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Under the Ban

A Scientist's Heresies Condemned
by the Church

A Correspondence

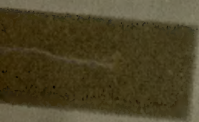
BETWEEN

Dr. St. George Mivart and Cardinal Vaughan

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A Correspondence

BETWEEN

DR. ST. GEORGE MIVART

AND

HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN

Archbishop of Westminster

ACCOMPANIED BY

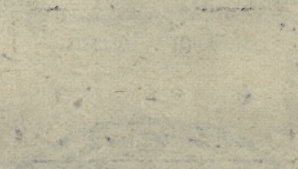
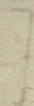
Two Articles by Dr. Mivart

ON

“Some Recent Catholic Apologists” and “The Continuity
of Catholicism.”



Office of Publication:
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UNDER THE BAN.¹

77, INVERNESS TERRACE, W., JANUARY 6, 1900.

My Dear Lord Cardinal :

Although I believe the "Tablet" belongs to your eminence, I am fully persuaded that you could not have known and approved of the monstrous article on me which appears therein.

I should not think of complaining of any criticism of opinions referred to by me, however hostile; but, when I am personally abused as a liar, a calumniator, and a coward, I feel I have cause to complain. I have never before been accused of cowardice in making my views known, but rather of too much boldness and presumption.

The article will surely shock all earnest Christians, for it sins deeply against that greatest of Christian virtues—charity. Its author represents me as falsely citing anonymous witnesses.

¹Dr. St. George Mivart, long conspicuous both in science and in the Catholic church, published in the January (1900) issues of the "Nineteenth Century" and the "Fortnightly Review" two articles which made him the subject of sharp personal criticism at the hands of the "Tablet," an English organ of Catholicism. This criticism caused him to write a letter of protest to Cardinal Vaughan, and this letter in turn led to an extended correspondence between the theologian and the scientist. In the course of this correspondence the cardinal called on Dr. Mivart to sign a Catholic profession of faith. Dr. Mivart refusing, the cardinal sent a letter to the Roman Catholic clergy of the diocese of Westminster, forbidding them to administer the sacraments to the offender. This book gives the correspondence, the confession of faith, and the notice of inhibition, as well as the two articles by Dr. Mivart which led up to these.

I give you my honor I do not refer to one save with complete truthfulness.

As to the points he specially refers to, the persons I cite are well known to your eminence. As to the birth of our Lord, I did not merely hear, but had written evidence, a verbatim copy of which is now in my library. As to the resurrection, my informant was almost as much known to your eminence as Bishop Brindle. He did not bind me to secrecy, and, if your eminence cares to know who he was, and will keep his name a secret, I will mention it.

The articles were written by me under a sense of duty, thinking death not far off, and (like my antecedent ones) with a view of opening as widely as possible the gates of Catholicity; the "Fortnightly" one to make conformity as easy as might be, the "Nineteenth Century" one to point out changes tending to facilitate that conformity—changes the existence and importance of many of which it is absolutely impossible to deny. My aim may have been Quixotic, my measures unwisely selected; but, whatever criticism I may merit, I am sure that scurrilous personalities can never be approved by your eminence.

With unchanged sentiments of regard,

I remain as respectfully as affectionately yours,

ST. GEORGE MIVART.

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER, S. W., JANUARY 9, 1900.

Dear Dr. Mivart:

I have received your letter, in which you complain of comments made upon your conduct by one of the Catholic papers, while you assure me that the articles in the "Nineteenth Cen-

ture" and the "Fortnightly Review" were written by you "under a sense of duty, thinking death not far off."

Before touching on these points, it is necessary to be clear as to the substance of your position.

You have publicly impugned the most sacred and fundamental doctrines of the faith, while still professing yourself to be a Catholic. It becomes, therefore, my primary duty, as guardian of the faith, to ascertain whether I am still to treat you as a member of the church and subject to my jurisdiction, or to consider you outside the unity of the faith.

As a test of orthodoxy regarding certain doctrines dealt with by you in your articles in the "Nineteenth Century," I herewith send you a profession of Catholic faith. I invite you to read and return it to me subscribed by your signature. Nothing less than this will be satisfactory. I need not say how deeply I regret the necessity which compels me to take official action of this kind, and how earnestly I hope and pray that you may have light and grace to withdraw from the position in which you stand, and to submit yourself unreservedly to the authority of the Catholic church.

Believe me to be, yours faithfully,

HERBERT CARD. VAUGHAN,

Archbishop of Westminster.

The profession of faith which Dr. Mivart was called upon to sign ran as follows :

FORMULA.

I hereby declare that, recognizing the Catholic church to be the supreme and infallible guardian of the Christian faith, I submit therein my judgment to hers, believing all that she teaches, and condemning all that she condemns. And in particular I firmly believe and profess that Our Lord Jesus

Christ, the only begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages, in the fulness of time, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven and was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary—that is to say, that the same Jesus Christ had no man for His father, and that St. Joseph was not His real or natural father, but only His reputed, or foster, father.

I therefore firmly believe and profess that the Blessed Virgin Mary conceived and brought forth the Son of God in an ineffable manner by the operation of the Holy Ghost, and absolutely without loss or detriment to her virginity, and that she is really and in truth, as the Catholic church most rightly calls her, the “ Ever Virgin ”; that is to say, virgin before the birth of Christ, virgin in that birth, and virgin after it, her sacred and spotless virginity being perpetually preserved from the beginning, then, and for ever afterwards.

I therefore condemn and reject as false and heretical the assertion that doubt or denial of the virgin birth of Christ or the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Mary, mother of God, is—or at any future time ever can be in any sense whatever—consistent with the Holy Catholic faith. (*Cf.* Nicene and Apostles’ Creed and Constitution of Paul IV., “ Cum Quorundam,” and Clement VIII., “ Dominici Gregis.”)

I believe and profess that Our Lord Jesus Christ, after His death and burial, rose again from the dead, and that His body glorified in His resurrection is the same as that in which He suffered and died for us upon the cross. I reject and condemn the statement that the body of Christ rotted in the grave or suffered corruption as false and heretical, and contrary to the Holy Catholic faith now and in all future time.

I firmly believe and profess, in accordance with the Holy Council of Trent, that the first man, Adam, when he trans-

gressed the command of God in Paradise, immediately lost the holiness and justice in which he had been constituted, and that he incurred through that prevarication the wrath and indignation of God, and that this prevarication of Adam injured, not himself alone, but his posterity, and that by it the holiness and justice received from God were lost by him, not for himself alone, but for us all. (*Cf.* Council of Trent, Session V.)

I firmly believe and profess that our Lord died upon the cross, not merely (as Socinus held) to set us an example or an "object lesson" of fidelity unto death, but that He might give Himself "a redemption for all" by "bearing our sins in His body upon the tree,"—that is, by making a true and full satisfaction to the offended justice of God for the sins original and actual of all men, and that these sins are taken away by no other remedy than the merit of the "one mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. 5), who has reconciled us to God in His own blood; "made unto us justice, sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30. *Cf.* Council of Trent, Session V.)

I reject and condemn all doctrines which deny the reality and transmission of original sin, and the perfect sufficiency of the atonement by which man is reconciled to God in the blood of Jesus Christ, as false and heretical, and contrary to the Holy Catholic faith now and at all future time.

I firmly believe and profess that the souls of men after death will be judged by God, and that those who are saved will "go into everlasting life" (Matt. xxv. 46), and those who are condemned "into everlasting punishment." I reject as false and heretical all doctrines which teach that the souls in hell may eventually be saved, or that their state in hell may be one which is not of punishment. (*Cf.* Constitution of Council of Lateran IV.)

In accordance with the Holy Councils of Trent and of the Vatican, I receive all the books of the Old and New Testament with all their parts as set forth in the fourth session of the Council of Trent, and contained in the ancient Latin edition of the Vulgate, as sacred and canonical, and I firmly believe and profess that the said Scriptures are sacred and canonical—not because, having been carefully composed by mere human industry, they were afterwards approved by the Church's authority, nor merely because they contain revelation with no admixture of error; but because, having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author and have been delivered as such to the church herself.

Wherefore, in all matters of faith or morals appertaining to the building up of Christian doctrine, I believe that to be the true sense of Holy Scripture which our Holy Mother the church has held and now holds, to whom the judgment of the true sense and interpretation of Holy Scripture belongs. (*Cf.* Council of Trent, Session IV.; Council of the Vatican, Dogmatic Constitution of the Catholic Faith, chap. ii., can. ii.)

I firmly believe and profess that the doctrine of faith which God has revealed has not been proposed like a philosophical invention to be perfected by human ingenuity, but has been delivered as a divine deposit to the spouse of Christ, to be faithfully kept and infallibly declared, and that therefore that meaning of the sacred dogmas is to be perpetually retained which our Holy Mother the church has once declared, and that that meaning can never be departed from, under the pretence or pretext of a deeper comprehension of them. I reject as false and heretical the assertion that it is possible at some time, according to the progress of science, to give to doctrines propounded by the church a sense different from that which the church has understood and understands, and con-

sequently that the sense and meaning of her doctrines can ever be in the course of time practically explained away or reversed. (Cf. Dogmatic Constitution of the Vatican on Catholic Faith, chap. iv., can. iv.)

Moreover, I condemn and revoke all other words and statements which in articles contributed by me to the "Fortnightly Review" and the "Nineteenth Century," or in any other of my writings, are found to be, in matter of faith or morals, contrary to the teaching of the Holy Catholic Faith according to the determination of the apostolic see; and in all such matters I submit myself to the judgment of the said see, receiving all that it receives and condemning all that it condemns.

JANUARY 11, 1900.

Dear Lord Cardinal:

I have received your eminence's letter, enclosing a document you invite me to sign and return. Before I can do that, however, there is a previous question; as "grace supposes nature," so, before I am a Catholic, I am an English gentleman, and in that capacity I have been grossly outraged.

Granting, for argument's sake, I have impugned certain doctrines (which I deny), that gives no man the right to assault or insult me at his pleasure.

The foul, vulgar, and brutal personalities of the "Tablet," charging me with cowardice and wilful, calumnious mendacity, are such that no man with a particle of self-respect could tolerate.

Before anything, therefore, I must ask for reparation, and I ask it of your eminence, not as a cardinal or a priest, or even as a Christian, but simply in your character of a distinguished English gentleman, desiring to act rightly and with the

courtesy befitting that character. I ask, then, for reparation in one of the following modes:

(1) A letter from yourself reprobating, and expressing your regret for, the abusive utterances of your journal in my regard; or

(2) The publication in the "Tablet" of a complete withdrawal and full apology for its imputations against my courage, veracity, and straightforwardness; or

(3) A letter from the writer of the article withdrawing his charges against me as a man, and begging my pardon.

I note with surprise that, in the letters I have received, your eminence does not appear to recognize your responsibility for the utterances of your journal, the "Tablet."

For my part, I, of course, fully recognize and respect your eminence's ecclesiastical position, with its rights and duties; but I recognize the right of no man to insult me (himself or through his subordinates), by personal imputations which relate, not to matters of belief, but to my natural qualities and characteristics.

Believe me, yours faithfully,

ST. G. MIVART.

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER, S. W., JANUARY 12, 1900.

Dear Dr. Mivart:

I have received your note of yesterday's date. I have only two things to say in reply to it.

First, if you have any personal correction to make in the criticism of your article by the "Tablet," you are free, like any other author whose publication is under review, to address yourself to the editor.

I know not by what privilege or usage you address yourself to me instead. Kindly go to the proper quarter.

Secondly, my own duty towards the church, and your assertion, while professing yourself to be a member thereof, that good and devoted Catholics hold certain blasphemous and heretical doctrines, and that these doctrines may become some day generally held within the church, are matters of too great an import to allow of their being put aside by references to journalistic criticism or to any other side issues.

Your assertion is equivalent to saying that a person may be actually a Catholic and yet a disbeliever in the incarnation and the resurrection, and that the church herself may change her belief in these doctrines.

A mere disclaimer of personally holding such heresies in general, and a mere general profession of adherence to Catholicity, such as is contained in your letter to the "Times" of to-day, is not sufficient to repair the scandal or to acquit you of complicity in the promotion of such heresies.

You tell me that your object has been "to open as widely as possible the gates of Catholicity" and "to make conformity as easy as might be."

This renders it all the more necessary that I should ask you to sign the formula of Catholic faith which I sent to you on Tuesday. As you are aware, no one can reject the profession of faith contained therein and still be a member of the Catholic church. I ask you, therefore, to sign, having regard to your own honor and position as a Catholic as well as to the interest of souls committed to my care.

Believe me to be, your faithful and devoted servant,

HERBERT CARD. VAUGHAN,

Archbishop of Westminster.

JANUARY 14, 1900.

Dear Lord Cardinal :

I thank your eminence for your letter of January 12. In reply, permit me to say I claim no "privilege," save that of old and valued friendship, in addressing you directly with respect to the "Tablet's" insults. It would be useless for me to address my friend, Mr. Snead Cox. He must, of course, give insertion to whatever is authoritatively sent him from "Archbishop's House," and would do the same were it an apology. I make no objection to criticism of my writings; what I object to is the imputation to me of defects as to ordinary courage and honesty.

I repeat that my appeal is to your eminence both as proprietor of the "Tablet" and as a gentleman as regards family and sentiment. I so appeal because (since "*qui facit per alium facit per se*") you have, through your subordinates, imputed to me calumnious mendacity and cowardice. I must confess myself amazed and somewhat scandalized that your eminence does not seem anxious at once to step forward and do me right (in a small matter so easily effected) as a matter of ordinary ethics, quite apart from religion. If the latter is to be brought into account, has not your eminence (of course, unwittingly) broken the commandment—"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor"?

Reluctantly, and with the greatest respect, I feel then compelled once more to demand an apology in one of the three modes pointed out in my last letter,—namely, (1) a letter from your eminence; (2) an apology for and withdrawal of personal imputations in the next issue of the "Tablet," or (3) a letter from the writer of the article, asking my pardon and withdrawing his insults.

Before receiving such apology, I can do nothing more in this matter, anxious as I am to meet your eminence's wishes to the full extent of my power. I ask you, then, to kindly remove the cause which paralyzes me. What would be the good of my signing anything, if I am to remain branded by your organ, and therefore by your eminence, as a coward and a liar? Evidently it would be said that I have signed insincerely and through fear! But, if I am astonished at the seeming want of ethical perception as to the moral necessity for undoing a personal wrong, I am, if possible, still more amazed to find that your eminence can never have read the articles you condemn. How otherwise could you write as you do about the doctrines of the incarnation and resurrection? I have not written one word about the latter doctrine, or about the fact of the resurrection; I have only put forward a notion (propounded to me by the best theologian I ever knew) respecting its mode and nature.

To the doctrine of the incarnation I have not referred, even in the most distant manner.

As a theologian, your eminence of course knows, far better than I do, that God could have become incarnate as perfectly in a normal human embryo as in an abnormal one.

Indeed, I think some scholastics have (amongst their various subtleties) taught that God, did He so will, could become incarnate in a mere animal or in an onion. For my part I do not see how it is possible for the human intellect to set bounds to the possibilities of the *absoluta potestas* of the Almighty with respect to matters so utterly inconceivable. The things which have been written about my articles really remind me of the attack made by Kingsley on Cardinal Newman.

As to much I am saddled with, I can say truly, as Newman

did, "I never said it." If your eminence could only spare time to read my articles carefully, you would see that I have scrupulously abstained from putting forward my own unimportant notions, and have strictly confined myself to making statements as to matters of fact which I believe to be incontrovertible.

I remain, dear Lord Cardinal, your eminence's most
faithful and devoted servant,

ST. G. MIVART.

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER, S. W., JANUARY 16, 1900.

Dear Dr. Mivart:

I regret that I must call upon you a third and last time to forward to me, with your signature attached thereto, the form of profession of faith, which, as your bishop, I felt bound to send to you in consequence of the articles published by you in the "Nineteenth Century" and "Fortnightly Review." And at the same time I require you to express your reprobation of those articles, and your sincere sorrow for having published them.

I cannot allow you to evade this duty on the ground of anything that may have been written in the "Tablet." If you have a grievance against the "Tablet," you must go to the editor. I am responsible neither for its language nor its arguments.

My dealing with you is exclusively as your ordinary and as guardian of the faith of my flock.

Failing dutiful submission on your part, the law of the church will take its course.

Believe me, your faithful and devoted servant,

HERBERT CARD. VAUGHAN,

Archbishop of Westminster.

JANUARY 19, 1900.

Dear Lord Cardinal:

I regret that illness has, till now, hindered my replying to your eminence's last letter.

Therein you say you are "dealing" with me "exclusively" as my "ordinary." It is also in that character only that I write to you to-day, putting aside for the moment the question of apology which I cannot doubt your sense of right will be sure, in some form, to secure for me. The fact is, I am exceedingly anxious to meet your eminence's wishes, and to give all the satisfaction I can to my Catholic friends. I remain attached to Catholicity and its rites, at which, happen what may, I shall not cease to assist, for I consider divine worship (in the words of my friend Dr. Gasquet) "the highest privilege of a rational nature." To your eminence, then, as my ordinary, I confidently appeal to help me out of a difficulty and to resolve a point of conscience which troubles me.

When I was admitted as a Catholic, I made, of course, a profession of the creed of Pope Pius IV. But I have no recollection of ever having made, or been asked to make, the following profession, which forms part of the document I am now asked to sign:

In accordance with the Holy Councils of Trent and of the Vatican, I receive all the books of the Old and New Testament with all their parts as set forth in the fourth section of the Council of Trent and contained in the ancient Latin edition of the Vulgate, as sacred and canonical, and I firmly believe and confess that the said Scriptures are sacred and canonical—not because, having been carefully composed by mere human industry, they are afterwards approved by the church's authority, not merely because they contain revelation with no mixture of error, but because, having been written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author, and have been delivered as such to the church herself.

