive it more than once?

A. By no means; and it would be a great sacrilege to attempt it; for the great end of baptism is to free us from original sin, and make us Christians, imprinting the sacred character of a Christian on our souls. Now, once we are freed from original sin, we are freed from it for ever; once that sacred character of a Christian is imprinted on the soul, it remains there for ever, and can never be blotted out. Therefore, the effects of the sacrament of baptism can never be produced in our soul a second time.

Q. 23. What dispositions are required for receiving this sacrament?

A. From all we have seen, it is plain, that in young children no dispositions are required at all, because they are incapable of any; but in adults, the dispositions required for receiving the graces of baptism, are, (1.) That the person be willing to receive it. (2.) That he hath faith in Jesus Christ; and (3.) That he have true repentance of his sins.

SECTION III.—*Of the Ceremonies of Baptism.*

Q. 24. What are we to observe in general of the ceremonies used in administering the sacrament of baptism?

A. Chiefly these three things: (1.) That they are all taken from the holy scriptures, or from some of the great truths of our religion. (2.) That they represent to us either the dispositions we ought to have for receiving baptism worthily, or the great benefits we receive from this sacrament, or the obliga-

tions we contract by receiving it ; and, (3.) That the prayers used along with these ceremonies all tend to obtain for the person baptised an abundant share of the graces of the sacrament, and strength to enable him to discharge his obligations.

Q. 25. How are these ceremonies divided ?

A. Some go before baptism, some accompany the sacramental action, and some follow after it.

Q. 26. What are the ceremonies that go before baptism, and what is their origin and signification ?

A. Before we explain the ceremonies themselves, we must observe, that, in places where the Catholic religion is established, the water kept in the baptismal font, to be used in this sacrament, is solemnly blessed on the eves of Easter and Pentecost, to serve throughout the whole year. It is blessed on the eve of Easter, because "all we who are baptised in Christ Jesus, are baptised in his death," for we are buried together with him by baptism unto death, that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life, Rom. vi. 3. It is blessed on the eves of Pentecost, because it is the Holy Ghost who gives to the water of baptism the power and efficacy of sanctifying our souls, and because the baptism of Christ is "with the Holy Ghost and with fire," Matt. iii. 11. In blessing these waters a lighted torch is put into the font, to represent the fire of divine love which is communicated to the soul by baptism, and the light of good example, which all who are baptised ought to give ; and holy oil and chrism are mixed with the water, to represent the spiritual union of the soul with God, by the grace received in baptism : and all this is done by order of the church, for the greater respect, though not of necessity for the validity of the sacrament. When, then, a person is presented for baptism, the priests meets him at the door of the church, to denote, that as he is not as yet of the number of the faithful, he has no right to enter into that sacred place : and there, after asking what he demands from the church, and telling him the conditions on which the demand will be granted, he proceeds to prepare him for receiving it as follows :

(1.) He breathes upon him and says, *Depart from him, thou unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Ghost the Comforter.* This ceremony is taken from the example of God himself, who, "having formed man of the slime of the earth, breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul," Gen. ii. 7 : and from the example of Jesus Christ, who, being come to

communicate to his apostles the Holy Ghost, breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," John xx. 22. And it signifies, that by baptism we receive a new and spiritual life by grace through the operation of the Holy Ghost, who is given to us, and makes us his temples.

(2.) He makes the sign of the cross upon his forehead, and upon his breast, because God ordered all those that belonged to him to have "the mark *Thau* set upon their foreheads," Ezech. ix. 4, which is "the seal of the living God," Rev. vii. 2, and denotes that the person who receives it begins now to be one of the flock of Jesus Christ, and will, by the sacrament of baptism, soon be admitted to his fold, according to that of our Saviour, "other sheep I have, who are not of this fold, them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd," John x. 16. Now, this sacred sign is planted on the forehead, to show, that after baptism we should never be ashamed of the cross of Christ, nor afraid to profess his doctrine; and it is planted on the breast, near the heart, to show that we should love the cross of Christ, and cheerfully submit to bear whatever portion of it he shall atterwards be pleased to lay upon us; being assured that "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him," 2 Tim. ii. 12.

(3.) He puts a little blessed salt into the person's mouth, saying, *Receive the salt of wisdom; may it be unto thee a propitiation unto life everlasting.* This ceremony is taken from a command of God in the old law, which says, "Whatsoever sacrifice thou offerest, thou shalt season it with salt," Lev. ii. 13. Because salt is an emblem of wisdom or discretion, without which none of our performances are agreeable to God; and Christ himself says, "Have salt in you," Mark ix. 49, meaning that heavenly wisdom, of which he says, "Be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and simple as doves," Matt. x. 16. This ceremony, therefore, denotes that by baptism we are solemnly dedicated and consecrated to God, as a sacrifice and oblation to his holy will; and that we ought ever after to preserve our souls from the corruption of sin, by the salt of heavenly wisdom, by which alone we ought to regulate our whole life and conversation. Now our Saviour proposes the wisdom of the serpent as an emblem of the wisdom of a Christian, because, as that animal (according to what St. Chrysostom tells us), when pursued by its enemies, uses all care to preserve its head, whatever becomes of the rest of its body; so the wisdom of the gospel teaches us to be only solicitous for the salvation of our souls, and ready to

part with everything else rather than to lose our souls, according to that of our Saviour, "What will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul," Mark viii. 36.

(4.) The priest proceeds to the exorcisms, by which, in the name of Jesus Christ, and through the merits of his death upon the cross (the sign of which is here frequently made upon the person to be baptized) he commands the devil to depart from this soul, whom God has chosen to be admitted to the grace of baptism, and orders him to give place to the Holy Ghost, who comes to take possession of him and make him his temple. This he does in consequence of that power over unclean spirits, which Jesus Christ left to the pastors of his church, to whom "he gave power over unclean spirits, to cast them out," Matt. x. 1; or as St. Mark expresses it, "he gave them power to cast out devils," Mark iii. 15; and St. Luke, "He gave them power and authority over all devils," Luke ix. 1. By this means, the person being prepared to be admitted into the church, as one delivered, in a great measure from the power of Satan, and belonging to Jesus Christ, the priest introduces him into that part of the church where the baptismal font is, saying, *Enter into the Church of God, that thou mayest have part with Christ unto everlasting life.* And while they are proceeding to the font, the priest, together with the person to be baptized, (or his godfather and godmother, if he be a child) recite, with an audible voice, the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's prayer, to show that it is only by true faith in Jesus Christ that we are entitled to enter into his church and become members of his body.

(5.) Then the priest recites another exorcism, and at the end of it touches the ear and nostrils of the person to be baptized with a little spittal, saying, *Ephpheta, that is, be thou opened into an odour of sweetness; but be thou put to flight, O Devil, for the judgment of God will be at hand.* This ceremony is taken from the example of Jesus Christ, who when they had brought to him one that was deaf and dumb.....taking him aside from the multitude, put his fingers into his ears, and spitting, touched his tongue, and.....said to him, Ephpheta, that is, be thou opened; and immediately his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spoke right," Mark vii. 32; and by it signified, that, as Jesus Christ, by this ceremony, cured the deaf and dumb man, so, by the grace of baptism, the ears of our soul are opened, to hear the word of God, and the inspirations of his holy Spirit; and that obeying

his holy will, manifested to us by this means, we become "an odour of sweetness, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God," Phil. iv. 18; and likewise, by our good example, "a good odour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish," 2 Cor. ii. 15. These are the ceremonies which go before baptism, and which are, as it were, a preparation for it.

Q. 27. What are the ceremonies that accompany the sacramental action?

A. As baptism is a covenant between God and the soul, there are two essential conditions required on our part to prepare us for receiving it, to wit, to renounce for ever the devil and the world, and to adhere to Jesus Christ, by faith; wherefore, being now arrived at the sacred font, (1.) The person to be baptized (or his godfather and godmother in his name) makes a solemn renunciation of the devil, and all his works and pomps, declaring, that he renounces, for ever, the service of the devil, and that he detests all the maxims and vanities of the world, which are the pomps of the devil, and that he abhors all sin, which are his works; that he embraces the service of Jesus Christ, and vows and promises to adhere constantly to the maxims and rules of his gospel, and to continue his faithful disciple. This is the sacred obligation in which we engage at baptism, this is the solemn promise we make, upon the keeping of which our eternal doom so much depends.

(2.) Then the priest anoints him with holy oil on the breast and between the shoulders, making the sign of the cross, and saying, *I anoint thee with the oil of salvation, in Christ Jesus our Lord, that thou mayest have life everlasting.* This ceremony is taken from the example of what God did in the old law, where he commanded, that all those things which immediately regarded his service, and were to be sanctified for that end, and consecrated, should be anointed with holy oil; as is declared in the thirtieth and fortieth chapters of Exodus, where he says, "And thou shalt consecrate all with the oil of unction, that they may be most holy," Ex. xl. 11. Now, the outward unction with oil is an emblem of the inward grace of the Holy Ghost, which sanctifies the soul; for, as oil gives light, warms, cures wounds, and strengthens weak parts, so the grace of the Holy Ghost enlightens the understanding, inflames the heart, cures the wounds of the soul, and strengthens its weakness. Hence of our Saviour it is said, "that God anointed him with the Holy Ghost," Acts x. 38. And St. John says to his dis-

ciples, "You have an unction from the holy One, and know all things," 1 John ii. 20. This ceremony, therefore, signifies, that the person to be baptized having renounced the devil, and undertaken to fight manfully against him, will receive a plentiful grace from the Holy Ghost in baptism, to direct him in this warfare, to assist him and strengthen him to resist all his spiritual enemies; and, at the same time, is consecrated to God by this holy unction for this purpose. He is therefore anointed on the breast, to show that his grace will fortify his breast with great courage and resolution; and between the shoulders, to show that the grace of baptism will sweeten the yoke of Christ, and make the burden of his commands light, easy, and even delightful to him.

(3.) The priest interrogates the person to be baptized concerning his faith in the blessed Trinity, and in the incarnation and death of our Saviour; because our Saviour says, "he that believes and is baptized shall be saved," Mark xvi.; to show that faith is a previous disposition necessarily required before baptism; which, as children cannot actually have themselves, their godfathers and godmothers answer for them, with the obligation of seeing them instructed in the faith, when they come to an age capable of it. *Lastly*, the priest inquires if the person be willing to be baptized, because none can receive baptism against their will; and getting his consent, he immediately baptizes him, by administering the sacramental action to him.

Q. 28. What are the ceremonies which are used after baptism?

A. (1.) The new Christian is immediately anointed on the crown of the head with holy chrism, in imitation of the anointing of kings and priests, by God's command in the old law; and signifies that royal priesthood, to which we are raised by baptism, according to that of St. Peter, "you are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation," 1 Pet. ii. 9.

(2.) He is clothed with a white garment, as an emblem of the spotless innocence with which his soul is adorned; and the priest, when he puts it on him, prays that he may carry it unstained before the judgment seat of Christ.

(3.) A lighted torch is put into his hand, as an emblem of the light of good example, which he is obliged to give by obeying the commands of God, according to what our Saviour says, "so let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven," Matt.

v. 16. While the priest gives him this torch, he exhorts him to keep his baptism without reproof, and obey the commands of God, that he may be ready when the bridegroom comes to enter with him into the marriage chamber.

(4.) The priest then gives him his leave to depart in peace.

SECTION IV.—*Of the Godfathers and Godmothers.*

Q. 29. What is the meaning of having godfathers and godmothers in baptism ?

A. It is, (1.) That they may present to the church the person that is to be baptized, and be the witnesses of his baptism. (2.) That they may answer in his name, when the person to be baptized is a child. (3.) That they may be sureties to the church for his performance of the promises they make for him ; and (4.) That they may be his instructors in all the duties of a Christian ; (5.) To give the child's name to the priest.

Q. 30. How many godfathers and godmothers should there be ?

A. One godfather for a boy, and one godmother for a girl is sufficient ; or, at most, one godfather and one godmother for one person to be baptized.

Q. 31. What qualifications are required in those who are chosen for this office ?

A. That a person be proper for this office, it is necessary, (1.) That he be a member of the church, otherwise he cannot be fit for bringing up the child in the true faith. (2.) That he be sufficiently instructed in his religion and in the Christian doctrine, otherwise he cannot be able to teach it to another. (3.) That he lead a Christian life, free from any public scandal, otherwise his example will destroy, instead of edifying the child to whom he is godfather.

Q. 32. What are the obligations of the godfathers and godmothers ?

A. Chiefly these : (1.) To see that their child be instructed betimes in the Christian doctrine, and to supply any defect in this respect, on the side of his natural parents, either by death or negligence. (2.) To watch over his morals when he begins to grow up, and engage him by their good advices and admonitions to live a pious Christian life, and to fulfil the sacred promises they made in baptism in his name.

Q. 33. What kindred do they contract by being godfather and godmothers ?

A. They contract a spiritual kindred, both with the child and its natural parents, which is an impediment to marriage between them ; and the same is contracted in the sacrament of confirmation.

CHAPTER XXI.

OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION.

Q. 1. What is the end or design for which confirmation was ordained ?

A. The design of the sacrament of confirmation is to complete and perfect the sanctification of our souls received in baptism, by bringing down the Holy Ghost in a more particular manner to dwell in them, and to fortify and confirm us in our faith, and enable us more effectually to resist all the enemies of our souls.

Q. 2. Can this be explained by any example ?

A. It is most fitly explained by the example of the holy apostles ; for, though they had been for three years in the school of Jesus Christ, had enjoyed his blessed company, seen his holy example, and been witnesses of his miracles ; and, though he had been particularly attentive during all that time, to instruct them in the most ample manner, both in public and private, in all the truths of his gospel ; yet it is surprising to see how imperfect they were after all, how little they understood the great truths he had revealed to them, and how much less they practised the lessons he had given them. Insomuch, that, even at the last supper, "there was a strife amongst them, which of them should seem to be greater," Luke xxii. 24 ; notwithstanding all the lessons of humility he had given them ; and so far were they from profiting by his instructions about suffering for his sake, that when he was taken in the garden, "they all forsook him and fled away," Matt. xxvi. 56. And a little after St. Peter himself denied him and cursed and swore he knew nothing about him. All this shows how imperfect they still were ; and the reason is, because the Holy Ghost was not yet come down upon them. But no sooner had they received this Divine Spirit on Pentecost, than immediately they became new men, their minds were enlightened to understand all

the things that their blessed Master had taught them ; their hearts were inflamed with a most ardent love for him, and a great zeal for his honour and for propagating his glory ; the grace of this holy Spirit “endowed them with a power from on high,” Luke xxiv. 49 ; which confirmed them in all good, and enabled them, in a most wonderful manner, cheerfully to undergo all dangers, to overcome all difficulties, and to suffer all torments, for the sake of their Lord and Master, so as even to “rejoice that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach for the name of Jesus,” Acts. v. 41. By all which, we see, that, by the decrees of heaven, the sanctification of our souls is, in a special manner, the work of the Holy Ghost. Now, as we are called, by our very vocation as Christians, to be saints, and to be perfect, according to that of our Saviour, “be you perfect as also your heavenly Father is perfect,” Matt. v. 48, therefore our blessed Redeemer was pleased of his infinite goodness, to institute the holy sacrament of confirmation, as the never failing means in his church to communicate his Divine Spirit to his followers, to confirm them in his service, and enable them to arrive at that sanctity and perfection which he requires from them.

Q. 3. Is confirmation a true sacrament ?

A. It is ; because it has all the three things necessary to constitute a sacrament.

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

A. Taking the whole of it as laid down in the holy scriptures, it consists of three things : (1.) The bishop, to whom alone it belongs to give confirmation, stretching out his hands over those that are to be confirmed, prays for them all in general, that the Holy Ghost may come down upon them with his sevenfold graces. (2.) Coming to each one in particular, he lays his hand upon him ; and (3.) At the same time anoints his forehead with holy chrism in the form of the cross, saying these words, “I sign thee with the sign of the cross, I confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Q. 5. Where do we find in scripture that this outward action is instituted by Jesus Christ, to be the means of bringing the Holy Ghost to our souls ?

A. In the Acts of the Apostles, we are told, that when St. Philip the deacon had, by his preachings and miracles, converted the Samaritans, “they were baptized both men and women,” Acts viii. 12 ; which, when the apostles who were at Jerusalem

had heard, "they sent to them Peter and John; who, when they were come, they (1.) prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.....then (2.) They laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost," verse 14. In which passage we evidently see, that prayer, and the laying on their hands, were the outward means used by these apostles, by which the Holy Ghost was communicated to their souls; prayer, as a preparation, and laying on their hands, as the immediate means appointed for that purpose.

Q. 6. Where do we find the anointing and confirming?

A. The scripture, speaking upon any subject, does not always mention every circumstance relating to it in one place, but sometimes mentions one circumstance, sometimes another, and it is by collecting these different passages together, that we have the whole. St. Paul, speaking of this sacrament, in his epistles to the Corinthians, describes it thus: "Now he that confirmeth us with you in Christ, and he that had anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts," 2 Cor. i. 21. In which words, he both mentions the confirming us, and the anointing us, and also the sealing us, or the sacred character which this sacrament imprints on our souls; and, at the same time declares, that all this is the work of God; that is, that God is the Author of it. From these two passages we have the whole of this sacrament explained to us, both as to the outward action, as above described, and the inward grace, or the sacred effects which it produces in the soul.

Q. 7. What are the effects of the sacrament of confirmation?

A. (1.) It brings down the Holy Ghost in a particular manner to our souls, with all his gifts and graces, increasing the justification of our souls, and making us more pure and holy in the eyes of God; see above, Chap. viii. Q. 34, 35. (2.) It confirms and strengthens us in our holy faith, and enables us to profess it before tyrants and persecutors, and to fight manfully against all the enemies of our soul, so as to bear all the crosses and trials of this life with Christian meekness and humility after the example of Jesus. (3.) It imprints a sacred character or seal on the soul, which shews that we have been confirmed, and, as it were, enlisted in the service of Jesus Christ, to fight under his banners, against all his and our enemies. And for this reason, as in baptism, this sacrament can never be received more than once, because this character, once received, can never be blotted out or lost.

Q. 8. As confirmation brings down the Holy Ghost to sanctify our souls, do all that receive confirmation become saints ?

A. Happy would it be, indeed, for the world, if this were the case, but alas ! this happens but too seldom ; and the reason is, that, in order to become a saint, two things are required, the assistance of the Holy Ghost, and our co-operation. Both these are absolutely necessary. Without the Divine assistance we can do nothing towards our salvation ; and though Almighty God should bestow his chosen graces upon us, if we resist them, and do not co-operate with them, we shall never advance one step towards Christian perfection. Hence St. Paul declares, that in all the great things he had done, it was “ not I,” says he, but the grace of God with me,” 1 Cor. xv. 10 ; not I alone, nor the grace of God alone, but “ the grace of God with me,” the grace of God assisting, and I co-operating. Now in the sacrament of confirmation, God Almighty does his part ; he gives us his Holy Spirit, and with him all those graces necessary to enable us to become saints, if we co-operate with them, and if few become saints even after receiving these graces, the fault is entirely our own, because we do not improve them as we might. And, alas ! how few make the proper use of them ?

Q. 9. How is the outward action of confirmation a sign of the grace received ?

A. The imposition of hands represents the communication of the Holy Ghost to the soul, and the anointing the forehead with holy chrism, represents the nature and plenitude of the grace received by the internal unction of the Holy Ghost.

Q. 10. How so ?

A. The chrism is a sacred ointment, composed of *oil of olives*, and *balm of Gilead*, solemnly blessed by the bishop on Holy Thursday. The oil represents the fulness of the grace received ; both because, as oil, when dropped upon any thing, spreads itself upon it, and insinuates itself into all its parts, so the grace of this holy sacrament penetrates into the soul, and diffuses itself throughout all her powers ; and also, because oil being a smooth mild substance, represents that spirit of mildness and patience under the cross, which is one principal effect of confirmation. At the same time, as the balm has a particular property of preserving bodies, after death, from putrefaction, it fitly represents the fortifying grace received in confirmation, by which our souls are preserved from the corruption of

sin, after our sins have been destroyed by the sacrament of baptism.

Q. 11. Do all receive an equal grace in the sacrament of confirmation?

A. The sacred character imprinted on the soul by confirmation is the same in all; but the other graces communicated to the soul are given in proportion to the designs which God has in view for the person who receives this sacrament, and to the dispositions with which he comes to receive it.

Q. 12. What are the dispositions necessary for receiving confirmation worthily?

A. These three, (1.) That the receiver be sufficiently instructed, according to his age and capacity, in the necessary knowledge of his Christian doctrine. (2.) That he be in the state of grace. And (3.) That he spend some time beforehand in prayer.

Q. 13. Why must he be instructed in his Christian doctrine?

A. Because without this he cannot have a proper sense of what he is doing, nor those devout affections of the soul towards God which enlarge the soul for receiving the grace of the sacraments; besides, the duty which faith imposes upon us, requires that we should be instructed in those parts of the Christian doctrine which each one ought to know, according to his age and capacity.

Q. 14. Why must he be in the state of grace?

A. Because the scripture assures us, that "the holy Spirit of wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins," Wisd. i. 4; and, therefore, it would be a grievous sacrilege for a person, who knows himself to be in a state of sin, to presume to receive this sacrament, without taking the necessary measures to put his soul in the state of grace, and be reconciled with God.

Q. 15. Why should he spend some time beforehand in prayer?

A. For two reasons: (1.) From the example of the apostles, who, during the ten days between the ascension of our Lord, and the coming of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost, "continued with one accord in prayer with the women, and Mary the Mother of Jesus, and with his brethren," Acts i. 14. Now if the apostles, by the particular inspiration of God, employed themselves in prayer to prepare themselves for the coming of the Holy Ghost, how much more ought we? (2.) Because our Saviour has assured us, that our Father from heaven will give

his good Spirit* to them that ask it," Luke xi. 13. See also above, Chap. viii. Q. 36.

Q. 16. What are the best prayers for this purpose ?

A. The hymns and prayers appointed by the church for invoking the Holy Ghost, and for begging his grace, as contained in the Manuals, and other books of devotion.

Q. 17. Is confirmation necessary for salvation ?

A. It is not absolutely necessary, yet it would certainly be a sin to neglect to receive it when one can have it ; especially, if by neglecting a present occasion, one runs the danger of not having it again ; and still more, if he be exposed to temptations and persecutions on account of his holy religion. And it would be a very grievous sin if one should neglect it out of contempt or disregard.

Q. 18. What are the ceremonies used in confirmation ?

A. Besides those used in the sacramental action, there are these following :

(1.) The anointing of the forehead is made *by the sign of the cross*, to show, that, being now confirmed in the service of Jesus Christ, and enlisted as his soldiers, we should never be ashamed of our Master's livery, but boldly profess ourselves disciples of a crucified Saviour, and members of his church, in spite of all that the world can do against us ; either by ridicule or persecution ; being mindful of his words, " Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man shall be ashamed of him, when he shall come in the glory of his Father with the holy angels," Mark viii. 38.

(2.) Immediately after confirmation, *the bishop gives the person confirmed a little blow on the cheek*, to teach him that, being now a soldier of Jesus Christ, he must manfully fight against all his enemies, and bear with meekness and patience all crosses, persecutions, and trials, for the sake and glory of his Lord and Master.

(3.) In giving him this little blow, the bishop says, *peace be with you*, to teach him, that the only way to true peace in this world, as well as in the next, is to suffer patiently for Christ's sake, and also to encourage him to do so from the hopes of the reward, according to our Lord's promise, " Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest to your souls," Matt. xi. 29.

(4.) The person confirmed takes a new name, which ought to be the name of some saint, whom he chooses for his par-

ticular patron, and whose virtuous example he should strive to imitate.

(5.) The person confirmed has one godfather, if a boy, and one godmother, if a girl, of whom the same things are to be observed as of those in baptism.

CHAPTER XXII.

OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST.

Q. 1. What was the end or design for which Christ instituted the holy Eucharist ?

A. It was that it might be the spiritual food and nourishment of our souls, to preserve and augment that life of grace which we receive in baptism, and which is completed and perfected in confirmation ; according to the words of our Saviour, " I am the living bread which came down from heaven ; if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever." And, a little after, " he that eateth me, the same shall live by me," John vi. 51, 58.

Q. 2. How is this explained ?

A. From the similitude of the natural life of our bodies ; for we see, that however lively, vigorous, and strong we be as to our natural life, yet our strength will soon diminish, our vigour fail, and our life become weaker and weaker, and at last be destroyed entirely, unless it be preserved by proper food, which feeds, nourishes, and strengthens the body ; so, in like manner, however lively and strong the soul be in the life of grace, which we receive in the sacrament of baptism and confirmation ; yet, by reason of the corruption of our nature, and the many temptations to which we are continually exposed, from the malice of our spiritual enemies, this spiritual life would soon fail and decay, and at last be extinguished entirely by mortal sin, if we had not a proper food to support and nourish it in the soul. For this reason, our blessed Saviour was pleased to institute the sacrament of the holy Eucharist, in which, under the outward appearances of bread and wine, he gives us his own precious body and blood, to feed and nourish our souls and to preserve and augment in them the life of grace, by which we live to him.

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

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

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

A. The appearance of bread and wine, which remain after consecration, and under which our blessed Saviour is received into our souls, when the priest puts it into our mouths, and we take it down into our stomachs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A. Bread made of wheat, and wine of the grape; and no

other thing can be used for this purpose, because this was what Christ used himself, and he commanded his apostles and their successors to do what he had done.

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

A. The substance of the bread and wine is changed by the Almighty power of God, into the body and blood of Christ; but all the outward appearances of the bread and wine, and all their sensible qualities, remain the same.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

SECTION I.—*Of the Real Presence.*

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

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

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

A. The *first* proof is taken from what is related in the sixth chapter of St. John's gospel, where we are told, that after the great miracle of feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two fishes, our Saviour went over to the other side of the lake, and that the next morning the multitude missing him, went over after him: and, when they found him, he took occasion, from the impression which that miracle had made upon their minds, to bring on the discourse about the heavenly food which he was to give to the world in the Holy Eucharist, and said, "labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you," verse 27. Here he declares, that the meat he was to give was such as would bring eternal life. Their curiosity being, by these words, raised to know more about this heavenly food, they asked a sign by which they might believe him, and wished to know if the food he spoke of was better than the manna which God gave their fathers from heaven in the desert. "Then Jesus said to them, Amen, amen, I say to you, Moses gave you not bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven; for the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world," verse 32. In which words he shows the supereminent excellency of his bread above the manna, saying, it is the "true bread from heaven," and such as produces the most wonderful effects, so as to "give life to the world." The Jews hearing of such wonderful bread, said to him, "Lord, give us always this bread," verse 34. Upon which he replied, "I am the bread of life"; and then he goes on to declare, that those who come to him, and believe in him, should be fed with his bread, and obtain everlasting life. The Jews hearing this, instead of believing his words, "murmured at him, because he had said, I am the living bread which came down from heaven," verse 41. Yet Jesus, instead of explaining away the literal meaning of what he had said, and in which they had understood him, showed no surprise at their unbelief; but added, that to believe

in him was a gift of God ; for, “ no man can come to me,” says he, “ except my Father, who hath sent me, draw him,” verse 44. And then he goes on to repeat what he had said before, and shows what his bread is in the plainest terms ; “ I am the bread of life,” says he ; “ your fathers did eat manna in the desert and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that, if any man eat of it, he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven ; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever, and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world,” verse 48. Here he repeats again the excellency of his heavenly bread, declares that he himself is that living bread ; and concludes, by assuring us, that the bread which he promises to give, is *his flesh*, that very flesh which he gave “ for the life of the world.” This assertion, in its plain and obvious sense, so clearly establishes his real presence in the heavenly bread he speaks of, that it seems impossible to find words to express it more strongly. In fact, the Jews naturally understood him in this sense, that he meant to give them his real flesh to eat ; but as they could not understand how this should be done and would not, in the simplicity of faith, believe it upon his word, “ they strove among themselves, saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat ? ” verse 53. Now, from this text and what follows, we have the most convincing proof of the real presence ; and that the literal, plain, and obvious sense of Christ’s words, in which the Jews understood him, was the very sense and meaning which he intended by them ; for it is evident from what the Jews here say, that they understood him in the literal sense, as promising to give them his *real flesh* to eat ; and it was from his own words that they were induced to understand him so. If, therefore, the literal sense, importing the real presence, had not been his meaning, if he meant the above expression only in a figurative sense, then the Jews were in a mistake as to his true meaning, and he himself had led them into that mistake, by the way he expressed himself. Seeing, therefore, that this mistaken sense of his words scandalized them, he was certainly bound, by the most sacred ties, to undeceive them, and to take away the scandal he had given, by explaining his figurative meaning to them. But, instead of this, and to show beyond reply, that the literal sense in which they had understood him, was the very thing which he himself meant, and that it was his real flesh he promised to give in this heavenly bread and not a figure only, he immediately replies, with his usual asseveration,

—“Amen, amen, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you,” verse 54. By which words he manifestly confirmed them in the idea they had of his meaning; and assures all mankind, that his very flesh and blood is the life-giving food contained in this heavenly bread. Now, would the eternal wisdom of God have sported with his poor creatures in so egregious a manner, if the literal sense had not been his true meaning? Would he who came to seek and to save those that were lost, and to enlighten them that sat in darkness, and in the shadow of death, have so positively led poor sinners into so gross a mistake, and in a matter of such importance for their salvation, if he had not meant what his words implied? It would certainly be the height of blasphemy to suppose it.

But our Saviour, not content with the above strong asseveration of the real presence, and foreseeing the great opposition which the pride of man would make against it in after ages, goes on in the following verses to repeat it again and again, and to inculcate it in different lights, every one more strongly affirming it than another; “he that eateth my flesh,” says he, “and drinketh my blood, hath life everlasting, and I will raise him up at the last day,” verse 55. The body and blood of Christ is alone the true life of our souls, the source of all grace, life, and benediction to us in this world, and of everlasting life in the world to come; consequently, the possessing this *life everlasting*, by eating his flesh and drinking his blood, necessarily implies our eating and drinking his real flesh and his real blood; for how could we possess Christ as the everlasting life of our soul, if we eat and drink nothing but a figure; and, therefore, he goes on to give this as the reason of what he last said: “for my flesh,” says he, “is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed”; how could this be so, if what he gives be nothing but a bit of bread? Again, “he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood,” says he, “abideth in me and I in him,” verse 57; how strongly does this also confirm his real presence. By giving us his real flesh and blood, he is himself received within us and abides in us, and we, living by this food the spiritual life of grace, abide in him, and are guided and directed by him. But this text would be evidently false, did he give nothing but a figure instead of the reality; for how could he be said to abide in us, and we in him, by means of this heavenly food, if he be not there? He then goes on to show again the excellency of this food, saying, “As the living Father hath

sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live for ever," verse 58. Can a piece of common bread be said to be "the bread that came down from heaven?" Can a bare figure be more excellent than the manna, which was a most admirable figure of Christ in many of his properties? or can a bit of plain bread, merely taken in remembrance of Christ, be supposed to be a food by which we shall live for ever?

It is manifest, then, that every one of these texts enforce and inculcate the reality of Christ's flesh and blood in the plainest and strongest terms; and it is most certain they were understood in the real sense by all who were then present. Many of his own disciples hearing him speak in such a plain and strong manner, and not being able to understand how this could be, but, following the example of the unbelieving Jews, were scandalized at it, and said, "this saying is hard, and who can hear it?" verse 61. "But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples murmured at this, said to them, Doth this scandalize you?" verse 62. Observe he does not say, *you are in a mistake, you misunderstand me*, which he certainly was bound to do, and would have done, had he not meant the reality of his presence as they understood him; but well knowing they were under no mistake on that point, he endeavoured to convince them of the truth of what scandalized them, by proposing another miracle: "If then," says he, "you shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?" verse 63, and seeing the hardness of their hearts, and their carnal mind, which hindered them from receiving the light of faith which he offered them, he adds, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing," verse 64. It is the Spirit of God that quickeneth the mind, by the gift of faith; but your fleshly minds hinder you from profiting by him. Just as he said above to the Jews, when they refused to believe him, and which he adds here also, "Therefore did I say to you, that no man can come to me unless it be given him by my father," verse 66. Immediately upon this, "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him," verse 67. Would Jesus Christ ever have let his own disciples leave him, and run headlong to their own perdition, had they been under a mistake about his meaning, and a mistake which he himself had occasioned, without ever offering to undeceive them? It would be impious to imagine it; on

the contrary, their fault only lay in their refusing to believe his word, which they understood in his true meaning; and, therefore, as "Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe," verse 65, he let them go without saying a word more to detain them.

When they were gone, "Jesus said to the twelve, will ye also go away?" verse 68. Here again we have another beautiful proof of the real presence. The twelve had been present all this time, had heard all that passed, and seen the Jews strive, and the disciples murmur and leave their Master; they understood what their master said in the same literal sense the others had done; it could, indeed, bear no other meaning: but, when Jesus put the above question to them, "Simon Peter," in the name of the whole, "answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed, and have known that thou art the Christ the Son of God," verse 69. Behold the noble simplicity of their faith, they believe the words of their Master without the least hesitation; they look upon them as the words of eternal life; they believe them in that very meaning in which the others had refused to believe them; they believe them as containing a promise of giving them his real flesh to eat and his real blood to drink: and they believe him with a most firm and sincere faith, for this plain but noble reason, because "he is Christ, the Son of God," who cannot possibly be deceived himself, and who is absolutely incapable of deceiving his creatures, and whose Almighty power is perfectly able to make good his word, and perform most exactly the promise he made them.

The *second* proof of the real presence, is taken from the words of the institution of the Holy Eucharist, as related by three Evangelists, in their gospels, and by St. Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. xi. Here we must observe, that the conversation held by our Saviour with the Jews and his disciples, as related above from St. John, happened some time before the institution of the blessed sacrament; in it we have seen that the apostles believed the words of their Master, and were persuaded that he then promised to give them a heavenly life-giving bread, and that this divine bread was his very "flesh for the life of the world"; consequently, from that day forward, they lived in expectation of his fulfilling this promise, and of his giving them this heavenly food. In the meantime, they saw him perform numbers of miracles of all kinds, and that

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

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

A. There are many reasons for this of the strongest kind: (1.) When he promised beforehand to give this heavenly bread, he certainly meant, and promised to give it in his real flesh and blood, to wit, that flesh which he gave *for the life of the world*, as we have clearly seen: therefore, when he performed his promise at the last supper, he actually did so, and spoke these words, *This is my body*, as declaring that what he gave was his real body, his real flesh and blood. (2.) Because his apostles could not possibly understand his words in any other sense, considering what had passed before, and the belief they had of his being God, and, therefore, he would have egregiously deceived them, if he had meant them in any other sense himself than what he knew they must take them in. (3.) Because his words would have been a manifest lie, if what he gave his

apostles was not his body, but only a bit of bread, as a figure of his body. (4.) Because, if what he gave his apostles was not his body, but only a bit of bread, then, when he held it out to them and said, *Take eat, this is my body*, he called a bit of bread his body, though he meant it only as a figure of his body; now, if this was so, he was guilty of a most gross and shameful absurdity; for nothing can be more absurd than to hold a bit of bread in one's hand, and say, this is the living body of a man; it being contrary to the common practice of mankind, and the common laws of speech, to call one thing by the name of another, with which it has no manner of resemblance nor connexion, and that, too, without giving the persons to whom it is said the least intimation of one's meaning, to serve as a key for understanding such an extraordinary way of speaking. (5.) A sober man would be ashamed, on any serious occasion to use a deceitful way of speaking, so as to call a thing by a name by which it was never known before, especially before people who, he knew, would undoubtedly be deceived by him, from the opinion they had of his integrity and probity. It is, therefore, impious to suppose that the Son of God would have done so with his apostles, to whom he always explained what he spoke to the multitude obscurely, and that upon one of the most solemn occasions of his whole life, when he was making a covenant that was to last to the end of time, instituting a sacrament that was to be frequented by all his followers, till his second coming; yea, making his last will and testament, and in it bequeathing to us an admirable legacy, the last pledge of his love. Is it not impeaching him of the most atrocious folly and insincerity, to suppose he would, on so solemn an occasion, use deceitful language, and what would necessarily lead men into error? (6.) Because the figurative sense destroys the belief of the passion and death of our blessed Saviour, which all Christians, in the Creed, profess to believe. For Jesus Christ said in John vi.: "The bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world"; and, at the institution, he declares: "This is my body, which is given for you," Luke xxii. 19, or, "which shall be delivered for you," 1 Cor. xi.; "This is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many, for the remission of sins," Matt. xxvi. 28. Now, it was his real flesh which was given for the life of the world, his real blood which was shed for the remission of sins; consequently it was his real flesh and blood which he gave in the blessed Eucharist; and if it be said, that the blessed Eucharist

was only a figure of his flesh and blood, then we must also say that it was only a figure of his flesh which was crucified for us, and a figure of his blood which was shed for the remission of sins, since he expressly declares it was the same in both.

Besides these reasons, which evidently show that it is impossible Christ could intend the figurative sense, when he spoke the words of the institution, there are others also, of a different kind, which no less clearly show the same thing; and, at the same time, prove directly the truth of the real presence; for, (1.) As it is an uncontested fact that the whole Christian church, for many ages, believed the real presence, and rendered divine worship to Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist; if this doctrine be false, then the whole church of Christ was, for many ages, guilty of superstition and idolatry; and, indeed, this is the very reason alleged by the first reformers for their breaking off from the whole Christian world then in being. Now, if we believe the scriptures, it is absolutely impossible that the church of Christ should fall into idolatry; for they repeatedly declare, that among the followers of Christ, "idols should be utterly destroyed," Is. ii. 18; that God would "cleanse them from their idols," Ezech. xxxvi. 25, "nor shall they be defiled any more with their idols, says God himself, nor with their abominations, nor with all their iniquities; and I will save them out of all the places in which they have sinned, and I will cleanse them, and they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and my servant David shall be King over them, and they shall have one Shepherd, they shall walk in my judgments, and shall keep my commandments, and shall do them," Ezech. xxxvii. 23. "And I will destroy," says he again, "thy graven things, and thy statutes out of the midst of thee, and thou shalt NO MORE adore the work of thy hands," Mich. v. 12. "And I will destroy the names of idols out of the earth, and they shall be remembered no more," Zach. xiii. 2. How can all this stand, if the whole church of Christ had been, for many ages, guilty of idolatry, by the belief of the real presence? Therefore, the doctrine of the real presence is not a false and idolatrous doctrine, but the true heavenly doctrine of Jesus Christ. (2.) Let us suppose, contrary to all these strong promises of God, that it is otherwise, and that the doctrine of the real presence is false; Jesus Christ must have foreseen that his whole church would, for many ages, embrace this doctrine, and fall into idolatrous worship, in consequence of it. He must have foreseen that his very words

would give men a natural handle to do so, and be a reasonable ground for their doing it; can we suppose without the height of blasphemy, that he would industriously have used such a language, as he knew would have such dreadful effects, and that, from the very respect men must have for his words, when a single word to explain himself would have effectually prevented it? (3.) If we suppose the figurative sense was intended by Jesus Christ, and taught by his apostles, then it is simply impossible the belief of the real presence could ever have taken place in the world; for, had the Christian world, in the first ages, believed only the figurative presence, then, when the real presence was first broached, it must have appeared *a new doctrine*, as having never been heard of before; on this account, it must have been considered as *false and heretical*, being diametrically opposite to what all the Christian world is supposed to have then believed as a revealed truth; it must even have appeared as a most *dangerous heresy*, because leading directly to idolatry, and teaching that men ought to adore as God, what they and all their predecessors, from the time of the apostles, believed to be nothing but bread and wine; and it must have been looked upon as altogether *incredible*, because contrary to the testimony of the senses, irreconcilable to the lights of natural reason, and directly opposite to the faith then, as we suppose, believed by all Christians. The proposal of such a doctrine must have been shocking to all people of piety and understanding on account of its novelty and dangerous tendency; it must have been no less so to the more worldly-minded people, from its opposition to sense and reason, without any prospect of the smallest advantage by it. For it must be observed, that human nature is the same in all ages, and the same reasons that make the doctrine of the real presence appear incredible to those who do not believe it at present, must have made it appear no less so in any former age, when, in the above supposition, it first appeared. From all which we must justly conclude, that a doctrine, lying under so many disadvantages, could never possibly have been embraced by any reasonable creature, except from the full conviction that it was revealed by God himself, whose divine authority alone takes away all difficulties in the belief of it; and this conviction could never possibly have taken place in the world, if it had not been from the beginning, and if the doctrine itself had not been revealed by Jesus Christ, and delivered by him, with the rest of revealed truths, to his apostles.

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

A. The *third* proof from scripture is taken from St. Paul, who warmly exhorting the Corinthians to fly all communication with idolatry, and by no means to partake of things offered to idols, uses this argument to persuade them. "The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? and the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord?" 1 Cor. x. 16. Here he expressly affirms, that, in the Holy Eucharist, we communicate and partake of the body and blood of Christ; and he affirms it as a truth perfectly well known to them, and which none can deny; and therefore, after showing that "the things which the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God, verse 20, he immediately concludes, "you cannot drink the chalice of the Lord and the chalice of devils; you cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord and the table of devils," verse 21, to show how shocking a crime it must be for those who communicate in the body and blood of Christ, to go and communicate also with the devil. All which would have been a ridiculous argument, if the real presence be not true.

The *fourth* proof from scripture is taken from the same holy apostle, who, 1 Cor. xi., reproving some abuses that had crept in among the Corinthians at their religious meetings, puts them in mind of the holy mysteries there celebrated, and, first, gives a history of the institution of the Blessed Eucharist, which he declares to have been received by immediate revelation from our Lord, and he gives it in the same terms in which it is described in the gospels, and then adds, "wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," verse 27. To receive the Holy Eucharist unworthily, is to receive it when one is in the state of mortal sin; which the apostle here declares to be a crime of the deepest dye, equal to that of the Jews, who put our Saviour to death in a cruel and barbarous manner. Now, in the belief of the real presence, we see, all at once, the grievous injury done to Jesus Christ by receiving him into a soul sullied with the guilt of sin, which is an object of horror and abomination in his eyes; but how a person should contract such a guilt, by eating a bit of bread as a figure of Christ's body, is inconceivable; common sense even revolts at the thought of it; especially if we reflect that the manna and the paschal lamb were much more lively figures of

Jesus Christ than a bit of bread, and yet it was never supposed, that those who eat the manna or the paschal lamb, when they were in the state of sin, were guilty of such a crime, or, indeed, of any crime at all, by doing so. This decision, therefore, of the Holy Ghost manifestly implies, that our blessed Saviour's body and blood are truly and really present, even to the unworthy communicant, and grievously injured by him who receives in such an unworthy manner.

What follows, still further confirms this; for the apostle adds, "he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment" (or, as the Protestant translation has it, *damnation*) "to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord," verse 29. Here we see a most dreadful punishment annexed to the crime of receiving unworthily, and the point in which its guilt consists immediately adjoined. Is not our natural reason shocked to suppose that a God of infinite justice and mercy would, in a manner, incorporate damnation to a soul for eating, while in a state of sin, a bit of bread as a figure of Christ? But, we are no longer surprised at such severity if we believe Jesus Christ to be really present in the holy sacrament, because we see, all at once, that the crime of receiving him into a soul sullied with mortal sin, must be of the most enormous guilt. But why is such a punishment annexed to such a crime? the apostle immediately adds, "not discerning the body of the Lord"; now, how can he discern it if it be not there? This then is their crime, this the source of their guilt, because they do not consider how great, how holy a Being is present in this holy mystery, and treat him in so unworthy and so injurious a manner.

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

A. We shall only make one general observation upon the whole, which is this. In the several passages of scripture which we have seen, there are about thirteen or fourteen different texts on this subject, and every one of them affirms, in the strongest terms, the doctrine of the real presence of the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist; and, on the other hand, there is not one single text in the whole scripture that affirms, or so much as insinuates the contrary. What then are we to believe, or how are we to know the truth in this matter? if not from such strong and express declarations of God's holy word, so frequently repeated, and so forcibly inculcated? and what can we think of those who pretend to follow

plain scripture as their only rule, and yet go point-blank against so many plain declarations of scripture, without one single text of scripture to authorise them to do so? Our Saviour says, "The bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world"; and they say, *it is not his flesh but only a bit of bread*. Christ says, "This is my body"; and they affirm, *it is not his body*; which shall we believe?

We may however here observe, that what the Catholics believe of the real presence of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, bequeathed by him, in the Holy Eucharist to his Church; and what the Protestants believe of the figurative presence in their sacrament are both true. This may seem a paradox at first sight, but it is easily reconciled. The pastors of the Catholic Church are the undoubted successors of the apostles, and inherit from them, by an uninterrupted transmission of holy orders, the same spiritual powers of the priesthood which they themselves received from our Saviour. Among these powers, that of consecrating the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ is certainly the most eminent. This power he gave to the apostles, at the institution of the Holy Eucharist, when he commanded them to do what he had done; and this power the pastors of the church enjoy to this day, and will enjoy to the end of time. Consequently, what they give to their people in the blessed Eucharist, is the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the same that he gave to his apostles, as all the above testimonies of scripture clearly affirm; when Luther and his followers broke off from the Catholic Church they rejected holy orders entirely; they even ridiculed them; they took upon themselves to be the spiritual guides and pastors of their followers; to preach and baptize, and do the other works of the ministry, without having either received any of the priestly powers, or any authority to do so, from those before them; and as they had not these powers themselves, they could not transmit them to their successors. Consequently, their successors to this day have no power to consecrate the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, nor do they even pretend to have such power; what they give then to their people in their sacrament, is precisely what they believe it to be, nothing but bread and wine, which they may receive as a figure, or any way they please; but then it is not a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ; it is not the sacred legacy which he bequeathed to his church; it is a mere human invention.

Q. 19. But does not our Saviour, at the very institution of

this sacrament, immediately say, "Do this in remembrance of me"? and does not this expression imply that he is not present? for how can we be desired to remember one that is present with us?

A. Whatever this expression may imply, yet it certainly does not affirm, in plain terms, that he is not present; consequently it can never invalidate the plain meaning of so many other texts expressly affirming his real presence; for, though we cannot mistake the plain obvious meaning of these other texts, yet we may easily be mistaken, in supposing what an obscure text may imply. But to show that these words "Do this in remembrance of me," by no means imply his absence, let us only consider another similar expression of the holy scripture. The wise man says, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth," Eccles. xii. 1. Shall we conclude from this that our Creator is not present with us in the days of our youth? this would be a very false and impious conclusion. The meaning of this text is plainly this, that our Creator, though always present with us, "for in him we live, and move, and have our being," Acts xvii. 28, yet is not present with us in a visible and sensible manner; and in our youth, when the mind is so apt to be carried away with the dangerous objects about us, we are but too, too ready to forget his presence, and to do things that are offensive to him; therefore, the Holy Ghost cautions us against this danger, and exhorts us never to forget the Divine presence; but always to conduct ourselves as remembering that we are exposed and open to his sight. In the same manner, though Jesus Christ be truly present in the Holy Eucharist, yet he is not present in a sensible manner, but is hid from our bodily eyes under the sacramental veils; and, as we might be in danger of forgetting his presence, and "of not discerning his body" there present, so as to receive him unworthily to our damnation, or fail in the respect and veneration we owe to him; therefore we are commanded, when we celebrate these holy mysteries, not to forget his presence; but remember that he is there, though not visible to our eyes, and consequently to behave ourselves in such a manner as his Divine presence requires. So that this text, if explained by a similar passage of the scripture itself, instead of implying his absence, is a very strong proof of his presence. But St. Paul gives us the precise sense of that expression, as directly intended by our Saviour; for, in the account he gives of the institution of the Holy Eucharist, which he received from Christ himself, after these words, "Do this in remembrance of me," he immediately

adds, as the true sense and meaning of them; "for as often as ye shall eat this bread and drink this chalice, ye shall show the death of our Lord until he come," 1 Cor. xi. 26, thereby declaring, that the remembrance which our Saviour here requires from us, is a remembrance of his passion and death, of which these holy mysteries are a mystical representation, and were instituted by him, to be a continual memorial of them till his second coming.

Q. 20. Does not our Saviour also say, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life"? John vi. 46. And does not this imply, that what he had been saying before, ought to be taken in a spiritual sense?

A. Certainly these words do not say, in plain terms that what he had been saying before about his flesh and blood, ought to be taken in any such sense as can exclude his real presence in the Holy Eucharist; and certain it is, that they were not understood in such a sense by his disciples; for their difficulty was solely about the reality of his presence; and after these words were spoken by him, "many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him," verse 67; which they certainly never would have done, if the words of our Saviour had been intended to explain the meaning of all he had said in a figurative sense, and as intending only a figure of his presence in the Holy Eucharist. It is also evident that these words are very obscure, when considered by themselves, and without their connexion with the context; and, therefore, can never be of any weight against the plain meaning of so many clear and express texts as go before. It is no less manifest, that our Saviour does not speak here of his own flesh: for who will care to say, that the flesh of Christ profiteth us nothing? since it was for us he took flesh, and in his flesh suffered and died for our salvation, and that he gave his flesh "for the life of the world"; therefore, we must conclude, that this text is far from making any thing against the real presence, and is not even spoken in relation to the holy sacrament at all; but that the proper meaning of it is, what we have seen above, that it is God's Holy Spirit which quickeneth our souls and enables us to believe the mysteries revealed by God; but the fleshly carnal minds of those disciples hindered them from profiting by the graces which that Holy Spirit gave them, for believing the words of Christ, which are, indeed, spirit and life to those who believe them.

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

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

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

A. By no means; because we find it a very common way of speaking in scripture, to call one thing by the name of a thing which it is not, on two different accounts; both which take place in the Blessed Eucharist, (1.) When it has the external appearance of the thing, by the name of which it is called. Thus angels appearing like men, are on that account called men in scripture; so also it is said, that "parted tongues, as it were of fire, appeared, and sat upon the apostles on Pentecost"; yet it was not fiery tongues, but the Holy Ghost under that appearance. (2.) When it is made from that thing by which it is called. Thus God said to Adam, "Dust thou art"; because he was made of dust. So after Aaron's rod was turned into a serpent it is still called a rod, "and Aaron's rod devoured their rods," Ex. vii. 12. So also in our case, the Holy Eucharist is called *bread* after consecration; for both these reasons, because it re-

tains all the outward appearance of bread, and because it was bread before consecration : and we may also add, because this Divine spiritual bread produces all the same effects in the soul, which natural bread does in the body.

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

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

Q. 24. How is this explained ?

A. To understand this, we must observe, that death precisely consists in the separation of the soul from the body. But as the blood is so necessary for life, that without it the soul cannot remain to enliven the body ; so when the blood is separated from the body, death necessarily ensues, and the soul can be no longer there. Our Saviour to show the greatness of his love for us, was pleased to suffer death for our salvation, in the most perfect manner ; so that not only was his soul separated from his body on the cross, but he also shed, to the last drop, his precious blood for us. And at his resurrection, his blood and his soul were again reunited to his body, and he restored to life. Now, the scripture positively declares, “that Christ rising again from the dead, dieth now no more ; death shall no more have dominion over him,” Rom. vi. 9. Consequently his body, his blood, and his soul, shall never more be separated from one another ; and, as the union of his Divine and human nature can never more be broken, so neither can these his two natures, united in his Divine person, be ever separated : from this it necessarily follows, that, wherever the body of Christ is, there also his blood, his soul, and his divinity must of necessity be ; and, wherever his blood is, there also his body, and soul, and divinity must be in like manner. Hence, though by the words of consecration, his body only is mentioned as present, under the form of wine ; yet by reason of the indissoluble connexion by which his body and blood, his soul and divinity, are united together, Jesus Christ, whole and entire, is truly, really and substantially present, both under the form of bread, and under the form of wine.

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

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

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

A. There is a very striking and apposite example in the different forms under which the Holy Ghost was pleased to appear to men; for, at our Saviour's baptism, "the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, as a dove upon him," Luke iii. 22. But when he came down on the apostles on Pentecost, "there appeared to them parted tongues, as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them," Acts ii. 3. Now the appearance of *a dove*, and *a tongue of fire*, are exceeding different; and yet it was the self same Holy Ghost that was under both these forms or appearances. In like manner, though the appearance of bread and that of wine be very different, yet it is the self same Jesus Christ who is contained under each, in the Holy Eucharist.

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

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

SECTION II.—*Of Transubstantiation.*

Q. 20. What is meant by transubstantiation?

A. To understand this, we must observe, that in all the bodily objects about us, there are two things carefully to be distinguished; the outward appearances which they exhibit to our senses, when applied to them, such as their colour, shape, taste, smell, and other such sensible qualities; and the inward matter or substance in which all these sensible qualities reside. These sensible qualities of bodies are the proper objects of our knowledge, of which we are absolutely certain, from the testimony

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

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

A. From the very words of our Saviour, of which it is a natural consequence; for, when he took bread into his hand, it was then bread; but when he gave it to his apostles, he expressly declared, that what he gave them to eat was his body; "Take, eat," said he, "this is my body"; and, as we have seen above, by thus declaring it to be his body, he made it his body, seeing it is simply impossible that his words should be false. Consequently, since that which, before consecration, was *bread*, did, after consecration, become his *body*, the bread must undoubtedly be changed into his body; and, as it is manifest to our senses, that there is no change in the outward sensible qualities, therefore, this change must be in the inward substance.

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

A. There is a very striking one in the cure of the ruler's son of Capernaum: for, when the ruler pressed our Saviour to go down with him to cure his son, saying, "Sir, come down before that my son die," John iv. 49, "Jesus saith to him, Go thy way, thy son liveth," verse 50. He did not command the son to be cured, as he expressed himself on other such occasions; but he affirmed he was cured, and immediately the young man was restored to his health; for it was the same hour that Jesus said to the ruler, "Thy son liveth, that the fever left him," verse 53. Which shows the Almighty power of the words of Christ, that, when he affirms a thing to be what it was not before, it immediately becomes what he affirms it to be. So, in our case, when Jesus took bread in his hand, and then affirmed, that

what he gave his apostles was his body, what was before bread, immediately became his body.

Q. 31. How is such a change possible?

A. It ill becomes us, weak mortals, to ask how anything is possible to the Almighty God. Surely he who created all things out of nothing by his word alone, can, with the same ease, annihilate them again, or change one thing into another as he pleases. However, he has not been wanting to dispose the world for the belief of this mystery, by doing, on different occasions, in a visible manner, what he here does in a manner imperceptible to our senses. He turned the waters of Egypt into blood by the hand of Moses; he changed Moses' dry rod into a living serpent; he changed the water into wine at the marriage of Cana; all this he did in a visible manner, so as to be evident to the senses of the beholders, which shows that it is perfectly easy for him to change one thing into another when he pleases. And that it is no less easy for his Almighty power to make one thing appear to us under the outward form of another thing, is manifest from several such instances where he has done so. Thus the angels often appeared to his holy servants of old under the appearance of young men, and spoke, and walked, and eat, and touched those they appeared to, as young men would have done. So, also, the Holy Ghost appeared to men, "under the bodily shape of a dove," Luke iii. 22, at our Saviour's baptism, and as "parted tongues of fire," when he came down upon the apostles, Acts ii. 3, and, indeed, the art of man itself, on many occasions, does in like manner; for how often do we see cooks, apothecaries, and brewers of wine, make up dishes, drugs, and various wines, representing so exactly what they are not, that the nicest judge, upon the strictest examination, could not distinguish them from what they represent? and shall we deny to the Almighty a power which we find in men? Now, in the Blessed Eucharist, he both changes the substance of the bread and wine into the substance of the body and blood of Christ; and Christ now really present in the Blessed Eucharist, is pleased to appear to us under the same outward forms which the bread and wine had before.

Q. 32. But how is it possible that the body of Christ should be in so many different places at one and the same time, as he must be according to this doctrine?

A. But who are we, to ask such a question of the Almighty? we, I say, who are perfectly ignorant of the nature of a glorified body, for such the body of Christ is, and who know

not what is possible or not possible for it to do. From what we have seen, it is evident that the real presence is a divine truth revealed by God, and, therefore, that our Saviour is actually present in many different places at once; therefore, it is certainly possible for him to be so, though we cannot comprehend how it is so. However, even in this, his infinite goodness has condescended to show us, by an example, that this is nowise impossible for him: for, in the miracle of feeding five thousand men with five loaves and two small fishes, it is declared, that the men "sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties," and that after "blessing the loaves, he gave to his disciples to set before them, and the two fishes he divided among them all; and they all did eat, and had their fill," Mark vi. 40. "And when they were filled he said to his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, lest they be lost. So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above to them that had eaten," John vi. 12. The same miracle was repeated a second time, when he fed four thousand men with seven loaves and a few small fishes, and gathered up seven baskets of the fragments, after all were filled, Mark viii. 6. Now from these two miracles, it is at least highly probable that it is easy for the power of God to make bodies, even in their natural state, be in many different places at one and the same time. For, if we suppose, for examples sake, that these five loaves were so large, as naturally to be sufficient to serve one company of fifty men; as there were a hundred such companies in all the five thousand, the loaves must have been in a hundred different places at one and the same time, while all these hundred companies were eating of them; and the same is to be observed of the two fishes; and what is still more, no less than twelve baskets were filled with the broken pieces, after all had eaten to their fill, which in appearance was a greater quantity than the five loaves were at the beginning. Now, if Almighty God could so multiply these loaves, even in their natural state, as to be in so many places at one and the same time, there can be no difficulty in believing that the body of Christ, now in a glorified state, may be in as many places at the same time as he pleases.

