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CHRIST, AS PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING :

BEING A VINDICATION OF

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND FROM
THEOLOGICAL NOVELTIES,

IN

EIGHT LECTURES

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

AT CANON BAMPTON'S LECTURE,

IN THE YEAR MDCCCXLII.

BY

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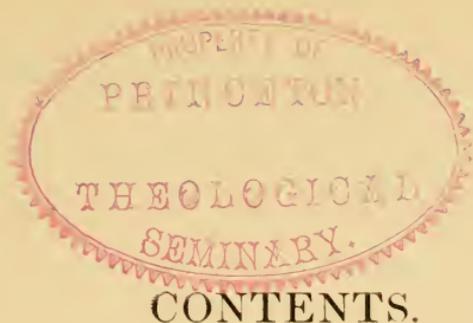
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MDCCCXLII.



PRELIMINARY REMARKS TO LECTURE V.

I. God as the source of light and knowledge—manifesting Himself through the Word. The *Λόγος* the illuminating principle—and author of reason as well as revelation. There must be therefore an accordance between the two; and a harmony between the moral and intellectual principles of nature and the truths developed in revelation.

II. But all natural knowledge at the highest is introductory to revelation. This revelation communicated to the Church for the benefit of mankind—Teacher of them under Christ.

LECTURE V.

CHRIST AS TEACHER AND ILLUMINATOR.

MARK VII. 13.

Ye have made the word of God of none effect by your traditions.

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MARK VII. 13.

Ye have made the word of God of none effect by your traditions.

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GALAT. IV. 9, 10.

*But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God,
how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye
desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and
times, and years.*

I. Distinction to be observed between Romanism and the Papacy.

II. State of the Church of England from the Reformation to the
nineteenth century.

III. Services of the Tractarian Divines. The essential Romanism of
their doctrines *as a system*.

ERRATA.

| | | |
|----------|----------|--|
| Page 46. | line 26. | <i>for</i> Resurrection |
| 256. | ult. | <i>after</i> lamented <i>add</i> for |
| 411. | 16. | <i>for</i> proposed, <i>read</i> proposed ; |
| — | — | <i>after is</i> omit comma |
| 420. | 17. | <i>omit</i> II. |
| 445. | 2. | from the bottom, <i>for</i> Barronico <i>read</i> Borromeo |

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

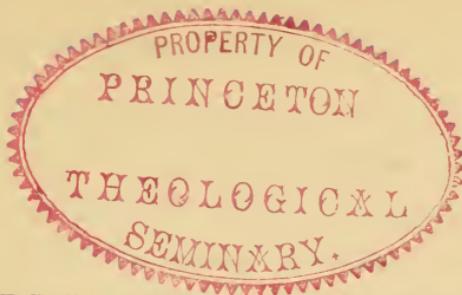
TO

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PRELIMINARY REMARKS

TO

LECTURE V.

“ God is light, the highest of all, unapproachable and ineffable, neither by intellect to be apprehended, nor by word to be uttered, the illuminator of every rational nature—this in intellectuals is what the sun is in objects of sense, discerned so far as we may be purified to contemplate it; and in proportion as we contemplate it, beloved—and as far as we love it, again intellectually perceived—itsself contemplative of itself, and comprehensive of itself—and only slightly streaming forth to things without it.”

Ὁ Θεὸς φῶς τὸ ἀκρότατον, καὶ ἀπρόσιτον, οὔτε νῶ κα- σαληπτὸν, οὔτε λόγῳ ῥητὸν, πάσης φωτιστικὸν λογικῆς φύ- σιος. τοῦτο ἐν νοητοῖς, ὅπερ ἐν αἰσθητοῖς ὁ ἥλιος ὅσον ἂν καθαυρώ- μεθα. φαντα- ζόμενον καὶ ὅσον ἂν φαν- τασθῶμεν, ἀγαπώμενον* καὶ ὅσον ἂν ἀγαπήσω- μεν, αὐτὸς νοούμενον αὐτὸ ἑαυτοῦ θεωρητικόν τε καὶ κασα- ληπτικόν, ὀλίγα τοῖς ἕξω χερόμενον. Greg. Naz. Orat. 40. p. 639. opp.

I. 1. **T**HUS sublimely, and in the spirit of a divine philosophy, writes Nazianzen on Almighty God, not only as the original of all goodness and purity, but as the inexhaustible fountain of intellectual light; in Himself underived, and by all but Himself incomprehensible; and, even in the most exalted of created beings, only shining in such faint communications of Himself as are compatible with the faculties of a finite intelligence. To us then He is in Himself inaccessible and invisible; but it is not so with Him, who, even in His union with the humanity, does not lose that essential Godhead,

which is His by eternal generation; nor, in His Godhead, that approximation to humanity which renders Him cognizable by us. “He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father.” “No one cometh to the Father, but by Me.” “No one knoweth the Son but the Father, and He to whom the Son has revealed Him.” “I and the Father are one.”

John i. 4.

The terms in which the great Apostle John speaks of Him, in relation to man, are very remarkable, “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men”—with that depth of meaning about them on the mysteries of the Divine Nature, which distinguish the writings of the mighty Evangelist and Prophet. The old Fathers did well to call him *Ὁ Θεολόγος*. He who leant on Jesus’ bosom might well have a larger portion of his Master’s spirit bestowed upon him; and, with the gift of an intenser love, might well have that which in Heaven follows upon love,—a sublimer knowledge of the Being who is the object of it. He would not appear to extend the illuminating energies of the *Λόγος*, merely to those who, being regenerated by water and the Spirit, and having their eyes opened to heavenly things, were emphatically *φωτισμένοι*, but to all mankind—of whom He is actually the Creator, and potentially the Redeemer and spiritual Creator too, if they will receive Him in the fulness of that relation. Being the very effulgence of the uncreated glory, and the express image of His hypostasis, He has been from the beginning, and still continues to be, the instrument and medium through which the fountal and paternal Deity is

revealed to His creatures, and by whom He works both in the spiritual and material creation.

By nature, therefore, or grace, or both, the second Person is the enlightener of all men—by virtue of their rationality and their capacity as moral and responsible beings. And this leads us, in the next place, to the consideration of Christ in another glorious office in that complement of ministerial relations in which He stands to us—that important one of Prophet, or Teacher of the Church which He has redeemed by His blood. “The Lord your God,” says Moses, “shall raise up unto you a Prophet like unto me;” like, yet by unapproachable steps elevated above him, as the Son is above the servant, and the Creator above the creature. “They shall all know Me, from the greatest to the least—for they shall all be taught of God.” And such a Teacher the incarnate God is, in the most comprehensive sense; not only to the Church in its corporate capacity, and by a spirit of wisdom communicated to the rulers of it, but directly to every individual member, who is brought, by His instrumentality, into communication with the essential and uncreated light.

And this is to be considered, as, really and specifically, the work of Christ in the economy of redemption; and, from such glimpses as Scripture gives us of the Persons in the triune Jehovah, it is appropriate to the second Person of the Trinity, whose union with the humanity constitutes the Mediator and God-Man. Hence it is, that, to

The *Λόγος*
the moral,
intellectual,
and spiritu-
al enlight-
ener of men.

Deut. xviii.
15, 18.

Jer. xxxi.
34. Is. liv.
13.

mark, at once, His relation of divine Teacher to His creatures, and, in some feeble sort, that which He bears to the Paternal Deity, *τὴν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα συγγενείαν*, the second Person is called distinctively and emphatically the Word—He through whom the hidden wisdom of the Deity is manifested forth, as a word is the expression and image of the thought. Not that this is all however; for, merely as the *Λόγος προφορικός*, his separate personality and equal Deity may be lost—and so to consider Him, and thus interpret the Scripture “Word” as applied to Christ, was the error of the heresiarch of Samosata. He is not only the outward declaration of God’s will, and the organ by which the Divine wisdom is manifested, nor even only the *Λόγος ἐνδιάθετος ἐν καρδίᾳ λαλουμένος*—but He is the personal intelligence, *ὁ Λόγος ἐνυπόστατος—Λόγος αὐθυπόστατος*—of the Divine Being—*τὸν οὐσιωδῶς τῷ πατρὶ συμπάροντα*¹.

¹ Damasc.
² τὸν δευτέρου
 Θεοῦ, πρῶτό-
 γονου τῶν
 εἰκονα Θεοῦ,
 Phil. frag.
 Phil. de
 Agricult.
 v. 1. p. 308.
 de Mund.
 opific. He
 considers
 Him a me-
 diator be-
 tween God
 and His
 creatures,
 and as His
 likeness, τὸν
 δι’ ἁγρᾶτον
 καὶ νοήτων
 Θεῶν λόγον
 εἰκονα λέγει
 Θεοῦ, vid.
 Bryant’s
 Philo Ju-
 deus on the

In this sense, and with a distinct reference to the second Person in the Trinity, the Word was known to the old Jewish interpreters of Scripture. Though he is by no means uniform and consistent², Philo speaks of Him distinctly and sublimely in this character, and with an evident ascription of personality. And this he obtained from the traditional teaching of the old Jewish Church, which was not only confirmed by Scripture, but no doubt originated from more than one *clear declaration*, and *constant intimations* of the same sublime truth in the writings of the Prophets. This conception of a personal word or wisdom, in inseparable connection

with a mysterious tri-unity, is distinctly traceable in the Rabbins, before the express declaration of the Gospel.

Λόγος, and Allix on the Jewish Church, c. ix. x.

It is an idle charge therefore, and wholly unsupported by fact, which attributes the introduction of the *Λόγος*, and with it the doctrine of the Trinity, to the Platonic School. For, whatever was the case with the Neo-Platonists, who made unscrupulous use of Christian materials, and who importantly modified and enlarged the outlines of their master, giving a prominence and systematic distinctness to what was, in him, at the best, obscure and latent, there is but faint resemblance between the *τρίας* of Plato, his *νοῦς* and *ὑλη* and *ιδέα*, and the Christian Trinity^a. In truth,

The personality of the *Λόγος* no discovery of the Platonists.

Vid. Mo-
sheim. diss.
de Christ.
relig. vol. 2.

^a That some vague and indistinct notions of a Trinity existed from very early times is undoubted, connected with the conception of the great first cause. Traces of it may be found in the Indian and Classical Mythologies. Plutarch speaks of a Trinity of God, matter, and the evil spirit; and there were certain heretics in the early Church, who to the divine Being and the Demiurgos joined a third original principle, sometimes the evil spirit, and sometimes matter. Nothing can be more indistinct than Plato himself, in regard to the real meaning of his doctrine; and we may find proof of vagueness of thought in the variation of the terms drawn from his writings to indicate the mysterious trias. I have stated one in the text; another is *τὸ ἄγαθον, λόγος σοφία* or *νοῦς*, and *ψυχὴ*. Sometimes he seems to consider the world itself as the second principle, *ὁ γίνητος θεός*, rather than a formative intellect. Sometimes the Maker of the world, *ὁ Δημιουργος*, is placed as the first, but by Julian as the second, by Protinus the third, and by Proclus as the fourth. Ptolemus, in Cudworth, speaks of these three hypostases, *τὸ ἄγαθόν, νοῦς*, and *ψυχὴ*, (the *anima mundi*;) as a doctrine very anciently delivered. The triad of Parmenides is the *τὸ πρῶτον ἐν*,

it is a mere nominal connection, which never would have been noticed, but for a diseased and weak craving in Christian Apologists after some external confirmation to a mysterious and incomprehensible fact in the Gospel revelation of the Godhead. And in that very remarkable passage in the second Letter of Plato to Dionysius¹, which is the most distinct of all, neither the personality, nor, much less, the co-eternity and equality of the Persons is expressed, or can with any plausibility be deduced; and in this alone, and in no mere superficial and numerical resemblance, can a real similarity be established. The Fathers, in these matters, often fancied more resemblances in things than a rigid comparison and scrutiny can justify. This is true even of the Oriental Church-

¹ But Clement Alexand. does not hesitate in applying it to the Christian Trinity, S.L. 5. 17. The whole 5th book is full of philosophical and poetical illustrations of Scripture truths, some

of them with real fragments of the primitive revelation.

ἐν πολλὰ, ἐν καὶ πολλὰ, which may be identified with the former in meaning and spirit. But no where is there any approximation to the tri-unity and transubstantiality. It is but fair to mention Cudworth's opinion in his own words: "Whereas in his tenth book of laws, he undertakes to prove the existence of a Deity, he does notwithstanding ascend no higher than to the ψυχὴ," (the animating principle of the ὕλη,) "or universal mundane soul, as a self-moving principle, and the immediate or proper cause of all that motion which is in the world. But in other places of his writings he frequently asserts, above the self-moving Psyche, an immoveable and standing Nous or intellect, which was properly the Demiurgos or architectonic Franer of the whole world. And lastly, above this multiform intelligence, he plainly asserts yet a higher hypostasis, one most simple and most absolutely perfect being, which he calls τὸ ἐν, in opposition to that multiplicity which speaks something of imperfection in it, and τᾶγαθον, goodness itself, as being above mind and understanding." Cudworth, *Intell. Syst.* vol. 2. p. 300.

teachers, who were familiar with Plato's writings in the original Greek, but much more with the Fathers of the West, who, with few exceptions, were unfamiliar with that language, and, save indirectly, with the Philosophy contained in its magnificent storehouse.

But, granting that this remarkable mind does contain some such intimation, and that the *δευτερος* and *γένητος Θεός* approximate in some distant degree to the personality of the *Λόγος*, yet it is most reasonable and probable that, on the old Patristical hypothesis, it came from Scripture sources. The Platonists themselves, indeed, attributed this and other high doctrines not to invention, but to a tradition immemorial, a *θεοπαράδοτος φιλοσοφία*. And, even, on the incredible supposition that it was otherwise, it would, at all events, supply demonstration, that, however transcendental and above the discovery and comprehension of the human intellect the triune mystery may be, it involves no such contradiction to reason, as Arians and Socinians have asserted to be inseparable from the doctrine of the Son's eternal generation, and the co-deity of the incarnate Wisdom.

The merely philosophical investigator would at all events reject unhesitatingly the theory of its introduction into the Church later than the primitive times; and conclude that Justin could not be the inventor of that, which, were it not demonstrably contained in the Christian Scriptures, had been for centuries the teaching of the Jewish Church, and was not originated, but only more distinctly as well

vid. Clem.
Alexan.
passim.
So Basil
and other
Fathers.

as practically developed, in the more perfect dispensation. This is a mere historical fact, independent of the question of its doctrinal truth.

2. The use which the Fathers, in the first ages of the Church, make of the analogy which the Scriptural application of the term *Λόγος* to the second Person of the Trinity, seems to intimate between it and the human intellect, is to shew the pure and coeternal generation of the *Λόγος* from the operation of the divine Intellect upon itself, and, if we may so say without irreverence, its physical necessity from the conditions inseparable from an intellectual essence. “He is called the word or ratiocination of the Father, because that He has been begotten of the Father, within His own unity, without passion, or time, or derivation, or separation of parts.” So says Damascenus in after times, speaking of the immemorial orthodox faith upon this great point; and in the same terms speak, with one voice, all the great orthodox Fathers before him, such as Chrysostom, and Nazianzen, and Basil. “For this cause He is called the Word,” says the latter, at the beginning of Saint John’s Gospel, “in order that it might be shewn that He came forth, mind from mind. Why the Word? Because He was begotten without passion. Why the Word? Because He is the image of Him who begat Him, exhibiting whole and entire, in Himself, Him who begat Him,—without having made any separation of parts from Him,—and subsisting perfect in Himself, as *our* word images entire the thought within us; for what we conceive in our heart that we

Patristical use of the supposed analogy between the divine and human intellect.

Damas. Orthodox. Fid. lib. 3. c. ix.

Λόγος καὶ ἀπαύγασμα λέγεται, διὰ τὸ ἄνευ συνδυασμοῦ καὶ ἀταθῶς, καὶ ἀχρονῶς, καὶ ἀρριούστως γενενηθῆναι, καὶ ἀχωρίστως ἰκ τοῦ Πατρὸς. Vid. Suicer in voce Λόγος. Διὰ τοῦτο Λόγος ἵνα δείχθῃ ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ νοῦ προῆλθε· διὰτι Λόγος ὅτι ἀπαθῶς ἐγεννήθη· διὰτι, Λόγος ὅτι εἰκῶν, τοῦ γεννήσαντος, ὅλον ἐν ἑαυτῷ δείκνυς τὸν γεννησαντα, οὐδὲν

set forth in word, and that which is spoken is a representation, by way of image, of the thought in the heart." When therefore the Fathers speak thus, and confine themselves within Scripture limits, it is not assuming human philosophy as the basis of Scripture interpretation, which was the great and dangerous fault of the later Alexandrian school, but it is Scripture itself philosophising and commenting on itself. It is not attempting to render mysteries comprehensible; but shewing, from the image of God stamped upon the soul, such intimation and shadowings forth of the operations of the Divine nature, as remove, at least, any appearance of contradiction from this stupendous mystery. Nor do the so called Platonic Fathers of the second century mean otherwise, though they sometimes express themselves with too great a looseness and latitude¹.

There have been great Christian philosophers, who assert that the eternal Λόγος and triune essence is demonstrable, as a necessary truth, upon the principles of reason—not that unassisted reason could discover it, but, that being revealed, it can shew its truth—as indeed, at the opposite extremity of the chain, the life and experience of a Christian may be said to be a *practical* demonstration of it. But, be this as it may, such a view of the divine Intelligence acting upon itself, in the eternal generation of the Λόγος, is of great value *defensively*, whatever may be the amount of positive truth that it contains. So consonant to the statement of holy writ is it considered by the Church of Rome, who is an authority not to be despised when

ἐκείθεν ἀπο-
μέριστας, καὶ
τελείως
ὑπάρχων
καθ' ἑαυτὸν
ὡς καὶ ὁ
ἡμέτερος
Λόγος ἄληθην
ἡμῶν ἀπει-
κονίζει τὴν
ἐννοίαν,
ἃ γὰρ κατὰ
καρδίαν ἐνε-
νοήσαμεν.
ταῦτα τῷ
ἰῆματι
προσηνεγκα-
μεν, καὶ
ἴστί τοῦ ἐν
τῇ καρδίᾳ
νοήματος
ἀπεικόνισ-
μα τὸ λα-
λουμένον.

Basil. Mag. in init.

Evang. Johan. vid. in id. Chrys. Hom. cxvi. t. 5. p. 747. Greg. Naz. Orat. xxxvi. p. 590.

¹ Especially in that identification of the generation of the Son with the πρόβωλη of the divine energies for the work of creation, which we find in Theophilus and Athénagoras.

she has no interest to pervert or conceal the truth, that it is embodied in the Tridentine formularies ^b.

^b “ Sed cum Jesum Filium Dei esse audimus, nihil terrenum aut mortale de ejus ortu cogitandum est—verum ortum illum, quo ab omni eternitate Pater filium genuit.” (Cat. Trident. p. 1. c. xiv.) “ Ex omnibus autem quæ ad indicandum modum rationemque æternæ generationis similitudinibus afferuntur, illa propius ad rem videtur accedere, quæ ab animi nostri cogitatione sumitur, quam-obrem sanctus Johannes filium ejus verbum appellat. Ut enim mens nostra se ipsam quodammodo intelligens, sui effingit imaginem quam verbum Theologi dixerunt, ita Deus, quantum tamen divinis humana conferri possunt, seipsum intelligens verbum æternum generat; etsi præstat contemplari, quod fides proponit et sincerâ mente Jesum Christum verum Deum, et verum hominem credere et confiteri, genitum quidem, ut Deum, ante omnium sæculorum ætates ex Patre.” (c. xv.)

Filius dicitur imago et *Λόγος*—est igitur imago cogitatione Patris genita—quod ut aliquo modo considerari possit, a nostrâ mente exempla exponamus. Voluit enim Deus in homine conspici vestigia sua, et, si hominis natura retinisset primam lucem, speculum esset divinæ naturæ minus obscurum; nunc in hâc caligine tamen aliqua notari vestigia possunt. Mens humana cogitando mox fingit imaginem rei cogitatæ, sed nos non transfundimus nostram essentiam in illas imagines; suntque cogitationes illæ subitæ et evanescentes actiones; at pater æternus sibi intuens gignit cogitationem sui, quæ est imago ipsius et non evanescens, sed subsistens communicatâ ipsi essentiâ. Hæc igitur imago est secunda persona, et conveniunt appellationes—dicitur *Λόγος*, quia cogitatione generatur; dicitur imago quia cogitatio est imago rei cogitatæ—dicitur splendor gloriæ, quod funere significantius scriptum est *ἀπαύγασμα*, id est, ab aliâ luce splendor editus.” Melancthon. loci Theolog. de Filio.

I said that it was their (the Fathers) common principle that the existence of the Son flows necessarily from the divine Intellect excited in Himself; and shewed how the Son's eternity will follow from this principle. And I discovered what I might have con-

The most learned divines of the Reformation, with Melancthon at their head, and eminent names in our own Church, insist on the same view, not as human and philosophical, but as essentially Scriptural.

And let not this preliminary consideration of Christ, as the eternal $\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$, appear unconnected

cealed, that I myself concur in this principle with the Platonists, for it seems to me founded on Scripture. By which I meant not to assert that it is so expressly declared in Scripture that I would undertake to prove it by the Scripture to others, in the same manner that I would undertake to prove that the world was created by Jesus Christ, or that the one like the other ought to be made a branch of the public confession of the Church: it was mentioned, only as a principle which, true or false, was embraced by a certain set of writers, and serves to explain certain things said by them, which, without it, are unintelligible, or at least, liable to misinterpretation—it *seems* to be founded on Scripture. Horsley's Theol. Tracts.

“Intellectus dum intelligit, gignit, (ut philosophi vocant) alium quasi intellectum sibi similem, quem, hanc ob causam, nos conceptum mentis, Platonici mentem genitam a mente, Patres verbum et $\Lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ mentis appellarunt. Et illum gignit inter se—et nunquam intellectus est actu intelligens, et ideo vere intellectus, sine hoc genito altero intellectu—et quidem sine ullâ sui mutatione gignit.” Zanchius de Naturâ Dei.

“Cum omnis processio sit secundum aliquam actionem; sicut, secundum actionem quæ tendit in exteriorem materiem, est aliqua processio ab extra—ita, secundum actionem quæ manet in ipso agente, attenditur processio quædam, ab intra. Et hoc maxime patet in intellectu, cujus actio scilicet intelligere manet in intelligente. Quumque autem intelligit, et hoc ipso quod intelligit procedit aliquid inter ipsum quod est conceptio rei intellectæ ex vi intellectivâ proveniens, et ex ejus notitia procedens. Quamquidem conceptionem vox significat, et dicitur verbum cordis significatum, verbo vocis. Aquinas, Theolog. Prim. Pars 9. 27. art. iii.

with his office of Teacher within the Church—for a comprehensive view of it cannot be obtained without this—and our regarding Him, in this sublime relation, as the wisdom of the Father, and in His connection with all God's creatures, which were made through Him physically and intellectually, while it enlarges our conception of His stupendous attributes, and wonder at His condescension, gives a concinnity to the whole manifestation of the Godhead in Him.

This consideration of the *Λόγος* necessary to a full comprehension of Christ's office as Teacher.

3. In three ways, therefore, may the *Λόγος* be considered as the light of the world. 1. As impressing upon the material world those forms which make it what it is,—those types and ideas which limit its natural indefiniteness, and constitute, so to say, the *immateriality of matter*. 2. In imprinting upon the mind of man those original verities, both of morality, and of intellectual truth, upon which the whole mental superstructure which constitutes the perfect man must be raised. 3. In freeing us, both morally and intellectually, from the perversions and corruptions engendered by the fall; and perfecting both, by the revelation and application of those wonderful truths which make up the Gospel, and by which the soul being changed into a better image, is reunited to

οὗτος ὁ τῶν
ὄντι μονο-
γενῆς ἑναπο-
σφραγιζό-
μενος τῶν
γνωστικῶν,
5. 1. 7. 36.

Εἰκὼν γὰρ
τοῦ Θεοῦ ὁ
Λόγος αὐτοῦ,
ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ νοῦ
γνήσιος, ὁ
Θεῖος Λόγος,
φωτὸς ἀρ-
χέτυπον φῶς,
εἰκὼν δὲ τοῦ
Λόγου ὁ ἄν-
θρώπος ἀλη-
θίνος, ὁ νοῦς
ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ,
ὁ κατ' εἰκόνα

God. “For the image of God is His Word,” says Clement of Alexandria, speaking of the works of the human mind and the marvellous operations of the divine, “the genuine child of intelligence—even the divine Word, archetypal light of light; and an image of the Word is the real man, the intelligent principle in man—who is said on this account to have been

produced after the image of God, and after His likeness —assimilated to the divine Word by the understanding in his heart, and in this way gifted with reason.”

τοῦ Θεοῦ. καὶ
καθ' ὁμοίωσιν
διὰ τοῦτο,
γενενηῆσθαι
λεγόμενος, τῇ
κατὰ καρ-
δίαν φρονήσει,
τῷ Θεῷ πα-
ρικαζόμενος
λόγῳ. καὶ
ταύτη λογί-
κος. Clem.
Alexand.
Λόγος προ-
φειστικός.
78. 18.

Since, therefore, He is not only the author of supernatural truths contained in the Bible, but likewise of the natural conscience and natural reason of man, there must, as a matter of course, be a coherence and correspondency between the two, as originating from the same source, and adapted to each other by a predetermined harmony. There will be a perfect unity throughout, and the marks of the same designing intelligence discoverable on a diligent comparison—the same intellectual principles as fundamental to all reasoning—the same moral axioms as fundamental to all action—and a like developement of those rules of government, the political aspect of God's kingdom, which are connected, by so many resemblances, in natural and revealed religion. Not only therefore is there an approach to truth or a verisimilitude, but a *real* light of divine truth even in our natural faculties, which is as much the inspiration of the Almighty as the verities of revelation—and, as a legitimate consequence, it is not only a thing to be tolerated, that we should submit any professed revelation from God to the test of the natural conscience and unbiassed reason, but it is absolutely necessary, and a designed result of the divine laws. For, though our faculties, even in their perfection, are limited in their range, and are practically deteriorated by much that interferes with their working, and disturbs their truthfulness, even within their

A corre-
spondence
therefore
between re-
velation
and the
natural
reason.

legitimate sphere, yet they offer the only conceivable way in which intelligent beings can receive that, which, however divine, is not intuitive, though founded upon our intuitions, and in harmony with them.

This is quite certain—that, if it were possible to demonstrate a contradiction between the alleged announcement of the Divine will, or any portion of it, and those fundamental principles which God has written in our hearts and minds, whether moral or intellectual, it could not proceed from that Being, who is the acknowledged Author of the one, and the asserted Author of both. No external evidences, however strong, could overcome the testimony of our conscience or our reason.

But there is an important caution to be here observed. This identification of truth, wherever existing, with the same divine original, and the same authority, as far as it goes, must be rigidly limited to *first principles* and conclusions manifestly arising from them—it must not be extended beyond these facts or the proximate and unquestionable results of them—not to probabilities, or *seeming truths*, in which, or even in any *long deductions* from undoubted principles, error may be unconsciously introduced, and the conclusion vitiated. This certainly has been done by some of the Fathers, and especially by Clement of Alexandria and his followers; for not only do they attach a divine authority to the first principles of reason, which is perfectly just, but recognise in philosophy, built up by the aid of that reason, a character equivalent to divine; and confer therefore the authority of the

The limitations of this principle.

original mind, not on what legitimately claims it, but on long deductions and whole speculative systems.

¹This, of course, tends directly to obliterate the boundary line between inspired truth as delivered in Scripture, and *the results* of natural reason—a distinction, which cannot, for the sake of the dearest interests of man, be too rigidly maintained.—And over and above that, the presentation of Scripture truths, mainly on their intellectual side, has a tendency to make us forget that not *γνώσις* but *πραξις*,—the application of truths to the purification of the moral nature, and not truths independently, and as subjects of science—is the object of the Gospel; the production indeed of perfect reason, but to *us* working in the heart, and essentially experimental—acted rather than believed.

¹ Thus Clem. Alex. considers the philosophy of Greece as a divine gift; and there is, in the language of German Neology, the same application of *divine* terms to human conclusions—thus, by *extending* the inspiration of God, destroying its exclusive appropriation to holy writ.

But, the truth of the principle itself is unshaken, and upon it are built, though not with a divine authority yet with an irresistible reason, those many noble works on the Christian evidences, internal and external, with which, to the vindication of His ways with men, and the demonstration of the uniform tenor of His laws, the Providence of God has enriched the Church. The great work of Hooker,—with its magnificent breadth of view, of the workings of the same divine intelligence in the laws physical and moral; and of the *unity of reason*, as his light, whether in the reception of its revealed truths, or its action in that ample field which is independent of revelation—and Butler's profound analogy of His ways in nature and in the Gospel, are, among ourselves, imperishable

monuments of the authority of the principle in question. The only point is, as to its extent, and the mode of its application. For, while there can be no doubt in points properly scientific, where the mind acts on laws not liable to perversion, and where conclusions may be safely drawn to an indefinite extent in a progressive series—because, no propositions here stimulate the reason to contradiction, through their influence on the passions—it is very different in that application not of the pure, but the mixed intellect, which involves moral truths, and principles influential upon human practice.

For here, more or less, the innate depravity of the heart begins to act, to misunderstand the proper sphere of reason, to prevent its operations, and distort its conclusions. It will be, however, sufficient to remark, that the immediate cause which has thus quenched the light of God and turned it to darkness, has arisen from the extension of the *empirical* reason, the faculty that operates in sense, beyond its legitimate limits; and from making it a judge and standard of supernatural verities themselves, rather than of those *outward* evidences only, on which they are, originally, presented to our acceptance. The higher reason is ever coincident with inspiration; and it would be a noble undertaking to reconcile the systems of intellectual philosophy, so far as they are in harmony with the undeniable principles of the human mind or natural light of God in the soul, with the supernatural truths of revelation, not on an eclectic system, but the clear sense of God's declared truth. It might be effected,

if it were possible to find a mind at once sufficiently comprehensive and yet analytical,—with a perfect scriptural simplicity and a Catholic faith, on one hand, and a sufficient sympathy with the diversities of the speculative intellect, on the other,—a rare union of gifts, but without which it could never be adequately executed, nor ought to be undertaken.

4. Unquestionably, however, so much of light was accorded to Heathens who lived far beyond, not only the direct illumination, but even the secondary influences of revealed truth, as to make it a matter of infinite interest to confirm and illustrate from them the statements of holy Writ on the facts of our common humanity. I do not mean, that, strictly speaking, the mind of the believer lacks it in the way of proof, or would abandon the smallest portion of the Gospel truths without it: certainly not. But this Catholic feeling, and sympathy with other men's minds, is instinctive to the human heart; and not less so even when the mind is most spiritualized, if intellectual capacity be combined with holiness of spirit; and it delights, for its own sake, in the discovery of points of resemblance, and in the enlargement of the brotherhood of common thought and common wants. And there is a sensible satisfaction, if not an increase of faith, in every new fact which it collects in harmony with the statements of the inspired volume. It is, moreover, inherent in the nature of all moral evidence, that, unlike truths mathematically demonstrated, whatever point of conviction the mind may have reached through it, it must admit an

Illustration
of Scripture
from hea-
then writ-
ings.

increase of strength even in the most ardent believer—and thus it must continue to be with faculties and a probationary state like ours, till trial is swallowed up in victory, and faith changed into vision.

It is no wonder therefore, that, in some points, and those of paramount importance to the spiritual interests of man, the largest share of knowledge and comprehension should have been bestowed upon heathen minds—it is not without a design on the part of Almighty God, and is profoundly connected with this adaptation of the light of nature, as communicated by the *Λόγος*, to the reception of the supernatural and perfecting verities which He has revealed as incarnate God.

I do not mean to say that the greatest powers of *inventive genius* have been exhibited by heathen intellects, except so far as a vast penetration, and an all-grasping observation of moral and intellectual truths, may, in some sort, deserve the name, by systematically presenting to our view unfamiliar but certain facts, or familiar facts in new combination. But I mean the greatest faculties, in their respective departments and for their respective vocations *in the investigation of our common nature*, which the world has ever seen—faculties preeminently fitted for an intellectual supremacy—systematic and formative, along with the subtlest and most sagacious analysis,—and evidently designed by the bestower of these magnificent gifts, to exercise a paramount, and, on the whole, beneficial influence upon all succeeding generations.

This is surely the case with Aristotle and Plato,

who being, on one hand, elevated by the strength of their genius above their fellow men, and, on the other, drawn by their respective instincts to throw all their force into the two departments of the human mind which are identified with their labours and their names, may, in justice, be considered, not merely as expounders of their own sentiments, but really as the *representatives of all men*; and as the catholic philosophers of the human mind, in its utmost expansion without the enlightenment of revelation! And, whether the object of our investigation be the facts and laws of natural morality; or, on the other side, the *spiritual* aspects of the carnal man,—his *intellectual tendencies* at least heavenwards, his decidedly marked though still obscure graspings after the possession of a divine happiness, and desires for the defecation of the better soul from these fleshly impulses with which it seems so intimately mixed,—beyond a question, these two great men are the best exponents of the truth.

And it is either to the one or the other of these portions of our nature, that the threatenings or invitations of revealed truth are constantly appealing,—resting upon them, as their real foundation and internal verification to us, even when this appeal is not explicitly avowed; and there is no important point in either, which, by making Plato or Aristotle the vehicle of proof, may not be established by the authority of the natural and heathen man. And surely this is a vast advantage to the Christian advocate, and a sensible satisfaction to every en-

Scriptural
uses of
Aristotle
and Plato.

quiring mind, that the proof of these most important truths should be placed beyond the reach of doubt, or the possibility of misconception ;—that they should not rest, as an infidel might think, on the equivocal testimony of possible enthusiasts, who, by the very excess of hardihood with which they testified to their heavenly hopes in the midst of sufferings, might lead to a reasonable doubt as to the universality of the wants which those hopes answered, and the pollutions which they removed. That they should not depend, either, on the vulgar in moral feeling, or the dull in intellect, but on that which in both cases is the calm and cool record of the most comprehensive minds of antiquity. I say—cool and calm—for it is a great error in regard to Plato to confound his imagination with a mere discursive fancy, or looseness of observation. No one has a more practical insight into life, no one is a more searching analyser—and the imagination only supplies that power of analogy and illustration, without which it would be impossible to convey from mind to mind the inner conceptions and finer instincts of the soul.

I say nothing here, except just to notice it, of the invaluable service to sound learning, and the effectual maintenance against all gainsayers of the Scripture truth which Aristotle has rendered, by that logic for the management of the discursive reason of which he is the greatest master ; and which, through the Schoolmen, has descended, with a prodigious accession of strength by a limitation to its proper sphere, to the masculine masters of the reformed theology.

Nor, shall I dwell on the vast resources which Plato gives us in asserting the predominance of spirit—a higher logic and a higher reason—and in carrying out that opposition to all *material* philosophies, which tasks not only an ample knowledge of the Scriptures, but the utmost faculties of intellectual and metaphysical science. It refutes beforehand, and by the light of nature, all those systems of the 18th century, of Locke, Condillac, and Paley, which tended to perpetuate that low standard of moral and religious truth from which they sprung, and created, even where there was a real faith, a constant opposition between it and the principles of the received philosophy—a materializing metaphysical creed.

They are, both of them, of great and permanent importance, on another side of the same great question. For while, by living and speculating before the general spread of Christianity had impregnated even the minds of heathens with ideas essentially Christian, they give us the natural mind, as much as possible, in its real condition; so, from the fact that their faculties so far exceed the average of mankind, and unquestionably touch upon the limits of possible human intellect in the present state, they give us the best gauge by which to measure its capacity for the ascertainment of revealed truth, for the purification of the heart, and the relief of the necessities of man's moral and spiritual nature. In Aristotle, indeed, there is nothing which could possibly be confounded with revelation, or *spiritual* truth, and we have seen already, in the higher specula-

tions of theology, the amount of Plato's claims to a discovery of the Divine nature. But the fact is unquestionable, that they go far beyond this negative acknowledgment of weakness. There are no writings whatsoever, which mark *so* unequivocally, both the inadequacy of the reason to satisfy the wants of human nature, or even so much as to imagine a remedy for them—and the palpable impotence of the greatest intellects, from the moment that they began, with faculties made intentionally unequal to the task, to speculate beyond those natural facts for the observation and illustration of which they were so wonderfully accomplished. No one can fail observing an instantaneous and striking difference in their clearness of perception in mental and moral facts, *as facts*, and the unsatisfactoriness or absurdity of the accompanying hypotheses, or exposition of their ultimate principle—the *true spiritual* relation of them to God is never approximated even by Plato.

But still, not only *in them*, but always and every where, there will be a perfect correspondency between the Christian revelation given through the Λόγος, and any profound philosophy of which man is the subject, so far as observation and facts go to compare them. However infidel may be the ultimate tendencies of writers, or false their hypotheses, political or religious; yet *the facts* upon which they reason, and specially those which are connected, in any way, with the spiritual wants of man, are almost always, at least partially, true, and rest upon a real foundation. If so, they ought to have a meaning,

if properly interpreted,—a something to fit to them, *in the revelation of God's will as towards man*, in that comprehensiveness of it which makes it co-extensive with human nature—its actual condition—and all its real wants! It will be important, therefore, to the cause of truth, to examine them, and give them their due weight,—never to neglect or despise them.

In fact, no such philosophies are to be undervalued by the wise advocate of revelation;—for all that is real, or is the representative of reality, has a power in it to influence mankind,—and, by the forcible truthfulness of some of their facts, they will and do exercise great power over men's minds, in spite of the false theoretic views combined with them. The truths are felt—and, in the lack of higher wisdom, the exposition and remedy of them will be taken for granted. We must not therefore, as Christian advocates, be afraid to grapple with them; because the solution of the difficulty, if the actual condition of things permits it to be solved,—and the gratification of the want, if it be a want—will always be found in the revelation which the Divine reason has bestowed upon us, and which has foreseen it, or provided for it, in one or other portion of the Catholic faith. But here—in the application of the predetermined and revealed provision—will always be found the difficulty; and unaccountable the fact would be, but for sin, and the dislocation of mind, intellectually as well as morally, which it has universally produced. There is no disposition found to accept the solution; no disposition to accept a remedy, even on the part

All true philosophies contain some truth, or indicate some real want, the solution of which is found in revelation.

of those, who, of all men, perhaps, most profoundly probe the evil, or at least most correctly appreciate it in its immediate effects. And yet, they who thus reject the cure which God offers, serve all the while, as sure, though involuntary witnesses to the reasonableness of those further discoveries which God has made, and fitted on, so to say, to their prior experience—an awful warning to the humble Christian, while they thus shut themselves out from a higher and truer knowledge.

Hence, as a consequence of the lack of grace upon the heart, men's very tenderness and concern for humanity,—which may be real, though imaginative rather than moral;—being based upon wrong principles, is empty and vain; it is extenuated into nothing, in the unattainable vastness of the object at which it professes to aim—a charity of speculation only. Moreover, in unregenerated minds of this order, every thing else is absorbed in the consciousness of intellectual activity; and in the self-satisfaction which comes of penetrating, or of seeming to penetrate, the inward springs of the soul, the moral principles and defects of social systems, and the means of their regeneration, while others are content to suffer ignorantly, or to murmur brutishly. This is quite sufficient to lull the sense of internal pain in themselves, as well as sympathy for the true root of the multiform evil, the spiritual corruption of mankind.

It is to be observed likewise, that *all* the discoveries which they have thus far made, are, without exception, accompanied by that feeling of strength

and vigour which is the reward of intellectual exertion. Whilst all the higher discoveries contained in divine revelation, which are necessary to make the former available and utilize them to men's good, must be *preceded* in their reception by an acknowledgment of former blindness and present weakness; and by a renunciation of that independency of mind, and ultimate reference to self, which, in all its former operations, conferred such exquisite gratification upon the soul.

II. But, even in point of mere knowledge, apart entirely from results and the practical remedy of practical evils, which, to the wisdom of man, experience proves to be desperate, even the most truthful and profound human philosophy does no more than lead to the threshold of revelation. There it leaves men to tread back again upon their own footsteps; and there most human philosophers have been left, in the absence of that childlike temper to which alone the wisdom of Christianity can be unlocked.

The highest truths in philosophy, the lowest in revelation.

How happy would it have been for speculative minds, had they possessed no more of knowledge, or of the capacity to acquire it, than the multitude whom they despise, and upon whom they reason; a sense, that is, of the evil and its burthen; and a desire to escape from it, without the power to deaden it, or to convert it, from a crying necessity of the soul, into an aliment for the intellect!

The Gospel, therefore, commences where Philosophy ends, and begins at a height incalculably

above the utmost reach of the latter; exalting the merest child, who can cry "Abba Father," *beyond the greatest reasoner after the flesh.*

The teaching of the
Λόγος.

