

WHAT innovations, or changes their religious worship underwent from the first planting of *Christianity* to the arrival of the GOTHs, or the invasion of the MOORS, would perhaps be impossible to say: That the *Gothic* princes embraced the *Christian* faith, is clear from many evidences still remaining, not in SPAIN only, but in ENGLAND and other countries: That the MOORS would never receive *Christianity* among them, appears but too plainly from the enmity that hath ever subsisted between the two people, from their final expulsion under PHILIP III. and the odium with which they pursue them to this day.

THAT the JEWS have always subsisted here in such numbers was probably owing to this circumstance: when TITUS carried back with him to ROME so many thousand captive JEWS, the shattered remnants of that devoted people, and dispersed them afterwards throughout the world; as SPAIN lay convenient for their passage out of ITALY, and being a wide and extended country, multitudes of them probably fled for an asylum there: Tho' great numbers remained at ROME and in ITALY, as appears by the edicts against them afterwards, and by the religion of the captives spreading so much among their conquerors: A circumstance which RUTILIUS has finely lamented;

Atque utinam nunquam Judæa subacta fuisset
 Pompeii bellis, imperioque Titi.
 Latius excisæ gentis contagia serpunt,
 Victoresque suos natio victa premit.

That the JEWS had in some parts of SPAIN, and at some periods, the free exercise of their religion, and worship, is an undoubted fact: There is an *Hebrew* Temple still remaining at TOLEDO, which I have seen, as a standing proof of it to this day.

WHAT is of more moment to us is, as may be collected from Dr. GEDDES's several tracts, that no western church has preserved so many, and such authentic monuments and records, as the SPANISH church hath down to the VIIIth century. It was antiently exactly the same with the present church of ENGLAND, had the same NICENE CREED, and appealed to the same general councils:

cils : And their Prince, as well as ours, was defender of the faith and head of the church. The Bishop of ROME had no more authority there, than any other prelate. The *Spanish* Church had no dependence on that see till the VIIIth century. Till after the *Moorish* times, it had no image-worship ; no prayers addressed to saints, or angels ; no purgatory ; it did not maintain seven sacraments ; it knew not transubstantiation, which certainly is of no older date than the time of Pope INNOCENT III. in the *Lateran* council, held after the year 1200 ; by consequence the cup was always given to the laity, and never refused till after that doctrine prevailed in the beginning of the XIIIth century. There was likewise no adoration of the host, no auricular confession. They had no prayers then in an unknown language. The antient *Gothic* Liturgy, then in use, was called *Mozarabic*, or *Musarabic*, from those christians, who lived under the *Moorish* government in SPAIN. It was first printed by Cardinal XIMENES. And there is to this day, an annual *Mozarabic* mass celebrated with great pomp and solemnity, in the metropolitan church of TOLEDO, at which the present King of SPAIN has assisted in person. Every one knows, that the term *mass* came from the custom of dismissing the people with the—*Ite—missa est*.

As the SPANISH Church certainly remained pure, uncorrupted, and unpapistical till towards the VIIIth century ; so from that period downwards, Paganism artfully, and by almost imperceptible insinuations, gradually stole in, wearing that mask or vizor, which we now call *Popery*. Whatever triumphs Christianity may formerly have gained over the Gentile worship ; Paganism, in all catholic countries, is now entirely revenged ; she triumphed in her turn from the moment she established herself in the form of *Popery*. Concealed under this drapery, she presides in the very tabernacle and sanctuary of christians, and is worshipped sitting between the horns of the altar. When you enter a Roman catholic, apostolic, papistical, christian temple, at your first view you see that all is *Pagan*. The late Dr. MIDDLETON hath very learnedly, elegantly, and effectually proved this point to demonstration. But I never relished that ingenious performance so much, as when my own eyes bore testimony to the truth of his observations. The

resemblance is so striking between the use of the ancient *Thura*, and the modern Incense; their *aspergillum*, *lavacrum*, &c. and the present holy water; the blessing of horses, and the ancient benediction of cattle; the same profusion of lamps and wax-lights; between the ancient *votivæ tabulæ*, *ἀναθήματα*, and the modern votive limbs, offerings, and pictures: the multitude of shrines, crosses, and altars in the churches, roads, hills, and high places; and particularly of *images*, which have often brought to my mind that satirical joke of PETRONIUS, who said he never walked the streets, but he could much more easily meet with a god than a man.

Facilius est deum, quam hominem invenire.

And I am sure, if you spit out of a window in SPAIN, 'tis ten to one but you spit upon a saint. The *Spanish Flagellantes*, by PYTHAGOREAN transmigration, are exactly the old, self-lashing priests of JOVE, or the AJAX MASTIGOPHORUS on an *Athenian* stage: and are indeed a most shocking spectacle. The custom of churches being permitted as sanctuaries for villains, prevailed at ROME in the time of the Emperor TIBERIUS: For the senate very justly exclaimed against it. See TACITUS. Annal. III. CESTIUS's opinion was,

Neque quenquam in urbis templa perfrugere, ut eo subsidio ad flagitia utatur.