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

A. I know this is the evasion that some use to avoid the force of this miracle; but it must be observed that there are not the smallest grounds from scripture to say so; nay, that it is directly contrary to the express words of the scripture; for, there it is affirmed, that "the two fishes he divided among them all," which would be false, if he had either formed new fishes, or the angels had supplied others invisibly; it is also said, that "they filled twelve baskets of the fragments of the five barley loaves that remained over and above to them that had eaten," which also must be false, if other loaves had been administered. Besides, Christ himself, speaking of these very miracles, said to his apostles, "When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say to him, Twelve. And when the seven loaves among four thousand, how many baskets of fragments took ye up? and they said, Seven," Mark viii. 19. Where he affirms, that he broke the five loaves among the five thousand, and the seven loaves among the four thousand; which would not have been true, if the whole five thousand and four thousand men had not partaken of the individual five and seven loaves, but the greatest number of them had been fed with other new formed, or new provided loaves.

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

A. The answer to this is the same as in the former case; we know from revelation that it is so; but how it should be so, does not belong to us to inquire. However, we must remember what our Saviour says in the gospel, that, at the resurrection, even our bodies shall become like the angels of God putting on the properties and qualities of spirits. But spirits are not confined to any magnitude, and, if they should appear to men in a visible form, may do it either in a large or small size as they please. Now the body of Christ is a glorified body, not existing in the same gross mortal manner that ours are in at present, and, therefore, not confined to shape or size at all. Besides, Christ himself expressly affirms, that it is possible with God to make a camel pass through the eye of a needle.

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

A. Not at all. Were the senses of the saints of old deceived when the angels appeared to them as young men? Were the senses of those deceived who saw the Holy Ghost descend upon

our Saviour like a dove? or upon the apostles like fiery tongues? Certainly not; for the senses saw what was really there; the appearances and forms of young men in the first case; and the appearance of a dove and of fiery tongues in the latter. So, in the Holy Eucharist, our senses perceive the appearances of bread and wine, and these appearances are really there; consequently they are by means deceived.

SECTION III.—*Of the Holy Communion.*

Q. 36. What is the holy communion?

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

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

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

Q. 38. What are these effects?

A. They are chiefly these following: (1.) It increases the sanctification of the soul by an increase of justifying grace; rendering the soul of the worthy receiver more pure, more holy, more beautiful, more agreeable in the eyes of God. (2.) It bestows on the soul a copious supply of actual grace, for preserving, strengthening, and perfecting her in her spiritual life, by which she advances in the love of God, and is strengthened in his service, according to the words of our Saviour, "he that eateth me, the same shall live by me," John vi. 58. (3.) It is a wholesome and powerful remedy against all the spiritual maladies of the soul, by which the infirmities of our corrupt nature are cured, our evil inclinations rectified, our affections for created objects moderated, and our passions extirpated. (4.) It cleanses the soul from all those venial sins, and imperfections of which we repent, and gives great strength to preserve us from falling into mortal sin. (5.) It unites us in a most intimate manner with Jesus Christ, who comes to us in this holy sacrament, on purpose to dwell in our souls and abide in us. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him," John vi. 57. (6.) It gives us a pledge and earnest of a glorious immortality, and brings us to the enjoyment of it at last, if we persevere in the grace of God to the end; "he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day,"

John vi. 55. "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever," John vi. 52.

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

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

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

A. It appears, (1.) from the nature of the crime committed. To receive the holy communion unworthily, is to receive it when a person knows himself to be in a state of sin, that is, in disgrace with God, and at enmity with him; for a soul in sin is loathsome and hideous in the sight of God, as a dead carcass is in the sight of men. Now, as this holy sacrament was designed to unite us with Jesus Christ, and that by it he might come and dwell in our souls, for he says, "he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, abides in me and I in him"; hence to receive this sacrament in the state of sin, is to unite Jesus Christ to a soul which is loathsome and hideous to him; an object of his horror and detestation; it is to bring the Author of Life into the dead carcass of a soul; to force, in a manner, the Holy of Holies to take up his abode in a place of filth and corruption. What a grievous injury must this be to Jesus Christ? what an affront put upon him? Nothing will serve so well to give us some distant notion of it, as a torment inflicted upon some of the martyrs by the heathen persecutors, when they stripped the martyr naked and tied him to a dead carcass, face to face, body to body, arms to arms, and legs to legs, and then threw him to the fields to die by the stench and corruption of the dead carcass. (2.) The great guilt of an unworthy communion also appears from the decision passed upon it by the Holy Ghost in the scripture; for there St. Paul says, "Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord," 1 Cor. xi. 27. To be guilty of a man's blood is to murder him; and to be guilty of his body seems capable of no other sense than to murder him in a cruel and barbarous manner, tormenting his body by a painful and lingering death: this was the crime of the Jews in what they did to Jesus Christ; and this also, says the apostle, is the crime of the unworthy communicant; a hideous crime indeed! a dreadful guilt! The unworthy communicant, like Judas, betrays Jesus Christ into the hands of his enemies, while he brings him into a soul where Satan reigns as

master ; and he betrays him, too, with a kiss, whilst in appearance he pretends to honour him. The Jews scourged him, crowned him with thorns, and crucified him ; and the unworthy communicant does him an injury more grievous and more afflicting to him than all these sufferings : for, if the scripture assures us that those who return to commit any mortal sin after baptism, “crucify again to themselves the Son of God, and make a mockery of him,” Heb. vi. 6, how much more do they do so who make an unworthy communion, which is one of the most grievous and atrocious of all sins ? Nay, in some respects, they are vastly more guilty than the Jews, who treated him in the way they did through ignorance, “for, if they had known it, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory,” 1 Cor. ii. 8. But the unworthy communicant knows him to be the Lord of glory, believes him to be the Son of God, and yet injures him in so atrocious a manner !

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

A. From different considerations, (1.) We find throughout the whole scripture, that Almighty God, jealous of his honour, and of the respect due to holy things, never fails to punish sacrilege, which is the profanation of holy things, with a particular severity. Witness the Bethsamites for looking into the Ark, 1 Kings vi. ; Oza for touching it with profane hands, 2 Kings vi. ; Baltasar for profaning the holy vessels, Dan. v., and others. Now, if God so severely punishes the profanation of inanimate creatures, which are only deputed for his service, what punishment is to be expected for the unworthy communicant, who profanes the Holy of Holies in so injurious a manner ? (2.) St. Paul assures us, that this sin is one principal cause of many severe temporal punishments ; for, after mentioning the greatness of the sin, and the dreadful punishment inflicted for it on the soul, he immediately adds, “therefore are there many infirm and weak among you, and many sleep,” 1 Cor. vi. 30 ; to show that sicknesses, and infirmities, and untimely deaths, are the fatal consequences of this sin. (3.) He declares the punishment of it, with regard to the next life, in these alarming words : “He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment (or damnation) to himself,” 1 Cor. xi. 29. (4.) The example of Judas, the first that ever made an unworthy communion, is a striking instance of the truth of this ; for immediately on his receiving the morsel from the hand of Christ, “Satan entered into him,” that is, got full

possession of him ; and “ he immediately went out,” and agreed with the chief priests to betray his Master into their hands that night, which he accordingly did, and got the thirty pieces of silver for which he had bargained to do it ; soon after this he was tormented with his guilty conscience, and continued to be so all night, and the next morning went to the chief priests and threw back the money, acknowledging his guilt ; but, finding no relief in his own mind, he fell into despair, “ and went and hanged himself with a halter,” Matt. xxvii. 5, and “ being hanged, he burst assunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out,” Acts. i. 18. Such was the unhappy fate of him who made the first unworthy communion ! A sad example indeed, and alarming !

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

A. There are several things required for this end, and particularly these following :

(1.) That we have a pure intention, not going about that sacred action merely out of custom, or because we see others go, or to be thought pious or devout by men, or the like ; but, (1.) for the glory of God, and to give supreme honour to Jesus Christ, opening our hearts to him, and receiving him unto our souls, as our Sovereign Lord and Master, to whom alone we wholly belong. (2.) To obtain for our souls all those excellent fruits which Jesus Christ bestows upon the worthy receiver. (3.) To commemorate the passion and death of Christ, according to his express command, “ Do this in remembrance of me ” ; for says St. Paul, “ as often as you shall eat this bread and drink this chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until he come,” 1 Cor. xi. 26. Such are the intentions we ought to have in receiving the holy sacrament.

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

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

(4.) That our soul be adorned with those holy virtues which are necessary to make it an agreeable habitation to Jesus Christ; particularly these following: (1.) "A lively faith of his Divine presence"; this is the foundation of all the rest, and the more the soul exercises herself in it, the more profitable her communion will be. It is acquired by humble prayer, and frequent acts of faith, considering who he is: our God, our Saviour, and our Judge, &c. (2.) "A profound humility, respect and reverential awe, and fear, considering his infinite dignity, and our own unworthiness. Consider what humility Moses showed at the burning bush, and Joshua when the angel appeared to him. Now, Jesus Christ is the King of angels; the four and twenty ancients, and other blessed spirits, show the most profound respect for him in heaven: How much more ought we, worms upon earth, to humble ourselves before him? This is acquired by considering who he is, and who we are. St. Elizabeth, when the blessed Virgin came to see her, cried out in amazement, "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" Luke i. 43. Our Lord himself comes to us in the Holy Eucharist! (3.) "A great confidence and trust in him"; he is able to do us all good, he is willing and ready on his part, he invites us to come, "Come to me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you," Matt. xi. And if God spared not even "his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how hath he not also with him given us all things"? Rom. viii. 32. The example of the woman with the issue of blood, shows the wonderful effects which a great confidence in him will have! for she touched but the hem of his garment, and was cured; but we receive him whole and entire in the holy communion, what may we not expect? Humility and confidence joined together, may obtain anything from him; witness the good Centurion. (4.) *A sincere love of Jesus Christ*; this is the crown of all the rest, which includes all good, and, of all things else, renders us most acceptable to Jesus Christ. It is acquired by fervent prayer, often meditating upon his infinite goodness, and his infinite love to us, and by frequent and fervent acts of holy love to him. And this love ought to show itself in an ardent desire of being united to him, and of receiving him frequently

in this holy sacrament, as the constant effect of love is to unite us to the beloved object; and particularly in making us careful to lead innocent lives, and obey his holy commandments, that we may have nothing to hinder us from this frequent union with him in the holy communion.

(5.) That after receiving him in this blessed Eucharist, we show our respect and gratitude to him in a becoming manner, (1.) By spending some time in his blessed company, and entertaining him with our most profound homage, by acts of faith and adoration, thanksgiving and praise, oblations of ourselves wholly to him, who gives himself wholly to us, laying before him all our necessities, and begging such graces for ourselves and others, as we and they stand in need of. (2.) By keeping ourselves more than ordinarily recollected during that day, often calling to mind whom we have been receiving, and rendering him the homage of some holy act of virtue. (3.) Striving to live by him; for, "he that eats this bread," says he, "the same shall live by me," which is done by a continual endeavour to imitate his example and to do his will.

SECTION IV.—*Of Communion in one kind.*

Q. 43. What does the sacrament of the holy communion, properly speaking, consist in?

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

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

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

former cases, only under two different forms instead of one, and the same sacrament.

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

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

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

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

Q. 47. But does not our Saviour say, "Except you eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you"? And does not this expressly command both *eating* and *drinking*; and, therefore, receiving in both kinds, otherwise there is no life for us?

A. This, indeed, expressly commands the receiving both his body and blood; but the stress of the command by no means lies upon the receiving it by the separate actions of eating and drinking; and this is manifestly explained by himself a little after, when he says, "he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me," John vi. 58, and "he that eateth this bread, shall live for ever," verse 59. Where we see that eternal life is promised to the eating alone: which evidently

shows, that, by eating only, we perfectly fulfil the command given in the former text, where both eating and drinking are mentioned, and obtain that same life to our souls which is there spoken of ; because, by eating alone, we receive both body and blood.

Q. 48. When he gave the chalice to his apostles, did he not say " Drink ye all of this " ? Matt. xxvi. 27.

A. He did ; but who were the *all* here spoken to ? Surely the apostles who were present with him, and to whom he was speaking ; and accordingly St. Mark tells us, that " they all drank of it," Mark xiv. 23. This, indeed, may imply a command to the priests who actually celebrate the holy mysteries, to receive at that time under both kinds ; but by no means contains a command for all the people, nor even for the priests, who are not actually celebrating, to do so.

Q. 49. Are there any grounds from scripture to authorize the giving communion in one kind ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

CHAPTER XXIII.

OF THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

Q. 1. WHAT do you understand by a sacrifice?

A. Sacrifice is an external act of religious worship, which can be given to none but to God alone.

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

A. In the *oblation* or *offering* of some sensible thing made to God, by a *priest* or *lawful minister*, to acknowledge, by the

destruction, or other *change* of the thing offered, the sovereign power of God, and his absolute dominion over all creatures, and to render to him the homage due to his supreme Majesty.

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

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

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

A. Because, as the nature of sacrifice is to acknowledge the supreme dominion of God over us and all creatures, and to worship him as God, it therefore can be offered to none but God; for to offer sacrifice to any creature would be the dreadful crime of idolatry, and the acknowledging that creature to be God. Hence the scripture says, "He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord," Exod. xxii. 20.

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

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

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

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

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

A. It is, as appear from several reasons:

(1.) We observe that all other outward actions, by which we testify our respect for one another, such as uncovering the head, bowing, kneeling, or the like, are daily used towards men, as well as towards God. Now, nothing is more agreeable to right reason than that, in the exterior worship of God, there should be some particular form or rite used, expressing that sovereign homage which we owe to the Deity, and which, therefore, can be given to none but to him alone; and such is sacrifice.

(2.) We find that all nations, however barbarous and savage, that ever acknowledged a Supreme Being, whether true or false, have always looked upon sacrifice as the essential worship due to him; which shows it to be pointed out, by the light of nature itself, as a necessary part of religion.

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

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

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

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

SECTION I.—*Of the Sacrifices of the Old Law.*

Q. 9. Who instituted the sacrifices of the old law?

A. God himself, by his own express command.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A. There were two different classes of things used in them: (1.) Living creatures, such as sheep, lambs, oxen, pigeons, &c.; and these were bloody sacrifices, because the victims were killed, and sometimes entirely burnt upon the altar. (2.) Things without life, such as fine flour, with oil and frankincense, Lev. ii. 1; unleavened cakes, or wafers, Lev. ii. 4, and the like; and these were either burnt, or otherwise destroyed, upon the altar. To those we may add, (3.) The famous sacrifice of bread and wine offered by Melchisedech, Priest of the Most High God: these two last kinds were unbloody sacrifices.

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

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

Q. 15. Were these sacrifices agreeable to Almighty God, for any virtue they possessed in themselves?

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

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

A. On a twofold account: (1.) As being all types and figures of Jesus Christ, and of his sacrifice in the new law; and, (2.) In as much as they were accompanied with the proper dispositions of heart in the offerers.

Q. 17. What were these dispositions?

A. Humility, repentance, confidence in God, and the like holy virtues, and especially faith in the Redeemer, who was then to come, and of whom these sacrifices were figures.

Hence David says, "A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit; a contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," Ps. l. 19.

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

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

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

A. No: All these sacrifices of the old law, together with the priesthood of Aaron, which was ordained by God for offering them, being only types and figures of the sacrifice and priesthood of the Redeemer, were to last only till his coming, and then to cease, and give way to the perfect sacrifice and priesthood of Jesus Christ, both which being according to the order of Melchisedech, were to last for ever; according to that, "the Lord hath sworn, and will not repent: thou art a priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech," Ps. cix. 4.

Q. 20. How does this appear from scripture?

A. It is expressly taught by St. Paul, from the testimony of David, from whom he cites these words, spoken in the person of Christ at his first entrance into the world: "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and oblation thou wouldst not, but a body thou hast fitted to me; holocaust for sin did not please thee. Then said I, Behold I come, in the head of the book it is written of me, that I should do thy will, O God," Heb. x. 5; then the apostle goes on to explain these words of Christ thus: "In saying before, Sacrifice and oblation,

and holocausts for sin thou wouldst not, neither are they pleasing to thee which are offered according to the law: then said I, Behold, I come to do thy will, O God; he taketh away the first that he may establish that which followeth: by the which will we are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Christ once," verse 8.

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

A. Melchisedech was "priest of the most high God, the king of Salem," which was afterwards called Jerusalem, and his sacrifice was "bread and wine," Gen. xiv. He also was a great figure of Jesus Christ, "being, by interpretation of his name, king of Justice, and then also king of Salem, that is, king of peace," Heb. vii. 2; and his order of priesthood was to offer up bread and wine; according to which order, Christ is declared in scripture to be "made a high priest for ever," Heb. vi. 20.

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

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

SECTION II.—*Of the Sacrifice of the New Law.*

Q. 23. What is the great sacrifice of the new law?

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

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

A. They are both one and the same sacrifice; because the victim is the same, to wit, *Jesus Christ*; and the *High Priest*, or principal offerer, is the same in both, to wit, *Jesus Christ*. It was he that offered himself upon the cross; it is he that offers himself upon the altar. The only difference is in the

manner of offering ; because on the cross he offered himself in a bloody manner, and *actually* died ; in the Mass he offers himself in an unbloody manner, and only dies *mystically*, that is, his death is here represented by the separate consecration of the bread and wine, which denotes the separation, or shedding of his sacred blood from his body.

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

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

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

A. (1.) That we might have in the sacrifice of the altar, a standing memorial of the death of Christ. (2.) That the memory of our Saviour's passion being thus daily renewed, and presented to Almighty God, might be a continual means to draw down his blessing upon us, and to thank him for his daily favours in a manner worthy of him, and to obtain pardon for the sins we are daily committing against him. (3.) That the Christian people might have an efficacious means of approaching daily to God through their Saviour Jesus Christ, who is the victim here offered. (4.) That they might have, to the end of the world, an external sacrifice, in which they might join together in offering supreme homage to God, as the servants of God had always done from the beginning of the world. (5.) That all the figures and sacrifices of the old law, and of Melchisedech, might be

perfectly fulfilled, according to that of our Saviour: "Amen I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot, or one tittle shall not pass from the law, till all be fulfilled," Matt. v. 18. (6.) That by the sacrifice of the altar, the fruits of his death might daily be applied to our souls.

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

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

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

A. If the Mass were a distinct sacrifice from that of the cross, and designed, as it were, to supply any supposed deficiency in the value or efficacy of his death, then it would justly be said to be injurious to it; but as it is the self same sacrifice, and offered only to apply the merits of his death to our souls, in particular, and for the other sacred ends above mentioned, it is evident to the weakest capacity, that it is not in the smallest degree injurious or derogatory to the sacrifice of the cross.

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

A. In the most perfect manner; for, (1.) In it the most perfect homage and sovereign adoration is given to Almighty God; because Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, made man for the salvation of mankind, humbles himself in this holy sacrifice in the most profound manner, taking upon him the forms of bread and wine, and offers himself up, by the hands of the priest, under the appearance of death, on purpose, by this humiliation of his humanity, which receives an infinite value from the Divinity of his person, to render the most perfect worship and adoration to his eternal Father for us, and with us. When, therefore, we join our intention with that of our High Priest and Victim, and offer this holy sacrifice to God in acknowledgment of his sovereign dominion over us,

and in protestation of our total subjection to him, we do him sovereign homage, and give him the most perfect honour and glory, which it is possible for a creature to render to his Creator.

(2.) Though it is our duty, as Christians, in all things to give thanks to God, both in words and affection, for the numberless benefits we are continually receiving from him; yet it must be owned, that all the thanks we can give him, are of no value in themselves, as proceeding from us, nor in any degree adequate to what we owe him. But if we had any thing *of real value in the sight of God*, which we could give to him in return for his many favours, this would, doubtless, make our thanksgiving most acceptable to him. Now, this is what we have in the sacrifice of the Mass; for, in it Jesus Christ gives himself to us, on purpose that we may have in him *a gift of infinite value* to offer to his eternal Father, in thanksgiving for all we have received from him: and for this purpose also, he offers himself to this holy mystery, with us and for us, so that here we make to God a return for all his benefits, not only adequate, but even superior to every other favour we can receive from him.

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

(4.) Prayer is undoubtedly a most powerful means to obtain

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

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

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

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

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

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

A. Jesus Christ in our invisible High Priest, and the principal agent in these holy mysteries : because it is he, who, by his Almighty power, changes the bread and wine into his own

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

Q. 33. Can this be more fully explained ?

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

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

A. We observe above that the sacrifices of the old law being only types and figures of the good things then to come, had no merit nor value in themselves, and were acceptable to God only in as much as they proceeded from, and were accompanied with the interior sacrifice of the hearts of the offerers, and were types of Jesus Christ, and offered through faith in a Redeemer then to come. But the case is quite different with the sacrifice of the Mass ; for this is of such infinite value in itself, that it is always most acceptable to Almighty God, independent of the disposition of the offerers. It is true, it will not be agreeable to him as coming from our hands, except we offer it with the proper interior dispositions ; nay, if we be ill-disposed at that time, or offer it without due devotion and attention, it will even be a means of provoking his indignation against us profaning, by our ill-dispositions, so sacred a

mystery: but, in itself, and as offered by Jesus Christ our Chief Priest, it is always agreeable to him. Hence, without all doubt, it is the most sublime and the most august mystery in the Christian religion, and the most divine action that can possibly be done by man. This will easily appear, if we consider the infinite dignity of the victim offered, the infinite sanctity of the High Priest who offers it, the admirable effects produced by it in giving infinite honour to Almighty God, incredible joy to all the angels and saints in heaven, obtaining innumerable blessings for men, and bringing ease and refreshment to the souls of the faithful departed; and, *lastly*, if we reflect on the sacred mystery which is there celebrated, to wit, the passion and death of Jesus Christ the re-represented, continued, and renewed.

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

A. (1.) That we ought to have the highest esteem and veneration for this adorable sacrifice. (2.) That we ought frequently to be present at it; and to let no consideration less than real necessity, hinder us from assisting at it upon those days in which we are commanded to render this homage to God. (3.) That, when present at it, we should behave ourselves with the most profound reverence, devotion, and attention. (4.) That we should have the greatest confidence of obtaining every good grace from God, through the merits of this holy mystery. And (5.) that we ought to get ourselves well instructed in every thing that belongs to it, and particularly in the way of assisting at it with most profit to our souls.

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

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

Q. 37. By whom is the Mass offered?

A. (1.) Chiefly and principally by Jesus Christ, who properly speaking, is alone both our High Priest and Victim. (2.) By the bishops and priests of his church, who are his ministers and deputies, whom he makes use of for performing the outward and visible celebration of this sacrifice here upon earth in his stead. (3.) By the faithful who are present, who also offer it up with the priest, and by his hands, as their common sacrifice.

(4.) By the whole church upon earth, which offers it up also, every time it is celebrated; for the priest is the public minister of the church, and offers up this holy sacrifice in her name, and for her benefit. Hence, at every Mass, there is a real spiritual communion of all the faithful upon earth.

Q. 38. For whom is the Mass offered?

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

SECTION III.—*Proofs from Scripture of the Sacrifice of the Mass.*

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

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

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

A. The *first* is taken from Jeremiah, who says, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform the good word that I have spoken to the house of Israel, and to the house of Juda. In those days, and at that time, I will make the bud of justice to spring forth unto David; and he shall do judgment and justice in the earth. In those days shall Juda be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell securely; and this is the name that they shall call him, The Lord our just one. For thus saith the Lord, There shall not be cut off from David a man to sit upon

the throne of the house of Israel : neither shall there be cut off from the priests and Levites a man before my face, to offer holocausts, and to burn sacrifice, and to kill victims continually," Jer. xxxiii. 14. On this passage we must observe, (1.) That it evidently relates to the Messiah and his kingdom : for he is the good thing promised to the house of Israel and to Juda, from the beginning, and to him alone agree these titles, "the bud of justice," and "the Lord our just one." (2.) That God here promises, that David shall never want a man to sit upon his throne. This is evidently applied to Christ by the angel Gabriel, when he told the blessed Virgin that her Son should "be great, and be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his Father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end," Luke i. 32. (3.) That God promises, that in this spiritual kingdom of Christ, the priesthood shall never fail, and that the office of these priests shall be to offer sacrifice continually ; and of what kind these sacrifices are, we know from the nature of Christ's priesthood, "Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech."

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

The *second* proof is from Isaiah, who says, "In that day there shall be an altar of the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a monument of the Lord at the borders thereof, and it shall be for a sign and for a testimony to the Lord of hosts in

the land of Egypt. For they shall cry to the Lord because of the oppressor, and he shall send them a Saviour and a Defender to deliver them. And the Lord shall be known by Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall worship him with sacrifices and offerings, and they shall make vows to the Lord and perform them," Is. xix. 19. Here we see a positive declaration, that the Egyptians, on their conversion to Christ, shall worship the Lord, "with sacrifice and offerings," and have his altar in the midst of them.

The *third* proof is taken from the same holy prophet, chapter lxvi. In this chapter he foretells God's benefits to his church, "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will bring upon her, as it were, a river of peace, and as an overflowing torrent, the glory of the Gentiles," verse 12; then verses 16 and 17, foretelling how he would destroy the wicked Jews, and call the Gentiles in their room, he says, verse 18, "I come that I may gather them together with all nations and tongues, and they shall come and shall see my glory; and I will set a sign among them, and I will send of them that shall be saved to the Gentiles unto the sea, into Africa and Lydia, them that draw the bow; into Italy and Greece, to the islands afar off, to them that have not heard of me, and have not seen my glory. And they shall declare my glory to the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren out of all nations, an offering to the Lord.....to my holy mountain Jerusalem." Here God foretells that, when he shall destroy the wicked Jews, he will save those among them who were faithful to him, and will send of those that are saved to all nations, to declare his glory to them, and bring them to his church, "his holy mountain Jerusalem." This is more like a history, than a prophecy of what was actually done, when the apostles and converted Jews were sent by our Saviour to preach to all nations, and unite them to his holy church. Then, in the following verses, the prophet adds, "and I will take from them (*the converted Gentiles*) to be priests and Levites, saith the Lord; for as the new heavens and the new earth which I make to stand before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed stand and your name," verse 21. By which we see, that, in the church of Christ, there shall always be priests and Levites taken out of all nations, whose office, as we have seen above out of Jeremias, shall be to offer sacrifice to God continually, as long as the heaven and the earth shall stand. St. Paul also assures us, that the office of priests is "to offer up gifts and sacrifices," Heb. v. 1.

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

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

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

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

commanded the pastors of his church to do the same: "Do this in remembrance of me"; that is, as St. Paul explains it, to "show forth his death till he come." Thus he both celebrated this holy sacrifice of the Mass himself, and gave power and command to the pastors of his church to continue to do the same till his second coming.

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

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

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

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

Q. 1. WHAT is the end or design of the sacrament of penance?

A. If we were always so happy as never to lose the grace received in baptism by committing actual sins ourselves, there would be no need of the sacrament of penance; but as we but too, too commonly lose that great treasure by the sins we commit ourselves, and cannot possibly get free of their guilt but by the grace of Jesus Christ; therefore, out of his infinite mercy, in condescension to our weakness and misery, he was pleased to institute the sacrament of penance, as the means of bestowing his sanctifying grace upon us, to cleanse us from the guilt of those sins which we commit after baptism.

Q. 2. Is penance a true sacrament?

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

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

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

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

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

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

A. In those parts of the gospel where Jesus Christ gave to the pastors of his church, in the persons of his apostles, the power of forgiving and retaining sins, and passed his sacred word, that, when they forgive a penitent's sins, by pronouncing the sentence of absolution upon him, they are actually forgiven, that is, are washed away from his soul by the grace of God then poured down into it.

Q. 6. How does it appear that Jesus Christ gave the power of forgiving sins to the pastors of his church?

A. From these following testimonies: (1.) "And behold they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed. And Jesus seeing their faith, said to the man sick of the palsy, Son, be of good heart, thy sins are forgiven thee. And behold some of the scribes said within themselves, He blasphemeth.

And Jesus seeing their thoughts, said, Why do you think evil in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Arise, and walk? But, that you may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, then saith he to the man sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thy house; and he arose and went into his house; and the multitude seeing it, feared and glorified God, who had given such power to men," Matt. ix. 2. Here, we see that our blessed Saviour wrought an evident miracle, with the express intention of proving that "he AS MAN, hath power on earth to forgive sins"; and it had the desired effect on the multitude, who were convinced by the miracle, that he had this power, and "glorified God, who had given such power to men." Jesus Christ, therefore, even as man, was sent by his Father, with this power. Now, on the very day of his resurrection, when he appeared to his apostles, he said to them, "as my Father hath sent me, I also send you," John xx. 21; consequently, with the same powers that I, as Man, am sent by my Father, I also send you as my substitutes, as pastors of my church. And that there might be no doubt, that in these words he included the power of forgiving sins, yea, to show that this was particularly included in them, he immediately "breathed upon them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and those sins ye shall retain, they are retained," John xx. 22. Where we see, that, in the clearest and most express terms, he gives them the power of forgiving sins, in such a manner, that when they, here on earth, exercise this power by passing sentence of forgiveness upon a penitent sinner, their sentence is ratified in heaven, and the sins of the penitent are actually forgiven.

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

to the soul, and ascends to the heavens; insomuch that what the priests do below, God ratifies above; and the Master confirms the sentence of the servants"—*On the Priesthood*, B. 3. The same is the language of the holy fathers in all ages, confirmed by the constant and uninterrupted belief and practice of the Christian world.

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

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

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

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

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

A. Jesus Christ did not think it so when he wrought the miracle above mentioned, to prove that "the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." But the mistake lies in not considering what part belongs to man, and what belongs to God in this matter. To wash away the guilt of sin from the soul, in which the forgiveness of sins, on the part of God, precisely consists, undoubtedly belongs to God alone, and is wholly his work; and this being the case, where is the least appearance of blasphemy, or even of impropriety, to say that Jesus Christ authorises the pastors of his church, in his name and in his person, to pronounce sentence of forgiveness upon a penitent

sinner, and that to the pronouncing of this sentence, he attaches the infusing of his grace to that penitent's soul? Is not this the very thing which is done in baptism, where the one who baptizes forgives the sins of the person baptized, by performing on him the outward action of baptizing, to which the infusion of justifying grace is annexed in that sacrament, as it is to the pronouncing of the sentence of absolution in the sacrament of penance? In both cases, it is God who washes the soul by his grace, and in both, man performs the outward action appointed by Christ for that purpose.

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

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

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

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

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

A. As it is impossible to obtain salvation while we are in the state of sin, and at enmity with God, and as this sacrament of penance is appointed by Jesus Christ, to be the means of restoring us to the friendship of God, by cleansing us from the guilt of actual sins committed after baptism, in the same way as baptism itself, is the means of cleansing us from original sin, and from all actual sins committed before baptism; therefore, the sacrament of penance is absolutely necessary for salvation to those who have lost the grace of God by mortal sin after baptism, as baptism itself is to those who have not yet received it. And though it be true, that a perfect contrition, arising from a perfect love of God above all things, will always find mercy with God, and obtain pardon for sins both before and after baptism; yet, as before baptism, this perfect contrition does not free the person who has it from the necessity of being baptized, where baptism can be had, and, where baptism cannot be had, will not find mercy with God, unless it be accompanied with the desire of baptism; so likewise with regard to mortal sins committed after baptism, the most perfect contrition does not free the one who has it from the obligation of apply-

ing to the sacrament of penance where he can have it, and, where that cannot be had, his contrition will not find mercy unless it include the desire of, and the resolution to apply to, the sacrament of penance whenever he has it in his power to do so.

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

A. No, and the reason is this: the effect of mortal sin is to kill the soul entirely, by depriving it of the grace of God, which is the life of the soul; hence mortal sin makes the sinner an enemy to God, an object of his hatred and indignation. On the other hand, venial sin does not kill the soul, nor banish the grace of God from it, but only diminishes the splendour of its beauty and weakens the fervour of its charity, but still the person continues a friend of God. Hence, to restore a soul in mortal sin to the state of grace and to the friendship of God, it is required that there be an infusion of justifying grace into that soul where it was not before; now, this is the pure effect of the mercy of God through the merits of Christ, which no act of the sinner can possibly deserve of itself; and this justifying grace can only be obtained by the sacrament of penance, which Christ has been pleased to institute for this very purpose.

But to increase the fervour of charity, to augment the spiritual beauty of the soul, to obtain a greater degree of sanctifying grace from God, and, consequently, to wash away the stains of venial sin, is the proper effect of every good action which a soul, already in the state of grace, performs, when accompanied with a sorrow for having offended God by these venial sins, or even by a sincere repentance in general, for all her past sins. So that, though venial sins are most perfectly and securely remitted by the sacrament of penance, yet they are also remitted by other means, such as, by devoutly receiving the other sacraments by fervent prayer, by holy acts of the love of God, and other such pious actions; whereas, mortal sin can no otherwise be remitted but by the sacrament of penance only.

Q. 14. What are the effects of the sacraments of penance?

A. (1.) If the penitent be under the guilt of mortal sin, by this sacrament the grace of justification is poured down into his soul, by which the guilt of his sins is washed away, and he is restored to the friendship of God. (2.) If he be already in

the state of grace by the sacrament of penance he receives an increase of sanctifying grace, by which his soul is rendered more holy and beautiful in the sight of God. (3.) He also receives such helps of actual grace as enables him the more effectually to avoid sin, and to preserve in the friendship of God. (4.) By cleansing the soul from the guilt of sin, this sacrament also delivers the soul from the eternal punishment due to that guilt; because it restores the sinner to the grace and friendship of God, and re-unites him with Jesus Christ; now, "there is nothing of damnation in those who are in Christ Jesus," Rom. viii. 1. (5.) It also delivers, in part, from the temporal punishment due to his sins, in proportion to the fervour of his repentance with which he receives it.

Q. 15. What are the parts of the sacrament of penance?

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

SECTION I.—*Of Contrition.*

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

A. They are all contained in a sincere repentance, or contrition for his sins, which, as we have seen above at large, Chap. XVII., consists of these three things: (1.) A sincere sorrow for having offended our good God, with a detestation of our sins, by which we have offended him. (2.) A firm purpose and resolution to avoid sin, and all the dangerous occasions of it, for the time to come. And, (3.) A being willing and ready to do penance for past sins in order to satisfy the Divine justice for them.

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

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

SECTION II.—*Of Sacramental Confession.*

Q. 18. What is sacramental confession ?

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

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

A. It is ordained by Jesus Christ as a condition absolutely necessary for this purpose ; insomuch, that without it, the grace of the sacrament of penance, by which our sins are pardoned, and we restored to the friendship of God, will not be bestowed upon us.

Q. 20. How does this necessity appear from scripture ?

A. It is included in the very power which Jesus Christ gave to the pastors of the church, of binding and loosing, of remitting and retaining sins. For, by giving them this power, he constituted them judges of our souls in his own stead, the ministers of reconciliation between God and the sinner ; consequently, it is his will that they should exercise this power with justice and discretion, according to the merits of the cause, and the dispositions of the penitent ; for we cannot suppose he intended they *should* exercise it at random ; it would be impiety to suppose it. Besides, as this tribunal is not a tribunal of strict vindictive justice, for punishing the offender to the extent of what he deserves, seeing nothing less than hell fire is the proper punishment of mortal sin, but is a tribunal of mercy, where, by the sentence of absolution, the sinner is delivered both from the guilt of his sins, and from the eternal punishment due to them ; and this eternal punishment is exchanged for a temporal punishment which, through the merits of Christ applied to our souls in this sacrament, both contributes to satisfy the Divine justice, and is most wholesome and salutary to the penitent ; it is doubtless the will of Jesus Christ, that the priest, when he exercises the power of binding, and lays this penance on the penitent, should do it with a just proportion to his guilt and dispositions. Now, it is self-evident that the priest can neither act with justice nor prudence, in forgiving or retaining sins, nor observe the just proportion in imposing the proper punishment suitable to the guilt and dispositions of the sinner, unless he know the real state of his soul, both as to his guilt and dispositions ; and, as none can possibly discover this to him but the sinner himself, hence it manifestly follows, that the very

power of binding and loosing, of forgiving and retaining sins, given by Jesus Christ to the priests of his church, necessarily includes a strict obligation of sinners to lay open the state of their souls, by an humble confession of all their sins to a priest, in order to receive the effect of that power, and to be absolved from their sins by him.

Moreover, the sacrament of penance is intended not only to be the means of freeing us from the guilt of our past sins, but also, and in a particular manner, to be a preservative against sin for the time to come, by applying proper remedies for curing all the distempers of the soul. Now these remedies are of two sorts, the grace of God and our co-operation. The grace of God is applied to our souls by the sacrament itself, and our pastors are appointed, as the spiritual physicians of our souls, to prescribe to us the necessary co-operation required on our part; and this they do, by *pointing out* to us what we ought to do for avoiding or overcoming temptations, for conquering our passions, and for breaking our evil customs; by *discovering* to us the delusions of Satan; by *instructing* us in our duty where we may be ignorant of it; by *rectifying* the mistakes into which our self-love is so apt to hurry us; by *encouraging* us, if faint-hearted in the concern of our souls; by *comforting* us, if afflicted with trouble of mind; and by *giving* us every other necessary assistance which the wants of our souls may require. Here, again, it is self-evident that they could apply none of those remedies to us, unless they were thoroughly acquainted with the real state of our souls and as none but ourselves can lay the state of our souls before them; from this also the necessity of our doing so, by an humble and sincere exposition of our interior to them, is manifest.

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

A. There are those following: (1.) "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity," 1 John i. 8. Here we see, in the most express terms, the confession of our sins declared to be the condition of our obtaining forgiveness for them: "If we confess them, God will forgive them"; and on the contrary, if we do not confess them, but conceal them, and "say we have no sin, we only deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." This testimony is so strong and clear for the necessity of confessing our sins, that our adversaries have no

other way to escape the force of it, but vainly pretending that the apostle means only the confessing our sins privately to God alone. But that this cannot be the apostle's meaning, is evident for two strong reasons; first, because *the confessing our sins* is here put in opposition to the *saying we have no sin*: these two are opposite to one another, and therefore must certainly relate to the same object. Now, who is there in his senses that would seriously dare to say to God in private, that *he has no sin*? In this part of the sentence, then, the apostle certainly means saying, *we have no sin before men*; and, consequently, in the opposite part of it, when he says, "If we confess our sins," he necessarily means the doing so *before men also*. Besides, the apostle here declares, that, if "we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins": How comes the fidelity and justice of God to be engaged here? Has he any where engaged his promise to pardon those who confess their sins to him alone in private? David indeed says, "I will confess against myself my injustice to the Lord: and thou hast forgiven the wickedness of my sin," Ps. xxxi. 5; which shows, that in the old law, when a sinner, "with a broken and contrite heart," that is, with *perfect repentance* of his sins, returned to God, and acknowledged his guilt with sorrow, God, of his infinite goodness, would show mercy to such a repentant sinner. But we do not read any where that God ever engaged his fidelity or justice to forgive the sins of any who confessed them in private to him alone: consequently, in the above text, the apostle cannot mean the confessing to God alone; but, from what we have seen above, it is manifest, that God has solemnly engaged his fidelity and justice to forgive the sins of those who confess them to the pastors of his church in the sacrament of penance, when he declares to these pastors, "whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." The effects of this promise cannot be obtained, as we have clearly seen, unless the sinner confess his sins to his pastor; and when he does that with the proper dispositions, then this sacred promise of Jesus Christ engages him in fidelity and justice to grant the wished-for pardon.—We must therefore conclude, that, when the apostle says, "if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins," his meaning most certainly is, if we confess them *sacramentally*.

(2.) St. James says, "Confess your sins one to another, and pray for one another, that you may be saved," James v. 16.

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

(3.) St. Paul, speaking of the reconciliation of sinners to God says, "God hath reconciled us to himself by Christ; and, hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. For God, indeed, was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself—and he hath placed in us the word of reconciliation; we are therefore ambassadors for Christ," 2 Cor. v. 18. In these words, the apostle declares, that whereas God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, reconciled the world to himself, he was pleased to appoint the apostles, and their successors in office, to be the ministers of this reconciliation; that is, to be his substitutes upon earth for applying to the souls of the people the means ordained by him for communicating the grace of reconciliation; and for this purpose, says the apostle, "he placed in us the word of reconciliation," by which means we are "made the ambassadors of Christ." Hence, then, it manifestly follows, that if the pastors of the church be the ministers of our reconciliation with God, if *the word of reconciliation*, the power of pronouncing sentence of absolution upon us, *be placed in them*, it is, of course, by their ministry alone that we can obtain this reconciliation. Christ instituted no other way; therefore, it is our strict obligation to have recourse to them for this benefit, by laying open the state of our souls before them in the sacrament of confession, that they may apply to us the means of our reconciliation in the way that Christ requires of them to do.

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

A. This is what some of the adversaries of our holy religion allege, in order to blind the minds of the people; but there certainly cannot be a more gross and palpable misrepresentation. The confession of sins so far from being a novelty invented in later ages, is more ancient than Christianity itself, was commanded by God in the law, is highly commended in the books of Wisdom, and was practised by the Jews, when our Saviour came among them. It was not then, indeed, a sacramental action, as it is under the gospel, where it is the last condition required on our part, for receiving the forgiveness of our sins, by the infusion of justifying grace. But it was among the Jews a profitable penitential work, a proof of the sincerity of their repentance, a help to restrain them from sin, an act of obedience to the command of God; and, on all these accounts, a powerful means to move God to mercy, and to obtain from him the grace of a perfect contrition and repentance. It was also among the Jews, like all the rest of their religion, a type and figure of the sacrament of penance, and of the sacramental confession, which Jesus Christ was to institute in his church.

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

A. From the following testimonies of scripture, (1.) "When a man or woman shall have committed any of all the sins that men are wont to commit, and by negligence shall have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, they shall confess their sin, and restore the principal, and a fifth part over and above," Num. v. 6. (2.) "He that hideth his sins shall not prosper; but he that shall confess and forsake them, shall obtain mercy," Prov. xxviii. 13. "Be not ashamed to say the truth for the sake of thy soul; for there is a shame that bringeth sin, and a shame that bringeth glory and grace.....Be not ashamed to confess thy sins, but submit not thyself to every man for sin," Ecclus. iv. 24, 31. See here how much it is commended. (3.) As for the practice of the Jews when St. John the Baptist appeared "in the desert baptizing and preaching the baptism of penance for the remission of sins: there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all they of Jerusalem, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, CONFESSING THEIR SINS," Mark i. 5. The same is also attested by St. Matt. chap. iii., where we learn from the word of God itself, that this holy practice of confessing our sins, is as old as revealed religion,

and has no other author but God himself. Jesus Christ, therefore, knowing that this was already established among the people of God, thought it no unwise necessary to make any new formal express command of it among his followers, especially as the very institution of the sacrament of penance, by giving the power of forgiving and retaining sins to the pastors of his church, naturally and necessarily presupposed the necessity of confessing our sins to them for obtaining pardon and forgiveness; and by this means, this holy action of confessing was raised up to the dignity of being an essential part of the sacrament, and an effectual means of obtaining pardon for our sins; whereas, before, it was only a legal observance, useful, indeed, and conducive to the reconciliation of the penitent sinner with God, but not the efficacious and certain means, as it now is, of obtaining that favour.

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

A. The very nature of this duty itself proves it to a demonstration; for, as it is a duty exceedingly contrary to flesh and blood, most humbling to our pride, and most afflicting to self-love, it is plainly impossible that mankind could ever have been induced to practice it as a necessary duty, by any human authority, or indeed by any other means whatsoever, than the full conviction, that God himself required it from them; and this conviction they never could have got, if it had not been introduced into the world with Christianity itself, and flowed from the same Divine source with it. Let us suppose, for example, that the Christians of the first ages had no knowledge of this practice, nor believe it necessary to confess their sins; who would ever have dared, in after ages, to introduce so heavy a yoke, or impose such a burden upon the faithful? What opposition must such an attempt have met with? What clamours would have been raised against it? What divisions and dissensions must it not have occasioned? and how would every body have cried out against it as a novelty, an imposition, a heresy, and what not? Suppose any body at present should attempt to introduce it into a Protestant country, would any power on earth be able to establish it? It is, therefore, plainly impossible that it ever could have been established in the Christian world, but by the command of Almighty God himself. Besides, all monuments of antiquity clearly show, that it has been universally received and practised through the whole Christian church, in all countries, and in all ages; nor is it

possible to assign any other beginning to it than that of Christianity itself. Add to all this, the infallible authority of the church of Christ, which always did, and to this day does, hold and teach as a truth revealed by Jesus Christ to his apostles, and by them delivered to their followers, that the duty of confessing our sins in the sacrament of penance, is commanded by God himself, and is his express law to all Christians.

Q. 25. Is sacramental confession of any other advantage besides its being a necessary means of getting our sins pardoned ?

A. It is, both to the penitent himself and to society ; for, (1.) with regard to the penitent, it serves to discharge part of the debt of temporal punishment due to his sins, it delivers him from that dreadful confusion which he would have to undergo at the day of judgment, and which, beginning then, would last for all eternity, as one of the greatest torments of hell. It procures him many useful instructions, counsels, directions, and exhortations, for the advancing his soul in a life of virtue and piety. It is also a source of immense comfort and consolation to the poor soul in her afflictions, especially in such as rise about her spiritual concerns. It affords an incredible ease and peace to the soul, when oppressed with the stings of a guilty conscience ; for it is much to be observed, that, although confession be a very heavy burden upon flesh and blood, and perfectly inimical to self-love, yet, when a soul is once touched with a sense of the evil of sin, and conscience is awakened on that account, it is the only resource that nature itself points out for ease and comfort : insomuch that numbers of examples are seen, of those who, being troubled in conscience, but who, not being members of the Catholic church, do not consider confession as a duty required by God ; yet fly to some friend in whom they can confide, and sometimes even to Catholic priests themselves, on whose secrecy they can better depend, and lay open their souls to them for advice and consolation. (2.) With regard to the state and society, how many evils are remedied in confession, which the laws of man could never rectify ? Losses are made up ; injuries received are pardoned, and reparation made for such as are done ; ill-gotten goods are restored ; those at enmity reconciled ; peace made up and restored ; unjust contracts dissolved ; scandals removed, and many other such benefits procured, which are of the highest advantage to society.

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

A. There are several things required for making a good confession ; but they may be all reduced to these following :

(1.) It ought to be *humble*. This is so necessary an ingredient in a good confession, that without it we can never expect to find favour with God. The proud Pharisee was one who led a good moral life in the eyes of the world, free from any gross crime, and adorned with several virtuous and good actions ; yet he was condemned in the sight of God on account of his pride ; whereas the poor publican, though loaded with sins, yet approaching to God by an humble repentance, was justified in the sight of God, and found mercy. Every sin we commit is accompanied with an act of pride ; because in every sin, we prefer our own will to the will of our Creator ; as therefore repentance is the returning to God from sin, it must necessarily be accompanied with great humility. The scripture says, “an humble and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise,” Ps. li. 19. “The Lord is nigh to them that are of a contrite heart, and he will save the humble of spirit,” Ps. xxxiii. 19. “God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble,” James iv. 6. Hence we find, that all those true penitents who found mercy from God, were remarkable for their great humility ; such as St. Mary Magdalene, the prodigal son, the humble publican, David, &c., and they showed their humility, both in the outward posture of their bodies, in what they did, and in every word they said. To excite this humility in our souls, we need only to consider what we are as sinners ; what we deserve for our sins ; the majesty of that great God before whom we are going to appear ; and the important affair we are going about, in order to be restored again to his favour.

(2.) Our confession ought to be *sincere* ; that is, we must declare our sins sincerely, such as they really are ; we must not exaggerate them, neither must we disguise them ; we must not seek to excuse them, nor blame others for them ; nor soften and diminish the real malice of them, by equivocal and captious expressions, which may make our pastor think less of them than they really deserve. Our great interest here is, to lay open the true state of our souls, as far as we can, such as it really is in the sight of God. It is easy to deceive our pastor ; but we would deceive ourselves infinitely worse if we did so, for we cannot deceive God ; and his holy word assures us, that “the deceitful man God will abhor,” Ps. v. 7 ; that “the Holy Ghost will fly from the deceitful,” Wisd. i. 5 ; and, therefore, “come not to the Lord with a double heart,” Ecclus. i. 36 ; for

“wo to them that are of a double heart, and to wicked lipsand to the sinner that goeth on the earth two ways,” Ecclus. ii. 14.

(3.) It ought to be *simple*; that is, we must, with all simplicity, declare the sins we have been guilty of, without mixing any other subject along with them, which does not concern the state of our conscience. In doing this, we must declare, (1.) The different sins we have been guilty of; (2.) The number of times we have been guilty of each sin; and (3.) Such circumstances as either notably aggravate the guilt of the sin, or change it into another kind of sin; for example, there is a great difference between cheating our neighbour of twenty shillings, and cheating him of twenty pounds; between stealing a sum of money from a neighbour, and stealing any sacred vessel, though of equal value to that sum, but dedicated to the service of God. In the former case the greatness of the sum aggravates the injury done, and consequently the guilt of the sin; in the latter case, the circumstance of stealing a sacred vessel changes the nature of the sin, from a simple act of injustice, to an unjust sacrilege. Now, the simplicity of our confession requires, that, having fully declared these three classes, we should rest there, without accusing others, or making complaints of our miseries and troubles, or speaking about our temporal affairs, or the like; and this is what is meant by the *simplicity* of confession.

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

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

A. It is a very great evil; for, (1.) To reconcile our souls with God, is, of all other things, the work of God, the end to which all that Christ did, said, and suffered tended; this is done in the sacrament of penance, and the confession of our sins is the part of that work which belongs to us; now, the scripture says, “Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully,” Jer. xlviii. 10. (2.) It is telling a lie to the Holy Ghost, the dreadful guilt of which we see both in

Cain and in the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts ix.

(3.) It is a grievous sacrilege, by profaning the sacrament, a mockery of God, a profanation of the blood of Christ, and opens the door to a still greater sacrilege of an unworthy communion. (4.) It renders the whole confession of no avail, prevents the sinner's getting pardon of his sins; nay, sullies his soul with another more grievous sin than those he had before. (5.) It puts him in danger of never making a good confession, and consequently of dying in his sins, as it shuts the door to all possibility of a cure from man, and renders him totally unworthy of any extraordinary help from God. (6.) It makes the sinner most miserable in his own conscience, and raises a hell upon earth in his soul, as experience itself teaches.

Q. 28. When one has unhappily fallen into disgrace with God by mortal sin, is he obliged to return immediately to God by a speedy repentance, and get his sins washed away by the sacrament of confession?

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

(1.) It is the highest folly, and contrary to all that wisdom and prudence by which we regulate ourselves in temporal affairs; for, if we fall into the mire, we immediately endeavour to get out of it and clean ourselves; if we perceive a spot upon our clothes, we immediately endeavour to take it out; if we be seized with any bodily disease, we make no delay in applying to the proper remedies; if we lose a piece of money, we speedily seek to find it. Now, a soul in mortal sin, is in a most dismal mire, sullied in the most detestable manner, sick to death itself, and deprived of the greatest of all treasures, the grace of God; what folly then to choose to continue in such a state!

(2.) It is a grievous injury done to God, to live in disgrace with him, because it involves, (1.) A contempt of his commands and earnest invitations to return to his friendship, and a preferring of the slavery of Satan to the favour of the Most High. (2.) A contempt of his threats, by which he endeavours to frighten sinners out of their evil ways, and make them return to him. (3.) An undervaluing of all his gracious promises of pardon and favour; by preferring the husks of swine to the happiness of our father's house, and all the good things he has there prepared for us.

(3.) The great danger of contracting the habit of sin, and of going on from bad to worse; for this is the fatal prerogative of sin, that if not speedily remedied by repentance, it gives the devil such power over us, that he easily hurries us on to greater sins, till at last they become habitual to us; being deprived of the grace of God, there is no defence against the allurements of sin, the violence of passion, the corruption of our own heart, and the repeated temptations we are daily exposed to: witness Cain, David, St. Peter, and Judas.

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

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

(6.) The danger of dying in that state; which appears, (1.)

From all these threats from scripture just mentioned. (2.) From the state the sinner is in; for, the moment one commits a mortal sin, the sentence is passed against him; the flames of hell are already kindled to receive him: "a fire is kindled in my rage, it shall burn upon you," Jer. xv. 14; the executioners are all ready, only waiting the command, and nothing is wanting to plunge him into the bottomless pit, but the cutting of the slender thread of life, by which he is hanging over the mouth of hell. (3.) From the uncertainty of the time, place, and manner when that thread shall be broken: our Saviour assures us, that death will come like a thief in the night, when we least expect it, and therefore commands us to be always ready. Remember the foolish virgins. (4.) Sin hastens on death, and cuts off the sinner before his time. "Do not commit iniquity, lest thou die in a time not thy own," Ecclus. vii. 18. "The wicked man shall perish before his days be completed," Job xv. 32. "The wicked are taken away before their time," Job. xxii. 16. "The years of the wicked shall be shortened," Prov. x. 27. "Men of blood and deceitful men shall not live out half their days," Ps. liv. 24. "How are they brought to desolation? they have suddenly ceased to be; they have perished by reason of their iniquity," Ps. lxxii. 19. "They lead their lives in good things, and in a moment drop down into hell," Job xxi. 13.

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

A. All the above reasons militate with double force against those who put off their conversion till their death-bed; for such, without all doubt, expose themselves to the utmost danger, if not to a moral certainty of being lost for ever; which will easily appear if we consider, (1.) The difficulty of a real and sincere repentance and change of heart, even in health. (2.) The violence and force of bad habits, now come to their height by long indulgence. (3.) The opposition the devil will certainly make to hinder those who have been always his during their life, from escaping out of his hands at the last moments. (4.) The state, both of body and mind, of a dying person, and how little able he is then to apply to any serious thought. (5.) The being justly deprived of the more abundant graces of God, to enable him to overcome all those obstacles, in just punishment for his past abuses of mercy. (6.) Experience of those who having recovered after being in a dangerous way, and having given the strongest signs of sincere repentance, yet

immediately on their recovery, become the same as before; which clearly shows how false their repentance was, and consequently how little it would have been regarded by God, had they then died. (7.) The common sentiments of all the saints of God, who have ever paid very little regard to deathbed conversions.

Q. 30. In what manner must one prepare himself for going to the sacrament of confession?

A. There are chiefly two things to be done; *first*, We must come to the full knowledge of our sins, and call them all to mind; for if we do not know them, we can neither repent of them, nor confess them. *Secondly*, we must stir ourselves up to a true and sincere repentance for them. In both which our principal dependence must be upon God, without whose light and help we can neither see our sins, nor be truly sorry for them; wherefore, when we set about preparing for our confession we must, (1.) Begin by prayer, earnestly begging Almighty God to enlighten our souls with his holy grace, that we may not be blinded by our passions, nor deluded by our self-love, but that we may call to mind in their true colours, all the sins we have been guilty of, whether in thought, word, or deed, since our last confession. (2.) We must then examine our conscience: that is, call ourselves to a strict account of all the evil we have done against God's holy law, according to the methods laid down in books of devotion, for helping to make that examination. When, by this means, we have called to mind all the sins we have been guilty of, we must then use our best endeavours to stir ourselves up to a sincere contrition or repentance for them. Now, this is done, (1.) By fervent and earnest prayer, begging the grace of a true repentance from Almighty God, who alone can bestow it upon us. (2.) By serious meditation on some of the great evils of sin, in order to excite in our souls a just horror against it. (3.) By making frequent and serious acts of sorrow and repentance for having offended God, with firm resolutions, through his grace, never to offend him more.

SECTION III.—*Of Satisfaction, as part of the Sacrament of Penance.*

Q. 31. What is sacramental satisfaction?

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

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

A. For these reasons, (1.) Because in administering the sacrament of penance, the priest acts as judge, commissioned by Almighty God, so to reconcile sinners with him, that, while he dispenses to the penitent sinner the fruits of the Divine mercy, he does not neglect the interests of his Divine justice. Now, the order of justice requires, that the guilty criminal be punished in a just proportion to his guilt, and that this punishment be inflicted by the judge. (2.) Because as the pardon granted in the sacrament of penance, delivers the sinner not only from the guilt of his crimes, but also from the eternal punishment due to them, which, through the mercy of God, and the merits of Christ, is changed into a temporal punishment, that the Divine justice may be in some measure satisfied; therefore it belongs to the priest, by whose ministry this change is made, to inflict some temporal punishment on the penitent, to serve, at least, in part for what the Divine justice requires. (3.) Because Jesus Christ, when he gave the pastors of his church power of loosing the sinner from his sins, with the same breath, gave him power to bind him with his penance; "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven"; which also shows, that the penitent is obliged, in the sight of God, to perform the penance so laid upon him?

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

A. We must distinguish between the desire of doing penance in satisfaction to the Divine justice for our sins, and the actual performance of that satisfaction. The desire of satisfying the Divine justice for our sins, and repairing, as far as we can, the injury done to God by sin, is an essential part of true repentance, and therefore, an essential disposition required for receiving the grace of the sacrament of penance, as we have seen above at large in the chapter on repentance. But the actual performance of our penance is not an essential part of the sacrament, nor necessary for receiving the grace of the sacrament, but only for its integrity; it is therefore a part of the sacrament, which would be incomplete without it, but not required for the validity of it. Hence, in administering this sacrament, the penance is enjoined by the priest, and accepted by the penitent, before absolution is given him, but the actual performance of the penance is deferred till afterwards. And hence, also, in a dying person, absolution may be given without enjoining

any penance at all ; because, when a penitent is incapable of actually performing the penance, God accepts of his sincere desire of accomplishing it, and looks upon that as done, which we sincerely desire to do, but have not the power of doing. Finally, from the same grounds it follows, that the actual performance of our penance is not required for obtaining the remission of the eternal punishment of sin, for this is remitted along with the sin itself, by the grace of the sacrament ; but only for discharging the debt of temporal punishment, into which the eternal punishment is changed by the grace of the sacrament, and which remains due to the Divine justice after the guilt and eternal punishment are forgiven.