Now, I beg of your eminence, as my ecclesiastical superior, to tell me whether I am, or not, right as to what would be the consequences of my signing the above ?

It would be easy, of course, by a little dexterity, to distort and evade what appears to be its real and obvious meaning. As God is the first cause and creator of all things, he is, in that sense, their author. Author of the "Decameron" of Boccaccio, as well as of the Bible. But to make a profession with such a meaning would be, in my eyes, grossly profane and altogether unjustifiable

Your eminence, of course, means and wishes me to sign *ex animo* the document sent to me, and I, for my part, desire to be perfectly—transparently—honest, candid, and straightforward.

Now, in my judgment, an acceptance and profession of the above cited portion of the document sent me would be equivalent to an assertion that there are no errors, or altogether false statements, or fabulous narratives, in the Old and New Testament, and that I should not be free to hold and teach, without blame, that the world was not created in any six periods of time; that the story of the serpent and the tree is altogether false; that the history of the tower of Babel is a mere fiction devoid of any particle of truth; that the story of Noah's Ark is also quite erroneous, as again that of the plagues of Egypt; that neither Joshua nor Hezekiah interfered with the regularity of solar time; that Jonah did not live within the belly of any kind of marine animal; that Lot's wife was never turned into a pillar of salt; and that Balaam's ass never spoke. I only put these forward as a few examples of statements (denials) which it seems to me any one who holds that "the books of the Old and New Testament, with all their parts, were written by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and

have God for their author" ought not and could not logically or rationally make.

If, however, your eminence can authoritatively tell me that divine inspiration or authorship does not (clerical errors, faults of translation, etc., apart) guarantee the truth and inerrancy of the statements so inspired, it will in one sense be a great relief to my mind, and greatly facilitate the signing of the document, your eminence's decision on the subject being once publicly known, and also the conditions under which I sign it.

I therefore most earnestly adjure and entreat your eminence to afford me all the spiritual help and enlightenment you can; for the question I now ask is my one great trouble and difficulty. I cannot and will not be false to science any more than to religion.

If only your eminence can tell me I have judged wrongly, and that I shall be held free and deemed blameless for denying the truth of statements whereof the Council of Vatican has declared God to be the author, it will afford my conscience great and much-needed relief.

I trust I may receive an answer on Tuesday next at the latest. I feel it is possible, however, that, as your eminence has so far declined to apologize, you may not accord me the authoritative answer to the question I so earnestly address to you as my ordinary. In that case I shall (according to custom) take silence to mean consent, and deem you think me right and agree with me in judging that no one who accepts the decrees of Trent and the Vatican (and Leo XIII.) about Scripture is free to proclaim the entire falsehood of any of its statements or professed histories.

I have the honor to remain, dear Lord Cardinal, your
eminence's most obedient and devoted servant,

ST. GEORGE MIVART.

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER, S. W., JANUARY 21, 1900.

Dear Dr. Mivart :

I am sorry to hear that you have been ill, and sincerely hope that you are recovering. In reply to your letter of the 19th, let me, first of all, urge you to place your feet down upon the firm and fundamental principle which is the ground on which every true Catholic stands,—*viz.*, that the church, being the divine teacher established by Christ in the world, rightly claims from her disciples a hearty and intellectual acceptance of all that she authoritatively teaches. This principle, given us by Our Lord, will carry you safely over all objections and difficulties that may spring up along your path. It was applied by St. Augustine to his acceptance of the Scriptures, where he says: *Ego vero Evangelio non crederem, nisi me Catholicæ Ecclesiæ commoveret auctoritas.*

But, if you are going to give the assent of faith only to such doctrines as present no difficulties beyond the power of your finite intelligence to see through and solve by direct answer, you must put aside at once all the mysteries of faith, and you must frankly own yourself to be a rationalist pure and simple. You then constitute your own ability to solve difficulties, intellectual or scientific, into your test of the doctrines proffered for your acceptance.

This is to return to the old Protestant system of private judgment, or to open rationalism and unbelief.

But you will let me, I hope, be frank, and urge that it is your moral, rather than your intellectual, nature that needs attention. God gives this grace to the humble; it is "the clean of heart" who "shall see God." Let me press upon you the primary necessity of humility and persevering prayer for light and grace.

Having said this much in general, I now refer more directly to your questions as to Holy Scripture. For an authoritative recent statement, see Leo XIII.'s Encyclical on Holy Scripture.

I would also recommend you to study Franzelin's Treatise de S. Scriptura, Hummelauer's Commentaries, and his account of the creation. See III. Vol. of *Biblische Studien*, 1898, Friburg in Brisgau, or his "Récit de la Création."

But, perhaps, more useful to you than this would be a conversation with Rev. Dr. Clarke or with F. Tyrrell, S.J., both of whom would be able to understand your state of mind and to give you counsel and assistance. I refer you to them.

Believe me to be your faithful and devoted servant,

HERBERT CARD. VAUGHAN,
Archbishop of Westminster.

JANUARY 23.

Dear Lord Cardinal:

I thank you. I rejoice to say I am better. My "ordinary" has indeed acted promptly in the character of an authoritative prelate, and hardly with the patient pastoral consideration some persons expected. You have issued your "inhibition" without waiting for a reply to your third summons. Your last letter is, however, less "dogmatic" than could have been wished, seeing that, though cardinal archbishop and head not only of the diocese but of the province of Westminster, you say neither "yes" nor "no" to my very simple question. You refer me to two of your clergy, to Franzelin, and to Leo XIII. for an answer. To Pope Leo I will go.

As to what you say about "private judgment," all of us, however submissive to authority, must, in the last resort, rest

upon the judgment of our individual reason. How otherwise could we know that authority had spoken at all, or what it had said ?

It is impossible to accept anything as true which is a contradiction in terms. Upon that truth all theological reasoning is based, and all other reasoning also.

I greatly desire to state plainly, and to make your eminence clearly understand, what my religious position is, and what it has for some years been. As you well know, I was once an ardent advocate of Catholicism. The best years of my life have been spent in its defence, while all I said in its favor I most thoroughly meant. Though, like many others who have thought much on such subjects, I have occasionally passed through periods of doubt, yet for years I was, on the whole, happy and full of confidence in the position I had taken up, which was clearly expressed in my article, "The Catholic Church and Biblical Criticism," published in the "Nineteenth Century" for July, 1887. Therein I rested much on the teaching of Cardinal Newman, which gave me to understand that Catholics were "free only to hold as 'inspired,' in some undefined sense of that word, certain portions or passages of the books set before them as canonical." I found great latitude of scriptural interpretation to be not uncommon amongst Catholics, both cleric and lay, and my efforts seemed to meet with approbation, notably from Pius IX., and afterwards, in a less degree, from Leo XIII.

All of a sudden, like a bolt from the blue, appeared, in 1893, that terrible encyclical about Scripture known as "Providentissimus Deus," containing the following unequivocal words :

It is absolutely wrong and forbidden, either to narrow inspiration to certain parts only of Holy Scripture, or to

admit that the sacred writer has erred. For the system of those who, in order to rid themselves of these difficulties, do not hesitate to concede that divine inspiration regards the things of faith and morals, and nothing beyond, because (as they wrongly think), in a question of the truth or falsehood of a passage, we should consider not so much what God has said as the reason and purpose which He had in mind in saying it—this system cannot be tolerated. For all the books which the church receives as sacred and canonical are written wholly and entirely, with all their parts, at the dictation of the Holy Ghost; and, so far is it from being possible that any error can coexist with inspiration, that inspiration not only is essentially incompatible with error, but excludes and rejects it as absolutely and necessarily as it is impossible that God himself, the supreme truth, can utter that which is not true. This is the ancient and unchanging faith of the church, solemnly defined in the Councils of Florence and of Trent, and finally confirmed and more expressly formulated by the Council of the Vatican. . . . Hence, because the Holy Ghost employed men as His instruments, we cannot therefore say that it was these inspired instruments who, perchance, have fallen into error, and not the primary author. For, by supernatural power, He so moved and impelled them to write—He was so present to them—that the things which He ordered, and those only, they, first, rightly understood, then willed faithfully to write down, and finally expressed in apt words and with infallible truth. Otherwise it could not be said that He was the author of the entire Scripture. Such has always been the persuasion of the Fathers. . . . It follows that those who maintain that an error is possible in any genuine passage of the sacred writings either pervert the Catholic notion of inspiration, or make God the author of such error.

It then seemed plain to me that my position was no longer tenable, but I had recourse to the most learned theologian I knew and my intimate friend. His representations, distinctions, and exhortations had great influence with me, and more

or less satisfied me for a time; but ultimately I came to the conclusion that Catholic doctrine and science were fatally at variance. This is now more clear to me than ever, since my "ordinary" does not say whether my judgment about what the attribution of any document to God's authorship involves is, or is not, right. To me it is plain that God's veracity and His incapability of deceit are primary truths without which revelation is impossible. The teaching, then, of Leo XIII., addressed dogmatically to the whole church, comes to this: Every statement made by a canonical writer must be true in the sense in which he put it forward—whether as an historical fact or a moral instruction.

Thus it is now evident that a vast and impassable abyss yawns between Catholic dogma and science, and no man with ordinary knowledge can henceforth join the communion of the Roman Catholic Church if he correctly understands what its principles and its teaching really are, unless they are radically changed.

For who could profess to believe the narrative about the tower of Babel, or that all species of animals came up to Adam to be named by him? Moreover, amongst the writings esteemed "canonical" by the Catholic church are the book of Tobit and the second book of Maccabees, and also the story which relates how, when Daniel was thrown a second time into the lion's den, an angel seized Habbacuc, in Judea, by the hair of his head and carried him, with his bowl of pottage, to give it to Daniel for his dinner.

To ask a reasonable man to believe such puerile tales would be to insult him. Plainly the Councils of Florence, Trent, and the Vatican have fallen successively into greater and greater errors, and thus all rational trust in either popes or councils is at an end. Some persons may ask me: "Why

did you not at once secede?" But your eminence will agree with me that a man should not hastily abandon convictions, but rather wait, seek the best advice, and, above all, divine aid. It is also a duty of ordinary prudence for a man to carefully examine his conscience to see whether any fault (*e.g.*, "pride," as you suggest) may not be at the root of his trouble and perplexity. Now, I have myself maintained, and maintain, that a secret wish, an unconscious bias, may lead to the acceptance, or rejection, of beliefs of various kinds, and certainly of religious beliefs. But, when the question is a purely intellectual one of the utmost simplicity, or like a proposition in Euclid, then I do not believe in the possibility of emotional deception. The falsehood of the historical narration about Babel is a certainty practically as great as that of the equality of the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle.

Still when, in two or three years, I had become fully convinced that orthodox Catholicism was untenable, I was extremely disinclined to secede. I was most reluctant to give pain to many dear Catholic friends, some of whom had been very kind to me. My family also was, and is, strongly Catholic, and my secession might inflict, not only great pain, but possibly social disadvantage, on those nearest and dearest to me.

Why, then, I asked myself, should I not continue to conform, as advocated in my "Fortnightly Review" article? Why should I stultify my past career when approaching its end, and give myself labor and sorrow? It was a great temptation. Probably I should have remained silent, had I not, by my writings, influenced many persons in favor of what I now felt to be erroneous, and therefore inevitably more or less hurtful. To such persons I was a debtor. I also hated to disguise, even by reticence, what I held to be truth.

These considerations were brought to a climax last year by a grave and prolonged illness. I was told I should probably die. Could I go out of the world while still remaining silent? It was plain to me that I ought not, and as soon as I could (in August) I wrote my recently-published articles. Therein I felt it would be useless to confine myself to that question which was for me at the root of the whole matter,—namely, Scripture. Therefore, while taking care to use no uncertain language about the Bible, I made my articles as startling as I could in other respects, so as to compel attention to them, and elicit, if possible, an unequivocal pronouncement. In this I have, thank God, succeeded, and the clause about Scripture I am required to sign is for me decisive.

I categorically refuse to sign the profession of faith. Nevertheless, as I said, I am attached to Catholicity as I understand it, and to that I adhere. If, then, my recent articles had been tolerated, especially my representations as to the probability of vast future changes through doctrinal evolution, I would have remained quiet in the hope that, little by little, I might successfully oppose points I had before mistakenly advocated. The "Quarterly" article of January, reviewed by me, and written, I suspect, by a Catholic, proceeds upon the very principle for which I am censured. I am not altogether surprised that your eminence has shirked replying to my question, and referred me to Dr. Clarke, whose dishonesty (not, of course, conscious) and shuffling about Scripture so profoundly disgusted me. It is to me truly shocking that religious teachers, cardinal and priests, profess to think certain beliefs to be necessary, and yet will not say what they truly are. They resemble quack doctors, who play their long familiar tricks upon the vulgar, but act otherwise to those they cannot trifle with.

It has long been painful to me to think of the teaching given in Catholic schools and often proclaimed from the pulpit. There need be small surprise at the opposition existing in France to the authoritative teaching of fables, fairy tales, and puerile and pestilent superstitions.

Happily I can now speak with entire frankness as to all my convictions. *Liberavi animam meam.* I can sing my *Nunc dimittis*, and calmly await the future.

In concluding, I must revert to the apology, about which your eminence seems as disposed to shuffle as about Scripture statements. If you have recently sold the "Tablet," you have, of course, ceased to be responsible. If not, however you may disclaim it, responsible you are, as a court of law would soon demonstrate under certain circumstances. I cannot but suspect the great reason for refusing to apologize is the desire to represent doctrinal agreement amongst Catholics to be much greater than in fact it is. When I spoke of exceptional opinions being held by "good Catholics," I did not mean to affirm they were theologically blameless, but simply that they were persons who looked upon themselves as Catholics while leading "good" lives in the ordinary sense of that word.

As to public opinion, it is plain the "Tablet" is not approved of, as to its treatment of me, by other Catholic journals, while I know that many of your eminence's clergy, who have no sympathy with me, are much disgusted with it.

Considering how much less is implied by the imputation of folly to a man than by what has been said of me by your agents, I conclude by calling the attention of your eminence to the words attributed to Christ by Matthew in his fifth chapter and twenty-second verse.

Your most obedient servant,

ST. GEORGE MIVART

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER, S. W., JANUARY 25, 1900.

Dear Dr. Mivart:

In reply to your letter received last night, let me point out that you have not therein done justice to the Holy Father's encyclical on Scripture, nor perhaps to yourself. When you asked me for "spiritual help and enlightenment," I urged the importance of cultivating three virtues,—humility, purity, and a spirit of prayer,—virtues bearing, as it seemed to me, directly on your present state of mind. And for enlightenment I referred you to the most authoritative teaching of Leo XIII., as I would any person who came to me as a serious inquirer on the question of Holy Scripture. If you think that I "shirked" your request, or "shuffled," as you say, you cannot have read the letter of the Holy Father *in extenso* or with care. In that letter the pope says :

Rationalists deny that there is any such thing as revelation or inspiration, or Holy Scripture at all; they see, instead, only the forgeries and the falsehoods of men; they set down the Scripture narratives as stupid fables and lying stories; the miracles and the wonders of God's power are not what they are said to be, but the startling effects of natural law, or else mere tricks and myths. These detestable errors, whereby they think they destroy the truth of the divine books, are obtruded on the world as the peremptory pronouncements of a certain newly-invented "free science"—a science, however, which is so far from final that they are perpetually modifying and supplementing it.

Surely you will have been able yourself, knowing the real state of your own mind better than I can know it, to say whether or not your catalogue of narratives described by you as "altogether false," "mere fiction devoid of any particle

of truth," etc., is alluded to and condemned under the above extract.

But I have said that you have not done justice to the Holy Father's teaching by the quotation that you have made from his encyclical. There are passages absolutely needed to complete his teaching in the very matter you bring under discussion. For instance, take the following:

There can never be any real discrepancy between the theologian and the physicist as long as each confines himself within his own lines, and both are careful, as St. Augustine warns us, "not to make rash assertions, or to assert what is not known as known." If dissensions should arise between them, here is the rule laid down by St. Augustine.

And so he goes on.

Again :

The sacred writers did not seek to penetrate the secrets of nature, but rather described and dealt with things in more or less figurative language, or in terms which were commonly used at the time, and which in many instances are in daily use at this day, even by the most eminent men of science. Ordinary speech primarily and properly describes what comes under the senses; and somewhat in the same way the sacred writers—as the angelic doctor also reminds us—"went by what sensibly appeared," or put down what God, speaking to men, signified in the way "men could understand and were accustomed to," etc., with much more in the same strain of explanation; and the Holy Father adds that "the principles here laid down will apply to cognate sciences, and especially to history."

These passages and others cannot be neglected without extreme levity by any one desiring to represent aright the direction given by Leo XIII. to students of the Bible.

And let me press upon you another consideration, drawn from the same encyclical:

As no one should be so presumptuous as to think that he understands the whole of the Scriptures, in which St. Augustine himself confessed that there was more that he did not know than that he knew, so, if he should come upon anything that seems incapable of solution, he must take to heart the cautious rule of the same holy doctor: "It is better even to be oppressed by unknown, but useful, signs than to interpret them uselessly, and thus to throw off the yoke only to be caught in the trap of error."

Finally, let me suggest that, besides a certain religious reverence due to the Word of God, a philosophic calm and measured language should be at least as characteristic of the teacher and student of Holy Writ as of the writer on any other serious science.