And yet, what a ROMAN Senator blushed at, is sanctified by a *Roman-catholic Pope*. The quires of churches in all popish countries are a sort of religious fairs or markets, where people continually come and go in succession, and masses are constantly said till twelve o'clock at noon, but not after. The mass for the dead is exactly copied from the parentation of the heathens. The dress of the officiating priest has constantly put me in mind of those remarkable words:

Tanquam vestis illa prophetica, quæ licet vera ederet miracula, operanti ornamentum potius quam adjumentum videretur*.

The present King of SPAIN, while he was at NAPLES, sent orders to the officiating priest on St. JANUARIUS's day, that the

* See TACITUS.

blood should be made to liquefy in such a precise number of minutes, for he would stay no longer. This is exactly the old quack experiment mentioned by HORACE, which he saw at GNATIA:

Dum flammâ sine thura liquefcere limine sacro
Perfuadere cupit—

THERE is one reason why the Church of ROME ought not to make so free with the argument of miracles: because if they maintain *theirs* to be as genuine as those of the Apostles, it will be an easy matter to prove those recorded of the Emperor VESPASIAN (who is said to have healed a withered hand, and restored the blind to sight) to be at least of equal authority: A *Roman* historian records the one, and a *Roman* catholic writer maintains the other: *Utri creditis, QUIRITES!* This folly of theirs, instead of strengthening their own cause, tends evidently to weaken it, and it saps the rotten foundations of popish policy. If the mischief ended there, it would be well: but it tends also to subvert the great proofs of Christianity, and to assist the gates of hell, instead of opposing them. The character of the present Papists is exactly that which TACITUS hath given of the old GERMANS,

De actis deorum credere, quam scire.

THE number of holydays enjoined by the Pope is become so excessive, as to be a scandalous encouragement to idleness. If it was thought despicable by the busy minds of the *Roman* people, to see the JEWS, from the institutions of MOSES, give but one day in seven to complete indolence, though for the cause of religion: If their active virtue abhorred to see, as one of them calls it, *septima quæque lux quieti data*; what would he have said, had he seen such a number of days consecrated in his own ROME to the same purpose? But this practice likewise had its birth in Paganism; and made CASSIUS say in the reign of NERO, that if they were to decree such a vast number of festival days, the gods would take up the whole year in being thanked, *eoque oportere dividi sacros, et negotiosos dies, queis divina colerentur, et humana non impedirent.*

THE

THE absurdity of their *Reliques* is beyond measure ridiculous; such as the thigh of St. LAWRENCE, with the skin burnt, and marked with the prongs, which he was turned with on the grid-iron. There are said to be the heads of two thousand martyred virgins in the convent of our Lady of ATOCHE near MADRID, where the *British* standards, taken at the battle of ALMANZA, still remain.

IT is certain, that their blind zeal in matters of religion has destroyed many fine remains of heathen learning, and classic antiquity: It still continues the same ravage under the direction of monks and inquisitors; leaves are cancelled, prefaces torn, and books prohibited, secreted, or burnt, because they are against the Catholic faith. As they formerly thought the Bible would appear to more advantage, when the pagan poets were destroyed; so they are still of opinion, that popery will always appear best, when every evidence of its imposture is suppressed or spirited away. These are lengths in which the zealots of the church of ROME have certainly gone too far: And on the other hand LUTHER himself, when he began the reformation, went too far in burning the canon law. This superstitious zeal of theirs against Pagan writers, and modern heretical authors, cannot be placed in a more ridiculous light, than they have placed it themselves in one of the pictures, which I saw at the ESCURIAL: where several angels were flogging St. JEROM for the wicked delight he had taken in reading the works of that vile heretic MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO.

As the several pagan gods were multiplied by being worshipped as different deities, though in reality they were the same: as a JUPITER, an HERCULES, &c. were set up in almost every country: So where popery prevails, and particularly in SPAIN, the Blessed Virgin MARY, the mother of our Lord, is multiplied into almost as many distinct divinities, as there are separate districts and places. Thus there is our Lady of ATOCHE, our Lady of ALCALA DE HENARES, our Lady of TOLEDO, &c. And the little pictures or images of these are worn as *Amulets* by the common people, who have as much faith in them, as the antients had

had in a *Talisman*, or *Abraxas*. I have seen one of these last, which Prince EUGENE himself wore, a strange instance of human weakness in one who rose so much above the common level, and made such a shining figure as a hero on the theatre of EUROPE. The Spaniards have marvellous superstitions relating to the different properties of those different Virgin MARIES: If you pray to *this*, she is a good preservative against thunder and lightning; if you pray to *that*, an admirable specific against the cholick and rheumatism. But the Blessed Virgin of PILAR, or our Lady of the Pillar, MARIA DE COLUMNA, in SARAGOÇA, is the most capital Virgin MARY, the greatest object of devotion in all SPAIN.