Q. 34. How does it appear, that when almighty God forgives the sin, and the eternal punishment due to it, his justice still demands from the sinner a proportionable debt of temporal punishment ?

A. This is manifest from several very strong proofs of scripture.

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

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

(3.) All the examples in scripture of the holy servants who had been sinners, and after their repentance and reconciliation with him, did most severe penance for their former sins, show, beyond reply, the same truth : since nothing but the full conviction that God required this satisfaction from them, could engage them to a course of life so contrary to all the inclinations and desires of human nature—See above, Chap. xvii. Q. 20.

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

(5.) When the children of Israel fell into that grievous sin of worshipping the golden calf, the Lord said to Moses, "Let me alone, that my wrath may be kindled against them, and that I may destroy them," Exod. xxxii. 10. But, at the earnest prayer of Moses, "the Lord was appeased from doing the evil which he had spoken against his people," verse 14; yet notwithstanding, "there were slain that day about three and twenty thousand men," verse 28, in punishment of this sin. After this, Moses again had recourse to prayer, that God might "forgive them this trespass," verse 31; and Almighty God was appeased, and bid Moses "go on, and lead the people," says he, "whither I have told thee, and my angel shall go before thee"; but he immediately adds, "and in the day of revenge I will visit this sin also of theirs," verse 34; where we see that the Divine justice was inflexible in demanding satisfaction, by taking vengeance of them, even after he was reconciled with them for the sin.

(6.) When the people of Israel murmured against God on the return of the spies, and provoked him to such a degree that he threatened to consume them entirely; at the prayers of Moses he was appeased, and said to him, "I have forgiven according to thy word," Num. xiv. 20. Here we see an express declaration from the mouth of God that he had forgiven the people this sin; but, as for the temporal punishment, in satisfaction to his

offended justice, he immediately adds, "but yet all the men that have seen my majesty, and the signs that I have done in Egypt, and in the wilderness, and have tempted me now ten times, and have not obeyed my voice, shall not see the land for which I swore to their fathers, neither shall any of them that hath detracted me behold it—Say, therefore, to them, as I live, saith the Lord, according as ye have spoken in my hearing, so will I do to you; in the wilderness shall your carcass lie—Your children shall wander in the desert forty years, and shall bear your fornication, until the carcasses of their fathers be consumed in the desert," Num. xiv. 22, 28, 33. Behold what a dreadful and long penance the Divine justice demanded from them even after their sin was forgiven.

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

Q. 35. Can we know what extent of temporal punishment

the Divine justice demands from any sinner, after his sins are forgiven?

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

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

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

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

A. Yes, indulgences; the power of granting which he has left in his church.

APPENDIX I.

Of Indulgences.

Q. 38. What is understood by an Indulgence?

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

Q. Has Jesus Christ given to his church the power of granting indulgences?

A. He has, as appears evidently from holy scripture; for (1.) He says to St. Peter, "Thou art Peter,.....and I will give

to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven," Matt. xvi. 19. In which words our Saviour gives to St. Peter, as the chief pastor of his church, whose authority as such extends to all her members, an ample and universal power of conducting the faithful to heaven, by loosing them from every thing that might hinder them from going thither, provided always they be properly disposed, and perform the conditions required upon their part. Now, there are only two things that can hinder a soul from going to heaven, to wit, the guilt of sin, and the debt of temporal punishment; for, till that debt be paid, none can enter there; consequently our Saviour saying, "whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven," manifestly includes both, and assures us, when the chief pastor looses the faithful from their sins in the sacrament of penance, or from the debt of temporal punishment, by granting an indulgence, this sentence is ratified in heaven, and stands good in the sight of God himself. (2.) On another occasion, declaring, "that he that will not hear the church," that is, the pastors and governors of the church, is to be considered "as a heathen and a publican," he immediately says to these pastors, in the person of all the apostles, "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven," Matt. xviii. 18. In which words, by the same reasoning as in the former case, we see the power of granting indulgences conferred on the first pastors or bishops of the church, as successors of the apostles. It is given to the head of the church, with regard to all the faithful, and to the bishops of the church, with regard to that portion of the faithful committed to their charge, to be exercised by them under such regulations as the church herself, in her sacred councils, has judged proper to appoint. (3.) St. Paul, though not one of the twelve apostles then present with our Saviour, when this power was given them, both exercised it himself towards the incestuous Corinthian, and recommended to the pastors of that church to do the same, for, having first condemned and bound him to public penance, and "delivered him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit might be saved in the day of our Lord," 1 Cor. v. 5; yet afterwards being informed of his great repentance and vehement sorrow, he writes to that church, "To him that is such a one,

this rebuke is sufficient that is given by many ; so that contrariwise, ye should rather forgive him.....and to whom ye have forgiven any thing, I also. For what I forgave, if I have forgiven any thing, for your sakes have I done it, in the person of Christ," 2 Cor. ii. 6, 10.

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

A. Yes, she does ; to understand which, we must observe, (1.) That God Almighty has given to his church the infinite merits and superabundant satisfaction of his Son Jesus, to be applied and dispensed to her children for the good of their souls, according to their wants. Thus St. Paul says, "Jesus Christ gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present wicked world," Gal. i. 4 ; and God "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ," Ephes. i. 3 ; "that he might show in the ages to come, the abundant riches of his grace, in his bounty towards us in Christ Jesus," Eph. ii. 7 ; for "he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how hath he not also, with him, given us all things ?" Rom. viii. 32. Now, the pastors of the church are "the dispensers of the mysteries of God," 1 Cor. iv. 1 ; to wit, of all these "spiritual blessings, abundant riches, and graces of Christ," which are the fruits of all his infinite merits and satisfactions. These are dispensed to the people, and applied to their souls by the pastors of the church, when they administer to us the holy sacraments ; and they are offered up to God as a compensation to his Divine justice, for the debt of temporal punishment, when they grant us a relaxation from that debt by an indulgence. (2.) In the creed we are taught to believe that in the church there is "the communion of saints" ; that is, that all the members of the church have a spiritual communication with one another in holy things, that the prayers, sacrifices, penances, and good works, which are performed by any of the faithful are accepted by Almighty God in such measure and manner as he sees fitting for all the others who put no impediment ; and the reason is, because all the members of the church compose but one spiritual body to Christ, of which he is the head ; and therefore, all the faithful, as members of one another, mutually partake of one another's prayers and good works, especially when they are expressly intended

and applied for one another. And as nothing is more agreeable to God, than that all his followers should live together in unity, charity, and brotherly love, as members of one body, mutually helping one another, especially in spiritual things; so we find many examples of his readiness to bestow great favours upon his people, in reward of this mutual charity. Thus, when Job's friends could find no acceptance with God of themselves, they found it immediately when Job offered up his prayers and sacrifices for them, Job xlii. How often did the prayers and sacrifices of Moses and Aaron obtain forgiveness for their sinful people, both as to the sin and the temporal punishment, even when God was so provoked by their crimes, that he seemed determined to consume and destroy them. How often does God declare in scripture, that he bears with the people of Israel, that he deals mercifully with them, that he bestows favours upon them, and the like, for the sake of his faithful servants, Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, even long after they were out of this world? So also, speaking of his care for Jerusalem, he says, "I will protect this city, and will save it for my own sake, and for David my servant's sake," 4 Kings xix. 34. Where observe, that he joins "his own sake and David's sake together," in the same sentence, as the joint motive of his protecting Jerusalem. From the same principles, St. Paul so often recommends himself to the prayers of the faithful, and when on a certain occasion, he had met with some great afflictions, he says to the Philippians, "I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer," Phil. i. 19. Seeing then that the prayers, penances, and good works of the faithful, and especially of the holy saints of God, who are of all others the most in favour with him, are, through the merits of Jesus Christ, on whom they all depend, most readily accepted by Almighty God for the benefit of all the members of his church, especially when, by a spirit of charity, they are offered up and applied for that purpose; therefore, when the church grants an indulgence to her children, for relieving the debt of temporal punishment due to the Divine justice, she offers up along with the infinite satisfaction of Christ, all the prayers, penances, and good works of his holy saints, as a most acceptable oblation to the justice of God, in satisfaction or compensation for the indulgence she grants both in imitation of what God himself did, when he joined *his own sake* and *David's sake* as the joint motive for protecting Jerusalem, and as an exercise of that holy communion of saints which she professes in the

Creed ; so that "out of their abundance, our wants are supplied," and our debt paid, 2 Cor. viii. 14.

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

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

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

A. Two things, (1.) That a person be in the state of grace, and in friendship with God ; for, while one continues in the state of sin, and at enmity with God, and of course worthy of eternal punishment in the sight of the Divine justice, he is not in a state capable of receiving an indulgence. And on this account it is, that in all grants of plenary indulgences, it is generally required, as a condition for gaining them, that the person apply first to the sacrament of confession, in order to put his soul in the state of grace, without which he is incapable of receiving that benefit. (2.) That the conditions required in the grant of the indulgence be exactly performed ; for, as indulgences are always granted on certain conditions, to be performed on our part, such as approaching to the holy sacraments, works of charity and mercy, exercises of piety and religion, prayers for the necessities of the church, and the like ; if these conditions required, be not exactly performed as required, we have no title to the favour of the indulgence. (3.) In order to gain the full effect of a plenary indulgence, it is also necessary to have a perfect repentance, and sincere detestation of all our sins, even the least venial sin ; because, as the punishment of sin will never be forgiven, while the guilt of it remains in the soul, and as a sincere repentance is absolutely required for the remission of the guilt ; therefore this sincere repentance must precede the remission of the punishment. Hence we may see how few there are who gain the full effect of a plenary indulgence, as there are few who have a sincere and efficacious repentance of every venial sin, and a sincere and firm resolu-

tion of avoiding every sin, great or small, with all the occasions of sin. Yet this ought not to hinder us from using our best endeavours for gaining a plenary indulgence when occasion offers; because, though we should not gain the whole effect of it, the more endeavours we use, and the better we are disposed, the more ample benefit we will reap from it; and whereas, we can never be certain how far we gain this benefit, and have but too much reason, from our own imperfect dispositions, to fear that we may have yet a great debt remaining unpaid; therefore, our endeavouring to gain an indulgence ought not to make us remiss in leading a truly penitential life, but rather encourage us to do so the more exactly because, the more we endeavour by works, worthy of penance, to satisfy the Divine justice, the better we will be disposed, when the opportunity comes, for gaining the more abundant effects of indulgences; for, when we have done our best, it is perhaps little to what we ought to have done and what we gain by indulgences makes up for the deficiencies of human infirmity, but can never be supposed to patronize negligence and sloth.

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

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

APPENDIX II.

Of Purgatory.

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

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

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

A. Upon these following: (1.) As the justice of God abso-

lutely demands from sinners a reparation of the injury done to him by sin, by means of temporal punishments to be undergone by them after the guilt of their mortal sins, and the eternal punishment has been remitted and forgiven them ; and, as this debt of temporal punishment is increased by the venial sins they commit, which also being offensive to God, must be punished by the Divine justice ; for “ God will render to every man according to his works, and of every idle word we speak, an account will be demanded ” ; hence it necessarily follows, that there must be a state of temporal punishment after death, where all those must go, who, dying in the state of grace, have not paid this debt before they die, and where they must remain in sufferings till such time as they have fully paid it. This place cannot be heaven ; for in heaven there can be no suffering. It cannot be hell ; for out of hell there is no redemption, and those who die in the state of grace, cannot be condemned for ever ; therefore it must be a middle place distinct from both. On these grounds our Saviour describes the nature of this state as follows, making use of it as a powerful motive to engage us to live a truly penitential life here, that we may clear that debt before we die : “ Be at agreement with thy adversary quickly,” says he, “ whilst thou art in the way with him, lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison : amen, I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou pay the last farthing,” Matt. v. 25. Here we see the doctrine of purgatory described to us in the plainest terms. This present life is everywhere represented in the holy scriptures as *a way* in which we are travelling towards eternity. Our *adversary* is the Divine justice to which we owe the debt of temporal punishment. God himself is the *judge*. If, therefore, we do not satisfy our adversary during this life, while we are in the way, when we come to die, and to be presented before the Judge, we shall be condemned to the prison of purgatory, where we must remain, till by our sufferings we have fully satisfied the Divine justice for the debt we owe even to the last farthing.

(2.) We have seen above, Chap. xvi. sect. 2, that though venial sins do not banish the grace of God from the soul, nor break our friendship with God, nor condemn us to eternal punishments, yet they greatly defile and obscure the purity of the soul, and render her less agreeable in the eyes of God ; now, the word of God assures us, that “ there shall not enter

into heaven anything defiled," Rev. xxi. 27; and that none "but the clean of heart shall see God," Matt. v. 8. When, therefore, a soul leaves this world in perfect charity with God, clean and undefiled by any of the smallest stains of sin, doubtless that soul will immediately be admitted into the presence and enjoyment of God. If, on the contrary, the soul leaves this world in disgrace with God, and dead to him by the guilt of mortal sin, that soul will undoubtedly be condemned to the eternal torments of hell. But when a soul leaves this world in the friendship of God, but sullied with the stains of smaller venial sins, it is plain such a soul cannot in that state go to heaven, where "nothing defiled can enter"; neither can she be condemned to hell, because she is in friendship with God, and a living member of Jesus Christ; therefore there must be some middle state, where such a soul is confined for a time, till by suffering she be cleansed and purged from all those defilements of venial sins, and rendered fit to be admitted to the presence and enjoyment of God. In this view, our blessed Saviour says, "He that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come," Matt. xii. 32. In which words he plainly insinuates, that some sins shall be forgiven in the world to come, otherwise it would be superfluous and trifling to say of the sin against the Holy Ghost in particular, that it shall never be forgiven neither in this world nor the next. To the same purpose the prophet Isaiah says, "The voice of the Lord of hosts was revealed in my ears, sure this iniquity shall not be forgiven you till you die, saith the Lord God of hosts," Is. xxii. 14, which plainly implies that, after death, it should be forgiven them. Now this truth necessarily establishes a middle state, where some sins shall be forgiven; this place cannot be heaven, for no sin can enter there to be forgiven; it cannot be hell, for in hell there is no forgiveness; therefore, it must be a middle place, distinct from both. Neither can these sins which are forgiven in the next life be mortal sins; for a soul that dies in mortal sin is immediately condemned to hell, like the rich glutton in the gospel: therefore, they are only venial sins which are purged from the soul in purgatory, as here explained.

(3.) From what has been said, it appears, (1.) That the souls that go to purgatory are only such as die in the state of grace, united to Jesus Christ. (2.) That it is their imperfect works for which they are condemned to that place of suffering,

and which must all be there consumed, and their stains purged away from them, before they can go to heaven. (3.) That, however, they shall at last be saved, and received into eternal bliss, to wit, when they have paid the utmost farthing, and when all their imperfections are purged away. And this is the precise doctrine of the church concerning purgatory. Now, this doctrine is laid down by St. Paul in the plainest terms, as follows: "For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid; which is in Christ Jesus": that is, none can be saved but such as are united to Jesus Christ by faith, that worketh by charity: "Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble, every man's work's shall be manifest; for the day of the Lord shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's works, of what sort it is." The building upon this foundation, as here explained, signifies the works that a man performs while united to Jesus Christ; such works as are good and perfect, are compared to gold, silver, and precious stones; such as are imperfect and venially sinful, are compared to wood, hay, stubble. At the day of the Lord, at the particular judgment after death, all these works shall be tried and examined by him, for then *the fire* of God's judgment shall "try every man's works of what sort it is." If any man's works which he hath built thereupon abide, he shall receive a reward, shall be immediately admitted to the joy of his Lord; "If any man's works burn, he shall suffer loss," these works being found of no value he must suffer for them; yet, having built upon the right foundation, by living and dying in the state of grace, and united to Jesus Christ, though with much imperfection, "he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire, being liable to this punishment on account of his many imperfections," 1 Cor. iii. 11. On this text of scripture St. Ambrose says as follows: "Whereas St. Paul saith *yet so as by fire*, he sheweth indeed, that he shall be saved, but yet shall suffer the punishment of fire; that being purged by fire, he may be saved, and not tormented for ever," *Ser.* 20, in Ps. 118.

(4.) The belief of a purgatory and the practice of praying for the souls detained there, is far from being a novelty, introduced in later ages, as the adversaries of the Catholic church pretend. It is much more ancient than Christianity itself; and we have a most decisive proof of it from scripture, among the people of God under the old law, in the time of

Judas Machabeus, about two hundred years before Christ. For, upon a great victory gained by that valiant general over the enemies of their religion, after the battle, in which many of his people had been slain, "Judas, making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection.....and because he considered that they who had fallen asleep, with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is, therefore, a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins," 2 Mach. xii. 43. In this passage of holy writ, we have the following particulars established, (1.) That the whole people of God, long before Christ, did hold it holy and laudable to pray for the dead. (2.) That they believed this to be a means of benefiting the souls departed, by freeing them from their sins. (3.) That the word of God declares this to be *holy and wholesome*. If therefore the souls of the faithful departed are benefited by the prayers of those upon earth, this establishes a purgatory beyond all contradictions, since those in heaven are in need of no help, and those in hell can receive none. Now, we do not find that our Saviour ever reprehended the Jews for their practice, though upon all occasions, he censured the Pharisees for the corruptions they had brought in, some of which were even of much less consequence than this, had it not been sound doctrine.

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

A. They are certainly most dreadful; much more so than any thing we can conceive in this world. (1.) Because the scripture says, "They shall be saved, yet so as by fire," 2 Cor. iii. (2.) Because they are wholly in the hands of the Divine justice, and the scripture says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," Heb. x. 31. And, indeed, even in this life, where his justice is always mixed with mercy, how dreadful are his punishments upon sinners? Witness the many examples in scripture, even for sins, which to us would seem but small. (3.) Some of the saints of God have not hesitated to think, that the torments of purgatory are not inferior to those of hell, only that those of hell have no end, whereas those of purgatory are but for a time. (4.) The following passages from the prophets, though addressed directly to the Jews, are applied, in their spiritual sense, to show the greatness of the torments of purgatory. "If the Lord shall wash away the

filth of the daughters of Sion, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning," Is. iv. 4; "And he shall sit refining and cleansing the silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and shall refine them as gold, and as silver," Mal. iii. 3.

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

A. Most undoubtedly they are of great service to them, both by easing their sufferings and shortening the time of their being there. Thus, the scripture expressly says, that "it is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins," 2 Mach. xii. In their situation they can do nothing for themselves, but suffer till they have paid the last farthing. For, as our Saviour assures us, when "the night of death cometh, no man can work," John ix. 4; and the Holy Ghost exhorts us to be diligent in doing all the good we can at present, for the same reason, "Whatsoever thy hand is able to do, do it earnestly; for neither work, nor reason, nor wisdom, nor knowledge shall be in hell, whither thou art hastening," Eccles. ix. 10; that is the regions below, in the state of the dead. But, though the souls in purgatory can do nothing of themselves to ease or shorten their sufferings, yet such is the goodness of God, that in consideration of the union and charity which he so strictly requires among all the members of his church, the body of Christ, and of that communion of saints which he himself has established among them, he is pleased to accept of the prayers, sacrifices, and good works of the faithful upon earth, when offered up by them for the souls departed; and, on that account, relieves their pains, and grants them a more speedy deliverance from them.

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

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

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

A. It is one of the most profitable acts of mercy we can perform; for (1.) "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy"; and "with the same measure that we mete to others, it shall be measured to us again." This is an established rule of the Divine justice, consequently the being diligent in

procuring relief to those who are gone before us, and are now in a state of purgation and suffering in the next life, is the most effectual means to move Almighty God to stir up others to bring the same relief to us, if we ever be so happy as to go to the same place; on the contrary, "Judgment without mercy to him that shows no mercy," James ii. 13. (2.) The souls in purgatory are the beloved spouses of Jesus Christ, united to him by grace and secure of their eternal salvation. Now, if Christ assures us that a cup of cold water given for his sake in this life, shall not want its reward, though the one to whom we give it may, perhaps, be one at enmity with Jesus Christ, or who will be lost for ever, and for ever separated from him; what reward will be given to those who, for his sake, contribute to do such a benefit to his beloved spouses in purgatory, as to ease their dreadful torments, and procure them a more speedy admission to his Divine presence? (3.) Those holy souls themselves will sooner or later be admitted to the possession of God, to the clear and full enjoyment of the Divine presence; what a happiness for us, if by our prayers, alms, sacrifices, and other good works, we have been instrumental in procuring them ease while they were in their state of purgation, and a more speedy admission to eternal bliss? May we not justly expect that their grateful hearts will not forget our services? Will they not be so many steadfast friends to us in heaven, and, by their powerful prayers, obtain a blessing from God to our souls? Hence our blessed Saviour says, in the gospel, "Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of iniquity, that when ye shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings," Luke xvi. 9. And in this consists the communion we have with these blessed souls in purgatory, included in that article of the Creed *the communion of saints*; which extends to all the members of the church of Christ, whether they be as yet in this present life, or departed out of it to another; for we communicate to the souls in purgatory the fruits of our prayers and good works offered up for them; and, in return, we receive, through the mercy of God, these precious rewards of our charity.

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

A. Chiefly these following: (1.) The strictness and severity of God's justice, which appears, in some respects, more formidable from purgatory than even from hell itself; for, in hell, *whom does he punish?* his enemies, his rebellious creatures,

obstinate, ungrateful, impenitent sinners, just objects of his aversion, wrath, and indignation; but in purgatory, he punishes his beloved friends, the chaste spouses of his Son, the living members of Jesus Christ, the objects of his complacency and love. In hell *how does he punish?* with torments the most dreadful, yea more dreadful than can enter into the heart of man to conceive. In purgatory he punishes with torments much of the same nature; for the souls there shall, indeed, at last, be saved, *yet so as by fire*; and, perhaps, little inferior in its intenseness, and differing from that of hell only in its duration. In hell *for what does he punish?* for mortal sin, the greatest and most atrocious outrage that can be done to his Divine Majesty; in purgatory, he punishes only smaller sins, venial imperfections, human frailties. If, therefore, he punishes these venial imperfections in his own beloved friends in so severe a manner, how dreadful are his judgments? how severe his justice? how much to be dreaded and feared?

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

(3.) It also shows us the great advantage we may draw from the sufferings of this life, if borne in a penitential spirit; and from endeavouring by a truly penitential life of self-denial and mortification, to discharge the debt we owe to the Divine justice, and by that means, "make agreement with our adversary while we are in the way." One great reason why souls go to purgatory, is, because they have not satisfied the justice of God, by their sufferings before they die; for this reason they must suffer in purgatory till they have paid the last farthing. Now, such is the goodness of God, that he accepts the penitential works we do in this world, and the sufferings we bear in a penitential spirit here, as payment of that debt; and, as our sufferings here, scarce deserve the name of sufferings, in comparison of the torments of purgatory, this shows what a vast advantage we may draw from the afflictions of the present life, and how unreasonably we act by neglecting to make the proper use of them.

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

APPENDIX III.

Of Public Penances.

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

A. There are several very strong reasons for inflicting public penances on public offenders. (1.) The express command of the holy scripture; for St. Paul, instructing the pastors of the church, in the person of his disciple Timothy, in the duties of their station, among other things says, "Those that sin reprove before all, that the rest also may have fear. I charge thee before God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe those things without prejudice, doing nothing by declining to either side," 1 Tim. v. 30; where we see with what a strong abjuration the apostle enjoins this duty. (2.) The same holy apostle confirms this command by his example; for, when he heard of the incestuous Corinthian, he excommunicated him, delivering him over to Satan, and kept him in that state of public penance, deprived of all the benefits of religion for about a whole year, 1 Cor. v. 5. (3.) The example of the church of Christ, which, instructed by the words and example of this apostle, was most rigorous and severe in inflicting public penances, especially on public offenders. The nature and duration of these public penances, in the ages immediately after the apostles, was determined by the bishops, according to the particular circumstances of the case; but, as charity waxed cold, and crimes became more frequent, the church also became more severe, and more rigorous in the use of these public penances, in order to put some restraint on these crimes, and establish by her sacred canons, proper regulations determining the nature and duration of the penance to be imposed,

according to the crime committed ; and some of them lasted for one, three, seven, yea fifteen years together. And this practice continued, with some alterations, to be exactly observed for public crimes till about the twelfth century ; after which they began to be changed into other works of piety, so that the use of public penances became less frequent, and in many places fell into disuse. But, (4.) the great Council of Trent taking this into consideration, in order to restore the use of them again, as being of the greatest benefit to religion, in putting a restraint upon sin, decrees as follows : “ The apostle admonishes, that those who sin openly are to be corrected publicly. When therefore, any crime is committed publicly, and before many, by which others will doubtless be offended, and moved with the scandal, a condign punishment must be publicly inflicted on the offender, according to the nature of the crime, that those who have been provoked by his example to evil, may be recalled to their duty by the testimony of his amendment,” Council of Trent, sess. xxiv. cap. 8. (5.) The Roman Ritual, and many others, expressly forbid those to be admitted to absolution “ who have given public scandal, unless they gave public satisfaction, and take away the scandal.”

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

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

condemned to public punishment. (4.) For imprinting in the minds of the ignorant a just sense of the evil of sin ; for, when they see sin committed with impunity, they very naturally lose the horror they ought to have at it, especially if the offender be in a station above themselves, and better instructed in his duty ; for then they naturally say, if it were so great an evil, how would such a one be guilty of it ? Nor is there any thing so effectual to prevent this, and to excite and keep up in their minds the just idea they ought to have of the evil of sin, than to see it publicly punished. (5.) To satisfy for the public offence they have given by their public sin.

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

A. To this it is replied, (1.) That St. Paul, the church of Christ, even with the experience of many ages, and the Council of Trent, had no such fear, when they so strongly enjoined, and so strictly practised, the punishing of public offenders by public penances. (2.) There are two ways any sin may be spoken of to others ; first, by proposing it in an alluring light, as pleasant, honourable, or useful, by which the hearers are excited to love it, and to commit it ; and, on this account, plays, novels, and romances, are the most pernicious and detestable engines the devil makes use of to engage men to sin. Secondly, by proposing it in an odious light, showing its innate malignity, and the fatal consequence it produces both for soul and body, in time, and for eternity ; and in this view, sermons and good books, though they describe sin to the hearers, and show its various kinds, yet are the most powerful means appointed by the Divine Providence to deter men from sin. Now, when a sinner is reproved publicly, his crime is spoken of always in this last view, and represented in all its horrors and fatal consequences, which, joined with the confusion and humiliation which the sinner is undergoing at the time, instead of increasing the scandal, must have quite the contrary effect, and excite sentiments of horror and aversion in the minds of those present. And this is the very reason assigned by the apostle for ordering public reproofs, "that the rest also may be afraid" ; and this is the very effect it naturally produces, as is confirmed by constant experience.

CHAPTER XXV.

OF THE SACRAMENT OF EXTREME UNCTION.

Q. 1. WHAT is the end and design of the sacrament of extreme unction?

A. The Council of Trent declares it in these words: "As our most merciful Redeemer, who desired that his servants should at all times be provided with wholesome remedies against the darts of their enemies, in the other sacraments gives Christians the greatest helps, to enable them to pass their lives in a Christian manner, and free from any grievous spiritual detriment, so he hath fortified the latter end of our life with a most powerful protection of the sacrament of extreme unction. For, though our adversary seeks, and seizes, during our whole life, every possible occasion of ruining our souls, yet there is no time wherein he more vehemently exerts all his strength and art to ruin us entirely, and destroy, if possible, our confidence in the mercy of God, than when he sees the last moment of life approaching," Sess. xiv. in Doct. de Extr. Unct. By this we see, that the intention of our blessed Saviour in instituting this sacrament, is that it may be the means of fortifying our souls against all the violent attacks and snares of our spiritual enemies at our last moments, and of enabling us to make a holy death, and securing a happy eternity.

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

A. He certainly does, as this general council declares, and as experience itself assures us: For, though at all times, he goeth about as a roaring "lion, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Peter v. 8; yet he redoubles all his force, and all his art, when we come to our last moments, knowing, that, if he can gain us then, we will be his for ever, but if he lose us then, he loses us for ever; according to that of the Revelations, when St. John heard a loud voice, saying, "Woe to the earth, and to the sea, because the devil is come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time," Rev. xii. 13. When the soul is in her last agony, hovering betwixt time and eternity, and upon the point of leaving the body, the devil then knows there is but a short time to stay, and therefore, he then redoubles all his assaults against her: for as another text says, "There are spirits that are created for vengeance—and in

the time of destruction they shall pour out their force," Ecclus. xxxix. 33; like a king, who being at war with his enemies, when he comes to a decisive battle, on the event of which his crown depends, calls out all his army on that day, and exerts the utmost of his power in order to ensure the victory. Now, when the poor soul comes to this last and dreadful battle, what can she do? If left to herself, she will surely perish. This our blessed Saviour, well knowing, was pleased, out of his infinite goodness, to institute the holy sacrament of extreme unction, by which he both purifies the soul still more and more from all the remains of sin that may be in her, and which would give the devil more power and advantage over her, and he also raises her up above her own strength, endowing her with power from on high to enable her to fight manfully against all the assaults of Satan, and come off with victory.

Q. 3. Is extreme unction a true and real sacrament of the new law?

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

Q. 4. What is the outward sensible sign used in extreme unction?

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

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

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

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

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

Q. 7. Where is this sacrament laid down in the holy scriptures?

A. It is explained at large, in all its parts, and commanded to be used by the holy apostle St. James, in these clear and express terms, "Is any one sick among you? let him bring in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." See here the outward action of the sacrament, *anointing with oil, accompanied with prayer*; the inward grace immediately follows, "and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him," James v. 14. Our Lord shall raise him up above his own strength, fortifying his soul with his assisting grace; and, "if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him," by the sanctifying grace of God, which will wash and purify his soul from all the stains of sin that may remain in it, so that he may appear with joy before his Lord.

Q. 8. What are the effects of this sacrament of extreme unction?

A. These will easily appear from what has been said; for (1.) It cleanses the soul from all the remains of sin, that is, from that anxiety and disturbance of mind, that fear and disquiet, that tepidity and sloth of soul, which, in some degree or other, sin always leaves in the soul, and which, when a person is in the danger of death, have often very bad consequences. Hence, (2.) it calms the mind, and renders the sick person composed and resigned to the will of God, giving him great courage and confidence in the Divine mercy. (3.) It washes away the guilt of venial sins which may lurk in the soul, as the proper and direct effect which is designed by it. (4.) It also cleanses the soul even from the guilt of mortal sin, in certain circumstances, where the sick person cannot have recourse to the sacrament of penance; for where this sacrament of penance can be had, it must always be applied to, for the remission of mortal sin; but in dying persons, it may sometimes happen that this cannot be done. As for example, if their mortal sins were not forgiven in confession, for want of proper dispositions, though unknown to the person himself; or were committed after being at the sacrament of penance, but had quite escaped his memory; or, if being suddenly deprived of his senses, he could not confess them, but had a sincere sorrow for them. In these, or such like cases, even the guilt of mortal sins will be cleansed from the soul, by the grace of extreme unction. (5.) It strengthens him to bear with more Christian patience, all the pains and sufferings of his sickness. (6.) It fortifies

the soul against all the assaults of Satan in her last moments ; and (7.) It contributes to restore health to the body, if expedient to the soul.

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

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

Q. 10. What are the dispositions required for receiving extreme unction ?

A. To receive this sacrament with the full and proper fruit of it to the soul, it is required, (1.) That the person be free from the known guilt of mortal sin, by a previous use of the sacrament of penance, where that can be done. (2.) If he be conscious of being in the state of sin, but cannot confess, being deprived of his speech, for example, though otherwise in his senses, that he have a sincere internal sorrow and repentance for these sins. (3.) As repentance is absolutely required for the remission of every sin, great or small, that he also have a sincere repentance for all his sins in general, whether great or small, known or unknown. (4.) That he also have a great and firm confidence in the mercy of God, and the merits of Christ, that by means of this sacrament he will be enabled to die the death of the just, and find favour with his God. (5.) That he join his earnest prayers with those of the church, while the sacrament is administering to him ; for this is a sacrament of prayer, and "the prayer of faith shall save the sick man."

Q. 11. To whom does it belong to give extreme unction ?

A. The scripture has determined it in express terms : "Let him call for the priests of the church" ; this being a branch of the priestly office.

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

A. Only to the members of the church who are in danger of death by sickness, "Is anyone sick among you?" says the

scripture; and among those only to such as are capable of sinning; because the design of this sacrament is chiefly to purify the soul from the remains of past sins, and strengthen her against falling into sin again. Hence it cannot be given, (1.) To such as are in danger of death, but not from sickness; as to people going to battle, or to sea, in a dangerous voyage, or to be put to death by the order of justice, or the like. (2.) To such as are incapable of having ever sinned; such as infants, and those who have been deprived of their judgment from their infancy. (3.) To those who die impenitent, or in the actual commission of mortal sin; as a drunken man wounded to death, and dying before he becomes sober again.

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

A. The infinite love of Jesus Christ to our souls, and his earnest desire of our salvation. At our first entrance into the world, he has provided the holy sacrament of baptism, to unite us to himself as members of his body. During the course of our life he has given us the powerful helps of his other sacraments, to enable us to persevere in that happy state; and at our death what an admirable means has he provided in the sacrament of extreme unction, to make us his for ever! (2.) The great happiness of being a member of the church of Christ, where alone this great help is to be found for our souls. Consider the importance of dying well; the dangers we will be then exposed to; the help here afforded us for that end, and this will clearly show the greatness of that happiness. (3.) How careful we should be while in health, to discharge well all our Christian duties, as that will most powerfully engage Almighty God to bestow this last help on us at our death; whereas a negligent and sinful life provokes him to deprive us of that benefit when death approaches, of which there is daily experience. (4.) That, when sickness comes, we be extremely careful to receive this sacrament in due time, and not to put it off to the very last, when perhaps we may be deprived of the abilities of disposing ourselves for receiving it with that devotion on which the greater abundance of its blessed effects so much depends.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS.

Q. 1. WHAT is the meaning of holy orders?

A. To understand this properly, we must observe, that, as Jesus Christ came into this world to save souls, and to communicate to them all those lights and helps which they stood in need of, for working out their salvation; so he received from his Father all necessary power and authority for this purpose. He, as man, was sent by his Father "to preach the gospel, to enlighten them that sat in darkness, to forgive sins upon earth," and to do every other thing that was necessary for the good of souls, insomuch, that he says himself to his apostles, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth," Matt. xxviii. 18. Now as the sacred helps which Christ knew to be necessary for the salvation of souls, were equally necessary for all mankind, and in all ages after him to the end of the world; therefore, it was no less necessary that some means should be appointed for communicating those Divine helps to all mankind, in all succeeding ages, in order to procure their salvation. For this reason, as our blessed Saviour was not to remain in his own person, in a visible manner, upon earth, to apply these helps to the souls of men himself; he therefore, chose twelve disciples, whom he called apostles, and he communicated to them all those sacred powers necessary for bringing others to salvation, which he himself had received from his Father, with power moreover to them to communicate the same powers to others who might succeed them, and carry on the same by a perpetual succession to the end of time. Thus he gave them power to *preach the gospel*, to *teach all nations*, and to *baptize*, before his ascension, as related, Matt. x. 18; Mark xvi.; to *consecrate the Holy Eucharist*, and offer up the *sacrifice* of his body and blood, when at the last supper he commanded them to do what he had just done, Luke xxii. 19; to *forgive sins*, when after his resurrection, "he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven," John xx. 22. And so of all the other sacred powers of the priesthood, which he communicated to his apostles in the most ample manner, and thereby made them priests and pastors of his people, and authorised them as his own substitutes, to communicate the same powers to others after them, and carry on

to the end of the world the great work he had begun for the salvation of souls; for, as St. Paul observes, "every high priest taken from among men, is appointed for men in things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins," Heb. v. 1.

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

A. We must carefully remark the following particulars: (1.) That the sacred powers of the priesthood are not of human institution, but the work of the great God, and are communicated to those whom he calls to that high office. (2.) That none can have, or exercise these powers, except he receive them from God, by the means which he has appointed for that end; for, "neither doth any man take the honour to himself; but he that is called by God as Aaron was," Heb. v. 4, and "how can they preach unless they be sent," Rom. x. 15; "for he that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber," saith Jesus Christ himself, John x. 1. (3.) That consequently all those who intrude themselves into the pastoral office of themselves and pretend to teach and preach, and administer any sacrament, without having received the proper power from Jesus Christ to do so, are only impostors and deluders of souls, "blind leaders of the blind," who together with those that follow them, "fall into the pit," Matt. xv. 14. (4.) That these priestly powers, being of different kinds, are separable from one another, and some of them may be communicated to any one without the others, as our Saviour in fact did communicate them at different times, and on different occasions, to his apostles. (5.) That when he communicated these powers to them, he did it in a visible, sensible manner, expressing in the words he used, the nature of the particular power which he gave them. (6.) That by doing so, he set the example in what manner the apostles and their successors should communicate the same powers to others after them, to wit, in an outward visible manner, by words and actions, expressing the power given.

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

A. They did, but in different degrees; for whereas, on the multitude of the Christian people increasing, it would have been impossible for one man to administer the effects of all the priestly powers to a great multitude of souls; and on the other hand, it would have been a source of endless dissensions to have had a number of pastors over the same people, with equal

power and authority, and without any subordination among themselves; therefore, as instructed by their divine Master, they communicated to some the plenitude of the priestly and pastoral powers, such as they had received from Christ; and these are the chief pastors of the church, the successors of the apostles, and are called *bishops*, constituted by the Holy Ghost to rule and govern his church, according to that of St. Paul, "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost has placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood," Acts xx. 28. To others they communicated only part of these priestly powers, particularly that of consecrating the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, and of offering up the holy sacrifice of the altar; and that of administering the sacrament of penance by the power of binding and loosing, with all the other sacraments except confirmation and orders; and these are the pastors of the second order, successors of the seventy-two disciples of our Lord, and are properly called *priests*; because the essential power of the priesthood consists in offering up sacrifice to God for the sins of the people, according to that, "every high priest.....is appointed, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins," Heb. v. 1. To others they communicated only the powers of preaching and baptizing, and of assisting the priest at the altar, when offering up the holy sacrifice; and these are called *deacons*, or servants, from this last branch of their office. Others they employed in preparing the matter for the sacrifice, and having the charge of all the things about the altar, keeping them clean and in proper condition, to be assistants to the deacon when serving at the altar, and to sing the epistle at Mass, when it is celebrated with all its solemnities, and these are the *sub-deacons*. All these degrees are called *holy orders*: because, when a person once enters into them, he is dedicated entirely to the service of God and his church, and can never more return to the world. Besides these, there are also the four minor orders, which are employed about the inferior offices and service of the church, not so immediately connected with the sacrifice, and are called *minor* or lesser orders: because those who enter into them have it still in their option to leave the service of the church, and return to the world. These four are called the acolyte, the exorcist, the lector, and the doorkeeper.

Q. 4. Why are all these called orders?

A. Because it is plain that they are all so many different steps or degrees, laid down in a regular order, by which the

sacred powers of the priesthood are gradually communicated to him who enters into the ecclesiastical state. For he must first begin with the lowest, or doorkeeper, and so gradually ascend to the higher degrees, or to a more ample share in these sacred powers, after having spent a competent time in the exercise of the lower-orders, and by his good behaviour there given proof of his deserving to be advanced to those that are higher.

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

A. That the bishops are superior to the priests, and hold the first rank in the sacred hierarchy of the church is an article of divine faith, declared as such by the Church of Christ in the Council of Trent; and is founded on the following testimonies of the holy scripture: (1.) It is evident that the apostles were raised by Jesus Christ to a much higher rank and dignity than the other disciples: for "they called to him his disciples, and he chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles," Luke vi. 13. He kept them always in his own company; he instructed them in particular in all the things he had heard from his Father, as his particular friends," John xv. 15. After his resurrection he said to them only, "As my Father hath sent me, I also send you; whose sins ye shall forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins ye shall retain, they are retained," John xx. 20. To them in particular, he said, "Go ye into the whole world, and preach the gospel to every creature," Mark xvi. 15. All which shows that they were constituted by him to be the chief pastors of his church. When their number was diminished by the infidelity of Judas, St. Peter, calling all the brethren, said, "The scripture must needs be fulfilled which the Holy Ghost spoke before, by the mouth of David, concerning Judaswho was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.....for, it is written, and his bishopric let another take. Wherefore, of those men who have complained with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus came in and went out among us.....one of these must be made with us a witness of his resurrection," Acts i. 16. Accordingly, two were appointed, and "praying, they said, Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show which of these two thou hast chosen to take the place of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas hath fallen.....and they gave them lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles," verse 26. All this shows evidently the superior order of the

apostles, and that St. Matthias, by being numbered among them was raised to a higher dignity, and to a superior station, than what he had before, while only one of the disciples. Now the bishops are the successors of the apostles and inherit the plenitude of the priestly powers which Christ communicated to them; whereas the priests are only the successors of the seventy-two disciples, and receive these powers only in part. (2.) St. Paul, speaking to the bishops of the church, says, "Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God," Acts xx. 28. To the bishops, then, the supreme power of ruling the church is committed by the Holy Ghost. (3.) The same apostle writing to Timothy, whom he had appointed bishop of Ephesus, to preserve the purity of the doctrine there, 1 Tim. i. 3, says, "Against a priest receive not an accusation, but under two or three witnesses," 1 Tim. v. 19: which proves to a demonstration, that St. Timothy had authority and jurisdiction over the priests in receiving accusations against them, and consequently, in judging them and correcting them. (4.) In like manner writing to Titus, he says, "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldst ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee," Tit. i. 5. Where we see the supreme authority that Titus had of making regulations in the church of Crete, and of constituting priests under him in the different cities of that island. (5.) The same truth is manifest, from the constant and uninterrupted practice of the church of Christ, and from the condemnation of Arius as a heretic in the fourth age for denying this doctrine.

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

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

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

Q. 7. What is meant by the sacrament of holy orders?

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

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

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

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

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

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

A. They are these following: (1.) An increase of sanctifying

grace in the soul. (2.) The power and the authority of exercising the functions of the order received. (3.) The necessary helps of actual grace to enable the person ordained to exercise these functions well. (4.) It also imprints a character on the soul, denoting the order received, which, like those of baptism and confirmation, can never be destroyed, and makes it impossible to receive the sacrament of holy orders more than once. This, however, is to be understood of the higher, or sacred orders, which were instituted by Christ himself; because the lesser, or minor orders, are commonly not reckoned a sacrament, being, properly speaking, instituted only by the church.

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

A. (1.) From the example of Jesus Christ, who, by an outward action, expressing the sacred powers communicated to the apostles, did actually bestow these powers upon them. (2.) From the example of the apostles, who constituted pastors of the church by the same means: thus, when they ordained the seven deacons, the scripture says, that "praying, they imposed hands upon them," Acts vi. 6. And when Saul and Barnabas were sent to the ministry by a special command of the Holy Ghost, "they, fasting and praying, and laying their hands upon them, sent them away," Acts xiii. 3. (3.) From these express declarations of the apostle to Timothy, "Neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, by the imposition of the hands of priesthood," 1 Tim. iv. 14. "I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee, by the imposition of my hands," 2 Tim. 1. 6. And for this reason, exhorting him to be cautious whom he admits to this sacrament, he says, Impose not hands lightly upon any man," 1 Tim. v. 22.

Q. 12. What dispositions are required to receive holy orders worthily?

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

That he observe and fulfil all the other regulations and conditions prescribed by the church.

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

A. Chiefly by these signs: (1.) If he have led an innocent and holy life before. (2.) If he have a great love and zeal for ecclesiastical discipline. (3.) If he have a pure intention, not pushed on by ambition or avarice, but by a zeal for promoting the glory of God, and the salvation of souls. (4.) If he be a man given to prayer, and sacred studies.

Q. 14. What are the other conditions the church requires?

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

Q. 15. Does the church oblige all those in sacred orders to live single and chaste.

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

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

A. Upon these following grounds, laid down in the holy scripture: (1.) Because a life of purity and chastity is more excellent, more perfect, and more acceptable to God than the married state. This is asserted by St. Paul in the most plain terms: "Concerning virgins," says he, "I have no commandment of the Lord, but I give counsel, as having obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.....Art thou loosed from a wife, seek not a wife," 1 Cor. vii. 25, 27; and, after several argu-

ments on the subject, he concludes in these words ; “ Wherefore, he that giveth his virgin in marriage doth well, and he that giveth her not doth better,” verse 38. This is also manifest from the special reward promised by our Saviour, and bestowed in heaven, upon those who led a chaste life : our Saviour says, “ Amen, I say to you, there is no man that hath left house or parents—or wife—for the kingdom of God’s sake, who shall not receive much more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting,” Luke xviii. 29. And the singular privileges which shall be bestowed on them in heaven, are described by St. John, where he tells us, that “ they have the name of the Lamb, and the name of his Father, written on their forehead,” to distinguish them in a special manner from all the other saints ; that “ they sing a new song before the throne of God, which no other can sing but themselves,” and that “ they follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth,” always attending his sacred person as his chaste and beloved spouses. And, describing those to whom such honour belongs, “ these are they,” says he, “ who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins,” Rev. xiv. 1, 3, 4. Seeing, then, the office of the priesthood requires the most angelical purity, and the most sublime sanctity in those who are admitted to it, therefore the church has judged proper to oblige all who enter into that office to embrace the more perfect state of chastity. (2.) St. Paul recommends, even to married people, to abstain from the use of marriage “ for a time, that they may give themselves to prayer,” 1 Cor. vii. 7 ; which is particularly to be understood when they are preparing themselves for receiving the holy communion ; and afterwards he adds the reason, because “ this is for their profit, and is decent,” and it will enable them “ to attend upon the Lord without impediment,” verse 35. Now, as the very office of the priests is daily to attend upon the Lord, “ to give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word,” Acts vi. 4 ; as “ they are appointed for men in the things that appertain to God, to offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins,” Heb. v. 1 ; therefore, the church wisely judging, that it is for their profit, and highly becoming, and a means to make them attend to the Lord, and to their holy functions, without impediment, that they should always live continent, obliges them, by strict and positive command, always to do so. (3.) St. Paul, explaining more minutely the advantages of a single life, especially in regard to the concerns of the soul, says, “ I would have you to be without solicitude ; he that is without a wife is solicitous for

the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please God ; but he that is with a wife is solicitous for the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and he is divided. And the unmarried woman, and the virgin, thinketh on the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and spirit ; but she that is married thinketh on the things of the world, how she may please her husband," 1 Cor. vii. 32. Here again, the church, wisely considering that it is the very essential duty of those who enter into the priesthood to be solicitous only for the things of the Lord, and not for the things of the world ; that " they are chosen by Jesus Church out of the world," John xv. 19 ; and " appointed for the things appertaining to God," Heb. v. 1 : that, therefore, they ought " not to be divided," but to " be holy both in body and spirit " ; on this account, obliges all those of the priesthood to live a chaste and single life, as being declared by the apostle to be most proper, and conducive to the end of their vocation. (4.) The duties of their state, as pastors of the flock of Jesus Christ, make the married state, in a manner incompatible with their vocation ; for they are chosen by Jesus Christ, and *separated* from the rest of mankind for the service " of the gospel of God," Rom. i. 1, that they " may go and bring forth fruit," in the conversion of souls to God, and that their fruit may remain, John xv. 16 ; they are dedicated, by their vocation, to this holy service of God, and his gospel, and are obliged to give their whole attention to the good of their people's souls ; to instruct them, to administer the sacraments to them, to comfort them in their distress, to assist them in their sickness, and especially when death approaches ; and, for this purpose, to answer their calls at all times, by night or by day, even though at the risk of their own life, when the good of their people's souls require it. Now, it is evidently incompatible with the cares of a wife and family, to discharge all these duties properly ; and therefore St. Paul says, " No man being a soldier of God, entangleth himself with worldly business, that he may please him to whom he hath engaged himself," 2 Tim. ii. 4. Now, the church, well knowing that no kind of worldly business so much entangleth a man and withdraweth him from the duties of the pastoral charge as the cares of a wife and family, therefore, expressly requires her pastors to abstain from a state so inconsistent with that charge. (5.) In the apostles' time, when the church began, there was a necessity for taking married people into the priesthood, because, for want of labourers in the vineyard, there was no room for choice ; and

therefore, the apostles did not make any express law against doing so ; yet we find the strongest injunctions in their sacred writings, that all who were admitted into that holy state should live chaste and continent lives. Thus St. Paul affirms, that “ a bishop must be.....sober, just, holy, continent,” Titus i. 8 ; and writing to Timothy on the virtues proper for his state as a pastor, he says, “ Be thou an example of the faithful in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in chastity,” 1 Tim. iv. 12 ; and again, “ I charge thee before God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels.....keep thyself chaste,” 1 Tim. v. 21, 23 ; and giving a catalogue of the virtues belonging to the ministers of Christ he says, “ In all things let us exhibit ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience.....in chastity,” 2 Cor. vi. 4, 6. In consequence of this, we find from the earliest monuments of antiquity, that, even when married people were admitted into the sacred ministry, they generally abstained from all cohabitation with their wives ever after ; till, in process of time, when the number of the faithful increased, so that there was no difficulty of getting plenty of young people trained up to the service of the church, the law was made, for all the above reasons, obliging all who entered into sacred orders to observe a perpetual chastity.

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

A. By no means ; for none are obliged to enter into that state but with their own free consent, and none ought to enter into it but such as “ are called by God, as Aaron was.” Now, they know the conditions beforehand, they freely accept of them ; and, as the law is founded, as we have seen, on the clearest and most evident principals of holy scripture, when God Almighty calls one to that state, he never refuses the necessary helps of his grace to enable him to accomplish all the obligations annexed to it. Continency is, without doubt, a gift of God ; for his holy word assures us, that “ a man cannot otherwise be continent, except God give it,” Wisd. viii. 21 ; and our Saviour, after enlarging a good deal on this subject, adds, “ all men receive not this word, but they to whom it is given,” Matt. xix. 11 ; and St. Paul, after saying, “ I would that all men were even as myself,” with regard to their leading a single life ; he immediately adds, “ but every one hath his proper gift from God,” 1 Cor. vii. 7. This grace, then, is given to some ; and to whom will God be more ready to give it, than to those whom he calls to that state, to which his holy church,

from the principles he himself has laid down in the sacred writings, has so solemnly annexed this obligation? And, indeed, nothing more admirably shows the finger of God, than to see such vast numbers as embrace the ecclesiastical state living in the strictest purity, even amidst the many dangerous occasions to which their necessary communication with the world, in their charge of souls, so frequently exposes them. It is not by the strength of nature or constitution that they live in such purity; nature is incapable, by its own strength, of practising a virtue which is so opposite to all the most violent inclinations of flesh and blood. It is the grace of Jesus Christ alone which bestows this gift upon them; and the chaste and continent lives they lead is a manifest proof of the interposition of God, and of his Divine approbation of the conduct of the church, in requiring the faithful observance of this virtue from her ministers.

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

A. Nothing is more unjust than the conduct of mankind on this head. That there, have been, and, as long as men are men, will be examples of bad men among the clergy, is readily granted, because but too true. There was a Judas among the twelve apostles of Christ; there was a Nicolaus among the seven deacons ordained by the apostles themselves; there was an Ananias and Sapphira among the first Christians; there was an incestuous man among the disciples of St. Paul in Corinth; no wonder, then, that among such great numbers as enter into the ministry of the church, some should be found who are a scandal to their sacred character. But surely nothing can be more unjust and unreasonable than to condemn that state of life, because some of its members do not live up to the sanctity of it, or attribute to the whole what is only the fault of a few, yet such is the judgment of the world. A few who perhaps embrace that state, not by a call from God, but from worldly motives, or who have lost the spirit of their vocation by not corresponding to the helps that vocation afforded them, on that account give bad examples, and public scandal; immediately all consideration of the great numbers of others who lead the most edifying and exemplary lives, is laid aside; the tongues of men are let loose against the sacred state itself, and all its members are indiscriminately involved in the same condemnation! But we need not be surprised at this, because our blessed Master himself says to his apostles, and in them to all

their successors, "If the world hate you, know ye that it hath hated me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you," John xv. 18.

CHAPTER XXVII.

OF THE SACRAMENT OF MARRIAGE.

Q. 1. WHAT is marriage or matrimony?

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

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

(2.) As a *civil contract*; for, upon the multiplication of mankind on the earth, they formed themselves into larger societies, of many families joined in one body, for their mutual protection and defence, and for securing to individuals the undisturbed possession of their property. For this purpose, it was necessary to make proper laws and regulations by which this security might be obtained. And as nothing contributes more to the good of the state, and the public tranquillity, than to have the natural contract of marriage properly regulated, with regard to the temporal goods and privileges, both of the married couple themselves, and of their children, proper laws were made by the different states for settling these matters. In this view,

marriage is a *civil contract*, made according to the laws of the country where the parties dwell, with regard to their temporal concerns, as members of the community.

(3.) As a *sacrament of the new law*. The great end of the Christian religion is to lead men to heaven, which presupposes the existence of men upon earth; and, as marriage is the natural source from which mankind draw their being upon earth, it was necessary that such measures should be taken with respect to marriage among Christians, as to make it conducive to that great end of the Christian religion, the salvation of souls. The trials and afflictions which accompany the married state, "and that tribulation of the flesh," which St. Paul declares shall be the portion of married people, 1 Cor. vii. 28, are too often, from the corruption of the heart of man, an occasion of the ruin of their souls; the difficulty of avoiding this ruin is not a little increased from the indissolubility of marriage, which our blessed Saviour restored to its original firmness among his followers; and the necessity of bringing up their children not only as men or as good citizens, but as good Christians, so as one day to become saints in heaven, which Jesus Christ requires, in the strictest manner, of all his followers, lays an additional duty upon Christian parents, which requires a particular grace and assistance from heaven to enable them to perform. For these reasons, our blessed Saviour was pleased to elevate the natural contract of marriage to a dignity of a sacrament among Christians, so as to annex a particular grace to the lawful celebration of this contract, by which the married people are enabled to bear, in a Christian manner, all the tribulations incident to that state, to preserve a mutual love and fidelity to one another, as the indissolubility of the bond of marriage requires, and to bring up their children in a Christian manner.

Q. 2 Is the marriage of a Christian a true sacrament?

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

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

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

Q. 4. What is the inward grace received?

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

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

A. When the Pharisees put the question to our Saviour, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause?" he declared in his answer, that marriage, at the beginning, was instituted by God himself; and though, from the hardness of their heart, it had very much declined from its original sanctity, he then restored it to its primitive state, by saying, wherefore they "are no more two but one flesh; what, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," Matt. xix. 6. And St. Paul, repeating the same truth, adds, "this is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the church," Eph. v. 32. In which words he shows, that, in the church of Christ, marriage is a great sacrament; and not only a sign of the union and love which is required among Christians in that state, but also of the union and love which subsists inviolably betwixt Christ and his church.

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

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

Q. 7. Is this bond of marriage indissoluble?

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

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

A. This appears manifest whether marriage be considered as a natural contract, as a civil contract, or as a sacrament. The nature and end of marriage, as a natural contract, is (1.) To be the means ordained by nature itself, for the propagation of man-

kind, and the proper education of the children. (2.) That the married people, united in this bond, may be a mutual help and comfort to one another during their mortal pilgrimage. Thus God himself declared at the beginning "It is not good for man to be alone, let us make him a help like unto himself," Gen. ii. 18, and with this intention the woman was created. Now, it is manifest, that, on both these accounts, the nature of marriage requires that its bonds be indissoluble; for man differs from all other creatures when he first comes into the world in this, that, whereas other animals require very little attention from the sire, the mother alone, for the most part, being sufficient to nurture them up till they can do for themselves, and that in a very short time; man, on the contrary, in his infancy, requires the whole attention of both father and mother; of the mother to tend and nurse him, and of the father to provide all necessaries both for mother and child. This necessity continues in different degrees, for a series of years, before the child can do anything for his own sustenance; and when reason begins to dawn, the child then requires the redoubled attention of both parents for educating him properly, whether as a man, a citizen, or a Christian. Now, if the bond of marriage could be dissolved, and it were in any case lawful for married people to become free, the passions of men would never be at a loss to put or suppose themselves in that case; and then a door would be opened, not only to the destruction of children both as to their subsistence and education, but likewise to debaucheries, and an universal corruption of manners, that must be of infinite prejudice to the multiplication of mankind, which is the end of marriage. Besides, what kind of solid comfort could the married people have in each other, if their marriage was not indissoluble. It is this indissolubility of marriage which makes the parties enter with all their heart into the views of their mutual interest. It is this which invincibly fixes their affections on their common concerns. It is this which gives a permanency to their love for one another. In a word, this indissolubility of marriage is the greatest incentive to make them bear their crosses, and put up with any thing disagreeable in each other's tempers, and carefully to avoid giving any just handle of discontent to one another. They are joined together for better and for worse, they are married, and can no more be separated while life remains; therefore they must make the best of it they can, and content themselves. But, on the contrary, if the bond of marriage were dissoluble, it would at the bottom differ nothing from

the state of concubinage, and be attended with all its bad consequences.

If next we consider marriage as a civil contract, its indissolubility is no less manifest; for the good and happiness of the state being the end of marriage as a civil contract, this end could not be procured if the bond of marriage was dissoluble; because children abandoned and neglected, endless dissensions in families, and confusion about the division of their property, being the natural consequences of the dissolubility of marriage, must necessarily be a source of great misery to human society.