I must conclude this correspondence by assuring you that there is no personal sacrifice that I shall not at any time most gladly make, if by so doing I can be of real use to you. I shall certainly not fail to pray that God's grace may prevail in the end, and that He may bring you back to the ark of salvation, to our great joy and consolation.

Believe me always your faithful and devoted servant,

HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN

JANUARY 27, 1900.¹*Dear Lord Cardinal :*

Had I not felt sure our correspondence was at an end, I should not, of course, have sent it to be published. Should your eminence wish it, and the "Times" consent, your last and this reply shall be added.

Permit me, in replying to your kind letter of the 25th inst., to separate what is personal from what is doctrinal.

(1) As to the former, I am perfectly certain that your eminence has meant, and means, most kindly to me, and, though I cannot but think you were precipitate in addressing your clergy so quickly, I am none the less sure it was done with regret, and only from an imperative sense of duty. Nothing that has happened can obliterate the impression made on me by past kindness. I entertain a warm and sincere regard for your eminence, and say, most cordially: "*Ad multos annos!*" I feel no less interest than I did in the progress of the new cathedral, and only wait to know its interior is free from scaffolding to visit it for a careful survey.

(2) As to doctrine, I have carefully read the whole of the encyclical, and can find nothing which negatives the very plain and decisive affirmations quoted by me. But, were it otherwise, it would only include the pope amongst the ecclesiastics who have so profoundly disgusted me by simultaneous assertions and denials; who try to play fast and loose with what they profess to regard as most sacred, saying that certain things must be believed, while yet they may be disbelieved; that it is necessary for salvation to hold with the fathers and doctors of the church, and also that there is really no occa-

¹ In supplying to the press his final letter to the cardinal, Dr. Mivart remarks: "The passages quoted from the pope's encyclical by the cardinal are quite irrelevant to the point at issue, though it is worth while to note that they contain a complete repudiation of the principle inculcated by Paul V. and Urban VIII. in the condemnation of Copernicanism."

sion so to do; that the decrees of Trent and the Vatican must absolutely be accepted as they were meant, and yet that they may be explained away.

The fact is that all Catholic teachers about Scripture are embarrassed by antecedent affirmations which you cannot disown, glad as you would be so to do. The Council of Trent naturally fell into error, because then modern science was but in its infancy; while that of the Vatican was no less mistaken, because the great majority of its bishops neither knew nor cared anything about natural science.

But these truths you are not free to affirm because of the dogma of "infallibility," which clings to the church like the fatal garment of Nessus, and will surely eat away its substance and reduce it to a mouldering, repulsive skeleton if that doctrine does not come to be explained away by dexterous Catholic theologians.

As to the old, worn-out saying, "There can be no discrepancy between science and religion," it is quite true if religion is always careful to change its teaching in obedience to science, but not otherwise.

As to "accommodations" and "Biblical modes of speaking," it is "true," or it is "not true," that the animals went up to Adam to be named, and so with respect to the story about Babel, etc.

Very many men and women are now anxious and distressed about their duty with regard to the Bible. What good end can be served by telling them it "contains no errors," while yet a multitude of its statements are altogether false?

By such a method the very foundations of religion become tainted with insincerity, untruth, and dishonesty.

Believe me, dear Lord Cardinal, yours, after all,
affectionately,

ST. GEORGE MIVART.

NOTICE OF INHIBITION OF SACRAMENTS. ¹

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER,
FEAST OF ST. PETER'S CHAIR, 1900.

Rev. Dear Father :

Dr. St. George Mivart, in his articles entitled " The Continuity of Catholicism " and " Some Recent Apologists," in the " Nineteenth Century " and the " Fortnightly Review " for January, 1900, has declared, or at least seemed to declare, that it is permissible for Catholics to hold certain heresies— regarding the virginal birth of Our Lord and the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin; the gospel account of the resurrection and the immunity of the sacred body from corruption; the reality and transmission of original sin; the redemption as a real satisfaction for the sins of men; the everlasting punishment of the wicked; the inspiration and integrity of Holy Scripture; the right of the Catholic church to interpret the sense of Scripture with authority; her perpetual retention of her doctrines in the same sense; not to speak of other false propositions. As he has thereby rendered his orthodoxy suspect, and has, moreover, confirmed the suspicion by failing, after three notifications, to sign the annexed profession of faith when tendered to him by me, it now becomes my duty to take further action, and I hereby inhibit him from approaching the sacraments, and forbid my priests to administer them to him, until he shall have proved his orthodoxy to the satisfaction of his ordinary.

Believe me to be, Rev. dear Father, your faithful and devoted servant,

HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN,
Archbishop of Westminster.

¹ A circular letter addressed to the Roman Catholic clergy of the diocese of Westminster.

P. S.—If it were true, as Dr. Mivart asserts, that there were persons calling themselves Catholics who hold any of the above heresies, it would be necessary to remind them that they have ceased in reality to be Catholics, and that, if they were to approach the sacraments, they would do so sacrilegiously, at the peril of their souls, and in defiance of the law of the church.

HERBERT CARDINAL VAUGHAN.

SOME RECENT CATHOLIC APOLOGISTS.¹

The task of the apologist, for whatsoever cause or institution, must, in order to be effective, vary according to the internal condition of, and the prevalent state of opinion respecting, that for which he pleads.

The advocate of Catholicity in the time of Innocent III. had indeed a different task from that of his successors in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries. A Catholic reaction has found a place in our own age, but it has, nevertheless, been accompanied by new and notable developments of unbelief. In the words of a learned and candid Roman ecclesiastic:²

There is no denying it, we have entered a period of exceptionally deep and widespread unbelief. Christianity has ceased in a great measure to be the acknowledged basis of society and the common bond of civilized nations.

This "falling away" has by no means, however, been a simply negative process. It has been largely the consequence of an advance in one or another department of science (biology, history, critical science, or ethics), resulting in the production of convictions deemed so inconsistent with fundamental Christian beliefs that no honest man could hold them and continue to conform to the usages of his antecedent creed.

This judgment the modern Apologist seeks to combat by declaring the "beliefs" referred to not "fundamental," and affirming that, though they may for centuries have been regarded as of vital importance, they are really but immaterial

¹ Originally printed in the "Fortnightly Review." 1900

² The Very Rev. J. B. Hogan, S.S., D.D., President of St. John's Seminary, Massachusetts. See his work "Clerical Studies," Boston, 1898, p. 98.

opinions, so that religious conformity need not come to an end on their account. Such is especially the case since they may become so changed and transformed as to assume an entirely new aspect, or may be simply and silently dropped altogether.

In a review bearing the title which heads this article, it would be disingenuous for its author not to acknowledge that he has himself taken a small part in such apologetics.

It was evident to me, when I began to write, that a serious conflict existed in the minds of many persons, between their religious beliefs and certain convictions and sentiments with which my innermost nature compelled me to sympathize. For as in youth I loved both natural science and history, and also early attained the conviction that there exists, pervading the universe, an intelligence utterly unfathomable by man, and that the world could not be explained or understood by mechanical conceptions only, I also became assured that Catholicity, well understood, is the most developed form of theism, and that, in addition to its other claims on acceptance, it acts as a very potent social bond, and supports and promotes (with whatever local or temporary drawbacks) the most benevolent and the noblest aspirations.

Any one so thinking would be clearly blameworthy if he did not do the best that was in him to ward off religious anarchy and nihilism. Moreover, the history of the rise and fall of religions has had a special interest for me ever since, as a boy, I became fascinated with the history of the Emperor Julian, as told by Gibbon. Perceiving much beauty and many merits in Paganism, I could well understand how worthy men should have offered homage at its shrines, while profoundly differing from the populace around them both in purpose and belief. But, if conformity was then desirable, why not now for many persons troubled with doubts and difficulties about

the religion of the modern world—Christianity and Catholicism?

I therefore felt bound to do my best to remove misunderstandings and promote concord as far as I could honestly promote it.

The first subject to which I applied myself was that which had then been most combated,—namely, the theory of evolution, including that of the human body. I urged¹ that the doctrines on the subject, derived from the Bible, had been shown, through the principles laid down by authoritative mediæval theologians, to be capable of so complete a transformation that they need cause no further trouble, even to the scrupulous. Nevertheless, I found, later on, that the minds of many Catholics continued to be troubled on account of what they took to be authoritative pronouncements against evolution. I, therefore, specially applied myself² to demonstrate, by a notable example from astronomy, how great their freedom really was, and how untrammelled their minds, by the yoke of ecclesiastical authority in all scientific matters. I was careful to claim this freedom, not only for physical, but also for historical and critical science. Yet, as it seemed to me that conformity, which had been secured by my astronomical contention, might be imperilled through questions concerning Scripture criticism, I next addressed myself³ to that question.

The number of persons troubled about these matters, however, I found to be both fewer and less tried than those scandalized by the Catholic doctrine about hell and damnation—

¹ See my "Genesis of Species" and "Lessons from Nature."

² See my article entitled "Modern Catholics and Scientific Freedom," in the "Nineteenth Century," for July, 1885.

³ See my article, "The Catholic Church and Biblical Criticism," in the "Nineteenth Century," for July, 1887.

as commonly understood. In the interests of Catholicity, therefore, I did my best to show¹ that its doctrines on this subject readily admitted of so complete a transformation that they no longer need distress men of ordinary good feeling. This well-meant endeavor did not, however, meet with approval at Rome, for my articles were placed upon the "Index." As I was called upon to make no retractation, and as not a single position put forward by me was condemned, I thought it well, out of respect for Leo XIII., and for other reasons,² to submit to the decree, and I submitted. I did not, however, withdraw or renounce any one of the opinions I had maintained, and certainly I do not withdraw them now.³ I still regard the representations as to hell which have been commonly promulgated, in sermons and meditations, as so horrible and revolting that a Deity capable of instituting such a place of torment would be a bad God, and, therefore, in the words of the late Dr. W. G. Ward,⁴ a God "we should be

¹ See "Happiness in Hell," in the "Nineteenth Century," for December, 1892, and February, 1893, and "Last Words on the Happiness in Hell," in the number for April, 1893, in the same periodical.

² See my article "The Index and my Articles on Hell," in the "Nineteenth Century" for December, 1893. It may seem inconsistent on my part, after thus submitting, to refer readers to my condemned articles, which amounts, perhaps, to a republication of them. But I am now free so to act, since in August last I wrote to Cardinal Steinhuber, S.J. (prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the "Index"), to say that, since my article had been freshly placed on the "Index" (in a new edition of that publication), if I did not receive answers to certain questions I should feel compelled to withdraw my submission. The reply I received did not answer those questions, and my submission is withdrawn accordingly.

³ The Hon. Lionel A. Tollemache, in his work on Benjamin Jowett, in a note on p. 27, speaks of my "relapsing" into my "amiable heresy." But no proposition of mine has been condemned as a "heresy," and there can be no need for me to return to what I have never renounced.

⁴ See his work "Nature and Grace" (1860), pp. 86, 87.

under the indefeasible obligation of disobeying, defying, and abhorring.”

As an Apologist, it has been my great endeavor to be, above all things, truthful and candid, not to shirk difficulties, not to ignore any claim of science, or shrink from pointing out mistakes made by church authorities. The Apologist who shows a want of sympathy with science, or a want of candor as to its assured progress, the benefits it has conferred upon mankind, or its triumphs over the obstructions placed in its way, will but injure the cause he has set out to serve.

Now, it was for centuries believed that God had instituted a society on the government of which He had conferred the power of deciding infallibly all questions of belief which were of moment to mankind, and of legislating unerringly as to all matters of human conduct.

Welcome, indeed, such an institution would be, but it would be worse than folly to seek to maintain that belief now, when ecclesiastical authority has itself demonstrated, through its own mistakes and errors, that its legitimate field of influence is very much less extensive than it was long supposed to be.

Such changes as to belief have at least this advantage for the Catholic Apologist: they supply him with a powerful argument in favor of patience and continued conformity in spite of difficulties, since, if such transformations have already removed so many difficulties, other changes may fairly be expected to do away with such as yet remain.

This question has been lately treated of in an article¹ entitled “The Ethics of Religious Conformity.” I have not space to review the essay at length; I must confine myself to noticing a few salient points in it, giving quotations sufficient

¹ See the “Quarterly Review” for January, 1899.

to enable the reader to judge as to the justice of my criticism. Its anonymous author does not declare to what religious communion he belongs, but I think the internal evidence it affords suffices to make clear that it is the communion of Rome. He begins thus:

While Renan was writing his "History of Israel," he is said to have paid a visit to Bernez, the Jewish Rationalist. He arrived at the festival of the Passover, and to his great surprise found Bernez was keeping it with punctilious observance of the ancient ritual. Renan expressed his astonishment that his friend should solemnly commemorate the holy days of a creed in which he had ceased to believe; but Bernez defended himself. "Dogma is a source of disunion," he said, "but ancient ritual observances preserve our common *esprit de corps*."

The Quarterly Reviewer has much to say as to the views of Mr. Henry Sidgwick,¹ and he also refers to the opinions of Dr. Sabatier,² and some long ago given forth by the late Cardinal Newman.³

Mr. Sidgwick considers that, when various members of the church of England have ceased to believe any of its doctrines, they are not bound to cease conformity with its worship, or to separate themselves from it, unless they hold, or are seeking to obtain, some official position, for the occupation of which an express profession of assent to its formulæ is a necessary condition.⁴ He deprecates secession on the ground of the ethical damage which would probably thence arise to

¹ In his work, "Practical Ethics" (1898), and especially in the section "The Ethics of Religious Conformity."

² "The Vitality of Christian Dogmas and their Power of Evolution." Translated by Mrs. Emmanuel Christen (1898).

³ "Sermons Preached before the University of Oxford" (1843).

⁴ His words are: "Any educational or other post of trust, in which membership to the church of England is required as a condition."

the seceder himself, and its injurious tendency for the community. Mr. Arthur Balfour has well pointed out ' that a religious organization (a church) is one " charged with a great practical work. For the successful promotion of this work unity, discipline, and self-devotion are the principal requisites; and, as in the case of every other such organization, the most powerful source of these qualities is to be found in the feelings aroused by common memories, common hopes, common loyalties; by professions in which all agree, by a ceremonial which all share; by customs and commands which all obey."

These considerations appear to me to carry great weight, as does also the reflection that a man can do much more to aid progress while still a member of the church than when he has once separated himself from it.

Dr. Sabatier would have sympathetic theologians gradually discard the old dogmas or formulæ (the husk, as it were), only preserving the nutritious contents, the essence uninjured, while evolving truth yet more precious. Dr. Newman would preserve even the formulæ while recognizing their human element, and consequent incapacity to express adequately what they would shadow forth to us, and the frequent need of a process of evolution to bring out into clear expression the latent truths he believed them to contain. The Quarterly Reviewer, however, denies that conformity is justifiable on Mr. Sidgwick's principles.

His conclusion is² :

For those who hold the theory of the evolution of dogma, whether in Newman's sense or in Sabatier's, conformity to a religious creed would appear to be lawful on the part of those

¹ See his " Foundations of Belief," Longmans, 1895, p. 274.

² P. 135.

who separate themselves by a considerable interval from the position accounted orthodox by the powers of the formularies or their official guardians. Such persons believe themselves to have reached a stage in the evolution of dogma which the bulk of the officials of the particular communion have not reached. But for those who regard the explanations of Newman and Sabatier as tantamount to the simple denial of the creeds, or who reject the theory of development, and have no other theory separating their position from a negative one, we cannot see in the mere utility of religion any justification for conformity.

Mr. Sidgwick pleads a "common understanding," but our argument is this: Either that common understanding assumes a theory of advance and development of dogma, in which case we do admit its sufficiency, while we deny that on such a theory the creeds are simply disbelieved; or the "common understanding" rests in a really sceptical theory, held in different ways by Bernez and Renan, on the theory that dogma is doomed to disappear, but that it is lawful, for reasons of sentiment and utility, to adhere to a creed in which you disbelieve. So stated, we reject the theory.

Now, no one could reasonably deny the lawfulness of "conformity" for persons who adopt the principle of Sabatier or Newman. But I do not see why it is not also lawful for those who hold with Mr. Sidgwick. Indeed I much prefer (as more honest, reasonable, and reverent) a frank statement, such as his, to the tortuous and involved positions assumed by the Quarterly Reviewer, which every now and then seem to result in the loss of all rational signification (see pp. 107-109).

Referring to Newman's well-known and often-quoted passage about musical harmony, the Reviewer says¹:

This analogy suggests in the first place the function of dogmatic formulæ in conveying to the soul divine truths, and

¹ P. 117.

enabling these truths to affect the soul, while the formulæ can never adequately represent such truths as they are in themselves, or as they affect the soul.

But can formulæ ever represent even a blackbird "as it is in itself" ?

The Reviewer further observes¹:

We believe that such figurative knowledge as is conveyed to us by the formulæ does place us in some relation with the unseen world. Thus assent to the formulæ is intellectually somewhat indefinite.

It is that indeed, but it is much more. It is WHOLLY indefinite !

This assent, he further tells us, is "a surrender to truths which we believe to be acting on us, without our being able intellectually to grasp them."

But truths which are not grasped by our intellect cannot be "truths," for us, at all. Such so-called "truths" can convey to our mind no information whatever.

The Quarterly Reviewer's attitude to a religious formula, which is but a blank to his intellect, may well remind us of the old woman's mental attitude towards "that blessed word Mesopotamia."

The Reviewer himself describes, as follows,² what our mental attitude should be to such a formula:

What that truth is our intellect can never explicitly know in this world. Our assent to it is an act of firm adhesion to whatever truth God is conveying to us, an opening of our nature to what He imparts, but not an act of intellectual comprehension of that truth.

But even omnipotence cannot "open our nature"—what-

¹ P. 118.