Then it is that the Λόγος, after teaching naturally, begins to teach *supernaturally*, building, on those moral foundations which are prepared to receive revelation, that spiritual nature and true wisdom which He alone can convey. And here He becomes not only the Teacher, but He is Himself, as God-Man, the *very subject matter* of this divine and spiritual instruction. He is, in His own person, that wisdom of God by which are healed the maladies under which man and the whole creation groan and travail in pain together until now; by which we are transformed, in reality, into *that* which, by fits and starts, even in the state of nature, we longed to be; and by which we are rendered competent to exercise, without fleshly let or hindrance, those capacities for heavenly happiness which had, till now, lain dormant within us.

By an identification with Himself, there is as real an implantation of spiritual life, as of natural life by fleshly generation, an immortal seed which, in its effects, is a new nature, and has within it, a real power and energy of transformation—till the once earthly man, who was fitted only for corruption, and tended to death by a natural law, is purified for the society of glorified spirits, and the unveiled vision of God. And, throughout this growth, the moral and spiritual means by which it is operated have depended entirely upon a knowledge of Himself, the *very*

Word, in these relations and offices which He has assumed for this gracious purpose. He is the way, and the truth, and the life, and being *the express image of the invisible God*, Himself transmits to us, in the gradual subdual of sin and growth of all holy affections, such an approach to it, as may prepare us for the things of which the natural man never dreams, but which God has prepared for them that love Him.

And this discovery of Himself is not by such a way of power and strength as is visible to the eye, attractive to the imagination, or flattering to the faculties of reason; but in a manner far beyond all human thoughts to discover, and such as the human mind and the unchanged human heart are alike Opposed to human reason. disinclined to receive. It is a way of blood, of lowliness, of more shames and infamies than there are found names for among men—God manifest in the flesh, and dying that we may live. We preach Christ crucified, in truth and reality the wisdom of God—and so acknowledged by human reason when in its right mind—but in the mean while, “to the Jew a stumbling-block, and to the Greek foolishness.”

Here then is the point in God’s wisdom, which is so utterly alien to the pride of science, and diametrically opposed to that carnal philosophy which turns truth itself into an instrument of vain-glory, and into matter, at the best, for selfish and unfruitful speculation. The wants of man become no longer an exercise of the mind, or an amusement of philosophy, but realities to be practically remedied,—the subject of an actual

discipline, and a process really remedial. There is required, therefore, an entire renunciation of the speculative temper—and, in its stead, must be found an unaffected confession of want and misery—a real wish and struggle to escape, by this new way, from that moral and intellectual degradation, which the greatest efforts and highest discoveries of reason were only made an instrument, in the hands of God, to prove and to illustrate. This was indeed a new way of teaching, and an unknown discipline; and, when the Word first announced to mankind the tidings of redemption, no wonder that men should have shrunk from the sacrifices of self which were indispensable to its reception. The simplicity of children was made to rebuke the wisdom of the wise, and all that was strongest in thought was forced to give way to a power alien to sense, and, neither morally nor intellectually, within the capacity of nature.

For, though the wants which it professed to supply, and the miseries which it undertook to remedy, were experimental and of *every day knowledge*; yet the faith and principles which underlie the means applied were astonishing mysteries, and the means themselves, without these suppositions, utterly inadequate to the task. This too was *a mystery in teaching*; that no mere training of the affections, nor an intellectual reception of the truth of the Saviour's offices, nor any moral means whatsoever, were enough; but that something beyond it was necessary for man, and something else actually secured for him. This was that *change of the will*, which lies beyond the reach of ethics; and that re-

generation of the affections of the soul, without which, the external teaching of any truth however wonderful and affecting, as that of Christ crucified eminently is, would be utterly unavailing, and, in the absence of which, no seed of goodness or immortality could grow.

Here again, as the inward Illuminator, and so working on the springs of the soul as to make it bend and submit itself to the reception of these mysteries of the Gospel, the *Λόγος* is still the Teacher, as well as the subject of the teaching. For the Spirit ministers to Him and for Him; and, whether in extraordinary endowments, as at the beginning, or in His ordinary operations at all times, is the most precious treasure which Christ has purchased by His death, and the special gift which He dispenses to His elect; turning thus external facts into inward experiences, mere truths into vital principles, and so identifying His influences with our faculties, that they become ours by ripening and enlarging their power, and not by making them cease to be our own.

And the instrumental means by which, in conformity to our nature and moral being, He conveys this inner and transforming teaching, are arranged with a divine symmetry and in an authoritative system,—and, in order to discipline our fallen nature into a heavenly condition, and the type of holiness which it has lost, we are committed to the charge of that visible Church, to which Christ Himself, through His Apostles, has given an organic form, and a commission to bring souls to Him. And within it, by the preaching of the Word,

The super-natural instruments for this teaching deposited in the visible Church.

by Sacraments, by prayer, and other ordinances of which faith is the soul, He *usually* communicates this indispensable condition for effectual teaching.

And every where it is to be observed, that, though accompanied and verified by these inward influences which no master of earthly wisdom ever imagined, yet the *impulsive power*, which awakens the intelligent mind into action, and stimulates the soul, *is from*

¹ I do not, however, mean to deny that, to souls who from their earliest years, enjoy God's covenanted grace, the supernatural *through-*out works with the natural—but still, I believe, in this order.

*without*¹—the effect is produced, according to the ordinary laws of the understanding and the affections, by the presentation, to both of them, of objects fitted to call them into the desired action. The state of the heart is referred, from beginning to end, to the outward historical facts and dogmatic teaching inseparable from them, which are wholly independent of any thing merely subjective. Nor does the knowledge of this heavenly wisdom come from an inward illumination or suggestion; but, so far, by ways analogous to ordinary knowledge and moral instruction, in which the inward faculties are awakened from without.

No doubt, had it so seemed good to Him, the great Teacher might have worked by way of constant inspiration, and conveyed to every individual soul whom He had redeemed, a direct knowledge of divine truths, as, in creation, He does inspire their natural faculties of reason and moral perception. But He has not so done; and, in accordance with that mysterious and awful law, apparently universal, by which rational intelligences are not only thrown into society, but in dependence on each other, for

what most intimately concerns their well-doing—the communication of the indispensable facts of the Gospel, the glad tidings of salvation—is left contingent on the fidelity of the Church, in whose hands, working mainly through her Ministers, they have been deposited, along with the other outward signs and means of grace, in trust for all mankind.

Here, therefore, is a portion of the *office of Teacher*, which all men may discharge, and which, in its *highest earthly form*, is solemnly committed by our Lord to His consecrated Ministers, to such an extent as to make the eternal interest of their brethren dependent on their fidelity to their trust—the *outward* preaching of the Word, the *outward* training and discipline of Christ's flock, the *outward* administration of the Sacraments—not the spiritual graces which come from Him alone, and rest *conditionally* on that inward frame, which, though generally joined with a proper discharge of our visible duties, no outward ministration or teaching of men can command, or human eye discern. It is Christ's to bestow these—the glorious gifts of the Priest and King!

The office of Teacher, how far communicated to men.

But in her *totality* the Church of Christ is, *to the world without*, a constant teacher—a teacher, in the truths she proclaims, the holy discipline she practises, the signs of a divine original which she exhibits, the impress and signature of God upon her—she is intended to be as a city placed upon a hill, that cannot be hid, bodying forth the Saviour, and continually testifying to those great truths which regard man's redemption, and which, at no period even of the greatest internal

corruption, she has ever universally deserted, or formally denied. And not a passive witness is the Church prepared to be, but is destined to carry out the Gospel beyond itself, with a constant motion and an *aggressive* teaching.

And so *within*, and towards each other, *all* Christians are bound, to the extent of their capacity, and the opportunities which God has given them to be *Teachers* likewise; and no one is without that appropriate and personal sphere in which, without derogation from other authority, the effectual knowledge of the Gospel, and the salvation of souls committed to his charge, is made dependent upon him. And thus, as God's natural attributes are reflected not only in the mighty whole of the creation but in each individual particle, so the image of Christ and His offices, as far as they are communicable, is reflected in each ultimate atom of which the organic whole is constructed; and the collective Church is multiplied in each individual.

Still, eminently, and with special power, by virtue of their office and the unction of the Spirit, are the Ministers of the Church of Christ Teachers—and, upon the due discharge of this portion of their trust, mainly depends the salvation of the souls of which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers. No step or motion God-ward, no mutual or individual celebration of prayer and thanksgiving, no participation of holy ordinances, is even possible without a previous intelligence, and that teaching of the ways of God in the Gospel which cannot be separated

from a rational and understanding faith ; no not, in its degree, *even in the child*, in whose behalf, before it has faith and repentance for itself, the faith and repentance of others is required by the Church. And then there are those solemn accessories of effectual teaching,—the rebuke, the constant calling to mind, the building up the structure of Christian wisdom upon the first foundation ; and the leading, by spiritual comparison, into those profounder meanings, and the application of those great truths, which are contained in the depths of revelation ; to the comprehension of which, intellect and holiness illuminated by the Spirit, and indissolubly combined in their operations into one mighty faculty without a name in the world's language, are indispensable to the soul. All this involves a vast responsibility,—it demands a clear discrimination and statement of great principles,—and a constant and accurate comprehension of the laws of man's spiritual and moral nature relatively to the Gospel ; laws which ought to be placed beyond the reach of any personal peculiarities, to colour them, or the suspicion of limited views, to misrepresent them. It requires a commanding truthfulness of statement, which every heart should acknowledge, and a ready reference to an unquestionable authority, to make possible the discharge of so solemn and onerous a duty.

LECTURE V.

I. 1. The whole counsel of God in Scripture, which is a perfect rule of faith and practice. 2. The Church to be tried by it—and the full perusal of it the right and duty of all Christians.

II. Traditions. 1. Of ceremonies over which the Church has power. 2. The tradition of teaching, always accompanying the word—but not authoritative. 3. The primitive tradition coextensive with Scripture, and not supplemental or complementary to it—the Scripture acknowledged from the first as a perfect rule, and as such adopted by the Church of England, and its interpretation confirmed by primitive antiquity. 4. Objections answered.

III. Evidence from the formularies of the Church of England, that Scripture is the sole rule of faith.

MARK VII. 13.

Ye have made the word of God of none effect by your traditions.

I. 1. **W**HERE is this word of God to be found? The word of God fully contained in the Bible. We have no longer the presence of inspired men, nor of Him who with lips of flesh spake as never man spake—no living oracle from whom we may resolve our doubts, or enlighten our ignorance, or strengthen our convictions, or penetrate the true springs which regulate the heart and consciences of men! The Ministers of the word are manifestly not endowed, by virtue of their office, with any higher reach

of faculties, either for the discovery or the preservation of truth; any illumination whatsoever, which differs in its *nature* from that which is accorded to all Christians, in proportion to their capacity, their earnestness of love, and the surrender of time and mind to divine pursuits—a *simple faith* accompanying them. They are men of like passions with their brethren; not necessarily endowed with a superiority to personal interest, an entire devotedness to their Lord and Master, or such an exemption from the ordinary failings of men, as to make it certain, that, even *with* the gift of higher faculties for the preservation and the discovery of sacred truth, they would act up to so magnificent a privilege, or be faithful stewards of the treasure.

Besides, they have, confessedly, no *supernatural power*, no working of miracles to attest their commission to men's eyes, and the truthfulness of their teaching to men's minds; and the fervent inculcation, in season and out of season, of truths not only solemn, but calling for constant sacrifices and great self-abandonment, even the surrender of mind and body, heart and soul, imperatively requires some disinterested and unsuspected authority upon which to rest. What they want individually, cannot be effectually supplied by an appeal to ancient or general tradition; for, where all are frail and peccable individually, no accumulation into masses can confer impeccability or infallibility—no continuity of opinion, by joining on century to century, can alter the nature of truth or falsehood. A long succession of ages,

and the vast multitude of mankind, have, before this, been perfectly unanimous in deadly error ; and, whatever a priori weight such a witness to facts, or system of opinions founded on them, may possess ; nay, whatever *moral demonstration*, under certain conditions and limitations, it may and does bring with it ; it has nothing, merely in itself, and on points on which mankind are prone to err, to silence doubt, or preclude enquiry—it has nothing to supply the want of a known and definite authority to regulate and control the belief of other men, and give certainty to its own.

To place such awful truths beyond the reach of the fluctuations of opinion, the infirmities of memory, the mistakes of ignorant, and the frauds of interested men, our divine Lord, as Teacher or Prophet, has committed them in their totality to written and imperishable records—He has given us the Bible. I do not mean, that He has thrust them abroad upon the world in that form, as a dead and voiceless book, to make their own way, to be taken up or laid down, as chance or fancy lead men to consult them—nor that He has left them to a casual advocacy, or arbitrary interpretation, or the licentious speculation of individual minds. Had He so done, He would have been acting in direct contravention to the laws which He Himself had established, and those *moral* necessities, which, while they make themselves felt in the every day teaching of common knowledge, are imperative in a scheme which roots its power in the affections, and is to be *lived* rather than believed.

The Bible
combined
with the
Church.

He has fitted on the authoritative record to his living ministers, by an inseparable union. As He has not left a succession of teachers, without an authoritative institute from which they may teach, and by which they might prove their teaching to men's understandings; so, He has not left the Book without Teachers, who are an essential part of His plan, and of as absolute an ordinance and as divine an origin as itself. It matters not to ask what the written Gospel might effect, of itself, on a mind casually thrown upon its perusal, *without any living guide or extraneous instruction* whatsoever.—It is an unprofitable speculation.—Though, *if* it were so, with the gift, which only God can give, of a humble and teachable heart and a desire for divine truth, we cannot doubt that its living words would bear their witness in themselves, and make their unassisted student wise unto salvation.

But we are not called to deal with an impossible or hypothetical case, but with the living truth of eighteen hundred years; ever since the Gospel was first preached, such never has been, nor, till the end of the world, will it ever be the case. The word of God never can be separated, as a question of fact, from the visible witness of the Church, and the interpretation of its teachers. How shall men believe without hearing? or how shall they hear without a teacher? or how shall they teach effectually, unless they have a fixed canon, and be sent to its interpretation with authority to proclaim its truths?

With this provision then, and under this safeguard,

for the assertion of its authority, for the constant inculcation of its truths, and to make it a part of the visible and energetic agencies of humanity, God the Word has transfused the wisdom of salvation into this divine Book. It contains all things *necessary for salvation, both in faith and practice*; and, over and above these great first truths which *all* minds fitly prepared may gather from it, it has treasures of wisdom which we cannot in this life exhaust—not only *intellectually*, for though that be true, it may be of small service to the soul—but *spiritually*, to be reached by the humble heart and earnest faith alone, the only keys to these celestial mysteries, with the glowing illumination of the Holy Ghost upon them. As there is no portion of visible nature, therefore, which does not bear marks of the Divine intelligence upon it, from the blade of grass up to the planet or the sun; so, the Divine reason has not issued forth to address the understanding of men in their own language, the laws of both of which, and their exquisite adaptation to each other, He has Himself ordained, without spreading throughout it that illumination, of which it was intended to be the permanent vehicle.

And, as in the natural world—though to an un-instructed eye all seems a lack of system, a careless throwing together of elements and powers, without discernible order or accurate interdependency, yet—to the eye of science the most exquisite symmetry and perfection of design is manifested; so is the word of God composed of all elements,

didactic, prophetic, historical, the gathering together of records from all ages and all minds ; without connection, or continuity of subject, or communication of purpose ; much composed in the emergencies of the moment ; much of immediate *local* application, and without a *thought* perhaps of future ages, or a universal reception ! a chaos of confusion to a careless eye, but the wisdom of God notwithstanding. For, out of this irregularity comes its real order ; from this variety, its vast comprehensiveness ; from these *emergent* necessities, its universal anticipation of all wants and errors ; all overruled, into an absolute completeness to its office of universal teaching, in union with the Church and her systematic discipline. No wonder therefore at its unity, the Teacher being the same, whether in the patriarchal times, or the types of the Mosaic law, or in the Prophets who were moved to foretel the things which God had ordained from the foundation of the world ; or in the Apostles, when they were guided into all truth, in the records of His life and the interpretation of His doctrines. It is the same revelation of the one Saviour.

It speaks
its own in-
spiration.

And, as is the substance and object of the teaching, so is the manner. No book speaks like this book—*non vox hominem sonat*. By the universal confession of mankind, it has about it a serene depth of power, and an incomparable majesty, not unworthy of the original which it claims. However it may be, yet so it is, that the study of it has universally conferred, not only a new freedom on human

thought, but a new dignity on all the subjects which it touches, and a new purity and elevation on human language itself. Yet is there in it no didactic monotony, but an entire and versatile adaptation to the conditions of the human mind and heart in those to whom it is addressed ; nay, it is modelled even on the peculiarities of those who were made the mouth-piece, though not the mere mechanical ὄργανον of the divinity—instinct with an influence, which does not destroy the least portion of their individual character, but, by that nameless change which emanates from the contact of the Spirit, elevates them, on one hand, to the height of possible human thought, and, on the other, gives them a pure simplicity, to which there is nothing similar to be found in literature, or in any other expression of the human mind. *Thus saith the Lord* ; and we really feel it to be the Lord, though it is in His servant—hear ye the *word of the Lord* ; and it is the word, manifestly, of the Framer of mankind. From no one else could come that insight which it possesses into all the complexities of the nature to which it is addressed—a real insight, not ab extrâ, but ab intrâ—just such as a great mechanist might possess into the springs of a machine, to whose construction and true relation of parts, an external observer can only approximate. It is, in this respect, undeniably the work of Him whom no vastness can outgrow, nor minuteness elude ; for, not only do you find marked therein those great tendencies, in which, throughout all men, there is a general unity of nature ; but

every individuality of thought and temper, every diversity of condition or fortune; all influences which modify our wants, our opinions, or our feelings, are here provided for, are the subject of distinct calculations, and have an appropriate remedy for them. The very greatest dramatists and anatomists of human nature have never attained its comprehensiveness, or rivalled its exquisite analysis of men's souls. They all fall short of the depths of the spirit, that power of touching interior and central truth, which makes a man, in the diligent study of Scripture, cry out, in spite of himself, *Thou God seest me*. It is the word that searcheth the secrets of the soul; this word is, as the Apostle truly describes it to be, a two-edged sword, quick and powerful, and reaching to the dividing of the hearts and reins.

Whilst it thus leaves no condition of mind without its appropriate wisdom; and no state of life without specific rules to guide it; so, on the other hand, in one great relation, it throws aside all artificial distinctions and all social differences; every thing that parts man from man, and hides our common humanity. It considers all mankind alike, as sinners to be saved; as immortal souls in imminent danger,—a levelling *extremity* of peril and guilt, in which there is neither high nor low, and where every thing is to be subordinated to the calls of an exacting and overwhelming eternity.

It is the simplest as well as the profoundest of books.

Taking therefore, as it does, the wants of our common humanity as its subject, and the ordinary

apprehensions of mankind, as that to which its statements are to be addressed, it is, in the main, not only the profoundest, but, beyond all comparison, the simplest and most intelligible, of all writings. Its object is to *instruct mankind*,—not the sage or philosopher, but the masses of men¹. It is their companion at all times and in all places, not only in the temple, but in the secrecy of the closet and the community of the family hearth, as Chrysostom and Origen truly state it to be; and the Word, who is essential light, is the illuminator of it and of them. So it is, that the Psalmist speaks of a small part of that revelation which Christians possess, “It is a light to the feet, and a lamp to the paths;” attesting therefore its existence by its own light. It is like a light, shining in a dark place, and making discovery of itself to all that can see. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; making wise the simple; rejoicing the heart, and enlightening the eyes;” and, to a rightly-disposed heart and ordinary understanding, it carries in itself the evidence of its power and wisdom^a.

^a It is to be presumed that, in the study of the Holy Scriptures, the heart is prepared for that illumination of the Spirit without which it is but a dark and sealed book, by humility and prayer—without that, truth, though discovered, cannot become saving.

“Εἰ οὖν τις μὴ μετὰ μεγάλης χάριτος τῆς παρὰ Θεοῦ λάβοι νοῆσαι τὰ εἰρημένα καὶ γεγενημένα ὑπὸ τῶν προφητῶν, οὐδὲν αὐτὸν ὀνήσει τὸ τὰς ῥήσεις δοκεῖν λέγειν, ἢ τὰ γεγενημένα, εἰ μὴ λόγον ἔχει καὶ περὶ αὐτῶν ἀποδιδόναι.”
Just Orat. cum Tryph. §. 92.

That being presumed, the *best interpreter of Scripture is itself*;

¹But so say all the old Fathers.
“Inclinavit,” says Austin,
“Deus Scripturas ad infantium et lactentium capacitatem.”
“Nihil,” says Cyril of Alex.
contr. Julian. “in Scripturis difficile est iis qui in illis versantur ut decet.”
“Faciles sunt Scripturæ ad intelligendum et prorsus exposita,” says Chrysostom;
“they are so, he says, to the servant, to the countryman, to the widow, and the boy, and him who is very unskilful.”
(Jer. Taylor, Sufficiency of Scripture to Salvation.)
“Ὅσον γὰρ Θεοῦ καὶ Διαβόλου τὸ μέσον, τοσούτου τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ Διαβόλου διδασκαλίας διαφορὰ καὶ τοῦτο δείξει σαφίστερον τοῖς μύθοις ἢ κεινίσι πα-

ρατιβήμενον
των θείων
λογίων τὸ
κάλλος, τὰς
τοῦ νοεροῦ
φωτὸς. ἐκ-
τίμιπον μαρ-
μαρογὰς.”
Theod.
Hær. Fab.
l. 5. Præf.
t. 4. p. 377.

2. This word of God therefore, so rich and so complete in all knowledge, is the great instrument

those passages which are in themselves evident, illuminate those which are obscure, till, by pursuing the analogy of faith, we penetrate more and more deeply into the inspired records; this is a better mode of understanding the word of God, than all which tradition or learned commentary can supply. “It should be a rule,” says Bishop Horsley, who has admirably exemplified his own Canon, “with every one who would read the Holy Scriptures with advantage and improvement, to compare every text which may seem either important for the doctrine it may contain, or remarkable for the turn of its expression, with the parallel passages in other parts of Holy Writ. It is incredible to any one, who has not in some degree made the experiment, what a proficiency may be made in that knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation, by studying Scripture in this manner, without any other commentary or exposition than what the different parts of the sacred Volume supply to each other. *I will not scruple to assert, that the most illiterate Christian, if he can but read his English Bible, and will take the pains to read it in this manner, will not only attain all that practical knowledge which is necessary to his salvation, but, by God’s blessing, he will become learned in every thing relating to his religion in such a degree, that he will not be liable to be beguiled by the refined arguments or by the false assertions of those who endeavour to graft their own opinions upon the oracles of God.*” Bp. Horsley’s Nine Sermons on the Reformation and other subjects, Sermon 5. “What need is there,” says Abp. Laud, “of another rule, since this is most infallible, and the same which the ancient Church of Christ admitted? And if it were sufficient for the ancient Church to guide them, and¹ direct their Councils, why should it be now held insufficient for us, at least, till a free General Council can be had? And it hath both the conditions which Bellarmine doth require in a rule, that it be certain, and that it be known. Now the Romanists dare not deny but this rule is certain; and that it is sufficiently known in the manifest parts of it, and such as are necessary to salvation, none of the ancients did

¹ This is worth noting, for the guide of the first great Councils was certainly Scripture, and not Tradition.

which the Church possesses, either for the conversion of mankind, or the edification of her own children. And in each case she appeals, and can only appeal, to the conscience and the reason, to both of which it is, by God Himself, expressly ac-

ever deny—so there is an infallible rule. Nor need there be such fear of a private spirit in *these manifest things, which being but read or heard teach themselves.*" Conference with Fisher, §. 33.

Origen, who, with all his dangerous licences of interpretation, was one of the first who attempted to ground the interpretation of the words of Scripture upon sound principles, lays down clearly both the principle of comparison, of which Bishop Horsley speaks so forcibly, and that assistance of the Spirit which is indispensable to utilize the knowledge so acquired.

“ Ἄλλοι δὲ βουλόμενοι ἐξετάζειν τὴν γράφην, νοῦν ἔχοντες τὸ γνῶμα αὐτῆς εὐρεῖν ἂν δύναιτο· οὔσης πολλαχοῦ ἀληθῶς ἀσαφοῦς μὲν, οὐ μὴν, ὡς φησι Κέλσος, τὸ μηδέν. Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ δυνάταί τις ἀνόητος ἢ γοῆς ἐξομαλίσαι ἢ ὅπη ποτὲ βούλεται τὸ λεχθὲν σφετερίσασθαι· μονὸς δὲ καὶ πᾶς ὁ κατ' ἀλήθειαν ἐν Χριστῷ σοφὸς τὸν εἰρμὸν πάντα ἀποδάη ἂν τῶν μετ' ἐπικρίψεως εἰρημένων ἐν ταῖς προφητείαις, πνευματικά πνευματικοῖς συγκρίνων, καὶ κατασκευάζων ἀπὸ τῆς συνηθείας τῶν γραφῶν ἕκαστον τῶν εὐρισκομένων. Orig. contr. Cels. lib. vii.

“ Ad hæc explananda non humani ingenii viribus nitendum est, sed orationibus et precibus ad Deum fuis. In quo etiam vestri adjutorio indigemus, ut Deus, Pater verbi, det nobis verbum in ad apertionem oris nostri, ut possimus considerare mirabilia de lege ejus¹.” And such in truth is the general voice and spirit of the Fathers, who universally insist on this principle of interpretation as alone necessary to understand Scripture, to the saving of the soul. ¹ Origen. in Levit. Hom. 6. ad init.

Our own Homilies lay down most distinctly the power which Holy Scripture, by God's grace, possesses, of illuminating the minds of all, however poor and otherwise uninstructed, who consult them as the oracles of God. And in so doing our Reformers are only proceeding, as they ever do, on the real spirit and principles of primitive antiquity.

commodated,—the book of life and light and all wisdom, furnished with every instrument to move the one, and convince the other.

With this limitation indeed, that she knows, in one sense, *we must have faith before we can believe.*

The Church ready to prove the faith to men's reason.

It is certain, that is, that a moral and predisposed state of the understanding is absolutely necessary for the proper consideration of the Christian revelation. Such is the bias of our nature in the other direction, that we must desire it to be true, before we can prove it to ourselves to be so. We must take off our shoes from off our feet, and feel that the ground on which we stand is holy, before the Divine presence within it will condescend to convince our understanding, or to move our heart. But she requires no more, as the condition of convincing our reason; no more than is indispensable for the consideration of any set of moral truths. When that is done, the Church confidently and without reserve appeals to the proof on which rests the revelation, whose presence within her she testifies—and overwhelming are the evidences, which are at her command to establish the divinity of that book; for on evidence she rests it, such as human reason can appreciate, and not merely on the ipse dixit of her own authority.

The argumentative proofs of Christianity.

And this strength of the argumentative proof, does not arise from one set of circumstances taken separately, but from the whole collectively; not one fact by itself, but a thousand in connection; it is the piling of truth upon truth, the accumulation of

distinct evidences, heterogeneous, yet in perfect consistency; flowing from different quarters, yet converging, at last, to the same point; mingling, and crossing, and combining with each other—it is all this together which forms a compacted body of proof, beneath the weight of which, in the eyes of a dispassionate enquirer, objection and opposition is overwhelmed. Different minds are influenced to action by different motives, and different forms of intellect are affected by a corresponding variety of reasoning.

Here, therefore, is a new proof of the action of the Divine reason; there is something admirable and truly miraculous in this *variety* of evidences which attach to the Bible—miracles and prophecy—an external witness to strike the senses—the persuasiveness of internal purity—arguments of all kinds for the mere intellect—hopes and fears for the heart—the fulfilment of all that the imagination could have conceived of Divine love, and all that the affections could desire—all combines to work conviction, and does not leave the strangest idiosyncrasy of mind, within the bounds of reason, without its appropriate testimony.

But, whilst the Church thus deals with those without her, and supports by irrefragable arguments the veracity of the records in which eternal life is contained, with still greater confidence and unreserve does she send those to Scripture, whose minds and hearts have been prepared for the study of it, by that holy discipline with which, by the command

of her Founder, she trains up His little ones, the lambs of the flock committed to her charge.

She sends them there, *not as a favour and a permission, reluctantly granted, and jealously limited*; but, at once, as their bounden duty, and as the enjoyment of their greatest privilege. Without abandoning them to their own guidance, where they want assistance, or withholding any support which she can give, she bids them consult, themselves and for themselves, those oracles which she holds in trust for their edification and growth in peace. And, for greater comfort and encouragement, she conveys to them those gracious promises, which attach a special blessing to the diligent study of the Scriptures, and in which the Spirit of God has promised to illuminate the eyes, and soften the heart, and to guide them, with an unfailing superintendence, into the possession of all saving truth.

The claims of the Church are to be tried by Scripture.

¹ It is perfectly astonishing that any one urge this in behalf of the Church. Even Rome is constantly embarrassed by this wild claim, and, unless she pleads the evidence of miracles, runs in a

This has always been both the doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church, in its purity, and thus deals the Church of England and the Reformation, without any reserve or limitation on this right of private judgment, save those which God Himself has fixed¹. She makes no exception in favour of her own authority to teach and to rule; and therefore she appeals to the same record for the ascertainment of her own commission and ministry, as for the establishment of the rule of faith and practice. And this she may do, and does, without the surrender of her right to teach her children, till they are fit to judge and examine for themselves into the grounds of

their faith—or of her claims to their conditional obedience—or of any of those moral and presumptive evidences of her divine authority, which she possesses anterior to an individual examination of the Scripture proof, and independent of it. But she knows very well, that all this, after all, is only evidence *presumptive*—that *claims are only claims*—and that, if they are true, they must likewise be proveable to that reason which God has given to us in order that we may judge, and discriminate between truth and falsehood.

She is well aware, that, though Christ has ascertained to His Church Universal a perpetual existence, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail; and though He has promised that, in one portion of it or another, or in some members in every portion of the visible body, His Spirit shall be present, and the truths¹ necessary to salvation shall be still maintained, yet He has not gone farther. He has neither assured impeccability, nor an infallible truth, to His whole body at all times, nor to *any one* particular portion of it by name; and has, throughout, suspended His presence, and the effectual exercise of His offices, upon the purity of the Church's faith, and the sincerity of her obedience. Even to the Apostles themselves, in that plenitude of authority and inspiration in which they are unapproachable and inimitable by after generations, the promise of Christ's presence was conditional on their teaching whatsoever He commanded; and much more must it be so, in the case of those whose highest claim is

perpetual circle—
first proving
Scripture
by her au-
thority, and
then her au-
thority by
Scripture.

¹ And this is allowed on all hands by Protestants, to be a sufficient and reasonable fulfilment of the Divine promise, though you may wish to go farther. But hear Bellarmine; "Ecclesiam non posse errare, sive proponat, quæ habentur in Scripturis, sive dogmata extra Scripturam." Still more audaciously, "Si Ecclesia in dogmatibus fidei, vel morum erraret, Christo et Spiritui Sancto error tribueretur." "Christus tenetur removere omnem errorem ab Ecclesiâ." Bell. de Eccles.

Milit. l. 3. that they sit in the Apostles' chair^b. She does not, and she dares not therefore if she would, refuse, in

c. xv.
In other words,

Rome is infallible, or Christ is false;—
what an alternative!

^b I have already given some patristical quotations in proof that all Churches are to be *tried by their doctrine and its accordance with Scripture*. I will here add one or two more:—

“Quapropter eis qui in Ecclesiâ sunt, Presbyteris obaudire oportet, his qui successionem habeat ab Apostolis, sicut ostendimus; qui cum successione charisma veritatis certum, secundum placitum Patris, acceperunt. Qui vero crediti quidem sunt a multis esse Presbyteri, serviunt autem suis voluptatibus, et non præponunt timorem Dei in cordibus suis, sed contuneliis agunt reliquos, et principalis consessionis tumore elati sunt, et in absconditis agunt mala, et dicunt, ‘Nemo nos videt,’ redarguentur Verbo; ab omnibus igitur talibus absistere oportet; adhærere vero his qui et Apostolorum sicut prædiximus doctrinam custodiunt.” Iren. ad Hær. l. 4. c. 43. 44. “Nec nos propterea dicimus nobis credi oportere quod in Ecclesiâ Christi sumus, quia ipsam quam tenemus commendavit Milevitanus Optatus, vel Mediolensis Ambrosius, vel alii innumerabiles nostræ communionis Episcopi. Quæcunque talia in Catholicâ fiunt, ideo sunt approbanda quia in Catholicâ fiunt, non ideo ipsa manifestatur Catholica, quia hæc in ea fiunt. . . . Then,

¹ Still more distinctly in another part of the same able treatise, “sunt libri dominici quorum auctoritati utrique consentimus, utrique cedi-mus—utri-que servi-mus; ibi, *quæramus ecclesiam*.”

appealing to the Scriptures, he adds, “Hæc sunt causæ nostræ firmamenta.” August. contr. Donatist. Epist.¹ So upon the Deity of our Lord, he grounds it not on the decision of the Nicene Council, but on Scripture. “Sed nunc nec ego Nicænum, nec tu debes Ariminense, tanquam præjudicaturus, proferre concilium, nec ego hujus auctoritate, nec tu illius detineris; scripturarum auctoribus, non quorumque propriis sed utrisque communibus testibus, res cum res, causa cum causâ, ratio cum ratione concertet.” August. contr. Max. Arian. t. 8. b. 2. c. 14.

Again, “Sive de Christo, sive de ejus ecclesiâ, sive de quâcunque aliâ re quæ pertinet ad fidem vitamque nostram, non dicam, si nos, sed si Angelus de cælo nobis annuntiaverit, præterquam quod in Scripturis legalibus et evangelicis accepistis, anathema sit.”

² There is no real inconsistency

²Aug. cont. Liter. Petilian. t. 9. lib. 3. c. 6. Finally, “Sed et alia

this point, as in all others, to defer to the authority of the Word; because she is quite certain, that, on

quæ absque auctoritate et testimoniis Scripturarum quasi traditione Apostolicâ sponte reperiunt atque confingunt, percutit gladius Dei." Hieron. Comm. in Agge. Prop. t. 3. c. 1. The question may be confused by the quotation of isolated passages, but, no doubt, such is the teaching of the greatest Fathers. See Goode's Rule of Faith, p. 127. vol. 2. for a very remarkable passage from an exposition of Saint Matthew, attributed to Chrysostom, and for an exhaustion of authorities. To assert that the true Church, whether Romanist or otherwise, can be determined, or men act upon the belief *without reasoning*, is absurd; a man exercises choice and reason just the same, whether he determines that his guide is infallible, or that his road is clearly marked out before him. No Protestant will dissent from the following Romanist definition of the Church; "Congregatio fidelium in vero Dei cultu adornatorum sub Christo capite." Dens Theol. t. 2. p. 111. He then gives four notes of the true Church. 1. Unitas, *unitas capitis*, i. e. the Pope—unitas fidei et doctrinæ, &c. 2. Sanctitas, quia omnes professione sancti sunt, et multis reverà sancti: neque extra eam sancti esse possunt. 3. Apostolicitas. 1. ratione doctrinæ. 2. propagationis ab Apostolis. 3. non interruptæ successionis. 4. indivulsæ adhæSIONIS Cathedræ Petri. To two of these Apostolicities we should hardly assent as decisive. 4. Catholicitas; quod sit toto orbe diffusa. Belarmine (de Concil. et Eccles. lib. 4.) gives fifteen notes of the true Church. 1. Ipsum Catholicæ Ecclesiæ nomen. 2. Antiquitas. 3. Diuturnitas. 4. Amplitudo, sive multitudo et varietas credentium. 5. Successio episcoporum in Ecclesiâ ad Apostolis deducta. 6. Conspiratio in doctrinâ cum Ecclesiâ antiquâ. 7. Unio membrorum inter se et eam capite. 8. Sanctitas doctrinæ. 9. Efficacia doctrinæ. 10. Sanctitas vitæ auctorum. 11. Gloria miraculorum. 12. Lumen propheticum. 13. Confessio adversariorum. 14. Infelix exitus, seu finis eorum, qui ecclesiam oppugnant. 15. Felicitas temporalis. Touching the first, It is our own fault if we permit Rome to usurp the name. 2. Our doctrine is the

between this and the other famous saying of Augustine, "Ego vero Evangelio non crederem, nisi me Catholicæ Ecclesiæ commoveret auctoritas"—for in disputed points he *rightly* interprets on her authority, "quisquis falli metuit hujus obscuritate quæstionis, Ecclesiam de illâ consulat." Contr. Crescon. "Disputare contra id; quod universa Ecclesiâ sentit, insolentissimæ est insanis." Epist. 118.

so important a point, *Scripture cannot be silent*, and that,— whatever be its statements upon the question,

oldest. 3. It has never wanted witnesses, nor ever will. 4. Numbers are no proof of truth. 5. The Church of England has the Episcopal succession, and other Protestant Churches the Presbyterian. 6. The Church of England has it. 7. No Church on earth has ever perfectly exhibited this, nor can do so. 8. The Church of England has it. 9. The Church of England has it. 10. The Church of England has a greater share than Rome, in the great Doctors of the Church Catholic. 11. All true miracles, i. e. of the Apostles and Apostolic men, belong to all the Church—Rome's lying miracles we lay no claim to. 12. Nor do we claim the lying prophecies of Rome's legendary saints. 13. Rome certainly has not this. 14. The extermination of enemies by the temporal sword is no mark of Christ, but of antichrist. 15. God has promised His Church, not prosperity on earth, but the contrary. I conclude this long note with the reasons by which Chillingworth was deceived into the Romish Church, and his own replies to them. 1. Visible perpetual profession—res. God has not foretold that the truth should, de facto, be always visibly professed without mixture of falsehood. 2. Because Luther in separating from Rome, separated from all Churches then in the world—res. God has not decreed that there shall always be a visible company of men free from error in itself damnable, neither is it schism to separate from a Church possessing all necessary doctrine, if it *insists on the profession of an error*. 3. Because Rome has the testimony of miracles,—res. 1. the doctrine of Protestants, i. e. the Bible, has been so confirmed—2. there is no promise that in after ages there should be a continuation of miraculous evidence—and, 3. Scripture does assert that signs and wonders should in after ages be wrought, in *confirmation of false doctrine*. 4. Because many Protestant doctrines are condemned heresies—res. all men are not heretics who by Philastrius, Epiphanius, or Saint Austin were put into the lists of heretics. 5. Because the ancient prophecies of the conversion of kings have been fulfilled in the Romish Church—res. kings and nations have been and may be converted by men of contrary

whatever be its signs or evidences of a true Church, and whatever the authority devolved upon it,—within those limits, be they more or be they less, she is bound by solemn duty to confine herself, and by those signs to measure the validity of her claims.

Let those fear the light, whose deeds or whose pretensions will not bear its scrutiny—certainly it is not so with the Church of England. And, if the exercise of reason, *by necessary laws*, in understanding what is proposed to it, in Scripture or out of Scripture, be private judgment—then is private

religions. 6. Because the doctrines of Rome are conformable to the primitive Fathers, but not so the Protestant doctrine—res. the Romanist doctrine is confessed by Romanists themselves to be contrary to the Fathers on many points. 7. Because the first Reformer had neither commission ordinary nor extraordinary—res. all Pastors of a Church have authority from God to preach against the abuses of it, nor can any Christian want such a commission, when there is no one else to do it. 8. Luther was persuaded by the devil in a dream to write against the Mass—res. this might be and was a mere delusion. 9. Because the Protestant faith is new and has been suspected of falsehood—res. Papists have been far more guilty of this than Protestants. 10. Because by denying all infallible authority of Pope, or Council, or Church, Protestants have destroyed all means of suppressing heresy or restoring unity—res. let all men believe Scripture and that only, endeavouring to ascertain its true sense, and this will be found not only a better, but the only way, to suppress heresy and restore unity. He who believes Scripture sincerely cannot be a heretic. And if this were the only term of Communion, though there would be minor differences, yet there would be substantial union. The two marks of a true Church proposed in our own Articles are worth all the rest. 1. The faithful preaching of the Word of God. 2. The due administration of the Sacraments.

judgment, under *any possible circumstances and any claims*, unavoidable; for no claims can be received, with or without evidence, in any other manner. It is an indefeasible *right* of all Christians and of all men, dangerous, like every thing else, if *unregulated* or *unprincipled*, but *safe and with a blessing upon it*, if exercised according to the laws which God has prescribed for its regulation. To neglect fit helps, or prejudice Scripture truths by principles of our own choosing, is indeed rationalism—but it is quite as much so, to presume that the Word of God cannot

instruct candid minds, though God says that it can; and that it is not quite as competent to define and restrict, as it may be, the authority and privileges of the Church, as any other verity whatsoever.

¹ 1 Tim. iii. 15. The old interpretation which refers *στούλος* to "the Church," is certainly the best; and surely, though not in the Romanist sense, it is a pillar or the earthly pillar of the truth which she proclaims and preserves.