THERE cannot be much *simony* in the Church of ROME, because the Pope, or the King, disposes of all church-preferments; for there can be no traffic supposed between the inferior ecclesiastics and his Holiness, or his Majesty. Statutes of mortmain are highly requisite and necessary in this country. The present King of SPAIN hath, it is said, attempted something like them, by taxing all donations to religious uses ever since the year 1730. These were anciently such a grievance in ENGLAND, that it became a form in some wills: *dentur, assignentur, vendantur—exceptis Religiosis & Judæis*.

PHILIP V. in 1716, obtained of the Pope an indulto for raising money upon the clergy. The Pope granted him one for five years, that is to say, a million and a half in the Indies, and a million on the churches in SPAIN. It is a mistake to call this the *los millones*, which is a different tax, as will appear in the account of the Spanish Revenue. This is called *subsídio*.

THE Crusade against the followers of WALDO (a merchant of LYONS) or the *Albigenses*, in 1160, gave birth probably to the INQUISITION. Pope GREGORY IX. first devised that horrid tribunal, but INNOCENT IV. was the first, who had abilities and courage sufficient to bring it to a due maturity, and give it a just establishment. The form of it, and the number of its members, differ greatly in different countries.* In SPAIN it was established chiefly by Cardinal XIMENES, who knew perfectly well what political use could be made of it. The Spaniards still sup-

* See more upon this article in the next Letter.

port it, not so much with an intention to burn Jews or Heretics, as they do in PORTUGAL, but to enjoy the benefit of one religion, the want of such uniformity being, they apprehend, a great inconvenience to other states. Monf. VOLTAIRE indeed is of another opinion; he tells us, that if there was but one religion in ENGLAND, the government would soon become despotic; if there were two, they would cut each others throats; but as there are so many religions amongst us, things go on very quietly. To speak however of the Inquisition in the mildest terms, it is at best but a *Roman, Turkish, or an Arabian* persecution in a Christian dress. The inquisitors perhaps may say, "We only persecute in this manner the very worst of heretics, such as *Jews*." It may be answered, "And what have the Pagans done more? those whom they persecuted, they accounted heretics, and these very Jews did the same thing." The Dominican will reply, "But can you as a *Christian* spare and tolerate the persecutors of CHRIST?" We answer, I think justly, That we have no authority to punish them; but we may tolerate their worship, or not, as we think proper. Because some people, called Jews, crucified the founder of our religion, JESUS CHRIST, above 1700 years ago, that is no reason why you should crucify all those who go under that name at this day. Where is your warrant, your authority, your commission delegated from the Almighty for this purpose? Is it any where said, "Go forth, my disciples, with sword and fire, torment, rack, and burn all those who will not embrace the Christian faith; or, what is much less, the Roman Catholic faith?" Though GOD himself may punish the sins of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation; these people are at present at least the *fiftieth* generation from the murderers of Christ. Thus you seem to me not only to snatch the thunder of the ALMIGHTY out of his hands, but to dart it unwarrantably, and even launch the bolt much farther than He ever declared he should do himself. Can the GOD of all mercy be delighted with so cruel a sacrifice of human blood? There is an undoubted resemblance between a SPANISH INQUISITOR, and a DIOCESIAN, a CALED, or a MUSTAPHA; you now act the part of the Pagan princes, as they formerly acted yours. Such a tribunal, shocking as it is to humanity, has nothing but false political ends to plead in its excuse: And where nature and religion

must

must be sacrificed, such a policy is only worthy of a MACHIAVEL, a XIMENES, or an Emperor of JAPAN. The principles of toleration are founded in nature, reason, humanity, justice, and true policy. If in a well civilized state the majority are of one religious persuasion, the most that you can lawfully do is, to lay those who are dissentient, under such restrictions, as shall prevent their disturbing, or subverting the civil or religious harmony of that state. This is all that appears to me allowable; and of this nature are the laws in England and Ireland against the Papists. But when you come to molest innocent subjects, to take from them their possessions, to expose them to tortures and cruel deaths, or drive them to seek settlements in other countries, you then exceed your power, play the part of a Syracusan tyrant, and it becomes *Persecution*; like the expulsion of the Moors, or the revocation of the edict of Nantz.

BUT after all, why are the Jews singled out, as the worst of heretics? In one light they are the most pardonable. They are the only people, besides the Christians, who have received the glorious deposit of a true, a divine revelation: They had theirs from God himself; we received ours from his Son: They are, no doubt, in a dangerous and incorrigible state of error, by not acknowledging the true MESSIAH; but we are not to be the punishers of that error: A very severe part of that punishment seems already to have passed upon them; they have been deprived of their country and temple; their existence, as a nation, destroyed; they have been sold, and carried captive into all lands; driven as wretched fugitives and vagabonds throughout the world: Let the intolerant spirit of bigots exclaim as loudly against them as it may, there is not a Roman-catholic in the world but will join in the cry: which very circumstance should awaken all the suspicions of us Protestants. The next step from exclusion out of community, is persecution. But to a humane mind, considering the sufferings of these people, the most natural conclusion will probably be that, which was made by the first outlaw of the human race, at a time when society or communion had not those sweets and advantages which they now enjoy. The conclusion meant is, *That their punishment is greater than they can bear.* The Spaniards have

D

always