² P. 115.

ever that process may be—and “impart” to us any “truth,” save by causing our intellect to apprehend it; and, while we live on earth, by directly or indirectly acting on our brain. No divine action on the lungs, the liver, or the heart, could ever enable us to apprehend “truth.”

According to our author’s teaching, as here expressed, we are to accept and “firmly adhere” to a proposition which is no truth for us, and to “open our nature” to what God leaves inapprehensible by our intellect. We are to accept with reverence and open our nature to “Abracadabra.” What utter absurdity might not claim acceptance on such principles as these?

But the Quarterly Reviewer contends that dogmas, as expressed to us, may be neither true nor untrue, and that none of these formulæ are “ultimate positions.”

I, on the other hand, earnestly contend that every statement, duly analyzed, must be true or untrue. For what is truth? It consists in an accurate correspondence between an act of the intellect (normally, and especially, a judgment) and some objective existence. So far as any assertion conveys to us an idea which corresponds with objective reality, it is “true”; and, so far as it diverges from that reality, it is “untrue.” There are, therefore, different degrees of untruth.

But, because a statement is “incomplete,” it does not thereby deserve to be called “untrue.” Thus the assertion, “A Siamang Gibbon is distinguished by having a chin,” is not untrue because that animal is also distinguished by having two toes on each foot bound together by skin.

But, because, again, every statement must be true or false, it does not follow that assertions may not be made which contain both truth and falsehood. Such statements, though apparently single, really, when analyzed, may be seen to consist of

two or more assertions mixed up together and requiring to be accurately distinguished.

Thus the statement, "A whale is a sort of fish which has warm blood," contains both a true and a false assertion. The expression "a sort of" may predicate either "a general likeness" or an "absolute identity of nature."

The assertion, "A whale is a creature with a general likeness to a fish, and has warm blood," is true. The statement, "A whale is a creature with the absolute nature of a fish, and has warm blood," is false.

The Reviewer remarks, with respect to High Churchmen and Roman Catholics, that they agree in regarding "the Christian church as the final sanction of dogmatic formulæ, and the mind of the church (to us only gradually and never completely disclosed) as the repository of their true meaning."

Elsewhere,¹ also, the Reviewer speaks of that "depository of all knowledge—the mind of the church."

But what *is* "the church"? In truth, no such thing really has, or can have, any separate existence. All that exists is a number of men and women who possess certain attributes and stand in various real relations to their environment.

The formal term church denotes an ideal abstraction, specially representing the religious relations of the persons who compose it; though, of course, such terms are convenient, and there should be no hesitation in using them. But the passage last quoted is a good example of the way in which, not only that abstraction, "the church," may be treated as a separate substantial entity, but an abstraction from that abstraction may further be personified as its "mind."

How can this unreal, personified abstraction from an ab-

¹ P. 126.

straction be “ a depositary ” for the “ meanings of formulæ ” —meanings which, according to the Reviewer, no man does, or ever will, understand ? Thus we have non-existent meanings, deposited in the non-existent mind of an hypostatized church !

Finally, the Reviewer tells us¹ that the invocation of the “ sense of the church supplies us with a fixed object of faith and loyalty ”—faith in and loyalty towards a personified abstraction from an abstraction, which has no real existence, or ever did or could have had it. It seems to me better, instead of professing reverence for incomprehensible formulæ, to patiently await their disappearance. They may disappear: (1) By transformation, as, *e.g.*, the dictum “ out of the church was salvation ” ; (2) by “ glosses,” such as have abolished the decrees against usury ; or (3) they may be simply dropped altogether, as the belief in Christ’s speedy second advent.

No fair-minded man will endure with patience the Quarterly Reviewer’s remarks upon the modifications and reversals which have taken place in physical science. Progress is impossible without modifications, and we may *reculer pour mieux sauter*. But for the last three hundred years there has been a continual, solid, and steady advance in physical, historical, and critical knowledge. This readiness to carp at science is discreditable to men like the Quarterly Reviewer, and tends to damage their own cause. Edifying is it, on the other hand, when we meet with due recognition of science at the hands of dogmatic theologians such as the before referred to Very Rev. Dr. Hogan.²

¹ P. 128.

² See his “ Clerical Studies,” Boston, 1898, p. 131. Geological science “ advances triumphantly, adding in each decade new and suggestive facts ; whilst its main principles have won the respect of all those who have made it

The Reviewer tells us¹ that, during the transition of a dogma from an old meaning to a new signification, it should be accepted "in the sense of the church." According to this, while Copernicanism was being anathematized by the Congregations of the Index and Inquisition, and by the pope himself, all the time the Newtonian astronomy, with other truths to be discovered later, were safely deposited in "the mind of the church," which, from the Apostolic age till 1820, kept them so securely hidden that for centuries no suspicion of their existence there was possible.

Before bidding a final farewell to the Quarterly Reviewer, we cannot permit one more statement he has made² to pass uncensured. After observing that, Galileo's discovery having proved undeniable, while theologians maintained it was against Scripture, an *impasse* was thus produced, which is now got rid of, "how," he asks, "did this come to pass? More recent theological analysis has pointed out that, in the case of a divine communication in writing to fallible and changeable man, the reasoning of Galileo's critics was inadequate."

This is an untrue representation. It was not "theological analysis," but the progress of physical science, which forced ecclesiastical authorities, willy-nilly, to retreat; to practically own themselves beaten, and to make tardy—disgracefully tardy—concessions. This misstatement, however, is a comparatively trifling matter. Much more serious is what has

the object of an intelligent and careful study. Such sciences cannot be set aside or overlooked. The Apologist who shows distrust and dislike of them only injures himself and his cause; and, if it were possible that a choice had to be made between them and the faith, it is much to be feared that the world would turn its back on the latter."

¹ P. 135.

² P. 119.

been written by another Catholic Apologist, Mr. Wilfrid Ward.¹

He has not scrupled to affirm that "Galileo was 'condemned for applying his theory to the detailed interpretation of Scripture, which he ought to have left to the theologian. It was for this intrusion on the theological domain that his position was condemned, although Copernicanism had already been tolerated as a scientific hypothesis.'"

The repetition of this abominable falsehood, which has been again and again refuted, may be partly due to what yet another Catholic Apologist, Mr. Wegg-Prosser, has written on the subject.² The last-named author makes a similar statement, though he can bring no evidence to support it. He tells us, indeed, of the Cardinals Ballarnini and del Monte having had a conversation, in March, 1615, wherein they agreed that Galileo "ought to avoid entering on the interpretation of Scripture"; but he introduces this statement by the words, "It is said," while he himself remarks upon the unsatisfactory evidential nature of conversations merely reported, and not at once written down. The only other passage referring to Scripture interpretation³ is a statement by Father Riccardi to the Inquisitor of Florence, that Galileo must put forward his heliocentric view merely as a hypothesis, "and this without alluding to the interpretation of Scripture."

Now, Galileo's writings found their place on the "Index," along with other works favoring Copernicanism, in the year 1616. Then it was that Sacred Congregation made a solemn decree about *that false and Pythagorean doctrine, altogether opposed*

¹ See his article "Catholic Apologists," in the "Nineteenth Century" for June, 1899, p. 955.

² "Nineteenth Century," June, 1899, p. 959.

³ See his work "Galileo and his Judges," Chapman & Hall, 1889, pp. 18, 47.

to Divine Scripture, on the mobility of the earth, and the immobility of the sun. But there is much more than this to show what was the true reason and motive of the condemnation of Copernicanism. Galileo was condemned in 1633, not for applying his theory to the interpretation of Scripture, but because, after Copernicanism had been condemned, and in defiance of an order from the pope and the Holy Office that he was not to hold, defend, or teach the theory in any manner, he had published his "Dialogue," a scientific treatise in which he represented Copernicanism as a probably true theory.

In the sentence pronounced on Galileo by the Inquisition, we read:

Invoking the most holy name of our Lord Jesus Christ and that of His most glorious Mother Mary ever Virgin, by this our definite sentence we say, pronounce, judge, and declare that you, the said Galileo, *on account of the things proved against you by documentary evidence, and which have been confessed by you as aforesaid, have rendered yourself to this Holy Office vehemently suspected of heresy—that is, of having believed and held a doctrine which is false and contrary to the sacred and divine Scriptures—to wit, that the sun is the centre of the world, and that it does not move from east to west, and that the earth moves and is not the centre of the universe.*

The condemnation¹ of Galileo by the Inquisition was consequent on eight heads of accusation which had been drawn up against him in 1632.² Now, there is not one of them which refers, in the very faintest way, to Scripture interpretation. As to *that*, it was not Galileo, but his judges, who went wrong, and they did so doubly.

¹ The full theological significance of all these acts is pointed out by the Rev. W. W. Roberts, whose work, "The Pontifical Decrees against the Doctrine of the Earth's Movement" (published by Messrs. Parker & Co.), should be carefully studied by every one interested in the subject.

² See Mr. Wegg Prosser's book, p. 80.

Ecclesiastical authority gave judgment as to physical science, and so went *ultra vires*. But it did much more than that. It founded its erroneous decree affecting physical science, which was *not* its own province, upon an erroneous judgment about the meaning of Scripture,¹ which, up till that time, had been universally supposed to be its own province.

These proceedings demonstrate two facts which are most important to Catholic men of science. One is that what is declared by even the highest known congregation (that of the *Holy Office*), whose president is the pope, and when the subject matter treated of is Scripture, may be quite erroneous. The other noteworthy fact is that men of physical science may have truer religious perceptions imparted to them, than any Roman congregation. This the Galileo case demonstrated absolutely and once for all; since we may safely affirm that whatever has shown itself to be a *fact* is *at least a possibility*.

God has thus taught us, through history, that it is not to ecclesiastical congregations, but to men of science, that He has committed the elucidation of scientific questions, whether such questions are or are not treated of by Scripture, the Fathers, the church's common teaching, or special congregations or tribunals of ecclesiastics actually summoned for the purpose. This also applies to all science—to Scripture criticism, to biology, and to all questions concerning evolution, the antiquity of man, and the origin of either his body or his soul, or of both. For all ecclesiastics who know nothing of natural science, it is an act necessarily as futile as impertinent to express any opinion on such subjects.

Therefore, Catholic men of science should calmly follow the even tenor of their way, regardless of all outcries, keeping

¹ This fact was first called attention to by the Rev. W. W. Roberts, and afterwards by me. See "Nineteenth Century" for July, 1885, p. 39.

ever before their eyes the crescentic Venus of Galileo¹ as their guiding star.

It would now be manifestly nothing less than absurd for ecclesiastics to assert any special claim to explain Scripture, seeing that church authorities have continuously misled the Christian world concerning it for eighteen hundred years; which world has only recently been delivered from such delusion through the labors of non-Catholic scientific men of Holland, Germany, and France. The only Catholic ecclesiastic I have heard of who was a precursor in their higher criticism was a Scotch priest named Geddes, and he got excommunicated for his pains.

But, if Galileo had been condemned for interpreting Scripture, it would only have been the more ridiculous, since the very highest living ecclesiastical authority has professed gratitude to him for what he did in that respect. Leo XIII., in February, 1877 (the year before his elevation to the papacy), published a pastoral letter, in which he declares that "Galileo, who gave to experimental philosophy one of its most vigorous impulses, reached, *by means of his researches*, the *proof that Holy Scripture and nature equally exhibit the footprints of a deity!*"²

¹ It was objected to Galileo then, did Venus revolve round the sun, she would exhibit such phases as does the moon. Galileo's telescope demonstrated at once that such was the case, and Venus was shown in her crescentic aspect.

² Mr. Wegg Prosser tells us (p. 111) that it was my article (before referred to) which led him to write his own book, wherein he has treated me very courteously, in spite of the difference between our views. He seems to think that I may have modified my own, but such is by no means the case. Noting my complaint that authority had made no reparation to Galileo or to science, he refers to the relaxation of censures which took place in 1757, the permission given, in 1820, to teach that the earth moves, and, in 1822, to print and publish at Rome works advocating the heliocentric views, and then declares that "Mr. Mivart must have been unaware of these facts." But

The true cause of his condemnation is already expressed by Galileo himself in his enforced abjuration: "Because after this Holy Office had juridically enjoined me to abandon altogether the false opinion which holds that the sun is the centre of the world and immovable, and that the earth is not the centre and moves, and had forbidden me to hold and defend or teach in any manner the said false doctrine; and after it had been notified to me that the said doctrine is repugnant to Holy Scripture, I wrote and caused to be printed a book wherein I treat of the same doctrine already condemned, and adduced arguments with great efficacy in favor of it without offering any solution of them. *Therefore*, I am judged, vehemently suspected of heresy, that of having held and believed that the sun is the centre of the world and immovable, and that the earth is not the centre, and moves. Wherefore, desiring to remove from the minds of your eminences and all Catholic Christians this vehement suspicion legitimately conceived against me with a sincere heart and faith, unfeigned, I abjure, curse, and detest the above-named errors and heresies, and generally every other error and sect contrary to the above-named church."

The opinion appears to be entertained both by Mr. Wegg-Prosser and Wilfrid Ward that it is enough if ecclesiastical authority concedes liberty of thought and speech when opinions, previously condemned, have been triumphantly shown by men of science to be unquestionably true.

such tardy revocations, which had become absolutely indispensable to save Rome becoming the laughing-stock of the civilized world (as it will soon become as regards "evolution," if some ignorant men of the *Curia* are not quickly muzzled), were well known to me, and regarded as quite insufficient. Nothing short of an official declaration that Galileo was innocent, and his conduct praiseworthy (except his abjuration), with a public and authoritative apology for the conduct of the popes and cardinals of Galileo's day, would, to my mind, at all meet the claims of justice in this matter.

This is, in my eyes, a most shocking principle. We have thus an authority claiming absolute supremacy, and allowed by most of its followers to possess it, misleading them in the most egregious manner. A religious authority should, at least, not affirm that to be true which it well knows may be false. But ecclesiastical authority claimed, in Galileo's day, not only to decide an astronomical question, but thereby affirmed that such scientific questions (regarded in connection with Scripture) were questions within its own province. It did so; for, when a judge decides any point, he, *ipso facto*, decides that it is within his own province to judge concerning it. If a tribunal be invested with the attribute of infallibility, it surely may be expected to know the limits of its own power. Such a tribunal, then, if it oversteps its own boundary, and then expresses a mistaken judgment, shows itself to be trebly wrong and doubly mistaken:

(1) It is wrong, in the first place, in that it expresses an absolute, yet mistaken, judgment, without taking the means needful to make its judgment perfectly secure and infallible. Non-Catholics may well ask, if the pope had only to occupy a certain chair in order to decide infallibly about the Galileo question, why he did not get into that chair?

(2) Secondly, the tribunal errs because, by deciding the question, it affirms that it has the power to decide securely about such a matter, while its impotent blunder demonstrated that it affirmed what it had no power to affirm, and decided without authority so to do.

(3) It is erroneous, thirdly, if it decides that to be true in fact which is really not so—as was the case with the tribunals which had to do with Galileo; but, whatever allowance may be made for theologians who were the contemporaries of Galileo, none surely can be made for those of our own day, who,

with the blunders of successive popes, and of the congregations of the Index and the Inquisition, before their eyes, yet dare to censure theories of physical science, such as those of evolution and the natural development of man from the lower animals.¹ If interrogated by some foolish persons, and so almost compelled to say something, what such ecclesiastical authorities ought to say should be something to this effect:

¹ It has now been long supposed, by educated Catholics interested in such subjects, that ecclesiastical authorities had ceased all opposition to the view of modern biological science, and this the more since they had been tolerated, and more, by Pius IX. It seems, however, that these authorities are like the Bourbons in their inability to profit by experience. In that well-known organ of the Roman Jesuits, the "Civiltà Cattolica," of January 7th, 1899, Series xvii., Vol. v., No. 1165, p. 34, there appeared an article entitled "Evoluzione a domma," which was an attack on Professor Zahm's well-known work, "Evolution and Dogma" (which has been translated into Italian), upholding evolution and the natural origin of the human body.

This work has been censured in a Jeremiad, emitted by the Bishop of Cremona, on October 22nd, 1898. But the writer in the "Civiltà" records facts which do not seem to have been generally known concerning the French Dominican, Père Leroy.

That religious Catholic professor had published at Paris, in 1891, a work entitled "L'Evolution Restreinte aux Espèces Organiques" (with the consent of the authorities of his order, and the cordial support of that other charming Catholic professor, M. A. de Lapparent), in which he had supported evolution, including that of man's body.

The "Civiltà" tells us that, in February, 1895, Father Leroy was summoned to Rome *ad audiendum verbum* (i.e., to hear a bit of the pope's mind), and there forced to retract what he had said regardless whether he was thus induced to solemnly tell a lie (like Galileo) or no. The members of *Curia* have no "bowels of compassion" or consideration for conscience or truth, otherwise they would be content with submission without insisting on recantation, regardless of the real belief of the man forced to recant. As persecutors of old would force men to burn incense to the genius of the emperors, regardless of all ethical considerations, so these congregations disregard them likewise, abundantly content if they can force those subject to them to prostitute their souls at their dictation.

This fact as to Father Leroy was denied in the "Weekly Register"; therefore I had recourse to the most certain authority possible, and ascertained

“ We are not biologists, and cannot judge about such matters, concerning which we may fall (as history shows us) into

that the iniquity gloated over by the “ *Civiltà Cattolica* ” actually took place. It was insisted on at Rome that he should publicly disavow his convictions under a threat that his work should otherwise be placed on the “ *Index*.” He recanted, but only to find later that afterwards his work was put on the “ *Index* ” all the same. It was wrongly so put, however, since it attributed to him an opinion not his, and not to be found in his work. In his retraction he said : “ I now learn that my thesis, after examination at Rome ‘ by competent authority,’ has been judged untenable, especially in what relates to the body of man, being incompatible with the text of Holy Scripture, as well as with the principles of sound philosophy.