² Ad Hær. l. 3. c. 1. "quod quidem tunc præconia-verunt postea per Dei voluntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt, fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum."

Unless she is prepared for this, she is really not a faithful witness or guardian of the deposit of truth which is contained in the word, and of which, by its proclamation, by its defence, and the maintenance of its purity, she is a pillar and a ground. And (supposing such to be the Apostle's¹ meaning) whilst a pillar sustains an edifice—ininitely more is it sustained itself by the whole building; and, while the Church is an instrument for upholding the faith, the faith constitutes *the very essence and being of the Church*. "The Gospel," says Irenæus, "which the Apostles preached, they afterwards delivered to us in the Scriptures to be the foundation and column of our faith²." Therefore we are not ultimately to judge the truth by the Church, but the Church by the truth. "We must seek the Church in the Scriptures," as

Augustine directs. Who would have believed that any Church could speak as Rome does? Prierias says, "The Church of Rome is the rule and model of faith, and the Scriptures derive from her all their faith and authority." "The doctrine of the Church of Rome is the infallible rule of faith, and from it the Holy Scriptures derive all their strength." Pighius says, "that without the command of the Church of Rome, we are not to believe the *most clear passage in Scripture*." In fact, Rome speaks exactly as the modern Socinian, who says through Belsham, "Impartial and serious enquirers must be particularly on their guard against what is called the *natural signification of words and phrases*¹."

(Vid. Jewel. Apolog.)
Prierias
adv. Lutherum.
"Apostoli quædam conscripserunt non ut scripta illa præessent fidei nostræ sed potius ut subsent." Alb. Pigh. (Hierar. lib. 1.)

And certainly with these two postulates—that Scripture owes all its authority to the Church, and that plain passages are not to be understood in their natural meaning—there is no proposition on Church authority, or any other article of faith, which may not be demonstrated.

¹ Belsham's Calm Enquiry. This coincidence ought surely to startle those who thus treat Scripture, in their zeal for tradition, for the soundness of their principle.

Nor is there any value in that distinction which, like every other imaginable verbal subtlety, may be found in Romanist controversialists. That, although Scripture hath authority, *quoad se*, in itself, from inspiration, yet, *quoad nos*, its authority is from the Church alone. For authority is clearly relative to those who owe obedience to it—and this is the meaning of the authority of Scripture; that is, it is the command of God, who has a right to our submission. It is therefore absurd to say, that the law of God has no authority, when declared to us, to

bind the conscience, save what it derives from man—for, from the necessary relations of creature and Creator, it binds the very moment it becomes known, from *that* relation, and nothing else. To suppose otherwise would be to subordinate the commands of God completely to the will and pleasure of men. The royal officer, who conveys to us a king's proclamation, has no authority, therefore, over us, nor does he convey authority to the royal command. So the Scriptures, the moment they are acknowledged, by whatsoever testimony known, or by whomsoever introduced to our acceptance, have an instant and inherent authority to bind all that hear them. However faithful may be the testimony which she bears to the truth, as faithful as that of Rome has been the contrary, no Church, save one dizzy with the fumes of infallibility, would venture to claim a lordship and dominion over them that receive it—and it is a duty both to God and man, that the bonds of such a Church should be broken asunder, and her cords cast off.

But Rome is wise in her generation—she knows that Scripture and herself cannot stand together. And if the Church of England ever embraces her main doctrines, with her scheme of Church authority, *she* too will act in the same manner, and, with the same unerring instinct, mould, with a plastic art, all the articles of the faith, to her dominant interest. She will fold the cloak of inerrancy about her, refuse to submit her claims to reason, and assert that her divinity precludes the discussion of her doctrines, or

an examination of her pretensions. She will no longer exhort us to probe to the uttermost all her doctrine, and rest this, and every other question that relates to our faith, on the decision of the infallible word. As it is, she considers that to introduce any other rule by which faith is to be measured, whether tradition, or a present infallibility, would be the deepest wrong she could offer to her Lord and Master; the usurpation of a power which has not been delegated either to individual or community; a trampling on our sacred right to call none Lord but Christ, and none Teacher, but His word. In thus doing, she rests upon a rock—and she is unconquerable by any assault which is not likewise aimed at right reason, the records of unerring truth, and the testimony of the Catholic Fathers from the beginning.

The truth is, that the desire to establish a larger Church authority, and a more splendid Church system than can be proved from Scripture, and the necessity of obtaining some other foundation on which to rest it, makes a traditionary hypothesis indispensable. It is not for the lack of proof in Scripture of any *article of the Catholic faith*, that men insist on its deficiencies and disparage its power; for all those articles may be most fully demonstrated from thence; but because it is lacking upon this question which they have exaggerated, on mere human principles, into the master point of all. In short, there is a *rationalistic and preconceived* opinion of the befitting authority and dignity of the

Church in its outward aspect, and recognised rulers; and to this, as in all similar cases where we presuppose the truth of things, the plainest declarations of holy writ must bend, and its emphatic silence only open the way to the sentence of a supplementary tribunal. The Church must assume the place of Christ, and tradition the place of Scripture. Luther some where says in his striking manner, “ That the more he looked upon the Heaven, the more he wondered at its standing without pillars; yet stand it did and firmly. And yet some men never felt secure of its not falling, unless they held the pillars of it in their own hands.” So it is in regard to the Church of Christ, its Scriptural canon, its justification by faith, and the simple scheme of Apostolic government. All this looks in men’s eyes *too bare, too slight a base for such a superstructure*, as indeed it is, if this were every thing it had to trust to—they require pomp, power, the visible symbols of an earthly majesty. They do not consider that the same hand which upholds the heavenly arch, sustains the Church—even He that fills the Heaven of heavens, and inhabiteth eternity! The strength of the Church is the renouncement of all aid but the aid of Christ; she does not love to pile up barriers between herself and Him who upholds the worlds, but, reaching forth directly to Him, she puts *her faith in the Invisible*—invisible to the eye of man, but with *her* intensely present.

II. 1. But, whilst Scripture has thus been made a perfect rule both of faith and practice, by their conso-

nance to which the claims of the Church itself, which is its witness and keeper, must be judged; whilst it is a rule not only perfect in quantity, containing all things appertaining to salvation, but likewise in *quality*, so framed that with the help of reason and that instruction from without, by which, in God's dispensation, it has been invariably accompanied, it is intelligible and instructive to all; so it will likewise follow, from the pre-adjustment of reason to revelation, and the harmonious action of one with the other when each occupies its due position, that, where an independent action might be left to the former, such an arrangement would be adopted by Him, who, amidst all the treasures of His power and goodness, uses an exact economy of means. Such a field is left in the internal arrangements of the body which Christ has constituted; in its necessary discipline, and the details of the divine life to which the Church schools the mind of man—but especially in those rites and ceremonies, upon which the visible beauty of holiness depends, and which exercise so vast and acknowledged an influence on the growth of the soul, and the edification of the body of Christ.

The tradi-
tion of cere-
monies, and
the power
of the
Church
therein.

But even here, whilst all the details are left to the Church and to its discretion, *the principles* upon which they must be framed, and to which they must be subordinated, are distinctly laid down. It is indispensable that the natural fitness of things, and the rules of decency and order, should be observed throughout—that the end proposed should be God's honour, and specially the edification of those who

are committed to the Church's charge—and that such an eye should be kept to the spirituality of the new Covenant and its fundamental truths, as to prevent forms from encumbering devotion, and accessories from being confounded with that which is essential.

On the other hand, to balance these limitations, Scripture has not been less explicit in ordaining an authority competent to this administration, and the maintenance of internal order and uniformity in divine things; lest the worship of the sanctuary should be profaned, the rites which Christ Himself has commanded should be irreverently approached, and that living image of love and spiritual beauty which it ought strikingly to embody, should be lost or disfigured to the eyes of men. To oppose this power,—so indispensable to the preservation of any society whatsoever, that, where it does not preexist, it must be created,—when it acts within its Scripture limits; or, to oppose it at all, indeed, except where the safety of great principles imperiously requires it, is a grievous offence against that humility and charity, without the exercise of which the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace cannot be preserved unbroken. Nothing can justify it, unless some clear sin against God's word be involved in it, and *that not constructively or by inference, but directly*. To proceed on any other ground, is to throw open a boundless field to individual fancy; to hazard that fundamental *unity* of the Church, the rupture of which is never so much a duty as *a last dire necessity*, on indifferent

matters; and to tear Christ's body continually asunder, by ungodly passions, a diseased scrupulosity, and an independence of judgment essentially schismatic.

But this tradition of ceremonies is not, from its very nature, susceptible of the uniformity of faith, as, in importance, it is infinitely inferior. It rests, in many respects, on what is itself variable—the peculiarities of manners, the diversity of associations, and even national character, to which, like the Lesbian rule, it may, and must, if it be truly Apostolical, with a practical wisdom, accommodate itself. Nay, in the same country and local Church, it may change with change of circumstances; and it becomes imperative upon every national Church, as a true mother of her children, carefully to prune, or even rigorously discard, many forms, which, though originally edifying, have been perverted to superstition, and the destruction of that spirit which they were framed to promote. There can be no greater mistake, in point of principle, nor one more dangerous in its results, as history has abundantly proved, than to give them a consecration which can never be conferred upon them, without damage to those higher truths, on whose *unapproachable* importance, as it ought to be considered, this tenacious maintenance of mere arbitrary power and the exaltation of indifferent ceremonies cannot but intrude.

Rites and ceremonies in their nature changeable.

In these respects no Church has any authority over another—but every one has enjoyed from the first a full discretion, founded in Scripture, fortified

by reason, and acknowledged by Councils, of acting on its own judgment, unlimited by the prescription of past ages, or by present example and authority. Its only rule is the Scriptures, and the only tribunal to which it is amenable is that of Christ! It was a liberty, which, the fundamentals of the faith being preserved, the Bishops of the primitive Churches freely exercised, without let or censure, in the construction of Liturgies and Creeds. From the very first foundation of the Church, probably, there has existed this diversity of ceremonial tradition—and, though the clear and distinguishable elements of a liturgy, not only in spirit and in principle, but even *form*, may be drawn from the Apostolical writings, and are confirmed beyond a doubt from the fragments of antiquity, venerable and worthy of all respect, which time has spared—yet it is confessedly impossible to trace up, amidst their varieties and corruptions, more than the main and simple distribution of parts, to the generation bordering on the Apostles^c. To call them Apostolical in any other

^c It is by no means, in thus saying, intended to assert, that no portion of the remaining Liturgies *are* Apostolical. They may be so, but to judge with any probability whether they are so, we must *go to Scripture* and primitive doctrine, and what accords with *that* is, at all events, to be revered as ancient, and received as true. Thus speaks the reply of the Commissioners of 1662 to the Presbyterians, “ That there were ancient Liturgies in the Church is evident—St. Chrysostom's, St. Basil's, and others, and the Greeks tell us of Saint James's much older than they; and though we find not in all ages whole Liturgies, yet it is certain that there were such in the oldest times, by those parts which are extant, as Sursum

sense, is wholly without foundation in fact—it is an unauthorized name and an unjustifiable exaggeration—in the craving it betrays for what God has not given us, it is ungrateful to the fulness of the Scripture—it is only to confuse our notions of what is human and what divine, and to call off to remains of equivocal authority, and on some points, of manifest and confessed corruption, that reverence which we pay, fully and unhesitatingly, to the Apostolic treasures, incorporated in holy Writ,—the word of men, but inspired by the Spirit, with a real life in it, an unmixed truth, and an uncorrupted purity. There is no reason why the Apostles themselves should not have differed in the minor arrangements of their respective Churches^d. There is no

corda, &c. ; Gloria Patri, &c. ; Benedicite ; Hymnus cherubinus, &c. ; Vere dignum et justum, &c. ; Dominus vobiscum et cum Spiritu tuo ; with divers others. Though those that are extant may be interpolated, yet such things as *are* to be found in them *all consentient to catholic and primitive doctrine*, may well be presumed to have been from the first, especially as we find no original of these Liturgies from General Councils.” The whole question is treated with perfect learning and discrimination in Mr. Palmer’s admirable work, “Origin. Liturg.” one of the best contributions of late years to the standard theology of the Church of England.

^d Take a passage from Bishop Taylor (Dissuas. Pop. p. 446.) on the subject of ritual tradition : “ This topic of pretended tradition is the most fallible thing in the world, for it is discovered of some things, that are called Apostolical traditions, that they had their original of being so esteemed, upon the authority and reputation of one man. The assumption of the Virgin Mary is esteemed a tradition Apostolical, but it can derive from no higher authority than St. Austin, whose doctrine alone brought into the Church the veneration of the Assumption. But the tradition of keeping Easter on the 14th day of the moon, derived only from St. John and the

reason why many of their arrangements should not have been merely local and temporary—many, like

Asiatic Bishops—but the other from St. Peter and St. Paul prevailed, though it had no greater authority. But the communicating of infants prevailed for many ages in the West, and to this day in the East, and went for an Apostolical tradition; but the fortune of it is changed, and it now passes for an error: and St. Jerome said, ‘It was an Apostolical tradition, that a priest should not baptize without chrism,’ but of this we have scarce any testimony but his own. But besides this, there were in the beginning of Christianity some apocryphal books; of these Origen gave great caution; and, because the falsity of these every good man could not discover, therefore he charges them, that they should offer to prove no opinion from any books, but from the canonical Scriptures, as I have already quoted him; but these were very busy in reporting traditions. The book of Hermes seduced St. Clemens of Alexandria into a belief, that the Apostles preached to them that died infidels, and then raised them to life; and the apocryphal books, under the title of Peter and Paul, make him believe that the Greeks were saved by their philosophy; and the Gospel of Nicodemus, so far as yet appears, was author of the pretended tradition of the signing with the sign of the Cross, at every motion of the body; and led Tertullian and St. Basil, and, in consequence, the Churches of succeeding ages, into the practice of it. A little thing will draw on a willing mind; and nothing is so credulous as piety and timorous religion, and nothing was more fearful to displease God, and anxious to please Him, than the primitive Christians; and every thing that would invite them to what they thought pious, was sure to prevail; and how many such pretences might enter in at this wide door, every man may easily observe.” The latter part of these remarks are admirably fitted for the present times, when many tender and timorous minds are afraid to reject what is boldly propounded to them as Apostolical. But any statement of facts, such as the foregoing, is enough to put the prudent and thoughtful on their guard.

The Fathers are not consistent with themselves upon the point, some disallowing even for practical observances of the Church any authority but Scripture, and rejecting *all* arguments not founded

the agapæ and other primitive usages, have been abolished as experience proved their inexpediency—and, even if we were masters of the most minute details of the Apostolic liturgical arrangements, unless there were something to stamp perpetuity upon them by a clear declaration to that effect, it would not follow that they were binding on the Church for ever. But probably there was no such perfect uniformity to record. Look at the disputes between the Roman and Eastern Churches on the observance of Easter¹, a point, ceremonially considered, of no mean importance; and between the same Church and those of Africa and the East on the baptism of heretics, an important point likewise, in which both parties claimed an Apostolical tradition in their favour, and both, as far as we can see, on valid grounds; they demonstrate at once, the uncertainty of any thing unestablished by Scripture, and the latitude which the founders of the Church permitted on some points, which, however important, were secondary to faith, liable to change, and amenable to private

¹ A good instance of this variation is one to which Romanists are fond of referring, in proof of the use of tradition in determining the perpetual obligation or not of a divine command—the washing of one another's feet by Christians. Augustine tells us, that some observed it, and some not. The Milanese Church observed it, and, curiously enough, on the authority of *St. Peter*. “*Ipsum sequimur Apostolum Petrum. . . ad hoc Ecclesia Romana quid respondet?*” Amb. or Pseudo-Amb. de Sacram. lib. 3. c. 1.

directly upon it. Others recognising a large authority in tradition, called Apostolical, in regulating the whole forms and discipline of the Church. But touching this point, it may be well to observe, that nobody, either Romanist or Tractator, recommends the resumption of *all* practices, which are provably primitive.

Yet, if a discretion or choice is exercised, where and how is the divine authority for their institution obeyed? If some be more and others less certain, who is to determine? who is to weigh to a hair the evidence for or against their Apostolicity? It becomes a matter of *taste*, and each person's own turn of mind is forthwith erected into the quasi-infallible tribunal of Catholicity.

¹ And the Church of England considers that the usage of the Primitive, Apostolical Churches, if it can be fairly established, though not binding on the conscience absolutely, yet is *proof* that such usage is pious and of a true Christian spirit.

Tradition of teaching essential to a Church but not authoritative.

judgment, as mere instruments of edification. It is not disputed therefore by any party, that, in rites and ceremonies, and in the spiritual discipline of those committed to her charge, all founded on Scripture, but in their details additional to it, the Church *has* an authority, to which, within its proper sphere and under Scripture limitations, submission is due. Nor is it further to be doubted, that, in forms and discipline, there is such a general correspondency throughout the Church Catholic¹, as to demonstrate a uniformity of principle, exhibiting itself thus organically, and *tending* to a uniform outward expression of the inward unity of faith.

2. There is likewise another application of the term Tradition, which is equally innocent, but is often misunderstood and misapplied; and which, notwithstanding, is inseparable from a Christian Church. Nay, without it, some of its most sacred functions could not be exercised, and its most powerful gifts would be unavailing towards the formation of a holy people, growing in peace, and consecrated even from infancy to the service of their Lord. She must receive the youngest into the society of Christ's flock; she must therefore administer the initiatory Sacrament, and, into the minds of those whom Christ has commanded to be brought to Him, she must, so to say, distill drop by drop the truths of eternal life, as they are able to bear them; till from milk they are fed on meat, and are fit for a severer knowledge, and the maturity of a manly discipline.

This indispensable work can only be carried on by

Creeds^e, as summaries of the faith; by Catechisms, as convenient forms for instruction in it; and by

^e It is necessary to observe here, that, though it is constantly presumed and argued on, as an undisputed fact, that there was, *exclusive of Scripture*, an Apostolical Creed containing the essentials of the Christian faith, yet there is no evidence at all of such a form having come down to us. The present Creed so called is, in its present form, no earlier than the fourth century; nor till that period, or near it, was the title of Apostolic applied to it.

It is, in fact, the Creed of the Western Church, but of no more authority than the Creed of Constantinople, or Cæsarea, or Jerusalem, or of any other orthodox Churches. No one doubts the existence from the very earliest times of such simple formulas of the main articles of the faith, without which no Neophyte could be admitted into the communion of the Church—the very number of those which remain testify to the fact, while their variations are equally decisive proof of the discretion exercised by each independent Christian community. That they all rest on the same foundation, and are, in the main, identical, is no proof that they came from the standard *oral* form—it certifies, no doubt, *one original*, and that original the written word of God—from which they were most of them drawn, and *by which they were universally proved*. I say most of them, because, before there was a *written* word, there was of course an unwritten creed; though, as we find from unquestionable evidences, of the very simplest form, being nothing more at first than an expression of belief in the holy Trinity. After all, the Apostles' Creed, so called, needs Scripture to vitalize and explain *it*, and Scripture needs not it—nor does it contain, except by *implication*, all necessary truths—not only must it be *proved by Scripture*, but, its bearing on the condition of the human soul, and on the whole counsel of God, *must be expounded out of the ample records of revelation, and is unintelligible without it*.

No one questions its venerableness, or is disposed to withhold from it the respect due to a relic of the ancient Church; but to claim for it an authority equal to Scripture, which can not only *not* be proved, but may be triumphantly disproved, is to offer an injury and not a mark of respect to this ancient formula. There is something *unconfessed* at stake in this pertinacious assumption—

the measured accuracy of Articles to fence it in and protect it. And these must be received by her people, *upon the authority of her who conveys them*; and, as a necessary condition, supported by all analogy and experience, for that spiritual training and moulding of the man into the Christian image, which it is her special office to give. And so each generation in its turn received it from that which went before. In her preaching too, even to her advanced members, she can only deliver from her own hands the verities which she has received, in like manner as she now transmits them—they are not her own invention or discovery; she is but the last link in their noble lineage. She would belie the truth if she taught otherwise—they have been *delivered* to her—and there is therefore, of necessity, upon her part, and on the part of her Ministers, *a transmission*, upon divine authority, of the truths which are necessary to salvation.

A traditive rule cannot, therefore, be so much as separated from the essence of a Christian Church, unless she abandons those who are committed to her charge, turns infidel to the *positive nature* and objective *certainty* of divine truth, and denies to the education by which souls are to be trained to heaven, that fulchrum of affirming unquestioned the truth of

and that is, an oral *authoritative tradition*, of which this would be a standing proof, a portion regulative of Scripture itself, and antecedent to it. This is the real gist of the question. I will only add, that though not all, yet the decided majority of the great theologians of the Church of England, take this view of the question—nothing *is less admitted*, than the *divine* authority of the Apostles' Creed.

her first principles, without which, no teacher of human science or professor of moral training, even in its lowest form, would undertake his task. Much more when, by the divine scheme, the affections are to be moulded, the will to receive an heavenward direction, the whole nature to be imbued with a spiritual frame and tendencies, and the truth to be practically felt and practically proved, by this objective and positive training, before the intellect is capable of the theoretic investigation. But it must be conditional on *Scripture*; that must be its sole and ultimate Canon; and, whatever preparation the Church may require, before she submits the truth of her discipline and doctrine to the probing scrutiny of the Word and an independent judgment, it must be adjusted to the reason of the case, and be subordinate to the commands of the ultimate authority. And hence comes the confusion of ideas which makes the true rule of faith, "*tradition confirmed by Scripture*"—*tradition does teach first*. Nor can there be any instruction without it—but then it must *prove*¹ itself *by Scripture*—but that which *proves* is the true Canon—the provisional teaching may be true or false, as it may happen; if false, it has distorted the rule of faith; if true, it is so because it accords with it, and for no other reason. Its only certain priority is that of time.

The *doctrinal tradition of the Church*, therefore, at any one time, is not an ultimate authority as Rome makes it—nor was it ever so, except from the mouth of the Apostles and inspired men—but a

¹ Not by allusions or possible references, but by premises adequate to the conclusion. There is surely another great assumption touching the relation of the written word to the first oral instruction; as though the last interpreted the first. Now if the author of an important communication to another, afterwards sent a *written statement*, not referring incidentally to what had been orally delivered, but avowedly a *deliberate re-statement* in a permanent form; who would ever think of proving the *fixed and written* by the unfixed and remembered statement? Is it not evident that written statements, if *deliberately*

made, are at least as clear as spoken ones, and that it would be to the document, and not to the vague recollection, that any man of sense would appeal? So in Scripture, the Apostles could not have spoken on vital points more distinctly than they have written; even separately, their writings profess to contain all saving truth; men therefore would instantly test the oral teaching by the written word; and Ecclesiastical doctrinal Tradition is only a witness to the interpretation of Scripture, not by the first teaching, or rather by the memory of it, but of Scripture as the authoritative

subordinate one, with an immediate and just influence indeed, and a *primâ facie* weight with it not lightly to be rejected, but in dependency, nevertheless, on the written word, and a reverend submission to its final sentence. Now, supposing that the authority of this traditive teaching is not grounded upon a *present infallibility* of the Church, it must depend entirely on its assumed *uniformity* and *sameness from the first*; and our own experience will convince us of the little dependence to be placed on oral doctrine, as carrying with it this condition. And here I assume that fundamental truths are not denied, which indeed is presupposed in a true Church, and I imply, by tradition, the whole tenour and colour of this or that Church at a particular period, in the mode of propounding Scripture truths, in the whole bearing of the Gospel upon the condition of the soul, the ultimate remedy for sin, and the mode of its application to individuals. Only consider the style of teaching, for instance, prevalent in the Church of England, during the greater part of last century; and then compare it with that difference, not only in external practice, but in the mode of regarding the fundamental truths of the Gospel, and their relative position in the whole scheme, which has since succeeded it—few things within the limits of the same Christianity, and the same reformed profession of it, can well be more dissimilar. Look again at the teaching which universally pervaded the public ministrations and the theoretic Theology of all our great divines for a century after the Reformation—the broad and distinct

character which it has impressed upon our Articles, identical with the great continental Reformers, in their views of the mode of applying salvation through Christ, and in the subordination of Church government, even in its purest form, to the great truths which bring men to God, and regenerate the soul. Compare it with the school of Laud, a great and high-minded man, but whose influence was fatal to the Church which he devotedly loved, and of the semi-Romanizing divines, as they are usually, though I will not say justly, considered, who subsequently followed in his steps. What an entire transformation on many points do we discover in that which every human precaution had been taken to render uniform—even with all reasonable allowance for differences of temper, and the varieties of view in which minds equally devout and Scriptural may regard the Church's teaching, the change is vast.

Yet, the *Articles* and *Homilies* of the Church remained what they were, as well as the Scriptural rock upon which they are founded—the change of doctrines arose, not merely from a modification of them by the principles of the Liturgy, but from a *deviation* from them; and a return to them and to their specific teaching, could alone restore the ancient model. The *actual* teaching of a Church, then, at this or that period, may more or less deviate from a professed standard, and be mixed with human additions, as it has abandoned the line of Scripture truth or not; and what has happened over and over again in modern times, was, human nature being the same, and on the whole with *far less preventives of error*, both intellectually

cessor, and clearer substitute for the oral Canon.

¹ Vincen-
tius is a
man whose
name has
survived in
virtue of
this one
celebrated
rule, quod
semper,
quod
ubique,
quod ab
omnibus.
His own
orthodoxy
is not cer-
tain; there
is some
ground for
suspecting
him at
least of
Semi-Pela-
gianism.
And but for
the latent
assump-
tion, that
the semper
et ubique et
ab omnibus
could be
really
established,
where
would he
have been?
Would the
rational mo-
dification of
it, which
alone is
tenable,
have pre-
served his
memory?
If not, a
name has
been im-
mortalized,
for pro-
pounding
an impossi-
bility as a
test of truth.
Some valu-
able re-
marks he
certainly

and morally, just as likely to happen to the earlier generations of the Church.

And such, in fact, seems to be the view even of Vincentius Lirinensis ¹, who, it must be remembered, never contemplated the application of this rule, of a universal traditive doctrine in all places identical, to any thing but the support of the *authority of Scripture*, and the elucidation of the mind of the Spirit, as contained therein.

The Scripture he expressly considers as a perfect rule, both in quantity and quality; nor does he imagine that there could be any doubt to candid and reasonable men of the truth which it intended to convey, and of which it was the sole foundation. It was only the perverseness of heretics, and that indomitable spirit of sophistry which it engendered, eluding the simplicity of the truth by logical subtleties, and wrenching the most stringent forms of language to à priori suppositions, which required the authority of a uniform, universal, and primitive tradition, to protect the sense of holy writ; and the present existence of which furnished at once a ready reply to the cavils of heretical objectors, and the theories of theological innovators. He says expressly ^g, that the mode which he proposes to adopt would not be applicable in all cases, nor at all times; and, with great clear-sightedness, perceived the probability, or at least the possibility, of a *false tradition*, hallowed by time and a universal acceptance, which, though it might silence the enquirer for the moment by an argument ad verecundiam, would, if it rested there,

^g Comm. c. 28.

not only not fortify Scriptural truth, but be destructive of it, and ruin that Gospel, which its legitimate application was calculated to support and verify.

It may be as well, likewise, as we touch on Lirinensis, to state the conditions which he attaches to his rule—that we may see the impossibility of answering them in their rigour, and the extreme difficulty therefore of their application in any but a considerably modified sense—that the conclusion therefore, following the premises, is not demonstrative, and its evidence merely secondary and confirmative—or creating a *presumption* only, not a certainty. 1. He speaks of none but such, “as having piously, wisely, and *constantly* lived, preached, and persevered in the Catholic faith and communion, obtained the favour, at length, either to die faithfully in Christ, or else had the happiness of being crowned with martyrdom for Christ’s sake^f.” 2. “That we are to receive, as true, whatsoever all the aforesaid authors, or, at least, the *greater part of them*, have clearly, frequently, and constantly affirmed, with an unanimous consent, retaining and delivering it over to others, as it were jointly, and making up all of them but one common and unanimous council of Doctors.” The rule *sounds* simply; and, as men take for granted at once its *literal* applicability, its grasping comprehension of all time, and place, and persons, in attestation of the truth, has a grandeur which imposes on the mind, as the sound does on the ear: but, taken with all these conditions, it presents immense difficulties in the verification

has,—
charity,
and large-
ness of
mind as
certainly
not. Vid.
Comm. c. 6.
May it
not be justly
asked, if
any one
ever re-
fused to
listen to the
authority of
the wise
and pious
and con-
stant Saints
of Christ?
The ques-
tion is, who
are such?
We go to the
Fathers for
the truth—
but, lest we
should be
deceived,
we must
know that
they are
qualified to
teach it—
and surely
this in-
volves the
previous
necessity of
knowing
what the
truth is—
how but by
Scripture
can this be
done?—who
constitute
the *greater*
number of
the Fa-
thers?
why—the
great ma-
jority of the
Saints of
Christ have
left *no re-*
cord of

^f Comm. c. 80.

their opinions—of those that *have* written, how many have been lost? of those who survive, how many have been corrupted or greatly altered? This

renders the decision on points of faith a mere *casualty*, dependent on a thousand accidents.—It is hunting a chimaera to engage in pursuit of such an evidence. Besides, Augustine admirably advises us to believe the *saying of no author*, unless he *proves* his point by reason or Canonical Scripture—If he does so by either, what avail a thousand opposite *averments*? 2. No one doubts that the Church is *indefectible*, i. e. that there always are, have been, and will be, true believers—

even of great truths. It *cannot*, in fact, and *ought not*, in theory, to be carried beyond a certain point, which no judicious Christian disputes. As implying no more than the *general* consent of the great saints of the Church Catholic in all fundamental verities, from the beginning till now, it is a great theological maxim, and practically full of consolation to the heart of the humble Christian.

It so happened, or rather it was so ordered divinely, that, at the date of the Nicene Council, though many corruptions were vigorously sprouting, the Apostles' teaching, in all vital points, still universally prevailed; and thus tradition was coincident with Scripture, and the chain of teaching unbroken, on the grand point therein disputed; and every link of it was ascertained, not *by mere oral assertion* and general presumption, but by those existing ecclesiastical documents, which certified, through each successive step, the identity and inherited apostolicity of the doctrine. But this was considered after all as mere presumptive or confirmatory evidence; for, as the traditive teaching on this high truth, in each successive generation, was really grounded on Scripture, so the final decision of the Nicene Fathers was made on Scripture, and not on mere tradition. In the estimate therefore of Vincentius, after all the other great Fathers of that age, neither present traditions, nor the decision of Councils, could be any thing more to an earnest enquirer, than a guide and intimation, which, in reason and in principle, he would be called upon to use in the examination of the written word, or as a weight to turn the scale of a vacillating decision.

No one ought to hesitate to call ecclesiastical tradition, in this sense and for this purpose, a divine instrument, as well for the discovery, as for the confirmation of the truth¹; and it would not only be opposed to all true reason, but be a mark of insensibility to God's goodness in providing it, if we did not greatly value, and practically apply it. But we know its limits; and where, at any period of the Church, its heads and teachers should either abjure all reference to the written word, or refuse a practical submission to its decisions; and should claim, either to the tradition of past times, or the actual teaching of the existing Church, that infallibility and absolute authority over men's faith, which belongs to God alone; then, in the opinion of Lirinensis, and of all the old Catholic Fathers, he, who, with the Bible in his hand, with its main truths written as clear as human language can make them, should withstand Bishops, and Councils, and the whole world confederated against him, even if he stood alone with none but God to help the right, would be the true representative of the faith once delivered to the saints—he would be the embodiment, for the time being, of the life and spirit of the Church Catholic, though it were not only concentrated in his single person, but *restricted to it*—one true disciple in an apostate generation. Such was once Gregory Nazianzen—such was the sublime constancy of Athanasius, truly the Great—such, too, in later times, borne up by the same divine Spirit, and by the same consciousness of the identification of his cause with God, was the elevated faith and unconquerable

but who can consult *all* true believers every where? if not, where is, I say not your *Catholic consent*, but your *knowledge* of it? Vid. Daillé on the Fathers. Bp. Taylor's Diss. Pop. and Gibson's *Preserv.*
¹ But, throughout, as *witness* to a fact, *not as independent authority.* For, to make it more than a witness, it ought to have the *same inspiration* as *that to which it witnesses*—unless it has, it is not, *like that*, divine. Such witness it bears, as a question of fact, to the institution of the Lord's day, to Infant Baptism, the three-fold order of the Ministry, and the per-

petual obligation of the Eucharist, in the *practice* of the Church,—and so in regard to *the existence* of doctrines, *not* their truth. And, *clearly, that* may safely be received as *evidence to facts* which reason may reject as a final and authoritative tribunal of doctrines. On Tradition complementary and authoritative. ¹ There is really no *via media*—none—exalt *primitive* tradition as you will. and as the Church of England does, by way of *witness*, you can never convert it into a thing *essentially different*,—*a divine authority*. The Church of England, therefore, symbolizes

heart of Luther! “Why do the heathens so furiously rage together, and why do the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth stand up, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed. Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh them to scorn; the Highest shall have them in derision.”

3. But to proceed farther with Tradition, not *as preparatory or interpretative*, but that and something more—*supplementary and authoritative*. Upon this vital point of the single authority of Scripture in matters of faith, there can, in reality, be but two opinions. ¹ There must be either one canon of faith, or two of co-ordinate authority. I use the term *co-ordinate*, because that is the specious word in which is veiled a meaning more derogatory to Scripture than at first sight it seems; but, on analysing the question, it is evident that even *here* there is in reality *but one*; so that it comes to this—you can have but *one Canon*, either Scripture or Tradition. For, say what you will, and disguise it as you will in words, the *ultimate tribunal*, the court of appeal, is *the true Canon*. Wherever the discretionary interpretation is placed, and the power of assigning the great regulating principles and lines of truth, *there is the true law*; Tradition, *not Scripture* therefore at all, save in subordination, and speaking the sense of Tradition. Again, it ought to be observed, that no one denies in any way, either in the Church of England or any other orthodox Church, certainly not

the great leaders of the German reformation, the use and value of primitive Tradition, and the positive and dogmatic theology¹ of which it is the safeguard; but, on the contrary, highly value it and constantly use it—they only limit it—the true Canon being interpreted by the laws of reason, and that alone; and, as the primitive Church understood it—the *two being identical in their results*. Nay, not only the true Canon, but one *as express* on vital points as words can make it, defying Tradition to make it clearer; the other being only confirmative and illustrative.

And if there are writers, as seems to be the case, who, however strenuously they reason *for Tradition as a rule of faith*, only mean it in the Catholic sense of assisting, by way of moral certainty, in ascertaining and fortifying the manifest sense of Scripture, they, in fact, whatever may seem to be implied in the surface of their argument, do only allow *one authoritative* rule. For, if the one be really only auxiliary to the other, not to be called in, save as introductory, till we are competent to examine the other; or defensively, to protect its plain and palpable sense, when investigated; it is only a support to the Canon, and not a Canon in the real sense of the term. But then, there should be no loose or equivocal statement in so vital a point; if they mean so, they should *say* that there is but one Canon, and that is Scripture. Every Canon of course has a *sense to be interpreted*; if they mean, that to a candid mind there is no such obvious sense, in holy writ, and that this cannot be satisfactorily ascertained without Tradition—why then

with those who hold Scripture to be the *sole Canon*—though they may unwisely *despise* tradition.
¹ Nothing can be more ungrounded than associating the names of Luther and Melancthon with a loose or *negative* theology.—In some respects it might be considered too *dogmatic*—too strictly tied down to articles and definitions. Mr. Rose attributes the decline of German Theology “to the neglect of a controlling superintendence and adherence to the letter of the symbolical books.” Probably most thoughtful men would attribute *something* to a *resiliency* from an over dogmatical system, cramping, more than

Catholic usage justified, the interpretation of the word of God. But to accuse it of being a mere negative system is diametrically opposed to the fact.

Unfair mode of reasoning on this question.

Tradition is the Canon and not Scripture. If they allow that holy writ is *clear and express in one sense*; that the vast majority of the Church, in all ages, agree in *that* one sense from the beginning, and that such universality of consent proves an individual to be wrong, if he interpret differently, why then Scripture is the true Canon, though fortified by Tradition.

But the question is constantly argued, both by that class of advocates, and by Romanists themselves, who alone are consistent in phraseology as well as meaning, as if, in the Protestant assertion of the sole authority of Scripture, the true point were this—how far, in excluding Tradition, as a co-ordinate Canon, we are to prescribe to God the way or ways by which His truth is to be transmitted; and whether He might not, as none can hinder His will, have instituted an infallible traditionary rule, quite as well as a written one. And this implies a *real* traditionary rule, not merely interpretative, but co-ordinate and complementary to the written.

Now this is an unfair and deceptive mode of stating the question, very common among controversialists, more bent upon victory than on the truth; and one which imposes on the mind of the unpractised reader, by the assumption upon which it goes, that there really *is* a rule which has come down to us, distinguishable from Scripture, and with a like uninterrupted transmission; with equal claims *primâ facie* upon our acceptance with the word itself; and which its opponents refuse to admit to its legitimate authority over faith. And, mostly, it is

expressly stated, or taken for granted, that this opposition is rationalistic in principle, and founded on some arbitrary theory on the mode of transmitting supernatural truths, which, according to our adversaries, would lead, in its legitimate consequences, to the subversion of the whole body of revealed truth, holy Writ and all.

But the question really raised by the assertion of the sole authority of Scripture, is not a doubt about the entire submission to be rendered by us to the will of God, however conveyed to us, and however authenticated,—nor, whether He might not, had He so pleased, have added Tradition to Scripture as a revelation complementary to the latter—nor whether even Tradition by itself might not have been made the instrument of transmission—but a mere question *of fact*, whether God *has* done so, or *has not*, in the Christian dispensation. If He *has*, and if it can be shewn us, we submit to it; if He *has not*, why, by insisting on a mere speculative case, should we practically call in question the sufficiency of the written Word?

We do not make Scripture of the *essence* of a revelation, nor an independent acquaintance with the written word, of the essence of a saving faith. For, as a matter of fact, Irenæus tells us of whole nations to whom it was savingly known, though among *them* utterly unwritten—and to the end of the world, it must be so, *accidentally*, to many. But we assert that it is *actually* the vehicle—it is, as things are, the only authenticated depository of divine truth, sufficiently certified to exercise a command over our faith.

The existence of an authoritative oral tradition a question of fact.

I say so in regard to the Christian dispensation—for there have been times, those of the Patriarchal Church for instance, when, from the necessity of the case, and the condition of the then civilization, there was no other instrument for handing down from age to age, divine truth,—that *θεοπαράδοτος σοφία*, to use a phrase of Plato, which all antiquity attests. It was, beyond a doubt, handed down by oral delivery. But we know too, how fragmentary it soon became; how utterly inadequate it proved to keep alive a knowledge of the truths indispensable to enlighten the conscience, and regulate the life; and how early the divine light, which perhaps had been communicated in all its fulness to our first parent, was extinguished in the bosom of his descendants.

But when, in process of time, a distinct people had been set apart for the peculiar inhabitation of the Almighty, and as the depository, on behalf of mankind, of the truths of redemption inherited from the fall, it no longer seemed fit to Almighty God to entrust His will to such a conveyance, ebbing and flowing with the uncertainties of opinion, and contracting, in its course onward, every corruption which ignorance or sinfulness communicated to it, as it passed—but it was His pleasure to commit it definitively to the custody of writing. And this precaution is the more remarkable, because the rites of sacrifice, and a ceremonial, almost dramatically vivid, transferred as it was from the uncertainties of speech to definite symbols, was infinitely better adapted for a safe conveyance through tradition, than precepts, and

highly spiritual doctrines. Yet even *there* they were committed, not loosely, but with elaborate care, to writing; and the main points *of the law moral*, as well as of the *law ceremonial*, though secured by the light of nature, and their inscription on the heart, were accompanied in the same way by an outward witness, and by an independent record.

This deserves our particular attention, because, as I said before, the advocates of co-ordinate Tradition argue, as though it were an unjustifiable assumption, that God, in conveying supernatural truths essential to salvation through all ages, would choose writing rather than tradition as His exclusive instrument; insinuating, that it arises from the same false principle as that by which Deists presume on what should be found in Scripture, apart from any analogy in God's natural dealings. This analogical argument is abstractedly true, and an excellent instrument for the subversion of deistical objections; and it is triumphantly applied to the vindication of God's dealings with men, where He Himself, *in pari materié*, has given us no precedent by which we might anticipate His proceedings in another case. But it does not apply to the present question; for, whatever might have been the fact, anterior to the Mosaic covenant, it was totally altered after its institution, and the committal to writing of these truths, in which, even then, the Jews had life eternal.

