FOR THE REGISTER.

LETTERS OF CIVIS.

NO. XII.

[CONCLUDING LETTER.]

I have already shown in former communications, how the Church of Rome oppressed her own subjects, and likewise persecuted "the heretics and schismatics who were deserters," as well as all others without her communion. I desire to add a few more authorities to those heretofore given on this subject.

In the fourth general council of Lateran, held in the early part of the 13th century, in the chapter "concerning heretics," it is declared that, "We excommunicate and shall anathematize every heresy extolling itself against this holy, orthodox, catholic faith, whichever before expounded, condemning all heretics, by whatsoever name called having, indeed, different faces, but having their tails bound together by a common agreement, as falsehood, the tail with another." And further on it says: "And because some, under the form of God-fearing, but denying its power, as the Apostle saith, have assumed the authority to preach, although the same Apostle saith, 'How can they preach unless they be sent?' Therefore, let all who, Holy See, or those of those the authority of the by or privately, be bound, with the [illegible] excommunication and unless they quickly repent, let those be visited with other competent punishment." Thus all those who preached without authority from Rome, or taught doctrines differing from those held and propagated by the Church of Rome, or called her jurisdiction to question, were barbarously and inhumanly persecuted as heretics. "During the whole of this century, (the 13th) the Roman Pontiff," says Mosheim, "carried on the most barbarous and inhuman persecution against those whom they branded with the opprobrious title of heretics, i. e. against all those who called their pretended authority and jurisdiction in question, or taught doctrines different from those which were adopted and propagated by the Church of Rome."

So, likewise, the catechism of the Council of Trent, framed in the times of the Reformation in naming those who are excluded from the church, but who are still subject to her jurisdiction, according to her theological tenets, asserts that, "Heretics and Schismatics, because they have separated from the church, and belong to her only as deserters, belong to the army from which they have deserted. It is not, however, to be denied, that they are still subject to the jurisdiction of the Church, as those liable to have her judgment passed on them, to be punished by her, and denounced with anathema." Here is a claim of most despotic authority for the Church of Rome; and while she is compared to an army governed by rigorous discipline, all dissenters from popery are regarded as so many rebellious heretics and deserters, who are still subject to her tyrannical rule. Thus, refractory Catholics, who were born under the spiritual dominion, and Protestants who were originally baptized out of the pale, of the British Church, and all others who rejected her authority, have equally felt her cruelty and power, both in the flames and on the racks of the Inquisition. Llorente's history of the horrible Inquisition instituted by the Spanish Inquisitors on French and English subjects who happened to be traveling or sojourning in Spain, while Mosheim mentions, "That nothing might be wanting to render this spiritual court formidable and tremendous, the Roman Pontiffs permitted the Inquisitors, [illegible] to pronounce sentence of death, and to put it in execution, without the knowledge or consent of the bishops, who were ordained by the Holy Ghost, to govern the church of God, and to be associated with the Roman Pontiff in the government of it." Therefore, let all who, by virtue of power, sit upon a throne as "the head of the Universal Church, and centre of Unity," and "as chief of all inquisitors and king of men?" Certainly he does; for the claims of Rome are the same in the nineteenth century that they were in the thirteenth. That she does not enjoy the fruits of those claims now as then, is not her fault. Times and circumstances change, but Rome does not change with them. Tempora mutantur, nos et Roma non illa sumus; is the motto of all genuine Roman Catholics; and every consistent Protestant might humbly ask—Et si semper eadem, sit semper Tyrannus—and if always the same, always a tyrant.

"If any one says or pretends to insinuate," says Francis Ployden, a bold and accredited champion of Romanism, "that modern Catholics differ in any thing from their predecessors, he is either deceived himself or he wishes to deceive others—semper eadem, (always the same) is not less emphatically descriptive of *our religion* than of *our jurisprudence*." And so must have thought Bossuet, who says: "The followers of Luther, assuming the title of Reformers, gloried that they had fulfilled all CHRISTENDOM'S desires, inasmuch as a reformation had been long the desire of Catholics, people, doctors, and prelates. In order, therefore, to authorise this *pretended reformation*, whatsoever church-writers had said against the *deceivers*, both of the people and even of the clergy, was collected with great industry. But in this lay a manifest conceit, there not being so much as one of all the passages alleged, wherein those doctors *ever* intend or aimed at altering the church's faith; or correcting her worship, which consisted in the sacrifice of the altar; or subverting the authority of her prelates, that of the Pope especially—the very scope which this whole reformation, introduced by Luther, tended to."—Now, these religious and juridical chiefs, bishop Hughes, and every other Roman Catholic bishop in this country, has sworn to "preserve, defend, increase and advance," in taking the following *Apostolical oath of Allegiance to the Pope and his successors*, which, mind you, is in *future* as well as in case, and is, therefore, considering its nature, a perjured *parliamentary* oath. Here is a portion of it:—"The rights, honors, privileges and authority of the Holy Roman Church of our Lord, the Pope, and his lawful successors, I will endeavor to preserve, defend, increase, and advance. [illegible] which shall be [illegible] or injury, in the Romish Church, anything in [illegible] I will [illegible] and judica of their province, right, honor, state or power; and if I shall know any such thing to be treated or agitated, by any whatsoever, I will hinder it to my power, and as soon as I can, I will signify it to our said Lord, or to some other by whom it may come to his knowledge. The rules of the Holy Fathers, the Apostolic decrees, ordinances, or disposals, reservations, provisions and mandates, I will observe with all my might, and cause to be observed by others. Heretics, schismatics, and rebels, to our said Lord, or his foresaid successors, I will to my power persecute and oppose."