“ A docile child of the church . . . I disavow, retract, and reprobate all that I have said, written, and published in favor of that theory.”

“ *E pur se muove* ” was not said by Leroy any more than it was by Galileo, but it was doubtless thought, for I know that he keeps silence, in spite of trying attacks, and painful as he feels it to be, only on account of the orders which his superiors, in the interest of peace, impose on him. More than two years later he wrote to a friend to say he regretted what had taken place less on his own account than on account of the interests of religion. Evolution, he said, may be attacked by scientific arguments, but that it should be prescribed in the names of theology and Scripture is inconceivable.

As to poor Father Zahm, he also has been forced to “ cave in,” and on the 31st of last May he accordingly wrote to the translator of his work the following letter :

NOTRE DAME, INDIANA, U. S. A.

My Dear Alfonso,—I have learned, from unquestionable authority, that the Holy See is adverse to the further distribution of “ *Evolution and Dogma*,” and I therefore beg you to use all your influence to have the work withdrawn from sale. . . .

Very sincerely yours,

J. A. ZAHM.

To M. Alfonso M. Galea.

To this is appended a declaration, in Italian, from the translator, as follows:

I, likewise, in my turn, join the illustrious Dr. J. A. Zahm, as translator of his “ *Evolution and Dogma*,” in begging my sincere friends neither to read nor to give ulterior publicity to my poor version of his above-named work, in homage and obedience to the desires of the Holy See, ever ready freely to acknowledge my error, should such be required of me.

ALF. M. GALEA.

Bétharram Siena, May 31st, 1899.

Thus ends (so far) this curious and modern repetition of the absurdity of the Galileo case. Father Zahm, like Archbishops Keen and Ireland, has had

great, painfully misleading, and very absurd errors. Of course, such theories contradict what we read in Scripture; but in our day so many things which we there read have been shown to be erroneous that we can no longer venture, at the most, to do more than put forward a tentative opinion for what it may be worth, and patiently await the progress of science to enable us to arrive at a trustworthy decision on such subjects.'"

Such an answer would be at once modest and reasonable; the office of ecclesiastical authority is by no means to condemn views till their truth has been demonstrated,—surely a most immoral proceeding,—but to abstain from emitting any judgment meanwhile. It might, if it so pleased, put, as it were, the stamp of authority on what has once been so demonstrated, though this would be objectionable in so far as it might seem to imply that such ecclesiastical persons had some power or right to emit a judgment about such matters.

It is surprising to find that another recent Catholic Apologist, Mr. W. S. Lilly, has committed himself¹ to the view

to feel the effects of Roman Curialism. That they have been made so to feel it is most absurd, for, though Catholic Americans love justice and freedom in a way Curialists do not approve of, yet, as regards belief, they have the simple faith of children. Poor Father Hecker (who has been so traduced by the Abbé Maignan) I knew well, both in England and also at Rome, where he had to undergo much vexation. He also had a faith which seemed, to me, in some respects, extravagant. I had a great regard for him, but I esteemed his noble and generous heart more than I did his intellect. Curious is the wonderful ignorance of Rome with regard both to England and America. Nor have the efforts of Cardinal Satolli done much to dissipate it. He is quoted by the "Civiltà" (p. 41, note 3) as an opponent of evolution in the name, not only of metaphysics, but of the natural sciences. If my information is correct, the natural science to which Cardinal Satolli is most devoted is mineralogy, and especially metallurgy, he having acquired in the United States a very large collection of specimens in the form of dollars.

¹ See his "Ancient Religion and Modern Thought," p. 279.

that authority should go on teaching old traditional views till their falsehood is demonstrated, and then modify such traditional views accordingly. This is the more surprising since the same pious Catholic layman—and secretary of the Catholic Union—has elsewhere expressed himself very differently on this subject. He has said: ¹

The greatest peril of the present day lies in this: that those who profess to be teachers of religion and defenders of the faith so seldom endeavor honestly to follow out the lines of thought familiar to earnest and cultivated men of the world. . . . Who can measure their responsibility, whose incredible traditions and discredited apologetics estrange men of intellect from Christianity?

What, in my opinion, is the great peril which Catholicity now runs is occasioned by the deep and appalling disregard for, if not sometimes positive aversion to, scientific truth which is exhibited by Catholic advocates, and, high above all, by the Roman Curia, whereof some of the most recent manifestations would seem to imply that, if only power can thereby be retained, any amount of deception and of terrorism over weak, credulous minds and tenderly scrupulous consciences is abundantly justified.

I will now pass to a brief consideration of certain positions recently taken up by yet another Catholic Apologist, a very distinguished priest, with respect to Scripture interpretation,—namely, the Rev. Robert Francis Clarke, D.D., F.L.S. In 1894 he defended the papal encyclical about the Bible, *Providentissimus Deus*, against the attack made on it by Canon Gore, and has since written, at intervals, on Scripture in the "Tablet," up to and including last year.

In these writings (for which he was made a doctor of

¹ See the "Forum," Vol. ii., p. 327.

divinity by Rome) he declared that, apart from mistakes of transcription, mistranslation, and possible mistakes in documents quoted, nothing could be justly termed "an error" which did not conflict with the divine purpose and intention in inspiring the writers of Scripture.

For this distinction "A Student," in a letter to the "Tablet,"¹ wrote to thank Dr. Clarke also for having "clearly shown us how many statements found in Holy Scripture may be untrue without being 'erroneous.'"² He then added: "But I should be deeply grateful to him if he would answer one further question. I would ask how, amidst many statements not accordant with fact, we may arrive at certainty as to what are altogether trustworthy?" "It is plain that the ordinary teaching of the church does not suffice for this, . . . He is, however, probably aware of some satisfactory tests . . . which may enable us to discriminate between statements altogether true, and those grouped by him in various categories as not possessing that important characteristic."

To this Dr. Clarke replied:³

The expression "A Student" makes use of is most objectionable and misleading. All statements whatever . . . which are propounded . . . by any canonical writer . . . are altogether true, if only they are taken in the way and sense intended by him.

As to the criterion desiderated by "A Student," he says:

The *contextus*, I reply, is the *criterion*. But what is concluded under this *contextus*? I again reply, everything relevant.

And, as example of such relevant things, he includes :

¹ On December, 25th, 1897.

² In the "Tablet" for January 1st, 1898.

Investigation of the date, place, environment of the sacred author, of the style, manner, in a word, the literary methods, of the author himself, and (if it be relevant) of the context in the present English meaning of the word context.

But Dr. Clarke's just quoted assertion, that a man's statements are true "*if only they are taken in the way and sense intended by him,*" would seem to me to involve very grave consequences.

Surely, only those statements are "true" (as I have before pointed out) which correspond with "objective fact"—quite apart from harmony with the intention of him who makes them. Were this not so, a lie told by a thief with the intention of deceiving a man he wanted to rob might, in such a sense, be termed "a truth."

One or two examples will, I think, suffice to test the validity of Dr. Clarke's position.

As to the account of the Tower of Babel, whatever might have been the intention of the writer, whatever ancient documents he may have copied, or however his contemporaries may have understood him, such considerations have nothing to do with the question: "Did it or did it not agree with objective fact?" I should much like to know whether the Rev. Dr. Clarke himself believes that the diversities of tongues really arose as there represented. If he does, he differs from the overwhelming majority of competent philologists; the same question may be asked him as to the narrative of the Deluge. But if, for whatever reason, the term "erroneous" is not to be applied to such narratives, no honest man of education can venture to deny that they disaccord with objective reality, and are therefore "untrue." Of course, it would be quite otherwise for any survivor of those who once held that every phrase in the Bible is as true as if it had been miraculously written by a divine act without the interven-

tion of any human agent. But it is a very different matter if we are told, as Dr. Clarke tells us, that we cannot know how many statements are mere copies from more ancient documents, not written by inspired penmen, or fancy speeches like those found in Thucydides, etc. Surely, in that way, doubt and uncertainty are thrown over the whole Bible.

It is to be regretted that the Rev. Dr. Clarke is not somewhat clearer in his statements. He tells us that the "*contextus* is the criterion," and that "this *contextus*" is "whatever is connected with, bears on, or is relevant to" any Scriptural passage we may be considering. But which of us could even hope to know all that is relative to any given text?

Dr. Clarke has been criticised in a very remarkable way in a letter to the "*Tablet*," signed "J. Herbert Williams," which says:

Whatever sanctity, truth, and inspiration attaches to the writings of the New Testament attaches to them *mediately*, because they are estimated to be on the same footing as the writings of the Old Testament. The Old Testament gives the norm, the model, of what an inspired writing is, and, when the New Testament writings are pronounced to be inspired, it is meant that they are like and equal to, the others. . . . Hence, when Dr. Robert F. Clarke ("*Tablet*," December 11th) compares the speeches of the Old Testament, "a set *Oratio*, as that of Solomon at the dedication of the Temple, or a conversation and dialogue with its parts," to the speeches of Thucydides, and asserts that the sacred writer "filled in the parts by putting himself in the place of the speaker, and wrote in his person as a skilful secretary writes a letter," and tells us that this account, so far from being inconsistent with the inspiration of the Old Testament, is the only explanation which avoids inconsistency and heretical deprivation of doctrine, may we presume that the same account applies to the "speeches and dialogues" of the New Testament? And, as the lawyers say, "If not, why not?"

Is, then, the "Magnificat," or the prayer of our Lord in John xvii., a similar literary composition to the prayer of Solomon above mentioned, and the discourse of Our Lord with the woman of Samaria, or that of the institution of the Eucharist, or any of the dialogues in the Gospels, similarly "filled in"? There is, surely, the same "absence of skilled shorthand writers" on the occasion of the visit to St. Elizabeth or on Mount Olivet, and there is not more, but less, reason to presume the existence of *documents* which the writers can quote and recite.

To all this Dr. Clarke makes but a very weak reply, "hedging" a little as to what he meant about Solomon (though Mr. Williams has quoted his very words), and contending that the "Magnificat" was translated into Greek with severe literalness, and remained untouched on the evidence of the frequent use of *kai* and the absence of *dè*.

He naturally admits that the different Evangelists vary slightly in their representation of events and discourses, and says:

To suppose that readers looked for *verbatim* reports when there were no shorthand writers is to suppose a manifest absurdity. The Evangelists and, above all, St. John give the gist in their own way, for which no shorthand writer was required.

Finally, he contends that the inspiration was the same in the New Testament as in the Old, "but the circumstances were almost entirely different."

The consequences, however, do not end here. What should we have to think, on Dr. Clarke's principles, of the trustworthiness of the conversation reported to have taken place between Our Lady and the Angel Gabriel?

It seems to me that, with the best intentions, this Apologist has let loose a perfect flood of scepticism, not only over the

Old Testament, but over the New Testament also. Such appear to be the inevitable consequences of abandoning a belief, once practically universal, in the miraculous inspiration and co-ordination of every word of the whole sacred text. Yet who, in the light of modern science, can possibly maintain that belief?

But, grave as the results may be of the position taken up by Dr. Clarke as regards Scripture, they seem to me infinitely less so than those which would ensue did he succeed in his attempted abolition of the recognized meaning of the words "true" and "truth."

If truth does not mean conformity between thought and reality, then we can know nothing to be true, and float helplessly and hopelessly in a shoreless ocean of uncertainty. In that ocean of doubt, not only all knowledge of history, but all kinds of scientific truths, theological included, are absolutely overwhelmed, and all logical support washed away from beneath the foundations of religion itself.

I now come to the consideration of the last Catholic Apologist it is my intention here to notice. I refer to the anonymous author who, under the assumed name, "Romanus," wrote, in the December number of the "Contemporary Review" for the year 1897, an article entitled "Liberal Catholicism." There are some persons who do not regard him as a Catholic Apologist at all. A very learned and justly esteemed Friar, the Most Reverend Father David, O.F.M.,—now an Inquisitor at Rome, and a Papal theologian,—has taken this view. In two lectures addressed to the Catholic Truth Society, he has vehemently attacked "Romanus." Now, Father David is the last person to be voluntarily unjust, for he is one of the most conscientious, as he is one of the most intellectual, of men. He can also be most considerate

and kind, as I well know, his kindness to me having been such that I feel I cannot be grateful enough to him for it. Yet it would not be very wonderful if he were sometimes unconsciously unjust. This is because he is possessed by an extreme fear of doing, or letting be done, any harm to the cause of religion—a fear which has sometimes restrained him from giving utterance to views which he nevertheless entertained. His zeal for the church is so great that I do not think he would allow any human feeling to interfere with the performance of the sternest part of what he might think his duty, as an official of the Holy Office. I can, then, well understand his opposition and hostility to “Romanus,” but I venture to entertain a more charitable opinion concerning the latter. He certainly speaks with very high appreciation of Catholicity, and I see no reason to doubt his sincerity because he deals hard blows at various ecclesiastical authorities, and may be troubled with doubts as to certain doctrines.

Father David has been a Catholic from his earliest childhood, and has never known what it is to entertain a doubt about his religion. But “Romanus” may be a convert—as Simpson, Capes, and so many other contributors to the “Rambler,” etc., were. Now, a convert, unlike Father David, is a person who has been compelled to abandon a system of belief which he once held, owing to new facts that have come to his knowledge. Is it to be wondered at that such a man, when yet other novel facts may have become known to him, should sometimes say to himself: How does my creed appear now, with this new light upon it? As I have said long ago:¹

Every man of science worthy of the name must not only refuse to give such assent, but must declare that he holds even.

¹ See the “Nineteenth Century,” for July, 1887, p. 35.

things he considers proved, only in such a way as to be ready to examine and weigh whatever seemingly important evidence may be freshly brought to light against them.

Nevertheless, I should be extremely disinclined to champion various ideas put forward by "Romanus," some of which I regard as untenable at the present time. To begin, I strongly object to the very title of his article. In my eyes there is no need to adopt any party name,—*e.g.*, such as "liberal." The title "Catholic" is amply sufficient for any sincere advocate and defender of Catholicity.

Such an Apologist, a defender of Catholicity, is a Theist *par excellence*, and therefore a necessary welcomer and upholder of all truth. I, therefore, cordially endorse the following words of "Romanus":

The God of truth can never be served by a lie, or the cause of religion promoted by clever dodges, studiously ambiguous utterances, hushing-up unpleasant truths, and misrepresenting and minimizing their significance.

Bearing in mind the case of Galileo and the renewed anti-scientific energy which characterizes the Roman Congregations to-day, I most strongly deprecate the opposition of "liberal Catholicism" to Catholicism of any other kind, and would propose to denote the system specially hostile to science and truth by the term "Curialism." The term suggested itself to my mind during a recent long illness, when reading Pastor's, Creighton's, and Ranke's "Popes."

I then learned how great and how frequent has been the opposition of the Roman "Curia," not only to science, but also to morality and religion. I regard, then, "Curialism" as being the great and persevering enemy of "Catholicity."

Concerning the comic incident about the "Index," criticised by "Romanus," it is a fact that the Holy See did dis-

pense us in England from the regulations of the new "Index," and, in truth, the old "Index" never did bind people in this country.

As to remarks of "Romanus" about the "three heavenly witnesses," I consider them to be well warranted. Father David has no personal need whatever to defend Rome's shocking decision on the question, since that decision was made before Father David arrived in Rome. Had he got there in time, it is probable such a scandal would never have taken place. With respect to the papal encyclical (*Providentissimus Deus*) on the Bible, I think that "Romanus" rather understates the objections to that shocking document. The distinction drawn by the Rev. Dr. Robert F. Clarke as to what is erroneous we have already considered, and we may here add that it seems in opposition to the very encyclical itself, which affirms that those who, in order to rid themselves of difficulties, do not hesitate to propose a system according to which they affirm that, in considering "the truth and falsehood of a passage, we should consider not so much what God had said, as the reason and purpose which He had in mind in saying it. This system cannot be tolerated." Herein the encyclical, in spite of all its faults, is very reasonable. For what man in his senses would venture to affirm that he knew the divine purposes sufficiently to make such knowledge a ready and serviceable test in Biblical criticism?

But, if this explanation of the existence of false statements in the Scriptures cannot be sustained, an answer to the question, "What is an error?" becomes only the more urgent. Bailey tells us that an "error" is a "mistake, oversight, or false opinion," and it appears to me to be unquestionable that any one who knowingly allows a false statement to be made in his name is a deceiver.

Now, if there are no "errors" (that word being taken in some unknown sense) in the Bible, there are in it, as everybody knows, a *multitude* of statements which are scientifically (including history as one branch of science) false. The Bible says the world was made in six days, but it was not so made. It tells us that Eve was formed from a rib of Adam, but, if such person ever existed, she never was so formed.¹ It gives two accounts of the Deluge, neither of which is true, etc., etc. It is needless to refer to other passages, because all educated Catholics know how numerous are the false statements the Bible contains. Who can accept as "true" such recitals as those about Moses's wife and God's manifestation to Moses (Exodus iv., 24-26; and xxxiii., 18-23)? Many statements like these just referred to have long deluded and misled the world, as they delude and mislead the uneducated now.

It is plain that our higher ecclesiastical rulers were themselves misled, and it seems pretty certain they are more or less misled still, to the great detriment of their authority, to the bewilderment of plain Christian men, and the undermining of religion. For it is most shocking that such errors should be taught to children and preached to adults as if they were truths.