From henceforth, no analogy can possibly be stronger; no anticipation more legitimate, than that the same plan would be adopted in the second

The analogy of the elder covenant opposed to it.

covenant—the doctrinal nature of which, and the tendencies inseparable from the human heart to corrupt its most vital doctrines, rendered such a precaution infinitely more necessary; whilst a traditive teaching, as a commentary and primary instructor, would bear to the new revelation exactly the same relation which it bore to the old. And this is wholly independent of the arguments to be drawn from daily experience and the very nature of the case, which must be considered as the voice of reason, and therefore of God, on a subject of such vast importance to men's souls as this; and which demonstrate, *ex abundantia*, the inherent advantages of the written over oral transmission. Supernatural and uninterrupted interference, indeed, might secure, *by force*, to the one, what is the inherent capacity of the other; but nothing short of that. But it is against the whole course of nature and of Scripture to suppose, that, with a waste of power, Almighty God employs the supernatural, where the natural is sufficient; and that he would compensate an inadequate instrument, unnecessarily chosen, by a perpetual miracle, and a wanton infraction of his ordinary laws. On precedent and analogy of reason, therefore, there is the greatest probability that writing solely would be employed, for the authoritative transmission to mankind of the inestimable truths of the Gospel.

And so is the actual history of the Church. Nor, again, as a matter of fact, is *this* the simple question, whether the primitive Church, that is, the Church Apostolical, ever had a rule of faith distinct

from the written one. From various expressions in the sacred writers, and especially in the Pauline Epistles, it is evident that they had such a rule *for a time*. And, indeed, the nature of the case demonstrates, that, anterior to the composition and diffusion of the Scriptures, such tradition, that is, the delivery of the Gospel truths by word of mouth, was, and could not but be, the only standard of doctrine. But then¹ what was orally delivered was just as liable to perversion or misinterpretation, from dullness of apprehension and moral perverseness, on the part of the hearers; or even more so, than the same doctrine defined in writing; and the history of the earliest period of the Church testifies as much difference of opinion about the *oral* word, as after times have exhibited on the *written*—there were, in both, differences of interpretation from the very beginning, nor, from the unchanging laws of human nature, could it be otherwise. Of fundamental truths all might be assured, if there was a fit moral disposition; and no more was necessary, or consistent with God's probationary dealing towards mankind. Though even then, at the very earliest period, we know not, whether, on the departure of the first founder of a primitive Church, be he Apostle or Evangelist, the main truths were not *immediately* committed to those records which the early Church, from first to last, preserved; or the Fathers, in their contests with heretics, could not have made so confident an appeal to the primitive teaching. And certain it is, that, in more than one instance, the benefit of the Apostolic presence, when

¹ Men seeing the inadequacy of holy writ to convince gainsayers, are apt to attribute the fault to the *mode* of transmission; not to the true cause, *human perverseness*, which the oral teaching of our Lord Himself had as little power to remove, as that of the Apostles.
Vid. p. 91, note a.

1 "Nomen traditionis generale est, et significat omnem doctrinam, sive scriptam, sive non scriptam quæ ab uno communicatur alteri." Bell. de Verb. Dei, l. 4. c. 2. This is often forgotten—so, "hold the traditions, (τὰς παραδόσεις,) which ye have been taught, whether by word or by our Epistle." 2 Thess. ii, 15. But whilst the written record is constantly described by the Fathers under the term "tradition"—tradition is frequently used by them in contradistinction to the written word—"τὰ μὲν ἐν γραφαῖς, τὰ δὲ ἐν παραδόσει παρεδώκαν οἱ ἅγιοι ἄποστολοι," says Epiph. But this cannot be disputed.

the necessity of the Churches called it elsewhere, *was* immediately supplied by a written record of the doctrine which he taught, as in the case of Saint Mark's and St. Luke's Gospel—each of them containing in itself all that was necessary to salvation. And here is one of the errors in thinking of a supplementary or co-ordinate Tradition¹ at all, as *purely oral*; for, *if not* committed to *writing* for centuries, its authority as a record of truth is worthless—if committed at once, it ceases *to be oral* from that instant—as in the case of Scripture, which *is* the written record of what was orally delivered by the Apostles—the only tradition received *semper et ubique*. And, preserving the term tradition, the Fathers continually apply the phrases, Apostolical traditions, or Evangelical traditions, characterising the Gospels or the Epistles, not to an oral teaching independent of Scripture, but to *the actual written record*—a fact to be carefully borne in mind, as it will strip the question of much difficulty, and of that ambiguous phraseology, which is the great resource of the advocates of authoritative and supplementary tradition, in citing the opinions of the primitive Fathers. But, however, from the very moment that the Evangelical truths assumed the permanency of writing, from that time all the authority invested in the oral tradition, when there was no better, was transferred to them. And this is evident, because, from the earliest period to which we can trace fragments of them, the Fathers refer to them as conclusive—they appeal to them—they argue from them—they assume them as authority unques-

tionable—they make them, from the first, the sole proof of their creeds and articles of faith—as our Lord and His Apostles argue from the Scriptures of the Old Testament. And, in the case of the holiest of them, of those whom we might suppose to stand the nearest to that divine afflatus which clothed the Apostles' lips with infallible truth, such as holy Polycarp and Ignatius, they expressly and emphatically disclaim the wish or intention to put themselves, for a moment, into competition with the inspired Apostles, or to confound their uninspired wisdom with the words of the Holy Ghost ^f.

And, in times somewhat later, those of Irenæus, for example, nothing can possibly be stronger than the attestation of the Church to the sufficiency of the

^f Οὐχ ὡς Πέτρος καὶ Παῦλος διατάσσομαι ὑμῖν· ἐκεῖνοι ἀπόστολοι, ἐγὼ δὲ κατὰ κριτος, κ. τ. λ. Ign. Ep. ad Rom. c. 4.

Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς μηδὲν κατ' ἐπιθεῖαν πράσσειν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ Χριστομαθίαν. Ἐπεὶ ἤκουσά τινων λεγοντων, ὅτι ἐὰν μὴ ἐν τοῖς ἀρχαίοις εὐξα, ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ οὐ πιστεύω· καὶ λέγοντός μου αὐτοῖς, ὅτι γέγραπται ἀπεκριθῆναι μοι, ὅτι πρόκειται. Ἐμοὶ δὲ ἀρχαῖα ἔστιν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, τὰ ἀθικτα ἀρχεῖα ὁ σταυρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ θάνατος, κ. τ. λ. Ign. Epist. ad Philad. §. 8.

Ταῦτα, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἐμαντῶ ἐπιτρέψας, γράφω ὑμῖν ἐπὶ τῆς δικαιοσύνης· ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ὑμεῖς προεπικαλέσασθέ με. Οὔτε γὰρ ἐγὼ οὔτε ἄλλος, ὅμοιος ἔμοι δύναται κατακολουθῆσαι τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ μακάριου καὶ ἐνδόξου Παύλου ὃς γενόμενος ἐν ὑμῖν κατὰ πρόσωπον τῶν τότε ἀνθρώπων, ἐδίδαξεν ἀκριβῶς καὶ βεβαίως τὸν περὶ τῆς ἀληθείας, λόγον· ὃς καὶ ἀπάν ὑμῖν ἔγραψεν ἐπιστολάς, εἰς ἃς ἐὰν ἐγκύπτῃτε, δυνηθήσεσθε οἰκοδομεῖσθαι εἰς τὴν δοθεῖσαν ὑμῖν πίστιν, ἣτις ἔστι μήτηρ παντῶν ἡμῶν. Polycarp. ad Philip. §. 3.

Ὅς οἱ ἀποκημονεύσαντες πάντα τὰ περὶ τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐδίδαξαν. Just. Martyr. Apol. prim. §. 33.

Οὐδὲ τῷ Θεῷ εἰς ἀνοιαν ἦν τὸ, ἐρωτᾶν τὸν Ἀδὰμ, ποῦ ἔστιν, οὐδὲ τὸν Καῖν, ποῦ Ἄβελ, ἀλλ' εἰς τὸ ἕκαστον ἐλέγξαι ὁποῖός ἐστι, καὶ εἰς ἡμᾶς τὴν γνώσιν πάντων διὰ τοῦ ἀναγραφῆναι ἐλθεῖν. Dial. cum Tryph. §. 99.

Sometimes they use it to imply what the Apostles taught, without a specific reference to either mode of conveyance. This often involves the interpretation of the Fathers on these questions in great perplexity. The Romanists sometimes seem to mean by tradition, a something never committed to writing, but handed orally down to each generation of the priesthood. But oral tradition usually means that which the Apostles themselves did not write, though it was committed to writing by others.

written Scriptures, even of the Gospels only, *as the sole rule of faith.* And¹ we even find arguments in

¹ Ἐπιδὴ . . .
τίσσερα
κλίματα τοῦ
κόσμου, ἐν ᾧ
ἰσμὶν, ἐῖσι,
καὶ τίσσερα
καθολικὰ
πνεύματα . . .
εἰκότως τίσ-
σερας ἔχουσιν
αὐτὴν στύ-
λους παντα-
χόθεν πνεύ-
ματων τὴν
ἀφθέρειαν,
καὶ ἀναζω-
πυροῦντας
τοὺς ἀνθρώ-
πους.

regard to the Gospels, not only to shew, that, in point of fact, they *did* contain all that the soul of the believer required, but to prove à priori that more than that perfect number there could not be. In all matters of faith the *written word*, and the first *Apostolic teaching*, were *commensurate* in the opinion of the early Fathers, the one different forms of the same thing. And so, as the argument

Equally ingenious and beautiful is the illustration he draws from the fourfold faces of the Cherubim—
καὶ γὰρ τὰ
Χερούβιμ,
τίτραπρόσω-

required, the Fathers reasoned against heretics; either upon tradition, if they denied, as they often did, the whole or a part of Scripture—or, if they admitted Scripture, from the written word, or from both combined, according to the arguments or position of their opponents; but never treated them as authorities differing in the extent of the truths which they affirmed².

πα, κ. σ. λ.
Iren. ad
Hær. lib. 3.
c. 11.

Thus “ Matthew to the Hebrews in their tongue,”

² Romanists of old confessed this. A. Marina-rius, at the Council of Trent, boldly averred it.

we are told by Irenæus, “ published the Scripture of the Gospel. ³ Then Peter and Paul preached the Gospel, and founded a Church at Rome; and after their departure, Mark, the scholar of Peter, delivered to us in writing these things which had been preached by them: and Luke, the follower of Paul, composed in a book the Gospel which was preached by him: and afterwards, John, residing in Asia, in the city of Ephesus, did himself also set forth a Gospel⁴.”

³ Iren. l. 3.
c. 1. et
præf.

⁴ Though, by adducing packed passages, Irenæus may be made to give a seeming support to the Romanist doctrine of Tradition, yet no one, on a comparison of him with himself can be more

He implies in this, that what was thus committed to writing was adequate to the first oral tradition. Thus and

decisive on the full sufficiency and authority of Scripture as the Canon of faith. "Non enim per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eos per quos Evangelium pervenit ad nos; quod quidem tunc præconiaverunt, postea vero per Dei voluntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt, fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum." Adv. Hær. lib. 3. c. 1. "Habentes itaque regulam ipsam veritatem, et in aperto positum de Deo testimonium, non debemus per quæstionum declinantes in aliâs atque alias absolutiones ejicere firmam et veram de Deo scientiam." Adv. Hær. lib. 2. c. 47.

Then speaking of the heretical opinion that the truth could not be elicited from Scripture without Tradition. "Cum enim ex Scripturis arguuntur, in accusationem convertuntur ipsarum Scripturarum, quasi non recte habeant, neque sint ex autoritate, et quia varie sint dictæ, et quia non possit ex his inveniri veritas ab his, qui nesciant traditionem. Non enim per literas traditam illam, sed per vivam vocem." Lib. 3. c. 2. Here are *precisely* the arguments by which Romanists, and Romanising Divines in our own Church, oppose the sole and sufficient authority of Scripture. Like Tertullian, too, whatever importance Irenæus may seem sometimes to attribute to Tradition, when he comes to argue and refute, it is from Scripture alone that he does it. "Ex ipsis demonstrabimus Scripturis.....Ex Scripturis divinis probationes apponemus." Lib. 2. c. 66. "Propter hoc enim et laboramus eas, quæ sunt ex Scripturis, adhibere ostensiones, ut ipsis sermonibus confutantes eos, quantum in nobis est, cohibeamus eos a grandi blasphemia." Lib. 4. c. 68. In fact, as in the case of Tertullian, nothing can be more distinctly defined than the purpose for which he referred to the traditional teaching of the Apostolical Churches. It was simply because they refused to believe the Scriptures, or those which the Church received as inspired, that Irenæus, like any other reasoner, has recourse to that oral teaching from the beginning, which was then still in the memory of men and exhibited by precise records, to prove that their doctrines were not only undiscoverable in Scripture, but that they were utterly unknown to the teaching of the Church which was *identical* with Scripture: there-

much more Irenæus writes against heretics who pretended that some necessary doctrines of the Gospel were not written, and that all necessary truths cannot be extracted from Scripture by those who are unacquainted with tradition. And in Irenæus, and subsequently in Clement¹ and others of the same period, are the first attempts in the Church to protect the meaning of the Scripture language against misinterpretation and misunderstanding by the fixed rules of speech and the

¹ In this point the Church is much indebted to Origen, a vigorous defender of the textual meaning of Scripture on one hand, as well as its extravagant allegorizer on the other. But it was a tenet of the Alexandrian divines, that their *σοφία* was only an interpretation of the frequent written word, not extraneous to it, and independent of it.

fore they were their own unhallowed invention. “*Traditionem itaque Apostolorum in toto mundo manifestatam, in omni ecclesiâ adest perspicere omnibus qui vera velint videre, et habemus annumerare eos qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt Episcopi in ecclesiis, et successores eorum usque ad nos, qui nihil tale docuerunt, neque cognoverunt, quale ab his deliratur.*” Lib. 3. c. 3. But of course those who were not persuaded by the word of God, were quite a little moved by the oral teaching of the Church.

The principle of this Father's reasoning is, that the oral teaching represented the Scripture, neither more nor less, in matters of faith. When he asks, “*quid si neque Apostoli quidem Scripturas reliquissent nobis, nonne oportebat ordinem sequi traditionis, quam tradiderunt iis quibus committebant ecclesias?*” the reply is; certainly,—for, in the absence of the written Canon, we should have nothing else to which to apply for the truth. Then after saying, that many barbarous nations were true Christians, though they had not the written Scriptures; *sine chartâ vel atramento Scriptam habentes per Spiritum in cordibus suis salutem, et veterem traditionem diligenter custodientes*; he gives that *vetus traditio*, which is nothing more than a brief enumeration, like those which we find in Tertullian, of the first main articles of the Christian faith. There are no traces, in the first three centuries, of an oral tradition supplementary to Scripture, except in the heretics of that period. There was the same general agreement then as now, in the prime articles of the faith, but no more. Nor did Irenæus, any more than Tertullian, debar himself from understanding the Scriptures, by the exercise of his own reason, and forming his own judgment thereon.

canons of verbal criticism. And to such an extent was the supremacy of the written word admitted, and the oral Tradition subordinated to it—as merely, at the best, an exponent of the recorded truths, neither more nor less in extent, in fundamentals—that, in the earlier ages, it was the *appeal to Tradition that marked the heretic*. An interior doctrine, dominant to the written one, and communicated, as well as subsequently transmitted, by oral teaching, was the ready resource of fruitful minds, bent on giving Gospel sanction to unchristian doctrines. Nearly all the first great heresiarchs accordingly claimed it. Not only the Gnostic sects, but, in another form, Paul¹ of Samosata and Arius: shewing how essentially uncertain it is, and was, and how plastic in any hands which took the trouble to mould it, or invent it.

In connection with this uniform declaration of the early Catholic Fathers, that in holy writ alone are the truths of salvation authoritatively contained, and with the practice which they founded upon it, is to be considered the absence, with the exception of one or two palpable fables, of any sayings or doings of our Lord, uncontained by the sacred record, and admitted by the older Church. It can only be explained by the experienced sufficiency of the written history; not only its experienced sufficiency for all saving truth, but its acknowledged co-extensiveness with the dogmatic oral teaching of the Apostles. It is an arrangement of Providence, thus to remove all shadow of claim from Tradition, as a co-steward of the truth, which might interfere, not only with the paramount,

We find from Justin, that there was a school in his day which denied our Lord's divinity—so there was, probably, from the first. And neither Arius nor Paul could else have appealed to such a traditive interpretation of Scripture as favoured their theologizing. There was such a school in the Church—though no such Church. The attempt of Priestley to fix such a charge on the old Hebrew Church of Jerusalem and its successors in Judæa has been triumphantly refuted by Horsley and Faber.

but with the single and unapproachable authority of Scripture. Yet we know, from the Apostle John, that there *were* many miracles, and sayings, and interpretations, of our Lord, unrecorded in the writings of the Evangelists—so many, that the very world itself could not contain the books that might be written of them; and these, one would have thought, must have been current in the early ages, and with them it would have been most interesting and instructive for the Church of future times to be acquainted. The smallest word from the Son of God is as a jewel of gold¹. And yet, only one short saying has been preserved, and that by Saint Paul. Not only therefore must the Holy Scriptures have seemed sufficient for salvation to those times, and to those elder Saints, but abundant to overflowing in divine truths; and to the selection of them by the Holy Spirit, as food for the souls of believers, they never dreamed of adding.

¹ I do not mean that there were *no attempts* to give currency to such sayings and doings—there were, as the letter to King Agbarus, for instance, recorded by Eusebius. But clearly the vigilant piety of the old Church preserved in its integrity and sufficiency the written history. And when we become acquainted with the vast number of spurious Gospels, and other so-called holy writings, which were put forth in those days, not only our gratitude to the Church primitive, but our admiration of its accurate discrimination and patient judgment is greatly increased.

And, no doubt, with the same intention, there are two remarkable instances of the perversion of mere oral statements recorded for us in Scripture; neither of them peculiarly exposed to misunderstanding, and one of them involving points so interesting, that we should have supposed it likely to be carefully preserved by the Church; and no sinister motive to influence the mind in either case. I mean, the saying of our Lord, touching the Apostle John, and his supposed exemption from death, and the statement of Saint Paul to the Thessalonians, on the coming of the man of sin, and the last judgment; “Remember

ye not, that when I was yet with you, I told you these things? and now ye know what withholdeth, that he might be revealed in due time." What a correct measure does this give us, experimentally, of the value of oral tradition for the conveyance of sacred truth, much of it requiring great distinctness and guardedness of expression! what a broken reed to which to trust! what an affront to the incorruptible and imperishable memorial of the written word! Facts therefore, and the reason of the case, alike prove, that beside Scripture there is no authoritative depository of saving truth; though it is necessarily accompanied, as it has always been, by a *tradition unauthoritative*, to witness and to teach the truth.

But it follows from this, that there is a *sense*, arising from the existence of an uncorrupted oral teaching traceable to the Apostles, in which the earlier centuries of the Church might very reasonably argue upon a *double Canon*, neither rule *complementary*, but each commensurate with the other, and might be said to possess it, though, in the same sense or degree, it is wholly inapplicable to ourselves^h. The

One other saying of Christ is recorded by Jerome. "Be never glad, but when you see your brother live in charity;" "a good saying," says Bp. Taylor, "but whether they were Christ's words or no, we have but a single testimony." "There is not one saying, or miracle, or story of Christ, in any thing material, preserved in any indubitable record, but in Scripture alone." Dissua. Pop. p. 2. s. 2.

^h "These two fountains of the knowledge of the doctrine of faith—the collection of the Apostolic writings and oral Tradition—sent forth streams, flowing by the side of each other, through all communities which agreed in the essentials of Christianity; and especially through the communities which were of Apostolic foundation. But as the stream of Tradition necessarily became more turbid, in proportion as the distance from the Apostolic times increased, the writings of the Apostles were designed by Providence to be an unadulterated source of divine doctrines for every age. Though on some occasions the Christians of those days might appeal solely to

absorption of the oral tradition, as a reference or final authority, in the written, as we have seen before,

the authority of Tradition, they uniformly maintained, that the doctrine of Christians in all its facts might be declared from holy writ." Neander quoted by Bishop Kaye. Tertullian is full of testimonies to the completeness of Scripture, which he even pushes so far on one occasion as to deny the lawfulness of any thing not *directly* permitted therein. He condemns with the utmost severity the notion, that the Apostles had kept back any thing from the great body of the Church. "Sed, ut diximus, *eadem dementia* est, quom confitentur quidem nihil Apostolos ignorasse, nec diversa inter se prædicasse—*non tamen omnia volunt illos omnibus revelasse*—quædam enim palam et universis: quædam secreto, et paucis demandasse." De Præscript. Hæret. c. 25. The whole tract De Præscript. Hæreticorum, is, in truth, diametrically opposed to the Romish doctrine respecting Tradition, "that there are certain doctrines ¹ necessary to salvation, which rest, not on the authority of Scripture, but the authority of Tradition." The reason why Tertullian refused to argue with heretics, out of Scripture, is simply because the heretics rejected a large portion of the sacred volume; and even on those which they received, put forced and erroneous interpretations. Which then were the genuine Scriptures? This was a question *purely historical*, and to be determined by the opinions and practice of the Apostolic Church; and in the interpretation of them, though the sanction of the Church was to be greatly respected, yet the practice of Tertullian, like that of the other Fathers, proves beyond a doubt that he thought himself at perfect liberty to exercise his own judgment upon them. And, what is mainly to the point insisted on in the text, he strenuously insists upon the *exact agreement* between the traditions preserved in the *Church and the doctrines of Scripture*. Vid. de Præscrip. Hæret. c. 38. The one was coextensive with the other. And when he appeals to the doctrine of the Catholic Churches, he argues that it could not have been corrupted since the time of the Apostles, *from its uniformity*—quod ubique idem est, non est inventum sed traditum. Truth alone admits of consistency, while it is of the very essence of error to change and vary. This, in union with the Scripture, would be just at any time—but it is clear that

¹ Not simply, they would say, for Scripture contains all things absolutely necessary. True—but being *once propounded* by the Church, they become, *for that reason*, and thenceforward, equally necessary to salvation with the other.

still allows the former *the first place, in point of time*, though neither in clearness nor comprehensiveness,

the force of an argument, arising from such uniformity, was infinitely stronger in the days of Irenæus and Tertullian, when the Churches were independent, and no artificial unity produced by the pressure of the Church of Rome. It was, moreover, a matter of fact, of which all cotemporaries were cognizant; into which they might examine, and need not receive implicitly the vague assertions of a controversialist. And when, c. 14. de Præscriptione Hæret. he dissuades a believing brother from entering into Scriptural researches, allowance being made for his natural exaggeration of feeling and expression, he is only giving that advice which any sensible Protestant would give upon a difficult point. It is that ordinary Christians should not by the arts of heretics be led away from the Creed in which they have been instructed. That, if in the perusal of Scripture, he encountered difficulties, he should consult some learned doctor of the Church. And when he himself comes to confute heretical doctrines, he comes like the other Fathers to the Apostolic writings, as the instrument and word of faith, by which alone errors could really be rejected, and to which all tradition was secondary and subordinate.

The *tradition of ceremonies* he considers in the same Protestant light—paying to it that regard which is rendered by our Church, which, while it acknowledges no tradition as a valid proof of doctrine, receives it, in point of ecclesiastical practice, if it be consistent with Scripture, and suitable to existing times and circumstances. He mentions many, in the same way in which Basil and other Fathers mention them—as not to be found in Scripture, and therefore solely derivable from Tradition—but he never excludes an examination of their reasonableness and congruity with Scripture; “Rationem traditioni et consuetudini, et fidei patrocinaturam aut ipse perspicies, aut ab aliquo qui perspexerit disces. Interim nonnullum esse credes, cui debeat obsequium.” De Coronâ, c. 4. “Sed quia eorum quæ ex traditione observantur tanto magis dignam rationem afferre debemus, quanto carent Scripturæ auctoritate.” De Jejun. c. 30.

But take an instance of the little uniformity of sentiment in the same Father. In one passage he would seem to inculcate the pro-

nor in any thing *but time*; and, though the real proof thenceforward was transferred to Scripture, yet, so long as the teaching of the Church maintained its first purity, hanging by its highest link upon the Apostles, and unchanged, you might be said to have

priety, if not more, of the same ceremonies being maintained in all Churches; “ Non possumus respuere consuetudinem, quam damnare non possumus, utpote non extraneam, quia non extraneorum; cum quibus scilicet communicamus jus pacis et nomen fraternitatis. Una nobis et illis fides, unus Deus, idem Christus, eadem spes, eadem lavacri Sacramenta. Semel dixerim, una Ecclesia sumus. Ita nostrum est, quodcunque nostrorum est.” De Virg. Vel. c. 2. Compare it with De Coron. c. 4. “ An non putas *omni fidei* licere concipere et constituere, duntaxat quod Deo congruat, quod disciplinæ conducat, quod saluti proficiat, dicente Domino: cur autem non et a vobis ipsis quod justum est judicatis? ut non de judicio tantum sed de omni sententia rerum examinandarum.” But this is only one instance of what is to be encountered in all the Fathers on points not clearly set down in holy writ, either an expression of opinion, “ *κατ’ οἰκονομίαν* ;” or a variation of opinion from the lapse of time and new convictions; or looseness of expression, which it is difficult to reduce to the exact meaning intended to be conveyed. The clear and well marked principles of Scripture are the only clue. It only remains to mention, that, while he states the faith of the Apostolic Churches to be what the Apostles originally delivered, he gives *no form as drawn up* by them, distinct from the Scriptures. He knew, in this sense, of no Apostles’ Creed. The several summaries which he gives, prove that there was no one authoritative form, while they are not only *deducible from* Scripture, but contain nothing which is not most *broadly laid down* therein. “ Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola immobilis, et irreformabilis, credendi scilicet in unicum Deum omnipotentem, mundi conditorem, et filium ejus Jesum Christum, natum ex virgine Mariâ, crucifixum sub Pontio Pilato, tertia die resuscitatum a mortuis, receptum in cœlis, sedentem nunc ad dexteram Patris, venturum judicare vivos et mortuos, per carnis etiam resurrectionem.” De Virg. Vel. ad init. Conf. de Præscrip. Hæret. c. 13. Advers. Praxeam, c. 2. Vid. Bp. Kaye’s Tertull.

two parallel Canons, both Apostolic. Certainly this,¹ so long as it was pure and accurately recorded, would preclude any difference, or the possibility of it, between the word written, and the word preached. But still, even here, for a proper parallelism, worth any thing as *independent* evidence, it is necessary that the one should be maintained in accurate separation from the other, which was impossible with the written word in every body's hand; for, in propriety of speech, from the moment that the Scriptures assumed the place of the Apostles, the Canon becomes one; because the first teaching did not, and could not sustain itself, and did not pretend to sustain itself, without the written word, which the whole Church allowed from the first to be a sufficient, and the only independent rule.

But, at any rate, whatever we may say of the preceding ages, yet, after the frightful disruption of the Apostolic teaching which, with few exceptions, intervened between the fifth and sixth centuries and the Reformation, it is impossible that the Church of later times can similarly argue, except in those fundamental truths of which, save among a few heretics, there is no question in any section of the Church.

The early Church came from the authority of oral teaching to the written truth—we have proceeded in the opposite direction¹—the doctrines of the Gospel were exhumed, not from the Fathers whose multitudinous works took the illustrious Usher eighteen years to peruse, and with which not more than *half a dozen theologians* at any one period can really have any thing like a thorough acquaintance—but direct

1 If opposite, it is to be called. Even the great advocate of tradition says, "hanc fuisse semper et esse hodieque Catholicorum consuetudinem, ut fidem veram duobus his modis approbent. Primum, divini Canonis auctoritate; deinde ecclesiæ Catholicæ traditione." And then, "*Non quia (canon) solus non sibi ad universa sufficit, sed quia verba divina pro suo plerique arbitrato interpretantes varias opiniones erroresque concipiunt, atque ideo necesse sit, ut ad unam ecclesiastici sensus regulam Scripturæ cælestis intelligentia dirigatur—in iis dumtaxat præcipue quæ-*

stionibus,
quibus
totius
Catholici
dogmatis
fundamen-
ta nitun-
tur.”
Vincent.
Lirin.
Comm.
c. 29.

from the living word of God. Or rather, to speak more guardedly and accurately on so important a point, the Gospel was cleared from the incumbrances which had marred its purity, and had stifled that light which, though never extinguished, had only shone forth by fits and flashes before; and God's *Temple, the Church*, was again purified, by a direct reference to His word, for the reception and indwelling of its proper glory, Christ apprehended by faithⁱ. Its doctrines

ⁱ This is the principle which ballasted the English Reformation, and, without trespassing upon the sole authority of Scripture, laid that wholesome check upon the extravagances of individual opinion, which rendered it not a revolution and utter change, delighting in divergence from all previously established opinions, but a *restoration*. Our Reformers took Scripture as their sole basis—but admitted as an article of faith nothing *which the early Fathers had not drawn from it*—not admitting *every thing which they drew*—but excluding what had not *been recognised by them*. And they did so because, from their examination of holy writ, and *their reference* to the Fathers, they found in them the acknowledgment of the same sole authority, and a perfect coincidence on all prime verities. They thus interpreted Scripture decisively and in one sense *first*, because on the laws of human language it bore no other—and, as must happen when truth is sincerely sought, *as the ancient Church interpreted it*—not because, but as they did—they called them in, only as witnesses to this right sense of the word of God. The leading continental Reformers, and particularly Melancthon, were vigorous advocates of the same principles, and the Fathers, shunned at first by the Reformers from an ignorance, whether they coincided or not with the Scriptural teaching, became a favourite armoury against Rome; but specially the Fathers of the three first centuries.

Jewel extended his challenge to the *six* first centuries; and, with a certain latitude to language, and an *indulgent interpretation of doubtful phraseology in a Scriptural sense*, on which some of our own greatest divines, such as Waterland and Usher, have not hesitated to proceed, not only are they decisive against the proper

indeed, as it was right they should be, were confirmed by the Fathers; the impulse to change was chastised by

tenets of Rome, but those more refined Romanist forms which are now presented to us as Catholic truths. But not only from controversial necessities, but from a largeness of spirit, rejoicing in communion with spirits of the elder Church, for the *sake of illustration and confirmation*, the theology of the Church of England is, above all others, marked by a veneration for the Fathers. Abp. Parker tells us of Cranmer, "He unrolled the most ancient Fathers, both Greek and Latin; he investigated all the Councils and every part of antiquity up to the very times of the Apostles."

"We have resorted," says Jewel, "as much as we possibly could, to the Church of the Apostles and of the ancient Catholic Bishops and Fathers—nor have we directed, to their rites and institutes, our doctrine only, but likewise our administration of the Sacraments, and the form of our public prayers. For we judged that a restoration ought to be sought from that precise quarter, whence the first beginnings of religion might be deduced." "This principle," says the ancient Father Tertullian, "avails against all heresies. Whatsoever is first, is true; whatsoever is later is adulterate." Casaubon says, Epist. 744, "With Melancthon and the Church of England, I could wish that our articles of faith should be derived from the fountain of holy Scripture, through the channel of antiquity—otherwise, what end will there ever be of perpetual innovation? If I am not greatly mistaken, the soundest part of the whole Reformation is to be found in England; for there, along with the study of essential truth, flourishes also the study of antiquity." In this spirit was framed the Canon of 1571, directing preachers to confine themselves, in what they *inculcated as necessary* truths, to what was agreeable to the doctrine of the New Testament, and collected from that very Scripture by the Catholic Fathers—a rule eminently wise in *fundamental truths* at any time, and one which, though no longer of authority to us, and directed *specially against Popish novelties*, is a strong evidence of the animus of the Evangelical founders of the English Church. But, to prevent misunderstanding of its intencion, I subjoin the remarks of Waterland; "The Canon does not order *that they shall teach whatever had been taught by the Fathers*—no, that would have been *setting up a new rule of faith*—neither does it say that they

antiquity, due reverence was paid to that Church universal which had once throughout the world borne a general testimony to the glorious Gospel, and with all her sin, had never been wholly apostatical; and the inspired oracles were fortified in their legitimate sense by primitive tradition and universal consent. Thus the last seal of which moral certainty, in this question, is susceptible, was stamped upon the truth; and in this twofold shelter of Scripture and primitive Tradition, it lies alike secure against the Romanist, and the Socinian. This then is the great use of the Fathers—either affirmatively, *indicating* the positive doctrine of Scripture; or *negatively*, the falsity of doctrine not delivered in them or by them. But, when the inspiration and sufficiency of holy Scripture is once established, the *necessity* of that use is *accidental*, and the result of controversy, a use and necessity not

should teach whatsoever the Fathers had collected from Scripture—no, that would have been *making them infallible* interpreters, or infallible reasoners—the *doctrine must be found first in Scripture*—only to be *more secure that we have found it* there, the Fathers are to be called in, to be, as it were, constant checks upon the presumption or wantonness of private interpretation. But then again as to private interpretation, there is liberty enough allowed to it. Preachers are not forbidden to interpret this or that text, or hundreds of texts, different from what the Fathers have done—provided still they keep within the analogy of faith—and presume not to raise up any new doctrine. For it was thought that there could be no necessary article of faith or doctrine, but what the ancients had drawn out before from the same Scripture—to say otherwise, would imply that the ancients *had failed universally in necessities*, which is morally absurd.” Waterland on Use and Value of Eccles. Antiq. Works, vol. 5.

arising from the obscurity of Scripture on vital truths, but from the perverseness of men. To those who have no controversies to wage, and who seek the truth in simplicity, holy Scripture, *in main points, is a light like the sun*; and in others, it is its own best interpreter, if we compare it with itself, and by the analogy of faith.

But it is indeed difficult to conceive how any mind can be so constituted, as not to feel the force of the Patristical argument in *fortifying* truth; and the absolute indispensability of this line of reasoning, *whether we will or no*, when we have to deal with the Socinian and the Romanist¹. Neither of them, in point of fact, is insensible to its power—for both in turn have endeavoured to avail themselves of its authority against the plain meaning of Scripture—but, with such an overwhelming array of fact and argument have they been met, that infallibility is the only refuge for the one, and unlimited private judgment for the other. It is a miserable pretence of reason, in this view of the relation between Scripture and primitive Tradition, to hear men rave of the authority of Scripture, as wholly independent of human interpretation dictatorially imposed upon it. For, after all, by *men it must* be interpreted; and, if it be studied by the rules of right reason, and in the truthfulness of a child-like temper, as God intended it to be, such interpretation will be the truth of the Spirit. He who protests the loudest against the interpretation of men, when it condemns his own scheme, or a sectarian sense, is really exemplifying that of which he falsely accuses the Catholic Christian—and setting up not

¹ A necessity, not because we confess that it is the last court of appeal, with the power of pronouncing the clearest judgment on vital points; but because our adversaries appeal to it, and we are ready to fight them, with their own weapons—and, because, though Scripture is in itself decisive to a candid mind, yet this consent in the interpretation of it removes the last loophole at which doubt could enter. But, in point of fact, no one who resists Scripture is ever convinced by antiquity; there is no point of doubtful or false doctrine or practice, in which a most specious array

of evidence may not be gathered from the Fathers, quite beyond the power of an ordinary capacity or learning to refute.

This is quite undeniable, as every body knows, who has seen any thing of Romanist *contro-versial* theology. A *striking* proof of this is, that *those very Patristical authorities* which the Reformers ranged, and I believe truly, against Rome, are now vehemently and successfully pleaded against the doctrines of the Reformation, and in support of the doctrinal scheme of Trent by *Anglican divines*.

No—though we adopt the line of antiquity for purposes of controversy, and

only a *human* opinion, which is inevitable; but a *solitary* and a *private* opinion, against the sense of the collective Church—a tribunal, to which, in a question of interpretation on a vital point, not only holy feeling, and the sentiments of mankind, but the plain laws of reason command us to submit.

But though, in this *polemic* aspect, the tradition of the early ages is necessary; and in this alone indispensable, when the authenticity of the Scriptures is once established; yet there is no mind of elevated feeling, or with that reverence for antiquity, which is as inseparable from a generous temperament as from a Christian modesty, which does not experience an unspeakable satisfaction in tracing up his faith from age to age, through martyrs, and saints, and confessors, the noble genealogy of the Church Catholic, till he loses himself in them, and becomes one of those innumerable multitudes from every country under heaven, and of every age, who shall join in singing around the throne the Song of Moses and of the Lamb.

But there is here a caution to be added, and two objections to be removed, from this view of Tradition. 1. It must be borne in mind, that no tradition however universal, no doctrine, however *nominally Apostolical*, has any solid ground to claim our acceptance of it as such, if the *last* link be wanting which is to unite it to the Apostles.

The Canon of Vincentius becomes inapplicable, though it be *ubique et ab omnibus*, if it be not *semper* likewise, and *proved so to be*. There may be more or less approximation, more or less probability; but

it never can possess that certainty which attaches to the written declaration of the Apostles. And the fact is, that not only the teaching of the Apostles, but that of the *Apostolic* times, must be drawn mainly from the Scriptures themselves. They are acknowledged *contemporary* documents, a history of the then Church, as well as an authoritative record of faith—they are far more voluminous than those immediate successors who are styled the Apostolic Fathers, and whose witness alone approximates the condition of an inspired authority—they are *far more full and explicit* on all *points of faith and practice*, as well as more luminous and more easily understood—they stand therefore, in point of *time and of fulness*, as well as of *authority*, unapproachably removed even from those records which come nearest to them. You may talk of proofs and evidences, but still no ingenuity can really fill up the chasm—there it stands—and you cannot remove it—it is like a fosse, drawn round the Apostolic faith and the real Apostolic Church, as Scripture gives it us¹. And, when a doctrine or practice cannot thus be traced, even on this ground, it is unreasonable to confer upon it a distinction which it cannot claim without a derogation from the peculiar character of the Scriptures. And to admit the only postulate by which this can be eluded, the principle of the *gradual expansion* of supposed Scripture truths, by which we are called upon to accept, as Apostolical, that of which the mere *rudiments* are discernible in the authoritative record; that to which, by the pure assumption of the Church's infallibility, you can see, or fancy that you see, faint al-

because our enemies insist upon it; yet no demonstrable defeat—no destruction of their tenets from the root—can be effected, except by the sword of the Spirit—the written word.

¹This ought never to be forgotten—scarcely one of the forms and doctrines now forced on the Church as Apostolical, have, or even affect to have, a probable hold on this higher link—this essential point of union with the Apostolical Church. Strange that men will desert the rock, for the quicksand, and deliberately quit the standing point where they are side by side with Christ and His Apostles, for a fic-

titious antiquity which is centuries later than that which every Christian who pleases may be perfect master of.

That it is not the authority of the Church, as such, is manifest from this, that many authorities from Pagan historians are very properly adduced in favour of high doctrinal points, as facts. And the authenticity of the Canonical books is demonstrated by the very same formulas as the authenticity of the works of Cicero or Demosthenes. In fact, in the absence of miracles, we should otherwise have no middle term on which to reason with gainsayers. Rome feels this, and claims

lusions, or shadowy intimations, or seeming references, is, whilst we allow it, in words, in fact, to deprive ourselves of the Apostolic rule. It is to put ourselves hopelessly into the hands of the Church, not Apostolical, not Patristical, but Scholastical, with all its corruptions of doctrine, if not its depravity in practice. For, if you accept the so-called expansions of Scripture doctrine in the fourth century, you can frame no formula of proof for that position which will not be equally available for the still more developed and systematic Church scheme of Trent. We accept, then, with reverence whatever is written in Scripture—or can be certainly proved from it—we wish not to change any thing which, in form and practice, is consistent with it, and edifying to the Church, though it be uninspired—but duty to God and man commands us to stop here.

2. Nor is there any contradiction in principle, that we receive the Scriptures upon the testimony of the ancient Church, and yet reject, in other points, its authority over our faith; which is the first objection to remove. For that general consent by which we are assured of the authenticity of the Scriptures, is, in itself and of itself, credible. All that it binds upon us is this—to accept whatever else shall be similarly attested to us, as the acts and sayings of the Apostles—to that it does unquestionably bind us, but no more. But the power of¹ universal Tradition to attest the authenticity of certain books, and their supposed inspiration, is a power inherent in it, of its very essence, and not peculiar at all to the Church, as such; but is

precisely of the same nature, and subject to the same laws, as that which we apply, every day, to the written monuments of antiquity. It confers no authority whatever, in the proper sense of the word, on those times whose special benefit and relation to after ages lay in this very transmission of the holy writings, the authentication of which, as documents, was possible to them, and to them alone. Not only, by thus doing, do they obtain in themselves no authority over us, but, in thus handing down the inspired writings of the Apostles, they really *limit their own authority*, and bind their own hands—for they give to the Church in after times, *by this very act*, the power of judging, and that, by an infallible standard, those very men, and those very communities, by whose instrumentality they were thus conveyed and perpetuated. They make it our duty, should there be any thing to require it in their practice and opinions, to reject whatever shall *oppose* what they themselves, with one consentient voice, confess to be the sole Canon of truth¹.