How bishop Hughes, and the other Roman Catholic bishops in this and other Protestant countries, accommodate this oath, which all of them take, to the circumstances surrounding them, we shall see presently. De Pratt, who was a Catholic and one of the first writers and politicians in Europe, says: "Jansenism (and is not bishop Hughes a Jesuit?) embarrasses itself very little with the means—scruples are trifles.—This is what Mirabeau called *le grande morale*; leaving what he distastefully termed *la petite morale* to the commonalty." So I judge the difficulty cannot be great with those who hold to the rule that the *end sanctifies the means, whatever they may be, if adopted from the force of circumstances. Fraud and misrepresentation and even hearing false witness are regarded by them at least as venial sins, if not as themselves pious, provided such means can be used to secure the ascendancy of the Papal system.* Pascal, in the history of the Confessional, says it is laid down as the doctrine of the Jesuit society, that, "It is only a venial sin to calumniate and accuse of false crimes, in order to ruin the credit of those who speak ill of us. It is certainly a probable opinion, says Caramoul, that there is no mortal sin in calumniating falsely, for the purpose of preserving our honor. For it is maintained by more than twenty grave doctors, Gaspar, Hortadi, Dicastillus, Sanchez, &c., &c.; so that if this doctrine be not probable, there would hardly be any which could be so called in all theology."—Roman Catholic bishops, who reside in Protestant countries, therefore, especially if they belong to the society of Jesus, (what a mockery it will have to Heaven in the premises.

In the meanwhile, it will be remembered by the reader, that I proved, in my last letter, from the canons of the council of Trent, that Rome is to be opposed to compel persons baptized in their infancy, whether before or after birth, and no matter by whom they are baptized, whether by parents, physicians, laymen or priests, by pagans, heretics, schismatics or faithful Catholics, it matters not, for when baptism is conferred with [illegible] in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, the person baptized is a member of Christ's Church, that is, a child of God and an inheritor of the kingdom of Heaven, by the *intention* of the person who performs the ceremony of baptism? If the substance of baptism, notwithstanding it was instituted by Christ, bears in itself no saving grace, as above quoted, how is it possible for an open enemy of the Saviour of men, as ANTICHRIST for example, although a professed follower of the Prince of Peace and therefore two fold more the son of perdition, to confer upon it by his intention such efficacious merit? In a word, does the efficacy of baptism depend, in any manner, whatever, upon the will, intention or purpose of the person who officiates in the performance of this rite? On the contrary, are we not taught by the holy scriptures to know that it does not, although it be duly done with water, and in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and with the proper qualities and formal purposes, and by one possessing competent authority? Will any one question the integrity of purpose, and worthiness of motive, or competency of authority of Philip when he baptized Simon Magus? Or will it be pretended that the circumstance of Simon Magus having been thus regularly baptized, for the purpose and with the *intention* of making him a member of Christ's Church and child of God and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, actually did confer upon him those privileges and blessings? So far from any such thing, does not every one know that all that Philip did in the premises was utterly void and ineffectious, because Simon's "heart was not right in the sight of God?" And does not every reader of his bible know also, that "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, and love toward our neighbor as our self" are the required conditions to make the "heart right in the sight of God," while baptism with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is only an outward and visible sign of this inward and spiritual grace, but not the means by which it is obtained?—What says St. Paul in his epistle to the Romans? Does he not limit the blessings of the promises to the truly faithful and to them only: "For," he declares, "he is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and the circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God." And what does Christ himself say? Does he not tell the stiffnecked Jews, the uncircumcised of heart, although outwardly belonging to his church founded by his authority under Moses and Aaron, "ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do." Thus, as we find it written in respect to the Jewish rite of circumcision and the Jews, just so it is in respect to the christian rite of baptism, and the christians. What then becomes of this Romish Doctrine of *Intention*? Why clearly are tenet [illegible] Church, it [illegible] and its [illegible] and *Heretical*, and as damnable an error as the [illegible] doctrine, that the *sacrament of orders imprinteth an indelible character upon the priest.* "In the minister of God who sits in the tribunal of penance, as his legitimate judge, he (the penitent) venerates that power and person of our Lord Jesus Christ," says the catechism of the Council of Trent. And also, that "they (the priests) hold the place, and power and authority of God on earth;" *and once a priest, always a priest.* Hence they hold and teach that however wicked a priest may be, yet he is to be *venerated* as holding "the place, and power and authority of God on earth." Thus it is written in the catechism of the Council of Trent: "And of this the faithful are frequently to be reminded, in order to be convinced, that were even the lives of her ministers debased by crime, they are still within her pale, and therefore line no part of the power with which her ministry invests them."—Does the Anglican Church obtain her XXVI Article from this section of the Catechism of the Trent fathers? Or are both dogmas the natural fruit of the same fundamental error—the "Divine rights of apostolic succession."—Now can any one be surprised at the influence which the priest exercises over the "faithful?"—Or that he should be able to control the Roman Catholic mass as one mind, at pleasure? The order of Jesuits, who are the Pope's propagandists, and all our Roman Catholic priests, it is believed, belong to this order, never did prevail in any country that they did not destroy its liberties and its morals. The political advocates of American rights commit an error in constantly endeavoring to fix the attention of the public on the question of temporal supremacy only; for, in regard to this question directly, the Romanists make a show of independence. The true question, and the only one of real and great practical importance, in reference to the Roman Catholics of this country, is every genuine American heart and head, is this: Can the Pope, in virtue of what Roman Catholics of the Irish and Dutch schools especially believe, on account of the [illegible] power, defend, increase, and [illegible] Church, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]