Of course, Leo XIII., if he spoke at all on the subject of Scriptural truth, could not have spoken much otherwise than he did, being bound hand and foot by the declarations of the Councils of the Vatican and of Trent. But why need such utterances have been put forth at all? Why could not the

¹ As to this, Cardinal Cajetan, in his great commentary on Holy Scripture, teaches that the account of the creation of Eve is not historical, and does not hesitate to call a belief in it by no less strong term than *absurd*. His work is in the library of the British Museum, and will be found in its catalogue under the title "Vio (Thomas de, Cardinal; Old Testament, Pentateuch *Commentarii*," . . . in *quinque Mosaicos libros*) 1539, Folio, Press Mark 100 8, e, 12 (1).

matter have been left to subside and die out, as that once universally received doctrine, the speedy end of the world, has been allowed to subside and die out? Many pious souls are keenly alive to Scriptural difficulties, and painfully anxious as to what they are to think about the many false statements to be found in the inspired writings. Such "little children" look to their spiritual "fathers" to be fed with the "bread" of wholesome doctrine to sustain their spiritual life, and they have doled out to them, instead, "stones," in the shape of hard words used in a sense which, if any one understands, no one explains rationally, or, I believe, can so explain—whether Dr. Robert F. Clarke or Father David, B.S.F.—in any reasonable sense.

In spite of a certain aggressiveness of tone, a somewhat provoking way of writing, various faults of style, and sundry untenable exaggerations, I am certainly inclined to include "Romanus" as, on the whole, an effective Catholic Apologist. The language of every Apologist must be regulated by what he regards as the greatest needs of his own day, and what he anticipates as probable developments of doctrine in the near, or remote future. "Romanus" specially appeals to "the church of ages yet to come," and any one who so appeals may surely count on the disfavor of those whose yearnings are rather for the past.

Every Apologist who proposes to advocate the cause of Catholicity is bound, above all things, to be frank and truthful. He must declare what he deems the truth, no matter what prejudices he ruffles, or what cherished and widespread delusions he may dispel. He is bound to try and give men higher and higher notions of the divine, and promote an unhesitating trust in that noblest gift bestowed on man—the human intellect. Every educated man who would feel it a

great trial to be forced from his conformity with Catholicity may surely take comfort when he considers the progress which, thanks to science, has taken place, and be grateful to the men who, age after age, have striven to facilitate progress. It would doubtless amaze and appal men of narrow views if they could now see what that progress will one day be. In the words¹ of the Rev. Dr. Hogan, we should not "look upon this evolution of Christian doctrine . . . as having reached its term." "Many facts and views commonly admitted at the present day may have to be given up at some later period," while quite others may, centuries hence, assume the form of unquestioned truths. The changes as to religious belief which have already become popular amongst Catholics are enormous, and much greater than these will surely occur in the near future. Altogether, so far it appears to me that our best motto with respect to conformity is: "Rest and be thankful."

ST. GEORGE MIVART.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 114.

THE CONTINUITY OF CATHOLICISM.¹

In a recent number of this review² I discussed, from a somewhat novel point of view, the much-debated question of "Continuity," in relation to that body of men and women denoted by the abstract term "the Anglican Church." After noticing their main religious relations to each other and to their environment from about 1530 to 1600, I ventured to declare that, in my judgment, such sudden and considerable changes had simultaneously taken place in those relations, with respect to worship, doctrine, and ecclesiastical government, that a true breach of continuity had thereby been effected.

Strange to say, a minor breach in the continuity of the Anglican body has actually been brought about by the very party which is so zealous in denying that any "breach" of continuity has ever taken place. It has arisen thus: From the "spacious" days of Queen Elizabeth to the happy accession of Queen Victoria the Anglican community underwent many changes, but it had ever remained consistently and strongly national. Tractarianism, however, introduced an altogether new spirit,—one no longer "national," but "Catholic,"—and also initiated a movement tending to reverse the Reformation settlement and restore the antecedent order of things. That movement was no sooner set going than it began to advance with irresistible vigor, and will (I believe) continue to advance, save in so far as it may be successfully combated by the efforts of those who are altogether hostile to Christianity.

¹ Originally printed in the "Nineteenth Century." 1900

² August, 1899.

It would be very rash to predict how the different schools of thought in England will stand to each other a hundred years hence. One thing, however, is happily certain : science will be advancing, and bringing with it a multitude of benefits to mankind.

Still, though theological prediction is very difficult, the anti-Reformation movement has no logical issue—as it seems to me—save in submission to the pope, who will doubtless make large concessions to obtain it. Such an issue would probably bring with it some curious results. Should there ever come to be in England—amongst other possibilities—an “ old papal ” and a “ Neo-Catholic ” body, both in full communion with Rome, we may wonder what will be the relations between their respective heads—between a cardinal at Westminster with his quasi-Byzantine cathedral, Roman rite, and celibate clergy, and another at Canterbury with an amplified English mass and a body of canons for the most part married.

My present object, however, is not to refer further to the Anglican communion, but to depict, as faithfully as I can, some circumstances relating to that of Rome. At the end of my former article¹ I said that some students might ask:

“ How about the Roman Communion ? ” It is all very well to criticise Anglicans and their religious ideas and practices, but is there any really true continuity amongst Roman Catholics ?

I will now endeavor to answer this question. It is a notorious fact that many modifications as to worship and ecclesiastical organization, and many developments of doctrine, have taken place, in the Roman church, between the end of the third and of the nineteenth centuries. It is, however, a fact

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 211.

equally notorious that no such sudden and considerable changes have simultaneously occurred within it as would constitute "a breach of continuity."

I have not sufficient knowledge to warrant my making assertions with respect to the first three centuries. But that at the end of the third the Catholic community was already fully organized is a fact admitted by all our best historians.

Taking for granted, then, that no breach of continuity has been occasioned by abrupt changes in ritual, dogma, and government, there yet remains another important matter which has to be considered. For there have been amongst Catholics very great modifications as to belief which have never been embodied in formal dogmatic decrees, and it is possible that some persons may consider that great changes of the kind do amount to a breach of continuity.

Such modifications have sometimes been very little noted, and in my former paper I observed that they might be far too little appreciated. I said:

While external matters attract general attention, little notice is taken of those wide and deep doctrinal developments which alone make conformity possible for men imbued with modern science, physical, critical, historical, and ethical. But such changes are taking place continually, and spreading in all directions amongst the educated, and this for the most part silently.

It is accordingly needful that some of these most remarkable modifications of belief which have come to exist amongst earnest practical Catholics should be passed in review. It will then be for my readers to say whether or not I am mistaken in upholding the "Continuity of Catholicism."

It may, however, be premised that, just as every man with a healthy and active mind must change his views as his knowl-

edge increases, so every well-constituted community must likewise modify its opinions. Of a community, as of a man, an animal or a plant, it may alike be said : “ To cease to change is to cease to live.” Of a man it may also be said that not to modify his convictions is to cease to live the highest kind of life,—that of the intellect,—while the life of one who learns more and more as his years increase should be a life of almost unceasing change.

But the changes in belief to which I have here to refer are extremely different in character. Some are changes which have come over the entire mass of Catholics, so that no one holds to-day what was once universally believed. Other changes are such as have taken place only amongst the educated, though amongst such they have become general and widespread. Others, again, are modifications of belief which as yet have occurred but amongst comparatively few sincere and earnest Catholics; whilst some others are extremely exceptional, yet should not remain unnoticed on account of the love for Catholicism felt by those who hold them. Most of these changes are matters of public notoriety and are widely known, however little noted and considered; but others which have come to my knowledge are, so far as I am aware, known but to very few.

All these changes are, however, to our purpose, because it is obviously my duty to bring forward all the most striking modifications I can, in order that the question may be tested in the most decisive manner. They are also to our purpose because the creed of the educated of to-day will become the belief of the many on the morrow. The same may also be said as to the opinions of those we may distinguish as the *élite* amongst the educated; whilst the fact that persons who are exceptionally learned and no less exceptionally devout have

undergone any noteworthy change of belief at least shows that such change is possible, and that it may spread further, and even one day become general.

Of course no organized society which has adopted such principles and rules as those which regulate the Catholic body can revoke any solemn declarations it has once made, or reverse any of the laws it may have authoritatively laid down.

Dogmas cannot be explicitly called in question, though sometimes they may be so explained (as we shall shortly see) that they thereby become (practically) explained away or even reversed. Sometimes, also, so changed a signification may be imparted to a word as to strangely modify the meaning of a doctrine wherein such word plays an important part.

Before considering the modifications in belief I am about to enumerate, I desire, first, to state clearly that I am by no means to be supposed to myself adopt all the novel views to which I may call attention.

Secondly, as I am no theologian, I cannot undertake the responsibility of defining what beliefs are, and what are not, *de fide*. To attempt to do that would, in the words of a learned divine,¹ only "give rise to endless discussions." It is enough for me that a belief has been generally entertained, in order that I should include it within the scope of this article ; for, as it seems to me, whatever has been so accepted, authority must have practically sanctioned, taught, or tolerated, at some time or other.

I need hardly add that I have no commission whatever from any authority to treat this subject, and, of course, have not the slightest claim to be regarded as a representative of any

¹ The Very Reverend Dr. Hogan. See his "Clerical Studies" (Boston, Massachusetts, 1898), p. 121.

portion of the Catholic body. I write merely as one highly interested in all that concerns Catholicity, who has had certain advantages and opportunities for observation, which those who are external to Catholicism cannot possess.

I will begin my catalogue of changes in belief with a consideration of the most universal and complete transformation of the kind which has taken place since the origin of Christianity. I refer to the one which science has produced with respect to what may be termed the "framework" and "setting" of our mental picture of all that concerns religion and human life.

When once effected, this transformation must have greatly facilitated all such subsequent changes of belief as science has tended to produce. I refer to that wonderful transformation in belief as to the nature and structure of the universe which has taken place since St. Thomas Aquinas wrote his "Summa contra Gentiles."

For a millennium and a half, all Christians had regarded the earth as the centre of the universe and the object of God's unique care. It was supposed to be surrounded by revolving crystal spheres bearing the sun, moon, and stars, while above them was heaven, with its angelic host; hell being within the earth, volcanoes so many of its gates, whence issued evil spirits to tempt and corrupt mankind, while angels readily descended from above, on errands of beneficence. It was also thought evident from revelation that all this fabric had been created in six days; that God had specially created and clothed the earth with distinct species of animals and plants, formed, as were also the sun, moon, and stars, for the service of man, whose faults caused the world to be drowned in a deluge in the past, as in the future it will be destroyed by fire.

To men who thus believed, it could not have been very diffi-

cult to accept the doctrine that, for the salvation of a race,—the only material objects of divine care and love,—God himself had descended from His celestial to His terrestrial sphere, and taken to Himself the nature of that being who had already been created in His image.

How great must have been the shock, to men brought up in this belief, to learn that their earth was but a floating speck of dust amidst a practical infinity of vast revolving spheres, many of which were possibly, if not probably, peopled by beings equal or superior in nature to man, and having, it might be, yet greater claims upon the good will of the Deity ! They could no longer behold the crystal floor of heaven, nor reasonably regard a volcano as a fountain of supernatural infernal fire. So vast a change of conception with respect to the cosmos could not fail to affect the domain of religious belief.

I will now pass on to consider one or two special doctrines with respect to which a complete change of belief has taken place.

The first of these shall be the assertion, "*Nulla salus extra ecclesiam*" ("Out of the church there is no salvation"). This dictum was long generally accepted in its most literal meaning, and not a few persons so accept it still. We all recollect the history of the Teutonic chieftain who was about to be baptized, but paused to ask what had been the fate in the next world of his pagan ancestors. When told there could be no doubt but that they were all damned, he refused the regenerating fluid, preferring to go where his ancestors had gone and abide with them. Now, however, it is admitted by the most rigid Roman theologians that men who do not even accept any form of Christianity, if only they are theists and lead good lives, may have an assured hope for the future, similar to that of a virtuous Christian believer.

This great change has been aided by the assertion that non-baptized persons, thus meritorious, belong not indeed to the "body" of the church, but to its "soul." Such an assertion is, however, a mere subterfuge. As we¹ pointed out in our former article, "the church," *qua* church, is an ideal abstraction. What an utter nonentity then must be "the soul" of this abstraction! There has indeed been a complete change of belief as to this matter, though many persons are most unwilling to admit the fact.

Another complete transformation is that which has taken place in the doctrine respecting the lawfulness of taking any interest for money. This was absolutely condemned by ecclesiastical authority under the name of "usury" at the Council of Vienna, presided over by Clement the Fifth. It was condemned again and again; according to Concina, by twenty-eight councils (seven of them being regarded as general councils) and by seventeen popes. The last formal decree of Rome on the subject is the celebrated encyclical of Benedict the Fourteenth. His definition is that usury is interest on a loan of money as a loan. The pope evidently regarded "usury" as intrinsically wrong—as a sin against justice and not merely against charity. The practice was so distinctly and emphatically condemned that no persons living in the middle ages could have had any apparently reasonable belief that such decisions would ever be explained away. Yet now, this has been done so completely that no pope, no Catholic priest or corporate ecclesiastical body, scruples to accept the best interest obtainable for any capital which may be at their disposal.

Ingenuous evasions, such as could never have been anticipated, have been devised, and thus it has come about that

¹ "Nineteenth Century," August, 1899, p. 204.

what was formerly declared by the highest ecclesiastical authority to be a great sin is now regarded as a perfectly innocent action, sometimes a meritorious one, and even, under certain circumstances, a course of conduct absolutely binding on conscience.

With the two above important transformations of opinion, there has gone along yet another, though it has advanced with a somewhat halting gait. I mean the change from fierce intolerance to benignant and sympathetic indulgence towards persons thought to be in religious error.

With the old view as to the necessity to salvation of actually being a member of the church's body, intolerance was natural—such intolerance, *e.g.*, as that of St. Louis, who told De Joinville that, when a layman heard Christianity evil spoken of, he should defend it “only with his sword, which he ought to run into the infidel's belly as far as it will go.”¹ The intolerance which existed in France down to the Revolution was great, and the Roman Inquisition, though now happily impotent to cause any physical suffering, maintains the same essential principles as those it acted on in the last century. We should soon be witnesses of notable intolerance, if the rabid Catholic party in Italy and France² could have their way.

Respect for the honest opinions of others is a sentiment which has become deeply rooted in the English mind, and certainly no less in that of our cousins across the Atlantic in the present day. It is an admirable kind of “Americanism”—an “Americanism” eminently “Catholic,” though pro-

¹ See “Saint Louis, King of France,” by the Sire de Joinville, translated by James Hutton (Sampson Low, Son & Marston, 1868), pp. 9, 10.

² I mean the party represented by the “Civiltà Cattolica,” the late Louis Veuillot, and the Canon Delassus and Abbé Maignen of the present day, and their allies—notably some pious anti-Dreyfusards.

foundly displeasing to "Curialism." It displayed itself most conspicuously in the holding of that ever-memorable Chicago "Parliament of Religions." Striking indeed is the contrast between Cardinal Gibbons opening with prayer the proceedings of that peaceful and admirable assembly, and Torquemada presiding at an *auto da fé*.

A few years ago I was talking with a friend—one of the most devout and earnest Catholics I know—about a certain priest who had then recently given pain to many by abandoning Christianity. My friend said to me:

How changed are the ideas of us Catholics from what they were centuries ago! There is not one of us who would wish him to be burned.

The remark was most true. Certainly no Catholic known to me would refuse to exert his utmost efforts to save that priest from so horrible a punishment.

If such changes as this one, together with those about "salvation," "usury," and "witchcraft" (which latter I will notice later on), had taken place suddenly, it would almost suffice to prove that a breach of continuity had taken place amongst Catholics. In fact, however, they were all gradually brought about and without any authoritative action.

There are other matters as to which many Catholics now entertain different views as to right and wrong from those entertained by their forefathers.

One of these relates to the promotion of gambling by State lotteries, which were held with the pope's sanction, while a cardinal would preside over the drawing of the lots. This form of gambling is now reprobated by many Catholics.

Many Catholics also have come to recognize the ethical truth, which only seems to have been clearly apprehended of late—the truth, namely, that we are morally bound not to

inflict needless pain on animals, and still more bound not to cause pain for the mere pleasure of producing it.

A third ethical intuition, which, so far as I know, has only acquired distinct and widespread appreciation in modern times, is that of our moral responsibility not to prostitute the noble faculty of reason by giving assent to propositions which are not supported by adequate evidence. This is the transgression graphically though improperly stigmatized by Professor Huxley as "the sin of faith," but which should be termed "the sin of credulity"—a grave fault, still far too common.

Pious people have sometimes seemed as though they thought they could hardly believe too much, and felt that to be overcredulous was safer than to entertain an "honest doubt." Now, however, the duty of caution in credence is continually becoming more widely recognized, and we may hope that ere long it will be generally regarded as an imperative duty.

Another most important change which is taking place amongst Catholics is the change which consists in regarding as specially to be valued, not that which is most ancient, but that which is most recent. This new belief may be shortly expressed by the maxim, "Opinions which are newest are generally truest." The circumstance that any belief is a specially old one makes its truth at once an object of suspicion. It was Cardinal Newman who initiated and mainly promoted, in England, this change of view, through his great work on "The Development of Christian Doctrine," and his demonstration of the superiority of the Fathers who wrote after the Council of Nice compared with the Ante-Nicene writers. It is interesting to note that an American ecclesiastic is most outspoken on this subject. The Very Reverend Dr. Hogan says :¹

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 176.

The Fathers have come to be better understood in this age than in any other ; the closer and more critical study to which they have been subjected during the last two centuries has long since put an end to the indiscriminate trust given them in older times. They still remain the unhesitating, unquestioned witnesses of the church's faith in many particulars ; but in how many more do they simply give expression to their personal views, or follow the prevailing notions of their time, or work out conclusions from Scripture by canons of interpretation which nobody thinks of following to-day ?