We know, indeed, and we thank God for it, that, on the whole, they were marked by eminent love and fidelity to the faith, and not untouched by that virtue, which we are willing to suppose must have been communicated to the souls of those who conversed familiarly with them who had seen the Lord. But, had it been *decidedly* otherwise, it would not have been of any real force in diminishing the weight of the evidence which they bear, as a body, to the writings of the Apostles. It does not at all invalidate the tradition by which the books of the Old Testament have come down to us, that they who have

miracles—
how long
will it be
before we
do the
same?

¹ Hence we judge with confidence of that ultra asceticism, and justifying power of bodily mortification which so soon made fatal way in the Church of Christ, infecting even many of its eminent saints with a

Pagan principle.

Yet it is not *we* that judge the *juستا-Apostolical* Church—it is Christ, it is His Apostles, it is the infallible Gospel. And,

putting other considerations aside, no one in comparing the Apostolical writings with Barnabas, Hermas, &c. can fail being struck with the vast inferiority of the latter, even in point of sound sense, and

practical wisdom, all that makes real intellectual power.

They were weak men palpably—but in addition to individual weakness they had the *universal failings and corruptions of humanity*

—there was no interference on God's part to prevent the natural consequences—a system involving at once much misapprehension of Apostolic teaching, and the seeds of great ultimate corruption.

The Fathers are too hardly judged in their mystic interpretations of Scripture. Origen's allegorizing principles indeed are unjustifiable—hardly one of them saw the true use of the histori-

transmitted them were a stiff-necked and rebellious people, sinning from the very first against that great principle of the *Unity* of the Godhead, which they were specially called to preserve. Those records have to us the same divinity, though, both in faith and practice, they who have transmitted them were always deserting the Canon of truth; though they were ever making it vain, like their successors in the Christian Church, by their traditions; though its types were darkness to them; though the spirituality of its law was unacknowledged; and though its prophecies were not only imperfectly understood, but interpreted in a sense contrary to the divine intention.

Nay, both records may be said to derive additional strength and confirmation from that very condemnation of their errors, of which they who acknowledge their authority are thus the unconscious and involuntary witnesses. We need, therefore, be under no apprehension of shaking the foundation, upon which, by way of external evidence, we rest the authority of Scripture, if, with the word in our hand, we follow the example and precept of Augustine, and judge the primitive Fathers by it, and not it by the primitive Fathers.

And when, therefore, you bring them from this higher level, and look upon the primitive Fathers, and their intellectually greater successors, as general commentators on the Scripture, in those expositions of its meaning¹ according to their *individual judgment*, of which they have left us ample records; they must be judged by the same laws as those which we apply to interpreters of later ages, quite as great in intellectual gifts, and enjoying, according to Christ's un-

failing promise, the like spiritual illumination. Their position, in some points of preparatory discipline and materials for judgment, is far inferior to their successors. But, though in some respects *incomparably less fitted* for teachers than the great divines of our own Church for instance; though, from the *mere difference in time*, even were they in other respects quite equal, *incapacitated* altogether from forming a correct opinion on the later prophetic portions of Scripture; they need not shrink from the comparison. Though we cannot, save on fundamental points, extract a uniform or consistent opinion¹; though there is hardly any important text on which they do not differ from each other; yet weighed in any fair balance, great value must be attached to many of them even as individual expositors. It is only ignorance, or a fanatical conceit of the superiority of modern times, which can come to any other conclusion.

And it must not be forgotten, that Cyprian is not bound by the sentiments of his master Tertullian; Augustine brings all to the test of holy writ; Jerome is prodigal in criticism on his predecessors². "I think Origen," he says, "on account of his learning, ought to be read in the same way as Tertullian, Novatus, Arnobius, Apollinaris, and some other ecclesiastical writers, Greek as well as Latin, that we may choose out of them what is good, and avoid the contrary." "For when the Lord is silent," says Austin, "who of us shall say that this or that is so; or, if he dares to say so, from whence

cal Scriptures—but still this mystic key often unlocks great beauties. Our own theology has its mannerisms too.

¹ And even here, till the Nicene Council and its successors drew out the full doctrine from Scripture, with no little difficulty, sometimes, and doubt—in points not fundamental there is not even the semblance of agreement.

² "Ego Origenem¹," he says, "propter eruditionem sic interdum legendum arbitror, quomodo Tertullianum, Novatium, Arnobium, Apollinarium, et nonnullos Ecclesiastica Scriptores, Græcos pariter et Latinos, ut bona eorum eligamus, vitemusque contraria." "Nam cum

¹ Epist. 76. ad Tranquill. t. 2. opp. So Epist. 65. ad Pamus. et Ocean. et lib. 2. Apol. contr. Rufin. He does not spare his predecessors.

Dominus
lauerit,
quis nos-
trum
dicat, illa
vel illasunt,
aut, sidicere
audeat,
unde pro-
bat?" "Ego
vocem pas-
toris in-
quiro, lege
mihidePro-
phetâ, lege
de Psalmo,
recita de
lege, recita
de Evange-
lio, recita
de Apo-
stolo¹."

¹ It is an intolerable bondage which would thus be imposed upon men's consciences, by the adoption of a principle which the Fathers repudiate, and which neither the Eastern nor Western Church has ever pro-pounded in its fulness. Rome re-jects it—Constanti-nople rejects it. Why should we adopt it? Moreover, it is practi-cally a slavery not to the Fa-thers, but to the hand-ful of theo-logians who

can he prove it?" "I demand the Shepherd's voice," says the same Father, "read this to me out of a Prophet; read it to me out of a Psalm, quote it from the Law, quote it from the Gospel, quote it from an Apostle."

So rational and scriptural is the tone in which these great Fathers speak of themselves and of each other; so unconscious are they of more than a common human authority; dependent on the proofs or reasons by which they could fortify their conclusions; so completely does the phantom of Patristical authority vanish as we approach it, till Scripture alone remains, in entire sufficiency, and unincumbered majesty. Why impose a character on them which they disclaim? why give them an authority, of which both they and Scripture know nothing¹? why not take the liberty which they frankly give us? why bind ourselves with chains which other Churches refuse? why bind ourselves, in *fact*, not to the Fathers, but to those fragments of the Fathers which alone lie within the reach of most of us? As great men we admire them; as witnesses of God's word we deeply value them; for their labours in behalf of the Church we are eternally bound to them—and this is enough.

3. There is another mode of arguing on the authority of Church Traditions, *Scripture being* admitted, which assumes that no verity, such as that of the Incarnation and the adorable Trinity, could stand, without its support; which, from the dishonour it does to God's

¹ Aug. Liber. de Past. t. ix. Opp. So Ambrose, "Scrip-turas interrogemus—interrogemus Apostolos—interrogemus Pro-phetas—interrogemus Christum." Amb. ad Gratian. de Fide, t. 3. lib. 1. cap. 4.; but to bring examples is to exhaust the Fathers—they are full of them

word, and the recklessness of consequences which it exhibits, when a favourite position is at stake, merits the severest animadversion from all who are jealous of the honour of God's book, and the integrity of divine truth. And this is the second objection which we have to answer. If there is no premeditated design in this slur upon Scripture, it is at all events to reason without a due consideration of the consequences that must follow, and follow inevitably, if such be the case. It is to argue desperately and destructively. For the ancient Fathers avowedly drew their main proofs and arguments from those divine writings, which are thus presumed to be incompetent to prove even the fundamental articles of faith; if this be our condition, where are we to look? the Church has no miracles to establish her power to reasonable men; the *αὐτὸς ἔφα* of mere human authority can only go for what it is worth in a searching enquiry; the Bible in this case is declared worthless by the Church herself, who leans in helpless dependence on those who profess to be masters of the multitudinous records and contradictory teaching of the Fathers! and the ruin of our faith must irretrievably follow the destruction of its foundation.

But, setting other reasons aside, it is not to be conceived that the greatest and acutest intellects have really been deceived, when they suppose that, by every form of argument and induction admitted among men, they can demonstrate from Scripture these fundamental truths; it cannot be the fact, that the prodigious monuments of learning and labour, and of the hardiest faculties of the mind of man, with

sit in the Patristical chair, and whose representations of Patristical doctrine are and must be the sole guide of thousands, who will not bow to the voice of the collective Church, in her Confessions, Articles, and authoritative formularies. Such teaching is only nominally Catholic—it is, in fact, the unauthoritative teaching of half a dozen learned and pious individuals—and no more, even at the best; it is really a schismatical principle, an abjuring of a Church interpretation for a private one.

¹ Tertull. Lib. de Trin.
² Theophyl. de Lazar.
³ "But," it is asked, "ought not teachable minds to be satisfied with the Church or traditive assurance?" resp. No man ought to be satisfied with less than God gives him—besides, this Church evidence resolves itself into the *faith and knowledge of each man's individual pastor*, who is thus practically the Church. But in reading Scripture I not only read God's word, but truly that of the Church universal, in whose consentient voice every humble student joins. Oral tradition is only enough, when you can have nothing better.

which they have enriched the Church, have really been proceeding, all the while, on an ignoratio elenchi—that they have toiled in vain to shew, that the humble Christian who reads the Godhead of his Saviour in Scripture, is not only, in faith, blessed, but, in spite of philosophy, and tortuous sophistry, *in reason* invincible. "The Scriptures," says Tertullian¹, "convict the frauds and thefts of heretics;" and another Father², "The word of God is the light by which thieves are to be discovered." Never, if we are wise, shall we consent to throw away this sword of the Spirit, which is as powerful to slay the enemies of the truth, as the shield of faith is to defend us, for the unsubstantial and fictitious authority of Tradition; the sword which *all may wield by God's help*³, for that instrument of defence, which, be it what it may, (and it is farthest from my wish to underrate its polemic value,) is needless to the humble believer, and must be abandoned to the good faith, as it must be left to the knowledge, of a minute section of the Church? Certain it is, in the meanwhile, that, though the proofs of the Gospel mysteries drawn from Scripture have not convinced the rationalizing infidel, nor silenced the cavils of the heretic, yet even the intellectual victory has been with the Christian advocate; by legitimate reasoning these proofs have never been refuted, nor their consequences repelled. Tertullian is no disparager of Scripture, and is here addressing those who rejected the written word; but if any one, touching those who *do* admit the Scripture, should ask in his words, "What good will you do, you that are most practised in the Scriptures? when,

if you assert any thing, it is denied by the other side; if you deny any position, it is asserted? We reply, “At all events we have gained this, that he cannot deny our conclusion, without at the same time denying some evident axiom of reasoning; some principle, which in other things the necessity of nature and of sense, will compel him to use. We can do no more; but in this we have done much, in giving a reason for the faith that is in us. *God alone can move the heart.*”

“ Quid promovetis, tu, exercitatis-sime Scripturarum, cum si quid defenderis, negetur ex adverso, si quid negaveris, defendatur?”
Tertull. de Præscript. adv. Hæret. c. 5.

It is no wonder that Romish controversialists, who treat holy Scripture with such dishonour, should, in blind zeal for the honour of their Church, endeavour, like Petavius^k, to overturn the orthodoxy of the

^k The points on which Huet and Petavius have assailed the orthodoxy of the Fathers are of such magnitude in determining the value of their authority for the settlement of doctrine independent of Scripture, that attention ought to be drawn to them, however brief the notice be. And first, as to the statement of the learned Jesuit, there can be no doubt that he and the Church of Rome were deeply interested in disproving the weight of the Fathers in doctrinal controversy, wherein they are, on the whole, overwhelmingly opposed to the Romanist doctrines. Nor can I think that there is any doubt of this—that, though Romanist Divines are in the habit of grounding the traditions of their Church on an unanimous consent of the ancient Doctors, and cite them profusely where there is so much as a shadow of the merest verbal support; and though where there is a fair show of such unanimity, they do not appeal to any other authority—as indeed why should they? yet they do both in theory, and in practice, as Bellarmine does, avail themselves of the further principle of the *present inherent infallibility* of the true Church—by virtue of which Patristical doctrine, when anti-Romanist, is most cavalierly treated, and authoritatively pronounced heterodox. This may be very decisively proved in Mr. Newman’s exquisite analysis of the Romanist system, in his books on the Prophetic office of the

Nicene Fathers, and, in revenge for the irrefragable arguments which they lend the Protestant Churches

Church—Rome is ever ambidexter, and there is no contradiction in her system, in holding out, as the policy of the moment requires, the one principle or the other. Nor, I suppose, are there any Protestant writers of any authority who would venture to uphold the full extent to which Petavius pushes his scheme of ante-Nicene heterodoxy. There are some in the list of Fathers, such as Dionysius of Alex., who are perfectly precise and orthodox in their *expression* of the Trinitarian doctrine; some, whose opinions are *almost irreconcilable*, by any process, with orthodox doctrine, such as Lactantius—whose theory of the production of Son and Spirit is utterly unscriptural and unjustifiable. Others abound in contradictory statements and uncounted expressions, which, though not incapable of a Scriptural interpretation, demand many postulates which all may not be inclined to grant, much refinement and acquaintance with the *economic principles*, the arguing *γυμναστικῶς*, as Jerome calls it, on which the Fathers often proceed, and much laborious comparison of passages, to render tolerable. Others speak loosely and carelessly both in regard to the Son and the Spirit, giving too much reason for the assertions of heretics, that the orthodox doctrine was a novelty, when it was at last distinctly gathered from Scripture, and clearly propounded. The Platonic Fathers, using the phraseology of their peculiar schools rather than the testimony of Scripture, threw many difficulties in the way of a Scriptural view from this very circumstance; and most unjustifiably adopt the terms “*generation*” and “*Sonship*” as used in Scripture, as synchronizing the filiation with the issuing forth of the creative energies from the abyss of the Deity—making thereby, as it would appear, the Sonship a *temporal* act. But it is not sufficiently remembered that, in the Platonic theory, the *προβολή* of creative energy is *coeternal* with the divine Being—like light from the sun—and keeping in mind, the constant use of the terms, e. g. as the streams from the fountain, the ray from the sun, &c. and the immense difficulties, and inevitable contradictions in expression arising from any attempt to *expand such a* mystery, I cannot think there can be any reasonable doubt of the *substantive soundness* of the ante-Nicene Fathers on the vital doctrine of the Trinity. Mr. Faber, in his

against Rome, endeavour to convict those holy men of heresy and ignorance of the faith—but the servant

Preface to the Apostolicity of Trinitarianism, has shewn good reason why the like indulgence and lenity of interpretation should be extended to the much disputed passage in Origen, Comm. in Johan. Ἐξεταστέον δὲ ἀληθοῦς ὄντος τοῦ, πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, εἰ καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα τὸ Ἅγιον δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο κ. τ. λ. And then οὐ (i. e. Υἱοῦ) κρήζειν ἔοικε τὸ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα, διακονοῦντος αὐτοῦ τῇ ὑποστάσει. Vid. Fab. Apostol. of Trinit. p. lix. Neither must it be forgotten, that, according to the ancient Church and Scripture, God the Father, being alone the fountal Deity, is the cause of existence to the Son, and the Son conjointly with the Father, the cause of derivative existence to the Spirit—yet the Father being eternal, there is no temporal priority or posteriority in this relation. On the whole, the most competent judges, such as Bull, Cave, Waterland, Horsley, Burton, &c. are satisfied of the orthodoxy of the Ante-Nicene Fathers.

But whilst it must, I think, be granted, that most valuable confirmations of the doctrine of the holy Trinity, as the teaching of the Church Catholic from the beginning as well as the demonstrable truth of Scripture, may be drawn from the testimony of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, it must equally be granted by every candid mind, that, apart from the illumination of Scripture, and the grand landmarks with which it furnishes us, to guide us through the intricacies of Patristical interpretation, they are utterly incompetent to furnish, as a body, a consistent or orthodox *statement* of this fundamental doctrine—though the doctrine itself is contained in them all. We have the decided opinion of Basil, that there is much in this question in the old Fathers which is incorrect in statement on the Holy Spirit as well as on the Son, an opinion which on such a point hardly admits of any appeal, and which is fully borne out by Jerome, who informs us that from *an ignorance of Scripture* many confounded the Spirit with the Father and the Son. On the unanimous confession of the great Fathers of the fourth century, the more precise statements of aftertimes, at the Council of Nice and subsequent to it, arise from a more *careful study of Scripture*, and not from tradition—though tradition with all its confusion and discrepancies had unquestionably preserved the doctrine substantially in tact.

These loose statements are so important, in the comparison of Scripture with Patristical expositions of doctrine, and the position in which

is not greater than his lord—interpreters of Scripture cannot escape that contumely which Scripture itself receives.

they stand to each other, that it will be but right to add one or two authorities from the great theologians of the Church of England. “If any thing,” says Bp. Horsley, “be justly reprehensible in the notions of the Platonic Christians, it is this conceit which seems to be common to Athenagoras with them all, and is a key to the meaning of many obscure passages in their writings, “that the external display of the power of the Son, in the business of creation, is the thing intended, in the Scripture language, under the figure of His generation—as if a new relation had taken place between the first and second person, when the creative powers were first exerted. The indiscretion of presuming to affix a determinate meaning upon a figurative expression, of which no particular exposition can be safely drawn from holy writ, is in some degree atoned by the object which these writers had in view—they thought to lead men away from the notion of a literal generation, by assigning to the figure a particular meaning, which it might naturally bear, and which, whether it were the true sense of it or no, seemed not to clash with any explicit part of the revelations. The conversion of an attribute into a person, whatever Dr. Priestley may imagine, is a notion to which they were entire strangers—that the Son had been a mere attribute, before he became a person; or that the paternal attributes were older than the Son’s personal existence, is a doctrine which they would have heard with horror and amazement.” Horsley’s Tracts, p. 64. “Suppose,” says Bp. Stillingfleet, a vigorous supporter of the legitimate uses of tradition, “the question be not concerning the express articles of this rule of faith, but concerning the sense and meaning of them, how then are we to find out the consent of Antiquity? for they might all agree in the words, and yet have a different notion of the things.” He then adduces the conclusions of Petavius on these points, and proceeds, “Here now arises the greatest difficulty to me in this point of Tradition; the usefulness of it, I am told, is for explaining the sense of Scripture: but there begins a great controversy in the Church about the explication of the doctrine of the Trinity. I desire to know whether Vincentius’s rules will help us

But Rome, if Scripture fails, has her support left ; there is her *infallibility*, which, if the claim be true,

here ? It is pleaded by St. Hierome and others, ‘that the writers of the Church might err in this matter, or speak unwarily in it before the matter came to be thoroughly discussed.’ If so, how comes the testimony of erroneous or unwary writers to be the certain means of giving the sense of Scripture ? And in most of the controversies of the Church, this way hath been used to take off the testimony of persons, who writ before the controversy began, and spake differently of the matter in debate. I do not deny the truth of the allegation in behalf of those persons ; but to my *understanding*, it plainly shews the *incompetency of Tradition for giving a certain sense of Scripture*, when that tradition is to be taken from the writers of the foregoing ages : and if this had been the only way of confuting Arius, it is a great question how he could ever have been condemned, if Petavius or S. Hierome say true.” Answer to Several Treatises, &c. p. 245, 246. Edit. 1674.

I cannot but think Mr. Goode in error, in the extent to which he pushes his conclusions on this subject, and that Waterland and Cave give the true account of the matter, quite enough for the subversion of an authoritative interpretative tradition, without involving principles, touching the early Fathers, which might eventually be equally dangerous to Scriptural truth. And questionless, with all deductions, the great divines of the Church of England do hold the soundness substantially of the early Patristical teaching. They may be excused, as the latter plead even for Lactantius, on account of the inexperience of the age in which they lived, in the *scientific expression* of these truths, and the abstruseness of doctrines not yet defined by Theologians, nor determined by Councils. And Waterland’s judgment perfectly coincides with that of Horsley and Bull on the eternal generation. “It must be confessed,” he says, “that the Catholics themselves were for some time pretty much divided about the question of eternal generation, though there *was no question about the eternal existence.*” Whether the *Λόγος* might be rightly said to be begotten in respect of the state which was antecedent to the *προελεύσις*, was the point in question ; Athanasius argued strenuously for it upon this prin-

is logically sufficient for the purpose; and, if we abandon Scripture as the sole rule of faith, it is to the same defence that we ourselves must be ultimately driven, though we have no array of false miracles, such as she dazzles and bewitches men's minds with, to support the claim.

The authoritative declarations of the the Church of England.

III. And this brings me, in the last place, to the *plain declarations* of the Church of England on this important point, which, as yet, have been taken for granted. She is emphatically a Scriptural Church—upon her own declaration of her office, in regard to holy writ, she is its witness and its keeper—with authority in all matters of faith which she can prove out of the divine record. But she cannot go farther—she cannot so much as change one jot or tittle of what is written, or interpret it by any other rules than the laws of reason, and the analogy of faith. She has not forgotten who it was that

ciple, that whatever is of another, and referred to that other as his head, (as the *Λόγος* considered as such plainly was,) may and ought to be styled Son and Begotten; besides, the Arians had objected, that there would be two unbegotten persons, if the *Λόγος* ever existed and was not in the capacity of Son, and the Church had never been used to the language of two unbegottens. These considerations, besides the testimonies of elder Fathers, who had admitted eternal generation, weighed with the generality of Catholics, and so eternal generation came to be the more prevailing language, and thus prevailed ever since. There is nothing new in the doctrine more than this—the calling that eternal generation which others would have styled the eternal existence and relations of the *Λόγος* to the Father, which, at length, amounts only to a difference in words and names." Waterland's *Second Defence of some Queries*, vol. 3. p. 260. The importance of this subject, and the true value of the early Fathers in high doctrine, must excuse the length of this note.

hedged in the first written Covenant with the prohibition, “Ye shall not add unto the word that I command you; neither shall ye diminish ought from it; that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord God which I command you.” She remembers too, that the revelation of the second Covenant is wound up with the same solemnity of sanction, and the like anathema, “If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the book of life.”

Deut. iv. 2.

Rev. xxii.
18, 19.

Hence it comes to pass that, when the Church of England, had she been disposed, might at least have appealed *in confirmation* of her doctrines to universal tradition, and it was obvious so to do if she thought Scripture inadequate, she emphatically avoids it, and appeals *to Scripture only*.

In the adoption, for example, of the three Catholic Creeds, one at least of which may be traced, in the main, close to the Apostles, and all of which are truly Catholic, and provable by Catholic Tradition, the reason which she gives for holding them, is not that the tradition of the Church has handed them down, but “that they may be proved by most certain warrants of Scripture.” The Baptism of Infants, though susceptible of such strength of outward evidence, and general tradition, she grounds upon its consonance with the institution of Christ. To General Councils, she attributes not only fallibility, but actual sins and errors; and pronounces that

¹i. e. *clearly proved.*

²If Councils be infallible, as *such*, the Arian stands on as firm ground as the Catholic. The Council of Ariminum was far more numerous than that of Nice.

The second Council of Nice decreed the worship of images as a *Catholic tradition*, &c. &c. Austin was right, "Neque ego Nicenum—neque tu Ariminense, &c."

³ "It is evident," says Bp. Taylor, "that the questions at Nice were not, and could not be determined by tradition."

2. Tradition was pretended on both sides . . . the tradition which the Sannas-tanians and Arians boasted of had in it *much pro-*

things ordained by them have neither strength nor authority, unless they be ¹declared to be taken out of holy Scripture." She well knew, from history, the secular passions which mingled from the first in those mighty Synods; what turbulent ambition, personal animosities, and political chicanery scandalized even some of those whose decisions, being grounded on holy writ, were true and catholic—she knew that there have been times, when the very same rule of the infallibility of Councils would have destroyed the faith ².

She knew, that to acknowledge the infallibility even of those whose decisions she adopted, would involve the acceptance of all other doctrine, however unscriptural, which their Canons enjoin. She knew that there have been times when crowded consistories, which, in the numbers, talents, and venerable dignity of their members, were not unworthy to represent the majesty of the Church Universal, not only themselves apostatized from the faith, but seemed for a time to obtain that which is the *seal of a General Council, the approbation of the Church without*, and the general consent of the faithful ³.

Wisely and scripturally did Constantine ¹, in opening

¹ Δεινὸν εἶη καὶ ἄγαν δεινὸν, τῶν πολεμίων καταλυθέντων, καὶ μηδεὸς ἀντιτείνειν τολμῶντος, ἀλλήλους βάλλειν καὶ τοῖς δυσμενέσιν ἡδονὴν καὶ γέλωτα προξενεῖν, ἄλλως τε καὶ περὶ θεῶν διαλεγομένους πραγμάτων, καὶ τοῦ παναγίου Πνεύματος τὴν διδασκαλίαν ἀνάγραπτον ἔχοντας. Εὐαγγελικαὶ γὰρ, Φησὶ, βίβλοι καὶ Ἀποστολικαί, καὶ τῶν παλαιῶν προφητῶν τὰ θεσπίσματα, σαφῶς ἡμᾶς ἀ χρῆ περὶ τοῦ θείου φρονεῖν ἐκπαιδεύουσι. τὴν πολεμοποιὸν οὖν ἀπελάσαντες ἔρι, ἐκ τῶν θεοπνεύστον λόγων λάβωμεν τῶν ζητούμενων τὴν λύσιν. Theodor. Eccles. Hist. lib. 1. c. 6^o ad fin.

Join to this the declaration of Athanasius himself in the Epistle to the African Bishops. Ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐνταῦθα οἱ Ἐπίσκοποι θεωρήσαντες

the first and holiest of them, tell the assembled Bishops, that, in this disputation concerning divine

ἐκείνων τὸ δόλιον, συνήγαγον ἐκ τῶν γραφῶν, τὸ ἀπαύγασμα, τὴν τε πηγὴν καὶ τὸν ποταμὸν, καὶ τὸν χαρακτῆρα πρὸς τὴν ὑπόστασιν, καὶ τὸ, ἐν τῷ Φατί σου ὄψομαι Φῶς, καὶ τὸ, ἐγὼ καὶ ὁ πατήρ ἐν ἴσμεν, καὶ λευκότερον λοιπὸν καὶ συντόμως ἔγραψαν, ὁμοούσιον τῷ πατρὶ τὸν υἱόν.

There can be no doubt that both the whole question, and the specific term ὁμοούσιον were determined by an appeal to holy writ. Touching the ὁμοούσιον, though to be found in one or two ancient Doctors, yet the conciliar decisions of the ancient Church were against its use¹.

But it might be inferred immediately from Scripture, and therefore the Fathers used it. The same conclusion may be drawn from the objections which some Bishops, perfectly orthodox, entertained to the introduction of the term as going beyond Scripture. And to this effect is the Letter of the historian Eusebius to his own Church at Cæsarea. Τὸν ἀναθέτιμον δὲ τὸν μετὰ τὴν πιστὴν πρὸς αὐτῶν ἐκτεθέντα ἀλυτὸν εἶναι ἠγησάμεθα, διὰ τὸ ἀπίεργειν ἀγραφοῖς χρῆσασθαι φωναίς· διὸ σχετὸν ἢ πάντα γέγονε συγχύσις τε καὶ ἀκαταστασία τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν. Euseb. Epist. ad Cæsar. Socr. Hist. Eccles. But though this is the case, and the result of this diligent ἐξέτασις, as Constantine calls it in his circular letter to the Churches, into the evidence of the Scriptures, set the statement of the doctrine in a clearer light, and more distinct from heretical perversions than it had ever been before, yet unquestionably there was much and just reference made to the uninterrupted teaching of at least a large proportion of the Christian Churches from the times of the Apostles; and a legitimate argument it was, when, Scripture being granted, the dispute turned on the interpretation of the scriptural phraseology. Some, as we learn from the account of the meeting preliminary to the Council, would have rested *it wholly* on the fact of the general teaching of the Church; a proceeding happily, for Scripture truth, overruled and untenable. Athanasius himself, though he oftentimes lays stress upon the transmitted teaching of the Church^a, yet by no means does so as an invariable rule, and

^a e. g. ὁ δὲ τοῖς παραδοθεῖσιν ἐμμένων ἀκίνδυνος, &c. de Incarn. adv. Paul. Samo. There are constant expressions of this kind. Orat. cont. Arian. &c. but he manifestly includes the Scripture in παραδόσις—the Church teaching from Scripture—or Scripture rightly understood, and as she understood it.

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oral tradition, but the writings of the doctors which were before them . . . the Soci-nians knowing that tradition was claimed on both sides, please

things on which they were about to enter, they had that set before them which they ought implicitly to follow—the doctrine of the Holy Ghost—for the books of the Evangelists and Apostles, and the oracles of the Prophets, did sufficiently shew all Christians what they ought to think of the Word of God. And well would it have been, if, in after times, Christian *Prelates* had followed the example, and acted on the principles of a Christian prince. And truly, though Christ is in the midst of two or three

After stating that the faith of the synod had been proved by Scripture, he declares that the faith so settled was sufficient for the reproof of all impiety. Athan. de Incarn. And that Catholic Christians will neither speak, nor endure to hear any thing that is a stranger to Scripture; it being an evil heart of immodesty to speak those things which are not written. Athan. Exhort. ad Monach. (Bp. Taylor, Dissua. Pop.)

who are gathered together in His Name, animated by His Spirit, and submissive to His word, He disowns the vastest multitudes and the most reverend senates of the Church, by whatever titles dignified, and by whomsoever convoked, who meet together without it^m.

includes in it, when he does, the Scripture proof and foundation of it. Moreover, had there been any really universal tradition separable from Scripture, it would have been quite impossible that the Arians should not only pervert the word, but, like Paul of Samosata, have been willing to try the matter by Tradition. And we have seen, to demonstration, in a former note, that a large proportion of the Ante-Nicene Fathers have so expressed themselves, that they would then, as they have done in the hands of Priestley, have ministered instruments by a little management to the Arian party.

The holy Scripture therefore was both in point of fact the only secure foundation for the controverted doctrine, and in reality the *one great argument* on which Athanasius¹ himself ultimately rested. And though the ancient Fathers might have been legitimately called in to arbitrate on a *disputed* text, yet where the text, as in this case, was far clearer than the commentary, there could, even on that ground, be no doubt as to which of the two should be chosen as the champ de bataille.

^m To complete this reference to the authoritative formularies of the Church of England, which give a decisive form to her doctrines, and to which her less precise and familiar expositions of doctrine

Finally, the Church of England rejects purgatory, pardons, the worshipping of images and relics, and invocation of saints, because they are founded upon no warranty of Scripture. It is only consistent, therefore, with these principles, that the minds of all within her pale are sedulously brought into a direct acquaintance, for *themselves*, with the oracles of God; not as a favour, reluctantly given, and timidly limited, but as a bounden duty, as a most certain blessing, and the inestimable privilege of every child of God. This advantage follows from it. That, though

and practice must be subordinated, I must not forget to mention Jewel's Apology for the Church of England, which was approved by the Queen and set forth with the consent of the Bishops, and was always understood to speak the sense of the whole Church; and Nowell's Catechism, which had *the express* sanction of Convocation. Jewel tells us that the Scriptures are the very infallible rule whereby may be tried—as Augustine had long ago pronounced before—whether the Church do swerve or err, and whereunto all Ecclesiastical doctrine ought to be called to account. And Nowell says, “that the *Christian religion* is to be learnt from no other source than from the heavenly word of God Himself, which He hath delivered us in holy Scripture.” Finally, the first Homily says, “Let us diligently search for the well of life in the books of the New and Old Testament, and not run to the stinking puddles of men's traditions, devised by men's imaginations, for our justification and salvation. For in holy Scripture is fully contained what we ought to do, and what to eschew, what to believe, what to love, and what to look for at God's hand, at length. These books therefore ought to be much in our hands, in our eyes, in our ears, in our mouths, but most of all, in our hearts. For the Scripture of God is the heavenly meat of our souls, the hearing and keeping of it maketh us blessed, sanctifieth us, and maketh us holy—it teemeth our souls—it is a light lantern unto our feet. It is a sure, stedfast, and everlasting instrument of salvation, it giveth wisdom to the humble and lowly hearts.”

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our eyes do not see the incarnate "Word," nor our ears hear Him, nor the Apostles who built up the Church under Him, yet, from the presence of that Spirit who accompanies every one in the devout study of the Scripture, our souls imbibe the truth, as *freshly* and directly from the fountains of life as ever the early Church did. It then becomes no *derivative* faith; it is no secondary knowledge; it is no vicarious trust; but, in each succeeding generation, it is a repetition of the first act of faith, and a continually fresh evidence, and individual attestation of the truth. Let it not be forgotten either, that the outward evidence, of whatever kind, is only recommendatory; only introductory to that evidence of the heart and conscience, which accompanies the devout study of Scripture, in all those, who, by acting upon it, are willing to know whether the doctrine contained in it really comes from God or not. The most illustrious saints testify, that, in their internal experience in the action of the word upon the soul, and in the verification of the promises therein, they have discerned such a radiancy of divine truth, as nothing else can approach in the way of proof or assurance.

Well does the Belgic Confession sayⁿ, "We re-

ⁿ Surely this article confesses the real truth of the *evidence* on which ignorant men may know Scripture to be the word of God. "The Holy Spirit," says Jackson, "who instructed the first preachers of the Gospel with the true sense and knowledge of the truths therein revealed, and furnished them with diversity of tongues, to utter them to the capacity of divers nations, *can and doth*, throughout all succeeding ages, continue His gifts, whether of tongues or others, whatsoever are necessary for conveying the true sense and meaning of saving truth already taught, *immediately to*

ceive these books, not so much because the Church receives them as Canonical, and approves them, as because the holy Spirit testifies to our consciences that they have come from God; and in that respect, most of all, because, even of themselves, they witness and prove this their authority and holiness.”

It is idle, therefore, in such a case, to say that it is from the Church, and not from the word of God, and for ourselves, that we FINALLY derive our proof and evidence of divine things. It may be refuted, by the humblest and simplest cottager who studies his Bible, in the same way that the philosopher refuted the arguments for the non-existence of matter, not by counter-reasoning, but by stamping on the ground, “ Thus I *refute* you.” “ I cannot answer

“ Nos libros recipimus, non tam quod Ecclesia illos pro Canonis recipiat et comprobet, quem quod Spiritus Sanctus nostris conscientiis testatus est illos a Deo emanasse; et eo maxime, quod ipsi etiam per se, sacram hanc suam auctoritatem et sanctitatem testentur atque comprobent.” Belg. Confess. Sylloge Confess.

the hearts of all such, in every nation, as are not, for their sin, judged unworthy of His society; of all such as resist not His motives to follow the lusts of the flesh. And as for men altogether illiterate, that cannot read the Scriptures in any tongue, we do not hold them bound (nor, indeed, are any) to believe absolutely or expressly every clause and sentence in the sacred Canon to be the infallible oracle of God's Spirit, otherwise than is before expressed; but unto the several matters or substance of truth contained in the principal parts thereof, their souls and spirits are so surely tied and fastened, that they can say to their own consciences, ‘ wheresoever these men that teach us these good lessons learned the same themselves, most certain it is that originally they came from God, and by the gracious providence of that God, whose goodness they so often mention, are they now come to us.’ Such are the rules and testimonies of God's providence; the doctrines or real truths of original sin, of our misery by nature, and our freedom by grace; such are the articles of Christ's Passion, and the effects thereof of the resurrection and life everlasting.” Jackson's Works, b. ii. sec. 1. c. 2.

your argument," may the peasant or mechanic say, "nor can I enter into your antiquities ; I am poor and ignorant ; but this I know, that in this book I have eternal life ; from it my faith has grown, and I am sure that it comes from God ; it is not from human evidence, not even that of the Church which first brought me to Christ ; but from myself, from my own eyes, and from the testimony of my own heart, I believe that Jesus Christ is *the Son of God, and the Saviour of sinners.*" It is a crown of glory to a Church to be rich in such proofs, from the palace to the cottage, of the faithfulness of her teaching ; and in such proofs, beyond all others that have ever been, does the scriptural Church of England abound. Well does she know, that, in thus preeminently honouring the Redeemer and the Redeemer's word, she is so far from *dishonouring* the Saints and Fathers of old time, that, by obeying their precepts, and following their example, she is tendering to their memories the most solemn mark of veneration which they can receive from us. She appeals to them as witnesses, she treads in their steps as holy guides, she traces, through the long line of ages up to the Founder of the Church, the unbroken succession of the faith, she acknowledges their fellowship with her own peculiar Saints and Martyrs, she entreats Almighty God in their prayers, she resounds His praises in their Anthems, and, in them, identifies herself with the communion of the Universal Church ; she knows that, in setting her children free from a human bondage, she is not encouraging a licentious

spirit in divine things, but providing against it; and that, for *herself*, she cannot lose a tittle of that rational obedience, which, those who are trained in the moderate spirit of Apostolic Christianity, render to their mother in the faith, and which, in its true loyalty, and voluntary obedience, is worth, a thousand times over, the miserable subjection of the Romish Church, and the iron chains which she lays on the very soul. History demonstrated to her, that, where men resist the authority of Scripture, they are just as likely to throw off the yoke of the Church; that, after all, a Council or a Church cannot speak more intelligibly than God can in human language; and that, where the fault lies, not in the understanding but in the affections, a more potent, and soul-searching influence is required, than any external power can possibly exert. It was a shortsighted policy, therefore, even for such a purpose as saving souls—if such a desire can co-exist with fraud—it was folly as well as sin, to work on men's minds, by the assumption of an authority, which, being founded neither on reason nor Scripture, but on something different from both, was certain to fall at last before that rigid and stern scrutiny, to which, not only the desire of truth, but the repugnance of mankind to the usurpation of an authority no better than their own, would inevitably lead.

But, at the same time, the Church of England has preserved that best counterbalance to the licentiousness of reason, and the abuse of the will—the authoritative declaration from the first of the faith of Christ, as the

primitive Fathers held it; and the principle of an early training in the ways of holiness, and a dedication to our Redeemer even from our mother's womb.

This is the only legitimate restraint upon the right of private judgment, and the exercise of free enquiry into the word of God in Scripture—not a *certain one*, or one which is always calculated to be successful, but the best for the purpose which the moral condition of man will permit; and one which the Church of God, from the beginning, whether Patriarchal, Jewish, or Christian, has been distinctly commanded to apply. The authority, however, which she seems to surrender on one hand, she more than regains on the other. For in transferring the veneration of the heart, and the obedience of the reason, to that which has really a right to claim it, she impresses the same divine sanction upon her own Scriptural rights and privileges—and, instead of doing as the Church of Rome does, and defending a citadel of stone with walls of pasteboard, she throws round that which is, in itself, comparatively weak, a rampart of adamant.

And, entirely apart from other powerful influences on the affections, in putting the testimony of Catholic antiquity, not on the basis of authority, but of right reason, she really rests it on the strongest ground which it can assume. So taken, as a piece of moral evidence, it is irresistible—there is quite enough in it, as fortifying the sense of Scripture, to beat down with a wholesome awe even the most adventurous mind. In her own children, certainty of faith has been, in great part, already produced, by the action

of grace upon the heart, and by that religious training, which, in the Church of England, is inseparably connected with a free access to Scripture, and a constant examination of its proofs. And, even if that complete witness of the Spirit be not already produced, it is no easy thing for an ingenuous mind to scrutinize, with a harsh irreverence, the truths which it has drawn in with its mother's milk—the doctrines which have been identified, in a thousand ways, with all that is most real and practical in humanity, and which are felt to harmonize with every uncorrupted feeling, and the innermost convictions of the soul. It can hardly be with a doubtful or sceptical temper, that the Church's child sits down to find in Scripture, the proofs which he is to seek there of long-announced truths, and to the discovery of which the Church has pointed out the way—he wishes, if he can, to find them there, and he does find them.

The more commanding his intellect, and the more responsible the post which he is likely to hold in the Lord's vineyard, the more searching will be the rigour of his scrutiny, that he may be able to give to gainsayers a reason of the faith that is in him; the more carefully will he balance the evidence, and the more independently will he form his judgment. The more there are of such enquirers, the more vigorous in every way will be the life of the Church, and her fitness to discharge her solemn offices. But this must be remembered—that the truth thus proved, not to say *reascertained* by the independent investigation of Scripture, is not to be promulgated, on our

own authority, or on the *mere* ground of private judgment ; but, as what it is, a Catholic truth, and the voice of the universal Church. And what ground is there for solemn apprehension and misgiving of heart, for earnest and repeated examination—what ground for pausing and earnest prayer, if there be any prime verities, in which we seem to differ for a moment from the voice of the Church? It is impossible that we should be right. Look at the multitude of capacious minds which have bent to these truths like the veriest children—the eighteen hundred years of change and turmoil, and of every imaginable revolution which can shake human opinions, and destroy all but the indestructible—and yet these truths preserved, not in the obscurity of books, but in the living heart of men's belief—and, amidst incumbrances and vain additions, and the assaults of all the gates of hell, still vigorous and undenied. Look at the sanction of creeds, and the attestation of synods—at the holy army of martyrs, that have testified to them in the fires, and the innumerable souls whom they have upheld in the valley of the shadow of death—and all this, in a Church, with which, in essential truths, the Redeemer has promised to be present to the end of the world. And then look at the solemn assurances with which, by those whom God Himself made our teachers and guardians, they were delivered unto *us*, as the best treasure and inheritance which they could confer ; and, finally, the tremendous ultimate consequences to the soul which must result from a wilful disobedience and proud rejection of the truth. What

mind is there, in a state of moral rectitude, which can remain unaffected by such considerations as these? Such evidence, indeed, is not infallible, if separately considered—and yet, collectively, it cannot be deceived—it has no divine authority to preclude the investigation of reason—but it has a weight which no reason can resist—it is *immediately* the voice of man, though accompanied by a cloud of witnesses, and under the awful incorporation of the universal Church—*mediately*, it is the voice of God, in the eternal laws of reason, *compelling* assent, and *necessitating* conviction, as far as compulsion is compatible with trial, and the independence of a moral responsibility.