Lastly, The indissolubility of marriage, considered as a sacrament, appears from the idea the scriptures give us of it in this view. For the sacrament of marriage among Christians is, by appointment of Jesus Christ, a sacred sign and symbol of his indissoluble union with his church; and on this account, St. Paul insists upon this as the most powerful motive to engage the married people to love one another; because as the bond of their marriage union is a symbol of the union of Christ with his church, they ought, therefore, to imitate the conduct of Jesus Christ and his church, in their behaviour to each other. "The husband," says he, "is head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the church; therefore, as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their husbands in all things. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved his church.....So ought also men to love their wives, as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife, loveth himself; for no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones: for this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall stick to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in his church," Eph. v. 23. Now all this reasoning of the apostle would fall to the ground, and have no effect, if marriage, as a sacrament, did not necessarily require to be indissoluble; as the sacred union between Christ and his church, of which Christian marriage is the symbol, can never be dissolved. All this is further confirmed, from the idea the scripture gives us of the nature of marriage; for there we are assured, that married people are "no longer two but one flesh"; and this the Holy Ghost declared at the beginning by the mouth of Adam. It is repeated again by Christ as the grounds of the indissolubility of marriage, and is used by St. Paul for the same purpose, who also declares, that husbands ought "to love their

wives as their own bodies," that in "loving his wife, he loves himself, and cannot hate her without hating his own flesh." All which manifestly shows the indissolubility of marriage from its nature, and from the identity which it produces among married people, making them one flesh.

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

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

(2.) Jesus Christ being to raise the contract of marriage to the dignity of a sacrament among his followers, in order to enable them to perform the more sublime and exalted duties which his holy religion required from married people, and to ordain it as a sign of his indissoluble union with his church, was pleased to abrogate all permission given to the Jews of dissolving marriages, and of marrying others while their former partners were alive, and positively pronounces this law, "what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder," Matt. xix. 6. After his public conversation with the Pharisees on this subject, "In the house again, his disciples asked him concerning the same thing, and he said to them," in these general and unlimited terms, "Whosoever shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth

adultery," verse 10. Which evidently shows, that, by the law of the gospel, the bond of marriage can never be dissolved, but that married people, *whosoever they be*, though they may live separate from one another's company, yet can never be loosed from the marriage tie ; and that if either party so separated from the other, should presume to marry another person whilst the former partner is in life, it would be no marriage at all before God, but the state of damnable adultery. The same law is more particularly repeated by our Saviour on a distinct occasion, where, after the parable of the unjust steward, and before he began the history of Lazarus and the rich glutton, he interposes this declaration : " Every one that putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery : and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery," Luke xvi. 18. Here we see none are excepted, *every one* includes all universally ; and both parties are in the same case ; not only he who puts away his wife and marries another, but also he who marries her who is put away, are equally guilty of adultery : which shows to a demonstration, that, in whatever case the separation is made, the bond of marriage still continues undissolved, so that neither party can marry any other without being guilty of that horrid crime. On this clear text St. Augustine writes thus, " Who are we, then, that we should say, one is guilty of adultery who puts away his wife and marries another ; and another who does the same is not guilty of adultery ? for seeing the gospel says, *every one* commits adultery who does this, (and consequently *all* who do it,) that is, who putting away his wife marries another, is guilty of adultery ; without doubt both are included, both he who, for any other cause besides fornication, puts away his wife, and he who puts her away for the cause of fornication," &c. *Lib. 1 De adult. conjug. cap. 9.*

(3.) St. Paul, who is doubtless the most infallible interpreter of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, declares the indissolubility of marriage in the strongest terms, " The woman that hath a husband," says he, " whilst her husband liveth, is bound to the law ; but if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. Wherefore whilst her husband liveth, she shall be called an adulteress, if she be with another man ; but if her husband be dead, she is freed from the law of her husband ; so that she is not an adulteress, if she be with another man," Rom. vii. 2. See in what express and general terms without any exception, he declares, that death alone can dissolve the bond of

marriage, so as to make it lawful for a married person to marry any other. In the same manner he declares this to be an express command of God himself, "but to them that are married," says he, "not I, but the Lord commandeth, that the wife depart not from her husband; and if she depart that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife," 1 Cor. vii. 10. And a little after he concludes, "a woman is bound by the law, as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband die, she is at liberty; let her marry to whom she will, only in the Lord," verse 39. Now what he here lays down, with regard to the wife, is equally binding with regard to the husband, both because the contract is mutual, and the bond of marriage the same in both; and because the apostle affirms, that if "the wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; so, in like manner, the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife," 1 Cor. vii. 4.

(4.) Now that the indissolubility of the bond of marriage is the true and genuine interpretation of all the above testimonies of holy writ, and that this is the true sense and meaning of them intended by the Holy Ghost, always has been, and is the doctrine of the church of Christ, as is designed and declared by her in the great and general Council of Trent, which, laying down the Catholic doctrine concerning marriage, begins with this very point, in these words: "The first father of mankind, declared the perpetual and indissoluble tie of marriage, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, when he said, *this now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; wherefore a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall adhere to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh*," Sess. xxiv. *in princip.*, and afterwards declares, that this always was and is taught by the Church of Christ, according to the doctrine of the gospel and the apostles; and, therefore, pronounces *anathema* upon all those who shall say she is mistaken in teaching so: "If any one shall say that the church is mistaken, in having taught and in teaching, according to the evangelical and apostolical doctrine, that the bond of marriage cannot be dissolved by the adultery of either of the parties, and that both, or even the innocent party, who gives no cause to the adultery, cannot contract another marriage whilst the other party is alive, and that he is guilty of adultery, who putting away the adulteress, marries another, as is also she who, leaving the adulterer, marries another, let him be anathema," Sess. xxiv. *can.* 7. Here we see the infallible authority of the church of Christ declaring the indissolubility of marriage to be the evan-

gelical and apostolical interpretation of all the above texts of scripture, and condemning all those who teach the contrary.

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

A. In answer to this, we must observe, (1.) That St. Mark, when relating what passed on this occasion, makes no mention of this exception, but tells us, that our Saviour, when in the house with his apostles, declared to them, in general terms, that, "whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her," Mark x. 11. Which clearly shows, that the exception mentioned by St. Matthew, is not applicable to the husband's marrying again, but to the lawfulness of his putting away his wife for any cause but fornication only. (2.) That this text of St. Matthew is very obscure as it lies, and especially if not compared with the account given by St. Mark, which opens the door to the true sense of it; but all the other texts on this subject are clear, decisive, and without all exception, consequently, the true meaning of the Holy Ghost is not to be sought from the ambiguous expression of an obscure text, in opposition to so many plain texts, but its ambiguity is to be explained and its true sense ascertained by those other clear and express texts upon the subject. (3.) If it be supposed lawful for the husband to put away his wife on account of her fornication, and to marry again, as being the innocent party, then either the bond of marriage is dissolved, or it is not; if it be not dissolved, it can never be lawful, even for the innocent party to marry; if it be dissolved, then even the guilty party can lawfully marry, because no less free than the other, and yet our Saviour expressly says, "he that shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery," Matt. xix. 9; which manifestly shows, that even when she is put away for her guilt, the marriage tie remains in its full force. (4.) The church of Christ has never understood the above exception as implying a dissolution of the bond of marriage, even in the case of fornication, or as in any respect favouring the innocent party, and condemns in the strongest terms those who teach it does so.

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

A. All these reasons just mentioned demonstrate that it cannot mean that the bond of marriage is dissolved even by the crime of either of the parties, and consequently it makes nothing against the doctrine of the Catholic church. Its true meaning, then, is to be sought for from the circumstances in which Christ spoke it, and from the question to which it was the answer. The Pharisees asked our Saviour, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" Matt. xix. 3. Before he gives a direct answer to the question, he puts them in mind, that marriage at its original institution was indissoluble, and consequently could not be broken by any cause; he then declares, that he by his supreme authority, restores it to this its primitive perfection, and that the infringement made upon it by the Jews was only a permission on account of the hardness of their hearts; after this preamble, he gives a direct answer to their question, in these words, "I say to you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery." This sentence contains two parts, first, an answer to their question, secondly, a confirmation of what he said in his preamble of the absolute indissolubility of marriage, which he was pleased to join together, rather indeed, in obscure terms. Their question was, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" To this he answers, *No*; it is not lawful to put away his wife for any cause except for fornication; and he who puts her away "except for fornication, committeth adultery," by being the occasion of her committing adultery; but that none might think that when he puts her away for fornication the tie of marriage is broken, and the husband at liberty to marry another, he adds, that even when lawfully put away for fornication, if the husband "shall marry another, he committeth adultery"; and "he that shall marry her that is so put away committeth adultery also."

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

A. From these reasons, (1.) Because, as we have proved above, by this sentence, the marriage bond is by no means broken, even in the case of fornication; (2.) Because it follows from this, and we have also shown above, that the exception cannot fall upon the indissolubility of marriage; and, therefore, must fall upon the lawfulness of putting away the wife at all; and (3.) Because, in another place, our Saviour says, in express terms, "whosoever putteth away his wife, excepting for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery;

and whosoever shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery"; Matt. xix. 9. Where it is manifest, that, if the husband putteth away his wife for any other cause except fornication, he is deemed the cause of her future crime, because the cause for which he puts her away was not just; but, if he put her away for fornication, and she marry another, that other is guilty of adultery, by marrying another man's wife; but the husband is free of the guilt, because he had a just and lawful cause for putting her away.

Q. 13. What are the conditions which the laws of God and his church require for the lawful celebration of the sacrament of marriage?

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

SECTION I.—*Of the Proclamation of the Banns.*

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

A. It is that when two persons intend to marry, their intention be published from the altar by their pastors during Divine service, for three different Sundays or holidays; and that all who may know of any lawful impediment why the marriage should not take place, be called upon in the name of God to declare it.

Q. 15. For what reason is this publication required?

A. The Council of Trent gives this reason in general; because, "the church of God, for the most just reasons, has always detested and prohibited clandestine or private marriages; but seeing that these prohibitions, by reason of the disobedience of men, had not the desired effect, and considering the grievous sins which arise from clandestine marriages, therefore ordains, that for all time coming, before marriage be contracted, it be three times proclaimed, &c. Wherefore, the particular reasons for ordaining these publications, are chiefly these; (1.) To prevent all clandestine marriages, which the church has always had in abhorrence, on account of the fatal consequences that too often flow from them. (2.) That it may be discovered if any of the parties be otherwise engaged, by promise, or from any other cause. (3.) That, if there be any

lawful impediment to the marriage, it may be made known; and (4.) That the parents, and all others interested in opposing the marriage, may be advertised of it, and have time to propose their just objections, if they have any, and so prevent the fatal consequences which might otherwise ensue.

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

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

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

A. (1.) That they be made on three different Sundays or holidays; so that it is not sufficient to do them twice in one day, and much less to do them all three. (2.) That they be made public during divine service, when all the people are present; so that it will not suffice to do them at any other time. (3.) When the parties belong to different parishes, that the proclamations be made in both the parishes by the proper pastor of each party. (4.) That a particular caution be used with those who travel about from place to place, and have no settled habitation, and no priest be allowed to marry them till the most diligent inquiry be made, lest they should have a wife or husband in other places, which is too often the case with such people.

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

A. Yes, it can. The Council considering that there may be cases wherein it may be necessary to dispense with some or all of the proclamations, gives power to *bishops only* to grant such

dispensation, when they shall see a just and necessary cause for doing so; particularly if there be danger that malicious people would oppose the marriage, and create disturbance, without having any just cause for doing it, as the Council itself expressly observes; and also when any great and spiritual or even temporal good of the parties require it.

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

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

SECTION II.—*Of the Consent of Parents.*

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

A. For several strong and weighty reasons. (1.) On account of the respect and obedience which children owe to their parents by the law of nature, and the honour which is due to them by the express law of God; all which demands, that, in an affair of so great consequence to the future happiness both of the children and the parents, nothing should be concluded, without their concurrence. (2.) Experience shows, that marriages made against the parents' will, for the most part, prove unfortunate; the disturbance of families, dissensions between husband and wife, the bad education of the children, are commonly the fatal consequences of such marriages; and no wonder. The insult done to the paternal authority, and the motives from whence such marriages flow, which generally are unbridled passions, and sometimes criminal intrigues, banish the Spirit of God from them, and deprive them of his blessing. (3.) Among the people of God, in the old law, the parents had the principal authority in marrying their children; and hence, when Almighty God speaks to them on this subject, he addresses himself only to the parents. Thus, when he forbids them to marry with infidel nations, he says, "Thou shalt not give thy daughter to his son, nor take his daughter for thy son," Deut. vii. 3. And the wise man speaks thus: "Marry thy daughter well, and thou shalt do a great work, and give her to a wise man," Ecclus. vii. 27. On this account, we find that the servants of God exactly follow this rule of marrying with the advice and consent of their parents; as we read of Isaac and Jacob, and Samson; and Esau is blamed, and displeased his

parents for doing the contrary. (4.) The church of Christ, in the Council of Trent, declares, that she always did detest and prohibit marriages of this kind; Sess. xxiv. Decr. de Matrim. c. 1. (5.) The civil laws, also of different states, highly disapprove of such marriages; and if the children who marry without the consent of their parents be minors, their marriage is, by the laws of France, declared illegal, and they are deprived of many civil advantages on that account, with regard to their portions, and other temporal conventions between them.

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

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

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

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

SECTION III.—*Of the Presence of the Pastor and Witnesses.*

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

A. The church, in the Council of Trent, considering the great evils that flow from clandestine marriages, and finding, by experience, that the repeated laws made against them had not been sufficient effectually to prevent them, made a solemn decree, by which it is ordained, not only that the proclamations of the banns should be made before marriage, as we have seen above, but also that the marriage itself should be made in presence of the proper pastor of the parties, or one commissioned by him, and at least two witnesses; and it is also declared, that where this is wanting, the marriage is null and void, and in the

sight of God, no marriage at all. In consequence of this, in all Catholic countries where this decree has been solemnly published, no marriage can be contracted but in presence of the proper pastor, or one commissioned by him. In all other places, where the decree has not been published, it is highly unlawful and criminal to be married by any other but the proper pastor, as being so entirely opposite to the spirit and desire of the church, and to her repeated prohibition of clandestine marriages.¹

Q. 24. What is the proper pastor?

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

SECTION IV.—*Of the Impediments of Marriage.*

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

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

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

A. There are two kinds: (1.) Such as render the marriage null and void, and no marriage at all in the sight of God, and of his church; and (2.) Such as render the marriage unlawful, and criminal in those who contract it, though valid in itself.

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

A. The impediments which render marriage null, by making the parties in whom they are found incapable of contracting marriage, are chiefly these following: (1.) The solemn vow of

¹ The new decree "*ne Temere*," August 1907, alters considerably the church's discipline on this point.—ED.

chastity, which all those make who enter into any religious order, by which they are solemnly consecrated to God in that state, in the face of the church, and, therefore, become incapable of contracting marriage; and the same is the case with those who enter into holy orders, and are thereby solemnly dedicated in the face of the church, to the service of God at his holy altar. (2.) Consanguinity, when the parties are within the prohibited degrees of kindred, of which see above, Chap. xv. Q. 56, and the following. (3.) The crime of adultery, with a mutual promise of marriage, in case the innocent party should die. It is with great reason that persons who are guilty of this crime should be rendered incapable of ever contracting marriage together, in order to prevent numbers of crimes which might otherwise follow; particularly the murder of the innocent party, whom either or both of the adulterers might be pushed on by their passion to put by death, in order to marry one another, were they not by this impediment rendered incapable of marriage; and if either one or both of them should be so infatuated as to procure the death of the innocent party, this would render them still more incapable of marrying together. (4.) If either of the parties be already married, and their partner alive, this renders them absolutely incapable of marrying any other, as nature itself dictates.

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

A. Impediments of this kind are such as do not annul the marriage, nor hinder it from being a true and valid marriage, but make it a very great crime in those who contract marriage with these impediments. The chief impediment of this kind are these: (1.) When a person is under a mutual promise of marriage to one; in this case it would be unlawful in him, and a great sin, to marry another, because it would be a manifest injury done to the person to whom he was under promise of marriage. (2.) When a person binds himself to God by a simple, private vow of chastity, it would be a manifest crime in him to marry, because a breach of the promise made to God. (3.) If one should marry publicly in Advent or Lent, when the church, for most just reasons, forbids the solemnizing of marriage, it would be a grievous sin of disobedience to her commands, a prostitution of these holy times set apart for penance and humiliation, and an occasion of great scandal. See above, Chap. xv. Q. 53.

SECTION V.—*Of the Dispositions for receiving worthily the Sacrament of Marriage.*

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

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

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

A. There is nothing of more importance than this is, though, alas! it is but seldom minded as it ought; yet our holy faith assures us that a good wife (and the same is to be said of a good husband) is, in a particular manner, the gift of God; “a house and riches,” says the wise man, “are given by parents, but a prudent wife is properly from the Lord,” Prov. xix. 14; also, “he that hath found a good wife hath found a good thing, and shall receive a pleasure from the Lord,” Prov. xviii. 22. This the holy patriarch Abraham was very sensible of; for, when he sent his principal servant to his own country to take a wife from among his kindred for his son Isaac, and the servant proposed some difficulties that might occur, Abraham answered him, “The Lord in whose sight I walk, will send his angel with thee, and will direct thy way, and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my own kindred,” Gen. xxiv. 40. And the happy effects of the presence of Jesus Christ at the marriage of Cana, are recorded to show us how great a blessing he brings to those marriages which he favours. Now the way to obtain his favour and direction is, (1.) Fervent and frequent prayer; thus Abraham’s servant when he arrived at his master’s country, in which he was an entire stranger, and knew not whom to apply to, began by a most earnest prayer to God for his direction, and everything succeeded with him according to his wish, Gen. xxiv. 12. Sarah also had recourse to the same means of finding the favour of God with regard to a husband, and found it effectually to her great consolation, Tob. iii. (2.) To consult with parents, and other pious friends, and not to be hurried on by passion. This we have seen above is what God himself requires to be done, and, therefore, he will not fail to give his blessing to those that do it. (3.) To be diligent in all the

duties of a good life, which the scripture assures us is an effectual means to obtain a good wife from God; "A good wife is a good portion, she shall be given in the portion of them that fear God, to a man for his good deeds," Ecclus. xxvi. 3. But, oh! how miserably deceived are those who expect this happiness by using means which are offensive to God! so far are such means from obtaining this blessing, that the word of God declares, "All malice is short to the malice of a woman, let the lot of sinners fall upon her," Ecclus. xxv. 26.

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

A. Surely those above all things which Almighty God had in the institution of marriage. Consequently not to gratify his ambition or avarice, and still less to gratify his carnal desires; such views as these can never be a means of procuring the benediction of heaven. Wherefore, the intention of Christians in marrying ought to be, (1.) That they may be a mutual help to one another; "It is not good," said God, when he instituted marriage, "for man to be alone; let us make him a help like to himself," Gen. ii.; to assist him in the government of his family, in the management of his temporal affairs, in the good education of his children, in bearing the pains, cares, and toils of this mortal life, in coming honestly through the world, and in securing a happy eternity. (2.) For the procreation of children; not so much that they may inherit the temporal riches of their parents, as that they may be brought up in the fear of God, increase the number of his faithful servants, and become one day glorious saints in heaven. This is certainly a point of the greatest consequence, and the neglect of attending to it properly is, doubtless, one great cause of unhappy marriages, while people seek more to gratify their brutal lusts than the honour and glory of the God that made them. But let us hear the scripture on this head: When the angel Raphael counselled Tobias to marry the virtuous Sarah, Tobias said, "I hear that she hath been given to seven husbands, and they all died; moreover I have heard that a devil killed them. Now I am afraid, lest the same thing should happen to me also." To this the angel replied, "Hear me, and I will show thee who they are over whom the devil can prevail; for they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lusts, as the horse and the mule, which have no understanding, over them the devil hath power. But thou,

when thou shalt take her, go into the chamber, and, for three days, keep thyself continent from her, and give thyself to nothing else but to prayers with her:.....and when the third night is past thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for the love of children, than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayest obtain a blessing of children," Tob. vi. These advices Tobias and Sarah faithfully followed, and the devil had no power to hurt them, but their marriage was exceeding happy in every respect. (3.) For a remedy against incontinency; hence St. Paul says, "for fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband"; for though he declares "to the unmarried and to widows, it is good for them if they so continue, even as I"; yet he immediately adds, "but if they do not contain, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to be burnt," 1 Cor. vii. 2, 8; to show that marriage is also intended as a remedy for those who are free to choose, and have not the gift of continency. On the same grounds, he says again, "I will, therefore, that the younger should marry, bear children, be mistresses of families, give no occasion to the adversary to speak evil," 1 Tim. v. 14; that is, by marriage, to prevent the scandal which might otherwise be given by their ill behaviour, and the ruin of their own souls, which some had already fallen into; "for some," says he, "are already turned aside after Satan," verse 15. Chastity is certainly a most sublime virtue, and to live a single life of chastity is, without all doubt, a more perfect and more excellent state than that of marriage, as we have seen above, Chap. xxvi. Q. 16; but then, as the virtue of continency is a particular gift of God, which all do not receive, if a person who is free from any obligation of living a single life, find that he has not received this gift, and, knowing his weakness, be afraid of himself; he may lawfully and laudably have recourse to marriage, to preserve himself from the danger of ruining his soul, to which that weakness might otherwise expose him.

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

A. There is nothing of more importance than this point for the happiness of the married state; though there is, perhaps, nothing less attended to by the generality of those who enter into it. To be of a good family, to have plenty of riches, to be beautiful and handsome, and the like, are, generally, the only considerations which influence people now-a-days in this choice:

but how impossible it is for these qualities alone to render them happy in one another, daily and fatal experience shows. A marriage contracted from no other motives, can scarce be called a Christian marriage, seeing the heathens themselves can have no other motives, than such as these in determining their choice. When these are made use of only as secondary motives, to decide in favour of those in whom more Christian and more essential qualities concur, they are, no doubt, very laudable; but, to be determined by them alone, where other things are wanting, is certainly to expose one's self to the greatest danger of misery. Wherefore a Christian, who wishes to make a Christian choice, ought, in the first place, and above all other considerations, to fix upon a person who is, (1.) *Of his own religion*; and (2.) *a virtuous Christian*.

First, that he choose one of his own religion, is of the utmost consequence, for several reasons: (1.) *On account of his own salvation*; this is manifest from the testimony of God himself; for when he introduced his people into the Holy Land, he laid the strongest injunctions upon them never to marry with the people of that country, who were of a false religion, otherwise they would certainly be seduced by them, and ruin their own souls. "Neither shalt thou make marriages with them," says Almighty God, "thou shalt not give thy daughter to his son, nor take his daughter for thy son; for she will turn away thy son from following me, that he may serve strange gods; and the wrath of the Lord shall be kindled, and will quickly destroy thee," Deut. vii. 2. And again he says, "Neither shalt thou take of their daughters a wife for thy son, lest after they themselves have committed fornication, they make thy sons also to commit fornication with their gods," Ex. xxxiv. 16. In this last text he mentions only the fear and danger of being seduced from his true religion; but in the former text, he absolutely affirms, that they "will be seduced" by such marriages; "for she will turn away thy son from following me." And in fact we find that this was actually the case; for, after the death of Josue, the scripture declares, that "the children of Israel dwelt in the midst of the Chanaanites, &c., and they took their daughters to wives, and they gave their own daughters to their sons, and they served their gods and they did evil in the sight of the Lord, and they forgot their God," Judg. iii. 6; which was a source of infinite miseries to their whole nation. It is laid to the charge of King Achab, as the height of his crimes, that he married a woman of a false religion, by whom he was also still

more perverted. Thus "Achab did evil in the sight of the Lord, above all that were before him. Nor was it enough for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nabat; but he also took to wife Jesabel, daughter of Ethbaal, the king of the Sidonians; and he went and served Baal and adored him," 3 Kings xvi. 30. Even Solomon himself was ruined by this very means, which brought the greatest miseries both upon his family and the kingdom; for "Solomon loved many strange women.....of the nations concerning which the Lord said to the children of Israel, You shall not go into them, neither shall any of them come into yours; for they will MOST CERTAINLY turn away your hearts to follow their gods.....And when he was now old, his heart was turned away by women to follow strange gods; and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God.....And the Lord was angry with Solomon; because his mind was turned away from the Lord the God of Israel," 3 Kings xi. 1. After such express declarations of Almighty God, and such striking examples, who shall dare to trust himself, or expose himself to such dangers? And does not daily experience, in numberless instances, confirm the truth of all this? All the strong injunctions laid upon Christians in the New Testament, to avoid all dangerous communications with those of a false religion, import the same obligation of not entering into marriage with them; and although, in certain circumstances, the church finds it necessary to overlook such connexions to prevent greater evils; yet she has always declared her entire disapprobation of them, well knowing the fatal seduction that too often flows from them, from experience itself. The same experience also shows, that, even where there is not an entire seduction from such marriages, yet they seldom fail to occasion in those who contract them, a coldness towards their religion, a neglect of the duties of a good Christian, a weakening of their faith, and other such fatal effects, which are most hurtful and pernicious to the soul.

(2.) *On account of the children*: for, when one of the parents professes a false religion, what is to become of the children? how are they to be brought up in the true religion of Jesus Christ? Sometimes, indeed, the zeal and fervour of the believing parents does a great deal in this matter; but how often do we find, from experience, that the quite contrary happens? And, if the faithful parent die when the children are young, they are then lost entirely; and, if this should not be the case, yet what is to be expected from children, who hear one thing from one parent, and the contrary from the other? who see what the one

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

(3.) *On account of their own peace and happiness*; for when the parties are of different religions, the one of the true religion, and the other of a false one, what a source of dissension and disturbances does this become? How often do they contend about the children? How often are calumnies and slanders against the true religion thrown out by the other party? How many gibes and sneers against their religion is the believing party often exposed to hear? What difficulty do they find in observing the rules and practices of their religion? And, though nothing of all this happens, what a heartfelt affliction must it be to them, if they have any sincere sense of eternity, to see the person, whom, by the laws of God and nature, they are bound to love above any other creature, living in a way so dangerous and ruinous to their souls? and how must this affliction be increased, if they see their dear children, whether

they will or not, brought up in the same way ? besides numbers of other trials which attend such connexions, but which the world never hears of.

Secondly, that he choose one who is also a good Christian, and a virtuous woman, is no less necessary, both for his own salvation, the good of his children, and their mutual happiness, than that she be of his own religion. Family, and riches, and beauty, are but feeble helps to happiness, if the temper be bad, the humour extravagant, and the passions violent. The word of God declares, that it is "better to sit in the corner of the house top, than with a brawling woman"; yea, "that it is better to dwell in a wilderness, than with a quarrelsome and passionate woman," Prov. xxi. 9, 19. And on the contrary, how great a blessing it is to have a virtuous and good wife, the same sacred oracle declares in these words: "He that hath found a good wife, hath found a good thing, and shall receive a pleasure from the Lord"; Prov. xviii. 22. "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised," Prov. xxxi. 30. "Depart not from a good and wise wife, whom thou hast gotten in the fear of the Lord; for the grace of her modesty is above gold," Ecclus. vii. 21. "Blessed is he that dwelleth with a wise woman," Ecclus. xxv. 11. "Happy is the husband of a good wife; for the number of his days is double. A virtuous woman rejoiceth her husband, and shall fulfil the years of his life in peace. A good wife is a good portion, she shall be given in the portion of them that fear God, to a man for his good deeds. Rich or poor, if his heart is good, his countenance shall be cheerful at all times.....the grace of a diligent woman shall delight her husband, and shall fat his bones; her discipline is the gift of God. Such is a wise and silent woman; and there is nothing so much worth as a well instructed soul. A holy and shamefaced woman is grace upon grace. As the sun when it riseth to the world in the high places of God; so is the beauty of a good wife for the ornament of her house," Ecclus. xxvi. All which is equally to be understood of a pious and virtuous husband.

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

A. Besides what is above, they ought (1.) to be instructed in the nature and obligations which the law of God has annexed to that state, and be resolved faithfully to discharge them. (2.) To be sufficiently instructed in the Christian doctrine, according to their capacity, without which they are not in a

condition to receive that sacrament worthily. (3.) To be in the state of grace, and in friendship with God; otherwise, by profaning the sacrament, if they receive it in the state of sin, they will bring a malediction upon their marriage, instead of a blessing. (4.) To endeavour, by works of charity and mercy, and by approaching worthily the holy sacraments of confession and communion, to procure the favour of God, and the presence of Jesus Christ to their marriage, that he may bless it, as he did that of Cana of Galilee.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

OF THE CHURCH TRIUMPHANT.

Q. 1. WHAT is meant by the Church Triumphant?

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

saints of God triumphing in heaven, in the possession of eternal glory. We have already seen what our holy religion teaches us concerning the two first states: it remains only to consider this third.

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

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

SECTION I.—*Of the State and Prerogatives of the Saints in Heaven.*

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

A. (1.) From the following clear testimonies of holy scripture. "We know," says St. Paul, "that, if our earthly house of this dwelling be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; for in this also we groan, desiring to be clothed over with our dwelling which is from heaven," 2 Cor. v. 1. Here the apostle declares, that when our earthly house, our body, is dissolved by death, we have a dwelling prepared for us in heaven; and that he groans to be clothed with that heavenly dwelling; and therefore, a little after he adds, "Therefore having always confidence, knowing, that, while we are in the body, we are absent from the Lord, (for we walk by faith and not by sight), we are confident, I say, and have a good will to be absent rather from the body, and to be present with the Lord," verse 6, which demonstrates that the beatitude of the saints is not deferred till the resurrection; but that, in the mean time, and whilst they are "absent from the body," their blessed souls are "present with the Lord." Again, in his epistle to the Philippians, he says, "To me to live is Christ; and to die is gain; and, if to live in the flesh, this is to me the fruit of labour, and what I shall choose I know not. But I am straitened between two, having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, a thing by far the better; but to abide still in the flesh is needful for you," Phil. i. 21. This needs no application; it speaks to the point itself. He is straitened whether he shall choose to live a while longer, and labour for the good of souls, or to be dissolved and go to enjoy Christ, which is by far the better. Moreover, St. John

actually saw great multitudes of saints and martyrs in heaven, in company with the Lamb, adoring him, and saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; because thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us to our God a kingdom, and priests," Rev. v. 9; and of the holy virgins he also saw great numbers "who follow the Lamb wherever he goes, and have his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads; and these," says he, "were purchased from among men, the first fruits to God and to the Lamb," Rev. xiv. 1. (2.) From the constant belief and tradition of the church of Christ. (3.) From this reason, founded on what Christ himself declared, to wit, God is certainly much more inclined and desirous to do good to his creatures, than to afflict them. To do good to his creatures is his first and principal desire; to afflict them, is a force upon his goodness, which their sins demand from his justice. Now Christ assures us, that when the wicked die, their souls are immediately condemned to hell, as we see in the rich glutton in the gospel. If, therefore, the justice of God alone immediately inflicts punishment upon sinners at their death, much more will his goodness and justice, combined together, immediately reward his holy saints, when they leave this world, by admitting their souls into eternal happiness.

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

A. Their exalted dignity, their happiness, and their employments.

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

A. That "they stand before the throne, and in the sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands," Rev. vii. 9; that "they shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father," Matt. xiii. 43; that they "are like the angels of God in heaven," Matt. xxii. 30; that they are so highly exalted as to become even like God himself; for "we know," says the beloved disciples, "that, when he shall appear, we shall be like to him, because we shall see him as he is," 1 John iii. 2; that the blessed company of the inhabitants of heaven is composed of an immense multitude of cherubim and seraphim, and holy angels, all on fire with Divine love; thus "thousands of thousands minister to him, and ten hundred times a hundred thousand stand before him," Dan. vii. 10; of an inconceivable number of holy martyrs, who having come out of great tribula-

tion, have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and serve him day and night in his temple," Rev. vii. 14; of numbers without numbers of other blessed souls, the patriarchs and prophets, the apostles of the Lamb, and his holy confessors, who, "having overcome, are clothed in white, and walk with him, because they are worthy," Rev. iii. 4; of the chaste spouses of Jesus Christ, "Who have not defiled their souls, but are virgins; in whose mouth there was found no lie, but are without spot before the throne of God," Rev. xiv. ; and, above all, the blessed Virgin Mother of God, the Queen of saints and angels, clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars," Rev. xii. 1, the symbol of her supereminent dignity above all the rest. Such is the splendour, magnificence and beauty of those heavenly inhabitants; they are all advanced to the highest dignity that can be conceived, even to a fellowship with the living God, and a partnership with Jesus Christ in his throne; for, "to him that shall overcome," says he, "I will give to sit with me in my throne," Rev. iii. 21.

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

A. That the place itself where they dwell is a most delightful place, "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; that in it the throne of God and the Lamb is placed, and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads, and night shall be no more, and they shall not need the light of the lamp, nor the light of the sun, for the Lord God shall enlighten them, and they shall reign for ever and ever," Rev. xxi. xxii. ; that "they shall no more hunger nor thirst, neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat, for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall lead them to the living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes," Rev. vii. 16; that "they are his people, and God himself with them shall be their God.....and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away," Rev. xxi. 3. "And they rest in him, for grace and peace is to his elect," Wis. iii. 9, that "the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come to Sion with praise; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and mourning shall fly away," Is. xxxv. 9; that all the riches of heaven shall be their own, those inestimable riches which "neither rust nor moth doth consume, nor thieves break

through to steal," Matt. vi. 20; for, "he that shall overcome, shall possess these things, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son," Rev. xxi. 7; "I am Alpha and Omega," says God himself, "the beginning and the end; to him that thirsteth, I will give of the fountain of the waters of life, cost free," Rev. xxi. 6; hence the royal prophet says, "O! how hast thou multiplied thy mercy, O God.....They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure; for in thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light we shall see light," Ps. xxxv. 8. But what, above every thing else, will fill their heart with joy unutterable, is the clear vision and enjoyment of God himself," "Blessed, *indeed*, are the clean of heart, for they shall see God," Matt. v. 8; "they shall see him face to face," 1 Cor. xiii. 12; and "God will be gracious to them, and they shall see his face with joy," Job xxxiii. 26; and "beholding the glory of the Lord with open face, they are transformed into the same image from glory to glory, by the spirit of the Lord," 2 Cor. iii. 18. By this they are intimately united with Jesus Christ, and partakers of his glory; for, "the glory which thou hast given me," says he to his eternal Father, "I have given them, that they may be one as we also are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.....Father, I will that where I am, they also whom thou hast given me may be, that they may see my glory which thou hast given me," John xvii. 22. And the immense happiness and joy which will result from this sight and union with God is thus expressed, "Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt fill me with joy with thy countenance, at thy right hand are delights even to the end," Ps. xv. 11; "O! how great is the multitude of thy sweetness, O Lord! which thou hast hidden from them that fear thee!" Ps. xxx. 20; "As the hart panteth after the fountains of waters, so my soul panteth after thee, my God; my soul hath thirsted after the strong, the living God; when shall I come and appear before the face of God?" Ps. xli. 1.

Q. 7. What account have we in scripture of their employments?

A. Their employments are perfectly consonant to the blissful state in which they dwell. Immersed in an ocean of inexhaustible delight, they are continually engaged in adoring and praising the author of their happiness, their hearts overflowing with joy unutterable, can never be satisfied in extolling and magnifying his holy name; for still they feel that "he exceeds

all their praise, and that his glory and magnificence is wonderful," Ecclus. xliii. 32. But their employments in particular are represented under these heads: (1.) As contemplating his infinite Majesty, his Almighty power, magnificence and grandeur, and rendering him the most profound homage and adoration on that account: "And behold there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne one sitting; and he that sat was, to the sight, like the jasper and the sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emeraldand from the throne there proceeded lightnings, and voices, and thunderings; and there were seven lamps burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.....and round about the throne were four living creatures, full of eyes before and behind.....and they rested not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come.....and the four and twenty ancients fell down before him that sitteth on the throne, and adored him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory, and honour, and power, because thou hast created all things, and for thy will they are and have been created," Rev. iv. "After this, I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne, and in the sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb. And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the ancients, and the four living creatures, and they fell down before the throne upon their faces, and adored God, saying, Benediction, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honour, and power, and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen," Rev. vii. 9.

(2.) As contemplating the incomprehensible work of our redemption, and full of charity for their brethren upon earth, and of zeal for their salvation, offering up their prayers to God, and rendering supreme homage and adoration to our great Deliverer. "And the four living creatures, and the four and twenty ancients fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints, and they sung a new canticle, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book, and open the seals thereof, because thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, in thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and

nation; and hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures, and the ancients, and the number of them were thousands and thousands, saying with a loud voice, The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength and honour, and glory, and benediction," Rev. v. 8. "And another angel came and stood before the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which is before the throne of God. And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel," Rev. viii. 3. On this account when the angel Raphael discovered himself to Tobias and his son, he said, "I discover then the truth unto you, and I will not hide the secret from you. When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner, and hide the dead by day in thy house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayers to the Lord," Tob. xii. 11.

(3.) At other times their delightful employment is, to contemplate the righteous judgment of the Almighty, to praise him for the rewards he bestows on his faithful servants, and for avenging them of their enemies, and to adore his tremendous justice for the just, though dreadful punishment, he inflicts on obstinate sinners; exhorting and encouraging one another to praise and adore him for his victories over them. "And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire, and them that had overcome the beast, and his image, and the number of his name standing on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, and singing the canticle of Moses, the servant of God, and the canticle of the Lamb, saying, Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, O King of Ages. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and magnify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all nations shall come, and shall adore in thy sight, because thy judgments are manifest," Rev. xv. 2; "And I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power, and the earth was enlightened with his glory, and he cried out with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every unclean spirit, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird.....Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath judged your judgment on her," Rev. xviii. 1, 20. "After these things, I heard, as it

were, the voice of many multitudes in heaven saying, Allelujah, salvation, and glory, and power, is to our God: for true and just are his judgments, who hath judged the great harlot which corrupted the earth with her fornications, and hath revenged the blood of his servants at her hands. And again, they said Allelujah, and her smoke ascendeth for ever and ever. And the four and twenty ancients, and the four living creatures, fell down and adored God that sitteth upon the throne, saying, Amen, Allelujah. And a voice came out from the throne, saying, Give praise to our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, great and little. And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of great thundering, saying, Allelujah; for the Lord our God, the Almighty hath reigned," Rev. xix. 1; "And there were great voices in heaven, saying, the Kingdom of the world is become our Lord's, and his Christ's, and he shall reign for ever, and ever, Amen.....We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, who art, and who wast, and who art to come, because thou hast taken thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath has come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst render reward to thy servants, the prophets, and to thy saints, and to them that fear thy name, little and great, and should destroy them that have corrupted the earth," Rev. xi. 15. Such is the description the holy scripture gives us of the glorious and delightful employments of the blessed inhabitants of heaven, where they live and rejoice for ever and ever!

SECTION II.—*Of our Communion with the Saints and Angels in Heaven.*

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

A. The communion of the saints, which we profess in the Creed to believe as a truth revealed by God, is not confined to the communication of prayers, and other good works, which the faithful upon earth have with one another; but also, and in a particular manner, it includes the communion which we have with our Christian brethren, who are departed out of this life in the faith and love of Jesus, whether they be as yet detained in purgatory, or are gone to enjoy God in his kingdom. The communion we have with those in purgatory we have seen above, Ch. xxiv. Q. 49; and it remains to explain here the communion

we have with the saints and angels in heaven. Now, the word *communion* signifies a mutual communication of good things, and the *communion of the saints* signifies a mutual communication of such good things as relate to our salvation. The saints in heaven are already perfectly happy, and secure of their own salvation, and the only good they can receive from us, is the pleasure of seeing us praise and glorify God on their account, and of our putting it in their power to contribute to our salvation; and on the other hand, the good we receive from them, is the help they procure to us by their holy prayers, to enable us to secure the great affair of our salvation, which they most earnestly desire. So that our communion with them consists, on our side, in our praising God for their happiness, paying them that honour and veneration which is due to their great dignity, as the friends and favourites of God, and begging a share in their holy prayers; and it consists, on their side, in their offering up our prayers to God and praying for us.

SECTION III.—*Of Honouring the Saints and Angels.*

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

A. The words *honour*, *veneration*, *worship*, *adoration*, and the like, all agree in this, that they suppose some dignity, excellency, or merit, in the person to whom they are given; they also suppose that we have an inward esteem, regard, and respect for the person, on account of the excellences we perceive in him. When, therefore, we know that a person possesses any dignity, excellency, or merit, and on that account, have a real esteem and regard for him in our heart, and when we testify this internal respect and esteem by such outward signs, whether in words or actions, as are expressive of that inward disposition of our heart towards him; this is what is meant by honour, veneration, worship, and adoration in the general meaning of these words, in which they all agree. There is, however, a difference among them in some particulars; for to *honour* one, signifies, properly to testify, by outward signs, the merits or excellency of the person whether he be our superior or inferior; thus a king honours a subject when he gives any mark of his royal favour. The other words, besides testifying our respect for the excellences of the person, imply at the same time, an acknowledgment of our own inferiority to him, at least with regard to those qualifications for which we

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

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

A. It is not only lawful, but it is a duty, as appears from several plain reasons; for, (1.) The word of God commands it, "render to all men their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, and honour to whom honour," Rom. xiii. 7. (2.) The very impulse of nature in a manner forces us to it; for no sooner do we perceive any virtuous excellency in another, than we immediately feel a respect and veneration arise in our hearts towards him, and a readiness and desire to testify the same outwardly, by our words and actions, when occasions of doing so occur. (3.) The feelings of the human heart demand it as a due; for, whenever a person is possessed of any dignity, or excellency above others, he expects, as a thing to which he is justly entitled, that others should honour him on that account, thus parents expect this from their children, masters from their servants, magistrates from their people, and kings from their subjects; and they would think themselves highly injured, if the respect due to them were denied them, or any disrespect shown them. Seeing, therefore, that the saints of God do possess so many high excellences above us, they are justly entitled to be honoured and respected by us on that account; and to refuse them all due veneration, and much more to disrespect and dishonour them, would doubtless be a very criminal action. Besides, (4.) The feelings of our heart show us that it is impossible for us to have a real love and respect for any person, without having,

at the same time, a similar love and respect for everything that is nearly connected with him : now, the saints and angels of God are most intimately connected with God, and with Jesus Christ ; they are his particular friends and favourites, intimately united with him in grace and glory, highly beloved and honoured by him. How then can we have a sincere love and respect for God, and for Jesus Christ, without having a proportionable love and respect for those who are so nearly connected with both ?

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

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

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

A. It does in many examples. Thus when the three angels appeared to Abraham, " as soon as he saw them, he ran to meet them from the door of his tent, and adored down to the ground," Gen. xviii. 2. When the two angels came to Sodom, " Lot seeing them, rose up and went to meet them, and worshipped prostrate to the ground," Gen. xix. 1. When Josue met the angel in the field, " he fell on his face to the ground, and worshipping said, What saith my Lord to his servant ?" Jos. v. 15. When Abdias met Elias the prophet, " he knew him, and

fell on his face, and said, "Art thou my Lord Elias?" 3 Kings xviii. 7. When the sons of the prophet saw Eliseus divide the waters of Jordan, "They said, the spirit of Elias hath rested on Eliseus, and coming to meet him, they worshipped him, falling to the ground," 4 Kings ii. 15. Even the heathen king Nabuchodonosor, when he saw how much Daniel was filled with the Spirit of God, by discovering to him his dream, and the interpretation of it, both acknowledged the God of Daniel to be the only true God, "and fell on his face and worshipped Daniel," Dan. ii. 46. So true it is, that even nature itself impels us to worship and venerate those whom we know, or believe to be friends of God and favourites of heaven.

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

A. This passage is much cried up, and a great stress laid upon it by the adversaries of the Catholic church, against what she teaches us on this head: which, however, they never would do, if they considered her doctrine with any degree of impartiality; for the adoration which St. John here offered the angel, either was divine worship, or it was not. If it was divine worship, then St. John was in a mistake, which could only arise from the glorious manner wherein the angel appeared to him, and which made the apostle take him for God or Jesus Christ himself; for we can never suppose that St. John would offer divine worship to an angel, knowing him to be an angel. The angel therefore, justly refused divine worship from the apostle, and informed him of his mistake, "See thou do it not," said he, for "I am, not God, but thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren." In this supposition, it is manifest, that this passage is nothing to the purpose against the doctrine of the church, which loudly condemns as most damnable idolatry the giving divine adoration to any creature in heaven or earth. If, on the other hand, the worship which St. John offered to this angel, was not divine worship, then it is evident, that his refusing to receive it, could not arise from his supposing it to be unlawful; because what was lawful in Abraham and Lot,

and Josue, to give to angels, and what was lawful in those angels to receive from them, could not be unlawful in St. John to give, or in the angel to receive from him: Neither can we suppose that St. John would a second time offer an unlawful worship to the angel, after having been already admonished of it.

It is manifest, then, that the worship which St. John offered to the angel (if it was not divine) was not unlawful. Why then did the angel refuse it? To this the answer is plain, from the very words of the angel, that he refused it out of humility, and out of his singular respect to St. John, whom he knew to be a prophet, an apostle, an evangelist, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, and a priest of the most High God. He knew he had been admitted to lie upon the breast of Jesus Christ, at the last supper; and therefore, would not permit him to lie now prostrate at his feet; but humbly said, "See thou do it not; for I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, who have the testimony of Jesus." And this is the only reason why he should refuse this outward testimony of respect from St. John, when other angels received the same from other holy men, but who were far inferior to St. John in dignity. Besides, from these last words of the angel there are very strong grounds to believe, that he was not one of the angelical spirits, but some of the prophets or other saints; or as some have, with great reason, supposed, St. John the Baptist, whom our Saviour calls a "prophet, and more than a prophet; for this is he," says Christ, "of whom it is written, Behold I send my angel before thy face," Matt. xi. 10. Here then we see that the Baptist is a prophet and an angel, and he in a particular manner, had the testimony of Jesus, being sent to prepare the way before him, and to point him out to the people; and, as the angel who appeared to St. John in the Revelations, said that he was "his fellow servant, and of his brethren the prophets, who have the testimony of Jesus," it is highly probable that he was St. John the Baptist; and, if so, no wonder he should, out of humility, refuse the worship offered him by the apostle, though otherwise in itself most lawful.

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

A. Was it idolatry, in David's nobles "to worship the king"? 1 Chron. xxix. 28; or, in Abraham, and Lot, and Josue to worship the angels? or in Abdias to worship Elias the prophet? or in the sons of the prophets to worship Eliseus? See above,

Q. 14. Or is it idolatry to acknowledge the dignity and excellences of those above us, and to pay them that outward respect and veneration to which they are justly entitled on that account ? To accuse of idolatry, the respect and veneration which the church of Christ pays to the saints and angels of God, can only arise from the most unpardonable ignorance, or the blackest malice and misrepresentation. The respect and veneration due to the saints and angels, far from being an injury to God, is an honour done to him ; because it is only for his sake it is given them, as a just tribute to the graces with which he has adorned them, and a fulfilling of the intentions of God himself, when he said “ Whosoever shall glorify me, him will I glorify,” 1 Kings ii. 30 ; and of our Saviour who declares, “ If any man minister to me, him will my Father honour,” John xii. 26.

SECTION IV.—*Of the Invocation of Saints and Angels.*

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

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

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

A. They certainly do, as appears from many testimonies of holy scripture. Thus (1.) We are told that “ Joram the son of Achab reigned over Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Josaphat, King of Juda,” 4 Kings iii. 1, that every year the king of Moab rebelled against Joram, verse 5, and Joram and Josaphat made an expedition against Moab, as is related in this chapter. Now, from the account there given, it is evident that Eliseus was then the prophet among the people ; and Elias is spoken of as no more among men ; from this it is plain, that Elias had been taken away in or before the eighteenth year of Josaphat king of Juda,” “ Josaphat reigned twenty-five years in Jerusalem,” 2 Paral. xx. 31, so that, at least, seven years of his reign passed after the translation of Elias, and “ Joram his son reigned in his stead,” 2 Paral. xxi. 1, in Jerusalem ; this Joram was a very bad king for “ he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Achab had done, for his wife was the daughter of Achab, and he did evil in the sight of the Lord,” 2 Paral. xxi. 6. After some time, a letter was brought

from Elias the prophet to him in which it was said, "Thus saith the Lord God of David, thy father, because thou hast not walked in the ways of Josaphat thy father.....behold the Lord will strike thee with great plague," &c., 2 Paral. xxi. 12. Here, then, we see, that Elias the prophet, more than seven years after he was taken out of this world, knew what was doing among his people, and showed the concern he took in their welfare, by writing this threatening letter to their wicked king. (2.) Our Saviour himself assures us, "that there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner's doing penance," Luke xv. 10. Now true penance is an interior act that passes in the heart itself, for the outward signs of it are of no value without the change of the heart, and may be performed even by hypocrites; the repentance, therefore, of a sinner is known to the angels of God, and the joy it gives them, shows the great concern they take for the good of souls. (3.) When the rich glutton, in hell, "besought Abraham to send Lazarus to his father's house, to testify to his five brethren, lest they should come to the same place of torments; Abraham said to him, They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.....and if they will not hear them, neither will they believe, if one rise again from the dead," Luke xvi. 27. Whence it is evident, that Abraham knew of Moses and the prophets, though they had been upon the earth several hundred years after his death; he knew also that their books were then extant, and that they were fully sufficient to convert the rich man's five brethren, as much as if Lazarus had risen from the dead and gone to warn them." (4.) Our Saviour says to St. John, "He that shall overcome and keep my works unto the end, I will give him power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, and as the vessel of a potter they shall be broken, as I also have received of my Father," Rev. ii. 26. And the saints about the throne, amidst the praises of their Redeemer, say, "Thou hast made us a kingdom to our God, and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth," Rev. v. 10. The Holy Ghost also, by the wise Man, says, "The just shall shine.....they shall judge nations, and rule over people, and their Lord shall reign for ever," Wisd. iii. 8. Consequently the saints must certainly know what passes upon earth among the nations, and must have a particular concern about them, otherwise how could they be said to reign over them, and rule them? And, indeed, (5.) if "the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," 1 Pet. v. 8, and "accuseth us before God day and night," Rev. xii. 10, and consequently knows well what is

doing upon the earth; how much more must the saints and angels know it, who enjoy the glory of the great God? Shall we deny a knowledge in them which the devils possess?

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

A. All the above testimonies of scripture show in fact that they do know it, which is the most certain proof that it is possible; but since God has not been pleased to reveal to man the manner in which they know our affairs, it would be presumption in us to search into it. How did the holy servants of God know the secrets of the hearts of others? how did the prophets know what was doing at a distance from them? how did they know what was to be done in after ages? That they did know those things is evident from scripture; but in what manner they knew them, or how it was possible for them to know them, God has not thought proper to discover. Surely it would be a childish argument to deny the fact, because we cannot comprehend the manner.

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

A. They certainly do; and this also is clearly declared in scripture. (1.) This is a natural consequence of their ardent love of God, and of their fervent charity. St. Paul assures us, that charity or the love of God, and of our neighbour for God's sake, never fails; faith and hope, and other such virtues, are swallowed up by the enjoyment of God in heaven, but this holy love is then only brought to its highest perfection: the blessed inhabitants of heaven, seeing the Divine Being in all the effulgence of his infinite beauty, are inflamed, to the highest degree, with love for him, and the most ardent desires that he should be loved and served by all his creatures; and, at the same time, sensible of the infinite happiness they enjoy in him, they are also inflamed with the most ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, and the most fervent desires, that all their brethren upon earth should come to enjoy the same happiness. Now, what are all these desires for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, but so many fervent prayers in the sight of God for our salvation? This, then, is their continual employment, to praise and adore God for all his glories, and for their own bliss, and to pour forth to him their most earnest prayers, that all their brethren upon earth may be brought to the same happiness. In fact, (2.) We have seen above, Q. 7, Number 2, that this

is one principal part of their employment in heaven, offering up the prayers of the saints upon earth, as a most agreeable sacrifice of incense in the sight of God. (3.) The Prophet Zacharias relates a fervent prayer that an angel made for the people of God, and for the city of Jerusalem, and that his prayer was graciously heard by God: "And the angel of the Lord answered and said, O Lord of hosts.....how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Juda, with which thou hast been angry? this is now the seventieth year. And the Lord answered the angel that spoke in me, good words, comfortable words," Zach. i. 12. (4.) In the celebrated dream which Judas Machabeus had first, "Onias who had been high priest.....holding up his hands, prayed for all the people of the Jews. After this there appeared also another man, admirable for age and glory, and environed with great beauty and majesty. Then Onias answering, said, This is a lover of his brethren and the people of Israel, this is he that prayeth much for the people, and for all the holy city, Jeremias the prophet of God," 2 Mach. xv. 12. Now, Onias and Jeremias had been dead long before, and as this happened some hundred years before Christ, it manifestly shows, that the people of God, even in the old law, firmly believed that the departed saints of God were solicitous for their brethren upon earth, and prayed for them. And, indeed, (5.) If the rich glutton, though in hell fire, was solicitous for his brethren, and prayed that they might not come to that place of torment; how much more must the saints and angels in heaven do the same?

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

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

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

A. There are these following: (1.) When Jacob wrestled with an angel, he prayed to that angel to bless him, and prayed so earnestly, that he said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me"; and the angel did bless him, and then said, "If thou hast been strong against God, how much more shalt thou prevail against men?" Gen. xxxii. 26. The angel says this, because he represented God; and shows the efficacy of Jacob's prayer. And the prophet Osee, speaking of this prayer of Jacob, says, "By his strength he had success with an angel, and he prevailed over the angel, and was strengthened; he wept and made supplication to him," Osee xii. 3. Here we not only see supplication made to an angel, but the great advantage of it. (2.) When Jacob was old he called Joseph and his two sons to bless them, and, laying his hands upon their heads, he said, "God, in whose sight my fathers Abraham and Issac walked, God, that feedeth me from my youth until this day, the angel that delivereth me from all evils, bless these boys," Gen. xlviii. 15. Here, in the same sentence, and with the same breath, he prays both to God and his guardian angel to bless his sons. (3.) When the angel conducted Lot out of Sodom, Lot prayed to the angel to spare the city of Segor, and allow him to retire to it, "And the angel said unto him, behold also in this city, I have heard thy prayers not to destroy the city for which thou hast spoken," Gen. xix. 21. (4.) St. John the apostle makes this prayer for the seven churches which are in Asia, "Grace be unto you, and peace from him that is, and that was, and that is to come, and from the seven spirits that are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ who is the faithful witness," Rev. i. 4. Here, with the same breath, the apostle prays for grace and peace from God, from the seven spirits that assist before his throne, and from Jesus Christ; and even places these seven spirits before Jesus Christ; than which there cannot be a more express and positive authority for desiring the prayers of the saints and angels in heaven. (5.) It is certainly lawful and profitable to desire the prayers of the servants of God here upon earth; and our prayers for one another are so agreeable to God Almighty, that sometimes when he refuses to hear the prayers of sinners for themselves, upon account of their own unworthiness, he grants what they need to the prayers of his servants for them; thus, God said to Job's friends, "My wrath is kindled against you, because ye have not spoken the thing that is right before me as my servant Job hath; take unto you therefore seven oxen and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer for your-

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

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

A. Was it an injury to the mediation of Christ when St. John prayed for grace and peace from the seven spirits that stand before the throne of God ? or is it an injury to the mediation of Christ to desire the prayers of one another. But this objection is owing to a gross mistake ; for a person may ask a favour either in his own right, and as a thing which he himself is entitled in justice to obtain ; or he may ask it merely as a favour, or for the sake of another who has a right to it. Jesus Christ, through his infinite merits, has a just right to ask and obtain from his Father for us, any thing he pleases, and therefore he is our Mediator of redemption ; but neither the saints in heaven nor we upon earth, have any right or title of ourselves to obtain anything from God ; and all the claim we or they have to be heard, is only as a favour to us, and for the sake of Christ, in and through his infinite merits, by which alone any good thing can come to us ; and when the saints in heaven pray for us, all the grounds they have to be heard are founded ultimately in his merits only. Now, it is evident, that the more there are who join together in asking any favour of God, through Christ, and for his sake, the more he is honoured by it ; so that our desiring these blessed spirits to pray for us, instead of being injurious to the mediation of

Christ, is, in fact, honouring it ; because by so doing, we engage a greater number of holy souls to testify their high esteem of, and their confidence in him, through whom alone their prayers can be heard.

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

A. Even by using such expressions, we do no more than St. John did, when he asked for grace and peace from the seven spirits that stand before the throne of God ; nor than Jacob did, when he asked the angel to bless himself, and to bless his two grandsons. But the truth is, that whatever expressions of this kind are used, the meaning is, that we desire these things from them, in the way in which alone we know they can give them ; that is, by asking them of God for us, through the merits of Christ ; and this we are taught from our infancy, in all our catechisms and books of instruction. Indeed, with regard to our angel guardians, we do no more than barely ask their prayers ; because we know that they are commissioned by God, not only to pray for us, but also to be the instruments in the hand of God, to bestow many other benefits upon us, as we shall now see.

SECTION V.—*Of Our Angel Guardians.*

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

A. That particular angels are commanded and appointed by God to watch over us, and protect us, and bestow many good benefits upon us, is thus declared in scripture : “ Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation ? ” Heb. i. 14. To *minister*, is to serve, to guard, to help us. Again, “ He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways,” Ps. xci. 11. Hence our Saviour says, “ Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones ; for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven,” Matt. xviii. 10. And when St. Peter was delivered out of prison, and came and knocked at the door where the rest were gathered together, they hearing his voice, could not believe it was himself, and said, “ It is his angel,” Acts xii. 15. The religion of God is a religion of charity, and tends to unite all

its members in the most perfect bonds of charity ; and, as this can only be nourished by a mutual intercourse of good offices, which is the communion of the saints ; hence, according to the spirit of our religion, every one ought to be solicitous for his neighbour's happiness, and ready, upon all occasions, to promote it to the best of his power ; and indeed, the more inflamed holy men are with the true love of God, the more earnest they are in promoting the good of souls. Now, as the angels are filled with the most ardent love of God, and have nothing more at heart than to advance his glory and the salvation of men, so that "the repentance of a sinner fills them with joy" ; they are, therefore, most ready and willing themselves to help us ; and God Almighty is pleased to employ them for our advantage and service. Besides, as Satan and his wicked angels are daily going about like roaring lions, seeking to devour us, and we, if left to ourselves, would fall a pray to their malice ; therefore our God, who was pleased to employ his good angels to drive those wicked spirits out of heaven, still continues to employ them in defending us from their assaults, and arming us against them.