It is so indeed ! What could be more absurd, with respect to any question of modern science, than to seek for enlightenment in works written ages before such questions were even thought of ? For example, what light can we expect to gain as to the problems of man's origin ; his relative nature ; the thousands of years he has existed ; his single or multiple origin ; the production of new species of animals and plants ; the authorship and date of the books of the Old and New Testaments ; the meaning of various obscure passages therein to be found ; or the exact nature of the doctrines and organization of primitive Christianity ; by addressing ourselves, not to learned experts who have severally made one or other of these questions their lifelong study, but to the teaching of ecclesiastics who may not really have studied them at all, but formed conclusions on *a priori* grounds ; such as the words of Scripture, the unanimous consent of the Fathers, or the ordinary teaching of generations of ecclesiastics, who knew still less about the subjects concerning which they presume to express a judgment than themselves. Such conduct is practically and in principle the blunder of Galileo's condemnation over again.

No ! Instead of proclaiming that to be true which has been believed "*semper, ubique, et ab omnibus,*" we may confi-

dently affirm that whatever has been so believed is most probably false.

I will now pass on to consider a change of belief that is very wonderful because its effects are so prodigiously different from those which they might have been expected to produce. It concerns a belief upon which the whole of Christianity was supposed, and is often declared, absolutely to rest. Nevertheless it has vanished ; while the Catholic community, instead of being any the worse, seems to have gained vigor through a struggle wherein it has felt the vivifying touch of mother earth.

I refer to the belief entertained by Catholics with respect to Scripture. The old view of the Bible regarded it as an entirely supernatural work, every word of which had been directly inspired by God Himself, and such is still the official belief enjoined on Catholics. It was early an obligation so to believe, but the Council of Trent imposed it on Catholics yet more distinctly, and that of the Vatican more distinctly still. Quite recently the pope, in his encyclical (*Providentissimus Deus*), declared the books of the Old and New Testaments, with all their parts, to be sacred and canonical because, having been written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author and therefore can contain no error. In so proclaiming, the pope only follows Roman tradition, for, as the Very Reverend Dr. Hogan says: ¹

Two hundred years ago the books of the Old and New Testament were held in universal veneration. No doubt was entertained of their authenticity. Moses was the unquestioned author of the Pentateuch; Solomon, of Proverbs; Isaiah, Daniel, and the other prophets, of all that bore their names; the evangelists and apostles, of the writings of the New Testa-

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 468.

ment respectively assigned to them. But their principal author was the Holy Ghost, for they were all inspired, and inspired in all their parts. This is what made them invaluable to Christians, their divine origin warranting their perfect inerrancy. If once we admit error in the Scriptures, said St. Jerome, "what further authority can they possess?" "The whole structure of the faith totters," added St. Augustine, "once the authority of Scripture is shaken." ("De Doctrina Christiana," cap. xxxviii.)

Four hundred years ago the authority of Scripture was deemed absolute as regards all kinds of knowledge,—physical no less than religious,—and even in the last century any questioning of the literal sense of the first chapter of Genesis was resented as irreligious. Dom Calmet refers indignantly to those who were disposed to admit more than an interval of twenty-four hours between the great creative act and the production of light. The memorable condemnation of Galileo in the seventeenth century never will be, and never should be, forgotten.

Now, in spite of an apparent official maintenance of such old views in the present day, they seem to be entirely abandoned by almost all educated Catholics. The pope's declaration that the Bible can "contain no errors" is but a matter of formal parade, only saved from falsehood by a more ingenious than honest distinction between "errors" and "untruths," whereby theologians are able to declare that statements "utterly untrue" are entirely "free from error." Even a theologian at Rome, formally serving the pope as such, would not venture to deny that hundreds of statements which are not "true" are to be found in the Old and New Testaments.

Thus, as I have said, educated Catholics no longer feel bound to regard the Bible in the old light. Comparatively

few persons now believe that the account in Genesis of the creation of the world, or of Adam and of Eve, is, in any sense, historical and true; or that the account of the Fall is such; or that diversities of language were due to God's fear lest men should build a tower to reach heaven; or that Joshua, or Isaiah, in any way interfered with the regularity of the earth's rotation on its axis.

Lest any readers should think these statements rash or exaggerated, I will quote, in confirmation of what I have said, the words of an ecclesiastic, who is president of an important Catholic seminary.

Dr. Hogan very candidly admits¹ that "work has been done on the Bible in recent times with results which are no longer seriously questioned. Theologians have to acknowledge, however reluctantly, that henceforth much less can be built on the Bible than has been done in the past." Again he tells us:²

Each decade is marked by notable concessions, and it is remarkable that our Biblical students, while professing the most entire submission to the teachings of Leo the Thirteenth, have never been bolder in their speculation and in the handling of what had hitherto been looked upon in the Bible as literal history, than since the encyclical was issued. . . . The plagues of Egypt are cut down to the size of ordinary events . . . the miracle of Joshua to a poetic description of a natural phenomenon, etc. In a word, what assumes a historical form in the Bible is admitted in one case as a true record of facts; in another as a conventional or fanciful representation of what happened; in another, again, as a fiction . . . destined to embody and convey some salutary truth. . . . The date and authorship of the books of the Old and New Testament they look upon as open to free discussion and bound to stand on their own merits.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 481.

² See pp. 476 and 477.

Wonderful indeed is the change which has come over the Catholic body as regards their belief about Scripture. It is of course still regarded as "inspired," but the meaning given to that term is rapidly changing. Who indeed that recognizes the immanence and universality of the divine activity can fail to regard that as the real author of all that is best and noblest in the thoughts, deeds, and words—spoken or written—of mankind? Can we venture to deny that Homer and Plato, Æschylus and Aristotle, Virgil and Tacitus, Dante and Shakespeare, were in various degrees inspired? As the Very Reverend Dr. Hogan says: ¹

The inspiration of Scripture is a dogma of faith; but it would seem as if we were further than ever from agreeing as to what is implied thereby.

But it is not only the general change which has taken place as to the mode in which educated Catholics have come to regard Scripture generally that is noteworthy; what is yet more remarkable is the change which has occurred respecting the interpretation of certain passages formerly deemed prophetic. The result shows that St. Jerome and St. Augustine were mistaken ² in their anticipations as to the fatal effects which must follow any such change of view as to Scripture.

I have no space to refer to more than one example—namely, that with respect to the meaning of the passage in Isaiah vii. 14-16:

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 167.

² See their words quoted above.

This used to be regarded as a prediction of the miraculous conception of Our Lord by a virgin, and it is actually referred to as such by St. Matthew i. 20-22 :

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, etc.

Yet there is probably no well-informed Catholic now who would deny that what Isaiah said was intended to calm the dread which Ahaz (king of Judah) felt with respect to Pekah (king of Israel) and Rezin (king of Syria) by assuring him that, before a young woman's¹ newly-born child should be old enough to know right from wrong, the two kings so dreaded should have disappeared. No one would now fail to see the absurdity of supposing that King Ahaz could be comforted by being told of an abnormal birth to take place five hundred years after his death.

Not less important than the transformation which has taken place in the belief of Catholics about Holy Scripture is that which has occurred with respect to the right and power of ecclesiastical authority to interpret it.

Four hundred years ago that right was universally allowed, and conceded by the laity, and the accuracy of such official interpretations was unquestioned. But in the seventeenth century, thanks to the confessorship of that venerable servant of God, Galileo, the futility of such a claim was once for all demonstrated.

The pope and the congregation of cardinals belonging to the Holy Office, when they condemned that illustrious astronomer and physicist, erred, not only about physical science, but also about the meaning of Scripture, and they grounded their

¹ The word which has been translated "virgin" really means "a young woman," and not necessarily a maiden.

first error on one much more important,—namely, on their pronouncement as to what the words of Holy Writ signified.¹

After such an humiliating and disastrous failure, it became obviously impossible for ecclesiastical authority to claim with success a hearing as to any matter of science. “*Falsus in uno falsus in omnibus*”! Catholics, to be logical, must say to any Roman congregation which should attempt to lay down the law about any branch of science:

“ You have blundered once, and we can never trust you again in any scientific matter; whether it be astronomy, biology, political economy, history, biblical criticism, or ecclesiology. You may be right in your dicta, but also you may be wrong. The only authority in science is the authority of those who have studied the matter and are ‘men who know.’ As to all that comes within the reach of inductive research, you must humbly accept the teaching of science, and nothing but science. And for this you should be grateful.”

Yet, in spite of its absurdity, the Roman Curia has again ventured to show its now broken teeth, and stretch out its now blunted claws against worthy ecclesiastics, and that as regards a biological question,—namely, the origin of man!

Poor Father Leroy, the Dominican, was summoned to Rome, and forced, willy-nilly, to recant and condemn what he had taught; and Father Zahm, the author of an edifying work, “*Evolution and Dogma*,” has been induced, by a promise quickly broken, to recall it from circulation. The “doctrine of evolution” was indeed very near being authoritatively condemned by the Curialists, but, much as they wished, they did not dare to condemn it.

One hardly knows whether to be more diverted by the impu-

¹ See my article “Modern Catholics and Scientific Freedom,” in the “Nineteenth Century” for July, 1885.

dent folly of such proceedings, or moved to indignation by their immorality. Happily the Curialists are, to quote the words of an Italian doctor of divinity who knows them well, "as impotent as they are unscrupulous and corrupt."

That the change I describe has really taken place, and has become fully recognized by ecclesiastics themselves, is certain. The Jesuit, Father Hill, teaches us that "the criterion of scientific truth is not authority, but evidence." The Very Reverend Dr. Hogan caps this remark¹ by the following one:

It is now generally felt that a negative, not a positive, harmony has to be looked for, and that, instead of attempting to find the secrets of science in the Bible, the true meaning of the Bible, where it touches on the things of nature, *should be sought for* in science.

From meditating on the changes which have taken place amongst Catholics, (1) with respect to the written Word, and (2) its authoritative interpretation, we may rise to consider some of the modifications which have been developed with respect to our conceptions as to the divine source of all knowledge. The great cause of all is not only utterly unimaginable by us, but entirely beyond our powers of comprehension and conception. Nevertheless, we may fearlessly affirm it possesses all that man possesses of perfection, and therefore such attributes as are feebly imaged forth—in a faint, though not false, analogy—by human intelligence, will,² etc.

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 133. The italics are mine.

² This is all that is meant by the words "personality" and "personal," as applied to Deity. Many men are strangely offended and repelled by those terms, because they entirely misapprehend the meaning and intention with which they are used. They fancy that, thereby, a sort of magnified humanity is attributed to God. But not to accept this conception of "personality" is to reduce our idea of the "First Cause" to that of a mere unintellectual energy, and therefore to degrade it to a kind of existence immeasurably below that of a human being.

A certain anthropomorphism is inseparable from our conception of the infinite being, because we cannot think thereof save by human ideas, based on imaginations of things and actions perceived by the senses. Hence that most true saying, "As men are, so are their gods." Therefore, as men become wiser, better, and nobler, their ideas of God ought to, and surely do, become more and more elevated.

The Christian idea of the Deity was mainly derived from that of the Hebrews, which had itself greatly changed between the conquest of Canaan and the Captivity. Yet the ideal greatness of the Jew and of the earlier Christians remained too much an idealized human greatness derived from conceptions of an omnipotent Cæsarism, a benevolent despotism, the legalism of the judge and the supremacy of the pontiff. The conduct deemed by many to be most fitting towards such a being was abject self-abasement, piteous entreaties, praises, and endeavors to ward off chastisement for demerits, by self-torture and the presentation of the virtuous acts of others. God was thus conceived of as a non-natural oriental despot, exacting praise and adoration, and ready to chastise with the utmost severity any withholding thereof—a being capable of punishing disrespect and disobedience in the most terrible manner imaginable. For such acts of disrespect and disobedience were "sins"; and grave sins were punished by damnation in hell-fire accompanied by other tortures, and lasting for ever and ever. Such ideas are not, perhaps, to be wondered at in ages when sufferings and hardships of all kinds abounded, when legal punishments were most barbarous, torture inflicted systematically, and burning alive regarded as a needful and salutary practice and viewed with complacency.

In these days of softened manners and benevolent feelings, extending even to the brute creation, such beliefs have become

impossible for many Catholics, no less than for men of other creeds. The Deity is now regarded as a being to whom impieties are unwelcome, because prejudicial to the moral and intellectual welfare of those who commit or utter them. It is, of course, fully recognized that we may only too easily perform actions prejudicial to our own welfare or that of others; but the old notion of "sin" as an offence against a sort of magnified, supernatural pope-king, who in divine anger smites the offender with an infinite punishment, is rapidly fading away. With the vanishing of such morbid notions about "sin," morbid notions about hell are rapidly vanishing also, and some writings of my own¹ have, I am thankful to say, helped to banish them from many Catholic minds. It is therefore needless for me to say more on the subject here.

But the mention of "sin" in general naturally brings to mind the changes which have been effected in the notions of Catholics as to "original sin."

No man of education now regards the Biblical account of "the fall" as more than "a myth intended to symbolize some moral lapse of the earliest races of mankind," or, possibly, "the first awakening of the human conscience to a perception of right and wrong." This is the utmost which such a man would admit, while most scholars would deny that there is more historical evidence for the garden of Eden than for the garden of the Hesperides.

The consideration of this change of view also naturally

¹ My articles: (1) "Happiness in Hell," "Nineteenth Century," December, 1892; (2) "The Happiness in Hell," *op. cit.*, February, 1893; and (3) "Last Words on the Happiness in Hell," *op. cit.*, April, 1893. Quite lately a Catholic writer, with the letters H. J. H., has published a paper in the number of the "American Ecclesiastical Review" for 1897, wherein he maintains that unbaptized infants may attain the same bliss as that open to those who have been baptized. This is a most startling theological innovation.

brings to mind those which have taken place amongst Catholics as to the real meaning of "redemption" and the mode in which Christ's death on the cross has affected mankind.

It is very noteworthy that there should have been such variations with respect to what many persons consider the very essence of the Christian religion.

A view once widely held as to the "how" men were so benefited may be termed "redemption by cheating the devil." According to this theory, Satan found himself, through the death of the God-man, overpaid, and so could make no further claim on man, who thus became freed from his dominion.

Another theory, which has been much more widely prevalent and is still held by many, may be called "redemption by legal fiction." This is the one propounded by St. Anselm in his treatise *Cur Deus homo?*—"Why God became Man."

According to it Christ suffered in the place of guilty man, and so God the Father was enabled, without renouncing what was due to His justice and majesty, to bestow His grace upon mankind.

Very different is the view held by many modern Catholics as orthodox as learned. According to them, Christ's life and death have served to set before us a great "object lesson." Such Catholics affirm that, beyond this, they know not, and that no one knows "how" man was benefited by the passion of Christ Jesus. All they know is that it has availed with God, as any other means would have availed, had God so willed it.¹

¹ I could refer to one of the most distinguished and highly placed of Roman theologians in support of this statement, had I permission to use his name. He told me that "he saw no reason why the sacrifice of any animal, or the offering of any flower, might not have accomplished all that was accomplished on Calvary, or why it might not have been accomplished without any physical act and by the divine will alone, save that in that case we should not have had the great 'object lesson' put before us."

Various other modifications of view might here be mentioned, but the above will suffice to show that, even as to this doctrine, great changes have taken place, and that it is possible yet others may follow.

But a change more startling than any yet referred to is that which seems now in progress with respect to the estimate in which Paganism is to be held in comparison with Christianity. The early Christians naturally detested it, and regarded the heathen gods as so many devils who had been permitted to delude mankind. To the polytheism of Greece and Rome, Egypt and Syria, succeeded the strictest monotheism; for at first prayers were not even addressed to Christ, but to the Father only. This monotheism was (as we have seen) of a very rigid type, leading to extreme self-denial, even as to the most innocent pleasures, to severe asceticism and a very exaggerated attribution of merit to virginity—apart from any special circumstances, and as a mere physical fact.

The asceticism of early Christianity was indeed widely different from that which is venerated to-day, as has been clearly shown by that learned Benedictine monk of Cambridge, Dom Cuthbert Butler. In his study of "Early Monastic History"¹ he tells us, concerning the spirit of Egyptian monachism (as reported in the "Downside Review"):

The favorite name used to describe any of the prominent monks was "great athlete." And they were athletes, and filled with the spirit of the modern athlete. They loved to "make a record" in austerities, to contend with one another in mortifications; and they would freely boast of their spiritual achievements. . . . In Palladius's account of Macarius this stands out most conspicuously; if he ever heard of any one

¹ See the "Downside Review" (vol. xvii., December, 1898, p. 268, etc.) on Dom Cuthbert Butler's "Lausiac History of Palladius" (Cambridge University Press, 1898).

having performed a work of asceticism, he was all on fire to do the same. . . . Did Macarius hear that another monk ate nothing but one pound of bread a day? For three years he ate each day only what he could extract in a single handful through the narrow neck of a jar. Did he hear that the Tabennesiates ate nothing cooked by fire throughout one Lent? He did the same for seven years. He did not rest satisfied until he had gone to see, and beaten, them all. . . . A strange system it was, often leading to extravagances, eccentricities, and worse. Oriental hermits surpassed anything in Egypt. . . . Some of the Syrian monks were termed grazers, because they dwelt on the mountains and ate neither meal nor bread; but, when meal-time came, they took sickles and went forth to cut grass. . . . St. Simeon Stylites, before ascending his pillar, had dwelt in an enclosure on a mountain, his right leg fastened to a large stone by an iron chain twenty cubits long. Theodoret relates that some of the hermits constantly carried on their shoulders heavy weights of iron, and that he had seen another who passed ten years in a tub suspended in mid-air from poles. . . . St. Jerome solemnly declares that he knew a Syrian hermit who lived in an old cistern on five figs a day; St. Gregory Nazianzen speaks of Syrian hermits who wore iron fetters, slept on the bare ground, and stood immovable in prayer in the rain, wind, and snow.