We cannot indeed set limits to the obliquities of the understanding, to the infirmities of the passions, or to the unconquerable prejudices of the heart—we dare not anticipate the sentence of the Judgment-seat, nor assume the prerogatives of the Judge. But we can say, and as faithful witnesses we must say, “He ^{Mark xvi. 16.} that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved—he ^{Luke xvi. 31.} that believeth not shall be damned.” “If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.”

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

TO

LECTURE VI.

SCRIPTURE THE INSTRUMENT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION.

I. The wonderful effect of the Gospel in overthrowing the false philosophy opposed to its reception—its power in educating the mind of man in combination with the written word—and vast concentration of intellectual resources within the Church.

II. Its decisive influence over all philosophies—of mind, morals, and matter—but these educational influences dependent on the preeminency of the simple verities of the Gospel.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

TO

LECTURE VI.



I. 1. **T**HERE is nothing more remarkable in the dealings of God with mankind than the seeming disproportion between the grandeur of the ends proposed, and the instruments selected for their accomplishment—so weak, usually, in themselves, as to require a divine power, no less than an infinite wisdom, to ensure success. It would be a thing incredible, did not the fact exist, that twelve fishermen, without learning, without power, without any thing to dazzle the fancy, to feed the passions, or to promote the material interests of mankind, should have subdued the world. Conquerors they may well and literally be called—for all earthly authority failed confessedly, in the contest which they provoked with a power in the heart and spirit of man as yet unknown and unexperienced—the most contemptible instruments, as they appeared, baffled alike the outrages of violence, and the calculated oppressions of mere policy—and that eternal law which secures truth against the brute forces with which the

world then assailed it, made the very tortures, in which the Spirit triumphed over the flesh, the means of its effectual propagation.

The true
triumph of
the Gospel
over human
philosophy.

But, after all, the true triumph of the Gospel was not over those mere material forces, which are, in their own nature, utterly disproportionate to a contest with the intellectual, and still more with the moral powers which are stored up in the heart of man, and which are inaccessible to what destroys the outward frame. It was a much greater thing to prevail over the school of the sophist, and the pretensions of an arrogant philosophy. For, though philosophers were, in the main, mere professors of disputation without an object, and the cultivators of science without truth, yet vast was then the power, even as it will be to the end of the world, which this logical philosophy, with all its coldness and mere intellectual glitter, exercised over the human mind, alike to the exclusion of solid truth, and of that growth which man, as man, might otherwise have attained.

But those simple truths which regard our common humanity, invigorated by Him who framed the springs upon which Christianity acts, were too strong, as they always will be when duly preached, for those mere formulas, and notional systems, which usurped the title of a philosophy of man. Therefore it was that the despised and rejected of men shamed the world's eloquence by the mouths of mere children, and—with what *seemed weakness*, but is *real strength*, a *simple appeal to conscience*,—rebuked alike the strength of reason, and the arrogance of learning,

till their false systems passed away from the living faith of mankind, into the obscurity of books.

But there was more in Christianity than this mere *negation* of philosophy—this power to move the heart, against mere abstract systems on one hand, and the seductions of the senses on the other. In the written word of God the Church was endowed with the only instrument for the real education of man, and his growth to such perfection, as, in his present condition, he is capable of attaining; and this, not merely in the moral training of the character, but, at least, in an equal degree, in the full developement and harmony of his intellectual being.

The Gospel
the real
educator
of the
intellect.

Not that this would have been obvious, at the time, to a speculator on the phænomenon at its first appearance, before the pervasiveness of its power over the whole constitution of man, and its regenerating effects, had become matters of experience. On the contrary, its favourable influence on the growth of the intellect would have seemed hardly compatible with its anti-philosophical tendency, and with that sweeping demolition of existing systems, which must necessarily ensue on its reception. Nor less opposed, probably, would it seem to the progression of the intellect, as men then counted of it, from its assailing not merely the existing results of its operations, but that faith in its powers, and that universal dominion over the subjects of thought, which might seem essential here, as in other departments of exertion, to ensure success in the pursuit of truth.

But the fact is, that no where is Christianity more

philosophically profound than in this very prostration of all pride and self-confidence which it requires, as the introduction and indispensable preliminary to its saving reception ; thus removing at once that which, from the commencement of the world, has been the real obstacle, not only to goodness, but to wisdom ; to that true knowledge which has always dwelt with humility, and finds in pride its very greatest enemy.

Isa. lvii. 15. "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity: *I dwell in the high and holy place, with Him also that is of an humble spirit.*" "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hidden *these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes—even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.*"

But over and above this principle, equally undeniable by true philosophy, as by true religion, it would be apparent, that what tends directly to satisfy the moral wants, and to work remedially upon the corruptions of human nature, could not but act favourably, though mediately, upon the intellectual condition of mankind. This was evident, *even on the principles of their own moralists.* For, in whatever theories they might indulge, on the purely intellectual condition to which, in its progression, the philosophical mind might aspire,—or whatever progress might be made, in the case of individuals, in training the speculative intellect, not only into a prominent, but an absorbing portion of the whole character, yet it was impossible to strip nature of its true humanities. There still remained, after all, that supremacy of the ethical

part, either for good or evil, which the divine Author of our constitution has bound up so *inseparably* with it, that even in thought, it can hardly be contemplated apart from it, without destroying the *manhood*, and in fact substituting some other being for the true man. But, whatever might be the case in the schools of pure philosophy, no one ever ventured to deny that, in the great mass of mankind, at any rate, the moral principle has an unresisted predominance; and, instead of being the tractable servant of reason, absolutely overrules and modifies it, with all its theoretical pretensions to independence, either to good or evil. Mankind at large are not speculative, *but practical*, and the practical mind was therefore necessarily influenced from the very first, by all that profoundly moved and influenced the heart, in its principles of action.

Now the perfection of any faculty can only arise from its direction to its proper object; and the perfection of the whole being, only from the harmonious adjustment and direction of *all* its faculties to the end proposed by the Framer of it. Assuming, therefore, as true, that account of man, and the purposes of his creation, which the inspired volume gives us, it is all in vain to insist upon mere intellectual distinction between man and man; and, from the expansion, after all, of one part of our nature only, however brilliant and flattering to human pride, to confer upon those who possess it, to the exclusion of other and diviner faculties, that superiority over the rest of their species, which the arrogance of intellectual philosophy has

The perfection of a rational being lie in the harmonious expansion of all its faculties.

always claimed. The plain truth is, that, between the highest human intelligence, and the least artificially and scientifically cultivated of its fellow men, the points of resemblance and even identity are far more numerous than those in which they differ. Do what you will, the common humanities will prevail over every thing else—and it is upon man's moral wants, and feelings, and dependencies, and all the hopes and fears which are inseparable from his inward and spiritual nature, that not only his happiness or misery, but his real dignity must be confessed to depend.

This the peculiar work of Christianity.

In this sense Christianity is essentially popular; not limited in its views to *castes of mind, any more than to castes of rank*, but having that universal aspect and equal application to which no human eye or reason is equal, but which we might expect from Him who sitteth in heaven over all from the beginning, and overlooketh the children of men. The Scripture strips man of his circumstantials, and, in the capacities and relations of a soul made for immortality, and the subject of the same scheme as its fellows for its regeneration and final salvation, all minor differences, without being annihilated, become comparatively subordinate.

It balances the feebleness of humanity by the power of God, and through that intimate union with the source of all wisdom and goodness, which accompanies the renunciation of carnal wisdom, it effects that which philosophy never could have accomplished—the combination of that confidence

which is indispensable to vigour and decision of action with humility of soul—that which heathen philosophy only found by making man his own centre, and by exaggerating his faculties into a portentous independence of any external power.

By revealing to man that dignity which is conferred upon every soul without exception, in being made the object of such unimaginable love, a dignity inseparable from the lowest and the meanest, it confers that self-respect and nobleness of mind on mere humanity, *as such*, which not only exempts the lowest condition from degradation, but gives it such an importance from its connection with immortal aims, as is more than a sufficient consolation for all the humiliations of poverty, and the grievousness of oppression. The Gospel alone, too, has discovered the secret of reconciling the energetic impulses which only the desire of happiness and the hope of attaining it can give, with a love of the glorious and beautiful out of ourselves, and a self-abandoning benevolence. It alone has attempered poverty with subordination, and cheerful contentment; dignified the lowest state with a generous loyalty; tamed the natural insolence of rank and wealth into modesty and brotherly charity; and connected the liveliest individuality and real liberty with the profoundest social and universal feeling. It alone, by making the spirit of man actually a citizen and inmate of an unseen polity, elevates him, by the mere *force of faith*—that power of “*I believe in that I see not*”—above the power of the world, and the tyranny of the outward senses.

The way in which it works this great purpose.

By touching immediately upon the *will*, to which no power of nature could approach before, it effects an inner revolution of the heart, and makes a *real morality* practicable for man; it enforces the sternest self-denial, and self-control, without deadening one genial impulse, or one amiable feeling; without destroying one natural virtue or faculty, or displacing one link in the manifold relations of man, it exalts them all; it enables men to discharge those offices to which they were inadequate before, and, in their turns, calls into lively action, the moral feelings, the imagination, and the hardy faculties of the intellect, without disturbing their connection, or destroying the symmetry, if we may so call it, of that whole humanity upon which it acts.

Its natural, and, under tolerably favourable circumstances, its inevitable result, therefore, when fairly carried out, is to accomplish that which no other influence can effect,—to educate the masses of mankind; and, in spite of circumstantial differences, and partial irregularities in its action, to lead to an uniform and general elevation of the whole character of man; in fact, not to *instruct* merely, or train in this or that department of knowledge, but, in union with the means and appliances of the Church Catholic, really to *educate him*. And this, even from the first, among the least instructed and elevated of its disciples ^a, was an observable point in Christianity.

^a I subjoin a beautiful passage from Theodoret; where he describes the effect of the Gospel in elevating the minds of the lowest and least instructed of mankind. “For all the heralds of the

However inferior in the application of the mere disputative faculties an ordinary man might chance

truth, the Prophets, I mean, and Apostles, had no portion indeed of the Greek eloquence; but, being full of the true wisdom, they brought to all nations, both Greek and Barbarian, the divine instruction; and they filled the whole earth and sea with their writings concerning virtue and holiness. And now all men, having abandoned the trifles of the philosophers, exult in the instructions of fishermen and publicans, and diligently observe the writings of the shoemaker. . . . They are acquainted with Matthew and Bartholomew and James, moreover with Moses and David and Isaiah, and the rest of the Apostles and Prophets, as familiarly as the names of their children. And straightway they (the heathen) make jests on their names, as barbarous. But we lament over their madness; because, seeing that men of a barbarous language have overcome the Grecian eloquence, and completely expelled their exquisitely composed fables, and that the solecisms of fishermen have subverted the Attic syllogisms, they do not blush, nor cover their faces, but shamefully fight in behalf of their error. . . . But we clearly demonstrate the power of the Apostolical and Prophetical doctrines, for all places under the sun are full of these discourses. . . . And we may see acquainted with these doctrines, not only the teachers of the Church, but even shoemakers, and smiths, and workers in wool, and other handicraftsmen, and, in the same manner, women, not only those who are acquainted with literature, but those who work for their living, both needlewomen and servants. And not only those who live in the town, but those in the country, have obtained this knowledge. And you may find even ditchers, and herdsmen, and gardeners, conversing respecting the divine Trinity, and the creation of the universe, and knowing much more of human nature than Aristotle and Plato; and, moreover, studious of virtue, and avoiding vice, and fearing the looked-for punishments, and awaiting without doubt the divine judgment-seat, and philosophizing about the life eternal and indestructible, and for the sake of the kingdom of heaven, gladly undergoing every kind of toil and labour; and all this without having learned from any one else, but those whom you call barbarian-tongued."

Καὶ γὰρ ἅπαντες τῆς ἀληθείας οἱ κήρυκες, προφῆται Φημί καὶ ἀπόστολοι,

to be, it would always give a vast superiority in that mode of reasoning, which, for the practical guidance and common purposes of life, is, *incomparably*, the most valuable; I mean, that ready and *practical* logic which lies in the direct and straightforward application of fixed and definite principles to the parti-

τῆς μὴν Ἑλληνικῆς οὐ μετέλαχον εὐγλωττίας ἔμπλεοι δὲ τῆς ἀληθινῆς ὄντες σοφίας, πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσι, καὶ ἑλληνικοῖς καὶ βαρβαρικοῖς, τὴν θείαν διδασκαλίαν προσήνεγκαν· καὶ πᾶσαν γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν τῶν ἀρετῆς πέρι καὶ εὐσεβείας ξυγγραμμάτων ἐπέπλησαν. καὶ νῦν ἅπαντες, τῶν φιλοσόφων τοὺς λήρους καταλιπόντες, τοῖς τῶν ἀλίαν καὶ τελωνῶν ἐντροφῶσι μαθήμασι, καὶ τὰ τοῦ σκυτοτόμου ξυγγράμματα περιέπουσι. . . . Τὸν δὲ Ματθαῖον, καὶ τὸν Βαρθολομαῖον, καὶ τὸν Ἰάκωβον, καὶ μέντοι καὶ τὸν Μαυῦσέα, καὶ τὸν Δαβίδ, καὶ τὸν Ἡσαΐαν, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀποστόλους τε καὶ προφήτας, οὕτως ἴσασιν ὡς τὰς τῶν παιδῶν προσηγορίας αὐτίκα τοίνυν καὶ καιμαρδοῦσιν, ὡς βάρβαρα, τὰ ὀνόματα· ἡμεῖς δὲ αὐτῶν τὴν ἐμπληξίαν ὀλοφυρόμεθα· ὅτι δὴ ὀρῶντες βαρβαροφώνους ἀνθρώπους τὴν ἑλληνικὴν εὐγλωττίαν νενικηκότας, καὶ τοὺς κεκομψευμένους μύθους παντελεῶς ἐξεληλαμένους, καὶ τοὺς ἀλιευτικοὺς σολοικισμοὺς τοὺς ἀττικοὺς καταλελυκότας ξυλλογισμοὺς, οὐκ ἐρρυθρίωσιν, οὐδ' ἐγκαλύπτονται, ἀλλ' ἀναίδην ὑπερμαχοῦσι τῆς πλάνης. . . . Ἡμεῖς δὲ, τῶν ἀποστολικῶν καὶ προφητικῶν δογμάτων κράτος ἐναργῶς ἐπιδείκνυμιν πᾶσα γὰρ ἡ ὑφήλιος τῶνδε τῶν λόγων ἀνάπλευς. . . . Καὶ ἔστιν ἰδεῖν ταῦτα εἰδότας τὰ δόγματα, οὐ μόνους γε τῆς ἐκκλησίας τοὺς διδασκάλους, ἀλλὰ καὶ σκυτοτόμους, καὶ χαλκοτύπους, καὶ ταλασιουργοὺς, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀποχειροβιάτους· καὶ γυναῖκας ἀσαύτως, οὐ μόνον τὰς λόγων μετεσχηκυίας, ἀλλὰ καὶ χερνήτιδας, καὶ ἀεστειδας, καὶ μέντοι καὶ θεραπαίνας. καὶ οὐ μόνον ἀστοί, ἀλλὰ καὶ χωρητικοὶ τήνδε τὴν γῶσιν ἐσχῆκασιν· καὶ ἔστιν εὐρεῖν καὶ σκαπανείας, καὶ βοηλάτας, καὶ φυτουργοὺς, περὶ τῆς θείας διαλεγόμενους Τριάδος, καὶ περὶ τῆς τῶν ὅλων δημιουργίας, καὶ τὴν ἀνθρωπιαν φύσιν εἰδότας Ἀριστοτέλους πολλῶ μᾶλλον καὶ Πλάτωνος. καὶ μέντοι καὶ ἀρετῆς ἐπιμελουμένους, καὶ κακίαν ἐκκλίνοντας, καὶ τὰ κολαστήρια δεδιότας τὰ προσδοκώμενα καὶ τὸ θεῖον δικαστήριον ἀνειδοιάστας προσμένοντας, καὶ τῆς αἰωνίου πέρι καὶ ἀνωλήθρου φιλοσοφοῦντας ζωῆς, καὶ τῶν οὐρανῶν ἕνεκα βασιλείας πάντα πόνοι ἀσπασίως αἰρουμένους· καὶ ταῦτα, οὐ παρ' ἄλλου τοῦ μεμαθηκότας, ἀλλὰ παρ' ἐκείνων οὓς ἡμεῖς βαρβαροφώνους ἀποκαλεῖτε. Theodoret. Graec. Affect. Curatio. Disp. 5. tom. 4. pp. 837—41

culars of the moment. This is, after all, the best reply to sophistical subtleties when they deal with questions of human life and action; and it is that which, a clear sense of right and wrong, and the definite relations of morality, human and divine, can effectually bestow even upon the simplest mind.

And over and above this faculty of sure *reasoning* upon questions of morality, or questions in any shape resolvable into them, which is very observably within the range of the humblest students of the word of God, we must not forget that there is a vast and unapproachable superiority, *even in point of reason*, which the believer, as such, possesses over the rejecters of revelation. In that dominant and most exalted portion of the soul, which overrules the merely empirical faculties—that, I mean, which is receptive of principles not to be demonstrated, but provable by their own light, and dependent on an inner intuition, the very humblest Christian holds a higher intellectual rank than the most highly endowed infidel. And this, even in principles merely moral; without speaking of still higher and purely spiritual faculties, which are called forth in the inner soul of man, by that union which faith is instrumental in forming with the eternal reason and most pure spirit. We cannot tell whether or not, in a future state of existence, those active faculties of the understanding, which, being limited to space and time, are merely intelligent of earthly and sensible things, may not be done away with altogether; but certainly those bases of all reasoning, the first

The believer, therefore, superior, *in reason*, to those who are unenlightened by the Gospel.

ἔννοιαι communicated to the mind anterior to all demonstration, will still form the foundation of the highest form of spiritual intelligence.

Such is the power possessed by the Gospel, not only for the moral improvement of mankind, but for the accompanying elevation of his intellectual nature. And this great and beneficent purpose is effected by the free use of the written word, that word which the mightiest Fathers of old urge on every individual Christian, however low or humble, to study for himself, and instruct his children and family withal. Nor can any instrument whatever avail in the absence of this. The *subjugation of the first and introductory training*, is only preparatory to this Christian manhood in which we are able to think and act for ourselves; and, unless it leads to this, it is *not education*, but merely a *taming and enslavement of the soul* to a human authority; and no better than this, under whatever fair title disguised. No system of training which shall perpetuate the infancy of the mind and lead men, not into a Christian obedience, but an ecclesiastical dependency, can ever supply the place of this divine instrument, or satisfy the wants of the human intelligence as well as the human soul. In exact proportion to the diffusion and universal study of the Gospel, in combination with those means of grace, and that divine scheme of instruction with which they have been accompanied from the first, has ever been the moral and intellectual elevation of mankind.

But over and above these popular and diffusive

Vid. Origen. in Levit. Hom. 9. August. in Psalm. 33. Hieron. in Epist. ad Coloss. c. 3. The first and the last of these passages are very precise on the laic and domestic use of Scripture.

influences favourable to an increased intelligence which Christianity disseminates with the use of the Bible, there has been ample provision from the first for eliciting in its extension and defence the very highest order of intellectual exertion. Whilst the Apostles lived and preached, the authority of their mighty works, and that still greater miracle, the holiness and elevation of principle which lifted them above humanity, as a light for all men to see, were answer enough to gainsayers. But what miracles had established, and regenerated lives had witnessed and adorned, reason was soon called upon to defend. The moment that the doctrines and divine truths of the Gospel had assumed a permanent and written form, and were thus committed to the custody of the Church, more vigorous efforts and more purely intellectual energies began to be called forth. All the powers of reason without exception—all the wide field of moral evidence, and deduction of consequences—over and above this, all that *specifically* constitutes the art of the orator—the whole range of the human passions with their appropriate instruments—every thing that can affect the mind in the delineation of truth before unknown in its purity—reclamations against cruel injustice, and the pleadings of oppressed innocence, which, except in such pathetic appeals, had no protection against authority—all that is drawn, to awe or solemnize the thoughts, from supernatural verities and the terrors of the world to come—all this, and more than this, with its vast range of topic and thought, was speedily called forth in

that succession of advocates, who were raised up, as the emergency required, for the vindication of the faith.

It soon grew, therefore, to embrace all the resources of literary composition ; and, as the purposes of attack and defence required, and the multiplication of enemies of every order of intellect and embracing every variety of assault called them forth, there was no department of knowledge connected with our general humanity, which did not come into its possession, and contribute its appropriate instruments to its defence. The scale of mere intellectual vigour and literary skill soon began to turn in favour of Christianity. It was all in vain that, in anticipation of the course of modern scepticism, the religion of nature was dressed out in the stolen doctrines of the Gospel—it was in vain, that the principles really discoverable by nature were sublimed into a mystical theology, emulous of the mysteries of the faith, without the heartiness and simplicities of the Gospel,—it was in vain, that the resources of inventive genius were exhausted by the Neo-Platonists, to cloak the deformities of popular paganism by an esoteric meaning, and a symbolic wisdom. The force of truth and of those moral arguments, which, in able hands, are an irresistible defence of the faith once delivered to the saints, was more powerful than the arts of its enemies, though it was weakened rather than strengthened by the philosophy of the Alexandrian school—and, before the reign of Julian, the intelligence of the world was irrecoverably ranged upon the side of the

Gospel. He would have destroyed at one blow the knowledge which vindicated it, and the truths which made the vindication irresistible, by exterminating those written Scriptures which alone sustained and fed it—but the power of the Emperor was not sufficient to execute what the sagacity of the philosopher had conceived; and it was in after ages reserved for the papacy, *really*, to a great extent, and but, for divine interposition, *effectually*, to accomplish that suppression of the divine records, which pagan wisdom and imperial power had attempted in vain.

Moreover, the connection between true religion and useful learning and the general cultivation of the intellect, is not temporary or accidental; but the preservation, the effectual defence, and the illustration of the Scriptures, in the progress of time, and in an increasing separation from the primitive age, only demand, if any thing, an increase of intellectual resources. Let us look, with this view, for a moment, on what is indispensably necessary to any thing like a complete intellectual apparatus for the student and advocate of the revealed word. There is the noble study of history, from which the intelligent study of the Bible is inseparable. Not the history of any one age, or one country, but embracing all times and all nations from one end of heaven to the other, as they have become, in succession, the subjects of the divine dispensation, or connected, more or less remotely, with that Catholic truth which was alike designed for the regeneration of them all. And much of this is required, not merely as supplementary—not as

The connection between true religion and intellectual cultivation essential and permanent.

gratifying a natural or holy curiosity, to trace the effects of the scheme of salvation on the broad scale of nations and empires—but a great part of it is inseparable from the body and substance of the inspired narrative—and the rest is indispensable for the interpretation of prophecy, and the disentangling, piece by piece, and line by line, of the errors which time has matted together, and imposed upon mankind as part and portion of the primitive truth—for the illustration of manners, or for the detection of heresy.

If this study be carried out into its perfection, what minuteness of knowledge and comprehensiveness of view is necessary—what patience of investigation—what liveliness of imagination and sympathy with humanity, to extract from the dryness of ancient records a truly human picture of past times, neither exaggerated nor distorted by false and one-sided views! How admirable in their combination are such qualities—how useful and influential any one of them; and some of them at least, to a considerable degree, inseparable from the study! How equally necessary is that practical acquaintance with the *human heart*, of which Scripture is the *best interpreter*, and of which an active familiarity with the religious wants and feelings of mankind is incomparably the best school—and *with it*, not in dry ethical theories, but in real action and development in all its complexities, not only the minister of the Gospel, but the student of history, if he is to read to any purpose, must be adequately acquainted!

A knowledge, moreover, of those magnificent languages in which the Scriptures are conveyed to us,

is not merely an accomplishment of the theologian, gracefully to set off austerer studies; but indispensably necessary to a critical perusal of the written word. And, in the study of the writers of Greece and Rome—even if a student does not draw from those incomparable models all that higher and more congenial minds extract from them—a portion of that truth of nature, that chastened and yet vigorous imagination, and that exquisite order and composition of thought and language which characterize them,—yet even ordinary capacities acquire much of enlargement and sound knowledge otherwise unattainable. And, when you join to this the incomparable discipline of mind by which it is acquired, and the patient activity and analytical precision which it confers—the inestimable benefit of the study of those ancient languages, for the lack of whose austere training nothing can compensate—and then again combine with it that acquaintance with the science of reasoning, and the conditions of thought; and that metaphysical acuteness which, whilst it is commandingly applicable to all studies of the intellect, the necessities of controversy have compelled divines in all ages to master above all other men—what mighty intellectual strength you have accumulated!

But still join to all this another important accomplishment—that knowledge of mankind in the practical science of government, in which the leaders of the Church have been constantly trained; brought to deal as they are, not merely with the abstract principles of legislation, but with their nice adjustment to existing

circumstances—and it is evident at once, that the whole sphere of human thought is occupied, and the very highest faculties of the intellect are called forth, by the training which *the specific* mode of transmitting the records of the Christian Church, and its outward constitution, have rendered necessary to its preservation.

Such then is the necessary connection of the Gospel, as it *is combined with the Church*, not only with the formation of the human character, but with the regulation of the intellect in all its forms and departments—and it really is not a question how far the Church *ought* to regulate the education of mankind, and how far this general training may or shall be committed to her charge. Had the Church of Christ been always faithful to herself, and acted up to the duty imposed upon her, as the common protector of mankind, it *never could* have become a question—nor, if the blessing of God should rest upon us, *will it be* a question between the Church of England and the country, of which, with all her short-comings, she is the greatest blessing, and glory, and bulwark.

At any rate, through whatever hands this education be administered, whether through those, to whom the commission of the Apostles has descended, with, we humbly trust, no small portion of their holiness and zeal, or through other and more irregular ministrations, it is impossible for any believer in revelation to deny, that divine knowledge is the master science, and that, to the clear declarations of holy writ, on whatever subject of thought, as the undoubted word

of God, a full and unhesitating obedience is to be rendered. Equally beyond contradiction is it, that there is no department in which the human mind can be employed, whether it belong to life and practice, or to the speculative intellect, over which, directly or indirectly, holy writ does not exercise control.

II. The very act of determining the great end of human action to a specific point, and giving thereby an overwhelming importance to one object, places such a limit to the eccentricities of the human mind, and gives such a direction to human action, as must most importantly modify both the one and the other.

The important influence of Christianity on every department of thought.

But it has exercised much more than this negative power—and has done much more than merely establish a subordination among the crowd of conflicting pursuits—it has done much, *positively*, in fixing that which before was loose and undetermined in those questions, which, from the beginning, have exercised the busy imagination and the restless faculties of man. It has thus, if we may use the expression, husbanded the powers of the human mind, and, as far as might be, prevented their occupation in those barren speculations, in which, so large a portion of their strength, intended for other and better purposes, had been wasted with a spendthrift prodigality. It has determined, for instance, authoritatively, those two great points, towards which the human mind, by an irresistible attraction, is always gravitating—the nature of God—and the nature of the soul.

How vast a stride in the progress of mind must

it be considered, to have laid down as points demonstrated, and on which the very Neophyte in religion was to proceed as settled, the immortality of the soul, and the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments. The human mind, in its un-

The nature of God, and of the soul. assisted state, was not only incapable of establishing this great truth, the moment it began to reason upon it, but either obscured it altogether, or connected the proof of it with such conditions as made it unavailing for any moral purposes. The mass of mankind, indeed, who are always led by the passion and instinct of faith rather than the calculations of reason, held it, such as it was, as a traditionary belief; and to them, therefore, the speculations of philosophy, on a subject already decided upon different grounds, and of which the very existence of the speculation confessed the belief, would be either unintelligible, or it would exercise no practical influence over them.

But subtler understandings were not to be so satisfied, and philosophy was weak, where nature was strong—it became completely entangled in its own sophistries, and, resting wisdom on the mere play of words, it necessarily failed in reaching the reality of things. There was a cold vanity about that ancient philosophy even at its best, which damped all earnestness about moral truth—and, in the most finished work¹ which antiquity has left us on this important question, the exquisite composition and the graces of thought and illustration with which it abounds, only render more remarkable the puerile metaphysics which are its main instruments of proof.

¹ The Phædon of Plato.

Whether natural reason, under other circumstances, or a different direction of its powers, might not have demonstrated the truth, is irrelevant to the question; it is certain that it did not—and no less certain, that, in the direction which it had chosen, and to which the peculiar genius of ancient philosophy inextricably confined it, it could not have arrived at a different result. Such is the tendency of the natural man to lean towards the intellect and its unlicensed speculations, in preference to the sphere of morals where it is restrained on all sides by stern dogmatic teaching, that, among all the schools of antiquity, we find small or no trace of that moral contemplation and insight into the heart which could boldly throw itself upon faith, and build a better system on the unbounded faculties and the moral necessities, which still distinguish the spirit of man even in its fall—it still leans to the physical and intellectual side, even when, as in the case of Plato, there were some obscure glimpses of spiritual truths and wants.

By such a mode of reasoning, indeed, they might not only have confirmed the natural instincts of mankind, but have fortified them by a moral demonstration. But they did not conceive in its full importance the moral nature of man, on which all true intellectual progression must be founded; and either blinded themselves in metaphysics, which made the proof of immortality impossible, or connected it with impieties, which made scepticism comparatively innocent.

It was the same with future rewards and punish-

ments; they could not hold them at all in any real sense. For they held without exception certain opinions respecting the divine nature, and the soul's future condition on the supposition of its immortality, as made the latter only a more effectual instrument to destroy its responsibility, by denying its separate consciousness. For, though the Italic and Ionic schools from the time of Socrates recognised the existence of one supreme Being, yet they stripped Him, or endeavoured to strip Him, of all moral attributes—withdraw Him from an active providence into an epicurean solitude, and held it to be a contradiction to suppose that the Deity, in His exemption from passion, could kindle into wrath; and a positive impiety to suppose that, good as He is, He could ever exert a stern justice to punish His guilty creatures. Even His goodness, therefore, was divested of all choice, and the same natural necessity which prevented Him from being feared as a moral Judge, denied Him, on the other hand, that gratitude which might be inspired by voluntary benefits; clothed Him with goodness by the same law that clothes the sun with light, and, while He was acknowledged as the first and highest of beings, deprived Him of that free will which is the privilege of the lowest.

Human reason essentially carnal in its speculations.

I mention these errors of human reason, because they are *inherent in its nature*, when it speculates upon divine things without the guidance of Scripture—and because, with all their appearance of philosophy and intellect, they have an essential carnality

about them, which is an effectual hindrance to moral advancement, and to the real intellectual greatness of man. All who are conversant with modern infidelity, and the inevitable moral degradation which accompanies it, know that it is only a transmutation of the old spirit into new forms, or rather new expressions with the same doctrine beneath them; and, that the perverseness which made the cross a stumbling-block to the Jew, and to the Greek foolishness, is, with all the change of time and opinion, the same resolute enemy to the truth as it is in Jesus.

But, to return; what a power have these simple truths, which, hidden from ancient philosophy, are the first principles instilled into the mind of a Christian—the moral *personality* of God, and His character as Judge and Lawgiver—the responsibility of man—the immortality of the soul in a future state of rewards and punishments! From this vantage ground, Christianity immediately controls, whilst, as far as our condition permits, it perfects, the several philosophies of mind, morals, and matter; all of them subjects so connected with the interests of society, that no theory on either, however speculative, which shall become predominant for the day, can be considered otherwise than of first-rate importance.

Not that the generality of mankind are *immediately* affected by what proceeds from the brain of the philosopher, and is elaborated in the closet; but that, by degrees, the influence of mind is certain to extend itself, widening its circle, as it proceeds, till the masses themselves are leavened with the same spirit.

The philosophies of mind, morals, and matter, controlled by the Gospel.

Whatever affects the higher order of minds, awakens other men's sympathies; and there is a certain tone of philosophy which is thus easily learned and propagated, and gains admittance into minds not disciplined in the school of religious knowledge. It flatters human vanity, in short, and gives that *cover of plausible reason*, which, from the construction of our nature, seems indispensable to uphold and justify us, in any systematic deviation from duty, or from the instincts of an uncorrupted nature. Or, whether it be, that the theory of the day is not so much the *cause, as the effect* of a specific tone of feeling and consequent practice, which finds its exponent in this form; and then, the scientific expression of it re-acts in the perpetuation of that to which it has given the appearance of a philosophical basis; and which it thus protects, to superficial eyes, from the exposure of that essential carnality which could not otherwise be overlooked. However this may be, it is quite certain, that, from its prevalent philosophy, the tendencies and practical character of the age may be correctly inferred.

1. But any *material philosophy* cannot stand with the sincere *reception of the truths of the Gospel*. Revelation has completely extricated mind from physical necessity. It lays down a mighty principle in unfolding to us the unoriginated and self-subsistent Spirit that inhabiteth eternity, and Who, by virtue of His own free-will, has created the world, impressed indeed with such *forms* of mind as matter is capable of receiving, but in a complete separation of nature from the spirit which

The philosophy of mind.

sustains its fluxional elements; and it thus establishes the like independence, in their proportion, in those spirits to whom He has not only given intelligence, but on whom He has impressed an image of Himself. In mind, therefore, according to revelation, there is a true generating power; in the Supreme Being, it is all energy, *actus purissimus*, and essentially creative; and, in all its forms, it has a principle of life and motion about it, which is impassably separated from the inertia of brute matter. Mind only can act upon mind; and not only the *τὰ νόητα*, but the *τὰ αἰσθητα*; the forms and intelligent conceptions of the material world, with its unity in plurality, and plurality in unity, and all that gives a mould of beauty to material things, are not the result of matter influencing mind, but the unfolding faculties of mind acting in our perceptions of that matter which the primary intelligence has fashioned.

But, in holy Scripture, the great principle upon which the perfection of moral and intelligent beings depends, is neither intellect nor matter, but a third unknown to the natural man,—spirit,—*intellectual* indeed, yet with something further hallowing it, and giving a moral character to it, even as it exists in the holy God, with whose intelligence purity is associated and incorporated.

This is the principle which must be supernaturally implanted in us, light from light, and life from The spiri-
tual princi-
ple in man. essential life, and which communion with both in Christ Jesus can alone implant in the soul; and this places our immortality on a basis totally distinct

from physical reasonings, and sets the question free from innumerable difficulties which, after all, encumber the latter. No analysis of its reasoning powers, however accurate; no inductions from its outward operations, however large; no cutting it up into separate portions, as is the practice of the metaphysical writers of modern times, conveys any conception of the soul's true nature and dignity. *The life* escapes in the operation, and in the miserable residuum no Christian can recognise the sublime image of his Maker, of which, with all his infirmities and miseries, he is conscious in himself. In fact, we have made, here, no progress since the time of Plato,—the few grand truths which we know are really fundamental to our daily Christian life, and are the first simple objects of Christian faith; and the best and only service which metaphysical sagacity can now render is to keep the truth distinct and clear from the sophistries of opponents, and a false philosophy of mind; a metaphysic only defensive, and not speculating beyond the Scripture facts.

The philo-
sophy of
ethics.

2. Not less decisive is the simple written word, such as children may read and understand it, upon the theory of ethics. How idle do speculations upon the ground of moral obligation become, when we can rest it at once upon the law of God; how idle to exchange such a base as this for the guess-work of general consequences, or even the eternal fitness of things, or the abstract beauty of virtue! They are false speculations, all of them, under whatever splendour of title disguised, and with whatsoever

authority of great names recommended to us. The ultimate issues of events belong alone to Him who can order or foresee them; the eternal fitness of things we doubt not—but all intimations we have of it can proceed only from His law written upon our hearts—and as for the abstract beauty of virtue, we, as Christians, have exchanged, for something more solid, that impersonation of it, of which Plato dreamed.

Imagination has no longer any thing to do here; nor indeed any of those faculties, which, by dressing out virtue to the fancy, go a long way to expel it, in its distasteful reality, from the heart and practice. It is now a matter of fact; and neither in our own mind, nor in the archetypal idea in the mind of the Deity, is it to be found; but in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was made like unto us in all things, sin only excepted, and who has left us an example that we should follow His steps. How complete a revolution has Scripture hereby introduced, not only into the practice, but into the theory of virtue—removing entirely from the catalogue of goodness all that is not done as God would have it done, and bringing all the boasted powers of the natural man under the condemnation of sin.

To what a simple and intelligible scheme does it reduce the confusion of passions, and strong impulses of nature, by absolutely subordinating them to the authority of conscience, and that conscience again guided and illuminated by the written word! What new qualities, strange to human ears, and revolting to human prejudices, and systems grounded

upon them, has the Gospel introduced in those graces of humility, long-suffering, and complete submission to the Divine will; all, in short, that sanctifies affliction to the soul; graces, without which Christian righteousness has no existence! What an awful element, again, in the corruption of the heart, has it introduced as an every day truth, in the influences of that evil and powerful spirit, which never can be safely absent from the thoughts of the Christian, and yet are unrecognised and unrecognisable by nature!

Here again, the great duty of the Christian moralist *is the defence of the word, as it is written for our instruction, neither more nor less*, in which the only protection, against false theories of morals, either without or within the Church, is really to be found.

The philosophy of matter.

3. Lastly, look at the influence of Scripture on the philosophy of matter—the great triumph of human reason, certainly, and, in its abuse and idolatrous exaltation, the great adversary of that revelation of which it ought to be the illustration and support. It may, however, be truly said, that it is revelation alone which has rendered possible a philosophy of matter, properly so called; for it alone has established that complete separation and distinction between matter and spirit, which ancient philosophy, even in its most purified state, seems never to have attained, and which, with the same tendency to materialising, the human mind, even of the highest worldly order, is still perpetually confounding.

But, by this utter separation from spirit, into what a subordinate rank, in the pursuits of an immortal soul, does it instantly reduce mere physical science! It is, in truth, the negation of every thing which constitutes the life and essence of a moral and intelligent being—dead, and consequently entirely passive—the unresisting subject of impulses from without—the slave of mechanical laws. And it is on this purely mechanical character that the claim of the physical sciences to perfection depends—for, from the very moment that they deal with other relations; with final ends, or with the ideas of beauty and grandeur impressed on material things, they deviate instantly into the province of the immaterial, and, to a certain extent, are spiritualized, in spite of themselves. But the invariable result, is not the recognition of a spirit external to the material world, and ruling it as a governor, but only of a formative and plastic power bound up with it, and exhibiting itself in the forms and phænomena of matter; in fact, it is not the latter that is subordinated, but the former that is debased. The consequence, therefore, of *merely* physical studies, apart from revelation, has always been *atheistical*, as, explain it how you will, the history of philosophy undoubtedly proves.

The *anima mundi* is the nearest approach made by physics to a *conception of Almighty God*. And let it not be a matter of surprise, that, hand in hand with the perfection of the mere scientific faculty, proceeds the utmost degradation of the moral powers. When the material world is contemplated, exclusive of Scripture,

and a dogmatic morality, this is not an accidental, but a necessary result. For, in proportion to man's confidence in his own intellectual faculties, is his distaste of any control over other powers and tendencies equally natural; and, with the worship of material nature, even when dressed out, as some of the greatest minds of modern times have dressed it, in the form of the most perfect artistical beauty, a relaxation of all the sterner virtues, a degradation of conscience, and an imaginative epicurism will invariably establish itself.

But suppose that, in the study of nature, an outward God be recognised, upholding by the word of His power the miracles of beauty and wisdom which He evoked from the abyss, and fashioned out of nothing; yet the conception of a mechanist, however sublime, a *θεὸς γεωμέτρων*, on however magnificent a scale, is still infinitely far removed from a moral governor, much more from such a God as the Gospel exhibits. And, from the limitation of our faculties, incapable, as they are, of exact comparison, the mastery over matter which science exercises, the discovery of its laws, however short of the first mover, and the process of reasoning rather descendendo than ascendendo, have, at least, an equal tendency to exalt our conception of the sagacity that discovers, as of that unoriginated wisdom which created; and to make the vastness of the universe, with its prodigious mechanism, a mere mirror, for man's intellectual vanity to gaze on the reflection of itself.