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

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

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

(2.) They assist us in our temporal affairs. Thus, when Agar was at last banished from her mistress's house, with her son, "she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Bersabee. And when the water in the bottle was spent, she cast the boy under one of the trees that were there, and went her way.....for she said, I will not see the boy die, and sitting over against him, she lifted up her voice and wept." In this distress the angel of God appeared to her, and comforted her, and showed her a well of water to relieve her, Gen. xxi. 14. When the prophet Elias was in the wilderness, and in utter want of all things, his angel brought him two different times a cake of bread, and a vessel of water to support him, 3 Kings xix. The saints of God were so sensible of the assistance of their angel guardians, in their temporal affairs, that their confidence in them was a comfort and support to them under their difficulties. Thus, when Abraham sent his servant to get a wife for his son, among his own relations, he encouraged him by saying, "The Lord God of heaven will send his angel with thee, and will direct thy way," Gen. xxiv. 7, 40. So likewise when Tobias sent his son on a long journey to recover some money that was owing to him, he said, "May you have a good journey, and God be with you in your way, and his angel accompany you," Tob. v. 21. And after he was gone, the mother being in great distress for fear of him, Tobias comforted her, saying, "I believe that the good angel of God doth accompany him and doth order all things well that are done about him; so that he shall return to us with joy," verse 27.

(3.) They deliver us from dangers and temporal evils; and this is one of the principal ends for which Almighty God com-

mits us to their care ; for, " he hath given his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways ; in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," Ps. xc. 11 ; and " the angel of the Lord shall encamp round about them that fear him, and shall deliver them," Ps. xxxiii. 8. The famous history of Eliseus, when the city he was in was besieged by an army of Syrians is well known ; for, when his servant expressed his great fear on that account, the prophet said, " Fear not, for there are more with us than with them." And Eliseus prayed and said, " Lord, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the servant, and he saw, and behold the mountain was full of chariots, and horsemen of fire, round about Eliseus," 4 Kings vi. 16. The history of Tobias is full of the services done to that good man by the holy angel Raphael ; and, when St. Peter was thrown into prison, and was to be put to death next day, the angel of the Lord delivered him out of prison in a most wonderful manner, Acts. xii. ; as was also done to the other apostles ; for when they were " put in the common prison, an angel of the Lord, by night, opening the doors of the prison, and leading them out said, Go, and, standing, speak in the temple to the people, all the words of this life," Acts v. 19. Daniel, too, in the lions' den, when the king came next morning to inquire about him, said, " O King, my God hath sent his angel, and hath shut up the mouths of the lions, and they have not hurt me," Dan. vi. 21.

(4.) They pray for us, and present our prayers to God, as we have seen above, Q. 7, Num. 2, and Q. 18.

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

Q. 25. But what need is there for employing his holy angels to do all these services tous ? Could not God do all this by himself ?

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

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

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

A. We ought to behave towards them, (1.) With *reverence for their presence*. When we consider who they are, to wit, the most sublime of all the works of God, of a nature much superior to ours, the great nobles of the court of heaven, who always see the face of God, the first princes of his kingdom; and then reflect, that wherever we are our angel is always present with us, and sees and knows all we do; we easily see with what respect and reverence we ought to behave in the presence of so glorious a being. Consider the behaviour of Abraham and Josue, and Moses and Daniel, and all the other holy saints of old, when the angels appeared visibly unto them. Our good angel is no less present with us, though invisible to our eyes. Now, this reverence chiefly consists in avoiding all sin, and never daring to do in his presence what we would be ashamed to do in the sight of a man for whom we have a high esteem. Sin is detestable to the angels of God, and displeases them; and therefore Almighty God says of our good angel, "Do not think him one to be contemned, for he will not forgive thee when thou hast sinned," Exod. xxiii. 21. (2.) With *devotion for their charity*. Devotion towards any one properly signifies a readiness to obey him, and to do his will. Our angel guardians have nothing more at heart than our good; all their inspirations and reproofs tend to this end. This is great charity in them, and, therefore, we ought to be attentive to their inspirations, and readily comply with them both in doing good and avoiding evil; this is to be truly devout to them; and, therefore, Almighty God himself says, "Take notice of him and hear his voice, and do not think him one to be contemned," Exod. xxiii. 21. (3.) With a *confidence in their protection*. When we consider who our angel guardian is, that he is able to help us, and most willing and desirous of doing so,

and that he has it in charge from God to protect and assist us, we cannot doubt of his continual attention to execute that charge. This ought certainly to give us a great confidence in him under God, and make us frequently have recourse to him, and earnestly recommend ourselves to him, like Jacob, who would not, "let the angel go till he had blessed him," Gen. xlviii.

SECTION VI.—*Of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

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

A. We have seen above, that the honour and veneration given to the saints in heaven, are due to them on account of their great dignity, their connection with Jesus Christ, and the high privileges and excellences which they enjoy. Hence it follows, that the more sublime the dignity of any saint is, the more nearly he is connected with Jesus Christ, and the higher and more exalted privileges he enjoys, the greater honour and veneration is due to him. Now, as the Blessed Virgin Mary is supereminently above all the other saints, and even above the highest angels themselves, in all these respects; it follows as a necessary consequence, that the honour and veneration due to her are supereminently greater than that which we owe to all the other saints and angels.

Q. 28. What are the high privileges which the Blessed Virgin enjoys, so far more excellent than those of all the other heavenly inhabitants? ¹

A. They are chiefly these following: (1.) That *sublime and inconceivable dignity of being the mother of God*; a dignity so high and so grand, that it puts her at once immensely above all other creatures, above everything whatsoever that is less than God. It is true she is still a pure creature, and, of course infinitely, below the Creator, betwixt whom and every possible creature, there must always be an infinite distance; but, with regard to all other creatures, there is as great a distance between the blessed Virgin and the most sublime seraphim, as there is betwixt the dignity of the mother of God and his servants. St. Elizabeth was amazed at the sight of this sublime dignity of the blessed Virgin; for, when "she heard the salutation of Mary.....she was filled with the Holy Ghost, and she cried out with a loud voice, and said Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy

¹ The privilege of "Immaculate Conception" is not dwelt on by the author because, although commonly held, it had not at that time been defined.

womb; and whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?" Luke i. 41. By particular inspiration of the Holy Ghost she pronounced Mary the most blessed of women, and was confounded and amazed that so great a personage as the mother of God should come to visit her. (2.) *The intimate relation she has with Jesus Christ*, by the sacred quality of being his mother. He indeed, out of his superabundant goodness, is pleased to consider his faithful servants as his brethren, and to treat them as such, but they are his brethren, at most, only by adoption; but the Blessed Virgin Mary is his mother by nature, not by adoption, but the nearest ties of flesh and blood; he is flesh of her flesh, and bone of her bone; his sacred body was formed of her flesh, and fed and nourished by her blood; so that her connection with him is that of a mother with the son of her womb, than which nothing can possibly be nearer betwixt two persons. How justly, then, is she entitled to the highest veneration, who is so nearly connected with Jesus Christ? (3.) *The superiority and authority* which he was pleased to give her over himself, in consequence of her being his mother. An amazing thing it is, no doubt, to see the Creator of heaven and earth, depending upon his own creature, the Sovereign Lord of all subject to a woman; he who provides for all creatures standing in need of being tended, supported and nourished, by one of them; and yet this is the very case. When God the Son first appeared among men, he was pleased to depend upon his Virgin mother for all the innumerable helps that an infant stands in need of at that tender age; to be tended and supported by her, and nourished with the milk of her breasts. As he grew up, all we know about him, during his private life, till the thirtieth year of his age, is, that "he went down to Nazareth, and was subject to her," Luke ii. 51. What an amazing idea does this give us of the honour and dignity of this ever blessed Virgin? If it be thought so great an honour, among men, to be a nurse and guardian of a king's son, what must it be to be the mother, the nurse, and the guardian of the King of kings? (4.) *The immaculate purity* of this ever blessed Virgin is a privilege of an immense value, bestowed only on Mary: "Behold they that serve him are not steadfast, and in his angels he found wickedness," Job iv. 18; but in Mary he found none. She, ever steadfast in his holy service, was, by the special disposition of the Divine Providence, from the very first instant of her conception, evermore preserved in innocence, and perfectly unsullied by the smallest stain of sin.

She never ceased to be the undefiled temple of God, the chaste and immaculate spouse of the Holy Ghost, and, of consequence, the sacred object of his complacency and love. In her he never found the smallest opposition to his will, but a continual correspondence to and improvement of every grace he bestowed upon her. Hence his infinite goodness, which delights to communicate, with the utmost profusion, his holy grace to those in whom he finds no obstacle, was continually increasing his sanctifying grace in her soul; insomuch that, (5.) The angel Gabriel, when he appeared to her, declared her to be "full of grace, and that the Lord himself was with her," and that, on this account, she was in a particular manner, "blessed among women," Luke i. 28. What a high idea does all this give us of the immense dignity to which she is now raised in heaven, above all the other saints, corresponding to her immaculate purity, and the innumerable graces with which her blessed soul was adorned during her mortal state! (6.) On all these accounts, she herself, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, prophesied the great honour and veneration that should be paid her in the church of God, till the end of the world when she said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, because he hath regarded the humility of his hand-maid; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me Blessed; for he that is mighty hath done great things to me, and holy is his name," Luke i. 46.

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

A. This cannot be called in question; for, (1.) The love and zeal for souls in any person is always in proportion to his love for God and for Jesus Christ; because the more ardently he loves God, the more ardently must he desire to see him loved and honoured by his creatures; and the more ardently he loves Jesus Christ, the more ardent must his zeal be for the salvation of those for whom Christ died and which he himself has so much at heart. Consequently as there never was any creature whose love to God and Jesus Christ was to be compared with the love which the blessed Virgin has for them, so none of all the heavenly inhabitants can possibly have such a love for souls and such ardent zeal for their salvation as she has. (2.) Our perfection in this life consists essentially in the conformity and union of our will with the will of God; and the more we advance in this holy union, the more perfect we are; but the entire perfection of this union of our will with the

will of God is only to be found in heaven ; there the blessed saints have no other will but the will of God, and the greater saints they are the more perfectly they are transformed into this Divine will. Consequently the Blessed Virgin, being the greatest of all the saints, is, of all others, the most perfectly united to the will of God, and has the most ardent desire of whatever pleases him. Now, as Almighty God has a most ardent love for our souls, as he “wills that all men should be saved,” 1 Tim. ii. 4 ; as “he wills not that any should perish, but that all should return to penance,” 2 Pet. iii. 9 ; as he wills not the death of a sinner, “but rather that he should return and live, Ezech. xxx. 11, who can doubt of the ardent desires that all the saints in heaven have for the salvation of our souls, and especially the Blessed Virgin, whose more exalted union with God makes her more ardently desire what is agreeable to him. (3.) When our blessed Saviour was hanging on the cross for our sins, seeing “his mother and the disciple standing whom he loved, he saith to his mother, “Woman, behold thy son ; after he saith to his disciple, Behold thy Mother,” John xix. 26. In these words our blessed Saviour, with his last breath, recommends all his followers, in the person of St. John, as her spiritual children, to his Virgin mother, and recommends her to them to be honoured and respected as their mother : and, indeed, if he is pleased to raise us up to the high dignity of being children of his heavenly Father, and his own brethren and co-heirs of his heavenly kingdom, without doubt his blessed mother must consider us as her spiritual children, and we have a just title to look upon her as our spiritual mother. And if so, who can conceive the ardent love she must have for our souls, and her fervent zeal for our salvation ? How much must her zeal for our souls exceed that of the other saints, in as much as the tender affection of a mother for her children exceeds that of one brother for another ? Besides, can she ever forget the last words of Jesus ? Can she neglect the charge he gave her from the cross ?

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

A. Most certainly they are ; for, (1.) the more ardent love we have for God, the more inflamed desires we have for his glory ; and the more concern we take in what regards his honour, the more ready he always is to hear our prayers ; “he will do the will of them that fear him ; and he will hear their prayer,” Ps. cxliv. 19. “The eyes of the Lord are upon the

just, and his ears unto their prayers," Ps. xxxiii. 16. And when the angel Gabriel was sent from heaven in consequence of the prayers of Daniel, to tell him all he wanted to know, he gave this for the reason of his coming, "because," says he, "thou art a man of desires," Dan. ix. 23. Now, as none ever feared God with such perfection as Mary did; as she was by far the most just and perfect of all pure creatures; as no one has such inflamed desires for the glory of God and the good of souls as she has; without doubt, her prayers for our salvation must be the most powerful of all the saints in the sight of God. (2.) "Take delight in the Lord," says his sacred word, "and he will give thee the requests of thy heart," Ps. xxxvi. 4. Who ever took delight in the Lord with such perfection as Mary: He alone was the object of her love, her joy and delight, every moment of her life; always full of his grace, her only happiness was in him continually. How ready, then, must he now be to give her the requests of her heart? And what are these requests, but her continual and most ardent desires for promoting his glory in the salvation of our souls? (3.) "If ye abide in me," says Jesus Christ, "and my words abide in you, ye shall ask whatever ye will, and it shall be done to you," John xv. 7. Now, who ever abode in Jesus Christ by holy love, without ever being separated from him, no not for an instant, as the blessed Virgin did? In whom did his sacred words abide with such perfection as they did in her? How powerful, then, must her holy prayers be in obtaining whatever she asketh? especially when we consider that she never will, nor can ask any thing but what is agreeable to his will; and his holy word declares, "this is the confidence which we have towards him, that whatsoever we ask according to his will, he heareth us," 1 John v. 14. (4.) "If our heart do not reprehend us, we have confidence towards God; and whatsoever we shall ask we shall receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight," 1 John iii. 21. Now the blessed Virgin was perfectly innocent, no stain of sin ever fell upon her pure soul; consequently her heart never did, yea, never could reprehend her; on the other hand, her continual attention was to do his will, and to do in everything she did what was pleasing in his sight; how powerful then, must her prayers now be to obtain from his infinite goodness whatsoever she asks him? (5.) Even when here upon earth, her power of obtaining what she asked of her blessed Son was exceeding great; a single hint of what she wished was enough to induce

him to work a most stupendous miracle, by changing water into most exquisite wine, to supply the wants of those for whom she prayed, John iv., even although he observed to her that what she wanted was not a thing that belonged to him or her; "what is that to you and me?" said he; and besides, though "his hour was not yet come"; yet he granted her desire, and began to work miracles before his hour, in order to please her; "If, therefore, her prayers were so powerful here on earth, how much more so must they be now that she reigns with him in glory in his kingdom? (6.) The sacred dignity she possesses in being the mother of Christ, and the great regard he pays to her as such, must surely make her requests more agreeable to him, and of greater weight in his eyes than those of any other of his saints, who, however holy they be, are but his servants, whereas the holiness of the blessed Virgin far exceeds the greatest of them; and over and above, she is his mother.

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

A. We observed above, that devotion to any, properly signifies a great readiness of our will to do what is pleasing and agreeable to them. Now, the most agreeable thing we can possibly do to the blessed Virgin, or indeed, to any of the saints in heaven, is to live in innocence, to obey the will of God, and to save our own souls. But, as in this view, our devotion is equally agreeable to all the saints in general, for they all rejoice at the repentance of sinners and the sanctification of souls; in order to make it proper to particular saints, we must so direct our devotion, that they may be in a particular manner concerned in promoting our salvation. Hence the true devotion which we owe to the blessed Virgin consists in what follows: (1.) In endeavouring to save our souls, by imitating her example in those sacred virtues for which she was most remarkable; particularly her profound humility, her great purity, her admirable patience and meekness, her ardent love for Jesus Christ, her perfect conformity to the will of God in all her afflictions, and her tender love and compassion for others. (2.) In often meditating upon her great virtues, and the sublime reward she has received for them in heaven, encouraging ourselves by that consideration, to go on with courage and perseverance following her sacred example, with a firm hope in the mercy of God, that, through the merits of her blessed Son, we shall one day come to enjoy her blessed company in heaven. (3.) In often thanking and praising God for all the glorious privileges

and graces bestowed upon her, and for the great glory she now enjoys in heaven: And, (4.) in frequently begging the assistance of her prayers for grace to enable us to imitate her example, with a firm confidence that Almighty God, through the merits of her blessed Son, “will accept her face” for us, as he accepted the face of Job for his three friends, and through her intercession grant those graces which he may justly refuse to our unworthiness.

SECTION VII.—*Of the Holy Images and Relics.*

Q. 32. What is meant by holy images?

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

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

A. By no means: as is evident from several reasons; for (1.) If these words were intended to prohibit the making of images of any kind, as they include everything without exception, “thou shalt not make to thyself the likeness of any thing, in heaven or earth, or under the earth,” it would be unlawful to make any picture at all; because all are included, whether holy or profane; so that it would be a sin to make the picture of a friend, or to imprint the king’s image upon coin, or to paint a horse or a house, or any creature whatsoever, which no man in his wits ever imagined to be the meaning of that command; consequently it does not prohibit the making of images in general. (2.) Neither does it absolutely prohibit the making of holy images, for a very palpable reason: because God himself absolutely commanded holy images to be made; for he said to Moses, “Thou shalt also make two cherubim of beaten gold on the two sides of the oracle; let one cherub be on the one side, and the other on the other: let them cover both sides of the propitiatory (or mercy seat), spreading their wings and covering

the oracle," Ex. xxv. 18, "and looking the one towards the other," Ex. xxxvii. 9. And when Solomon built the temple, "he graved cherubim on the walls," 2 Chron. iii. 3. Where also are described at large the magnificent manner in which he "made in the house of the Holy of Holies, cherubim of image work, and overlaid them with gold," verse 10, "and they stood upright on their feet, and their faces were turned toward the house without," verse 13. All this was done by orders of his father king David, who "gave Solomon the purest gold to make the likeness of the chariot of the cherubim, spreading their wings, and covering the ark of the covenant of the Lord. All these things (said he) came to me written by the hand of the Lord," 1 Chron. xxviii. 18. Also, "The Lord said to Moses, Make a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign, whosoever being struck (*with the fiery serpents*) shall look on it, shall live," Num. xxi. 8. This was a holy image representing Christ upon the cross, as he himself assures us, John iii. 14. Now, this shows to a demonstration, that the words of the command do not forbid the making of the holy images, otherwise God would never have commanded them, on so many occasions, to be made. (3.) Neither does the command forbid to honour holy images, and to use them for religious purposes; for God not only commanded the images of the two cherubim to be placed upon the mercy-seat, upon the ark of the covenant, which was doing them a great honour; but he also said to Moses, "Thence will I give orders and will speak to thee over the propitiatory, and from the midst of the two cherubim," Ex. xxv. 22. What greater honour could be done to these two images than to be the seat of God, the throne on which he should appear and declare his orders to his people. The other two also which Solomon made by God's command to David, were set with their faces towards the house without, before all the people, who therefore prayed before or towards them. And could any image be used for a more religious purpose than the brazen serpent, which was set up to be an instrument in the hand of God, for performing a continual series of the greatest miracles?

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

A. The words of the command fully explain their own true meaning; for, after forbidding to make the likeness of any thing, &c., it is immediately added, "thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them," which manifestly shows, that the command only forbids the making of these things as idols, to be adored

and served as if they were gods, or could either see or hear or help us ; for this was the horrid crime of idolatry, which was then become so common in the world, and to which the Israelites were extremely prone, as appears from their whole history, and particularly from their worshipping the golden calf, offering sacrifice to it, and saying, "These are thy gods, O Israel, who have brought thee out of the land of Egypt," Ex. xxxii. 4, 6. What God immediately adds, shows the same truth ; for immediately after this prohibition he says, "I am the Lord thy God, strong and jealous," putting them in mind, that he only is their God, and jealous of his honour, who will severely punish those who serve idols, or any other God but him. By all which, it is also manifest, that the words of the command above cited, are only an application and illustration of the former words, "thou shalt have no strange gods before me," and by no means a distinct command from it.

Q. 35. What is meant by holy relics ?

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

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

A. With regard to holy images, the church in the general

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

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

A. On three very strong and solid reasons: (1.) *On the very natural disposition and frame of the heart of man.* For, when we have a real affection and esteem for any other, our regard is not confined to his person alone; but naturally and forcibly extends itself to everything that belongs to, or is intimately connected with him. What esteem and regard do we not constantly pay to the picture of our king, or of any friend whom we sincerely love? If a mother loses her darling child by death, how carefully does she keep a little of his hair, or set it in a ring or bracelet, and pay the highest regard to it on all occasions, as a dear memorial of her darling child? Examples of this kind are innumerable. If, therefore, we have a real esteem and sincere affection for Jesus Christ and his holy saints, does not nature itself impel us to have an esteem and regard for their holy images and relics? And is it possible to have a real esteem and regard for these things without showing the external signs of it when occasion offers? But is it to these images or relics, as considered in themselves, that we show this regard? By no means, any more than the regard we show for the picture of a friend, or the esteem we put upon any memorial of those we love, is paid to these objects as considered in themselves. It is only for the sake of those whom they represent, and for the connexion they have with those we love, that we show any

regard to them at all. So that all the outward respect we pay to these things, is only a testification of the inward love, esteem, and veneration, we have for those to whom they relate; and, on this account it is, that all the regard we pay to these things, is called *relative honour, relative worship*, and the like.

(2.) *On the authority of God himself*, who has often been pleased to give the most manifest approbation of our respect and veneration paid to holy images and relics. The brazen serpent, set up by his express command in the wilderness, was an image of Jesus Christ upon the cross, and what numbers of miracles did not God perform by it? for, as many as were bitten by the fiery serpents, the bite of which, till that time, was certain death, by only casting their eyes upon the brazen serpent, were immediately healed, Num. xxi. 11. When Elias was taken up to heaven, Eliseus, his successor as the prophet of God, "took up the mantle of Elias, that fell from him, and going back, he stood upon the bank of the Jordan, and he said, Where is now the God of Elias? And he struck the waters with the mantle of Elias, and they were divided hither and thither, and Eliseus passed over," 4 Kings ii. 13. And after some time this prophet "Eliseus died, and they buried him. And the rovers from Moab came into the land the same year; and some that were burying a man saw the rovers, and cast the body into the sepulchre of Eliseus; and, when it had touched the bones of Eliseus, the man came to life and stood upon his feet," 4 Kings xiii. 20. If we examine the New Testament, there we find that God wrought by the hand of Paul, more than common miracles; so that even there were brought from his body to the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them," Acts xix. 11. See here what examples of the greatest benefits bestowed on man, and the most surprising miracles wrought by God, by means of holy images and relics. Could any thing more manifestly approve and authorise the respect and veneration due to these things? Let us examine the feelings of our own hearts: Suppose we had in our possession the mantle of Elias, or the aprons and handkerchiefs that had touched the body of St. Paul, and saw the same miracles done by them which are recorded in scripture to have been actually performed by their means, would not nature itself dictate to us to put the highest value and esteem upon them?

(3.) *On the advantages which we receive from the use of holy pictures*, even in a natural way; for they are a proper and be-

coming ornament for the churches of God ; they serve much for the instruction of the ignorant ; they excite love and other holy affections towards God and his saints, as the picture of our absent friend calls him to our remembrance and revives our love and affection for him ; they encourage us to an imitation of their virtues ; and they are a profession of our faith that we believe the doctrine of Christ and his saints.

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

A. Sacrifice, both in its own nature, and from the common judgment formed of it by all mankind, is an external manifestation of the belief we have of the Divine Being, and his infinite perfections, and of that supreme worship and adoration which we give to him as God. On this account it can be given to none but God alone, and to offer sacrifice to any creature whatever would be the grossest idolatry. But sacrifice alone excepted, there is no outward sign of respect, whether bowing, uncovering our head, kneeling, or the like, that either of itself, or in the opinion of mankind, signifies any one particular kind of respect more than another ; and hence they are used promiscuously on all occasions, both towards God, and towards one another, to signify civil, natural, religious, and Divine worship, according to the object to which they are paid. And as, in fact, we have no other way of showing outwardly the respect and regard we have for any object ; hence we make use of them also to express the veneration and respect we pay to holy images and relics, as well as to any other object.

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

A. This is the argument used by the adversaries of the Catholic church, to render her odious to the people ; but nothing can be more unjust or uncharitable. All that these external actions naturally represent is, that we do esteem, respect, and venerate the object to which we direct them ; the more ardently and affectionately we perform these actions, the more we show the sincerity of our love and respect for the object, but they certainly have no manner of connexion with the motive upon which our love and esteem of the object is founded : nay, as hypocrisy can perfectly well imitate all these exterior signs of the internal affections, they may be used out of mockery and ridicule,

as well as out of respect and veneration, as the soldiers did when they bowed the knee before our Saviour, and saluted him, *Hail, King of the Jews*. When, therefore, a person performs any of these external signs of respect to any holy images or relics, though he do it in the most affectionate manner, can any thing be more *uncharitable* than to conclude from this, that he believes that image or relic to be the God that made him? or that he loves it, adores it, and trusts in it as his God? Can any thing be more *unjust*, than to persist in making this conclusion, even though the person himself, and all Roman Catholics whatsoever, unanimously declare, that they abhor and detest such a thought, and that all they intended by such actions is to honour and reverence these sacred objects which these holy images represent? just as Protestants every day show an outward respect and regard for the pictures of their king, or deceased friends, in honour of those represented by them. Can any thing even be more *unreasonable*, than absolutely to conclude that these outward acts of respect arise from a bad motive, when both justice and charity combine to show that they arise from a good and laudable motive, and of which the actions themselves are more susceptible than of a bad one? When Josue saw the angel, "he fell on his face to the ground and worshipped," Jos. v. 15. Would any man in his wits conclude from this, that Josue was guilty of superstition or idolatry, and believed this angel to be his God? When David's nobles "bowed themselves, and worshipped God and the king," 1 Chron. xix. 20, will either justice or charity allow us to conclude from this, that they adored David as their God? When Josue "fell flat on the ground, before the ark of the Lord, until the evening, both he and all the ancients of Israel, and cast dust upon their heads," Jos. vii. 6, could any thing be more unreasonable than to conclude from this, that they gave divine adoration to the ark? Besides, with regard to a crucifix, or the image of Christ crucified; how can those who profess themselves Christians, be offended at the sight of an image which represents the sufferings of their Redeemer? or how can they believe that it is incumbent on them to have the image of his death always present to their *mind*, and yet not allow it before their *eyes*?

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

A. This is another shameful source of calumny and misrepresentation against the Catholic church. Poetical compositions such as hymns are, have this peculiar to them that without the smallest injury to truth, they use tropes, figures, and warm expressions, which no man in his wits ever understands literally, because, in their literal sense, they are absolutely false, or nonsense; now, because such expressions are used in some of the church hymns, is it not unjust or uncharitable to the highest degree to conclude from this, that the church understands them in their literal sense, in which they are evidently false? Can anything be more unreasonable than to lay so heavy a charge upon her from such a ground; a charge which must suppose that all her members are fools and idiots?

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

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

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

A. There yet remains two things of the highest importance,

which we purposely delayed till now, that these instructions of the Faith of Christ might end with them ; and these are, *Death*, that important passage from time to eternity ; and *Hell*, that place of punishment prepared for the wicked in the next world.

APPENDIX I.

On Death.

Q. 43. What is death ?

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

Q. 44. What are the effects of death ?

A. (1.) It deprives us of all our possessions in this world, riches, honours, titles, dignities, lands, goods, cattle, and the like ; and, in doing this, it makes no difference nor distinction between the king and the beggar ? rich and poor, wise and foolish, are all reduced in an instant to the same most abject poverty, by the same all-conquering hand of death. (2.) It deprives us of all our bodily or mental qualifications : for, though a person be ever so accomplished, ever so beautiful, though he have the best of memories, the most penetrating understanding, the most solid judgment, lively wit, agreeable turn of mind, amiable temper, and the most fertile genius ; though all these natural talents had been improved to the highest degree, by all the help that reading, study, conversation, and experience can give, yet the moment that the fatal hour approaches, all must yield to death's devouring sword, which puts an immediate end to all these qualifications, as if they never had existed. (3.) It deprives us of our very powers, senses and faculties themselves ; the poor carcase becomes a lifeless lump of clay, which can neither see, nor hear, nor speak, nor move, nor feel. (4.) It causes an eternal separation from every enjoyment of this life, the light of the day, the charms of music, the conversation of our fellow creatures, the society of man, the company of friends, relations, and acquaintances, however near or dear they may have been to us ; all which we can never, never more enjoy in this world. (5.) It deprives us of our time itself, and with it of all further possibility of labouring for the great end of our being, the salvation of our souls ; and at once puts a stop to all our fine schemes about our worldly affairs, which so often fill our minds, and distract our thoughts, with anxious

cares, and hinder us from attending, as we ought, to the great concerns of eternity. (6.) It reduces the poor body to a most miserable state of poverty and nakedness, than which nothing can be more dismal and hideous; for it is no better than a stock or a stone, a lump of earth, a dunghill of corruption.

Q. 45. What appearance does the body make after death?

A. A most dismal and ghastly appearance; for the head falls down on one side, the neck being no longer able to support it; the hair is commonly wet with the dead sweat, and quite in disorder with the tossing and tumbling in bed during the last agony; the temples become hollow, and stick close to the bones; the ears hang loose and lifeless; the eyes are sunk in the head, and half open, quite deprived of their wonted brightness, and become all glazed in a ghastly manner; the cheeks fall in, and, as it were, stick close to the bones; the nose becomes sharp and pointed; the lips pale, and separated from one another, the teeth appearing from between them of a blackish or yellow colour; the tongue dry and parched; and the whole body stiff and cold like a piece of marble! Oh what a dismal change! That pleasant smile, which was so agreeable to the beholders, that rosy blush which was wont to adorn the countenance, those lively looks, that cheerful air, which gave such grace to the behaviour, is all now gone, all faded and withered, and changed into such a dismal spectacle, that the most cheerfully disposed person in the world can scarce behold it without being filled with thoughts of sadness; but all who go near it, after looking upon the corpse for a moment, cover it up again, and immediately withdraw, pale, silent, and pensive, carrying about with them, in their mind, the sad image of this carcase, and incapable of any joy or diversion, till, by other objects, they have put it entirely out of their thoughts.

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

A. The poor carcase, lying in this miserable condition, soon begins to corrupt, and send forth a stench, capable of infecting the whole house. * Scarce two days had passed since the person expired, and already it is impossible to remain in the room along with it; the windows must all be thrown open to let in fresh air, and, as soon as possible, this dead body must be hurried out of the house, carried to a distance, and thrust into the bowels of the earth, lest the air itself should be corrupted by the infection that flows from it. Although a man's children loved him as the best of parents, though his servants revered him as the most indulgent master, though the affection

of his wife went even to excess, though everyone that knew him was fond of him to distraction, yet, now, what a wonderful change has death produced! Of all his nearest and dearest friends, not one will now come near him, nor suffer the nauseous smell that issues from him; but all of them, wife, children, friends, relations, neighbours, servants, acquaintances, all conspire together to get him out of the house as soon as possible, and hurry him away to the grave! And what a dismal habitation is this! a place of darkness and obscurity! a place of irksomeness and horror! a strait and narrow habitation! full of ordure and filthiness! hid from the light of the sun! filled with bones and dead men's skulls! with no other company but worms and vermin, to which the poor carcase is left a prey! Such is the end of all worldly grandeur!

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

A. St. Augustine tells us, that, being at Rome, he was invited to go and see the body of an emperor, which had been buried some time before, and was going to be raised and translated to some other place, and he thus describes what he saw upon this occasion: "I saw," says the saint, "the flesh all black and bluish, falling off by pieces, through rottenness; his belly was full of worms, which came out and went in by holes they had gnawed there, just like an ant's hill in a summer's day: among others, two had taken up their nest in the holes of the eyes. His hair was all falling off; his lips and nose were already consumed, so that all his teeth appeared; and I saw up his nostrils, even to the skull." What a miserable spectacle! What an humbling sight to behold! An emperor! But the truth is so; scarce is the body of the most beautiful person shut up in the grave, and covered with the earth, when it immediately begins to change its colour; some parts become bluish, others yellow, and in a short time, the whole becomes black from head to foot. In a little time, the flesh on the face, and arms, and breast, becomes soft and moist, and then melts away into a stinking sort of humour, which flows down in the coffin, and in which the body is soaked for some time. In this humour there is engendered a prodigious quantity of worms, and other vermin, which it is nauseous and shocking even to name. These immediately begin to feast on that flesh out of which they were engendered, and take up their lodging in all the different parts of the body; some devouring the eyes, some gnawing the nostrils, some crawling out and in at the mouth; here a company of them fixes on the breast, feasting on the paps, and

penetrating into the bowels; there another company of them settle in the belly, where they have made a large opening for themselves, to go out and in at pleasure; here one half of the leg is eaten away, there the palms of the hands are almost consumed. In a word they seize upon all the different parts of the body by hundreds and by thousands, and feast upon this poor carcase of ours at pleasure. In the meantime the hairs fall away from the head, the flesh melts down through mere rottenness, and discovers the bones all black with putrefaction. The whole carcase is no more a body, but a frightful heap of ordure and filth. *Finally*, the worms having consumed all they can get, consume themselves at last, and there now remain only the harder parts of the bones, which also rotting away by degrees, crumble into the dust, and are no longer to be distinguished from the earth in which they lie. Thus the sentence is fulfilled, pronounced on man for sin, "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return"!

Q. 48. What are the properties of death?

A. Chiefly these three, (1.) It is absolutely certain that all must die; for "it is appointed for men once to die," Heb. ix. 27. And, indeed, though the word of God had been silent on this subject, experience itself convinces us of it. Hence those unbelievers themselves who reject the scriptures, and laugh at all religion, yet all agree in the firm belief, that "we all must die." The sentence is universal, and comprehends all the seed of Adam without exception, of whatever condition, state or dignity they be. We have heard of many great heroes, who have conquered nations, and made the world tremble at their frown; but all their might and valour could not conquer death, or even keep him off for a moment, when their hour was come. Many have been remarkable among men for their great learning, penetrating genius, and extensive knowledge, in all the wonders of nature, but none, even Solomon himself, could ever find out a remedy to preserve themselves from death. There always are great numbers in the world abounding in riches, and possessing all the wealth and opulence of the earth, but none could ever buy a moment's life when death approached, no more than the poorest beggar. Many have lived to a very great age, as we read in the fifth of Genesis, even to several hundreds of years; but, after all, the scriptures always add, "and he died." Even sanctity itself cannot preserve from death, nor stave it off for a moment; many holy servants of God have been in the world, many whose souls were most

pleasing to the Almighty, many at whose desire he wrought the greatest miracles, and overturned, in a manner, the established laws of nature, but none could ever obtain from him to be delivered from the sentence of death pronounced by the Divine justice against all mankind. The blessed Virgin Mary, the most innocent, the most holy of all pure creatures, underwent this sentence; yea, Jesus Christ himself, the Holy of holies, though any suffering of his was sufficient to redeem ten thousand worlds, yet, as he made himself a man, and took our nature upon him, would also undergo the common curse of our nature, and subjected himself to the general sentence by dying on a cross. So that it remains a most infallible truth, that death is most certain; it is a portion of all mankind; we must all die. (2.) The time, place, manner, and all the circumstances of death are no less uncertain than death itself is most certain, When shall we die? this day or to-morrow? within a week, or month, or year? or shall we live yet several years? Of all this we are absolutely uncertain and ignorant. How many have gone to bed in seemingly good health, and were corpses before next morning? How many have risen healthy and well, and before the sun was set have been in eternity? How many are cut off in their childhood, youth and every stage of life, when they least expect it? When will our time be? As to the place, where shall we die? at home or abroad? in the house, or in the fields? by sea or by land? in town or country? &c. Of all this we are no less ignorant than of the time; it is a mystery to us, wholly hidden from our eyes. In what manner shall we die? in our sins, or in favour with our God? shall we be cut off on a sudden, or have time to prepare ourselves? shall we have time to call for, and receive the helps of religion, or shall we die without them? shall our death be violent or natural? easy, or painful? by sickness, or the sword? by fire or water? Of these and a thousand other circumstances, we know nothing at all; we are in a perfect uncertainty about them. Many are every day carried out of the world by some one or other of these means, but which of them will be our fate, is quite hidden from our eyes. "None knows of this hour but the Father, and he to whom the Father will reveal it; but this we know, because Jesus Christ has declared it, that "it will come like a thief in the night, when we least expect it"; for, "at what hour you know not, the Son of Man will come," Matt. xxiv. 44; yea, "at what hour ye think not, the Son of Man will come," Luke xiii. 40. (3.) We can die but once; and

once dead, we are dead for ever as to this world ; there is no returning to life to die a second time. A mistake, then, in this affair is without all remedy.

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

A. (1.) From the certainty we have that we must die, it follows as a necessary consequence that we ought to prepare ourselves in time for that important passage. Little need would there be of preparation for death, if all were to end at that hour ; but when we die to this world, we only then, properly speaking, begin to live ; but to live a life that will never end, and will be either a life of eternal bliss or of eternal misery ; in one of these we all must end, and the determination of our eternal doom entirely depends upon the state and manner in which we die ! Our all is at stake ! an eternity is the point in question ! How necessary, then, to prepare ourselves, while time is, for so important a moment ? (2.) From the uncertainty of the time and manner of our death, it follows that we ought to be always prepared, and not dare to live a moment in a state in which we would be afraid to die ; who knows but death may catch us in that unprepared moment, and then what must be our misery for ever ! None are willing to die unprepared, the very thought of that is shocking ; but we vainly flatter ourselves, that we have yet a great while to live ; hence we put off and delay our necessary preparation till death comes at last, when we do not expect it, and by this delusion hell is filled with souls ! Our blessed Saviour, well knowing how apt we are to be deluded by this snare of Satan, warns us against it in the most pressing manner. (3.) As we can die but once, and as upon the manner in which we die our eternal doom depends, it follows as a necessary consequence, that we ought to consider our being prepared for death, as the most important affair of our whole life, the only business for which we came into this world, and, therefore, to be always *well* prepared, and perfectly ready whenever the call may come. A mistake here is of eternal detriment to us ; it can never be rectified. When a person has an affair of some consequence upon hand, he may be indifferent whether he succeed or not, and a little negligence may be pardonable ; but, if his life or whole fortune were at stake, who would pardon his neglect ? If it were a case in which a mistake could be rectified, and success ensured another way, good and well ; but, if this were impossible, if this cause be already at the supreme tribunal, from which there is no appeal, must he not be a madman to

neglect the means of success? If we be going a long and dangerous voyage, what care do we not take to lay in all necessary provisions for it? If we have a case to be tried before a judge for a little worldly gain, what precautions and pains do we not take to procure a favourable sentence? Death is a dreadful and dangerous voyage from time to eternity! after death, we have a cause to be tried before a supreme tribunal, and by the sentence passed there our eternal fate is decided.

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

A. (1.) He describes the uncertainty of that hour, and exhorts us to watch and be always ready. Thus, "Of that day and hour no one knoweth, no not angels of heaven, but the Father alone; and as it was in the days of Noah, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. For, as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they knew not till the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be..... Watch ye, therefore, because ye know not at what hour your Lord will come. Wherefore be ye also ready, because at what hour ye know not, the Son of Man will come," Matt. xxiv. 26. "Likewise, as it was in the days of Lot: they eat and drank, they bought and sold, they planted and built: and in the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all; even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man shall be revealed..... Remember Lot's wife," Luke xvii. 28. "For, 'Of that day or hour no man knoweth, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father..... watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning, lest coming on a sudden, he find you sleeping. And what I say to you, I say to all, Watch,' Mark xiii. 32.

(2.) He shows us the great happiness of being always ready and prepared for death. Thus, "Who thinkest thou, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath set over his family to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom, when his Lord shall come, he shall find so doing. Amen, I say to you, he shall set him over all his goods," Matt. xxiv. 45. "Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Amen, I say to you, that he will gird himself, and make them sit down to meat, and passing, will minister to them. And, if he shall come in the second watch;

or, if he shall come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants.....Be ye then also ready; for at what hour ye think not, the Son of Man will come," Luke xii. 37.

(3.) He shows the misery of those who shall be found unprepared when death comes. Thus: "But, if the evil servant say in his heart, My Lord is long a coming; and shall begin to strike his fellow servants, and shall eat and drink with drunkards: the Lord of that servant shall come in a day that he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he knoweth not, and shall separate him and appoint his portion with hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matt. xxiv. 48. Then he goes on with the parable of the foolish virgins, to show, that all such shall be eternally excluded from the marriage chamber, the eternal joys of heaven; for when these virgins came and said, "Lord, Lord, open to us. He answering, said, Amen, I say to you, I know you not"; and hence our Saviour concludes, "Watch ye therefore; because ye know not the day nor the hour," Matt. xxv. 11. "And the servant that knew the will of his Lord and prepared not himself, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes," Luke xii. 47. And to those who trust in their riches, and deceive themselves with the hope of a long life, he proposes the example of the rich man, who said to himself, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thy rest, eat, drink, make good cheer. But God said to him, Thou fool, this night do they require thy soul of thee, and whose shall these things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God," Luke xii. 19.

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

selves like men who wait for their Lord, when he shall return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may be open to him immediately," Luke xii. 35. And hence another scripture says, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. From henceforth now, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; for their works follow them," Rev. xiv. 13. (4.) To join to all this a continual guard and watch over ourselves with fervent prayer to God for his divine assistance: "Take ye heed; watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is," Mark xiii. 33. "Watch ye, therefore, praying at all times, that ye may be counted worthy to escape all these things that are to come, and to stand before the Son of Man," Luke xxi. 36.

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

A. (1.) Self-denial, and mortification of our passions, by which our hearts are most effectually taken off from the creatures, and rendered free and ready to answer the call, and leave all we have in this world, whenever the hour comes; "O death," says the wise man, "how bitter is the remembrance of thee, to a man that hath peace in his possessions; to a man that is at rest, and whose ways are prosperous in all things, and that is yet able to take meat!" But, on the contrary, "O death, thy sentence is welcome to the man that is in need, and to him whose strength faileth!" Ecclus. xli. 1. In this sense, St. Paul said, "I die daily"; because, as death is an eternal separation from all things of this world, he, by daily mortification and self-denial, separated still more and more his heart and affections from them, as the best preparation for the final separation by death. (2.) Works of charity and mercy towards the poor: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find mercy," Matt. v. 7. "According to thy ability, be merciful. If thou have much, give abundantly; if thou have little, take care even so to bestow a little willingly; for thus thou storest up to thyself a good reward for the day of necessity. For alms deliver from all sin, and from death, and will not suffer a soul to go into darkness. Alms shall be a great confidence before the Most High God, to all that give it," Tob. iv. 8. (3.) Worthily frequenting the holy sacraments, by which the grace of God is more and more communicated to our souls, our confidence increased in him, our hearts inflamed with his holy love, and great strength acquired against the day of trial. (4.) Frequent exercise of these divine virtues of faith, hope, and charity;

these are the arms by which we are to quench all the fiery darts of the enemy in our last moments; against these his most violent assaults are commonly made at that hour; and it is by frequent practice in them that we must make them familiar to us, and be accustomed to exercise these heavenly arms when the day of battle comes. (5.) Prayer and watching, as recommended above by Jesus Christ himself.

APPENDIX II.

On Hell.

Q. 52. What account does the scripture give of hell?

A. It represents it to us as a place where there is all manner of woes and miseries, without the least mixture of good; and where the unhappy victims of the Divine justice shall be tormented for endless eternities. (1.) The place itself is thus described, "A land that is dark and covered with the mist of death, a land of misery and darkness, where the shadow of death, and no order but everlasting horror dwelleth," Job, x. 21. "Their land shall be soaked with blood, and their ground with the fat of fat ones.....The streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the ground thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch; night and day it shall not be quenched; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever," Is. xxxiv. 7. "For Topheth is prepared from yesterday, prepared by the king, deep and wide; the nourishment thereof is fire and much wood, and the breath of the Lord as a torrent of brimstone kindleth it," Is. xxx. 33. And hence that holy prophet cries out to sinners, "The sinners in Sion are afraid, trembling hath seized upon the hypocrites; which of you can dwell with devouring fire? which of you can dwell with everlasting burnings?" Is. xxxiii. 14. In the gospel, it is emphatically called *a place of torments*, Luke xvi. 28. And Our Saviour says, "At the end of the world, the Son of Man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matt. xiii. 40. "And he opened the bottomless pit, and the smoke of it arose, as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air were darkened with the smoke of the pit," Rev. ix. 2. "And the devil, who seduced them, was cast into the pool of fire and

brimstone, where both the beast and the false prophet shall be tormented, day and night, for ever and ever," Rev. xx. 9.

(2.) The executioners of the Divine vengeance are thus described: "His zeal shall take armour, and he will arm the creature for the revenge of his enemies.....he will sharpen his severe wrath for a spear, and the whole world shall fight with him against the unwise; then shafts of lightning shall go directly from the clouds.....and thick hail shall be cast upon them from the stone casting wrath; the water of the sea shall rage against them, and the rivers shall run together in a terrible manner; a mighty wind shall stand up against them, and as a whirlwind shall divide them," Wisd. v. 18. "There are spirits which are created for vengeance, and in their fury they lay on grievous torments. In the time of destruction they shall pour their force, and they shall appease the wrath of him that made them: Fire, hail, famine and death, all these were created for vengeance, the teeth of beasts, and scorpions, and serpents, and the sword, taking vengeance upon the ungodly unto destruction," Ecclus. xxxix. 33. "The Lord shall rain snares upon the wicked; fire and brimstone, and storms of wind, shall be the portion of their cup," Ps. x. 7; "For the creature serving the Creator, is made fierce against the unjust for their punishment," Wisd. xvi. 24. "The Lord Almighty will take revenge on them; in the day of judgment he will visit them; for he will give fire and worms into their flesh, that they burn and feel for ever," Judith xvi. 20.

(3.) Their companions in misery; "The devil who seduced them.....the beast and the false prophet.....and hell and death were cast into the pool of fire," Rev. xx. 9, 10, 14; and the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," Rev. xxi. 8. Among these will be Cain who murdered his brother, Judas who betrayed his God, the rich glutton who was clothed with purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day, and the great whore of Babylon, of whom the great God says, "Go out from her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and the Lord hath remembered her iniquities. Render to her as she also hath rendered unto you; and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup wherein she hath mingled, mingle ye double unto her. As much as she hath glorified herself, and

hath been in delicacies, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her; because she hath said in her heart, I sit as a Queen, I shall see no mourning; therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death and mourning, and famine, and she shalt be burnt with the fire," Rev. xviii. 4. Along with these will also be there, all those unhappy "angels who sinned, and kept not their principality, but forsook their own habitation, whom God delivered to infernal ropes drawn down to the lower hell into torments, and reserved under darkness, in everlasting chains, unto the judgment of the great day," 2 Pet. ii. 4; and Jude, verse 6. And also the people of "Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbouring cities, who, having given themselves over to fornication, and gone after other flesh, were made an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire," Jude, verse 7. And all those "who have gone in the way of Cain, and have poured out themselves after the error of Balaam for reward, and have perished in the gainsaying of Core," Jude, verse 11. "And all other sinners who did not do penance for their murders, nor for their sorceries, nor for their fornications, nor for their thefts," Rev. ix. 21; nor for their other crimes, Rev. xvi. 11. A dreadful and hideous company indeed! shocking and horrible state, to be confined with such for all eternity!

(4.) Their torments themselves are also thus laid down in scripture; and, in general, it is said, "to them that are contentious, and who obey not the truth, but give credit to iniquity, wrath, and indignation. Tribulation and anguish on every soul of man that worketh evil," Rom. ii. 8. The particulars of this tribulation are, (1.) Confusion and reproach; "the Lord shall laugh them to scorn; and they shall fall after this without honour, and be a reproach among the dead for ever; for he shall burst them, puffed up and speechless, and shall shake them from the foundations, and they shall be utterly laid waste; they shall be in sorrow, and their memory shall perish; they shall come with fear at the thought of their sins, and their iniquities shall stand against them to convict them," Wisd. iv. 18. "Wherefore thou hast also greatly tormented them, who in their life have lived foolishly and unjustly, by the same things which they worshipped.....thou hast sent a judgment upon them, as senseless children to mock them," Wisd. xii. 23, 25. "They are confounded and ashamed; the forgers of error are gone together into confusion," Is. xlv. 16. "Fear shall cover them, and shame shall be upon every face, and baldness upon all their heads," Ezech. vii. 18; for, "Behold I come against thee,

saith the Lord of hosts, and I will discover thy shame to thy face, and I will show thy nakedness to the nations, and thy shame to kingdoms; and I will cast abominations upon thee, and will disgrace thee," Nah. iii. 5. "Thou shalt drink thy sister's cup deep and wide; thou shalt be had in derision and scorn; it containeth much. Thou shalt be filled with drunkenness and sorrow; with the cup of grief and sadness.....and thou shalt drink it up even to the dregs, and thou shalt devour the fragments thereof," Ezech. xxiii. 32. Yea God himself shall deride them, "I also," saith he, "will laugh in your destruction, and will mock when that shall come upon you which you feared," Prov. i. 26. Then shall they cry out in the words of the Psalmist, "All the day long my shame is before me, and the confusion of my face hath covered me," Ps. xliii. 16. (2.) Fire; for they shall "be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished.....for every one shall be salted with fire, and every victim shall be salted with salt," Mark ix. 44, 48. Accordingly the sentence of the judge shall be, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.....and these shall go into everlasting punishment," Matt. xxv. 41. "For, thou, O Lord, shalt make them as an oven of fire in the time of thy anger. The Lord shall trouble them in his wrath, and fire shall devour them," Ps. xx. 10. "He shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mingled with pure wine in the cup of his wrath, and shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the sight of the holy angels, and in the sight of the Lamb, and the smoke of their torments shall ascend up for ever and ever, neither have they rest day or night," Rev. xiv. 10. (3.) The cup of the wrath of God; "In the hand of the Lord there is a cup of strong wine full of mixture.....the dregs thereof are not emptied; all the sinners of the earth shall drink," Ps. lxxiv. 9. "Take the cup of wine of this fury at my hand, and thou shalt make all the nations to drink thereof, unto which I shall send thee, and they shall drink, and be troubled, and be mad.....to make them a desolation and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a curse," Jer. xxv. 15. And this dreadful cup of the wrath of God contains all manner of evils: "A fire is kindled in my wrath, and shall burn even to the lowest hell..... I will heap evils upon them, and will spend my arrows among them; they shall be consumed with famine, and birds shall devour them with a bitter bite; I will send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the fury of creatures that trail upon the

ground, and of serpents.....their grapes are grapes of gall, and their clusters most bitter; their wine is the gall of dragons, and the venom of asps which is incurable. Are not these things stored up with me, and sealed up in my treasures? Revenge is mine, and I will repay them in due time," Deut. xxxii. 22, 32. (4.) In the midst of all these dreadful evils, no comfort, nor peace, nor ease, "Neither have they rest day or night," Rev. xiv. 11. No ray of light to cheer their disconsolate mind; for that land, "is a land of darkness covered with the mist of death; yea, a land of misery and darkness," Job x. 21. Hence the sentence pronounced against the wicked servant in the gospel, "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the exterior darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," Matt. xxii. 13; for to them "the storm of darkness is reserved for ever," Jude, verse 13. Yea, the fire itself which torments them, shall be a fire of darkness to them; "Shall not the light of the wicked be extinguished, and the flame of his fire not shine? The light shall be dark in his tabernacle," Job xviii. 5. No drop of water to cool their parched tongues burnt and scorched in these tormenting flames. The rich glutton "lifting up his eyes, when he was in torments, saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; and he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame," Luke xvi. 23. What is a drop of water to that ocean of fire? and yet this drop of water was denied him. No pleasant sound of music shall be found there to soothe or ease their pain; for "I will take away from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, and the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the mill, and the light of the lamp, and all this land shall be a desolation and astonishment," Jer. xxv. 10; and the voice of harpers and of musicians, and of them that play on the pipe and on the trumpet, shall be no more heard at all," Rev. xviii. 22.

(5.) Their employment in the midst of that abyss of misery, is thus declared: "There shall be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth"; Matt. viii. 12. They shall seek death and shall not find it; they shall desire to die and death shall fly from them, Rev. ix. 6. They shall torment themselves with bitter, and fruitless remorse, "Saying within themselves, repenting, and groaning with anguish of spirit—We have erred from thy way of truth, and the light of justice hath not shined unto us—we wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity and

destruction, and have walked through hard ways, but the way of the Lord we have not known. What hath pride profited us? or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us? All these things are passed away like a shadow," Wisd. v. 3. But knowing all this is to no purpose; they burst out into rage and despair, "gnawing their tongues for pain, and blaspheming the God of heaven because of their pains and wounds," Rev. xvi. 10.

(6.) The pain of loss, or their eternal separation from God and all good, will be the most dreadful of all their torments; for God is an infinite good in himself, and the inexhaustible source of all good to us; our hearts are made for him, and nothing less than God can satisfy to the full the boundless capacity of our souls. Even in this life we partake numberless ways of his infinite goodness, all the real good we enjoy being emanations from the boundless ocean of his Divine goodness. Poor unhappy sinners are not sensible of this while they are partaking of his sweetness in this life; but being blinded by their passions, and occupied with a thousand extravagant and sensual pursuits, they forget the sovereign source from whence all good flows; but in hell the case will be immensely altered. Being then loosed from the chains of mortality, sensual objects will no longer be able to bind them; they shall then find and feel, to their woeful experience, that God alone is their sovereign, their universal, their eternal good, that nothing else can possibly ease them; they shall find themselves racked with the most ardent desire of possessing this immense good; but at the same time, shall feel, to their inexpressible torment, that this eternal good is eternally lost to them; lost to them in himself, lost to them in themselves, and lost to them in all his creatures. Their lively sense of this dismal and irreparable loss, and of all the fatal consequences of it, shall continually rack their despairing souls; nor shall they be able for a single moment, to turn away their thoughts from it; lost to their God, and lost to all good, and eternally fixed in an ocean of exquisite torment, they are in a continual state of inexpressible violence, and all the efforts of their vehement longings after happiness shall only serve to redouble their misery, hence the soul becomes a hell to herself, perpetually racked and torn asunder by the most horrid envy, sadness, hatred, rage, despair. Even in this life, the holy servants of God find the greatest joy and consolation from that small glimpse of the Divine presence which God sometimes communicates to them for their consolation; and nothing gives them so great affliction as when he at times, and for their trials,

deprives them of it. Thus Job, amidst his other afflictions, complains, in a particular manner, of this, as of the most severe of his sufferings: "Why hidest thou thy face, and thinkest me thy enemy?" Job xiii. 24. When all his other trials came upon him, he was content, and blessed God for them. So long as he enjoyed the Divine presence all was well; but the moment he was deprived of this, he was afflicted indeed, and complained of this loss as the greatest of all. David also was most sensible of this, and expresses the dreadful affliction it occasioned to him, when he said, "How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget me unto the end? How long dost thou turn away thy face from me! How long shall I take counsels in my soul's sorrow in my heart all the day? Ps. xii. 1. In thy favour thou gavest strength to my beauty! thou didst turn away thy face from me, and I became troubled," Ps. xxix 8. God himself also threatens sinners, to deprive them of his countenance as one of the greatest punishments even in this life, saying to such, "I will cast you away from before my face, as I have cast away all your brethren," Jer. vii. 15. "Because they forsook me, I have hid my face from them; and I have delivered them into the hands of their enemies—I have dealt with them according to their uncleanness and wickedness, and have hid my face from them," Ezech. xxxix. 23. Then shall "they cry to the Lord, and he will not hear them; and he will hide his face from them at that time, as they have behaved wickedly in their devices," Mich. iii. 4. What, then, will be the case of sinners in hell, when banished for ever from the face of God, and plunged in an ocean of misery, they shall cry out in the agonies of despair, thou hast hid thy face "from us, and hath crushed us in the hand of our iniquity," Is. lxiv. 7; and, as this will be the most exquisite part of their punishment, so it occupies the first place in the sentence that will be passed against them on the day of judgment; "Depart from me, ye cursed!" Matt. xxv. 41; "I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity," Matt. vii. 23. I know, "not from whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity," Luke xiii. 27. *Depart from me!* that is the dreadful sentence; and hence St. Paul declares, that "They shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction, from the face of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 9. And being thus for ever separated from God, they are of course separated from all good, banished for ever from the society of his saints, and eternally cut off from the joys of heaven, for "Neither fornicators, nor idolaters,

nor adulterers, nor the effeminate, nor liars with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall possess the kingdom of God," 1 Cor. vi. 9. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest.....of which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God," Gal. v. 19; "for this know and understand, that no fornicator, nor unclean, nor covetous person, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ, and of God," Eph. v. 5. "Into that heavenly Jerusalem shall not enter anything defiled, or that worketh abomination, or maketh a lie," Rev. xxi. 27. "But without are dogs, and soreerers, and unchaste, and murderers, and servers of idols, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie," Rev. xxiii. 15.

(7.) The duration of their torments shall be for ever and ever, as long as God shall be God, for endless eternity; as is expressly declared in several of the texts above cited.