Such savage and barbarous practices are no longer even admired by most Catholics, and the contrast is indeed great between these devotees and the reasonable men who have replaced them in modern times—for example, the Jesuits of Mount Street or the Fathers of the Brompton Oratory. It is not perhaps wonderful, then, that, having regard to such asceticism, to fierce intolerance, and to the many superstitions which tended to retard progress and impede human welfare, there have not been wanting Catholics to contend that, with the coming of Christianity, the pendulum swung (as it were) too far in one direction, and that, the destruction of the evils of

Paganism having been accomplished, it should now be made to swing in the other direction, so that some of the merits Paganism possessed may be revived and restored.

I have heard a man devoted to the cause of Catholicity express himself as follows, when seeking the advice of a learned and austere priest:

“ Monotheism,” in the highest sense of that term, is, of course, an indisputable truth, but can it be entirely defended as popularly understood? Newman has thrown¹ some doubts on this matter. He seems to doubt whether that infinite energy which pervades the universe—God—“ falls, or can be brought, under the idea of earthly number.” The idea “ number ” most certainly implies “ comparison,” “ distinctness,” and “ similarity,” and we cannot predicate “ unity ” of God without the idea of “ number.” Can God be *thus* spoken of as being absolutely One? He has many attributes, some of which our reason reveals to us, while there may be many more which are altogether beyond our powers of conception. There is no doubt a certain “ analogy ” between the “ attributes ” and “ modes of being ” of man and of God, but there is also an infinite and most mysterious difference. A man is not always actually “ loving ” or actually “ angry ”; he is for the most part but potentially one or the other. But with God nothing is potential; His every energy is an actual, eternal act of His essence. Thus it cannot be denied that the nature of God’s attributes, like the nature of God Himself, is incomprehensible to us. Moreover, God’s attributes, while distinct, are each of them equally “ God,” and therefore substantial. We can hardly then venture to affirm or deny that they are “ substantially distinct ” and “ distinctly substantial.” At the least it seems that reason must admit that they may be much more so than is commonly supposed. But does not this really amount to polytheism? And indeed we may well ask why may we not, in this way, attribute “ plurality ” to God? There are certainly some attributes

¹ In the last of his sermons preached before the University of Oxford.

and aspects of the Deity which may not be unfitly represented by such Pagan gods—by Zeus, Athene, Ares, Aphrodite, Nemesis, Eros, Demeter, and Pan. In a sense the Paganism of Greece and Rome was “true” and “righteous,” and the worship of the heathen, as Cardinal Newman has said,¹ “an acceptable service.”

Amongst the attributes of God, revealed by reason, are some as to which the Christian revelation is silent; and the study of nature manifests to us divine activities which do not seem to harmonize with that idea of His being which is set before us by ecclesiastical authority.²

The student of biology finds the living world replete on every side with phenomena which, while they clothe the earth with beauty, minister, not merely to sexual reproduction, but often to mere pleasure. Certainly the devotee of biological science might well find himself moved by his studies to adore two divinities to which they specially point,—namely, Eros and Aphrodite.³

There are, to my knowledge, good Catholics who feel drawn to worship God directly, but are repelled by the symbols often set before them; such as by the figure of an old man clad in a cope and wearing a papal tiara, or some representations of the “sacred heart,” or of that bird distinguished by no intellectual or moral ornithological pre-eminence—the dove. Amongst such devout persons are some who would prefer to worship God under one of His attributes symbolized by representations more resembling Athene or Apollo, and who have specially felt the want in Christianity of a female symbol of divinity; for of course God is as much female⁴ as He is male.

¹ In his “Discourses on University Education” (1852), p. 96.

² This is very notably the case with the teaching of St. Augustine and many others, as to what is known in moral theology as “the debitum”—based, possibly, on that of St. Paul (1 Corinthians vii. 9).

³ It is hardly necessary to point out that the fact of pleasure of this kind being sown broadcast over nature in no way tends to excuse any relaxation in those ethical rules as to human conduct which are needful to maintain a sound social system.

⁴ Harnack tells us that there were some in the earlier ages of Christianity who were inclined to regard the Holy Spirit of God as a female principle.

I have heard there are persons who go to the Brompton Oratory to there worship the Madonna, as the only available representative of Venus; and we have lately read of the recent worship (in Paris) of Isis, by persons who regarded the goddess, whose veil no man has drawn aside, as no inapt symbol of the inscrutable power that everywhere meets, yet everywhere escapes, our gaze as we seek to probe the mysteries of nature.

In conclusion, I would ask whether it would be lawful for me, as a Catholic, to worship God as Zeus¹ or Athene, if I am in truth devoutly moved so to adore Him.

The answer given, in my hearing, by the learned and devout priest in question was as follows:

Most certainly it is lawful for you so to do, provided you find it helps you to advance in virtue and religion. But you must only do it privately; it would not at present be right for you to carry on a public worship of that kind.

I myself subsequently asked the same question of three other learned and experienced priests, and received a similar reply from them all.

Who would have anticipated in the thirteenth century that such a reply to such a question was a possible one? Truly a great change has come over the spirit of some Catholics!

The next doctrine I wish to refer to is that of Our Lord's resurrection. As everybody knows, each of the four evangelists gives a graphic account of the visit to the sepulchre, though only one of these can be accurate, seeing that no two of them agree. This and some other reasons have suggested to critics that the whole of these histories of the first Easter morning may be legendary only, and the suspicion is strength

See his "History of Dogma" (translated from the third German edition), vol. iv., p. 109 (Williams & Norgate, 1898).

¹ To guard against an absurd misapprehension, I would point out that the questioner had no idea of worshipping the mythological characters Zeus, Athene, etc., but only attributes of the Supreme (majesty, wisdom, beauty, power, love, etc.) which these old Greek types embody.

ened by the fact that the earliest writings in the New Testament—the Pauline epistles—are utterly silent with respect to them. It would certainly be very strange, if St. Paul did know of this visit to the empty tomb, that he should have failed to add so extremely valuable a testimony to the others he adduces in favor of the belief that the Lord had truly risen !

Impressed by these difficulties, I once asked a learned theologian (high in office and in great favor with the pope) whether, if it could be proved that Christ's body had rotted in the grave, such a fact would be conclusive against the truth of the doctrine of the resurrection. "Not in the least," he replied; "because we do not know in what the essence of a body consists." Here we have an example of a change effected in belief through modifying the signification of a word—namely, the word "body"—the sort of change before referred to.¹ Such a theologian—a man as scrupulous as he is pious—would never have answered me as he did, had he not been sure that the change of view in question would be innocuous to religion.

The fact, then, that Catholicity can thus stand entirely independent of what but a comparatively short time ago would have been universally regarded as an absolutely requisite belief seems to me a most remarkable fact as showing the indestructibility of Catholicism.

This doctrine relating to the termination of Christ's earthly career naturally brings to our mind what the New Testament tells us as to its commencement,—namely, his miraculous conception and his birth from a virgin mother. The possibility that the Scriptural account of what concerns the former doctrine may be an unhistorical interpolation can

¹ See *ante*, p. 53.

hardly fail to suggest (as it has suggested) the speculation whether St. Luke's account of what concerns the second dogma may not be similarly explained. But could such a result be equally innocuous to Catholicity? Now critics have long doubted, or disbelieved, the early date commonly assigned to this part of the New Testament, and in the last volume of T. & T. Clark's Dictionary it is quite admitted that the account in Luke belongs to a later structure of the synoptic narrative, and was not known to the first generation of Christians.

That such an account should have been accepted as original, though really a later interpolation, would not be so very astonishing. Newly-discovered facts continue to make such a thing more and more likely. Thus we learn from a most Catholic source² that the orthodox world "has received a fresh shock by the discovery, in Coptic, of the Apocryphal 'Acts of Paul.' The work, somewhat longer than the 'Acts of the Apostles,' turns out to be of a most fabulous character (it probably included the story of the 'Baptized Lion,' referred to by St. Jerome); it was composed after the middle of the second century by 'a priest of Asia Minor,' as Tertullian records; and yet it was accepted in the course of the next century as trustworthy in Carthage and Alexandria. . . . It made its way into certain Syriac copies of the New Testament, and thence into the Armenian Canon, and it is even found in two Latin New Testament MSS. That a document of so late a date and of such a character should have had such a 'career of conquest,' and should thus have made its way to the very threshold of the Canon, certainly raises important questions." It does so indeed!

As to the effect on Catholicity of a modified way of understanding Our Lord's conception (startling and inadmissible

² The "Dublin Review" for January, 1899, p. 23.

by Catholics as such a view now is), there are, some people think, evidences that it might turn out to be as innocuous as that concerning the resurrection. And those good Catholics who have come to believe the Gospel account of the resurrection to be legendary will be less indisposed than others to regard the account of His conception to be of a similar character. Indeed, to my certain knowledge there actually are devout Catholics of both sexes, well known and highly esteemed,—weekly communicants and leading lives devoted to charity and religion,—who believe Joseph to have been the real and natural father of Jesus. They do not scruple, on that account, to apply to his mother all the expressions common amongst Catholics; the term “virgin”¹ being used in the sense given to it by Isaiah, and not in the strict modern sense of that word. I know also priests who share this opinion, and I have heard a devout and ascetic religious affirm—not in my presence alone—that he thought the extraordinary dignity to which Rome has now raised St. Joseph may have been providentially brought about in preparation for a great change in popular sentiment and credence on this question.

But this last modification of belief is as yet so rare amongst Catholics that its very existence is not generally suspected; but the fact that it really does exist amongst some who are earnest, learned, and devout is surely a very remarkable fact. The possibility of extreme changes in orthodox belief is also clearly shown with respect to two other doctrines, with a notice of which this article will end.

Both of these doctrines were once universally believed by Catholics. Yet they have completely passed away—one in early times, the other in the modern period.

¹ Which is thus by them used in a much modified sense, as we have just seen may be done with the word “body.”

The first was the belief that the end of the world would take place during the life of the first generation of Christians. No doctrine seems to have been more universally and strongly held, or to have had more effect on the lives of the early Christians—promoting their zeal and courage and shielding them from temptation. What value had the pleasures of life to men certain that in a few years nought would remain save the bliss of heaven for the elect, and the torments of hell for the reprobate?

It was but natural that this doctrine should have been regarded by all as absolutely certain, since it had the very highest sanction, having been proclaimed, it was believed, by Our Lord Himself.

This was indeed but natural, seeing that we read in St. Matthew xxiv. 34, that Jesus said, speaking of the end of the world:

Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

The passage in St. Mark xiii. 30 is identical; and also that in St. Luke xxi. 32, save that the words “ these things ” are omitted.

Well might men ask: “ If we cannot be sure that Christ so spoke (seeing they are thus recorded by three evangelists), of what words attributed to Him can we be certain ? ”

It has been suggested that the words may have been displaced, and that they should have been inserted in connection with those referring to the fall of Jerusalem. But the difficulty cannot be thus evaded, since the Lord is said to have elsewhere announced His speedy second advent. Thus in Matthew x. 23 we read: “ I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come ; ”

and (in xvi. 28): “ Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in His kingdom.”

In Mark ix. 1 we find the following very explicit passage:

And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

I leave to professed theologians the task of explaining these predictions, so entirely falsified by the event. My purpose in bringing them forward is only to show how a very early dogma (universally believed and naturally regarded as *de fide*—being so exceptionally grounded, as was thought, on direct revelation) vanished from amongst the articles of the Christian faith and utterly disappeared.

The last belief once general amongst Catholics (and other Christians) which I shall here notice is that concerning witchcraft and diabolical possession,—in one word, concerning “ Demonology.” If the doctrine last considered could claim to be based on words in the New Testament, this one may claim to be based on the Old Testament also. Putting aside Saul and the Witch of Endor, we read in Exodus (xxii. 18) the terrible words: “ Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.” When one thinks of the horrors, the cruelties, the frightful injustices, which have been perpetrated for centuries on poor women condemned as witches, it is difficult indeed to believe that the words above cited were written at the express dictation and, as it were, by “ the finger of God Himself.” But, if we regard it as an interpolation, the difficulty yet remains; for the delusion as to diabolical possession has also been fraught with frightful evils, and even recently caused a poor woman, in Ireland, to be put on the fire by her supersti-

tious relatives. Yet this superstition was sustained not by an isolated text or two in the Old Testament, but by all the Gospel narratives. They actually abound with asserted instances of such possession, and no one can read them without a conviction that the evangelists thought that Our Lord believed that "possession" was a fact of common experience, and did not object to such a belief being entertained by His disciples. The explanation of this difficulty is a matter quite beyond my ability, and I leave its elucidation to skilled divines. My business is limited to calling attention to the wonderful transformation which has taken place amongst Catholics as well as others, as to this belief. Apart from the vulgar, a belief in witchcraft and possession has almost entirely died out.

With the mention of this last transformation in belief, I bring to a close that catalogue of changes—the most startling and noteworthy I could find—which I proposed to myself to set before my readers, and which, I venture to think, will suffice to show that great modifications in general belief have indeed taken place amongst Catholics between the earliest days of Christianity and the close of the nineteenth century.

To my mind it appears that these changes, though considerable, cannot be deemed to constitute a "breach of continuity," since, though the majority of them have been effected in modern times, they have all taken place gradually, without authoritative official recognition, and certainly without any disruption of the Catholic body! Without interruption to its internal and external relations, and therefore without interruption to its continuous life. I submit, then, that the "Continuity of Catholicity" is a fact which cannot be successfully contested.

Before concluding, I desire to set down a few words in reply

to some readers who may wish to ask me why I have thus written, and why, feeling confident that the advance of science will bring about all needful changes, I have not awaited them in silence. To such inquiries I would reply as follows:

First, as I said in the concluding sentence of my former article, in the face of death I desire to do my duty in promoting what I regard as truth. Had I never written before, I would not write now. But, since I know that many persons have been influenced by former words of mine, I feel under a moral obligation to frankly make known my latest convictions.

Secondly, I am convinced that the great changes herein referred to are but preludes to far greater changes in the future—changes which will be most salutary, if duly foreseen and prepared for. They will take place surely sooner or later, as a new generation of mankind is sure anyhow to succeed the present one. But, just as the certainty of that fact does not make the function of the *accoucheur* less useful, so the sure advent of new conceptions and beliefs does not render useless the work of those who would prepare for and facilitate their safe delivery into the world of ideas.

Thirdly, I write, because I am very strongly impressed with the various dangers¹ wherewith Catholicity is now threatened; and, as it is to me evident that, as a moral agent, its power and influence are still enormous, I would do my best to serve it now, as I have done in the past.

Fourthly, and lastly. I have written in the way I have written, because I am convinced that it is only by intellectual breadth; by the welcoming of truth on all sides and from all

¹ The Very Reverend Dr. Hogan says (*loc. cit.* p. 98): "There is no denying it, we have entered a period of exceptionally deep and widespread unbelief. Christianity has ceased, in a great measure, to be the acknowledged basis of society and the bond of civilized nations."

quarters; by despising nothing that is good, even though it be pagan aspirations and ideals—too lightly thrust aside; by scrupulous honesty and candid appreciation of the true value of men and of arguments hostile to us, that solid good can be effected and Catholicity regain that universality of acceptance in the civilized world, and by men of light and leading, which it once enjoyed.

Being thus profoundly impressed, I regard with the greatest aversion the spirit and tendency I have labelled “Curialism,”¹ because I regard it as the one dangerous and deadly foe of Catholicity.

The Curia² has learned nothing as to the real conditions of mankind beyond its own surroundings. Certainly it has learned nothing as to the nature and tendencies of that dominant factor in the world—our own race. Essentially despotic, it has still no glimmering of the truth that the English-speaking peoples have thrown off, once and for ever, despotism of whatsoever kind, and will never submit to the centralized tyranny which is the Curialist’s only notion of government.

¹ A typical example of its action is afforded by its recent movement against what has been termed “Americanism.”

² In denouncing the Curia I make no reference to Leo the Thirteenth or to many exemplary cardinals. I refer to ecclesiastics of a lower grade, as to whom the Roman D.D. before referred to (resident at Rome) further writes to me thus: “If any one thinks they care for religion, or anything but their own interest, or believes they possess one spark of evangelizing zeal, he must be a lunatic.” As to practical religion, let the pastoral care and house-to-house visitation carried on by the whole of the priests of St. John Lateran be compared with what takes place in the most crowded and least-well-served parish in London.

But the subordination of all else to politics, even in high quarters, is made manifest by the recent benevolence of the Vatican to Russia, and its extraordinary hostility to England and our empire, throughout which the Catholic church enjoys such signal advantages and favors. The hope is that Russian absolutism may lead to the restoration of some fragments of the temporal power,—*i.e.*, more power and money for the Curialists.

A love for legal, constitutional rule is with us an inextinguishable passion. It is this spirit, also, which is the true "Americanism" across the Atlantic, where it dominates as it does in these islands which gave it birth.

The struggle will doubtless be long between Catholicity (which desires all truth, justice, and rational liberty in religion) and Curialism, but the defeat of the latter, however long delayed, is well assured.

My aim has been to strengthen Catholicity, and to that end I have enumerated the most striking modifications in the belief of Catholics I could find, to show how many and great changes the Catholic body can undergo without injury to its vitality. I submit to the judgment of my readers the truth of the conclusion at which I have arrived,—namely, that these changes, no more than those which have occurred in Catholic ritual, doctrinal development, and government, have been fatal to the "Continuity of Catholicism."

ST. GEORGE MIVART.