When regarded, indeed, in conjunction with the natural conscience, it *does* testify to its Maker's

almighty power and Godhead, nay, to His goodness over all His works; and so the Apostle affirms. Rom. ii. But, until interpreted by revelation, it has no language to the human soul; it is a book of wonders, but written in hieroglyphics, and requiring an interpreter. And the same revelation which subordinates the study of nature and its laws to sublimer objects, while, by the discovery which it makes that the physical attributes of the Creator are in indissoluble connection with His moral ones, it seems to depress physical science, yet gives, in reality, a rank and worth unknown before, and a wonderful elevation, to it.

How sublime a study it is, to trace the goodness and the wisdom of God in His works, and to prostrate the soul the more before Him in intelligent worship; to draw from every fresh discovery a stronger conviction of His wisdom, His presence, and His love; to impregnate the forms of matter with the meaning of the Spirit; and, looking *at it* through the Gospel, and not at the Gospel through it, to regard its beauty and its power, as Almighty God Himself does, neither more nor less; and as the sure record of revelation teaches the Christian to consider it. “Behold the lilies of the field! how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” Matt. vi. 28. “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth His handywork; one day telleth another, and one night certifieth another.” Ps. xix. 1, 2. “Thou, Ps. cii. 25. Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy

hands ; they shall perish, but Thou remainest ; they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt Thou fold them up, and they shall be changed ; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail."

2 Pet. iii.
10, 11.

"The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Seeing then, that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness."

Nothing can exceed this philosophy ; you may expand it, but render it more clear and striking you cannot. What vast and sublime truths it announces—and what an effectual controller and director, and yet sanctifier and exalter of all truth, is the written word of God !

Such then is the way in which holy writ, by knowledge not darkly uttered, but most intelligibly conveyed, overrules and directs every department of human investigation—the true *ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ φρόνησις* of the human mind. And this it does, with a comprehensive wisdom ; not by undervaluing, or annihilating, but by guiding and directing—by way of order, and accurate subordination. Nor does it proceed *casuistically* by details, which, in a field so vast, all the books in the world could not have contained—but *legislatively*, by way of general laws and *principles*—the application of them, and the working them out, in all their diversity, it has left to the human mind, completely unfettered.

Ample
room left
for the free
exercise of
the human
intellect.

And within these appointed limits a boundless occupation has been assigned to that intellect, which God Himself has marvellously endowed for this very purpose—not to baffle its faculties of their proper

objects, nor to sting them on with a passionate desire after truth, which could not be satisfied without impiety. But, like a vigilant and thoughtful Father, He would prevent His children from squandering the inheritance which He has bestowed upon them, upon vanities or the pursuit of impossibilities—guiding them to the interpretation of the records, in which He has inscribed His wonderful attributes; and leading them to build, not moral truth on physical, and spiritual on moral, but, with a reversal of the order necessary at least to us, to look at moral verities, through the intervention of the Spirit, and at the dim works of nature through the instrumentality of both.

Imperfectly, indeed, has this education of the general intellect of man been carried out—yet so far as it has gone, this is its result—the necessary result, indeed, of the plan of divine instruction, with which God has combined the universal circulation and free examination of the Scriptures. But, while this is certain, it will lead us into serious error, and a misconception of the purpose of the Gospel, if we take these great results upon the intellect as *its main and avowed object*. They are, indeed, necessary consequences of it—but, notwithstanding the seeming paradox, they are attained *incidentally and by the way*—and, on a further examination of the question, it will be evident, that, in any other way than this, they would really not have been promoted, but rendered unattainable. The great *and only direct* object of the Gospel, and one never, for a moment, to be forgotten, is to save men's souls—and that not by

The education of the intellect the certain result, but not the main object of the Gospel.

learning, or science, or any thing which can be acquired among men, or is fitted to claim earthly power, or admiration, but by repentance and faith in Christ Jesus. It is a thing not of speculation, but of practice—a thing to be done, and *done instantly*—for the case is urgent—the whole world lieth in wickedness and in the darkness of the shadow of death—till the Day-spring from on high shall rise upon our hearts. “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” It admits of no doubt, or hesitation, or compromise—there is but one way to escape the wrath of God—the condemnation that shall come, even death eternal—the acceptance with heart and soul of the Son of God! We have no other message, and no other commission to bear to the ears of men, than this: they that repent, and are baptized, shall be saved—they that believe not shall be damned. There is no difference of persons, or respect of ranks—all receive the same invitation, and are the subjects of the same warning. There is neither Jew nor Greek any longer, neither bond nor free,—but all have come short of the glory of God—and all must die, in that all have sinned. It matters not what occupations we are engaged in, what pleasures attract us, or what solemn duties seem to claim our thoughts and energies—*one thing is needful, and only one*. There must be no participation of the heart—it must all be given to God. The heart that is given must be changed—the Spirit from above must descend upon it, and it must become a new creature. It is no common message that is

delivered to us—even if *our* ears are dull to it, yet the prophets and kings of former days desired to hear the things which we hear, and did not hear them, and to see the things which we see, and did not see them. The Son of God Himself has descended from heaven, O sinner, that He may save thee—He has died that thou mayest live—He is discrowned, that thou mayest reign for ever—He is risen from the grave, and is ascended into heaven, that He may prepare a habitation for thee there. And from thence, by us, His Ministers, He entreats you, by His agony and bloody sweat, by His cross and passion, by His precious death and burial, to permit Him to save the soul which He has redeemed, not by perishable silver and gold, but by His own most precious blood. “Eye hath not seen, Isa. lxiv. 4. nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.” It is the triumph of God’s love which is proclaimed, “Hear, O heaven, and give Isa. xlv. 23. ear, O earth—for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and magnified Himself in Israel.” “Unto us a Child is Isa. ix. 6. born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder; and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God!” If love does not move, we have threats—“indignation Rom. ii. 9. and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil.” Any how, we have but this one end—to save men’s souls—and proclaim but one way to accomplish it, faith in Christ Jesus.

LECTURE VI.

I. The Church useless for education unless the salvation of souls through Christ be her great aim. Inseparable from the free use of the written word. Great sin and error of Rome in withholding it from the people.

II. Comparative power of the Churches of England and Rome for the education of a nation.

MARK VII. 13.

Ye have made the word of God of none effect by your traditions.

I. 1. **T**HOUGH, as ministers of Christ, we have to deal with worldly knowledge in many ways, though we are *in* the world, and must be so, yet we are not *of* the world, nor is the holy book which we put into men's hands—we only deal with it, from first to last, in its connection with another—our real business is with men's spirits—and not by carnal means, not by arms, nor by learning, nor by the force of earthly oratory, do we profess to change them, but by a faith given from above, an earnest repentance by grace working with outward means, with the power of Sacraments, and the mighty word of God. In comparison of this, all things are to be regarded as of no value—as bearing

no appreciable proportion to the overwhelming importance of saving souls. All the knowledge that human intelligence has ever acquired, all that human art has ever wrought to beautify life, all the social wisdom which regulates commonwealths, and binds empires together, if without the Gospel they could have any permanent existence at all—yet all these and more than these we would throw away from us, and teach men to throw them away as not worth a thought, if they stood in opposition to this greatest of God's purposes, for which kingdoms exist and kings reign and prosper.

The regulating power of the Gospel over all knowledge arises from its grand primary truths.

It is from these and similar considerations of the *incalculable worth of the soul*, that the restraining and regulating power of the Gospel over all truth and knowledge is derived. And, in regard to the Ministers of the Church, who are, of necessity, the great instruments in training the mind of man, it should be the one master-thought—for, unless there is this overwhelming conviction at the heart, those intellectual faculties which theological study sharpens, and the knowledge which it accumulates, would destroy that simplicity of Christian faith, without which science may be advanced, and minds enlightened, and intellectual triumphs won; but the Gospel cannot be preached, and souls cannot be saved. The pride of knowledge is chastised by the thought, that it is but an instrument, utterly valueless, except in its application to God's service; nay, full of imminent danger, unless kept in close subordination to Gospel purposes. Here we become, what we ought to be,

mere children ; and, having played perhaps the part of giants in other departments, and wrestled for victory in the struggle with brother intellects, the balance is restored, and can only be restored, by that filial simplicity of spirit, by which, rejoicing in one faith, one hope, one baptism, we cry with the lowliest of those who sit at the Redeemer's feet, "*Abba, Father.*"

And, as in individuals, so also is it in a Church ; ^{Danger of mere learning.} unless it be chastened and subordinated by this pre-eminence of the first truths of the Gospel, as the centre of life and of all spiritual action, the apparatus of secular learning will become not a Gospel weapon, but, like Saul's armour to the champion of Israel, a hindrance and an incumbrance. The energy by which souls are penetrated, and the doctrines of Christ become the power of God unto salvation, will be gradually deadened under a cold and systematic theology—the spirituality, which is the essence and specialty of the Gospel, must cease in such a case to animate a body of doctrines, purely intellectual in their statement, and logical in their dependence ; and those broad and simple principles which animated Apostles and Martyrs, and which burn in the heart like coals of fire, even *the Gospel which triumphed over the world*, will be lost in refinements and timid definitions, in the self-righteousness of an ascetic, and the torpor of a philosophical morality. And, however sound and vigorous the system intellectually considered may be, the world will never render to a merely literary or scientific caste that reverence which is only due

to the teachers of the Gospel, and to the true commission of Christ.

But even that intellectual character itself will hardly be preserved—for, however strange it may seem, in proportion as the salvation of souls, and those leading Gospel truths which have the Saviour for their centre, lose their commanding prominence, the value of the learning originally cultivated for their defence and propagation, and still bearing their name, will be certain to decline. Its true intellectual power will depart—its practical and masculine tone, with that vigorous and straightforward argumentation which comes naturally from the earnest defence of the Gospel truths, will degenerate into idle and unprofitable subtleties, entangling, without instructing, the mind; there will be no nature—no home-coming truthfulness—no piercing the soul—and, with a feebler reason, will come a superstitious veneration of forms and rites, in which the lost spirit of true religion becomes hopelessly entombed.

With the loss of this devotedness of thought and heart to the salvation of mankind, and that simple earnestness of character which this conviction alone can give to the Ministers of a dispensation essentially spiritual, will of necessity decline the influence which such visible exhibition of the realities of the Gospel, with its elastic and unconquerable energy, must exercise over the world at large. That commanding station which the authoritative truths of the Gospel, adequately asserted by a devoted Ministry, are calculated to occupy, and the working of those principles

which find such a response in the depth of man's nature, is miserably supplied by mere decencies and moralities—it finds no representative in mere social dignities—it dies away from a pointless teaching with which mankind at large cannot sympathize, and which they will soon learn to despise. The power over those religious instincts of mankind, which are of all feelings the most deep and uneradicable, will pass into other hands, however rude and inadequate to sustain it; it will be swayed by those, whose experience or simple knowledge of Scripture has led to an acquaintance with their own souls, and revealed, along with it, the secret of penetrating the souls of other men.

And, even to those who are imbued with a higher and truer philosophy than mere dialectic or grammatical studies can give them, great caution is necessary—lest, in their desire to produce in others such a spiritual elevation as may counteract the *material* tendencies of the age, they should go the wrong way to work; and strive to recommend the Gospel of Christ by their philosophy, rather than teach their philosophy through the Gospel. This deserves remark, because an eminent writer of the last century, in lamenting the decay of religious feeling, and with it, a general debasement of intellect, and lowness of moral tone, attributes it to the adoption of a spurious philosophy, alien to the character of the Gospel revelation, and indisposing men's minds to the reception of any truths which went beyond the region of sense, and the capacity of the *practical* understanding.

But surely this deplorable degradation of the phi-

losophical tone, and the decline of its principles, through the system of Locke, to the undisguised expediency of Helvetius and Condillac, was not so *much the cause, as the result of the decay of true religion*, and of that deadness to the spiritual aspects of the Gospel which followed the wasteful over-exhaustion of all faculties, moral, intellectual, and spiritual, in the agony of the Civil War. The simple truths of the Gospel at the era of the Reformation, along with the general agitation of spirit which it produced, threw into the masculine writings of that period, and of the century and more which followed it, an elevation of true philosophy, equal to the vigorous intellect and Scriptural simplicity which it had worked out of the crooked wisdom of scholasticism, and the benumbing domination of an infallible Church. In fact, nothing low or material can dwell with the earnest reception of Christ crucified. The Gospel is the best philosophy, and the most faithful preacher is the best philosopher.

The truth of Scripture inseparably connected with a free use of it.

But this Christian simplicity of purpose and doctrine which is thus essential to give the Church that authority over the general intellect of mankind, which, for the good of all, she ought to possess, and which is equally necessary to control her own intellectual stores, cannot be separated from the written word, as the sole authority of divine truth, and to be submitted, as such, to the matured judgment of those whom she is to educate.

It cannot be done, by making men's minds dependent—the object of education is to make them, as far as may be, in reason and Scripture, inde-

pendent; to raise them to the power of directing themselves under God; and to the enjoyment of that liberty which accompanies the obedience of intelligent creatures to the divine law. But it is an awful office; and the authority, of necessity, conferred by it, upon those who are thus called to train the human mind, under such powerful sanctions, is so great and so inevitable, if those duties are adequately discharged, that it may very reasonably be demanded, within what limits and by what precise commission it is exercised by the body which claims it. There must be a natural jealousy of such a *power*, as well as a desire to know the *truth* of such a claim. This jealousy must be appeased and the truth ascertained by some authority, like that of the Holy Scriptures, admitted by both parties, and of which the common understanding, truthfully exercised, is competent to judge.

No communion of men which shall claim the right to add from other sources within their own exclusive control, to the written and unchanging canon; no Church which, without so doing, *practically excludes those whom she governs from* the written record, by claiming the exclusive right of interpretation, not by the ordinary rules of reason, but by a power of which her own declaration is the only witness, is fit for the discharge of such a vocation. In truth, there is nothing more clearly demonstrated in ecclesiastical history than the necessity of this appeal to a definite and uncorruptible authority, not only for the instruction of the world, and the rational submission of the

mind to the divine teaching, but to the educational fitness and devotedness of the Ministers of the Church themselves. We are but men—no more exempt from the necessity of an external control than those of our brethren, among whom we are called upon to minister. The authority which we exercise, and *ought* to exercise over our flocks, by our divine commission, has a tendency, like other authority, to disjoin responsibility from power. We are too much tempted, therefore, to forget the nature and intention of our office, and the unreserved devotedness to the good of others, whose servants we are, which it imperatively demands at our hands. We have a disposition, for our ease and influence's sake, to entrench ourselves in outward form, and to insist on an unconditional submission. We cease to remember the wholesome restraints which limit the obedience of our flocks, and which make *us, and our doctrine*, amenable to the word of God, not as a closed book, or a dead letter, but as one open, alike of right and of duty, to the judgment of all.

The Ministry of the Church of England benefited by this acknowledged control.

It has been most happy for our own Apostolic Church, that her ministers have always lived and moved under this control,—happy for themselves, whom it has retained within the limits of their commission, and for the nation, in whom, without awakening its jealousy, they have kept alive the love and fear of God. They may, sometimes, have slumbered at their posts, that is not to be denied—they may sometimes not have preached with sufficient distinctness the whole counsel of God—but they have never rendered it odious to men by unauthorized and

interested additions ; they have never falsely pledged the truth of God, to bulwark an authority which they had no right to claim—they have preserved the book of life committed to their charge, and provided, in its uncorrupted integrity and admitted sufficiency, the means of restoration and of spiritual renewal. The Church of England is at this moment reaping the blessing of it, in the progress which she is making, in regaining the affections of the people who have been entrusted to her guardianship ; and even, in the periods of her greatest inactivity, she has proved, thanks to the word of God, no other, both intellectually and morally, than the great bulwark of the faith ; and has produced, even while she seemed spiritually asleep, the noblest vindications of our common Christianity.

Such has been the Church of England, even at her worst. But when we consider the Church of Rome—how vast a difference there is, all dependent on the admission or exclusion of the word ! And certainly, whether we look to this great purpose and yet *collateral* effect of the Church, in training up the whole moral and intellectual nature of man, or to its *immediate* purpose in saving souls by bringing them to Christ ; the Church of Rome has committed no greater sin against mankind than in the deliberate dethronement of the word of God, from its peculiar educational and training office. In other Churches, indeed, the decay of love and the gradual growth of corruption have tainted the purity of the Gospel, and darkened the minds of the people and of the priesthood—those superstitions which the growth of ages has

Sin of the Church of Rome in withholding the Scriptures from the people.

accumulated, and in which the supineness of human nature so easily learns to acquiesce, are perpetuated among them by habit, and hallowed by traditionary veneration. But it has happened, in the ordinary course of humanity,—it is a melancholy proof of the moral and intellectual frailty of man, and that is all—a warning of the necessity of constant grace to counteract the forces which are always undermining the truth, and dragging the Church downwards. Yet, with all the disastrous results which have followed from this degeneracy, there is more to excite the pity and even the sympathy, than to awaken the indignation, of candid and thoughtful minds.

But, with the Church of Rome, it has not been a misfortune, but a crime; not *an accident*, but a *policy*—she has deliberately chosen darkness rather than light; and, in the suppression of the Bible, has played the part of Antichrist, and waged a profound and calculated warfare against the moral and intellectual liberties of mankind; “*Populus vult decipi, et decipientur*”^a, has been at once her rule of action, and

^a This principle of Romanism should be deeply studied, as it is developed in her teaching. And this, after all, was the politic reason for the adoption of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and other *fables* by which it was accommodated to its popular uses, and which contrast so strongly with the supersensuous philosophy by which it was recommended and explained to minds of a higher order. Paschasius, for instance, the first promulgator of the doctrine in its perfect form, and whom Bellarmine describes as the first serious writer on the subject, proves the miracle which he propounds, by affirming among other proofs of our Lord’s bodily presence in the elements, that “our Lord was often seen in the shape of a lamb in the hands of the priest; and that, on one occasion, an

her apology for it, from a very early period, and is so still. Therefore God sent a spirit of delusion upon her, and

angel shewed Christ to a priest, in the form of a child upon the altar, and having bound and kissed Him, swallowed Him up,"—and other blasphemous absurdities. That gross impositions were practised to delude the senses of the people, even on this awful mystery, is undoubted.

Take another instance of it. "*Hoc ferme tempore quidam clerici, maligno errore seducti, asseverare conabantur, panem et vinum, quæ in altari ponuntur, post consecrationem, in priori substantia permanere, et figuram tantummodo esse corporis et sanguinis Christi, non verum Christi corpus et sanguinem. Quorum enormem perfidiam, beatus Odo destruere cupiens, dum quadam die, in conspectu totius populi, sacrosanctis missarum solemniis devotus, intenderet; expressis lachrymis, Dei omnipotentis clementiam in suo ministerio affore postulavit; quæ, ad depellendos hominum errores, substantiam divinorum mysteriorum declararet proprietatem. Cumque ad confractionem vivifici panis ventum fuisset: (O ineffabilem Dei miserationem, et præsentiam æternæ majestatis ostentationem!) confestim nanque inter manus beati pontificis fragmenta corporis Christi tenentis sanguis guttatim defluere cœpit. Stans, itaque, pontifex, et præ gaudio uberes lachrymas fundens, innuit astantibus ministris, ut illi potissimum proprius accedant qui nuper in fidem titubaverant. Vocati igitur celeriter adsunt, atque in tantarum rerum consideratione perterriti, pœnitenti voce exclamant: O te inter homines fœlicissimum hodie; cui Filius Dei semetipsum in carne dignatus est revelare! Et rursus; Exora, inquit, præsulum pater, exora Domini majestatem; ut in pristinam formam præsens sanguis commutetur; ne nos, propter infidelitatis errorem, ultio divina sequatur. Oravit ergo sacerdos. Post orationem, ad aram respexit; et ubi dimiserat sanguinem, consuetam vini reperit speciem."* (Osbern. de Vit. S. Od. Archiep. Cantuar. Aug. Sac. Lond. 1691. II. 82.) Soames' Bampton Lectures, p. 418.

At the time of the Reformation there were numerous discoveries and exposures of the machinery used for these purposes of deceit; vid. Burnet's History of the Reformation, vol. 1. But any one acquainted with the existing condition of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain and Italy is perfectly aware that such delusions

she believed her own lie ; and, sitting in the temple of God as ruler and guide, the representative of Him who is not only the Light, but *the very* TRUTH, she taught a system not Christian but Pagan—a system embodying in its workings all the moral corruptions and intellectual perversions which ages fertile in

are still systematically practised. The rationale of the powers exhibited by images is that by which philosophers of old explained and justified such worship as was paid to them—the actual presence of a *Δαίμων*. The following explanation is given by a Romanist writer of the miraculous powers of images of the Virgin. “Dicendum sit concessum Deiparæ Dominæ privilegium assistendi, physice et realiter, in aliquibus simulachris seu imaginibus ; et quod in aliquibus simulachris, seu imaginibus ipsius, credatur, assistere adesseque personaliter, physice et realiter—ut in illis debitas adorationes recipiat a fidelibus cultoribus.” R. P. Petri. de Median. Res. Theolog. (Faber’s Calendar of Prophecy, vol. iii. p. 263.) It is idle to plead Tridentine refinement as the practice of the Church, and as a counter-weight to the systematic encouragement of this wretched superstition. Do not let it be said that this is passed away. This lying spirit clings to Rome. The Breviary of the Romish Church is *full* of these monstrous fables. It is no unauthorized work, but carefully compiled and solemnly enjoined. For, in consequence of a decree of the Council of Trent, Pope Pius V. ordered a number of *learned and able men* to compile the Breviary, and by his Bull, “quod a nobis,” July, 1566, sanctioned it, and commanded the use thereof to the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church all over the world. Clement VIII. finding that the Breviary of Pius V. had been altered and depraved, restored it to its original condition. Lastly, Urban VIII. in 1631, had the language of the whole work and the metres of the hymns revised.

Whoever enjoys any ecclesiastical revenue—all persons of both sexes who have professed in any of the regular orders—all sub-deacons, deacons, and priests, are bound to repeat the service of the day out of the Breviary. The omission of any one of the eight portions of which the service consists is a mortal sin. Could any of this stand its ground with clergy or laity with the *free use of Scripture* ?

wickedness could supply to the comprehensive sagacity and the organizing hand of her rulers.

It avails not to say, that she was led on by circumstances, and, that the universal ignorance, and errors of the times, exercised a controlling influence over her, which she had not the power to resist; for, though a rational expediency must sometimes bend to circumstances, and a high intellectual cultivation is incompatible with times of general confusion, and a barbarous rudeness of manners; yet the very characteristic of the Gospel is *its unchangeable spirit*; and its simple yet commanding truths, combined with the civilizing influences of a faithful Ministry, are the intended antidote to a degrading ignorance, and an inhuman rudeness. Nor is it a plea to be admitted in her favour, as an adequate defence, that there were periods in her usurpation when, on the whole, it was exercised beneficially for mankind; and when its very overshadowing vastness looked to friendly eyes rather as an earthly *providence*, than a tyranny over the nations^b; that, in claiming and exercising a secular

The darkness of the middle ages nosufficient apology.

^b A distinction should be observed between the earlier and later periods of the Romish See. Its universal influence, of course, could never have arisen, nor a voluntary respect, if not obedience, have been paid it, without sensible benefits to produce it. As a fulchrum to the Ecclesiastical power *before* nationalities were developed, it was of great value; and from it, as from a hearth where unextinguished embers still linger in the ashes, what remained of ancient art and civilization was circulated throughout western Christendom by the members of the distant Churches who constantly kept up the communication of the Christian Societies which she had founded with their distant mother.

“The Anglo-Saxon Church,” says an eminent divine, “is repre-

authority irreconcilable with the word of God, she was opposing the intolerable abuses of a power *merely*

sented as having yielded an authority to the papacy which our national institutions have long peremptorily refused. Nor is it, indeed, capable of denial, that the Roman See was constantly regarded among our distant ancestry with a degree of affectionate esteem and grateful veneration, which offer a striking contrast to that habitual neglect and to those occasional displays of contemptuous indignation, which it has received from England during the last three centuries. But let it be remembered that Ante-Norman times knew nothing of the political pretensions advanced by Gregory VII. and by some of his successors; they saw not solemnly established, as integral members of the Catholic faith, those thirteen Articles which papal authority has now appended to the Nicene Creed, and which are obtruded upon the consciences of men under a bold denunciation of eternal perdition. The Roman See has therefore altered most materially both its worldly and its religious aspect since the Conquest. What was the light, however, in which our early progenitors viewed the Pontiff? and what were the privileges conceded to him? Did they esteem St. Peter the rock upon which the Church was built, the janitor, who held the privilege of closing heaven's gates against all who should decline obedience to his admitted successors, and the leader under whose guidance they would individually proceed to the Judgment-seat of Christ? Had they a papal legate constantly resident among them, claiming for his master a paramount jurisdiction, at least, over their Ecclesiastical affairs, and interfering habitually in their domestic polity? Was any disposition ever shewn among them to obey the pontifical authority, when it happened to be at variance with their own judgment? Did oaths of canonical obedience bind their prelates to the Roman See? Was a complete Ecclesiastical supremacy, within the realm, denied to their princes? An unqualified negative must reply to every one of these questions. Our Anglo-Saxon fathers understood uniformly by the metaphorical rock, in our blessed Lord's promise to St. Peter, no other than Jesus Himself. They considered Cephas to have been appointed janitor of heaven merely by way of admonishing mankind, that all who could gain admission within the celestial portals must firmly maintain the

secular, and of forces, without mitigation, material. In those tempestuous times, indeed, when every element of disorder was let loose, and before a new system of society had gradually emerged out of the confusion ; nay, in what seemed the utter wreck of all that constitutes individual goodness, or national order ; it is not to be denied, that even the Romish authority, from the excess of the opposing evils, exercised in its antagonism a correcting influence on the condition of society. But, whatever grand or even holy views may, from time to time, have glanced across the politic schemes of her rulers, certain it is, on the whole, that they were animated by the most intense and systematic selfishness ; their end was power by all instruments, power at all risks, power of all kinds, and power over all men ; and, while enough of what was higher and more spiritual remained within her to ensure the sympathy of the nations in those iron times, yet elements more and more undisguisedly secular, and claims embodying the world's worst corruptions, became inextricably united at last with the domination which she exercised as the successor of the fisherman, and in the name of the despised and rejected of men.

But ought we to judge sternly and harshly of an anomalous power, in an unexampled crisis of the world ? Certainly not. If she had then possessed the magnanimity to educate, instead of *subjugating* those over whom

faith which he so manfully professed." Soame's Bampton Lectures, p. 454.

she ruled, with the instruments which God had profusely put into her hands ; or if, while she exercised an absolute but temporary guardianship over generations incapable of moral or mental independence, she had prepared herself and them, or allowed herself and them to be prepared, for a state of higher advancement, and for the necessary revolutions of time and knowledge—it would have atoned for many sins, and no one would scrutinize too severely the transient irregularities of ambition, and the inevitable exorbitancies of power ! But what is the fact ? why, that she disdained the office of teacher, of which she only discerned the lowliness, and not the dignity ; she refused, as beneath her, a ministry of the faith, which must lead men to a participation in what she held to be exclusively her own ; instead of a limited sovereignty, she chose to be the unquestioned mistress of slaves ; not the unfolders of the sacred oracles, but herself an oracle ; an earthly god, rather than the first among many brethren, and the honoured guide and instructor of Christ's flock.

The spiritual good, therefore, that flowed from Rome, even in the period of the greatest darkness, came from those remainders of the Gospel light, which she had not the power to extinguish, nor any interest to repudiate. Not only in the mountains of Piedmont, indeed, but in the depth of her retirements, and in the silence of her monasteries, the word of God still kept alive a true faith in Christ, in the bosom of many a secret student ; nay, gleams and flashes occasionally escaped from it to those without ; but, *as the light of the*

world, as the guide of life, as the inheritance of mankind^c, the Bible was extinguished, and the Gospel abolished.

^c It was only by slow degrees that Scripture was thus expelled; it was only gradually that this deep sleep stole over the nations, which, when the fulness of time was come for the exercise of her usurpation, Rome did her best to seal. The earlier Gregory and Leo speak in very different terms of holy writ from their successors after the tenth and eleventh centuries; amidst much error there was no *systematic anti-scripturality*; the door was not closed on reformation. There was still much that was genial and benignant in Rome. She yet acknowledged the popular use of Scripture.

Thus speaks Gregory the Great: "Resident juxta fluenta plenissima; dumque se consiliis Scripturæ ex toto addicunt, ut videntur nihil agant nisi quod ex responso Scripturarum audiunt, quasi in aquam se projicientes, hosti illudunt. Quæ fluenta plenissima dicuntur: quia de quibuscumque scrupulis in Scripturis consilium quæritur, sine minoratione de omnibus ad plenum invenitur." In Cant. c. 5. v. 12. tom. iii. Elihu ait. "Adversus eum contendis, quod non ad omnia verba responderit tibi. Semel loquetur Deus, et secundo id ipsum non repetet. Ac si diceret: Deus singulorum cordibus privatis vocibus non respondet, sed tale eloquium construit, per quod cunctorum quæstionibus satisfaciat. In Scripturæ quippe ejus eloquio, causas nostras singuli si requirimus, invenimus." Exposit. in Job. lib. 23. c. 19. "Quid est autem Scriptura sacra, nisi quædam epistola omnipotentis Dei ad creaturam suam? . . . Stude ergo; quæso, et quotidie Creatoris tui verba meditare. Disce cor Dei in verbis Dei." Lib. 4. Ep. 31. ad Theod. Med.

It was he who disclaimed the office of universal Bishop, and thus speaks of the assumption of that title by the Bishop of Constantinople: "Consacerdos meus Johannes vocari universalis Episcopus conatur. Exclamare compellor et dicere: O tempora, O mores! Sacerdotes vanitatis sibi nomina expetunt; et nobis ac profanis vocabulis gloriantur. Sed *absit a cordibus Christianorum nomen istud blasphemiae, in quo omnium Sacerdotum honor adininitur, dum ab uno sibi dementer arrogatur.*" Greg. Epist. lib. 4. Epist. 32. Afterwards he puts it on lower ground, not as blaspheming against Christ, but usurpation over the brethren. "Absit hoc, absit a Christiani mente id sibi velle quempiam

Surely, when we contemplate that wonderful record of God's wisdom, and its universal appli-

arripere, unde fratrum suorum honorem inminuere ex quantalacunque parte videatur." Ibid. Epist. 36.

In the same Epistle he thus describes the same Ecclesiastical usurper; "Mandata dominica, apostolica præcepta, regulas Patrum despiciens, cum (scil. Anti-Christum) per elationem præcurrere conatur in nomine; ita ut universa sibi tentet ascribere, et omnia quæ *soli uni capiti coherent*, videlicet Christo, ejusdem Christi sibi studeat membra subjugare." Lib. 4. Epist. 36. Manifestly such a title and such a claim could not co-exist for any length of time, with even a tolerably free and general use of the Scriptures. Advance a few centuries later, and with the claim then propounded we see the utter incompatibility of a Scriptural Church, or Scriptural teaching. "Quod Romana Ecclesia a solo Domino sit fundata; quod solus Romanus Pontifex jure dicatur universalis; quod ille solus possit deponere Episcopos vel reconciliare; quod legatus ejus omnibus Episcopis præsit in concilio, etiam inferioris gradus, et adversus eos sententiam depositionis possit dare; quod absentes Papa possit deponere; quod cum excommunicatis ab illo, inter cætera, nec in eâdem domo debemus manere; quod illi liceat imperatores deponere; quod nulla Synodus absque præcepto ejus, debet generalis vocari; quod sententia illius a nullo debeat retractari, et ipse omnium solus retractare possit; quod a nemine ipse judicari debeat; quod Romana Ecclesia nunquam erravit, nec in perpetuum, Scripturâ testante, errabit; quod Romanus Pontifex, si Canonice fuerit ordinatus, meritis Beati Petri indubitanter efficitur Sanctus; quod illius præcepto et licentiâ subjectis liceat accusare; quod, absque synodali conventu possit Episcopos deponere et reconciliare; quod Catholicus non habeatur quia non concordat Romanæ Ecclesiæ; quod a fidelitate iniquorum, subjectos potest absolvere." Dict. Pop. Greg. Sep. in Epist. lib. 2. Epist. 55. Labb. Concil. vol. 10. pp. 110, 111.

It is delightful to know how cherished was holy Scripture in the ancient Anglo-Saxon Church, how deeply studied, and how many rays of truth must, after all, have illuminated periods of her history, which we too rashly condemn to an unmitigated darkness, and an unbroken ignorance. "The reading of Holy Scriptures," says Bede, "is

cability to the wants of mankind; its incomparable home-comingness and simplicity as well as depth,

the knowledge of everlasting blessedness. In the holy Scriptures man may contemplate himself, as in some mirror, what sort of person he is. Just so the reading of holy Scriptures; it cleanseth the reader's soul, it bringeth into his mind the fear of hell-punishment, and it raiseth his heart to the joy above. The man who wishes ever to be with God; he should often pray to Him, and he should often read the holy Scriptures. For when we pray, we speak to God, and when we read the holy books, then God speaks to us. It is a twofold joy which the reading of the holy books bringeth to the readers; first, that it so instructs their understandings as to render them sharper, and also that it leads them from this world's vanities to the love of God. The reading of the holy books is a very pious work, and it greatly helpeth to the cleansing of the soul. As the body is fed with fleshly meats, so also the higher man, that is, the soul, is fed with divine conferences: as the Psalmist says, 'Sweeter to the cheek of my mouth are thy speeches, than honey, or the honey-comb.' He is very happy who readeth the holy Scriptures, if he turneth the words into works. All the holy Scriptures are written for our health, that we may through them understand the truth. Oftener the blind man stumbleth than he who sees; so also he who knows not God's commands, oftener he sinneth from his ignorance, than does he who knows them. And like the blind man without a guide, so also man without a teacher, must have great difficulty in going the right way according to God's commands." Whelock in his Notes upon Bede's Ecclesiastical History. (Cant. 1643. p. 173.)

"In his enim quæ aperte in Scripturis posita sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia quæ continent fidem, mores vivendi, spem scilicet atque charitatem. Cum vero, facta quâdam familiaritate cum ipsa lingua divinarum Scripturarum, in ea quæ obscura sunt aperienda et discutienda, pergeudum est, ut ad obscuriores locutiones illustrandas, de manifestioribus sumantur exempla, et quædam certarum sententiarum testimonia, dubitationem certis auferant: in qua re memoria valet plurimum, quæ, si defuerit, non potest his præceptis dari." (Rabanus Maurus, Mogunt. Archiep. de Clericorum Institutione, lib. ii. c. 7. edit. Colon. 1533. p. 160.)

we are very wrong in yielding so readily, as we are inclined to do, to the common supposition, that the unadorned Gospel, not divested of that beauty of holiness in the Church which it not only

“ Panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie. Sicut enim panis est esca corporis unde corpus in hoc seculo vivet, ita est panis spiritualis unde anima sine fine vivere debet. Hoc est divina Scriptura, quæ docet et ammonet qualiter ad Dominum et ad regnum æternum pervenire valeamus, et qualiter possumus relinquere viam quæ ducit ad infernum et regnum Diaboli, ubi erunt peccatores sine fine torquendi. Illum, ergo, panem, fratres rarissimi, cotidie sine cessatione cum magno desiderio rogare debemus, ut illum Dominus omnipotens pro sua pietate largiri dignetur: ut valeamus intelligere quæ sit voluntas Dei, et facere quæ illi placita sunt, ut maneamus in illo et ipse in nobis.” Brit. Mus. MSS. Cotton. Tiberius, c. 1. fol. 87.

“ All teachers that take not their doctrine and examples out of these holy books are like those of whom Christ Himself thus said, *Cæcus si cæco ducatum præstet, ambo in foveam cadent*: If the blind man be leader of the blind, then shall they both fall into some blind pit; but such teachers as take their examples and doctrine from hence, whether it be out of the Old Testament or the New, are such as Christ Himself spake of in these words, *Omnis scriba doctus in regno cælorum similis est homini patri-familias qui profert de thesauro suo nova et vetera*; Every learned scribe in the Church of God is like the master of a family, who brings forth ever out of his own treasure things new and old.” *Ælfric, of the New Testament, L’Isle’s Transl. p. 38.*

“ *Incipit ordo vel examinatio in ordinatione episcopi. Interrogamus te dilectissime frater in caritate sincera: si omnem prudentiam tuam quantum tua capax est natura divinæ Scripturæ sensibus accommodare volueris. Responsio. Ita ex toto corde volo in omnibus obedire et consentire. Interrogatio. Vis ea qui ex divinis Scripturis intelligis plebem cui ordinandus es et verbis docere et exemplis? Responsio. Volo.*” (*Brit. Mus. MSS. Cotton. Tiberius. A. III. f. 91.*) Respecting any belief in tradition, this examination is silent. Vid. *Soame’s Bampton Lectures, p. 92—95.*

admits, but requires, but still in the integrity of its doctrines, as propounded by Christ and His Apostles, would have been inapplicable to the popular wants of these rude ages. There is something, surely, extremely disrespectful to the holy Volume in this belief; nay, brethren, I will call it boldly what it is; it is a rationalistic disparagement of the divine wisdom, in thinking that the word of God, in all its breadth and power, the simple primitive Gospel, without addition or diminution, could have exercised no regenerating influences over mediæval society, without the legends, the idolatries, the specious corruptions, and the popular witchcraft of the Church of Rome.

Those times were indeed rude, in the luxurious appliances of life, and in the refinements of the arts—but they were rich in noble capacities—they were full of energy and intellect; they had all the principles of social order within them, however unperfected and unmethodized; they were no unapt ground, as events subsequently proved, for the reception of those Gospel truths, which, had the Church done her duty, *might once* have been *gently and peaceably* distilled into men's minds, instead of being tempestuously flung abroad, as was their ultimate fate, when the time for sowing them arrived. It is not only a principle full of danger, if wrought out into all its practical consequences, but one really inapplicable to the individual case, to vindicate Rome, and her corruptions of the Gospel truth, on the ground of their adaptation to the then condition of mankind, which, but for this, she might not only have benefited by fits and starts and in her own despite, but

have permanently ameliorated, and thus identified the Gospel, in men's minds, with the after growth of the nation. To vindicate the main features of mediæval Christianity, both doctrinal and practical, on the principle of its being the *real Apostolic* scheme, is an intelligible argument, however false, in fact, and destructive of what it professes to uphold. But to assert that *Apostolic* truth is a distinct thing from that system, and yet, to justify, on grounds of temporary expediency, not a mere modification of its form, but an alteration of essential principles in the way of propounding it, is ground, both morally and logically, untenable. Almighty God best knows what were the great purposes which He designed to answer, in making the written word the full and perfect Canon of the faith; and it was the bounden duty of the Ministers of the Gospel to preach it as they had received it; and to communicate to mankind at large, in its unimpaired fulness, the inheritance of which they were the depositories.

In the early ages of Christianity, we are sure that many nations were converted to the faith by the Apostles, and Apostolic missionaries, whose intellectual condition must necessarily have been low,—many barbarous tribes, to whom, carnally speaking, a corrupt form of Christianity, modelled to their condition and actual prejudices, after the modern and ancient fashion of Romanist propagandism, would have been better fitted than the faith once delivered to the saints^d. Much more, in the Churches of the

^d It would be absurd to place any precise limits, though limits of truth and reason there undoubtedly are, on the accommodation

West, fashioned from the first to Apostolic doctrine and discipline, might that faith, which was already

to invincible prejudice or gross ignorance which a Minister of the Gospel may adopt towards a barbarous nation which he is evangelizing. Nor would I disparage for a moment the indefatigable zeal, heroic self-devotion, and unconquerable faith exhibited by some illustrious Romanist missionaries, whose names and whose praises are in all the world. But with all reasonable and charitable allowance, there can, I think, be no doubt, that the love of despotic power, an intense selfishness of purpose, and unscrupulous dealing with the word of light and life, which characterize Rome as an educator, have marked most of *her later* missionary efforts, whatever the earlier ones may have been. "The many histories and relations which mention the labours, perils, and exploits of that prodigious multitude of Jesuits, who were employed in the conversion of the African, American, and Indian infidels, abundantly shew, with what fidelity and zeal the members of this society executed the orders of the Roman pontiffs. And their labours would have undoubtedly crowned them with immortal glory, had it not appeared evident from the most authentic records, that the greatest part of these new apostles had more in view the promoting the ambitious views of Rome, and the advancing the interests of their own society, than the propagation of the Christian religion, or the honour of its divine Author. It may also be affirmed, from records of the highest credit and authority, that the inquisition erected by the Jesuits at Goa, and the penal laws, whose terrors they employed so freely in propagation of the Gospel, contributed much more than their arguments and exhortations, which were but sparingly used to engage the Indians to embrace Christianity." Vid. General History of the Church by Mosheim, vol. iv. p. 155.