Q. 53. How can it be reconciled with the goodness of God to say, that he will punish his creatures for all eternity?

A. This is a difficulty which is much cried up by the free-thinkers, who deny all revelation; and on this ground they form their argument against what the Christian revelation teaches concerning the eternity of future punishments; but in this they act most irrationally, for it is a most evident truth, "that no arguments founded on principles which we cannot comprehend, can possibly disprove a proposition already proved on principles that we do understand. That the Christian revelation is from God and most infallibly true, is proved beyond reply by all the motives of credibility, which are arguments, of their own kind, suited to the capacity of every man of common understanding. What is becoming the Divine goodness, how infinite goodness and infinite justice can be reconciled in their respective operations, is infinitely above any finite understanding to comprehend. As the Christian revelation is from God, every article of it must be infallible truth. Although, therefore, *our finite understandings* should not be able to reconcile any revealed truth with our *finite and imperfect idea* of infinite goodness, yet this can never be any reason, either against the truth of revelation in general, or against any particular truth contained in it. Now, the eternity of hell's torments is a truth revealed by God, a fundamental article of the Christian revelation; consequently, although we cannot reconcile this truth with our *weak and imperfect idea* of the goodness of God, yet this can never have the smallest weight against that truth.

Q. 54. How does it appear that the eternity of hell's torments is a truth revealed by God?

A. From three very strong reasons: (1.) Because the holy scriptures every where represent these torments as *eternal*, as *never-ending*, as enduring *for ever and ever*; and this appears from numbers of these texts above cited. (2.) Because the Christian world has at all times, and in all places, declared this to be revealed truth, has always understood those texts in their literal and obvious sense; nor is it possible to show any other beginning for this belief than that of Christianity itself, as appears from the writings of Christians in all ages, and from the testimony and declaration of the church of Christ on all occasions. (3.) Because, in the fourth century, when the opposite doctrine began to be broached, it was immediately condemned by the whole Christian world, as an impious doctrine, contrary to the sacred word of God, and to the faith received from their predecessors. Hence it follows that, in order to disprove the eternity of hell's torments, the Deists must show, either that the Christian revelation is an imposture, or that this article is not a point of the Christian revelation; neither of which has it ever been in their power to do, notwithstanding all their efforts for that end.

Q. 55. From whence arises the mistake of those who deny the eternity of hell's torments?

A. From the false and unjust idea they form to themselves of the malice of sin; for, blinded by their passions, and inclined by the corruption of their heart to justify everything that is agreeable to their natural inclinations, they shut their eyes against the evil of sin, and the greatness of the injury committed by sin against the infinite majesty of God, and, on this account, fondly endeavour to persuade themselves, that, as sin, according to their notion of it, is but a trifling affair, it is inconsistent with the Divine goodness to punish it with eternal torments; all which is nothing else but reasoning upon false principles, and taking the argument by the wrong end. For, if they would argue rationally, they should reason in this manner: "God is infinitely just, and therefore can never punish sin more than it deserves; he is infinitely good, therefore must rather be inclined to punish it less than it deserves. But this infinitely just and good God has positively declared that he will punish mortal sin in the next world, with eternal torments; therefore sin must infallibly be an evil of infinite malice, however trifling it may appear to my self-love, and corrupt judg-

ment." This is a just way of reasoning, and founded on the most incontestable principles. And, would they but allow themselves to consider the malice of sin by the principles of reason itself, and not through the mist of passion, they would both be brought to the same conclusion, and at the same time be convinced that it highly deserves eternal punishment. For, even among ourselves, do not the constant feelings of our heart persuade us, that an offence, the same in itself as to the action is always the more grievous, the greater distance there is between the offender and the person offended? Do we not constantly decide, that the malice of the injury is always greater, the more exalted the person offended is in dignity above the offender? Seeing therefore, that there is an infinite distance between the most perfect creature that could be created, and God himself the Creator, it follows as a necessary consequence, that mortal sin, which is a grievous injury, done by the creature to the Creator, must contain a malice, in this respect, infinite; of course to be punished according to what it deserves, it must require an infinite punishment; but, as a finite creature could not subsist under a punishment infinite in its intenseness, it therefore must be infinite in its extension or duration, that is, must last for eternity.

It must also be further considered that God Almighty has forewarned sinners of their danger; he has told them beforehand what they have to expect, if they die in their sins. Now, when good and evil, life and death, are placed before their eyes, that they may choose which they please, if they wilfully choose that which God himself assures them will bring them to eternal damnation, is not damnation itself too small a punishment for such insolent madness? Instead of derogating from the goodness of God, that he declares he will punish impenitent sinners with eternal torments, if we consider things in the proper light, we shall find his goodness most admirably displayed in it: For can any man say how far in the very nature of the thing itself, satisfaction is due to infinite justice, for the infinite sanctity and mercy of God, abused and blasphemed by wicked men? To argue by the light of reason, and from what passes among ourselves, an infinite satisfaction would be required; and if this be the case, what is it but infinite goodness and mercy in God to warn men of their danger, and to tell them beforehand what they have to expect by sinning, that they may avoid that monster, and prevent their falling into endless misery? Nay, we may even go a step further, and observe

that it is even necessary, for the good of mankind, both that the torments of hell should be eternal, and that God should reveal it to the world. For, if the corruption of our heart be such, that, notwithstanding the belief of the eternity of these torments, wickedness and vice reign so universally, even among those who have that belief; what would be the case if they believed these torments would only be temporary? If even eternal punishments are not sufficient to restrain men from sin, what would be the case if the punishments of sin were only to last for a time, and then all end in endless happiness?

Q. 56. After all, what proportion is their betwixt sin, which is the action of a moment, and a punishment which is of eternal duration?

A. But who can assure us that sin is the action of a moment? Even though it were, it contains as we have seen, an infinite malice, because of the infinite dignity of the person of God, who is offended by it, and therefore deserves an infinite punishment. A stab given to a king, with a view to kill him, is only an action of a moment, and yet it is punished with prisons, confiscations, tortures, and death, which is a kind of infinite punishment as to this life. But what if the sin itself, in those who die guilty of it, should be eternal? The guilt of sin does not lie precisely in the outward action, which, indeed, is but the action of the moment, but in the malice of the will of the sinner who commits it; and, as long as the sinful action is unrepented of, so long the will adheres to it, and continues, as it were, in the virtual commission of it; because all that time it continues averted from God, and adhering to that sinful action by which God is offended. If a sinner dies in this state, it is manifest, that, as long as he continues in it, he must deserve punishment; and, if he continues in it for all eternity, he must deserve punishment. Now this is the very case: The same divine revelation which assures us that the pains of hell are eternal, assures us also, that after this life, there is no repentance; but that the miserable sinners condemned to those pains shall, for all eternity, be employed "in gnawing their tongues for pain, and blaspheming the God of heaven, because of their pains, and wounds, and do not repent for their works," Rev. xvi. 10. "A fire is kindled in my wrath," says Almighty God, "and shall burn even to the lowest hell—and I will heap evils upon them, and will spend my arrows among them—Oh that they would be wise and understand, and provide for their last end!" Dent. xxxii. 22, 29.

AN INQUIRY

WHETHER SALVATION CAN BE HAD WITHOUT TRUE FAITH, AND
OUT OF THE COMMUNION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST?

Introduction and State of the Question.

THERE is nothing in which the great apostle of the Gentiles seems more to glory than in his ardent zeal for the salvation of souls, and in the sincerity of his heart in delivering to the world the sacred truths of eternity pure and uncorrupted. He was not ashamed of these divine truths; he rejoiced when he was called to suffer for them; he had no worldly interest in view in preaching them; he sought not the esteem and favour of men in delivering them; his only view was to promote the honour of his blessed Master, and to gain souls to him, and therefore he had no idea of using flattering words, or of accommodating the doctrine of the gospel to the humours of men. He knew that the truths revealed by Jesus Christ are unalterable; that "heaven and earth shall pass away, but his words shall never pass away"; and that, therefore, to corrupt these sacred words, though but in one single article, would be "a perverting the gospel of Christ," Gal. i. 7, a sin so grievous, that the Holy Ghost, by his mouth, pronounces a curse upon any one, though an angel from heaven, who shall dare to be guilty of it. Hence he describes his own conduct in preaching the gospel, as follows: "Ye know from the first day that I came into Asia, in what manner I have been with you for all the time.....How I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have preached it to you, and taught you publicly, and from house to house," Acts xx. 18, 20. "We had confidence in God to speak to you the gospel of God in much carefulness.....not as pleasing men but God, who proveth our hearts, for neither have we used at any time the speech of flattery, as you know; nor taken occasion of covetousness, God is witness. Nor sought we glory of men, neither of you, nor of others," 1 Thess. ii. 2, 4; "for we are not as many, adulterating the word of God; but with sincerity, but as from God, in the sight of God, we speak in Christ," 2 Cor. ii. 17; "we renounce the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor adulterating the word of God, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's

conscience in the sight of God.....for we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ our Lord," 2 Cor. iv. 2, 5. "Do I speak to please men? If I yet pleased men I should not be a servant of Christ," Gal. i. 10. Now "Christ sent me to preach the gospel, not in wisdom of speech, lest the cross of Christ should be made void; for the word of the cross, to them, indeed, that perish, is foolishness; but to them that are saved, that is, to us, it is the power of God.....and it pleased God by the foolishness of our preaching to save them that believe.....for the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.....and the foolish things of the world God hath chosen, that he may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen that he may confound the strong.....that no flesh should glory in his sight," 1 Cor. i. "But I am not ashamed of the gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth," Rom. i. 16. And, therefore "I, when I came among you, came not in loftiness of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of Christ; and my preaching was not the persuasive words of human wisdom, but in showing of the Spirit, and in power, that your faith might not stand on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God," 1 Cor. ii. 1.

The church of Christ, animated by the same Divine Spirit of truth which inspired this holy apostle, has at all times and in all places, regulated her conduct according to the model set here before her in his words and example, "earnestly contending for the faith once delivered to the saints," Jude, verse 3; her continual vigilance and attention is, "to keep that which is committed to her trust, pure and undefiled," "avoiding all profane novelties of words," 1 Tim. ii. 20; that the sacred *words* of God "once put into her mouth, may never depart from her, from henceforth and for ever," Is. lix. 21. She, therefore, knows not what it is to temporize in religion, in order to please men, nor to adulterate the gospel of Christ to humour them; she declares the sacred truths revealed by Jesus Christ in their native simplicity, without endeavouring to gild them with the persuasive words or human wisdom; and much less to disguise them in a dress not their own. The naked truth is the only arms she opposes to all its adversaries, regardless of their censure or of their approbation. "This is the truth," says he, "revealed by God; this ye must embrace, or ye can have no part with him." If the world look upon what she says as foolishness, she is not surprised, for she knows that "the sensual man perceiveth not the things are of the Spirit of

God; for, it is foolishness to him and he cannot understand," 1 Cor. ii. 14; but that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men"; and pitying their blindness, she earnestly prays to God to enlighten them, with modesty admonishing them, if peradventure God may give them repentance to know the truth, 2 Tim. ii. 25.

If ever there was a time wherein the conduct of the church was necessary, this present age seems in a particular manner to demand it. At present, the gates of hell seem to be quite set open, and infidelity of every kind stalks lawless on the earth; the sacred truths of religion are reviled and denied, the gospel adulterated by innumerable opposite and contradictory interpretations fixed upon it; its native simplicity disguised by loftiness of speech and the persuasive words of human wisdom, and a thousand condescensions and compliances are admitted and received, by which the inflexible purity of its maxims is enervated both in faith and practice, and the "narrow way that leads to life" converted, in the opinion of men, "to the broad road that leads to destruction." This observation is particularly true in regard to that latitudinarian principle so common now-a-days, that *man may be saved in any religion, provided he lives a good moral life, according to the light he has*; for, by this, the faith of Christ is evacuated, and the gospel rendered of no avail; a Jew, a Turk, a Heathen, a Deist, an Atheist, are all comprehended in this scheme, and if they live a good moral life, have as good a right to salvation as a Christian! To be a member of the church of Christ is no longer necessary to salvation, whether we belong to her or not! What a wide field does this give to the passions of men! What liberty to all the whims of the human mind! It is, therefore, of the utmost consequence to examine upon what ground this principle stands; to see if it be sterling coin; to be satisfied whether we can trust our salvation to it or not. It is no doubt the interest of Atheists and Deists to adopt this maxim, to extol it with the highest praises, to adorn it with the most specious veil of liberality of sentiment and charity; but a Christian who believes the gospel, will not so readily receive it; he knows the scripture contains the truth of the most high God, and that it is perfectly unsafe to trust our soul to any maxim, however specious it may appear, which is not grounded in their sacred oracles; and, therefore, before he adopt it, he will rigorously scrutinize it by what they teach.

To do this is the design of the following inquiry, or rather to

show from the most precise declarations of the word of God, that the above free-thinking maxim is diametrically opposite to all the lights of revelation. For there we learn, that the Son of God became man, and appeared among men on purpose to instruct them in the knowledge of those Divine truths, on which their salvation depends; and, therefore, that he absolutely requires true faith in him, and in the sacred truths which he revealed, as a necessary condition to salvation. There also he learns, that he instituted a holy church upon earth, to be the depository of these truths, and that he absolutely requires of all to be united with that church in order to be saved. In the belief of these two general truths all Christian churches agree. The churches of *England* and *Scotland* solemnly acknowledge them as well as the church of Rome, and hold, that without the true faith of Jesus Christ, and without being a member of his true church, there is no salvation. However much they differ in their application, they all agree in the belief of these truths. So that it is the common cause of Christianity which is defended in this inquiry. The church to which the author belongs will easily appear, upon perusal of it; and if he applied these general truths to his own church, it is only because he believes it to be the true church. A member of any other church must do the same, if he reason consequentially; wherefore, without any further preamble, we shall proceed to the point, and show in the words of the confession of Faith of the Church of Scotland, *That out of the Church of Christ, there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.* Confess. of Faith, chap xxv.

Q. 1. How does this appear from the holy scriptures?

A. The holy scriptures are very clear upon this head; but, as the texts which declare it to us, propose it in different points of view, we shall here consider them separately for the greater clearness.

SECTION I.—*Direct Proofs from Scripture.*

(1.) The prophet Isaiah, foretelling the glory of the church of Christ, says, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that resisteth thee in judgment, thou shalt condemn," Isaiah liv. 17. "For the nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish," Isaiah lx. 12. Here we see declared in express terms, that all those who oppose the church of Christ, and refuse to submit to her

authority, shall be condemned by her, and shall perish. Our Saviour declares the same in still stronger terms, when he says to the pastors of his church, in the persons of his apostles, when he sent them to preach the gospel, "Whosoever shall not receive you, NOR HEAR YOUR WORDS, going forth out of that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Amen, I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city," Matt. x. 14.

(2.) Our Saviour, after ordering us to admonish our offending brother in private, or before a few witnesses, concludes thus, "If he will not hear them, tell the church. And, if he will not hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen or a publican," Matt. xviii. 17. The heathens are those who know not the true God, and who worship stocks and stones, and the very devils themselves, instead of God; the publicans were a set of people among the Jews, remarkable for their crimes, and looked upon by all as abandoned by God, and given up to a reprobate sense; with these, then, all those who obstinately resist the voice of the church, are classed and condemned by the mouth of Jesus Christ himself.

(3.) Our Saviour speaking of his church under the figure of a flock, of which he himself is the good shepherd, says "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd," John x. 16. He is here speaking of those who were not then joined in communion with his apostles and other disciples, and he calls them, at that time, "his sheep": but to show there was no salvation for them in the state they were in, and unless they were united to the fold, he says, "them also I must bring"; which shows, that according to the disposition of the Divine decrees, it was absolutely necessary, that all who belong to Jesus Christ, all whom he acknowledges for his sheep, should be brought to, and united in communion with, that *one fold*, which is his church.

(4.) In consequence of this, we are assured, that, when the apostles began to publish the gospel, "the Lord daily added to their society, such as should be saved"; or, as the Protestant translation has it, "The Lord daily added to the church such as should be saved," Acts ii. 47, which points out in the strongest manner, by what God actually did, that the being added to the church, is a condition absolutely required by him, in order to be saved; and, if that were so then, it must be so now, and will be so to the end of the world; for the conditions of salvation,

ordained at the beginning, and revealed by Jesus Christ, could never be altered by any other, and he never made any new revelation by which he altered them himself.

(5.) The church is the body of Christ, and all who belong to the church are members of his body, and as such are united with Jesus Christ, as the head; but those who are out of the church, are not members of his body, and of course are not united with Christ the head. Now, speaking of his church and all her members, under the figure of a vine, with all its branches united to it, he says, "I am the vine, ye the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If any one abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire, and he burneth," John xv. 5. What Christ here says, under the figure of a vine, is equally true as to members and the body; for no member that is separated from the body can do anything, it has neither life nor sense, nor motion, but corrupts and rots; which expressly shows, that if we be not united to the church of Christ, whether we consider this church as a body consisting of the head and members, or as a vine with all its branches, we are not united with Christ, and on that account are in the road to perdition.

(6.) These proofs are so strong and convincing, that the church of Scotland fairly acknowledges the truth of what we have laid down above, in the very terms in which we have proposed it; for, in her Confession of Faith, agreed upon by the divines of Westminster, approved by the General Assembly, in the year 1647, and ratified by Act of Parliament in 1649, in the chapter upon the church, she speaks thus, "The visible church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel, (not confined to one nation, as before, under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, and of their children, and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation," Conf. of Faith, ch. xxv.

SECTION II.—*Proofs from the Necessity of True Faith.*

(1.) Jesus Christ, addressing himself to his eternal Father, says, "This is eternal life, that they may know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3. Hence it necessarily follows, that all those who do not know

Jesus Christ cannot have eternal life. Now, this knowledge of Jesus Christ, is not the bare knowledge that there was such a person, but the believing him to be what he is, the eternal Son of God, made man for the salvation of mankind; and, therefore, he says again, "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting," John iii. 16. Hence the believing in Jesus Christ, is one condition positively required by God, in order to salvation; so that without this belief there can be no salvation; for, as he himself again declares, "He that believeth not, is already condemned; because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God," John iii. 18, and "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see light; but the wrath of God abideth on him," John iii. 36. And the beloved disciple adds, "Many seducers are gone out into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh; this is a seducer and an antichrist," 2 John 7. Where it is manifest, that those who do not know Jesus Christ, and consequently do not believe in him; and also that those who do not know there was such a person, who heard of him, but refuse to believe, and *confess* that he is the Son of God *come in the flesh*, cannot be saved; and therefore, that the knowing and believing in Jesus Christ, is appointed by Almighty God, as an absolute condition of salvation.

2. But it is not enough to believe in the person of Jesus Christ; it is also required to believe his doctrine, to believe his words, to believe those divine truths which he has revealed; and, indeed, how can we believe him to be God, if we refuse to believe what he says? Hence, when he gave the pastors of his church, in the persons of his apostles, their commission to preach the gospel, he ordered them to teach the world, "to observe," says he, "all those things whatsoever I have commanded you," Matt. xxviii. 20. And he immediately adds, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned," Mark xvi. 16. Where it is manifest, that the belief of his doctrine, the observance, and consequently the belief of all those things which he commanded his apostles to teach, is required as a necessary condition of salvation. Nay, he adds in another part, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this sinful and adulterous generation, him also the Son of Man shall be ashamed of, when he shall come in the glory of his Father, with his

holy angels," Mark viii. 38. Now, if the being ashamed of his words shall bring on such a condemnation, what shall the denying them do? It is evident, therefore, that the true faith of Jesus Christ comprehends the belief both of his person and of his words, that is, of his doctrine; and that this true faith is laid down by Almighty God as a necessary condition of salvation.

(3.) As it is impossible that Jesus Christ should reveal contradictions, or say to one that a thing is true, and to another that it is false; hence it follows, that the true faith of Jesus Christ cannot contain contradictions; and, therefore, that it must be one and the same every where, and in no point contrary to itself; and this the scripture expressly confirms, saying, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," Eph. iv. 5. Now, St. Paul positively declares, that "without faith, it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6. Consequently this one true faith of Jesus Christ is so absolutely required as a condition of salvation, that without it, let a man do what he will, it is impossible to please God, or be saved.

(4.) The Scripture declares, that, when the apostles published the truths of the gospel, "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," Acts xiii. 48; consequently those who did not believe were not ordained to eternal life; whence it evidently follows, that faith is a condition absolutely required by God for obtaining eternal life. For St. Paul affirms, "The sure foundation of God standeth firm, having this seal, The Lord knoweth who are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19; that is to say, God, from all eternity, most certainly knows who are his; who those are, who, by obeying his holy grace, will continue faithful to the end, and be happy with him for ever; and all such he ordains to eternal life. When, therefore, the scripture affirms, that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," it evidently shows, that the belief of the truths of the gospel, or true faith, is appointed by God as a necessary condition of salvation, as none are so ordained but those who believe.

(5.) Our blessed Saviour, speaking of those who belong to him says, "I know mine, and mine know me.....My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give them eternal life, and they shall not perish for ever," John x. 13, 27. Can any words express more clearly, that to know Jesus Christ, and to hear his voice, and follow him, that is, to believe and obey him, are the distinguishing characters of his sheep, to whom he gives eternal life? Consequently, those who

do not believe him are none of his, and therefore will not be saved; as he expressly says to the Jews, "but ye do not believe, because ye are not of my sheep," John x. 26; "and if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins," John viii. 24; which shows to a demonstration, that faith in Jesus Christ is expressly appointed by Almighty God, as a condition of salvation; "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved," Acts iv. 12.

(6.) St. Paul, expressing that of the Psalmist, "To-day if ye shall hear his voice," &c., says, "And to whom did he swear that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that were incredulous; and we see that they could not enter in, because of unbelief," Heb. iii. 18. On this account he exhorts thus: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief to depart from the living God," Heb. iii. 12; and again, "There remaineth the day of rest for the people of Godlet us hasten, therefore, to enter into that rest, lest any man fall into the same example of unbelief," Heb. iv. 9, 11. In all this passage, we see that the main scope of the apostle is to show, that unbelievers cannot go to heaven, and that this truth is confirmed by Almighty God even with a solemn oath.

(7.) The holy scripture declares that unbelievers, instead of going to heaven, shall be condemned to hell fire, and classes all such in company with the worst of criminals. Thus the Almighty himself declares to St. John the apostle, "But the fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, they shall have their portion in the pool burning with fire and brimstone, which is the second death," Rev. xxi. 8. If, therefore, Almighty God has sworn that unbelievers shall not enter into his rest, and if he declares that their portion shall be in hell, one must shut his eyes on purpose not to see that true belief, true faith in Jesus Christ, and his words, namely, that faith, *without which it is impossible to please God*, is absolutely required by Almighty God as a condition of salvation.

(8.) The word of God assures us, that, antecedently to faith in Christ, all mankind are under sin, and that it is impossible to be justified from sin but by faith in Jesus Christ, which is set forth by God as the means for obtaining justification. Thus "we have charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin, as it is written, There is not any man just," Rom. iii. 9.

But the justice of God is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe in him ; for there is no distinction ; for all have sinned, and do need the glory of God ; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood," Rom. iii. 22. Also, "The scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by the faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe," Gal. iii. 22.

(9.) These sacred testimonies of the word of God are so manifest and convincing, that the Church of England admits and embraces the Athanasian Creed, as containing nothing but divine truths, and what may *be proved by the most evident texts of scripture*, as is declared in the 8th of the 39 Articles. Now, the Athanasian Creed begins thus : "Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith, which faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." Then after explaining the great mysteries of the Catholic faith, concerning the Unity and Trinity of God, and the Incarnation and Death of Jesus Christ, it concludes in these words : "This is the Catholic faith, which, except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." This speaks plain indeed, and needs no application.

Now, seeing the true faith, or the firm belief of those truths which Jesus Christ revealed, is thus absolutely required as a condition of salvation, it follows as a necessary consequence, that, out of the true church of Christ there is no salvation, because this true faith can only be found in the true church of Christ ; to her the sacred charge of the truths of eternity was committed, the words of Jesus Christ were first put in her mouth, and an express covenant made by God, *That they should never depart from her mouth*. It is therefore from the pastors of the church alone we can learn the true faith, since they alone are authorized to preach it, and, hearing them, we hear Christ himself. Hence St. Paul says, "How shall they believe him of whom they have not heard ? and how shall they hear without a preacher ? and how shall they preach unless they be sent ?" Rom. x. 14. Now, the pastors of the church were ordained and sent by Jesus Christ to "teach all nations, and to preach the gospel to every creature," consequently, it is only from them that the truths of the gospel can be learned.

SECTION III.—*Proofs with regard to those who are separated from the Church.*

In this section we are to consider what judgment the scriptures pronounce upon all those who are separated from the church of Christ by teaching and believing doctrines contrary to hers; and, for the greater clearness, we shall first consider those who begin such separation, and teach false doctrine, and then those who follow such leaders. With regard to the former.

(1.) Our blessed Saviour, foretelling the coming of false teachers, says, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves; by their fruits ye shall know them"; and then he tells us, going on with the similitude of a tree, what shall be the portion of such false prophets. "Every tree," says he, "that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down and cast into the fire," Matt. vii. 15, 19. Such is the fate of false teachers, according to Jesus Christ. St. Paul describes them in the same light, and exhorts the pastors of the church to watch against them, that they may prevent the seduction of the flock. "I know," says he, "that, after my departure, ravening wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch," Acts xx. 29. Such is the idea the word of God gives of all those who depart from the doctrine of the church of Christ, and teach falsehood, that they are *ravenous wolves, seducers of the people, who speak perverse things, and whose end is hell fire.*

(2.) St. Paul concluding his epistle to the Romans, cautions them against all such teachers in these words: "Now, I beseech you, brethren, to mark them who cause dissensions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and to avoid them: for they that are such serve not Christ our Lord, but their own belly, and by pleasing speeches, and good words, seduce the hearts of the innocent," Rom. xvi. 17. Can such as these, who cause dissensions contrary to the old doctrine, and seduce the souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus, who are not servants of Christ, but his enemies, and are slaves to their own belly: can these, I say, be in the way of salvation? Alas! the same holy apostle describes their fate in another text, saying, "That they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame," Phil. iii. 18.

(3.) In St. Paul's absence, some false teachers had come in among the Galatians, and persuaded them, that it was *necessary* for salvation to join circumcision with the gospel; on this account, the apostle writes his epistle to them to correct them from this error; and though it was but an error in one point, and in appearance of no great importance, yet, because it was false doctrine, see how the holy apostle condemns it: "I wonder how you are so soon removed from him that called you to the grace of Christ, unto another gospel; which is not another; only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you, besides that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we said before, I say now again, if any one preach to you a gospel besides that which ye have received, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 6. This shows with a witness, indeed, the great crime and dismal fate of false teachers, though but in one only point of false doctrine.

(4.) St. Peter describes these unhappy men in the most dreadful colours. "There shall be among you," says he, "lying teachers, who shall bring sects of perdition (or, as the Protestant translation has it, *damnable heresies*), and deny the Lord who bought them, bringing on themselves swift destruction," 2 Pet. ii. 1; and going on to describe them, he says, "Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their destruction slumbereth not," verse 3; "the Lord knoweth how.....to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be tormented; and especially them who.....despise governments, audacious, pleasing themselves, they fear not to bring in sects, blaspheming," verse 9; "leaving the right way, they have gone astray," verse 15; "these are wells without water, and clouds tossed with whirlwinds, to whom the midst of darkness is reserved," verse 17. Good God! what a dreadful state to be in.

(5.) St. Paul, speaking of such as are led away by what St. Peter calls *damnable heresies*, says, "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, avoid; knowing that he that is such a one, is subverted and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment," Titus iii. 10. Other offenders are judged, and cast out of the church, by the sentence of the pastors of the same church; but heretics more unhappy than they, run out of the church of their own accord, and, by so doing, give judgment and sentence against their own souls.

(6.) St. John brands all such false teachers who go out from

the true church of Christ with the horrid name of antichrists; "Even now," says he, "there are become many antichrists..... they went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would, no doubt, have remained with us; but that they may be manifest that they are not all of us," 1 John ii. 18. And again he says, "Many seducers are gone out into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, this is a seducer and an antichrist," 2 John, verse 7; and to show that not only those who deny the Divinity of Jesus Christ, but also those who do not embrace his doctrine, fall under the same condemnation, he immediately adds, "Whosoever revolteth, and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that continueth in the doctrine, the same hath both the Father and the Son," verse 9. What stronger terms could be used to show that all such as separate from the church of Christ, and receive not his sacred doctrine, are out of the way of salvation?

Now, if all those who break off from the church of Christ, and all those who teach false doctrine, contrary to "the faith once revealed to her, and which shall never depart out of her mouth," are condemned in such strong and severe terms by the Holy Ghost in his holy scriptures, what condition must those be in who follow such false teachers, and hold such pernicious doctrine? Is there the smallest reason to suppose, that salvation can possibly be found among "ravening wolves, seducers of the flock, speakers of perverse things"? Is it possible to be saved in "pernicious sects, damnable heresies, false doctrines, dissensions and offences contrary to the doctrine received from the apostles"? Can those be sure guides to heaven whom the word of God declares to be "enemies of the cross of Christ," and "antichrists, whose end is destruction," who fall under the curse of the apostle, "to whom the mist of darkness is reserved"? But let us hear the scripture itself for the answer to these questions?

(1.) St. Paul, in the black catalogue he gives of the works of the flesh reckons *sects*, or as the Protestant translation has it, *heresies*, for one of them, and classing this with *idolatry*, *witchcraft*, *dissensions*, and the rest of that hideous crew, he concludes in these words, "of which I fortell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God," Gal. v. 20.

(2.) Our Saviour, foretelling the evils of the latter times, says, "and many false prophets shall arise, and shall seduce many

.....but he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved," Matt. xxiv. 11, 13. Is it not evident from this, that those who are seduced by these false prophets shall not be saved? and that salvation will be the happy lot only of those who persevere in the faith and love of Christ to the end?

(3.) St. Peter, foretelling that "there shall be lying teachers, who shall bring in damnable heresies, and bring upon themselves swift destruction," immediately adds, "and many shall follow their riotousness," (or, as the Protestant translation has it, *their pernicious ways*,) "through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of," 2 Pet. ii. 2. Now, to whom are these ways pernicious, but to those who follow them?

(4.) The whole epistle of St. Jude contains a description of all those who follow these pernicious ways, and of their miserable fate, and says, "that they are raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own confusion, wandering stars, to whom the storm of darkness is reserved for ever," verse 13.

(5.) St. Paul declares "that in the last time some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to spirits of error, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, and having their consciences seared," 1 Tim. iv. 1. Can anyone imagine salvation is possible to those who follow the spirit of error for their guide, and embrace the doctrine of devils?

(6.) The same holy apostle, giving an ample description of heretics, says, among other things, that they have "an appearance of godliness, but deny the power thereof.....ever learning and never attaining the knowledge of the truth.....that they are men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.....and that being evil men and seducers, they grow worse and worse, erring and driving into error," 2 Tim. iii. What grounds can such as these have to expect salvation?

(7.) But our Blessed Saviour, in one short sentence, clearly shows the miserable fate of all those who follow these teachers, when he says, "they are blind leaders of the blind, and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the pit," Matt. xv. 14, which evidently shows that the lot of both shall be the same, and that all the above dreadful condemnations of false teachers equally belong to such as follow them.

(8.) These testimonies of scripture are so strong and convincing, that the church of England fairly acknowledges the truth of what they contain, and in the 18th of her Thirty-nine Articles, declares, "That those ARE TO BE HAD ACCURSED, that presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or

sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature. For the holy scripture doth set out to us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby man must be saved." And we have evidently seen above that salvation can never be had in him, without believing the sacred doctrine which he revealed to the world.

(9.) We shall add one proof more with regard to Jews, Turks, Heathens, and Idolators, and all who know not the true God, nor Jesus Christ his Son, and who do not obey his gospel; of these the scripture says, "The Gentiles have stuck fast in the destruction which they prepared.....the wicked shall be turned into hell, and the nations that forget God," Ps. ix. 16, 18. "The Lord shall reign to eternity, yea for ever and ever. Ye Gentiles (*the Heathens*) shall perish from his land," Ps. x. 16. But particularly what follows: "Jesus Christ shall be revealed from heaven with the angels of his power, in a flame of fire, yielding vengeance to them who know not God, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction from the face of our Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 7. This is no less clear and precise than it is dreadful and terrible, and cuts off all evasion, as it declares in the most express terms, that all those who know not God, and who obey not the gospel of Christ, shall be lost for ever; which evidently shows that the knowledge and belief of God, and of Jesus Christ and obedience to his gospel, are absolutely required by him as essential conditions of salvation.

Q. 2. These proofs are all very strong indeed, but what is the result of all these reasonings and scripture testimonies?

A. The consequence of these is self-evident, to wit, that since salvation cannot be had in any sect of people separated in faith from the church of Christ, and teaching false doctrine; therefore the Church of Christ is the only road set forth to us by Almighty God in which we can be saved, and out of her communion there is no *ordinary possibility of salvation*.

Q. 3. Why do you say *ordinary possibility of salvation*? Is there any reason to suppose that God has reserved any extraordinary means of salvation for some who are not joined in communion with the church of Christ by the true faith?

(A.) No doubt, it is (absolutely speaking) *possible* for God to save men by any means he pleases; and he could have saved all mankind through the merits of any one thing that Jesus Christ did or suffered, without requiring such a severe sacrifice

from him as his death upon the cross. But whatever God can do in this respect, is nothing to our purpose; the great question for us is to know what he has done. Now, we have seen above, from the whole tenor of revelation, that God has appointed true faith in Jesus Christ, and the being a member of his church, as conditions of salvation. That he has appointed them as essential conditions, so that none *will* or *can* be saved without them. That the word of God points out no other possible way by which man can be saved; nay, that whatever extraordinary ways he may sometime take to bring people to his church, yet according to the manner he has spoken in many of the above texts on this subject, it is impossible he should, in fact, have reserved any *extraordinary* means of salvation for those who live and die not joined in communion with the church of Christ by true faith, otherwise he would contradict himself, and give the lie to his own words, which is absolutely impossible. For instance, these two express declarations of scripture, "The Lord daily added to the church such as should be saved," and, "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed," would not be true, if there was any possibility for those to be saved who were not added to the church, or did not believe. The same is equally true in most of the other texts, as will appear on considering them.

Q. 4. Is it not a very uncharitable doctrine to say that none can be saved out of the church, or who do not believe as the church does?

A. If this doctrine were a mere human opinion, or the result only of human reasoning, it might be looked upon as uncharitable, or in any other light one pleases; but it is a doctrine in which mere human reason does not enter. It is a point which solely depends upon the will of the Almighty: and the only question is to know, what he has been pleased to decide concerning it. Now the whole doctrine of his holy scripture, concerning this point, declares in the plainest and strongest terms, that he has been pleased to ordain, that none shall be saved out of the church of Christ, or without the true faith; and who shall dare to say a *doctrine* taught and declared by the great God, is *uncharitable*? But the mistake that many fall into in this point arises from not reflecting, that God Almighty is not obliged to save any one. He pursued the fallen angels with the utmost rigour of justice, and he could justly have treated man in the same way. If, therefore, he is pleased to offer salvation to mankind, through the merits of Jesus Christ, this is all the

effect of his infinite goodness and mercy ; but as he is perfect master of his own gifts, he certainly is at full liberty to require what conditions he pleases for bestowing his gifts upon us. Now, the whole tenor of his revealed will declares to us, that he requires our being members of his church, and our having the true faith of Jesus Christ, as indispensable conditions of salvation ; and who shall dare to find fault with him for doing so ? or say it is an uncharitable opinion to think and believe what he has so expressly and so repeatedly declared in his holy scriptures ?

Observe further, that it is not the Catholic church alone that holds this doctrine. We have seen above, that the fathers and founders of the Protestant church of Scotland hold, in express terms, that "out of the true church of Christ there is no ordinary possibility of salvation" ; and have inserted it as an article of their faith, in the public authentic standard of their religion, *the Confession of Faith*, which all her ministers are obliged to subscribe. The church of England also, in the same authentic manner declares, as an article of her Creed, "That except a man do keep the catholic faith whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly" ; and assures her members, that this Creed can be proved by the most evident texts of holy scripture ; which, therefore, all her ministers are also obliged to subscribe : moreover she affirms, that "those are to be had accursed who presume to say, that every man (*even though he be not in the true faith of Jesus Christ*) shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth." If, therefore, this doctrine be deemed uncharitable, the churches, both of England and Scotland, must evidently fall under this condemnation. It is true, indeed, that, though the founders of these churches, convinced by the repeated and evident testimonies of the word of God, embraced this truth, and inserted it as a Divine truth revealed by God, in the public authentic standards of their religion ; yet their posterity now disclaim it and cry out against the Catholic church as uncharitable for holding it ; but this only shows their inconsistency with themselves, and that they are void of all certainty in what they believe ; for, if it was a Divine truth, when these religions were founded, that *out of the true church, and without the catholic faith, there is no salvation*, it must be so still ; and if their first founders were mistaken in this point, what security can their followers now have for any other thing they taught ? But the Catholic church, always like herself, constant and uniform in her doctrine, and always

preserving the *words once put in her mouth*, by her Divine Master, at all times and in all ages, has believed and taught the same doctrine, as a truth revealed by God, that “out of the true church of Christ, and without his true faith, there is no possibility of salvation”; and the most authentic public testimony of her enemies themselves, gives proof that this doctrine is the doctrine of Jesus, and of his holy gospel, whatsoever private persons, for selfish and interested views, may say to the contrary. Neither is she afraid of being thought uncharitable on this account. On the contrary, she considers it as the height of charity to warn men of their danger, in an affair of so immense importance as is that of their eternal salvation, and, with the most tender compassion for their situation, uses every means in her power, particularly by her most fervent prayers to God, for the conversion of all that are out of the true way, that they may be brought to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved. And this is true charity; for charity is a virtue of the heart, which makes a man love his neighbour’s soul, and endeavour to promote his salvation; and that only can be called a charitable opinion, which tends to excite and promote this disposition of the heart; whereas a contrary opinion, which makes a man careless and indifferent about his neighbour’s soul, is the only opinion which deserves to be called uncharitable. It is plain, therefore, that the charge of being uncharitable is nothing but a malicious misrepresentation, and gross slander, invented only to render the Catholic church and her doctrine odious. Her enemies saw that want of charity was a crime shocking, at the first sight, to a well-disposed mind, and could not fail to excite odium and aversion, if charged upon her. They knew their followers, who are ever ready to swallow down anything against her, who would never take pains to examine what grounds there are for such a charge, and would take it for granted that she was guilty upon their bold assertion; and the event has too well verified their opinion. But the smallest attention must show that her conduct in this point is the effect of her great charity. Was St. Paul uncharitable when he declared, that “neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, &c., shall possess the kingdom of God”? 1 Cor. vi. 9; or when he pronounced “a curse upon any one, though an angel from heaven, who should preach any other gospel than what he had preached”? Gal. i. 8. Quite the contrary: It was his ardent charity and zeal for their salvation which made him so earnest in warning them of their danger. How then can the Catholic

church be deemed uncharitable, for only saying what he says, and from the same charitable motive? An unfavourable opinion she certainly has of all those who are not of her communion; but to call it uncharitable, is a mere imposition upon the unthinking.

Q. 5. But, if a man act according to the dictates of his conscience, and follow exactly the light of reason which God has implanted in him for his guide, is not that sufficient to bring him to salvation?

A. This is, indeed, a specious proposition; but a great mistake lurks under it. When man was first created, his reason was then an enlightened reason. Illuminated by the grace of original righteousness, with which his soul was adorned, reason and conscience were then sure guides to conduct him in the way of salvation. But by sin this light was miserably darkened, and his reason became a prey to ignorance and error. It was not, indeed, entirely extinguished; it still clearly teaches him many great truths with regard to his conduct, but is at present so apt to be led astray by pride, passion, prejudice, and other such corrupt motives, that in numberless instances, it serves only to confirm him in his error, by giving an appearance of reason to the suggestions of self-love and passion. And this is too commonly the case, even in natural things; but, in regard to supernatural things, concerning God and eternity, if left to itself, our reason is perfectly blind. To remedy this misery, God has given us the light of faith, as a sure and certain guide to conduct us to salvation, and has appointed his holy church as the guardian and depository of this heavenly light; consequently, though a man pretend to act according to reason and conscience, and even flatter himself that he does so, in things that regard his soul; yet, if this reason and conscience be not enlightened and guided by the light of the true faith, it can never be sufficient of itself to bring him to salvation.

Q. 6. Does the holy scripture give any light in this matter?

A. Nothing can be more striking than what the holy scripture says upon it. "There is a way," says the wise man, "that seemeth right to a man, but the ends thereof lead to death," Prov. xiv. 12. And it is again repeated, Prov. xvi. 25. What can be more plain than this, to show that a man may act according to what he thinks the light of reason and conscience, and be persuaded he is doing right, and yet be, in fact, running on in the road to perdition? And do not all those who are seduced by false prophets, and false teachers, think they are in the

right way? Is it not under the pretext of acting according to conscience that they are seduced by them? and yet the mouth of truth itself has expressly declared, that, "if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the pit," Matt. xv. 14. Yea, the same eternal truth, to show us to what excess of wickedness man is capable of going, under the pretence of following his conscience, says to his apostles, "the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God a service," John xvi. 2. But observe what he adds, "and these things will they do, because they have not known the Father nor me," verse 3. Which shows that, if one has not the true knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, which can only be got by his true faith, there is nothing so enormous but what he is capable of, and yet think he is acting according to reason and conscience. Indeed, had God given us no other guide but the light of reason, such as it is, to direct us, we might have, in some degree, been excused in following that light; but, as he has given us an external guide in his holy church, to rectify our blinded reason by the light of faith, our reason alone, unassisted by this guide, can never be sufficient for salvation.

But nothing will set this matter in a clearer light than to consider some particular examples. Conscience tells a Heathen that it is not only lawful, but a duty to worship idols, and to offer up sacrifices to stocks and stones, the work of men's hands. Will his acting in this manner, according to his conscience, save him? or will these acts of idolatry be innocent or agreeable in the sight of God; because they are performed according to conscience? See above, § 3, number 9, the answer which the word of God gives to this question; to which add that of the wise man, "The idol that is made by hands is cursed, as well as he that made it.....for that which is made, together with him that made it, shall suffer torments," Wisd. xiv. 8, 10; also, "He that sacrificeth to gods shall be put to death, save only to the Lord," Exod. xxii. 20. In like manner, a Jew's conscience tells him that he may lawfully and meritoriously blaspheme Jesus Christ, and approve the conduct of his forefathers for putting him to death upon a tree. Will such blasphemy save him, because it is according to the dictates of his conscience? The Holy Ghost, by the mouth of St. Paul, says, "If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema," that is, "accursed," 1 Cor. xvi. 22. A turk is taught by his conscience that it would be a crime to believe in Jesus Christ, and not to believe in Mahomet; will this impious conscience

save him? The scripture assures us that "there is no other name given to men under heaven, by which we can be saved," but the name of Jesus only; and, "he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God remaineth on him." All the various sects which have been separated from the true church, in every age, have uniformly and constantly calumniated and slandered her, and spoken evil of the way of truth professed by her, and were persuaded in their consciences, that it was lawful and meritorious to do so, so as even to oblige their teachers, from time to time, to preach all the evil they could say against her to their people from their pulpits. Will calumnies and slanders against the spouse of Jesus Christ save them, because their conscience approves them? The word of God declares, "That the nation and the kingdom that will not serve her, shall perish"; and "there shall be lying teachers who shall bring in damnable heresies, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.....through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of," 2 Pet. ii. In all these, in such like cases, their conscience is their greatest crime, and shows to what a pitch of impiety our conscience and reason can lead us, when under the influence of pride, passion, prejudice, and self-love; and therefore, that these alone, can never be guides to salvation, unless enlightened and directed by the sacred beams of revealed truths.

Q. 7. But suppose a person to be *invincibly ignorant* of the faith of Jesus Christ and his church, will not this *invincible ignorance* save him?

A. This is also a very specious proposition, and I am afraid for want of being properly sifted and considered, serves as an occasion of some dangerous mistakes in this matter; we shall, therefore, endeavour to examine it thoroughly. And here we must observe, that two different questions are commonly blended together in one, when people speak of invincible ignorance; the first is, *will a person who is invincibly ignorant of the true faith or church of Christ be condemned precisely on account of that ignorance?* That is, *will that ignorance be imputed to him as a crime?* or will this *his invincible ignorance* excuse him from the guilt of not believing? To this I reply, that, as no man can be guilty of a sin for not doing what it is absolutely out of his power to do, therefore, a person who is invincibly ignorant of the true faith and church of Christ, will not be condemned precisely on account of that ignorance; such ignorance will not be imputed to him as a crime; but will undoubtedly

excuse him from the guilt of not believing. In this all divines agree without the least doubt or hesitation; so that a Heathen, for example, that never heard of Jesus Christ, will not be condemned as a criminal, precisely for want of faith in him; a heretic that never had any knowledge of the true church of Christ will not be condemned as guilty for not being joined in communion with that church. And so far the first question admits of no dispute. The second question is this, *Can a person invincibly ignorant of the true faith or church of Jesus, and living and dying in that state, be saved?* This is a very different question from the former, and of the highest importance, though it is too commonly confounded with the former, and from this arises the mistake that many are apt to fall into in this matter. Now, to answer this question clearly and distinctly, we must consider two different cases; first, with regard to those Turks, Jews, and Heathens, who, having never heard of Jesus Christ, nor of his religion, are invincibly ignorant of it, many of whom there are in the world; and, secondly, with regard to all those different sects of Christians who are separated from the true church of Christ by heresy.

Q. 8. What then is to be said of all those Turks, Jews, and Heathens, who having never heard of Jesus Christ, or of his religion, are, therefore, invincibly ignorant of both; can they be saved, if they live and die in that state?

A. The plain answer to this is, that they cannot be saved, that not one of these "can enter into the kingdom of God." It is true, as we have seen above, they will not be condemned as criminal, precisely because they have not the faith of Christ, of which they are invincibly ignorant. But the faith of Christ, though an essential condition of salvation, is but one condition; others are also required. And though invincible ignorance will certainly save a man from sin, in wanting that of which he is invincibly ignorant, yet it is plainly impossible and childish to suppose, that this invincible ignorance in one point will make up for the want of all other conditions required. Now all those we here speak of are in the state of original sin, "aliens from God; and children of wrath," as the scripture calls all such, and unbaptised; and it is a constant article of the Christian faith, that, except original sin be washed away by the grace of baptism, there is no salvation; for Christ himself expressly declares, "Amen, amen, I say to thee, Except a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii. 5. And, indeed, if even the children

of Christian parents, who die without baptism, cannot go to heaven, how much less can those go there, who, besides being never baptised, are supposed, in the present case, to live and die in ignorance of the true God, or of Jesus Christ and his faith, and, on that account, must also be supposed to have committed many actual sins themselves. Nay, to suppose that Heathens, Turks, or Jews who live and die in that state, can be saved, is to suppose that worshippers of idols, and of Mahomet, and blasphemers of Jesus Christ, can be saved in the guilt of original sin, as well as of all those actual crimes by their ignorance; which is putting them upon a better footing, by far, than even Christians themselves and their children. The fate of all such the scripture decides as follows, "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with the angel of his power, in a flame of fire, yielding vengeance to them who know not God and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction, from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his power," 2 Thess. i. 7. This is precise, indeed, and a clear and decisive answer to the present question.

Q. 9. What judgment does the scripture make of all those various sects of Christians who are separated from the church by heresy? Can they be saved if they be in invincible ignorance and live and die in their state of separation from the true church of Christ?

A. These are certainly in a very different state from the Turks, Jews, and Heathens, provided they have true baptism among them; for if they either have no baptism at all, or have altered the way of giving it from what Christ ordained, then they are in no better state as to their possibility of salvation than the Turks, Jews, or Heathens themselves, however much they may boast of the name of Christians. But if they have true baptism among them, then they are, by baptism, made true members of the church of Christ, and as many of them as die young, in their baptismal innocence, will undoubtedly be saved. But as for those among them who come to the years of discretion, and being educated in a false faith, live and die in a state of separation from the communion of the church of Christ, to give a clear and distinct answer to the question with regard to them, we also must distinguish two different cases; the *first* is of those who either live among Catholics, or have Catholics living in the same country among them, who know there are such people, and often hear about them: the *second* regards

those who have no such acquaintance of Catholics, who have no opportunity of such acquaintance, and who seldom or never hear about them, except in a false and odious light.

Q. 10. What is to be said of those who live among Catholics? If they be in invincible ignorance, and die in their state of separation, can they be saved?

A. It is next to impossible for any one in this class to be in invincible ignorance; for, to be in invincible ignorance, three things are necessarily required, *first*, that *a person have a real and sincere desire of knowing the truth*; for if he be cold and indifferent about an affair of so great concern as that of his eternal salvation; if he be careless whether he be in a right way or not; if being enslaved to this present life, he take no concern about the next, it is manifest, that an ignorance arising from this disposition is a *voluntary ignorance*, and therefore highly culpable in the sight of God. It will be still worse, if a person be positively unwilling to seek after the truth, from the fear of worldly inconveniences, and, therefore, industriously avoid every opportunity he may have of knowing it; of such as these the scripture says, "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to hell; who have said to God, Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways," Job. xxi. 13. *Secondly*, For one to be in invincible ignorance, it is required, *That he be sincerely resolved to embrace the truth wherever he may find it and whatever it may cost him*. For if he be not fully resolved to follow the will of God, wherever it shall appear to him, in all things necessary to salvation; if, on the contrary, he be so disposed, that he would rather neglect his duty, and hazard his soul, than correct an ill custom, or disoblige his friends, or expose himself to some temporal loss or disadvantage, such a disposition must be highly displeasing to God, and an ignorance arising from it, can never excuse him before his Creator; of this our Saviour says, "He that loveth father or mother, or son or daughter, more than me, is not worthy of me," Matt. x. 37. The *third* thing necessary for a person to be in invincible ignorance is, *That he sincerely use his best endeavours to know his duty, and particularly that he recommend the matter earnestly to Almighty God, and pray for light and direction from him*. For, whatever desire he may pretend to have of knowing the truth, if he do not use the proper means for finding it, it is manifest that his ignorance is *not invincible*, but *voluntary*; for ignorance is only there invincible, when a person has a sincere desire to know the truth, with a full

resolution to embrace it, but either has no possible means for knowing it, or after using his best endeavours to know it, yet cannot find it. And, therefore, if a person be deficient in using his endeavours to know his duty, his ignorance is not invincible, it is by his own fault that he does not see it; and, if inattention, indifference, unconcernedness, worldly motives, or unjust prejudices influence his judgment, and suffer it to yield to the bias of a perverse education, he has neither *invincible ignorance* nor *the fear of God*. Now it is inconsistent with the goodness and promises of God, that a person brought up in a false religion, but who is disposed as these three conditions require, and uses his best endeavours to know the truth, should be left in an invincible ignorance of it; and if, from his attachment to the world, and to sensual or other selfish objects, he be not so disposed, and neglect to use the proper means for coming at the truth, then his ignorance is *voluntary and culpable*, and therefore not *invincible*.

Q. 11. But what if the doubt never rise in his mind about the matter, and he go on, *bona fide*, in the way he was brought up in?

A. It is a great mistake to suppose that a formal doubt, concerning any branch of duty, is necessary to make one's ignorance of his duty voluntary and culpable; it is enough to make his ignorance blameable, that there be sufficient reasons for doubting, though from his unjust prejudices, from folly, precipitation, and rashness, from obstinacy and pride, or other such depravations of the heart, he hinder these reasons from exciting a formal doubt in the mind. Saul had no doubt of his doing well when he offered sacrifice before the prophet Samuel came; on the contrary, he was persuaded he had the strongest reasons for doing so, and yet he was condemned for that very action, and himself and family rejected by Almighty God. The Jews had no doubt but that they were acting well when they put our Saviour to death; nay, their high-priest declared in full council, that it was expedient for the good and safety of the nation that they should do so. They were grossly mistaken, indeed, and sadly ignorant of their duty; but their ignorance was most blameable, and they were severely condemned for what they did, though they did it out of ignorance. And, indeed, all those who act out of a false and erroneous conscience, are highly blameable for having such a conscience, though they never had any formal doubt about it. Nay, their not having such a doubt, when they have just and solid grounds for

doubting, rather makes them in some degree the more guilty, because it shows the greater corruption of the heart, and their depraved dispositions. Now, a person brought up in a false faith, which the scripture calls *sects of perdition, doctrines of devils, perverse things, lies and hypocrisy*; and who has heard of the true church of Christ, which condemns all these sects, and sees the divisions and dissensions which they constantly have among themselves, has always before his eyes the most cogent reasons to doubt of the way he is in; and if any due attention and examination be made with sincere dispositions of his heart, it must convince him that he is in the wrong, and the more he examines, the more he will see it; for this plain reason, that it is simply impossible, that *false doctrine, lies and hypocrisy* should ever be supported by any solid arguments sufficient to satisfy any reasonable person, who sincerely seeks the truth, and begs light from God to direct him in the search of it. Hence, if such a person never doubt, but go on, as is supposed, *bona fide*, in his own way, notwithstanding the strong grounds of doubt which he has daily before his eyes; this evidently shows either a most supine negligence in the concerns of his soul, or that his heart is totally blinded by passion and prejudice. There were many such people among the Jews and Heathens in the time of the apostles, who, notwithstanding the splendid light of the truth which these holy preachers every where displayed, and which was the most powerful reason that can be conceived for making them doubt of their own superstitions, yet were so far from having such doubts, that they thought, by killing the apostles, they did God a service. Whence did this arise? St. Paul himself shall inform us: "We renounce," says he, "the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor adulterating the word of God, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Here he describes the glaring light of the truth which he preached, yet this light was hid to great numbers, and he immediately gives the reason: "And if our gospel be also hid," says he, "it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not shine upon them," 2 Cor. iv. 2. Behold the real cause of their incredulity; they are so much enslaved to the things of this world by the depravity of their own heart, that the devil, by this means, blinds them, that they should not see the light; but an ignorance which arises from such

depraved dispositions is a guilty ignorance, a voluntary ignorance, and therefore can never excuse them.

Q. 12. Are not those, also, who are members of the church of Christ, obliged, when they come to an age capable of it, to examine whether they be in the right way or not, as well as those who are brought up in any sect separated from the true church?

A. There is nothing which the church of Christ has more at heart, than that her children should be thoroughly instructed in their religion, and in the grounds of it, as far as they are capable. For this end she strictly commands her pastors to be assiduous in the duty of instructing their people from their earliest years, and uses every other possible means for the same purpose, well knowing, that the more they know of their religion, the more they must be attached to it. The true church of Christ is the work of God, the doctrine she teaches contains the truths of God; now, the more attentively truth is examined, the more illustrious it must appear; and Almighty God has given such splendid testimony to the truth of his true religion, that the more it is examined with sincerity the more it convinces and delights. Here, then, lies the great difference, that, when a member of the church of Christ considers his religion, he cannot possibly have any reasonable grounds for doubt concerning it, and the more he examines, the more convinced he must be of the truth of it. But one who is brought up in a false religion, if he think at all, cannot fail to see the strongest grounds of doubt; and the more he examines, the more its falsehood must appear; for falsehood can never bear the light of unbiassed and impartial examination.

Q. 13. But how comes it that we see many good men, and men of great learning, among all sects of Christians, some of which must undoubtedly be false, as they contradict one another, and condemn one another?

A. To understand this, we must observe, that the word of God expressly declares, that God wills "all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 4. In consequence of this sincere desire which God has for the salvation of all, he never fails to give to all such outward helps, and inward graces, as he sees sufficient to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, if they co-operate on their part, with these graces; but, if they shut their eyes against his light, if, from the corruption of their heart, they pay no regard to the helps and graces he gives them, then they must remain in their

ignorance ; but their ignorance is voluntary in its cause, and a just punishment of their own fault. Now, although many of those who are brought up in false religions may live very good lives, as to moral honesty, in the eyes of the world, yet this does not say but they may be very blameable in the sight of God, and by their secret passions and attachments to the things of this life, put an effectual stop to the designs of his mercy of bringing them to the knowledge of his truth. The proud Pharisee was an exceeding good man in the eyes of the world, and yet was condemned by Almighty God, for the secret pride of his heart. And as for those men of learning who are to be found in a false religion, their learning does not exempt them from pride and passion ; nay, the word of God assures us, “that knowledge puffeth up,” 1 Cor. viii. 1 ; and generally speaking, where there are not true humility, and the love of God, the more learning, the more pride, and the more self-conceit, the more desire of glory, and of praise for men, and the more obstinacy of heart, and, consequently, the more opposition to faith ; for Jesus Christ himself says to the Jews, whose hard hearts resisted all the splendour of his doctrine and miracles, “How can ye believe who receive glory from one another, and the glory which is from God alone ye do not seek ?” John v. 44. There were no doubt many learned people both among the Jews and Gentiles, when the gospel was first preached by the apostles, and yet, notwithstanding the numberless miracles which they wrought, in proof of its being from God, St. Paul expressly tell us, that it was “to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness,” 1 Cor. i. 23 ; because, notwithstanding all their learning, their pride, passions, and prejudices, *blinded their minds, that the light of the gospel should not shine upon them.* So that it needs be no surprise to see learned men in a false religion, especially as their learning is commonly of a worldly kind ; for, *faith is a gift of God*, and it is not the knowledge of the head, but the humility and sincerity of the heart, which disposes a soul to receive that gift from him ; yea, Christ himself expressly says, “That God hides these things from the wise and prudent, and reveals them to little ones,” Matt. xi 25. Upon the whole, then, we must conclude, that, among those who are brought up in a false religion, and separated from the church of Christ, but who know there is a church which declares herself to be the only true church of Christ, who have an opportunity of hearing about her, and of being acquainted with those of her communion, it is

scarce to be supposed, and highly improbable, that *invincible ignorance* should have any place at all. But, after all, if any should really be found among them who are in invincible ignorance, they will be in the same state with those who never had an opportunity of knowing any other way but the false religion they are in.

Q. 14. What, then, is to be said of those, who, being brought up in a false religion, have no opportunity of hearing about the true church and faith of Christ? or, of hearing of it only in a false and odious light? Can such as these be saved if they live and die in their separation from the communion of the church of Christ, and an invincible ignorance of the truth?

A. The learned author of the book called *Charity and Truth*, who seems willing to go as far as possible in favour of those who are not joined in the communion of the church of Christ, candidly owns, that it is quite uncertain if any such will be saved, even though in invincible ignorance; for, in laying down the true state of the question, he says, "The meaning is, that no one is saved unless he be in the Catholic communion, either actually or virtually, either in fact or in desire; and that we are not sure, generally speaking, that any one is saved out of the Catholic church, who is invincibly ignorant of the true church, and of the true religion," Ch. I. Q. 3. The fact is, there is not one single testimony of the holy scripture which gives reason to think that anyone will be saved out of that communion, but there are great numbers, as we have seen above, which very strongly declare the contrary. So that all the reasons which are brought in favour of those who are out of the church, are taken from the supposition of cases that perhaps never exist, and from our imperfect notions of the goodness of God, or from the idea which some frame to themselves of what is meant by being a member of the true church; and those people of whom we speak in the present question afford the principal grounds of these reasonings. For it is argued in this manner: Suppose a man born and baptized in a heretical sect, and afterwards, when he comes of age, to be in such circumstances as never to have an opportunity of hearing about the true religion, or, if he does it is always in such false and odious colours as serve only to make him detest it, and to make him more and more attached to his own way; and, on this account, to be in invincible ignorance of the truth. It is acknowledged by all, that this man, by his baptism, is made a member of the church of Christ,

and that if he die, before he come to the use of reason, he will certainly be saved in his baptismal innocence. Let us now suppose further, that, when he comes to age, he continues to live an innocent life, and by co-operating with the graces which God bestows upon him, perseveres in his innocency, and does his best, according to the knowledge he has, and would do better if he knew it; is it not inconsistent with the goodness of God to suppose that such a man, living and dying in this state, would be lost? Is he not always in the sight of God, a real member of the church of Christ, though not joined in her communion? And, if he die in his innocency, must he not be saved? Such is the argument proposed on this subject; and, to be sure, it has a dazzling appearance. But it must be observed, that there is the strongest reason to doubt that such a case as is there supposed ever was, or ever will be; for (1.) There is not the smallest ground in scripture to suppose it. (2.) As it is impossible for man, in his present fallen state, to preserve his baptismal innocence for any space of time, much less to persevere in it to the end of his life, without a special and extraordinary grace from God; and, as a grace of this kind is justly esteemed one of the most singular favours given by God to his faithful servants, who are members of his church, and enjoy all the powerful helps that are only to be found in her communion, to enable them to persevere in their baptismal innocence to their deaths; is it to be supposed that God will bestow this so singular a favour upon any one who is not in her communion, and deprived of all her helps? And if it be supposed that he loses his baptismal innocence by committing a mortal sin, but recovers the grace of justification by a sincere repentance, the difficulty still increases. For a repentance without the help of the sacraments sufficient to obtain the grace of justification, includes a perfect contrition, founded in a perfect love of God above all things; a favour so seldom granted to sinners, even in the church itself, that the sacrament of penance is appointed by Jesus Christ as the standing means of supplying our deficiency in that respect. Now, what likelihood is there that Almighty God will bestow so very singular a favour upon one who has lost his innocency, and is not in the communion of his church, and deprived of the helps she affords for recovering it? But, (3.) Let us suppose the case to happen as it is proposed, and that Almighty God gives this man these extraordinary graces by which he preserves his baptismal innocence to the last, dies in the grace of God, and goes to heaven; would not

this be making God contradict himself, and act directly contrary to the whole tenor of his revealed will? All the testimonies of scripture above displayed concur to prove, that God has appointed true faith in Jesus Christ, and the being in communion with the church of Christ, as necessary conditions of salvation; and yet, in the present case, the person would be saved who had not the true faith in Jesus Christ, and was not in communion with his church, but lived and died in a heretical congregation. There is therefore the greatest reason to believe that such a case will never happen, but that a person brought up in heresy, and invincibly ignorant of the truth, being by that means deprived of all the helps and graces which are the consequences of the true faith, and which are only found in the true church, will not preserve his innocency, but continuing in his heresy, and dying in his sins, will be lost; not precisely because he had not the true faith, of which he is supposed to be invincibly ignorant, and therefore not culpable in wanting it, but for his other sins of which he dies guilty.

Q. 15. But can none who are in heresy, and in invincible ignorance of the truth, be saved?

A. God forbid we should say so! all the above reasons only prove that if they live and die in that state they will not be saved, and that according to the present providence they cannot be saved? but the great God is able to take them out of that state, to cure even their ignorance though invincible to them in their present situation, to bring them to the knowledge of the true faith, and to the communion of his holy church, and in consequence of that to salvation; and we further add, that if he be pleased, of his infinite mercy, to save any who are at present in invincible ignorance of the truth, in order to act consistently with himself, and with his holy word, he will undoubtedly bring them to the union of his holy church for that purpose, before they die.

Q. 16. Are there any grounds in scripture for this doctrine?

A. This doctrine is founded upon the strongest and most positive declarations of scripture. For the scripture lays down this fundamental truth, "The sure foundation of God standeth firm, having this seal; The Lord knoweth who are his," 2 Tim. ii., 19. That is, God, from all eternity, perfectly well knows who those are, who, by co-operating with the graces he shall bestow upon them, will persevere to the end in his faith and love and be happy with him for ever. Now, let a person be,

at present, in whatever state you please, Heathen, Turk, Jew, or Heretic, in *vincible* or in *invincible* ignorance; to all mankind, without exception, God, through the merits of Christ, and for his sake, gives such graces as he sees proper for their present state, with a view to their eternal salvation; if they comply with what he gives, and co-operate with them, he will then give them more and greater, till he brings them at last to that happy end; but if they resist them, and abuse those they receive, this will put a stop to their getting more and greater graces, and they will be left to their own ways, as the just punishment of their ingratitude. Those, therefore, whom Almighty God foresees will continue to make a proper use of his graces, and be saved, those he ordains to eternal life; and all such the scripture assures us, he will in his own good time, and in the way and manner he sees proper, most undoubtedly bring to the knowledge of the true faith, and to the communion of his holy church. Thus, "the Lord daily added to the church such as should be saved," Acts ii. 47. Now, what the Lord daily did in the time of the apostles, he daily will continue to do to the end of the world; and as none could be saved who were not added to the church in those days, so neither could any afterwards; for there is no new revelation since the apostle's time, discovering a different road to salvation. Again the scripture says, that, "as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed," Acts xiii. 48; that is, were brought to the true faith which the apostles preached; the same then will be done for ever afterwards; for as none were ordained to eternal life who did not believe, then, neither will any afterwards; for the same reason as in the former case. And our Saviour himself decides this point in the clearest terms, when he says, "Other sheep I have who are not of this fold, them also I MUST BRING, and they SHALL hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd," John x. 16; here he manifestly speaks of those who had not as yet heard his voice, but were either Jews or Heathens, and not united in the fold of his apostles and other disciples; yet he calls them his sheep, because "The Lord knoweth who are his," and he foreknew who would co-operate with his grace, and follow his voice; now he expressly declares, "them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice." It was not enough for their salvation that they were ready in the disposition of their hearts to answer his call, and to do better if they knew better; it was necessary they should actually be brought to the communion of his own fold, "them also I must bring"; it was necessary they

should have the true faith of Christ, "and they shall hear my voice," in order to secure their salvation; for, as he says a little after, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give them eternal life, and they shall not perish for ever, and no man shall snatch them out of my hand," John x. 27.

This will still further appear from the account which St. Paul gives of the several steps the Divine Providence takes in the salvation of the elect, and of the principal graces bestowed upon them for that end; "for, whom he foreknew," says he "he also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of his Son; and whom he predestinated, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified," Rom. viii. 29. *First*, "he lays down the sure foundation of God," above mentioned, "which has this seal. The Lord knoweth who are his," 2 Tim. ii. 19. God, from all eternity, foreknew who would improve the talents he should in time bestow upon them, and who, persevering to the end, should be his for ever. Now, says the apostle, "whom" he thus "foreknew he also predestinated to be made conformable to the image of his Son, that is, he preordained, that all his elect should resemble Jesus Christ, by 'putting off the old man with his deeds, and putting on the new.....according to the image of him that created him,'" Col. iii. 9. To procure this conformity with Jesus Christ, the next step he takes is *to call them*, for, "whom he predestinated, them he also called," namely, to the knowledge and faith of Jesus Christ, and to the communion of his holy church: that is, he gives them such internal graces, and so disposes all external circumstances as effectually to bring them to this great happiness; and *whom he thus called to the true faith*, "them he also justified"; that is, being brought to the true faith, "without which it is impossible to please God," he continues to bestow still further graces upon them, of fear, hope, love of God, and sorrow for their sins, with which they also co-operating, are brought by means of his holy sacraments to the grace of justification. In consequence of this, still greater and greater graces are bestowed upon them, and they persevering to the end in their co-operation, are received at last into eternal glory: for "whom he justified, them he also glorified"; where it is manifest, that our being called to the faith and church of Jesus Christ, is ordained by Almighty God as a most essential step in the affair of salvation, as a necessary condition to be performed, even before we can be

justified from the guilt of our sins, and consequently, that, without true faith, and out of the communion of the church of Christ, there is no possibility of salvation. It is no less manifest, that let a person be, at present, in any state whatsoever, Heathen, Turk, Jew, or Heretic; if Almighty God foreknows that this person will co-operate with those graces which from all eternity he had resolved to bestow upon him, and continue faithful to the end, and be saved; he will, by no means, permit him to live and die in his present state, but will order matters so, out of the treasures of his Divine wisdom, that he shall sooner or later be brought to the union of the church of Christ, out of which he has ordained that salvation cannot be found.

Q. 17. This is without doubt an unanswerable proof, if it be certain, that by our calling or vocation, mentioned in the above passage of St. Paul, is meant our vocation to the faith and church of Christ; but how can this be proved?

A. Nothing is more evident from the whole tenor of the New Testament; for, whenever the object of our calling or vocation is spoken of, it is always declared to be the faith and church of Christ. Thus St. Paul, speaking of his own vocation, says, "It pleased him, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son to me," Gal. i. 15. So exhorting us to walk worthy of the vocation in which we are called, by humility and charity, he immediately adds the object of our vocation, as a most powerful motive for us to do so, "One body," says he, "one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism," Eph. iv. 4. Again, "Let the peace of Christ rejoice in your hearts, wherein also ye are called in one body," Col. iii. 15. Also, "We testified to every one of you that ye would walk worthy of God who hath called you to his kingdom and glory," 1 Thess. ii. 12; to his kingdom here, and to his glory hereafter. From all which it is manifest, that the object of our vocation is the *one faith* of Christ; the *body* of Christ, and the *kingdom* of Christ, which is his church. Hence the same holy apostle says in another place, "But ye are come to Mount Sion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the company of many thousands of angels, and to the church of the first-born who are written in heaven," Heb. xii. 22. See here the object of our vocation, the church of Christ; and St. Peter says, "But ye are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people, that ye may declare his virtues who hath called you out of darkness

into his admirable light," 1 Pet. ii. 9. To be a member then of this *holy nation*, to be one of this *purchased people*, to be brought to this *admirable light* of the true faith, is the grand object to which our calling brings us.

Q. 18. But after all, how does it stand with the infinite goodness of God, that none should be saved without the true faith of Christ, and without being in the communion of his church, since by this means by far the greatest part of mankind must be lost; seeing the number of those who have not the faith, and are not in the communion of his church, has always greatly exceeded the number of those who are?

A. The greatest number of mankind will be lost, is a truth which Christ himself declares, where he says, that "many are called, but few are chosen," and that "many walk in the broad road to destruction; but few there are that find the narrow way to life." The difficulty of reconciling this with the goodness of God, will easily vanish, and the goodness of God appear in all its beauty, if we consider what the Christian revelation teaches us concerning this matter. For there we learn that man, by the voluntary abuse of his free-will, having lost that happy state in which God, out of pure goodness, had created him, had rendered himself totally unworthy of any favour or mercy from God; so that God, without any breach of justice, nay, with the greatest justice, could, if he pleased, have left him without remedy, a prey to that misery which his sins deserved, as he actually did with the fallen angels. It was, therefore, the effect of his infinite goodness alone, that God was willing to show mercy to man at all; and still more so, that he was pleased to provide so unheard of a remedy for his evils as he did; "God so loved the world," says our blessed Saviour, "that he gave his only begotten Son," to seek and save those that were lost, by dying upon a cross for them. But as man, by the voluntary abuse of his free-will, had lost the favour of his God; therefore God positively decreed, that none who come to the full use of their reason, should reap the benefit of the redemption of Christ, but by a voluntary performance of those conditions which he requires from them; for Christ "is become the cause of eternal salvation to all that obey him," Heb. v. 9. And whereas man, by the miserable corruption of his nature by sin, was absolutely incapable of performing these conditions of himself; therefore God, out of the boundless riches of his goodness, and the sincere desire he has that all should be saved through the merits of Jesus Christ, gives to all

mankind, in whatever state or condition they be, such supernatural helps of his grace, as he sees proper for their present state, with a view to their salvation : that is to say, by these graces he moves them, and enables them to do some present good, or withdraws them from, and enables them to avoid some present evil, with this view, that, if they co-operate with this heavenly motion of his grace, he will give them more and greater graces ; and, if they continue their correspondence to those, he will go on to give them still more, till he bring them at last to the true faith and church of Christ, and to a happy end ; but, if they resist his graces, if they abuse them, and act contrary to them, if they reject these calls and offers of mercy which God gives them, this abuse and ingratitude, God, out of his infinite goodness, bears with for a while, till at length he stops the continuation of such undeserved favours to them, and leaves them to perish in their own obstinacy and ingratitude. Hence if the greater part of mankind be lost, this is wholly owing to themselves in abusing the goodness of God, and resisting the means he uses for their salvation ! so that our salvation is only from the goodness of God, and our perdition wholly from ourselves, according to what he says by his prophet, “ Destruction is thine, O Israel, thy help is only in me,” Hosea xiii. 9.

Q. 19. That is, indeed, a full vindication of the Divine goodness ; but there are some parts of it which need to be properly ascertained ; and first, How does it appear from scripture that God gives to all mankind the graces here mentioned, with a view to their salvation ?

A. This is manifest from three strong reasons recorded in scripture ; *first*, The scripture assures us, that God wills all men to be saved, and that none should be lost. Thus, “ As I live, saith the Lord God, I will not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live,” Ezech. xxxiii. 12. So our Saviour declares, “ It is not the will of our Father who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish,” Matt. xviii. 14. “ God dealeth patiently for your sake,” says St. Peter, “ not willing that any should perish, but that all should return to penance,” 1 Pet. iii. 9. And St. Paul affirms it in express terms saying, “ God will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth,” 1 Tim. ii. 4. He wills all men to be saved, and he wills them to come to the knowledge of the truth, as an essential condition of salvation. Now, from this sincere will of God for the salvation of all men, it

follows as a necessary consequence, that he gives to all men such helps of his grace as are sufficient, if they make a good use of them, to bring them both to the knowledge of the truth and to salvation: for, as they are absolutely incapable of taking any step towards this end, without his aid, if he wills the end, he must of necessity apply the means in such a manner, that, if the end be not accomplished, it is not owing to him; and, if he did not do so, his affirming that he wills all men to be saved, and even swearing that he wills not the death of the wicked, would be only sporting with his poor creatures, and insulting over their misery, which is blasphemy to suppose.

2dly, The scripture positively declares, that Jesus Christ died for the redemption of all mankind, without exception. Thus, "Jesus Christ gave himself a redemption for all," 1 Tim. ii. 6. "If one died for all, then all are dead, and Christ died for all," 2 Cor. v. 15. "We hope in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially the faithful," 1 Tim. iv. 10. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the just, and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world," 1 John ii. 1. Hence St. John the Baptist said of him, "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who taketh away the sins of the world," John i. 29. And he himself says, "The bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world," John vi. 52. Again, "The Son of man, says he, 'came to seek and to save that which was lost,' Luke xix. 10; and 'I come not to judge the world, but to save the world,' John xii. 47; and St. Paul says of him, 'A faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners,' 1 Tim. i. 15. But, as all were lost, as all without exception were sinners, therefore Jesus Christ came to seek and save all. Now, from this truth it also follows, as a necessary consequence, that all, without exception, must receive, in some degree or other, such fruits and benefits of his redemption, as are sufficient to procure their salvation, either directly or indirectly, mediately, or immediately, if they co-operate with them; so that, if any one be not actually saved, this cannot be owing to any deficiency on the part of Jesus Christ, but to their own abuse of his graces; for it would be trifling to say, that he is the Saviour of all, if all did not receive the fruits of his redemption with a view to their salvation.

3dly, The scripture expressly assures us, that all men do

actually receive from God, in that degree, manner, and proportion, which he sees proper, according to their present state, such helps of his graces as would enable them to secure their salvation, if they co-operated with them. For, in the *first* place, Almighty God, out of his sincere desire for the salvation of all, “sent his Son into the world, that the world might be saved by him,” John iii. 17. From which St. Paul draws this plain argument, “He that spared not even his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how hath he not also with him given us all things?” Rom. viii. 32, at least all things absolutely necessary for our salvation, and without which it would never be in our power to procure it? Now, as he delivered his Son for all, without exception, and with this very view, “that the world,” that is, all mankind, “might be saved by him”; therefore, to all without exception, he gives with him such helps and graces, as either mediately or immediately, directly, or indirectly, put it in their power to be saved. *Secondly*, the scripture declares that Christ “is the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world,” John i. 9; consequently every man that cometh into this world, partaketh of his light in such degree and proportion as he sees proper to give him, and in such time, place, and manner as he thinks fit. For, *Thirdly*, “To every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the giving of Christ,” Eph. iv. 7; and “the grace of God our Saviour hath appeared to all men,” Tit. ii. 11. *Fourthly*, The goodness and mercy of God to all mankind is thus displayed in scripture: “Thou hast mercy upon all, because thou canst do all things, and winkest at the sins of men for the sake of repentance; for thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made; for thou didst not appoint or make any thing hating it.....but thou sparest all because they are thine, O Lord, who lovest souls,” Wisd. xi. 24. Now, how could he be said “to spare all,” and to “have mercy on all,” for the sake of repentance, if he did not give to all such graces, at least as are absolutely necessary to help them and to bring them to repentance? *Lastly*, Our Saviour himself says, “Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man shall hear my voice, and open to me the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me; and to him that shall overcome, I will give to sit with me in my throne,” Rev. iii. 20. He knocks at every door, at every heart, by the motions of his holy grace; and, if any man whatsoever shall open and co-operate with his grace, so as to overcome, all will be well.

From all which it is manifest, that all men, without exception, in whatever state they be, whether Jew, Turk, Heathen or Christian, at some time or other, receive graces from God, as the fruits of the redemption of Jesus, with a view to their eternal salvation, and which either mediately, or immediately, would bring them to that end, if those who receive them make a proper use of them; so that if, by their abuse of these means, they be not saved, the fault is entirely their own. It is true they are not given in the same degree and proportion to all, but “according to the measure of the giving of Christ”; for, “every one has his proper gift from God, one after this manner, and another after that,” 1 Cor. vii. 7. And in the distribution of the talents, one got five, another two, and another only one; for God being master of his own gifts, may give more abundantly to one than to another, as he pleases; but what every one gets is sufficient for his present purpose, and he that only got the one talent, had it fully in his power to have got the same reward with the other two, had he improved his talent as they did theirs; but as he was negligent and unprofitable he was justly condemned for his sloth.

Q. 20. How can it be shown, that, if a man co-operate with those graces which God bestows upon him, he will always receive more and more from him?

A. This appears evident, (1.) From the very end God has in giving them; for, as all the graces which God bestows on man, through the merits of Christ, are given with a view to his salvation, and arise from the desire God has of saving him, if man put no obstacle on his part, but improves the present grace he receives, the same gracious desire which God has of his salvation, and which moved him to give the first, must also move him to give a second, and a third, and so on, till he perfect the great work for which he gives them; and hence the scripture says, “Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun the good work in you, will perfect it unto the day of Christ Jesus,” Phil. i. 6. It is, therefore, an undoubted truth, that God will never fail on his side to give us all further necessary helps, if we make a good use of those he has given; for he will never leave us, if we do not first leave him. Hence the same holy apostle exhorts us, “with fear and trembling to work out our own salvation; for it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to accomplish, according to his good will,” Phil. ii. 12, showing us that God will not be wanting, if we do our part, and work according to the graces he gives us with

fear and trembling. Hence also the frequent exhortations of the same apostle, "not to neglect the grace of God," 1 Tim. iv. 14. "To stir up the grace of God that is in us," 2 Tim. i. 6. "Not to receive the grace of God in vain," 2 Cor. vi. 1, and "to look diligently that no man be wanting to the grace of God," Heb. xii. 15. The same truth appears, (2.) From those testimonies of scripture, where we are assured, that if we serve God and obey him, we shall advance in his love, and in union with him; for to serve and obey him, is the same thing as to make a good use of the graces he gives us, and to be more loved by him, and united to him, is to receive still greater graces from him. Thus our Saviour says, "If any man love me, he will keep my word," (that is, do my will, correspond with my grace) "and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and will make our abode with him," John xiv. 23. So also St. James says, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.....Be humbled in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you," James iv. 8, 10. Hence St. Peter warmly exhorts us, "to take heed not to fall from our own steadfastness, but to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. iii. 17, because the continuing steadfast in his service, by corresponding with his grace, is the sure way to get more from him. It is proved, (3.) By the express declaration of Jesus Christ, who says, "I am the vine, and my Father is the husbandman.....every branch in me that beareth fruit, he will purge it, that it may bring forth more fruit," John xv. 1. Also in the parable of the pounds, he ordered the pound to be taken from the unprofitable servant, and given to the other that had ten pounds, and then adds, "I say unto you, that to everyone that hath, shall be given, and he shall abound, Luke xix. 26, that is, to everyone that hath and makes a good use of what he hath; for, when the master went away, he gave one pound to each of his servants, "and said to them, trade till I come," verse 13. But when he came back, he found one had gained ten pounds, and the slothful servant none at all, but kept the pound he had got laid up in a napkin; so that the only difference between these two was, that the one had improved what he got from his master, and the other had not; and, therefore, to the one that had improved his pound, more and more was given, that he might abound. The same expression is repeated by our Saviour on different occasions, but particularly Mark iv. 24, where considering the great grace bestowed on the Jews, in communicating to them

his holy word, he exhorts them to be careful, to make an ample return to God, by improving that grace, and promises if they do so, that more shall be given them: "Take heed," says he to them, "what ye hear; with what measure ye shall mete, it shall be measured to you again; and more shall be given to you"; and then he immediately adds, as a general rule; "for he that hath, to him shall be given," verse 25. To the same purpose Almighty God says to all sinners, whose hearts he touches with his reproof, and the check of their conscience. "Turn ye at my reproof, behold I will utter my spirit to you, and I will show you my words," Prov. i. 23. If they concur with the grace of his reproof, and turn, he will bestow greater favours upon them.

Q. 21. How is it shown that if a man resist, or neglect the graces of God, they shall be taken from him? and that, if he be lost, the fault is his own?

A. This also is manifest throughout the whole scripture. But, that this point may be fully understood, we must consider the different degrees of fatal consequences that flow from an obstinate abuse of these graces of God. (1.) These graces are withdrawn from them; not, indeed, all at once, for God, out of his infinite mercy, waits patiently for sinners, and repeats his endeavours for their conversion; but if they still resist or abuse his graces, they are lessened, they are diminished, they are given seldomer, and in a weaker degree. Thus our Saviour says of the unprofitable servant, "Take the pound away from him;..... for, from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him," Luke xix. 24, 26. How so? *If he hath not*, how can anything at all be *taken from him*? The sense is, he that hath not improved what he hath, even that which he hath, shall be taken away from him. The same is repeated on several other occasions. (2.) The more the graces of God are weakened or withdrawn from sinners, by their repeated abuse of them, the more their passions become strong in their hearts, and get the greater ascendant over them, till, at last, they become miserable slaves to them; "My people heard not my voice," says Almighty God, "Israel hearkened not to me, so I let them go according to the desires of their hearts; they shall walk in their own inventions," Ps. lxxx. 12; and St. Paul assures us, that whereas the wise men among the Heathen nations by the light of reason itself, came to a clear knowledge of the existence of God, and of his power and divinity, but, "because, when they knew God, they did not glorify him as

God," by a correspondence with the light he gave them, but continued in their idolatry, therefore, "God gave them up to the desires of their hearts.....God delivered them up to shameful affections.....and delivered them up to a reprobate sense," Rom. i. (3.) If their obstinacy still increase, and they go on shutting their eyes against the light of truth which God offers them, he then permits them to be seduced by falsehood, to "give heed to spirits of error and doctrines of devils," 1 Tim. iv. 4. Thus, because they received not the love of truth, that they might be saved; therefore, God shall send them the operation of error, to believe lying, that all may be judged, (or, as the Protestant translation has it, *that all may be damned*) who have not believed the truth, but have consented to iniquity, 2 Thess. ii. 10. This strong text clearly shows two great truths; *first*, That God gives to all the offers of the truth; and, *secondly*, That the source of their damnation is entirely from themselves, in refusing to receive it. (4.) If, therefore, they still continue in their perversity, and die in their sin, a dreadful condemnation shall be their portion for ever; to them "God swears in his wrath that they shall not enter into his rest," Ps. xciv. 11. On them he pronounces that dreadful sentence, "Because I called, and ye refused, I stretched out my hand, and there was none that regarded; ye have despised all my counsel, and have neglected my apprehensions, I also will laugh at your destruction, and will mock when that which you feared shall fall upon you. When sudden calamity shall fall upon you, and destruction, like a tempest, shall be at hand; when tribulation and distress shall come upon you; then shall they call upon me and I will not hear, they shall rise in the morning, and they shall not find me; because they have hated instruction, and received not the fear of the Lord, nor consented to my counsel, but despised all my reproof, therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way, and shall be filled with their own devices," Prov. i. 24. Their condemnation is prefigured in the fate of Jerusalem; which had been rebellious to all the calls of God, which our Saviour laments in these affecting words, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem! thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered together thy children as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and thou wouldst not! Behold your house shall be left to you desolate," Matt. xxiii. 37. "I would, and thou wouldst not! This is their great crime. I sent you my prophets and servants, my graces, and lights, and holy motions,

but these ye killed and destroyed, and gave no ear to them !” The miserable fate of all such unhappy sinners, prefigured in Jerusalem, drew tears from the eyes of Jesus, when he wept over that city, and said, “ If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are for thy peace, but now they are hidden from my eyes ; for the day shall come upon thee and thy enemies.....shall beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee ; and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone,” Luke xix. 42. These are they who having been invited to the marriage supper of the great King, rejected his invitation, and killed his servants, for which reason “ he sent his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burnt their city,” Matt. xxii. 7, declaring, that “ not one of them should taste of his supper.”

Q. 22. What is the result of all these truths ?

A. The result is very plain, namely, Though God Almighty has been pleased to ordain that none shall be saved who have not the true faith of Jesus Christ, and are not in communion of his holy church ; yet this is no way inconsistent with the infinite goodness of God ; because he gives to all sufficient graces, suitable to the state they are in, by which they are enabled, if they correspond with them, to be brought to the true faith and church of Christ ; and that, if any are lost, it is not owing to any want of goodness in God, but to their own abuse of the graces bestowed upon them. On some, indeed, he bestows these graces more abundantly, giving them five talents, to others he gives more sparingly, to some two, and to some only one ; but he gives to all sufficient for their present wants, and will give more if those be improved, till at last he bring them to the knowledge of his truth and to salvation.

Q. 23. But, suppose a person in the wilds of Tartary, or America, where the name of Christ had never yet been heard : suppose also, that this person should attend to the dictates of conscience, enlightened by such graces as God is pleased to give him, and constantly comply with them ; yet, how is it possible such a person could be brought to the knowledge and faith of Jesus Christ ?

A. This case is certainly possible ; and if it should happen, it is not to be doubted but Almighty God would, from the treasures of his infinite wisdom, provide some means to bring such a person to the knowledge of the truth, even though he should send an angel from heaven, if necessary, to instruct him. “ The hand of the Lord is not shortened, that he cannot save,”

in whatever difficulties a poor soul may be ; he has, in former times, done wonderful things in cases of this kind, and he is no less able to do the same again ; and since he has so clearly ordained, that, out of the true church, and without true faith in Christ there is no salvation, there can be no doubt, but that, in the case proposed, he would take care effectually to bring such a person to that happiness.

Q. 24. If there any authority from scripture to prove this ?

A. There can be no stronger proof from scripture than from facts there related ; now we have in scripture two beautiful examples of God's acting in this manner in similar cases, which shows that he would do the same again, if any case should require it. The one is of the Eunuch of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia : He, following the lights that God gave him, though living at a great distance from Jerusalem, got acquainted with the worship of the true God, and was accustomed to go from time to time to Jerusalem, to adore him. But, when the gospel began to be published, the Jewish religion could no longer save him, and, therefore, being well disposed, by his fidelity to the graces he had hitherto got, Almighty God did not forsake him, but, when he was returning to his own country from Jerusalem, the Lord sent an angel to St. Philip to go meet him, and instruct him in the faith of Christ, and baptize him, Acts viii. 26. The other example is of Cornelius, who was an officer of the Roman army of the Italic band, and brought up in idolatry ; in the course of rotation, his regiment coming to Judea, he saw there a different religion from his own, and the worship of one only God. The grace of God moving his heart, he believed in this God, and following the further motions of Divine grace, he gave much alms to the poor, and prayed earnestly to this God to direct him what to do. Did God abandon him ? by no means ; he sent an angel from heaven to tell him whom to apply to in order to be fully instructed in the knowledge and faith of Jesus Christ, and to be received into his church by baptism. Now, what God did in these two cases, he is no less able to do in all others, and has a thousand ways in his wisdom, to conduct souls who are truly serious, to the knowledge of the truth, and to salvation. And though such a soul were in the remotest wilds of the world, God could be in no difficulty to send a Philip to him, or an angel from heaven to instruct him, or by the superabundance of his internal grace, could infuse into him the knowledge of the truth, or, by numberless other ways unknown to us. The great affair is, that we

carefully do our part in complying with what he gives us ; for, of this we are certain, that if we be not wanting to him, he will never be wanting to us, but as he begins the good work in us, will also perfect it, if we be careful to correspond, and to put no hindrance to his designs.

Q. 25. Are none brought to the faith and church of Christ, but those who correspond as they ought with the graces received before ?

A. God forbid this were the case ; for, though it be most certain that God will never fail to bring all those to the faith and church of Christ, whether Heathens, Jews, Turks, or Heretics, who do faithfully correspond to all the grace he bestows upon them beforehand, yet he has no where tied himself down to bestow that singular mercy on none but these. If this were the case, how few indeed would receive it ! But God, to show the infinite riches of his goodness and mercy, bestows it on great numbers of the most undeserving ; he bestowed it even upon many of the hard-hearted Jews who crucified Jesus Christ, and of the priests who persecuted him to death, even though they had obstinately opposed all the endeavours he had used beforehand, by his doctrines and miracles, to convert them. In this he acts as Lord and Master, and as a free disposer of his own gifts ; he gives to all what helps are necessary and sufficient in their present state ; to those who co-operate with these helps he never fails to give more abundantly ; and, in order to show the riches of his mercy, to numbers of the most undeserving he bestows his most singular favours for their conversion. Hence none have cause to complain ; all ought to be solicitous in co-operating with what they have ; none ought to despair on account of their past ingratitude, but be assured that God, who is rich in mercy, will yet have mercy on them, if they return to him ; and those only ought to fear and tremble who remain obstinate in their evil ways, who continue to resist the calls of his mercy, and put off their conversion from day to day. For, though his infinite mercy knows no bounds in pardoning all sins, however numerous and grievous, if we repent, yet the offers of his mercy are limited, and if we exceed these limits by our obstinacy, there will be no more mercy for us ; the time of mercy is fixed for every one, and if we do not embrace its offers within that time, the gates of mercy will be shut against us ; when the bridegroom is once entered into the marriage chamber, the doors are shut and the foolish virgins who were not ready in time, are for ever excluded, with this

dreadful reproach from Jesus Christ, *I know you not. Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity.* Seeing, therefore, that no man knows how long the time of mercy will last for him, no man ought to delay a moment; if he miss the present offer, perhaps it may be the last. That hour will come like a thief in the night, when we least expect it, as Christ himself assures us, and therefore he commands us to be always ready.

Q. 26. What opinion, then, may be formed of the salvation of any one, in particular, who is out of the true church of Christ, and lives in a false religion?

A. In answer to this, I ask you another question: What opinion would you form of the salvation of one who is living in the open state of mortal sin, such as adultery, robbery, impurity or the like? No man could pronounce, and say, that that man will certainly be lost; but every one must say, that, if he live and die in that state, without repentance, he cannot be saved; and if it be the will of God positively to save him, he will, before he die, give him the grace of sincere repentance, because God Almighty expressly requires from sinners a sincere repentance, as a condition without which they cannot be saved, "Except ye repent," says he, "ye shall all likewise perish," Luke xiii. 3. The same is to be said of a person who is out of the true church, and lives in a false religion; if he die in that state he cannot be saved; and if it be the will of God actually to save him, he will undoubtedly bring him to the true faith, and make him a member of the church of Christ, before he leave this world; and the reason is the same as in the other case. God, as we have seen above at large, requires of all men to be united to the church by true faith, as a condition of salvation, and, therefore, daily "adds to the church such as shall be saved," Luke ii. 47. Now, let a man be ever so great an adversary to the church of Christ at present, or ever so great a sinner though a member of the church, yet, as no man can know what God may be pleased to do for either, before he die, so no man can pronounce and say, that either the one or the other will be lost; for, if God please, he may give the light of true faith to the one, and the grace of true repentance to the other even at their last moments, and save them.

Q. 27. But, suppose a person live in a false religion, and die without being reunited to the communion of the church of Christ, can it be said of such a one that he is certainly lost?

A. I must here put another question. Suppose a great sinner continues to live in his sins, and dies without any appear-

ance of repentance, could you say of such a one that he is certainly lost? Certainly not; because no man knows, nor can know what may have past between God and his soul in his last moments; all that can be said is, that if he has actually died without repentance, he is certainly lost; but if God, of his infinite goodness, has given him the grace of a perfect repentance, and he has corresponded on his part, with so great a favour, he will be saved. In the same manner, suppose a person living in a false religion dies without giving any appearance of embracing the true faith, or without being reconciled to the church of Christ, we can never say for certain, of such an one, that he is lost; all that we can say must be under the same condition as in the other case, if he has actually died as he had lived, separated from the true church of Christ, and without the true faith of Christ, he cannot be saved; but if God, in his great mercy, has given him, in his last moments, light and grace to see and embrace the true faith, and he has corresponded with so great a favour, as God requires of him, he will be saved. Now, as no man knows, nor can know, what may have passed in the soul of either the one or the other at their last moments, so no man can pronounce of either that he is lost for certain.

Q. 28. But in the case proposed, if a person, in his last moments, shall receive the light of faith from God, and embrace it with all his heart, would this be sufficient to make him a member of the true church in the sight of God?

A. Most undoubtedly; the case is the same in this as in baptism. Though Jesus Christ expressly says, "Except a man be born again, of water and the holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," John iii., which establishes the absolute necessity of baptism for salvation; yet, suppose a Heathen, or Turk, or Jew, should be instructed in the faith of Christ, and embrace it with all his heart, but die suddenly without baptism, or be taken away by his infidel friends, or put in absolute impossibility of receiving baptism, and die in the above dispositions with a sincere repentance and desire of baptism, this person will undoubtedly receive all the fruits of baptism from God; and therefore, is said to be baptised in desire. In the same manner, suppose a person brought up in a false religion, embraces with all his heart the light of the true faith, which God gives him in his last moments, as it is absolutely impossible for him, in that state, to join the external communion of the church in the eyes of men; yet he will surely be considered as united to her in the sight of God, by means

of the true faith which he embraces, and his desire of being united to the church if it were in his power.

Q. 29. Is there any reason to believe, that God Almighty often bestows the light of faith, or the grace of repentance, at the hour of death upon those who have lived all their lives in heresy, or in sins ?

A. That God can, in an instant, convert the most obdurate heart, either to the true faith, or to repentance, is manifest from the examples of St. Paul, Zacheus the publican, St. Matthew the apostle, and numbers of others ; and in particular of St. Peter, to whom in an instant, he revealed the Divinity of Jesus Christ, who said to him on that account, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father who is in heaven," Matt. xvi. 17. That he can do this at the hour of death, as easily as at any time in life, cannot be doubted, as we see in the good thief upon the cross. He is the same all powerful God at all times. But it must be owned that there is very little reason to think that this is often the case. There certainly are not the smallest grounds for revelation to think so. Nay, the scripture, as we have seen above, threatens quite the contrary. All that can be said is, that as God is able, he can do it : and as he is merciful, he may do it : and the possibility of this is sufficient to hinder us from passing any judgment about the state of any soul who has left this world ; but it would certainly be the height of madness, and a manifest tempting of God, for a person to go in an evil way, in hopes of finding such mercy at his last.

Q. 30. Do we not see, even among false religions, many serious, well-disposed people, who live good lives, and are even devout and pious in their own way ; and is it not hard to think, that if such should die in their own way, they will not be saved ?

A. But is it not much more reasonable in itself, as well as conformable to the whole tenor of what God has revealed, to say, that if they be truly such before God, as they appear in the eyes of men, and such as he knows will continue to correspond with the graces he gives them, he will not allow them to die in their false religion ; but will undoubtedly bring them to the true faith before they die ? The door of salvation is by no means shut against such people by any thing here advanced ; the only difficulty is about the way they can get at it. By supposing they can reach it, though they die in their false

religion, is supposing God to act contrary to himself, and in opposition to everything he has revealed to men upon this matter; but by adhering to his holy word, and firmly believing that God "adds daily to the church, such as shall be saved," and will most undoubtedly add those here spoken of to her, if they be of that happy number, we do not make their salvation more difficult either to themselves or to God; and we avoid the dreadful consequence of supposing God to act contrary to himself and to his own revealed will. If these people be really such in the eyes of God as they appear to men; and if Jesus Christ, foreseeing their perseverance in improving the graces he bestows upon them, acknowledges them among the number of his sheep, "to whom he gives eternal life," then it is evident they are in the state with those of whom he says in the gospel, "other sheep I have who are not of this fold," John x. 16; both the one and the other are considered as belonging to him, according to his foreknowledge of their salvation; but neither of them are joined in the visible communion of his church. Now, of these last he immediately adds, "them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." It was not enough for their salvation to be acknowledged to be his sheep; and because they were so, it was necessary that they should be united to the fold to which they did not then belong. The same thing must then be the case of those we hear speak of: they are sheep of Jesus Christ, because he foresees they will at last be saved; but, as they are not at present within the fold of his church, in order to secure their salvation, "them also he must bring," before they die, that there may be "one fold and one shepherd."

Q. 31. This is very strong indeed. But, as this is a great case which many pretend to lay a great stress upon, whence arises the weight it seems to have with them in favour of those who even die in a false religion?

A. Their mistake arises from the idea they form to themselves of good works, and from their not observing the vast difference there is between natural good moral actions, and supernatural Christian good works, which alone will bring a man to heaven. However corrupted our nature is by sin; yet there are few or none of the seed of Adam but have some good natural dispositions, some being more inclined to one virtue, some to another. Thus some are of a humane benevolent disposition; some tender-hearted and compassionate

towards others in distress ; some just and upright in their dealings ; some temperate and sober ; some mild and patient ; and so of others ; and some also have a natural turn to devotion, and a kind of respect for the Supreme Being. Now, all such good natural dispositions of themselves are far from being Christian virtues, and altogether incapable of bringing a man to heaven. They indeed make him who has them agreeable to men, and procure him esteem and regard from those with whom he lives ; but they are of no avail before God with regard to eternity. To be convinced of this we need only observe, that good natural dispositions of this kind are found in Turks, Jews, and Heathens, as well as among Christians : yet no Christians can suppose that a Turk, Jew, or Heathen, who dies in that state, will obtain the kingdom of heaven by means of these virtues. Nay, the Pharisees, among the people of God, were remarkable for many such virtues ; they had a great veneration for the law of God ; they made open profession of piety and devotion ; gave large alms to the poor ; fasted and prayed a great deal ; were assiduous in all their public duties of religion ; were remarkable for their strict observance of the Sabbath day, and had an abhorrence of all profanation of the holy name of God ; yet Jesus Christ himself expressly declares, "Except your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. v. 20. We are told that one of their number went up to the temple to pray, who was in the eyes of the world a very good man, led an innocent life, free from those grosser crimes which are so common among men, fasted twice a week, and gave tithes of all he possessed ; yet Christ himself assures us that he was condemned in the sight of God. All this shows to a demonstration, that none of the above good dispositions of nature are capable of themselves to bring a man to heaven, who lives according to them, and the reason is, because "there is no other name given to man under heaven, by which we can be saved, but the name of Jesus only," Acts iv. 12 ; therefore no good works whatsoever, performed through the good dispositions of nature only, can ever be crowned by God with eternal happiness. To obtain this glorious reward, our good works must be sanctified by the blood of Jesus, and become Christian virtues. Now, if we search the holy scriptures, we find two conditions absolutely required to make our good works agreeable to God, and conducive to our salvation. *First*, that we be united to Jesus Christ by true faith, which is the root and

foundation of all Christian virtues; for St. Paul expressly says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. xi. 6. Observe the word *impossible*: he does not say it is difficult, but that it is *impossible*. Let, therefore, a man have ever so many good natural dispositions, and be as charitable as devout, and mortified as the Pharisees were; yet if he have not true faith in Jesus Christ, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven. They refused to believe in him; and, therefore, all their good works were good for nothing as to their salvation; and, unless our righteousness exceed theirs in this point, as Christ himself assures us, we shall never enter into this heavenly kingdom. But even true faith itself, however necessary it be, yet is not sufficient alone to make our good works available to salvation; for it is necessary, in the *second* place, that we be in charity with God, in his friendship and grace, without which even true faith itself will never save us. To be convinced of this, let us only give ear to St. Paul, who says, "Though I should have all faith, so as to remove mountains, though I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, though I should give my body to be burnt, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing," 1 Cor. xiii. So that let a man be ever so peaceable, regular, inoffensive, and religious in his way, and charitable to the poor, and what else you please; yet, if he have not the true faith of Jesus Christ, and be not in charity with his God, all his apparent virtues goes for nothing in the accounts of God; it is impossible for him to please God by them; and, if he live and die in that state, they will profit him nothing. Hence it is manifest, that those who die in a false religion, however unexceptionable their moral conduct may be, in the eyes of men; yet as they want the true faith of Christ, and, of course, are not in charity with him, are not in the way of salvation; for nothing can avail us in Christ, but "faith that works by charity," Gal. v. 6.

Q. 32. But, as all this is so evident, how comes it, that some now-a-days, who profess themselves members of the church of Christ, seem to call this truth in question, by continually pleading in favour of those who are not of their communion, proposing excuses for them, and using all their endeavours to prove a possibility of salvation for those who live and die in a false religion?

A. This is one of those infernal engines which the enemy of souls makes use of in these unhappy times to promote his own cause, and which, there are grounds to fear, has, from various

reasons, found its way even among those who belong to the fold of Christ; for (1.) As they live among those who are of another communion, and often have the most intimate connections with them, they naturally and most laudably contract a love and affection for them. This makes them first sorry to think their friends should be out of the way of salvation. Then they proceed to wish and hope they may not be so. Hence they come to call in question if they be so? and from this the step is easy to grasp at every pretext to persuade themselves they are not so. (2.) Latitudinarian principles are every where present in these our days; an uncovenanted mercy, forsooth, is found to be in God for Turks, Jews, and Infidels, which had never before been heard of among Christians. This is gilded over with the specious character of a liberal way of thinking and generous sentiments; and it is become the fashion to think and speak in this manner. Now, the fashion is a most powerful persuasive, which even good people are not always proof against; and when one hears those sentiments every day resounding in his ears, and any thing that seems contrary to them, ridiculed and condemned, this naturally clouds the understanding, and discourages the mind from so much as wishing to examine the strength of these sentiments, for fear of finding out their falsehood. When, for fear of being despised, we wish any thing to be true, the translation is very easy to believe it to be true; and every sophistical show of reason in its favour is adopted, without further examination, as conclusive. (3.) Worldly interest also very often concurs, with its overbearing influence, to produce the same end. A member of the church of Christ sees his separated friend in power and credit in the world, and capable of being of great service to him and his; he knows, should he embrace the true faith, he would lose all his influence, and become unable to serve him. This makes him cool in wishing his conversion; but the thought that his friend is not in the way of salvation pains him; he, therefore, begins to wish he *could* be saved as he is, in his own religion. Hence he comes to doubt but that *he may*, and gladly adopts any show of proof to make him think that *he will*. It is true, indeed, all these reasons would have little influence with a sincere member of the church of Christ, who understands his religion, and has a just sense of what it teaches him on this head: but the great misfortune of many, who give into these loose ways of thinking and speaking, is, (4.) That they are ignorant of the grounds of their religion; they

do not examine the matter to the bottom; and if once they begin to be infected by the spirit of the mode, they are unwilling to examine; they even take it amiss if any zealous friend should attempt to undeceive them, and, grasping at those miserable sophisms, which are alleged in favour of their loose way of thinking, refuse to open their eyes to the truth, or even to look at the reasons which support it.

Q. 33. What are those sophistical arguments by which they are so much deceived?

A. We have seen them above, and fully confuted them one by one. But their great mistake arises from what they say about invincible ignorance, and about what is required to be a member of the church of Christ. For, whilst they must either deny their own faith, or allow this general proposition, that, "without faith it is impossible to please God"; whilst they admit the truth of this, they pretend, that as invincible ignorance must excuse a man before God, in all other cases, so it must excuse him in this also; and, therefore, that though a man have not the true faith, "invincible ignorance will save him"; not adverting to the two senses which these words contain, of which the one is certainly true, and the other no less false. Invincible ignorance will save him precisely from the guilt of having a false faith, and of not having the true faith; this is certainly true. But to say invincible ignorance will save him, that is, will bring him to salvation; this is certainly false, as all we have seen above most fully proves. Again, whilst they acknowledge, this other general proposition, that "out of the true church of Christ there is no salvation," which they must acknowledge, or give up their own religion; they suppose that a man may be a member of the true church in the sight of God, though not joined with her in communion, as all baptized children are, though born in heresy, at least till they come to the age of judging for themselves. Their mistake here lies in not reflecting that all adults who are in a false religion, can be members of the church in the sight of God, in no other sense than those were of whom our Saviour says, "Other sheep I have who are not of this fold." But as he expressly declares that it was necessary to bring even those to the communion of his church, this evidently shows, that they and all such are not members of the church, in such a way as that they can be saved in their present state, without being joined in her communion.

Q. 34. But after all, is it not laudable, and praiseworthy to

show all indulgence and condescension to those who are without, and to behave towards them with all lenity and mildness?

A. Most undoubtedly; it is not only laudable, but a strict duty to do so, as far as truth can go. But to betray the truth with any view of this kind, must be a grievous crime, and highly prejudicial to both parties. In fact, experience shows that the loose way of thinking and speaking, which some who are members of the true church have *of late* got into, is productive of the worst of consequences, both to those whom they wish to favour, and to themselves; for, (1.) Those who are separated from the church of Christ, well know, that she constantly professes as an article of her creed that without the true faith, and out of her communion there is no salvation. When, therefore, they see the members of that church talking dubiously on this head, seeming to call it in question, and even alleging pretexts and excuses to invalidate it, what can they think? What effects must this have upon their minds? Must it not unavoidably tend to lull them asleep, to extinguish any desire of inquiring after the truth, which God may have given them, or to shut their hearts against any such good thought? Self-love never fails eagerly to lay hold of every thing that favours its wishes; and, if once they find this truth called in question, even by those who profess to believe it, they will consider it as a mere school dispute, and think no more about the matter. (2.) This way of thinking and speaking naturally tends to extinguish all zeal for the salvation of souls in the hearts of those who adopt it; for, whilst they persuade themselves that there is a possibility of salvation for those who die in a false faith, and out of the church of Christ, self-love will easily incline them not to give themselves any trouble about their conversion; nay, it has sometimes even gone so far as to make some think it more advisable not to endeavour to undeceive them, lest, forsooth, it should change their present *excusable ignorance*, as they call it, into a *culpable obstinacy*; not reflecting, that, by their pious and zealous endeavours they may be brought to the knowledge of the truth, and save their souls, whereas, through their uncharitable neglect, they may be deprived of so great a happiness. Woe to the world, indeed, if the first preachers of Christianity had been of such unchristian sentiments. (3.) It is of no less prejudice to the members of the church themselves who embrace such ways of thinking; for it cannot fail to cool their zeal and esteem for their religion, to make them more careless of preserving their faith, ready

for worldly motives to expose it to danger, and in time of temptation to forsake it entirely. In fact, if a man be thoroughly persuaded of the truth of his holy religion, and of the necessity of being a member of the church of Christ, how is it possible he should ever expose himself to any occasion of losing so great a treasure, or for any worldly fear or favour abandon it? Since, then, experience shows that many, for some trifling worldly advantage do expose themselves to such danger, by going to places where they can have no exercise of their religion, but every inducement to leave it, or, by engaging in such employments as are inconsistent with their duty, or the like, and that they expose their children to the same dangerous occasions, this most undoubtedly can only arise from want of a just idea of the importance of their religion, and, upon a strict examination, it is always found, that some degree or other of the above latitudinarian sentiments is the radical cause of the whole. (4.) Besides, if once a person begin to hesitate about the importance of his religion, what esteem or regard can he have for the laws, rules, or practices of it? Self-love, always attentive to its own satisfaction, will soon tell him, that, if it be not absolutely necessary to be of that religion, much less necessary must it be to submit to all its regulations; hence liberties are taken in practice, inconsistent with their duty, the commands of the church are despised, the exercises of devotion neglected, and a shadow of religion introduced under the show of liberal sentiments, but to the destruction of solid virtue and piety.

Q. 35. What shall we say of those members of the church of Christ, who actually abandon their religion, and renounce their faith?

A. As the great God himself has given a full and distinct answer to this question in three different places of his holy scriptures, it would be presumption to answer it in any other words but his own. First, then, he says, by the mouth of his holy apostle St. Paul, "It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, have tasted also the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have, moreover, tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and are fallen away, to be renewed again into penance, crucifying again to themselves the Son of God, and making a mockery of him. For the earth that drinketh in the rain that cometh often upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is tilled, receiveth blessing from God: but that which bringeth forth thorns and briars is rejected, and very near to a curse, whose

end is to be burnt," Heb. iv. 4. On which passage the late learned and pious publisher of the Rheims New Testament says, in the note, "that it is impossible for such as have fallen after baptism, to be again baptized; and very hard for such as have apostatized from the faith, after having received many graces, to return again to the happy state from which they fell." Again, "If we sin wilfully," says the same holy apostle, "after having received the knowledge of the truth, there is left no sacrifice for sins, but a certain dreadful expectation of judgment, and the rage of a fire which shall consume the adversaries," Heb. x. 26; on which the same learned author says, "He speaks of the sin of wilful apostasy from the known truth; after which, as we cannot be baptized again, we cannot expect to have that abundant remission of sins, which Christ purchased by his death, applied to our souls in that ample manner as it is in baptism; but we have rather all manner of reason to look for a dreadful judgment; the more, because apostates from the known truth, seldom or ever have the grace to return to it." *Lastly*, By the mouth of the holy apostle St. Peter, God thus declares the state of such people: "For, if fleeing from the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they be again entangled in them, and overcome, their latter state is become to them worse than the former. For, it had been better for them never to have known the way of justice, than after they have known it, to turn back from that holy commandment, which was delivered to them. For, that of the true proverb hath happened to them, the dog is returned to his own vomit, and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire," 2 Pet. ii. 20.

Q. 36. You said above that it is *only of late* that that loose way of thinking and speaking about the necessity of true faith, and of being in communion with the church of Christ, which we have been examining, has appeared among the members of the church; was not the same language held by Christians in all former ages?

A. Far from it; and this is one of the greatest grounds of its condemnation. It is a novelty, it is a new doctrine; it was unheard of from the beginning; nay, it is directly opposite to the uniform doctrine of all the great lights of the church in all former ages. These great and holy men, the most unexceptionable witnesses of the Christian faith in their days, knew no other language on this subject, but what they saw spoken before them by Christ and his apostles; they knew their Divine

Master had declared, "He that believeth not shall be damned"; they heard his apostle thundering out a dreadful anathema on any one, though an angel from heaven, who should dare to alter the gospel he had preached, Gal. i. 8: they heard him affirming, in express terms, that "without faith it is impossible to please God"; and they constantly held the same language. And, as they saw not the smallest surmise in scripture to make them think those who were out of the church could be saved by invincible ignorance, that deceptious evasion is not so much as once to be met with in all their writings.

Q. 37. In what manner then do these holy saints express themselves on this subject?

A. It would be endless to collect all their testimonies; the few that follow may suffice as a sample of the whole. St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, and the disciple of the apostles, in his epistle to the Philadelphians, says, "Those who make a separation, shall not inherit the kingdom of God." St. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, and martyr in the second age, says, "The church is the gate of life, but all the rest are thieves and robbers, and therefore to be avoided," *Lib. i. de. Hær. c. 3.* St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, and martyr about the middle of the third age, says, "The house of God is but one, and no one can have salvation but in the church," *Epist. 62. alias 4.* And in his book on the unity of the church, he says, "He cannot have God for his Father, who has not the church for his mother. If any one could escape who was out of the ark of Noah, then he who is out of the church may also escape." So much for those most primitive Fathers.

In the fourth century, St. Chrysostom speaks thus, "We know that salvation belongs to the church ALONE, and that no one can partake of Christ, nor be saved out of the Catholic church and the Catholic faith," *Hom. i. in Pasch.*

St. Augustine, in the same age: "The Catholic church alone," says he, "is the body of Christ; the Holy Ghost gives life to no one who is out of his body," *Epist. 185, § 50 Edit. Bened.* And, in another place, he says, "Salvation no one can have but in the Catholic church. Out of the Catholic church he may have any thing but salvation. He may have honour, he may have baptism, he may have the gospel, he may both believe and preach in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but he can find salvation no where but in the Catholic church," *Serm. ad Casariens de Emerit.* Again, "In the Catholic Church," says he, "there are both good and bad. But

those that are separated from her, as long as their opinions are opposite to hers, cannot be good. For though the conversation of some of them appears commendable, yet their very separation from the church makes them bad, according to that of our Saviour, Luke xi. 23, 'He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathers not with me scattereth,'” *Epist.* 209 *ad Feliciam*.

Lactantius, another great light of the fourth age says, “It is the Catholic church only which retains the true worship. This Church is the fountain of truth, it is the house of faith, it is the temple of God. If any one either comes not into this church, or departs from it, his eternal salvation is desperate. No one must flatter himself obstinately, for his soul and salvation are at stake,” *Lib.* iv. *Divin. Instit.* c. 30.

St. Fulgentius, in the sixth century, speaks thus: “Hold most firmly, and without any doubt, that no one who is baptised out of the Catholic church can partake of eternal life, if, before the end of this life, he be not restored to the Catholic church and incorporated therein,” *Lib. de Fid.* c. 37. These are sufficient to show the faith of the Christian world in all preceding ages; for all the holy writers of Christianity, in every age, speak on this subject in the same strain.

Q. 38. These testimonies are strong, and speak plain to the purpose; but, after such proofs, is it not a matter of surprise that anybody should call this point in question?

A. Indeed this can only be accounted for from the general spirit of dissipation and disregard for all religion, which so universally prevails now-a-days; for the first Fathers and apostles of the Reformation, and some of their most candid followers, seeing the strong proofs from the scripture for this point, and not finding the smallest foundation in these sacred writings to support the contrary, have fairly acknowledged it, however much it made against themselves. We have seen how the divines at Westminster speak on this matter, in the Confession of Faith, used to this day by the church of Scotland, and which was ratified and adopted by the General Assembly in the year 1647, as the standard of their religion. But their predecessors in the preceding century, when the Presbyterian religion first began in Scotland, speak no less clearly on the same subject; for, in their Confession of Faith, authorized by Parliament in the year 1560, “as a doctrine grounded upon the infallible word of God,” they speak thus, Article xvi., “As we believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so we do most con-

stantly believe, that, from the beginning, there hath been, and now is, and to the end of the world shall be, one kirk, that is to say, one company and multitude of men, chosen by God, who rightly worship and embrace him by true faith in Jesus Christ ;.....which kirk is catholic, that is, universal ; because it containeth the elect of all ages, &c. Out of which kirk there is neither life nor eternal felicity ; and, therefore, we utterly abhor the blasphemy of them that affirm, that men, which live according to equity and justice, shall be saved, what religion soever they have professed." This confession of the original kirk of Scotland was reprinted, and published at Glasgow, in the year 1771, from which this passage is taken. Calvin himself confesses the same truth, in these words, speaking of the visible church, " Out of its bosom," says he, " no remission of sins, no salvation is to be hoped for, according to Isaiah, Joel, and Ezekiel.....So that it is always highly pernicious to depart from the church " ; and this he affirms in his Institutions themselves, B. iv. c. I. § 4.

We shall add one testimony more which is particularly strong ; it is of Dr Pearson, a bishop of the church of England, in his exposition of the Creed, Edit. 1669, where he says, " The necessity of believing the catholic church appeared, *first*, in this, that Christ hath appointed it as the only way to eternal life. We read at the first, Acts ii. 47, " That the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved ; and what was then daily done, hath been done since continually. Christ never appointed two ways to heaven ; nor did he build a church to save some, and make another institution for other men's salvation, Acts iv. 12, ' There is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved, but the name of Jesus ' ; and that name is no otherwise given under heaven than in the church. As none were saved from the deluge but such as were within the ark of Noah, framed for their reception by the command of God ; as none of the first born of Egypt lived but such as were within those habitations whose door-posts were sprinkled with blood, by the appointment of God, for their preservation ; as none of the inhabitants of Jericho could escape the fire or sword, but such as were within the house of Rahab, for whose protection a covenant was made ; so NONE shall ever escape the eternal wrath of God, who belong not to the church of God." Behold how far the force of truth prevailed, among the most eminent members of the Reformation, before latitudinarian principles crept in among them. What

a reproach must this be before the judgment-seat of God to those members of the church of Christ, who call in question, or seek to invalidate this great and fundamental truth, the very fence and barrier of the true religion, which is so repeatedly spoken by God in his holy scriptures, professed by the church of Christ in all ages, attested in the strongest terms by the most eminent lights of Christianity, and candidly acknowledged by the most celebrated writers and divines of the Reformation? Will not every attempt to weaken the importance of this divine truth be considered by the Great God as betraying his cause, and the interests of his holy faith; and will those who do so be able to plead even their favourite *invincible ignorance* in their own defence before him?

Q. 39. What are the proper sentiments and dispositions which this great truth ought to produce in the hearts and conduct of those who are members of the church of Christ?

A. Nothing can contribute more effectually to produce the most necessary and salutary dispositions in their hearts, both towards God, towards one another, and towards those who are separated from their communion, than the frequent and serious consideration of their vocation to the faith of Christ, and to the communion of that church out of which there is no salvation. And, (1.) With regard to God, it cannot fail to inspire them with the most tender sentiments of affection, love and gratitude towards him, to see themselves so highly favoured by his infinite goodness, without any desert on their part, and in preference to so many thousands of others, who are left in ignorance and error. They ought never to cease praising and adoring him for so great and inestimable a favour, and should be assiduous in giving proof of the sincerity of their gratitude and love to him, by a continual obedience to his commandments. How agreeable such things are to Almighty God, and how much he requires them from those whom he has so highly favoured, is evident, from his own Divine word, where we are frequently put in mind of the greatness of the grace of our vocation, and pressingly commanded to make a proper return to God for it, by these holy virtues. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," says St. Paul, "who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ, as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted in his sight in charity.....Wherefore I cease not to make commemoration of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the

Father of Glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom, and of revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints; and what is the exceeding greatness of his power towards us, who believe according to the operation of the might of his power which he wrought in Christ," Eph. 1. Behold how ardently he desires that we may have a proper sense of that great mercy! And a little after, describing the greatness of this favour, and the return it requires from us, he says, "By him (Christ) we have access in one Spirit to the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but ye are fellow citizens with the saints, and domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone," Eph. ii. 18. "For you were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord. Walk ye as the children of light; for the fruit of the light is in all goodness, and justice and truth; proving what is well pleasing to God, and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," Eph. v. 8. In another place he says, "That ye may walk worthy of God in all things pleasing..... giving thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us to the kingdom of his beloved Son," Col. i. 10. And again, writing to Titus, he says, "It is a faithful saying, and these things I will have thee affirm constantly, that they who believe in God may be careful to excel in good works," Tit. iii. 8. Lastly, to show the absolute necessity of this grateful correspondence on our part, with so great goodness of God towards us, he assures us that it is only on condition of our persevering in our holy faith, and in the hope of our calling, that we can expect the eternal reward of being presented spotless before God, "Whereas," says he, "ye were sometimes alienated, and enemies in mind, in evil works; yet now he hath reconciled you in the body of his flesh, to present you holy, and unspotted, and blameless before him, if so ye continue in the faith, grounded and settled, and immoveable from the gospel which ye have heard, which is preached in all the creation which is under heaven," Col. i. 21. St. Peter also describes the grace of our vocation in the most beautiful terms, and assures us that the very design of God in calling us was, that we might make a suitable return to him by declaring his praises. "Ye," says

he, "are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people, that ye may declare the virtues (or praises) of him who hath called you out of darkness into his admirable light," 1 Pet. ii. 9. How great an obligation does all this lay us under of living good lives, and studying in all things to do the will of God, especially when Christ himself expressly says, "So let your light shine before men, that they seeing your good works, may glorify your Father who is in heaven"?

Q. 40. What are the dispositions and behaviour which this inestimable goodness of God requires in the members of his church towards one another?

A. St. Paul describes them to us in a very strong light as follows: "I, therefore, a prisoner in the Lord, beseech you that ye may walk worthy of the vocation in which ye are called with all humility and mildness, with patience, supporting one another in charity; careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body, one Spirit, as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all," Eph. iv. 1. See here in what strong colours he shows that humility, meekness, and brotherly love are virtues essential to our vocation, and that every thing belonging to our holy religion requires that we should live in the constant practice of them; that we are all united in *one body* the church of Christ, animated by *one spirit*, the spirit of Jesus, which guides and conducts that body into all truth; that we are called to *one hope of our calling*, the possession of God himself in eternal glory; that we will serve *one Lord*, our Lord Jesus Christ; that we all profess *one faith*, that holy faith which he revealed to mankind, *without which it is impossible to please God*; that we are all sanctified by *one baptism*; that we all serve *one God*; that we are all children of *one Father*; and that this heavenly Father is ever present with us, and our whole conduct is naked and open before him. How unbecoming then must it be in the eyes of this our Father, to see us entertaining discords, or ill-will, among ourselves? and how unworthy of our vocation, and dishonourable to our religion, if, being members of the same body, servants of the same Master, and children of the same Father, united together in so many strong ties of religion, we should live in animosity and enmity with each other? In another place the same holy apostle, describing the dispositions necessary for those whom God has called, as his elect, to the inestimable grace of being members of his holy church, says,

“Put ye on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, the bowels of mercy, benignity, humility, modesty, patience, bearing with one another, and forgiving one another; if any one have a complaint against another, even as the Lord hath forgiven you, so do you also,” Col. iii. 12. And the contrary behaviour is so unbecoming and so unworthy of our vocation, that St. James declares it to be even diabolical. “If ye have bitter zeal and contentions in your heart, glory not, and be not liars against the truth; for this is not wisdom descending from above, but earthly, sensual, devilish,” James iii. 14. All this is drawn from the express doctrine of our great Master himself, who not only commands all his followers to live in brotherly love and union among themselves, but declares this to be so connected with their vocation, that it is the distinguishing sign of their belonging to him: “By this shall all men know,” says he, “that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another,” John xiii. 35.

Q 41. What are the dispositions which the members of the church of Christ ought to have, and what line of conduct should they follow towards those who are separated from their communion?

A. It is impossible to have a real and sincere love of God, without also loving every thing that is connected with him; and the more nearly anything is connected with God, the greater must our love be towards it. Now, all those who are in a false religion, though separated from the communion of the church, yet have in many other respects a very near connexion with God, for they are *his creatures*, the work of his hands made for his glory; they are *his images*, made after the likeness and similitude of God; they are *redeemed* by the blood of Jesus who died for mankind; they are created to be *eternally happy* with him in heaven; for God wills not the death of a sinner but rather that he should turn and live. All these considerations show, that we are bound to have a sincere and fervent love for them and a charitable zeal for their eternal salvation; and consequently, to have the most tender sympathy and compassion for them, considering the dangerous way they are in for their souls; and this is the radical and essential disposition of our hearts, which we are bound to have towards all mankind, without exception. Of this we have a beautiful example in St. Paul, who thus expresses the dispositions of his heart towards his brethren the unbelieving Jews: “I speak the truth in Christ,” says he, “I lie not, my

conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great sadness and sorrow in my heart: for I wished myself to be anathema (that is, *a curse*) from Christ, for my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh," Rom. ix. 1.

Now, this sincere love and zeal for their salvation, ought to show itself principally in these following points: (1.) "To be always ready to satisfy every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us," 1 Pet. iii. 15; that is, to be always willing and ready to explain our holy faith to them, and to show them the grounds upon which our faith is built, whenever any of them ask us to do so. This should be done with all modesty and mildness towards them, not entering into idle disputes, nor keeping up contentions with heat and acrimony, even though they should be ever so unreasonable in what they say against us; but after giving an account of the hope that is in us, with lenity and charity, leave the rest to the dispositions of the Divine providence; for the scripture says, "Avoid foolish questions knowing that they beget strifes; but the servant of the Lord must not wrangle, but be mild towards all men and to teach, patient, with modesty admonishing them that resist the truth, if, peradventure, God may give them repentance to know the truth, and they may recover themselves from the snares of the devil, by whom they are held captive at will," 2 Tim. ii. 23, and "to walk with wisdom towards them that are without; so that your speech be always in grace seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man," Col. iv. 5.

(2.) To be earnest in praying to God for their conversion and salvation, as is expressly commanded in scripture, "I desire, therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings, be made for all men.....for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God, who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 1. We have a beautiful example of this in the same holy apostle, who, full of charity for the salvation of the Jews, pities their mistaken zeal for their own errors, and pours forth the prayers of his heart for them. "Brethren," says he, "the will of my heart indeed, and my prayer to God is for them unto salvation; for I bear them witness that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge," Rom. x. 1.

(3.) To give them good example, by the exercise of good works, and the practice of all Christian virtues. Nothing is of greater efficacy to give others a good opinion of our holy

religion, than to live well. This is a living argument which teaches the most ignorant and convinces the most obstinate, and hence we find this repeatedly commanded in the scripture, on purpose to give edification to those who are without, and to excite them to glorify God. "So let your light shine," says Jesus Christ himself, "before men, that they seeing your good works, may glorify your heavenly Father," Matt. v. 16. And St. Peter expresses himself thus, on this important duty, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, to refrain yourselves from carnal desires, which war against the soul, having your conversation good among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, considering you by your good works, they may give glory to God in the day of visitation... for so is the will of God, that, by doing well, ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men," 1 Pet. ii. 11, 15. St. Paul also requires the same thing saying, "In all things show thyself an example of good works, in doctrine, in integrity, in gravity, thy speech sound that cannot be blamed, that he who is on the contrary part may be afraid, having no evil to say of us," Titus ii. 7.

But (4.) *Lastly*, If notwithstanding such pious and edifying behaviour, persecutions and trials should be permitted by the Divine providence to come upon us, for his own wise and just purposes, if we should be evil spoken of falsely, if the truths of our holy religion should be calumniated, and our doctrine misrepresented, we must not be surprised nor disheartened; but remember that this is the way the world treated our Lord and Master himself, who foretold that his faithful followers should be treated in the same manner. St. Peter also assures us, that this is one of the signs of those who follow sects of perdition, to speak evil of the truth, "through whom," says he, "the way of truth shall be evil spoken of," 2 Pet. ii. 2; and St. Jude adds, "that they blaspheme whatever things they know not," Jude 10. Neither ought such trials to diminish, even in the smallest degree, our sincere charity for them, and our desire of their salvation; but rather increase our pity and compassion for their poor souls, and make us more earnest in praying for them, imitating our blessed Saviour, who on the cross itself, prayed for his persecutors, "Father," said he, "forgive them, for they know not what they are doing." Above all things, we must never entertain the least thought of revenge, "not rendering evil for evil, not railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing: for unto this ye are called, that ye may inherit a bless-

ing," 1 Pet. iii. 9. On the contrary, looking on our trials as all disposed and ordered by the hand of God, "without whom not a hair of our head can fall to the ground," we must "rejoice to be counted worthy to suffer ignominy for the sake of Christ," Acts v. 41. For, "if also ye suffer any thing for justice' sake, blessed are ye.....for it is better doing well (*if such be the will of God*) to suffer, than doing ill," 1 Pet. iii. 14, 17. And therefore, "Dearly beloved, think not strange the burning heat that is to try you, as if some new thing happened to you; but if ye partake of the sufferings of Christ, rejoice, that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may also be glad with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, ye shall be happy; for that which is of the honour, glory, and power of God, and that which is in spirit resteth upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or a railer, or a coveter of other men's things; but if as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name," 1 Pet. iv. 12, always remembering the words of our Lord, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all that is evil against you falsely, for my sake, be glad, and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven," Matt. v. 11.

APPENDIX.

ON COMMUNICATING IN RELIGION WITH THOSE WHO ARE SEPARATED FROM THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

WHOEVER seriously considers what has been shown in the preceding inquiry, and the light in which the sacred scriptures represent to us all false religions, will have no difficulty in drawing this conclusion, that every communication with such, in religious matters, must be highly criminal in the sight of God; because every such communication implies an approbation of their false doctrine, and is, as St. John expresses it, "a communicating with their wicked works," 2 John 11. It might, therefore, seem unnecessary to advance any thing further on this head; but, as the licentiousness of the heart of man, fostered by the latitudinarian maxims so current in the world, is but too apt to take liberties in practice, under some specious pretence or other, which a bare conclusion from other principles might prove too weak to restrain; and as the Spirit of God has thought proper to lay down our duty on this point,

in the plainest terms, in his sacred scriptures, it cannot, therefore, but be agreeable to all sincere disciples of Jesus Christ, to know to the full what their holy religion teaches them concerning it, both for their own satisfaction, in knowing their duty, and the grounds of it; and also, that they may be armed against the “cunning craftiness of such as may go about to deceive them.” This appendix, therefore, is added, to show, from the most incontestable authority, that it is altogether unlawful for the members of the true church of Christ to have any religious communication, even though in appearance only, with any of those who are separated from her communion; and that the vain pretexts which may be brought to authorise such communications are mere delusions, and, as St. Paul justly calls them, “impositions of philosophy, vain deceit, according to the rudiments of the world, and not according to Christ,” Col. ii. 6, as will manifestly appear by what the sacred word of God declares upon this subject.

SECTION I.—*Principles promised from the Holy Scriptures.*

Q. 1. Are we obliged to confess our holy faith outwardly, acknowledging ourselves to be members of the church of Christ?

A. We are strictly obliged to confess this outwardly, when either God’s honour, or the good of our neighbour’s soul requires it; for this important reason, because the scripture makes it an express condition of salvation. Thus (1.) “This is the word of faith which we preach; that if thou confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved; for with the heart we believe unto justice, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,” Rom. x. 9. In which words the apostle declares, that it is an article of Divine faith, revealed by God, and preached as his word by the apostles, that if we confess Jesus outwardly, and believe him in our hearts, we shall be saved; for, though the internal faith of the heart is sufficient for our justification, that is, for being reconciled with God through repentance, yet if occasion be given, we are also bound to confess outwardly, both by words and actions, without shame, or fear of the world, the faith which we believe in our hearts, in order to obtain salvation. And it is with great reason that St. Paul affirms this to be a revealed truth; for, (2.) Jesus Christ himself declares it to his holy apostles in these

words, "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, I will also confess him before my Father who is in heaven," Matt. x. 32; and, in another place, he repeats it with an asseveration, saying, "And I say unto you, whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God," Luke xii. 8. In these words, the necessity of confessing our faith in Jesus Christ is revealed by him; which therefore St. Paul, in the former text, calls *the word of faith*. Now, by confessing Jesus Christ, is not only meant confessing our belief of his person, but also of his doctrine, and, consequently, of his church, in which alone his true doctrine is preserved; for of St. Paul before his conversion, it is said, that "he breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," Acts ix. 1; that is, against the church of Christ, as he himself declares, saying, "Beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it," Gal. i. 13; and yet, when Christ appeared to him by the way going to Damascus, he said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?.....I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," Acts ix. 4; where it is manifest, that persecuting Christ, and persecuting his church, is the same thing; and consequently, confessing Christ, and confessing his church is the same thing also, according to his own words to the pastors of his church, "He that hears you hears me; and he that despises you despises me."

Q. 2. Is it a grievous sin to deny Christ or his faith and church?

A. It is, of its own nature, a most grievous sin of the deepest die; for Christ himself says, "Whosoever shall deny me before men, I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven," Matt. x. 33; and again, "He that shall deny me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God," Luke xii. 9. On this authority St. Paul declares the same truth as a *faithful saying*, and commands his disciple, Timothy, and in him all the pastors of God's church, to preach and inculcate the same to their people: "A faithful saying if we deny him, he will deny us; if we believe not, he continueth faithful, he cannot deny himself; of these things, put them in mind, charging them before the Lord," 2 Tim. ii. 11; where it is manifest, that, to deny Jesus Christ, and, of consequence, to deny his faith, or church, is a deadly sin, which, at the great day, will bring upon us that dreadful sentence, "I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity," Luke xiii. 27.

Q. 3. How does it appear that denying the faith or church

of Christ is included in these texts, and is the same as denying Christ himself.

A. This is manifest both from the reason given above, and also from the following express declaration of Christ himself saying, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also shall be ashamed of him, when he shall come in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels," Mark viii. 38; where it is evident, that the being ashamed, not only of Christ, but also of his words, that is, of his doctrine, of his faith, and consequently of his church, the depository of his faith, it is a mortal sin of its own nature; and if the *being ashamed* of these is a mortal sin, how much more the *denying them*?

Q. 4. But is it not allowable to deny our faith outwardly, whilst we keep it firm in our hearts, in order to escape some great evil, such as the loss of all our goods, or of our liberty, or of life itself?

A. No; it is never allowable, even in appearance, either by words or signs, or actions to deny our faith, though to gain the whole world, or to escape the greatest evils; for, (1.) This is the very thing that Christ condemns in express terms, when he says, "Whosoever shall deny me before men," that is, outwardly in appearance, in the eyes of the world, "I will also deny him before my Father who is in heaven." (2.) Because he makes the losing our life for his sake, and for the sake of his gospel, when called to the test, a condition of salvation. "Whosoever," says he, "shall lose his life for my sake, and for the gospel, shall save it; for what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man also shall be ashamed of him, when he shall come in the glory of his Father," Mark viii. 35; where it is evident, that even the being ashamed *of his gospel*, that is, *of his words*, even though in order to save our life, to gain the whole world, is a crime which will destroy the soul; how much more to deny it? whereas if we lose our life for his holy faith, we save our souls, and gain eternal happiness. (3.) Because to deny our faith, even in appearance, is, of *its own nature*, a mortal sin, and therefore can never, never be allowable on any consideration.

Q. 5. Did the primitive Christians understand those texts in this manner?

A. There cannot be a stronger proof of the belief of the primitive church in this matter, than the noble behaviour of thousands and thousands of her members, who laid down their lives in the midst of the most cruel torments, rather than do the smallest thing that could have, though but an appearance of denying their holy religion. It was not always required of these blessed martyrs openly to renounce their faith, or to abandon it entirely; the saying some words, or doing some action, which was only to be interpreted a disavowal of their religion, of an approbation of the then established religion of the country, was frequently all that was required to save them from the loss of goods, liberty, and life; for example, to be present at a heathen sacrifice, though their heart took no share in what was there done; and had they complied with this for once, they would seldom have been sought after again, but might follow what religion they pleased; and yet they persevered resolute and uniform, choosing rather to forfeit all that was near or dear to them in this world, and to undergo the most exquisite torments, than do the smallest action contrary to the allegiance they owed to Jesus Christ, or, though in appearance only, seemed to be ashamed of him, and of his sacred words. Nothing sure, but the most perfect conviction of the unlawfulness of the thing could have prevailed with such numbers, of both sexes, and often of the most tender age, to reject with horror such a compliance. Their all was at stake, life, liberty, goods, children, and everything else; by a compliance they would have secured all these things which men are taught to regard as the most valuable things in this world, and, moreover, were often promised riches and honours, and the favour of the emperors; by a non-compliance, they forfeited all, and were condemned to die in the most excruciating manner; yet, convinced as they were, that such compliance was unlawful, an injury to God, a dishonour to his holy faith, and a scandal to their brethren, they cheerfully embraced death in all its horrors rather than be guilty of such crime. Nay, what still more plainly shows the sense of the primitive church, in this point, when some weak brethren, to avoid these tortures, procured, for money, an attestation from the magistrates that they had complied with what the persecuting laws required from them, though in reality they had not; they were looked upon by the church as traitors to their God and to their religion, and as such they were dealt with, so as not to be admitted to the participation of the sacred mysteries, till, by a long and severe public

penance, they had endeavoured to expiate their crime, and satisfy for the scandal they had given.

Q. 6. Wherein does the malice of the sin consist, when one, either by words, or signs, or actions, denies his faith, though only in appearance, whilst he still retains it in his heart?

A. The malice of this sin is manifold; for (1.) It is a most grievous lie, in a matter of the highest importance, when one professes outwardly that the truths of God are false, which he believes in his heart to be true; and if this profession be accompanied with an oath, it is a most damnable perjury, and one of the highest insults that can be offered to Almighty God, because it is calling himself to witness that the Divine truths revealed by him are false. (2.) It is giving the lie to God before men; for, as he "that believeth not the Son, maketh God a liar, because he believeth not the testimony which he hath testified of his Son," 1 John v. 10; so he that denieth any truth revealed by Jesus Christ, maketh him a liar, because he acknowledges before men that his Divine faith is not true. Hence, (3.) All acts of this kind are most dishonourable to Almighty God, and contain a grievous contempt of his infinite Majesty, of which he says, "They that despise me shall be despised," 1 Kings (Sam.) ii. 30. (4.) They are also grievously injurious to divine charity, and show that we love the world, our possessions, or our life, much more than God, when, for fear of losing them, we deny him and his holy faith. (5.) They also contain the malice of a grievous scandal; for they give the enemies of our holy faith a handle to think slightly of it, and to be the more confirmed in their own errors; and the bad example of such actions naturally induces weak brethren to follow it, and to lose the esteem they ought to have for their holy religion, to the ruin and destruction of their poor souls.

SECTION II.—*Consequences that necessarily follow from these Scripture Principles.*

Q. 7. What are the consequences which flow from these scripture principles?

A. Chiefly these following: (1.) That when a person is called upon, by public authority, to give an account of his religion, he is obliged in conscience, openly to declare his faith; because the honour of God then requires him to do so, and obliges him not to be *ashamed of Christ, nor of his words*, even though his doing so should cost him all he has in this world, yea even life

itself. Hence all the holy martyrs, when examined before their persecuting judges, openly confessed their faith in Jesus Christ, and rejoiced, with the apostles, to suffer for his name's sake.

(2.) When we hear wicked men speaking impious things against the gospel, or ridiculing the sacred truths it teaches, and have grounds to hope that our defending them would either check their impiety, or prevent others present from being hurt by them; it is our duty to profess our esteem and veneration for the gospel, because then both the good of our neighbour, and the honour of God, calls upon us to do so. And indeed, is it not surprising, that if we hear our friend, or father, or our prince, spoken evil of, we think ourselves obliged to take their part, and defend them, and yet should be cold and backward to defend the cause of the great God, when we hear his Divine truths blasphemed? or be ashamed to show ourselves Christians for fear of being laughed at by men? Have we not reason to dread that Christ will be ashamed of us for this at the great day? This was not the case with the royal prophet, that man according to God's own heart, who said to God, "I spoke of thy testimonies before kings, and I was not ashamed," Ps. cxviii. 46: nor with St. Paul, who said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel," Rom. i. 6.

(3.) That it is always criminal to seem to approve or profess any false religion, whether this be done by words, signs, or actions; because to approve a false religion, even in appearance, or before men, is a tacit condemnation of the true, is a dangerous lie, dishonourable to God, and a scandal to our neighbour. Hence when the persecuting heathen king required the venerable old man Eleazer to eat swine's flesh, contrary to the law, as a sign of his denying his religion, "he," says the scripture, "choosing rather a most glorious death than a hateful life, went forward of his own accord to the torment"; and when some of his friends, moved with a false compassion, proposed to bring him other flesh which the law allowed, that he might appear to have eaten swine's flesh in obedience to the king, and so save his life, "he answered without delay.....saying he would rather be sent into the other world; for it doth not become our age, said he, to dissemble, whereby many young persons.....through my dissimulation, and for a little time of a corruptible life, should be deceived, and I thereby bring a stain and a curse upon my old age; for though, for the present time, I should be delivered from the punishment of men; yet should

I not escape the hand of the Almighty, neither alive nor deadand he was forthwith carried to execution," 2 Mach. vi. 19.

(4.) That when a person living among those of a false religion, conceals his faith, though he keep it in his heart, and in order to conceal it, neglects all the external duties of it, and even transgresses the sacred laws and precepts of the church for fear of being discovered, lest forsooth he should meet with any temporal inconveniency, he is guilty of a sin ; because he is ashamed of the faith of Christ, disobeys his holy church, and prefers his own worldly ease and interest, to the glory of his God and the honour of his holy gospel.

(5.) That if this person, the more effectually to conceal his religion, not only neglects its duties, but even joins in acts of the false religion of those with whom he dwells, by assisting at their prayers, or going to their churches, his crime is still more atrocious ; because he positively professes a false religion, denies the true religion of Jesus Christ before men, and therefore, must expect to be denied by him at the great day. Of such as these the scripture says, "when they worship the Lord they serve also their idols," 4 Kings xvii. 33, 41. And their great misery is, that they conceal their worship of the Lord, being ashamed or afraid to show it, and worship their idols openly, to wit, their worldly views of interest, favour of men, or the like.

(6.) That if any outward action, or manner of dress, or the like, be either of its own nature, or by the laws of any country, or by the custom of the place, looked upon as a distinctive sign of any false religion ; it is always unlawful and a sin in any member of the church of Christ to do that action, or wear that dress, whatever his private intention may be in doing so ; because, in the eye of the world, his doing so is an open professing of that false religion, nor does it depend upon his private intention to make it otherwise. Hence the church severely condemned the practice of some Christians living among the Turks, who, whilst they privately attended their Christian duties, took Turkish names, and used the Turkish dress, that, by this means, being taken for Turks, they might enjoy some privileges in trade, and be freed from some taxes which the Christians were obliged to pay. All such dissimulation in religion is detestable in the sight of God not only for the reasons given above, but also because of the hurt it does to his holy religion itself ; for when it is discovered, as it seldom fails sooner or later to be, it gives the enemies of our holy faith a

handle to believe, that it approves such dissimulation, and increases their hatred and aversion to it.

(7.) Every action or way of speaking which either includes, or seems to include, a contempt and disapprobation of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, or an approbation of what is contrary thereto, and which scandalizes weak brethren, or tends to lead them into error or sin, is still more detestable in the eyes of God; as besides all the other evils above mentioned, it also tends to the ruin of those souls for which Christ died. We have seen how much this consideration weighed with that holy servant of God, Eleazer, to keep him from doing a thing lawful in itself, but which having the appearance of evil, would have proved a scandal to others; and St. Paul, in the strongest manner, shows us the greatness of the crime of giving scandal in things that regard religion above all others.

Q. 8. What is the doctrine delivered by St. Paul on this head?

A. It consists of several most necessary points, for (1.) He lays down three different kinds of hurt we may do to our neighbour's soul, by giving bad example of any kind, but especially in what regards our religion; *first, To scandalize him*, that is to encourage our neighbour to do evil, or to be the cause of inducing him to sin; *secondly, To offend him*, that is to give him pain and trouble of mind, on seeing our evil doings; *thirdly, To make him weak*, that is, to weaken his esteem and zeal for his religion, by seeing or hearing us do or say anything slightly of it. Now all these things he exhorts us to avoid, by abstaining from the most innocent actions, if our neighbour through weakness take offence at them. "It is good," says he, "not to eat flesh, and not to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother is offended, or scandalized, or made weak," Rom. xiv. 21. "Put not a stumbling-block, or a scandal in your brother's way.....but if, because of thy meat, thy brother be grieved, thou walkest now not according to charity. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died," Rom. xiv. 13, 15.

(2.) He declares, that when a person thinks anything a sin, which is not so in itself, and commits it, he becomes guilty, by acting against his conscience, "All things," says he, "are clean, but it is an evil for that man who eateth with offence.....for he that discerneth, (that is, *thinks some meats clean, and some unclean*), if he eat is condemned because not of faith," that is not according to, but against his conscience, Rom. xiv. 20, 23.

(3.) He affirms, that, if we do a thing innocent in itself, but which has the appearance of evil, and much more so if it be evil, by which our brother is encouraged, or otherwise induced to do it, who believes it to be evil, or knows it to be such ; we commit a grievous sin, by ruining our brother's soul, and sinning against Christ, who died for our salvation. Meats offered to idols, in reality, contract no uncleanness on that account, because an idol is nothing, and therefore may, in themselves be eaten without any scruple ; yet all are not of that opinion ; and, "if any one eats with the conscience of the idol," (that is, *thinking it unlawful to do so*,) "his conscience, being weak, is defiled." Now, though another, who has knowledge, may lawfully eat such meat, yet, if his doing so induces his weak brother to do the same, he is guilty of the ruin of his brother. "Take heed," says he, "lest perhaps this your liberty become a stumbling-block to the weak ; for if a man see him that hath knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not his conscience, being weak, be emboldened to eat those things which are sacrificed to idols ? and through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish for whom Christ died ? Now, when ye sin thus against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ," 1 Cor. viii. 9.

Wherefore, (4.) He concludes, that for his part, "if meat scandalise my brother, I will never taste flesh, lest I should scandalise my brother," 1 Cor. viii. 13. And a little after he gives this general command to all, "Give no offence to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God," 1 Cor. x. 32. From all which it is manifest, that every word or action which includes, or seems to include a contempt of religion, by which our brethren may "be offended, or scandalised, or made weak," is very offensive in the sight of God, from this consideration alone, that it tends to make "them perish for whom Christ died, wounds their weak conscience"; and through them is a "sin against Christ." And how severe a judgment Christ will pass against all those who scandalize their weak brethren, appears from his own words, when he says, "He that shall scandalize one of those little ones that believe in me, it were better for him that a mill stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Wo to the world, because of scandals ; for it must needs be that scandals come, but nevertheless, wo to that man by whom scandal cometh," Matt. xviii. 6. And the holy Eleazer declared, that, had he been guilty of that crime, though

by an action which was in itself lawful, and to save his own life, yet "neither alive or dead should he escape the hand of the Almighty," 2 Mach. vi.

(8.) Lastly, that it is always criminal to expose one's self, without necessity, to the probable danger of losing one's faith, or being corrupted in one's religion; for the scripture declares that "He that loveth danger shall perish in it," Eccelus. iii. 27. And our Saviour commands us to pluck out our eye, or cut off a hand or foot, and throw it from us, if it be a scandal to us; that is, to fly from, separate ourselves from, and avoid every person, thing, or employment, which puts us in the dangerous occasion of ruining our souls, though as near and dear or useful to us as an eye, a hand, or a foot; and he adds this cogent reason, "For it is better," says he, "for thee that one of thy members should perish, than that thy whole body should be cast into hell fire," Matt. v. 29. And again, "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed and lame, than, having two hands and two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire," Matt. xviii. 8.

Q. 9. What is the conclusion to be drawn from all these scripture truths?

A. The conclusion is manifest, namely, "That every communication in matters of religion with those who are separated from the church of Christ, which either is in itself, or is esteemed in the eyes of men to be a defection from the true faith, or a profession or approbation of their false tenets, or is a distinctive sign of belonging to their sect, or an occasion of offence and scandal to the faithful, or an exposing of one's self to the probable danger of seduction; is a very great crime in the sight of God, and strictly forbidden by his holy law, as being intrinsically evil in its own nature."

Q. 10. Is there any positive law of God, expressly forbidding all communication with those of a false religion?

A. There are several very strong and clear commands for this purpose, some of which contain an unlimited prohibition of all such communication in general, and others enforce this prohibition, by assigning some particular reasons for it.

SECTION III.—*General Laws of God, forbidding all Communication in Religion with those of a false Religion.*

Q. 11. What are those laws which prohibit this in general ?

A. They are principally these following :

(1.) The first is grounded upon the light in which all false religions are considered in the holy scripture ; for there we are assured, that they arise from *false teachers*, who are called *seducers of the people, ravenous wolves, false prophets*, who *speake perverse things* : that they are *antichrists*, and *enemies of the cross of Christ* ; that *departing from the true faith of Christ*, they *give heed to the spirits of error* ; that their doctrines are the *doctrines of devils, speaking lies*, that their *ways are pernicious*, their *heresies damnable, and the like*. In consequence of all which, this general command of avoiding all communication with them in religion, is given by the apostle, “Bear not the yoke together with unbelievers ; for what participation hath justice with injustice ? or what fellowship hath light with darkness ? and what concord hath Christ with Belial ? or what part hath the faithful with the unbelievers ? or what agreement hath the temple of God with idols ? For ye are the temple of the living God ?” 2 Cor. vi. 14. Now it is the true religion of Jesus Christ, the true doctrine of his gospel, which is justice and light ; all false doctrines are injustice and darkness ; it is by our holy faith that we belong to Christ, and are temples of the living God ; all false religions flow from the father of lies, and make those who embrace them unbelievers ; therefore, all participation, all fellowship, all communication with false religions, is here expressly forbidden by the word of God. We have seen above, that we are obliged to love the persons of those who are engaged in false religions, to wish them well and do them good ; but here we are expressly forbidden all communication in their religion ; that is, in their false tenets and worship. Hence the learned and pious English divines, who published at Rheims their translation of the New Testament, in their note upon this passage say, “Generally, here is forbidden conversation and dealing with unbelievers in prayers, or meetings at their schismatical service, or other divine office whatsoever ; which the apostle here uttereth in more particular terms, that Christian folk may take the better heed of it.”

(2.) The next general command to avoid all religious communication with those who are heretics, or have a false religion, is this, “A man that is a heretic, after the first and second

admonition, AVOID, knowing that he is such an one, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned by his own judgment," Tit. iii. 10. Here we see another general command to avoid all such; that is, to flee from them, to have no communication with them. But in what are we commanded to flee from them? not as to their persons, or the necessary communications of society; for then, as the same holy apostle says upon a similiar occasion, "You must needs go out of the world," 1 Cor. v. 10. Not as to the offices of Christian charity; for these we are commanded by Christ himself, in the person of the good Samaritan, to give to all mankind, whatever their religion be; therefore in the most restrained and limited sense which the words can bear, the thing in which we are commanded to avoid them, is in all matters of religion; in that in which they themselves are subverted and sin; in things relating to God and his service. In these they err, in these they are subverted, in these they are condemned; therefore in these we must avoid them. Hence the pious translators of the Rheims New Testament, in their note on this text says, "Heretics, therefore, must not marvel, if we warn all Catholic men, by the words of the apostle in this place, to take heed of them, and to shun their preaching, books, and conventicles."

(3.) A third general command on this subject, is manifestly included in this warm injunction of the apostle, "we charge you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother walking disorderly, and not according to the tradition which they have received from us," 2 Thess. iii. 6. In this passage, all the different sects of false religions are particularly pointed out; for, however they may differ among themselves in other respects, they generally agree in this point of rejecting all apostolical traditions, handed down to us by the church of Christ; all such the apostle here charges us, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to avoid, to withdraw ourselves from them. Now it is evident, that the most limited sense in which this command, so warmly laid on us by the apostle, can be taken, is to withdraw ourselves from them, in every thing relating to religion, from their sacraments, prayers, preachings, religious meetings, and the like. It is in these things that they "do not walk according to the tradition received from the apostles." In these things then, we are here commanded in the name of Christ himself, "to withdraw ourselves from them."

Seeing, therefore, that the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of this

holy apostle, has so often, and in such strong terms, forbidden all manner of fellowship in religion with those who are out of his holy church, let us not be deceived by the specious, but vain sophistry of cunning men, who lie in wait to deceive; let us not offend our great God, by transgressing these his express commands, by joining in the prayers or going to the meetings of such as are disjoined from his holy church, lest he should withdraw his holy grace from us, and while we expose ourselves to danger, he should leave us to perish in it. Let us hear and follow the advice and command of the same holy apostle, "As therefore ye have received Jesus Christ the Lord, walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and confirmed in the faith; as also ye have learned, abounding in him in thanksgiving. Beware lest any man impose upon you by philosophy and vain deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the rudiments of the world, and not according to Christ," Col. ii. 6. Wherefore, whatever arguments may be brought from human traditions and worldly motives, from interest, gaining favour, liberality of sentiment, sociality, curiosity, levity, gaiety, or the like, to induce us to join in, or to partake of any religious duty with those of a false religion, though but in appearance only, let us look upon all such arguments as philosophy, and vain deceit, as traditions of men and worldly wisdom; and let us oppose to all such reasons, this one argument, "God has expressly forbid it; therefore no human power can make it lawful."

SECTION IV.—*Particular Laws of God forbidding all Communication with false Religions, and assigning reasons for it.*

Q. 12. What are the particular laws on this subject?

In the three general commands above mentioned, God Almighty speaks, by the mouth of his holy apostle, as Lord and Master, and lays his orders upon us absolutely. In what follows, he joins the merciful Saviour to the Sovereign; and whilst he no less strictly commands us to avoid all religious communication with those who are separated from his holy faith and church, he, at the same time, condescends to engage our obedience, by showing us the strongest reasons for it.

(1.) "Beware of false prophets," says our blessed Master, "who come to you in clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravening wolves," Matt. vii. 15. Here Jesus Christ commands his followers to "beware of false prophets"; that is, to flee

from them, to be on their guard against them; and he adds this powerful motive, lest ye be seduced and ruined by them; for, whatever appearance of godliness they may put on, though they come to you in the clothing of sheep, yet within they are ravenous wolves, and seek only to slay and to destroy. To the same purpose he says in another place, "Take heed that no man seduce you; for many will come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and they will seduce many," Matt. xxiv. 4. "And many false prophets shall arise and seduce many," verse 11. Here he foretells the cunning of false teachers, and the danger of being seduced by them, and commands us to take care of ourselves, that such be not our fate. But how shall we escape from them? He afterwards tells us *how*; do not believe them, have nothing to do with them, have no communication with them. "Then," says he, "if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, do not believe him. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch as to deceive (if it is possible) even the elect. Behold I have told it you beforehand. If, therefore, they shall say to you, Behold he is in the desert, go ye not out; behold he is in the closet, believe it not," Matt. xxiv. 23. Can there be a more efficacious reason to enforce the observance of his command, than what he here uses, or a more interesting motive to induce his followers to have no religious communication with such false teachers? many will be certainly seduced by them; and so will ye, if ye expose yourself to the danger.

(2.) St. Peter, considering the great mercy bestowed upon us by the grace of our vocation to the true faith of Christ, says, that it is our duty to "declare the praises and virtues of him who hath called us out of darkness into his admirable light," 1 Pet. ii. 9. St. Paul also exhorts us to "give thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his beloved Son," Col. i. 12; where it is manifest, that as the true faith of Jesus Christ is the only light that conduces to salvation, and it is only in his kingdom, that is, in his church, where that heavenly light is to be found, so all false religions are darkness; and to be separated from the kingdom of Christ, is to be in darkness as to the great business of eternity. And indeed, what greater or more miserable darkness can a poor soul be in than to be led away by seducing spirits, and "departing from

the faith of Christ give heed to the doctrine of devils," 1 Tim. iv. 1. St. Paul, deploring the state of such souls, says, that they "have their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts," Eph. iv. 18. On this account, the same holy apostle exhorts us in the most pressing manner, to take care not to be seduced from the light of our holy faith, by the vain words and seducing speeches of false teachers, by which we would certainly incur the anger of God; and, to prevent so great a misery, he not only exhorts us to walk as children of the light, in the practice of all holy virtues, but expressly commands us to avoid all communion in religion with those who walk in the darkness of error. "Let no man deceive you," says he, "with vain words, for, because of these things cometh the anger of God upon the children of unbelief; be ye not, therefore, partakers with them. For ye were heretofore darkness, but now light in the Lord, walk ye as children of the light.....and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness," Eph. v. 6. Here, then, we have an express command, not only not to partake with the unfruitful works of darkness, that is, not to join in any false religion, or partake of its rites or sacraments, but also, not to have any fellowship with its professors, not to be present at their meetings or sermons, or any other of their religious offices, lest we be deceived by them, and incur the anger of the Almighty, provoking him to withdraw his assistance from us, and leave us to ourselves, in punishment of our disobedience.

(3.) St. Paul, full of zeal for the good of souls and solicitous to prevent us from all danger of losing our holy faith, the ground-work of our salvation, renews the same command in his epistle to the Romans, by way of entreaty, beseeching us to avoid all such communion with those of a false religion; he also shows us by what sign we should discover them, and points out the source of our danger from them. "Now," says he, "I beseech you, brethren, to mark them, who cause dissensions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and to avoid them; for they that are such, serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and, by pleasing speeches and good words, seduce the hearts of the innocent," Rom. xvi. 17. See here whom we are to avoid; "those that cause dissensions contrary to the old doctrine"; all those who, having left the true faith and doctrine which they had learned, and which had been handed down to us from the beginning by the church of

Christ, follow strange doctrines, and make divisions and dissensions in the Christian world. And why are we to avoid them? because they are not servants of Christ, but slaves to their own belly, whose hearts are placed upon the enjoyments of this world, and who, by "pleasing speeches and good words, seduce the hearts of the innocent," that is, do not bring any reason or solid arguments to seduce people to their evil ways, so as to convince the understanding, for that is impossible, but practise upon their hearts and passions, relaxing the laws of the gospel; granting liberties to the inclinations of flesh and blood, laying aside the sacred rules of mortification of the passions and of self-denial, promising worldly wealth, and ease, and honours, and, by pleasing speeches, of this kind, seducing the heart and engaging people to their ways.

(4.) The same argument and command the apostle repeats in his epistle to his beloved disciple Timothy, where he gives a sad picture, indeed, of all false teachers, and, withal, tells us, that they put on an outward show of piety, the better to deceive, "having an appearance, indeed, of godliness, but denying the power thereof"; then he immediately gives this command; "Now, these avoid: for, of this sort are they that creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, who are led away with divers desires"; and adds this sign by which they may be known, that, not having the true faith of Christ, and being out of his holy church the only sure rule for knowing the truth, they are never settled, but always altering and changing their opinions, "ever learning, and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth"; and no wonder, because as he adds, "they resist the truth, being corrupted in their mind and reprobate concerning the faith," 2 Tim. iii. 5. Here it is to be observed, that, though the apostle says, that silly weak people, and especially women, are most apt to be deceived by such false teachers, yet he gives the command of avoiding all communication with them in their evil ways, to all without exception, even to Timothy himself; for the epistle is directed particularly to him, and to him he says, as well as to all others, "Now these avoid," though he was a pastor of the church, and fully instructed by the apostle himself in all the truths of religion; because, besides the danger of seduction, which none can escape who voluntarily expose themselves to it, all such communication is evil in itself, and therefore to be avoided by all, and especially by pastors, whose example would be more prejudicial to others.

(5.) *Lastly*, The beloved disciple St. John renews the same commands in the strongest terms, and adds another reason, which regards all without exception, and especially those who are best instructed in their duty: "Look to yourselves," says he, "that ye lose not the things that ye have wrought, but that you may receive a full reward. Whosoever revolteth and continueth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that continueth in the doctrine, the same hath both the Father and the Son. If any man come to you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, nor say to him, God speed you; for he that saith to him God speed you, communicateth with his wicked works," 2 John, verse 8. Here, then, it is manifest, that every fellowship with those who have not the doctrine of Jesus Christ, which is a "communication in their evil works," that is, in their false tenets, or worship, or in any act of religion, is strictly forbidden, under pain of losing the "things we have wrought," the reward of our labours, the salvation of our souls. And if this holy apostle declares that the very saying, *God speed* to such people, is a communication with their wicked works, what would he have said of going to their places of worship, of hearing their sermons, joining in their prayers, or the like? From this passage the learned translators of the Rheims New Testament, in their note, justly observe, "That, in matters of religion, in praying, hearing their sermons, presence at their service, partaking of their sacraments, and all other communicating with them in spiritual things, it is a great and damnable sin to deal with them." And if this be the case with all in general, how much more with those who are well instructed and better knowing in their religion than others; for their doing any of these things must be a much greater crime than in ignorant people, because they know their duty better.

Q. 13. These laws are all very clear and strong; but has the Christian church always observed, and enforced the observation of them?

A. The Spirit of Christ, which dictated the holy scriptures, and the Spirit which animates and guides the church of Christ, *and teaches her all truth*, is the same; and therefore her conduct in this point has been uniformly the same in all ages with what the holy scripture teaches. She has constantly prohibited her children to have any communication, in religious matters, with those who are separated from her communion; and this she has sometimes done under the most severe penalties. In the apostolical canons, which are of very ancient standing, and for

the most part handed down from the apostolical age, it is thus decreed: "If any bishop or priest, or deacon, shall join in prayers with heretics, let him be suspended from communion," Can. 44. Also, "if any clergyman, or laic, shall go into the synagogue of the Jews, or the meetings of heretics, to join in prayer with them, let them be deposed, and deprived of communion," Can. 63. So also, in one of her most respectable councils, held in the year 398, at which the great St. Augustine was present, she speaks thus, "None must either pray or sing psalms with heretics; and whosoever shall communicate with those who are cut off from the communion of the church, whether clergyman or laic, let him be excommunicated," Coun. Carth. iv. 72 and 73. The same is her language in all ages; and in this she shows herself to be the true mother, who will not suffer her children to be divided. She knows her heavenly spouse has declared, that "no man can serve two masters; we cannot serve God and Mammon"; and therefore she must either have them to be hers entirely, or she will not have them at all. She knows his holy apostle has protested, that there can be no "participation, no fellowship, no concord, no part, no agreement betwixt the faithful and the unbeliever"; and therefore she can never allow any of her faithful children to have any religious communication with those of a false religion and corrupted faith.

Q. 14. Are there any other particular reasons for avoiding all communication with those who are separated from the church, in those countries where the number of the faithful is small, and where they live amidst multitudes, who are of different religions?

A. Yes, there are, and very strong ones. For (1.) In these countries, if any of the faithful appear in the public places of worship, whether of the established kind, or of those permitted by law, their doing so is generally looked upon as a defection from their own faith, and adjoining with those who are separated from it, which is denying their faith before men. (2.) In these circumstances, when a member of the church goes to such religious meetings, whether to be present at their service, or hear their sermons, it never fails to give the greatest scandal; it is a matter of triumph, and sometimes of derision, to those who are without, and gives the most feeling affliction and offence to the rest of the faithful. It is an encouragement to weak people to do the same, lessens their esteem and respect for their holy faith, and gives those who are without, a handle

to bring such unhappy examples, as a motive to induce others to do the same, as experience itself teaches to have been too often the case. (3.) It can seldom or ever be done, especially among the more unlearned sort, without evident danger of seduction, as is found also from experience. All which considerations, as we have seen above, make all communication with those of a false religion doubly criminal, and most strictly forbidden by the law of Jesus Christ, even though done in appearance only, and without any internal joining in the mind. (4.) There are also some particular laws of the church, expressly forbidding the faithful to have any religious communication in these circumstances with those of a different religion.

Q. 15. What are these particular laws of the church?

A. I shall only mention the two following; the first is a rescript of the head of the church, Pope Paul IV., to the Catholics in England, at a time when the most severe persecutions were raised against them, unless they agreed to go from time to time to the public churches: "Great," says the holy Father, "has been the grief of our mind for tribulations and calamities ye have constantly undergone for your adherence to the Catholic faith; and, as we understand that these trials are become more severe at present, our affliction is increased exceedingly. For we are informed that ye are compelled, under the most grievous penalties, to go to the churches of heretics, to frequent their meetings, and be present at their sermons, indeed we are fully persuaded that ye who, with so much fortitude and constancy, have hitherto undergone almost infinite miseries, *that ye might walk without stain in the law of the Lord*, will never consent to be defiled by communicating with those who have forsaken the Divine law. Nevertheless, urged by the zeal of our pastoral duty, and from the paternal solicitude with which we daily labour for the salvation of your souls, we are forced to admonish and conjure you, *that on no account you go to the churches of heretics, or hear their sermons, or join in their rites, lest ye incur the wrath of God, for it is not lawful for you to do such things, without dishonouring God, and hurting your own souls.*" In consequence of which authentic decision, the Catholic pastors there have most strictly prohibited all such communication, by their special regulations.

The second is taken from the regulations made by the Catholic pastors in Scotland, which were authenticated and confirmed by the holy See; in which it is expressly ordained, "That if any of the faithful shall be present at the service of

those of a different religion, or go to hear their sermons, they shall be obliged to do public penance for the scandal so given, and that they all be expressly forbidden to be present even at their private prayers"; and then it is added, "Certain it is, that all communication in holy things with heretics has, at all times, been condemned by the church with the greatest detestation. And in Scotland, the distinctive sign of the faithful from others, is, that the Catholics do not go to their churches; and for the most part, nothing else is required of Catholics as a profession that they have forsaken their own church, than to go to the meetings of others, which, if they do, they are no longer esteemed Catholics, but apostates from their faith." Which last words show, that, in Scotland it is particularly criminal to go to such places, as including a denial of their holy faith, in the estimation of the world, and in the eye of the law, and, on that account also, must be attended with greater offence and scandal to all the faithful.

Q. 16. After such strong prohibitions, both by the holy scripture, the general laws of the church, and the statutes of particular churches, where the occasion requires it, one is at a loss to imagine what any man could say to the contrary: can any kind of authority be brought from the scripture to favour the liberty of going to such places.

A. That is impossible; the scripture can never contradict itself; and we see that the whole tenor of the scripture, in the strongest terms, expressly forbids it. Nor is it in the New Testament alone that all religious communication is forbidden with those of a false religion; the conduct of the Divine providence, in this point, was uniformly the same from the beginning; and the people of God, in the old law, were forbidden all such communication, under the severest penalties, as appears from numbers of places in the Old Testament. Neither, indeed, is it so much as pretended that any one text of scripture can be produced to authorise such liberty; and this very circumstance alone is its greatest condemnation; while we see such numbers of the most clear and evident texts forbidding it, and not so much as the shadow of one text to favour it. The constant practice of the church also shows, that any attempt to authorize or excuse such liberty falls under the curse pronounced by St. Paul on all novelty in religion, and is contrary to the gospel which has been preached from the beginning, and handed down from the holy apostles.

Q. 17. But is it not allowed in some countries to go to hear

the sermons of those who are separated from the church ; and, if in some, why not in others ?

A. It is not allowed in any country ; for no power on earth can make that allowable which the law of God forbids ; and to say, that, because several actually do it in some countries without being censured, and that therefore it is allowable, is the same as to say several, yea great numbers, if you please, curse and swear, and lie, and get drunk in every country, without being censured, therefore these crimes are every where allowed. Wherever any number of men are, many will be found who transgress the most sacred laws both of God and his church, and in many cases it is impossible always to censure and punish those who do so ; yet this, by no means, alters the nature of the law, which will stand at the great day as a testimony against them, and though here they escape the censure of men, they will not escape the just punishment of their transgression at the tribunal of God.

Q. 18. May it be said that the above texts of scripture only forbid communicating with those out of the Church, but not the going out of curiosity to hear and see what passes among them at their religious meetings, without any joining along with them ?

A. Whatever is a sin to do, is a sin to appear to do ; and it is evident, that whoever goes to such places appears to join with what is done there, whatever be in his own mind ; and Jesus Christ not only condemns those who deny him in their hearts, but also all those who deny him before men, whatever be the inward dispositions of their hearts. Besides, the very going to such places is commonly looked upon, in the eyes of the world, and in some countries, in the eye of the law itself, as a joining that communion. Hence it never fails to give great offence and scandal to the faithful wherever it is known ; all these are real evils, and render every action criminal which is accompanied with them. But if we consider the texts of scripture themselves, we shall find that they forbid the very going to such places at all ; for do not these texts command us to avoid them ? and can one be said to avoid them who goes to them, whatever be his intention ? Does not the scripture say, that there is no fellowship, no participation, no concord, no part, no agreement between the faithful and the unbeliever ? and can this be said of one who goes to their religious meetings, is present at their service, and hears their preachings ? Does not the scripture expressly affirm, that he who says *God speed them,*

communicateth in their wicked works ? how much more he who honours their meetings with his presence ? Lastly, does not scripture say, *Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness ?* and does not this include all kind of union with them in their evil ways ? As for the motive of *curiosity to see and hear what they do and say*, it is certainly a disgrace to a Christian, or even for a reasonable person, to fly to such an excuse for doing a thing forbidden by any lawful authority, but much more for doing what is so frequently, so severely, and for such important reasons forbidden by the law of God, and of his church. Whatever useful purposes curiosity may serve in the acquisition of knowledge, however blameless it may be when employed about innocent objects, yet curiosity is, without doubt, a very great sin in itself, when, to gratify it, a person either does what is criminal, or prohibited by lawful authority, or exposes himself to the danger of doing so.

Q. 19. But, if a person be properly instructed, and thoroughly grounded in his religion, does not this take away the danger of being seduced from the faith ? and may not such a one go to see and hear what passes among them ?

A. In answer to this, we must observe, (1.) That allowing such a person would run no hazard himself of losing his faith, yet this would only be avoiding one of those reasons for which the going to such places is forbidden ; but it would not hinder his going there to be a communication, at least in the eyes of the world, with a false religion, a seeming approbation of it, and a transgression of an express command of God and his church, not to go to such places, and a very grievous scandal to all the faithful. Nay, the scandal arising from the example of such learned people must be much greater than from others, because every one of the faithful well knows that it is a sin to go to such places, and, therefore, all must be much more offended to see a person who ought to know his duty better than others, acting so contrary to his duty : and the weaker sort among them will be much more influenced to do the same, from the example of such a person, than if less learned, and less instructed in his religion. But,

(2.) If we consider what our holy religion teaches, we will see, that even the most learned cannot answer for themselves, when, contrary to their duty, they culpably expose themselves to the danger. St. Paul assures us, that, “by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, for it is the gift of God,” Eph. ii. 8. Our faith, then, being a gift of God,

our perseverance in it is no less so. If, therefore, a person, though ever so learned, shall offend Almighty God in doing what is dishonourable to his holy faith; is not this provoking God to withdraw that gift from him, of which, by his disobedience he renders himself unworthy? And do not examples of the most learned men, who have lost themselves by this means, effectually prove that this is often the case? In the primitive ages, Tertullian and Tatian were most learned men, and great champions of the Christian faith, having written many excellent things in defence of it; yet, by exposing themselves to these very dangers, they were miserably seduced, lost their faith, and fell into the most unreasonable heresies. How many instances have been in the world, even of clergymen who perfectly well knew their religion, and lost their faith, and were seduced by exposing themselves to the same, or similar dangers? Their learning, in such cases, is of no service for their preservation; it is the heart that is seduced, and then their knowledge makes them only the more blameable in the sight of God. Hence the scripture declares, that it is "by pleasing speeches and good words" that false teachers "seduce the hearts of the innocent," Rom. xvi. 18. It is impossible there should be any solid reason in favour of falsehood, capable of convincing the understanding of a person who is well instructed in the faith of Jesus Christ; but the most learned and best instructed are not proof against their own passions, and the seductions of the heart, and therefore can have no security against these, if they culpably expose themselves to the danger, by which they offend God, and provoke him to withdraw his grace from them, and leave them a prey to their passions, which, as we have seen, has often been done. On this account we find that the command of avoiding all fellowship with false teachers, is given to all without exception, to the learned as well as to the unlearned, to the pastors as well as to the people. It was to his very apostles that our Lord himself said, "Take heed that no man seduce you. If they say to you, Lo here is Christ, do not believe them. If they shall say to you, Behold he is in the desert, go not out. Have nothing to do with them." And it was to Timothy, a pastor himself of the church, and his own disciple, that St. Paul, after describing false teachers, gave this command, *Now these avoid*. It was also to Titus, another of his disciples, instructed by himself, and a pastor of the church, that he gave the same command, Titus iii. 10. Who can presume upon, himself, if these pillars and first pastors

of the church were so strictly cautioned to be aware of the danger.

Q. 20. But, if a person well instructed, should go to such meetings, to see and hear their ways, that he might be the better able to confute them, would not this be lawful?

A. This case is the same, as to the danger, with that of reading bad books with the design of confuting them. To read bad books, is forbidden by the law of nature, and by the law of God, as well as by the positive law of the church, precisely upon account of the danger of being seduced by them to evil. Now, suppose a person to be thoroughly learned, and in no probable danger of being seduced by them; yet he cannot read them with a safe conscience, unless he have also received permission from his spiritual superiors to do so, even though with the design of confuting them. If he read them without such leave, he runs the risk of being hurt by them, notwithstanding all his learning, in punishment of his disobedience to what the laws of God require of him. But, if he have such permission, and read with an intention of confuting them, he may then do it lawfully; and has every reason to hope that God will preserve him from danger. In like manner, if a learned person, by permission of his lawful superiors, should go to the meetings of those of a false religion, precisely to learn their ways and doctrine, that he may be able the better to confute it, this will take away the sin as to this one point of exposing himself to the danger; but then, even this will not excuse the other evils of his doing so; namely, its being an apparent communication with a false religion, a seeming approbation of it, and a source of offence and scandal to the faithful, the bulk of whom, hearing of his doing so, and not knowing either the permission he has got, or the intention with which he goes, cannot fail to be greatly offended and scandalised by it. So that, except in such circumstances where all these evils could also be prevented, such permission could not be granted; and though granted, would not, I fear, give him full security before the tribunal of God; especially when it is considered that there seldom or ever can be a necessity for granting such permission, since the tenets and doctrines of all false religions can easily be known from their books, or from the relation of others, without doing a thing so detrimental to the honour of the true religion, and so obnoxious in the eyes of all pious members of the church of Christ.

THE END.