"The grand accusation that is brought against the Jesuits in China is this; 'That they make an impious mixture of light and darkness, of Chinese superstition and Christian truth, in order to triumph with the greater speed and facility over the prejudices of that people against the doctrine of the Gospel; and that they allow their converts to retain the profane customs and the absurd rites of their Pagan ancestors.' Ricci, who was the founder of the Christian Church in that famous monarchy, declared it as his

established, have been maintained in some approach to its primitive strength and purity, along with the

opinion, that *the greatest part of those rites, which the Chinese are obliged by the laws of their country to perform*, might be innocently observed by the new converts. To render this opinion less shocking, he supported and explained it upon the following principle; ‘That these rites were of a civil and not of a sacred nature; that they were invented from views of policy, and not for any purposes of religion; and that none but the very dregs of the populace in China, considered them in any other light.’ This opinion was not only rejected by the Dominicans and Franciscans, who were associated with the Jesuits in this important mission, but also by some even of the most learned Jesuits, both in China and Japan, and particularly by Nicholas Lombard, who published a memorial, containing the reasons upon which his dissent was founded. This contest, which was long carried on in a private manner, was brought by the Dominicans, before the tribunal of the pontiff, in the year 1645, and from that period continued to produce great divisions, commotions, and caballing, in the Church of Rome. Innocent X. in the year now mentioned, pronounced in favour of the Dominicans, and highly condemned the indulgence which the Jesuits had shewn to the Chinese superstitions.” Vid. Mosheim’s General History of the Church, vol. v. p. 25, 26.

“The ministerial labours of the Romish missionaries, and, more especially, of the Jesuits, were crowned in Japan with surprising success, towards the commencement of this century, and made an incredible number of converts to the Christian religion.” Vol. v. p. 33.

“While Father Labat was at Rome, Father Tamburini, who at that time was general of the Jesuits, asked him several questions relating to the progress of Christianity in America; to which, with equal courage and candour, he gave immediately this general answer: ‘That the Gospel had made little or no real progress in that country: that he had never met with one adult person among the Americans who could be esteemed a true proselyte to Christianity; and that the Missionaries could scarcely pretend to any other exploits (of a spiritual kind) than their having baptized some children at the point of death.’ He added at the same time, ‘That, in order to make the Americans Christians, it was pre-

civilization of mankind, and that expansion of the human mind, which, as far as lay in the power of Rome, it was made an instrument to repress.

The corruption of the mediæval period of the Church, and the parallel growth of laic and ecclesiastical degeneracy, could not only never have attained their full and systematized shape, but could never have prevailed *permanently, or universally, at all*, had the supreme authority of Scripture been maintained uninjured; and had the consequent discrepancy between its plain rules and the prevailing doctrines been constantly brought home to the observation of Christians. But one deviation followed another, and the first de-

Mediæval corruption not compatible with the free use of Scripture.

viously necessary to make them men.’ This bold Dominican, who had been himself a Missionary in the American islands, had a great mind to give Tamburini some seasonable advice concerning the immense wealth and authority that the Jesuits had acquired in these parts of the world; but the cunning old man eluded artfully this part of the conversation, and turned it upon another subject. Lebat gave, upon another occasion, a still greater proof of his undaunted spirit and presence of mind; for when, in the audience granted him by Clement XI. that pontiff praised in pompous terms the industry and zeal of the Portuguese and Spanish Missionaries in promoting the salvation of the Americans, and reproached the French with inactivity and indifference in a matter of such high importance, our resolute Dominican told him plainly, ‘that the Spaniards and Portuguese boasted of the success of their labours without any sort of foundation; since it was well known, that, instead of converts, they had only made hypocrites, all their disciples among the Indians having been forced, by the dread of punishment and the terrors of death, to embrace Christianity;’ adding, moreover, ‘that such as had received baptism continued as open and egregious idolaters as they had been before their profession of Christianity.’” Vid. note o, vol. v. p. 44. Mosheim’s General History. (M’Laine’s Transl.)

liberate departure from Scripture, as the rule of faith, involved in principle, both positively and negatively, all the consequences which ensued. Corruptions, commenced in ignorance, were retained from policy—vague superstitions were methodized for profit—they became bound up, in popular opinion, with the essence of the faith, and indispensable, in reality, to the secular interests of the Church. But, as enquiry can never wholly be suppressed, and man cannot so far stifle his intellectual nature, as not, from time to time, to seek the reason of what is demanded from him as *a duty*; and, as such reason could not be found in Scripture, it was of necessity extra-Scripturally sought—the unlimited authority of the Church, gradually supplanting the earlier reverence for primitive tradition, and embracing in its compass every variety of doctrine and principle, not by any other process to be established, was built up, as an article of faith, upon the ruins of the word.

With the free and general use of Scripture, and the witnesses to the truth, which, even as it was, the partial perusal of it, stirred up, this never could have stood. Neither indulgences, nor pilgrimages, nor the worship of images, nor the supremacy of the Roman see, nor the sacrifice of the mass, nor salvation by meritorious works, could ever have grown into a widely-admitted and established creed.

Again. Along with the supremacy of the word, there must have existed a nobler and freer philosophy than that which grew up under the influence of the subtle intellects of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, pro-

fessedly on the ruins of Biblicism, and which furnished to Romanists what the Eclectics did to Paganism—a pretence of reason, and a philosophical form which might silence the doubts of the timid, and hopelessly perplex, if it did not *convince*, the understanding of the bold. Under this enormous and wide-branching system, which embraced, from a theological centre, every department of the human mind, the small remains of Scriptural authority were finally suppressed¹. Meanwhile, it gave as wide a play as was possible to the metaphysical and logical tendencies of the human mind, compatibly with a nominal holding of salvation through Christ, faith in whom it rendered dead; and, under the dictum that what was theologically true might be philosophically false, it opened a door to every form of that theoretic infidelity, in which the high places of the Romish Church have always abounded. And this was not all—for, from the admixture of oriental errors in the works on which the system was founded, and from the adoption not merely of the logic of Aristotle, but of his physics and metaphysics, not only was the growth of all true knowledge impeded, but the greatest errors in every department of thought were identified with Christian truth, and the authority of the Church. A natural result of this was—that, when the time of emancipation came, even if the authority of the sacred record was maintained in all fundamental points, yet that other truths, most important, though not absolutely essential, which required more attention to deduction and collateral support from tradition and history, were exposed to

Nor the philosophy of the Schools.

¹ See an admirable analysis of this system, in many important points, in Hampden's Bampton Lectures. The life of Aquinas, by the same powerful writer, in the Encyclop. Metropol. There are many excellent remarks on the same subject, *now* a very important one, in Bp. Van Mildert's Boyle's Lectures.

rejection. The Church, which, in so many respects, had abused her trust, and tyrannized over the human mind, which she ought to have cultured and enlarged, might be naturally supposed to have the wish to abuse it in all. Her assertion could no more be taken upon trust—she had forfeited the generous confidence and unhesitating belief of mankind.

The Romish system incompatible with intellectual progression.

¹ Hence the triumphant air of the infidels of the Academy in reasoning against Christianity. Much of their reasonings is *irrefutable* on the supposition, that Romanism and the Gospel are the same. It is an awful warning to all who mix up Tradition with the Gospel, to study the mode in which Voltaire and Condorcet treat such a writer as Pascal—how con-

Quite certain it is, that, not only in many of those who have emancipated themselves from her Creed, has the previous strain upon the mind, in the constant struggle between faith and reason, overturned permanently the proper balance of the intellect; but, in the case of those whom she has nominally retained, she has never been able to reconcile faith to the growth of knowledge and the improvement of the hardier faculties. Every such advance has been accompanied by a corresponding declension in her power, and, with it, by the ruin of that Christianity which it has always been her system to identify absolutely with herself, and that truth of God which her superstitions have inextricably encumbered¹. She has abandoned no one claim, however monstrous, so long as she could maintain it, and—where a greater liberty has been permitted, and, in the partial use of Scripture, faith has been conciliated with enlightenment of mind—her improvement has been the result of compulsion; not a change of system or an enlargement of view, but the necessity imposed upon her by the neighbourhood and irresistible pressure of a more Scriptural communion.

But this is a mere palliative and a temporary

expedient—change she cannot, without an abandonment of her infallibility, and the risk of being absorbed, the moment she admits the full authority of Scripture independently of her teaching, into a Church more truly Catholic than herself. Not only cannot the Gospel and Rome dwell together—but *Rome, and the reasonable exercise of the faculties which God has given us, are irreconcilable*^{*}. Hence the struggle,

clusive had been his argument in defence of the Gospel as we find it in the word of God! how easily neutralized, in defence of a corrupt and human system!

^{*} This is so serious a charge, that it ought not to be made without unquestionable evidence, which I subjoin from a book which deserves to be profoundly studied by all who wish to be acquainted with the practical results of Romanism *in its purity*—undisturbed by Protestant light.

“Wherever the Religion of Rome reigns absolute, there is but one step between it and complete infidelity.”

“A divine of great eminence has observed to me, that this important position demands proof and elucidation. I am most willing to defer to his judgment; though nothing is so difficult as reducing to theory the daily experience of life. I have stated as a general fact what I have seen invariably happen in my native country; what all inhabitants of Roman Catholic countries, in every part of the world, with whom I have become acquainted in the course of my life, have confirmed to me, both as witnesses and as instances. I hope I can give good reasons, and probable explanations of this moral phenomenon; but, to a mind deeply impressed by the experience of the fact, they must all appear tame and lifeless. As I cannot, however, communicate the impressions themselves, I request, that in case my theory should appear unsatisfactory, it may not be allowed to weaken my testimony. The tendency of Roman Catholic Christianity to produce complete and sudden infidelity arises, in the first place, from its exclusiveness. A Romanist is, from infancy, taught, as an article of faith, that Popery and Christianity are identical. He must therefore be prepared to reject the Gospel revelation, the moment he shall find cause to reject Popery. A Roman Catholic is also taught to believe in the infallibility of the Church as an essential part of Christianity. He must there-

and, as authentic records teach us, the intolerable agony, in her intelligent members, between the irre-

fore reject Christianity, upon being convinced of the existence of a single error in his Church's creed. But, it will be asked, why do not Roman Catholics, in countries where Romanism reigns supreme, doubt and examine those two articles, before they reject the whole system of Christianity? I answer, because those two articles are impressed upon their minds above all others. I believe whatever the holy Roman Church believes, is made to be the compendious creed of the Romanist. This implicit acquiescence, this faith by proxy, dispenses from all thought, all reading, all attention. The very common aversion of the understanding to abstract subjects, is cherished by this short creed; a load of care and trouble is thus thrown off the mind, and all apprehensions from the want of faith vanish at the comfortable recollection, that the Church is believing mightily for her children. The mass of Romanists are, on this point, like the good Tartar tribes, who employ praying machines; a kind of little windmills, which whirl their written prayers in the face of heaven. The Church is a faith-engine for the Roman Catholic. Now, suppose a young Tartar, in the practice of setting up daily his praying machine, grows intimately acquainted with an European traveller, who indulges his wit at the expense of the devout contrivance:—can you expect that, when the force of ridicule or reason shall induce him to destroy his whirl, he will sit down to enquire into the necessity of prayer, and the right mode of performing it? No more will the young Spaniard, (I say Spaniard, because I know them best,) when Voltaire has made him heartily laugh at popes, saints, monks, and miracles, undertake a long and laborious study, to distinguish Christianity from Popery. The more I reflect upon the popular customs and feelings of Spain, the more clearly I perceive the bitter roots of unbelief which Rome has twisted, as it were, round the very heart of the country, in the bonds with which she has secured it to herself. The inquisition has indissolubly connected, in the popular mind, the ideas of absurdity, confusion, immorality, and disgrace, with that of heresy." The Rev. B. White's Evidences against Roman Catholicism.

"It was then (in the 17th century) first," says Voltaire, "that endeavours began to be used to open the eyes of the people in relation

sistible impulse by which energetic minds are propelled to the search after truth, and that blank in-

to the superstitions, which they are so apt to mingle with their religion. It was no longer accounted criminal to know (whatever sentiments the Parliament of Aix or the Carmelites might entertain) that Lazarus and Mary Magdalene had never been in Provence. The Benedictines could gain no credit to their assertion, that Dionysius the Areopagite had governed the Church of Paris. Supposed saints, pretended miracles, false relics, began to lose repute. Sound reason, which had produced such a reformation in philosophy, penetrated every where, though slowly and with difficulty. The Bishop of Chalons, Gaston Louis de Noailles, brother to the Cardinal of that name, joined so much good sense to his piety, that, in the year 1702, he destroyed a relic, preserved with great care for many ages in the church of Notre-Dame, and adored under the name of the hand of Jesus Christ. All Chalons murmured against the Bishop. Presidents, counsellors, kings, officers, treasurers of France, merchants, principal citizens, canons, curates, protested unanimously and in form against the attempt of the Bishop; demanding to have the holy hand restored; and alleging the robe of Jesus Christ preserved at Argenteuch, his handkerchief at Turin and at Laon, and one of the nails of the cross at St. Denis. But the prudent firmness of the Bishop prevailed in the end over the credulity of the people. Some other superstitions, attached to respected usages, still subsist. The truly philosophical spirit did not prevail till about the middle of this age." Voltaire's *Age of Louis XIV.* c. xxxi. vol. 11. p. 191, 192.

Even earlier look at the effect of this grinding tyranny and imposture. "It is certain," says the ecclesiastical historian Mosheim, "that, in the sixteenth century, there lay concealed, in different parts of Europe, several persons, who entertained a virulent enmity against religion in general, and in a more especial manner against the religion of the Gospel; who, both in their writings and in their private conversation, sowed the seeds of impiety and error, and who instilled their odious principles into weak and credulous minds. It is even reported, that, in certain provinces of France and Italy, schools were erected, whence these impious doctors issued to deceive the simple and unwary." *Eccles. Hist.* cent. xvi. sect. 2. §. v. Determined infidelity was likewise charged against the Templars,

fidelity which seems the only refuge from her unnatural pressure—hence, from the earliest times, when minds and hearts were less susceptible, the growth of a philosophical heathenism, and the existence even of a wide-spread atheism in all ranks of the Christian priesthood. Eminently, in this respect, *is Rome Antichristian and Apostate*—dwelling with infidelity, and leading to infidelity, by making it almost impossible to acquire knowledge, even the highest and the noblest, without sapping the faith, and in the recoil involving Atheism or Deism, as the inevitable consequence. Hence, too, not in individuals only, but *in whole nations* abandoned to her false teaching, comes that almost universal and avowed divorce, of what God, by the *intermediation of the Scripture*, had made one, *knowledge and faith*; hence that most awful of all sights, the very highest faculties of mind, and the most stupendous discoveries in science, placed in direct opposition to that God, whose glorious works in nature they have unfolded to us, and whose constructive and mechanical attributes they have so wonderfully illustrated.

Her most eminent saints enfeebled by her system.

And even, in those eminent saints whom she has from time to time produced within her bosom, there is an intellectual deficiency; a want of simultaneous and harmonious growth of all the faculties; a lack of that freedom and manliness of spirit, which, when the word of God is our only guide, is capable of combining with the simplest faith, and the lowliest humility.

when their order was suppressed, at the beginning of the fourteenth century." See Bp. Van Mildert's Hist. View of Infidelity, Sermon. ix.

Their instinct of holiness has enabled them to select and grow upon those elements of divine truth, the *food of souls*, which, however obscured by her, are still within her, if the teaching of the Spirit leads to the discovery of them. But the chain, one hardly knows how, still hangs about them; it is upon their soul; they do not rise to Christ, but see Him only through the interpretations of men and the distorted reflection of the Church. They have never tasted freely of the Scriptures; the exposition of the Fathers, or the declaration of the Church, is the nearest point to them which they can reach; an unconquerable timidity deadens the pursuit of truth, in the fear of error; and the clearest deductions of reason from the infallible word are awed down by the phantom of the Church. Hence comes, of necessity, a want of clear and decided faith; a lack of that vital vigour in their religious scheme, which direct contact with the word can alone bestow; and hence has happened a phenomenon otherwise inexplicable—that religious movements, and an apparent stirring up of an earnest spirit, such as might have reasonably led to the greatest results, and a doctrinal reformation of the Church, has never gone in her beyond the extension of the penitential discipline, or the reformation of a cloister¹. Such is the heavy yoke of the Church's infallibility even on the best minds. So does it oppress and break down the heart and intellect far beyond the mark of reason and the limits of genuine *humility*; and, worst of all, it incapacitates those earnest and holy tempers, in whose hands alone, a

¹ What noble intellects and holy hearts were members of the Society of Port-Royal! What inadequate results followed—and how inadequate the end proposed, to what such instruments might have been equal under a better system!

great change could be safe, from the work of effectual reformation.

The open
Gospel the
security of
the Church
of England.

But, while this fatal defect makes Rome incapable, even at her best, of educating individual minds to the height of their faculties; whilst her practical scheme is utterly inapplicable, as a system of training, to the masses which it only degrades; whilst she is wholly incompetent to deal with the awakened strength of reason^f;

^f Le Seur and Jacquier, the learned commentators on the *Principia* of Newton, prefix a declaration, in which, by a solemn falsehood, they avoid contradicting the Church, and sharing the fate of Galileo. "Newton," they say, "in his third book assumes the hypothesis of the earth's motion. The propositions of that author could not be explained, except through the same hypothesis. We have therefore been forced to act a character not our own. But we declare our submission to the decrees of the Roman Pontiffs against the motions of the earth." The same sacrifice, according to B. White, is required at the Spanish Universities.

By a solemn decree of the Council of Trent, the press in every part of Christendom, "ad coercenda petulantia ingenia," was subjected to the previous censure of the Bishops or the Inquisitors. And let it not be said, as ill-informed Protestants suppose, that Rome is changed in this respect. She is what she was five centuries ago, and in her *actual* and *present proscription* of all the great masters of the human mind, shews her inherent incapacity of keeping pace with the growth of the human faculties. The first book in the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, published by authority, among those which the faithful are bound, if they have them to surrender to the Inquisition, is Bacon de *Augmentis Scientiarum*. Locke on the *Human Understanding*, and Cudworth's *Intellectual Systems*, are under the same prohibition. The *Paradise Lost* of Milton is forbidden. "I pass over large classes of books, the very possession of which is forbidden; but I must notice the impartial prohibition of science. The Church of Rome proscribed Copernicus; but to make all things even, it has proscribed Des Cartes also. Will the house believe it possible, that the celebrated sentence, in 1634, against Galileo, a sentence immortalized by the execrations of

and, except in conjunction with atheistic and democratic influences which she never scruples to invoke, can never again rule the mind, or widely influence the practice of the nation; these same Scriptures, so fatal to her, constitute, in their authority over faith, and their universal extension as the rule of life, the real strength of the Church of England. By their admirable adaptation to any advances in real science; by their coalescence with every thing that really expands or adorns the human mind; and by the perfect harmony of her system with their declarations,

science in every country where the mind is free, should be renewed and republished in 1819? The work of Algaretti, on the Newtonian system, shares the same fate; so that every modification of science, in other words, every effort of free enquiry, every attempt to disengage the mind from the trammels of authority," &c. &c. Sir R. Inglis's Speech, May 30, 1825. Why this proscription of physical science? because, in addition to its other influences in training and bracing the human mind, *in the proscription of substantial forms*, it subverts the master doctrine of transubstantiation. This could not be established without the aid of Aristotle. From him was introduced the doctrine of *substantial forms*, or *absolute accidents*. The Schoolmen suppose that the universe is made up of matter, invested and individualized by certain qualities which have a *real* and substantial being. This explained the bodily presence of Christ in the Sacraments. *The substance* of the bread and wine, they argued, is converted into His body and blood, (omnium enim elementa possunt in se transmutari¹ non generatione, sed alteratione,) but the absolute accidents, the substantial forms of both, remain as before. Though she may regulate its study and subordinate it to proper principles and a higher science, yet it is to be hoped, that the Church in the country of Bacon, will never undervalue the discipline which natural science furnishes to the mind, nor the noble discovery of which it has been the instrument.

¹ See for this doctrine of corruption or transmutation, in connection with the Eucharist, Hampden's Bampton Lectures.

and by nothing else, can the present remaining position of the Church of England be explained. Hence it comes to pass, that, in a period of universal fermentation, and, whether there be intellectual advance or not, certainly a period of unexampled intellectual stir and agitation, her influence, as the national Church, over the hearts and minds of men, is not only not lessened, but daily increased; and the foundations of her temporal security, under God's blessing, are broadened and deepened, and rest not on the shifting expediencies of power, or the accumulation upon her of secular honours; but on her spiritual vigour, and on the hearts of the people.

Indeed, from the era of her emancipation from Rome downwards, she has combined reverence for the Gospel, and for that Apostolical Ministry, which, by divine commission, conveys and inculcates it, with intellectual liberty. She has been gloriously distinguished above all Churches which have ever existed, alike by the continued purity of her doctrine, and the display of the very highest mental vigour; and this, not only in truth purely theological, but, by a natural sympathy and relationship, in every department of science, which, conjoined with faith, can minister to the glory of God. She has formed and educated the nation committed to her charge without enslaving it; and, by imposing upon the mind and its exercise, no other restraints, than those of God's own ordering, she has regulated it, not only without enfeebling it, but with an enlargement of its compass, and with a visible augmentation of its powers.

If she were to be destroyed as a national establishment to-morrow, nothing could destroy her inseparable and immemorial connection with the mind of the nation, and with all that is noblest in its character and its history. In the monuments of learning which she has bequeathed to all generations, she has extended her connection with great events and leading minds to the very noblest literature which has ever enriched a language, or given free play to the capacities of the human intellect—her Scriptural training is embodied in the most finished models of argument, of imagination, and of all that constitutes not only practical wisdom, but *literary* genius in the fulness of that power which ennobles, and those graces that embellish it. Hence her great divines are not merely manuals of theology and the study of solitary scholastics—their works are not the meagre fruits of a verbal or technical philosophy, but built upon universal principles, overflowing with a racy vigour, and savouring of contact with inspiration. They bring the illumination of the Spirit to the developement of every great moral and religious truth, and ensure the invigoration of every natural faculty, in its turn, by dedicating it to its noblest use; so they come from the closet into the senate and the seat of judgment; and unite, not only in the sanctity of a common faith, but in similarity of study and intellectual sympathy, the divine, the lawyer, and the statesman—all that forms and moderates the faith or practical intelligence of nations.

The Church of England inseparably connected with the intellect of the nation.

The Church of England has nothing to fear, there-

fore, for the future, in the advance of knowledge in any direction, nor the most rigorous investigation of her claims—she is clear of all encumbrance of human invention *whatsoever*, for she has identified herself in all things, both in doctrine and discipline, with the inspired book of which she is the witness and keeper, and with which she is herself content to stand or fall.

And as her strength and purity, as an independent Church, are inseparable from the limitation of her claims by Scripture, and the resting upon that authority of all things necessary to salvation—so directly or indirectly connected with the same fundamental principle of the full authority of Scripture, and the duty of every man to study it, are all the advantages which she may plead as the established guide of the national mind, to politicians versed in the affairs of man and the instruments by which they are governed, and feeling the necessity of a state education to form Christian citizens. All claims in favour of herself above dissent on one hand, and the Church of Rome on the other, as the acknowledged and national instrument for conducting it, are in one way or other inseparable from this. To this office, as the acknowledged trainer of the nation, I will now direct your attention.

II. But in entering on this comparison of the *theoretic* educational value of the Church of England, I would not be understood to assert that, amidst all her corruptions and practical incompetency for an instructor of the human mind, Rome does not preserve noble fragments of a system originally constructed for this

Comparative *theoretic* advantages for national education possessed by the Churches of Rome and England.

purpose by a divine forethought,—reminiscences of principles once inseparable from the *practice* of the Church Catholic, whether they were ever expressed in the form of dogmatic propositions or not. Such are the already existing and prepared *polity*,—a *Church as well as a mere religion*,—into which every soul whom God has placed within the Christian commonwealth is intended to be born, upon the Gospel scheme—the subordination of all things, in the civil as well as the religious life, to its spiritual influence—and those childlike relations on the part of the flock, and that reverend fatherhood on the side of the teacher which, in one form or other, deeply pervade the theory of her educational system.

But we must not be *the dupe of words* in a practical question. It is not enough that the imagination is attracted by the *mere presentation* of ideas thus grand, and of principles which God has so interwoven with the *natural* relations of society, that, to incorporate them into its *civil* relations, is the true purpose of all wise government—we must not straightway conclude that the system which, on its *verbal adjustment*, is most regulated by them, is superior to another which, with a greater practical latitude, and less pretension, may, after all, possess infinitely more of the requisites of an *educational* power for man as he is. Nor must we err in another way, as meditative men are too apt to do; and, because we discern in the actual condition of things many incongruities, and a vast interval between an imaginable, or even, under certain circumstances, a practicable state, and the existing condition of mankind, straightway rush to the con-

clusion that a stringent *opposite theory*, is an effectual instrument for a regeneration of the social condition. *If men* indeed would obey a specific authority, no doubt disorder would cease ; but we have no right to think that a restoration of the disrupted relationship between the teachers and the taught can be effected by *high claims* to such obedience. There can only, at the best, be an *approximation* to such a happy dependency—a valuable one certainly, and one worth all pains to attain, but no more. Perfect obedience implies perfect rulers, and, unless an inherent superiority in goodness, wisdom, intellect, and energy, could be secured to the presiding class, any such *subordination* of man's whole mind and spirit to them as that in which Church-theorists see the restoration of a golden age, is an impossibility, and the attempt is of all things to be most deprecated. Here then is a *great mistake* in the data on which the theory of an absolute Church is built ; and, as realities will, in the end, prevail, spite of all efforts to substitute *unrealities* for them, all attempts to act on such a theory and maintain such *inherent* superiority over the mass of mankind, as in the Romish Church, have issued at last in signal failure ; or, so far as they have succeeded, have wrought, as we have seen, the degradation of the rulers and the ruled.

But still, in a healthy Church we may find enough for God's purpose—such a *comparative* superiority in zeal and love, and in that spiritual knowledge of God which is necessary to regulate all other knowledge, as may effect good beyond calculation, in spite of obstructions and difficulties ; this *is* feasible, and may become a *fact*, a fact

full of power, and mighty results. On *this fact*, in which so little is assumed, and which has no false hypothesis at the bottom of it, the Church of England rests—and with her commission from above, she needs no other fulchrum. It is *practically certain*, that every thing, in the paternal relation, which is really valuable, and compatible with human liberty and intellectual advancement, and all the reverence and obedience attendant upon it, will, in spite of all the power that can withstand it, follow, in the bulk of mankind, on offices of indefatigable love—whilst the most splendid claims and conclusive theories of an *inherent* title to it cannot in themselves command either respect or affection. The labours of Christian love among men will give influence to the most imperfect system, and ought to do so, whilst the best without them is powerless.

But Rome, at *her best*, only tames and subjects—at her worst, she utterly ruins; and to that worst, from the natural resistance of the human mind to her usurpation, she is always tending. The Church of England in her feeblest condition—from the vigorous reason within her, and from her practical accommodation to man's actual condition in an advanced and advancing social state—has wrought, herself, and allowed to be wrought by others, a large amount of moral and intellectual good, and has regulated men's minds by an unquestionable sense of religious obligation. If the time shall ever arrive when all her resources shall be called forth, and her genuine Gospel theory be carried out to its fullest extent—if the sense of her spiritual commission shall

be tempered adequately with the indefatigable energy of Christian zeal, and the simplicity of Gospel truth ; and if she thus strives, as with one heart and soul, for the practical amelioration, religious, moral, and intellectual, of the people among whom she is called upon to labour, she will be the most glorious manifestation of God's presence among men, which the world has ever seen.

That she has such capabilities, *in theory*, nay, *that the best* theory of national education is answered in her, and that her correspondence with its conditions depends throughout on the free use of the word of God, will, I trust, be clear on an attentive comparison.

The tendency of instruction should be practical.

1. There should be a *general practical tendency*—something to regulate the mind of the nation in their *social* duties, and to promote that tone of masculine morality, which is the great safeguard of commonwealths, and the sole condition of political liberty. To this fundamental condition, is opposed any system which, by deserting Scripture, directs the religious thoughts of mankind to vague fancies or idle subtleties—which engages the mere imaginative faculties—which dissipates the *broad articles* of faith into casuistical complexities—or any thing which shall, *on principle*, tamper with the obligations of morality, or weaken the authority of conscience. Now this is eminently the case with Romanism—for to every feeling which mere religious instinct may suggest, however opposed to right reason, or to an enlightened faith, it gives every possible scope ; it

ministers a constant food to that peering, restless curiosity about the spiritual world^f, which is discon-

^f There is no question raised here on the existence of an intermediate state, whether the souls of the just are conveyed to a state of perfect peace and security, till, on the resurrection of the body, they shall be finally exalted to the enjoyment of the beatific vision in heaven.

I do not mean to argue for or against it in this place; but thus much must undoubtedly be confessed, that it is not *inconsistent* with the declarations of holy writ. Such seems the immemorial tradition of the Jewish Church; and such was the opinion not only of the greater number of the ancient Fathers, but of those who were most eminent for abilities and for learning. Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Lactantius, Victorinus, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Œcumenius, Theophylact, and successive saints in all ages, have held the doctrine as scriptural. In the case of the Millenarian doctrines, however largely received, we early find a vigorous opposition—but we do not find in the present case that any opposition or refutation was ever attempted—though individual writers, in some passages of their works, may very well be understood to express it as their opinion, that the souls of the saints should not only enjoy the sight of God after the resurrection, but *till* the resurrection. And even now it is not only held by individual Christians, but it is held as an article of faith by the whole Greek Church. But it was rejected by the Latins at the Council of Florence, in 1430. “*Definimus insuper . . . illorum animas qui post susceptum baptismum nullum omnino maculam incurrerunt, illas etiam quæ post contractam peccati maculam, vel in suis corporibus, vel eisdem excitæ corporibus, prout superius dictum est, sunt purgatæ, in cælum eos recipi et intueri clare ipsum Deum, trinum et unum.*” Concil. Flor. in defin. c. 4. Thus adding one to the many proofs which Rome has given of her disregard of the most ancient and uniform tradition, in comparison of her own pretended infallibility.

But to hold this as a theological and probable opinion is one thing; to dwell upon it as an important article of faith, with practical consequences flowing from it, is another. Still more dangerous are earnest speculations on the employments therein of the spirits of the blest, on the greater or less degree of their inter-

tented with what Scripture has revealed, and has connected inseparably with morality and practical

mediate purity, or the means and instruments which Almighty God may adopt for exalting them gradually to higher degrees of spiritual perfection. All this obliterates the line which ought to be most distinctly drawn between what Scripture clearly propounds, and what it does not—and destroys the proper balance and analogy of faith. So it is in regard to another subject connected with the unseen world—the relation which the Church on earth bears to the Church unseen and in heaven.

That it forms only one Church, closely and indissolubly connected, there can be no question—and that too, with a more intimate union and intercommunion than most Christians suppose. Unquestionably we *may* hold, and contemplative spirits do hold, a real intercourse, to a certain extent, with their disembodied brethren; and, in the ancient Church, there was evidently an intense perception of this permanent and affectionate relation, which has slipped out of men's memories and practice at the present day to a greater extent than is desirable. At all events, let us not blame those who think so, if they go no farther—surely the feeling is a good and holy one. It was from this feeling that the ancient Church commemorated at the holy Eucharist her saints and martyrs, and entreated Almighty God to hasten the coming of His kingdom, and so complete the blessedness of His saints. Such was the universal primitive practice—naturally *leading*, however, to *prayers to* those *for* whom petitions were originally offered; and to prayers *for* others besides those confessedly blessed saints in whose behalf alone they were first presented. But, beyond a doubt, to pray *for* the departed is incompatible with *praying to them*—and to pray only for great saints and blessed martyrs is a very different thing from petitions in behalf of those of whose eternal state we are doubtful. But I mention it here, in order to protest against men's arguing on these subjects *on the ground of feeling*, as has been done of late—is it commanded in Scripture? this is the question; if not commanded, is it recommended? if not so, is it consistent with Scripture? and, if in itself a thing indifferent, does it accidentally interfere *with positive truths and commanded duties*? If we rest on feeling, certainly the majority of mankind will worship saints, will worship the blessed Virgin, will pray to God for those who have *not* departed hence in His faith and fear. *Let*

duties—a tone of mind, which, if indulged, is at once subversive of a sober Christian faith, and, in its consequences, of a practical morality.

Not only is reasonable provision made for the infirmities of nature, and the requisitions of the senses, to which an orderly but simple beauty, in the accompaniments of divine worship, is indispensable; but, with a pagan unspirituality, she has thrown into her ritual all that can bewitch the *mere* senses, attract the *mere* imagination, and draw the mind down from heaven to earthly and visible elements. Hence, of necessity, a corresponding degradation of the more masculine faculties, a lack of that reference to unseen things, and the realization of them by an active faith, which, in its superiority to the senses, and the elevation of tone which it communicates to the whole mind, is a noble result of scriptural belief and practice. But Romanism goes farther than this indirect influence on the practical vigour of the mind. It has a direct tendency to shake the foundations of morality, and to weaken those salutary

us shun so fatal an error. Our sublime Funeral Service itself might fall a sacrifice to this diseased sentimentality—with all its elevating assurances of a finished conquest over death and the grave—of the sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection to those that sleep in Jesus, and the existing enjoyment of a perfect joy and felicity. “Yet,” says a Roman Catholic Prelate, “how consoling are the belief and practice of Catholics in this matter, compared with those of Protestants. Their burial service is a cold disconsolate ceremony; and as to any communication with the deceased, when the grave closes on their remains, they do not so much as imagine any.” Milner’s End of Controversy.

terrors of the divine wrath, by which human guilt is at once restrained and punished. I will not enlarge here on the mysteries of the Confessional, with its long catalogue of abuses and unavoidable evils; the certain loss of purity of mind, and degradation of general feeling which it entails.

I will not dwell on those *indulgences* which barter sin for filthy lucre, and turned, at least, in former times, God's wrath against sin and the worm that never dies, into a mere instrument of traffic in the market of the priest. I will not enlarge on her false holiness, those ascetic principles which substitute the cloister for the world, and fasts and vigils for Christian temperance—I will not even dwell on that systematic depreciation of holy matrimony, the foundation of human society, and of all the sanctities of life, which is as directly anti-social as it is anti-scriptural. But I will merely notice, that the whole system of outward penance, and satisfaction to God by the maceration of the flesh, and the sacramental absolution, *obice absente*, turns the repentance of the soul into a *mere outward thing*; and changes the moral abhorrence of God for sin into a *penal* vengeance by a corporeal suffering, which may be exactly measured by grains and scruples, and the claims of justice satisfied to the full—it removes, from transgression, its danger, and from conscience, its terror, by the certainty of *future absolution*, at the moment of necessity; and by the temporal agony of purgatorial fires. If there were nothing more in Rome than these anti-social tendencies, and these hindrances to a practical morality, directly arising

from her rejection of Scripture, they would incapacitate her for the office of national education.

2. There should be a capacity for change; not a change of fundamental doctrines, but the power of accommodating herself, in things indifferent, to an alteration in outward circumstances, and the evident lessons of experience. But this, both in principle and in practice, is irreconcilable with that unchangeableness which cannot be separated from the claim to an infallible judgment on which the Church of Rome rests her pretensions. Every season, indeed, does not require the exhibition and avowal of every principle; the present expediency is the law of the Church, and regulates the instruments with which she meets it. She bends to the times with that plastic and protean wisdom which is uniform in nothing but its ambition, and is wisdom only for its own selfish purposes. But in the course of centuries, and during the warfare, which, under every variety of circumstances, she has waged against the human mind, there is hardly any corruption of doctrine or practice, which she has not only used for a temporary purpose, but which the necessities of her position have not compelled her to shelter under her infallibility, and to fortify with anathemas.

However clear, therefore, may be the demonstration furnished by experience, of the injurious results of this or that particular practice, she has not the power to abrogate it, without endangering every thing. And yet, prayers for the dead, the worship of saints and angels, the adoration of images and relics, and

other innovations upon the practice of the Church Apostolical, stand in this position. Even supposing, for a single instant, that they were not fond things, vainly invented, and not only not grounded upon any warranty of Scripture, but directly opposed to it—granting the large postulate, that they all proposed good purposes by legitimate means, the edification of the soul by forms *not* unscriptural—yet they have been found, by so large an experience, to disappoint this intention, and to produce such deadly injury to sound religion, that, on the common principles of prudence, they ought for ever to be abandoned, as, from a true love to Gospel truth, they ought never to have been introduced. At the best, they are great experiments on the possibility of blending with the Gospel simplicity some of the feelings of the natural heart, which are most deeply rooted there, and the indulgence of which, notwithstanding, holy writ does not authorize. Their *defence* is the attempt of sophisters to see, how far men can steer, by subtlety on the right hand and on the left, between sins the most awfully denounced in Scripture, without making shipwreck of the faith; and how far mere notional distinctions and the force of words can hinder them from falling headlong into that superstition and idolatry, from which even the most awful realities of God's wrath are insufficient to deter them. We need not seek for the result in the tortuous sophistries of Bellarmine^f, or in that incomparable dexterity in the

^f Nos cum Ecclesiâ asserimus, imagines Christi et Sanctorum honorandas esse, modo tamen (ut in Concil. Trid. Sess. 25.

management of words which deludes the simple and unpractised in the decrees of Trent. Experience

declaratur) in imaginibus hac collocetur fiducia, nec ab eis aliquid petatur, nec in eis in esse credatur ulla divinitas, sed solum honorentur propter eat, quæ nobis repræsentant." Bellar. de Imag. Sanct. lib. ii. c. 12.

"Non licet a sanctis petere, ut nobis *tanquam auctores divinatorum* beneficiorum, gloriam vel gratiam, aliaque ad beatitudinem media concedant." "Sancti non sunt immediati intercessores nostri apud Deum, sed, quicquid a Deos nobis impetrant, per Christum impetrant." Ib. c. xvii. lib. 1. de cult. Sanct.

What idle distinctions are these when joined to such express declarations as the following, denouncing them who abstain from the practice as impious and heretical; "illos qui negunt sanctos . . . invocandos esse, vel qui asserunt, illos pro hominibus non orare, vel eorum . . . invocationem esse idololatriam, vel pugnare cum verbo Dei adversarique honori unius mediatoris Dei et hominum Jesu Christi—*impie sentire*—affirmantes . . . sanctorum reliquiis venerationem . . . non deberi, &c. omnino damnandos esse, prout jam pudor eos damnavit, et nunc etiam damnat Ecclesia." Conc. Trid. Sess. 25. The result is not an accidental but an inevitable one; *things are stronger words—the practice of the Church*, than her sophistical distinction,—and Rome worships the saints as Christ ought to be worshipped. Does she pray to Christ for salvation through His merits and intercession? So she does *to them*. Does she pray for the enjoyment of eternal happiness through the blood of Christ? So she does to the Martyrs, through *their blood*. Does she implore Christ for life and aid and comfort? So she does to them. In regard to the holy Virgin, there is hardly one attribute peculiar to God Himself, which is not conferred upon her, no entreaty for a blessing or a grace which God can give, which is not addressed to her. She is conjoined in worship with Jehovah Himself. Blessing is implored from Mary and her Son. Glory is ascribed to Mary together with the holy Trinity. No one even ordinarily well acquainted either with books of Romanist devotion, or the practice of Roman Catholic countries, can have a *shadow of doubt* that, whether Rome be guilty or not of Hagiolatry, she is guilty of *Mariolatry*. What a singular chapter in Church history

has decided against them, and that is enough—and therefore our own Apostolic Church has swept them away, not only in their grossest forms, but in their *very rudiments*; she does not tolerate any thing that can lead to them.

And so she would still do, and has ever professed to do, with any part of her ritual or her doctrine, which shall be shewn to be opposed to holy writ, or to the practical edification of her people. With Scripture as her Canon she can afford to do so, without endangering one Christian truth, or laying one finger on the substance of the faith. But, had she rested on any thing else, she could not thus have discriminated between the true and the false. For the essential and circumstantial are so blended together in old ecclesiastical practice, and so wrapt up in the same claims of sanctity, that the fringe of a garment, a cross, or a genuflexion, has a mystic

is the perpetual virginity, assumption, and immaculate conception, &c. of Mary! What a prodigious difference touching the first between Tertullian who disbelieves, and Origen who only leans to *the more* pious opinion, and the unhesitating assertions, both claiming universal and immemorial tradition, and denouncing wrath on disbelievers, in Jerome and Augustine! It is an awful thing to tamper with idolatry; and, who that is conversant with the human mind, and the lessons of ecclesiastical history, would venture to predict the consequences of these views of the mother of our Lord which are now urged vehemently upon us, as though they were fundamental truths of religion, instead of being *not religious* opinions at all, whatever else they may be? Surely there is some defect in the constitution of minds which are not satisfied with that commemorative honour, and that rational and temperate reverence, which the Church of England pays to the Virgin and the Saints. Any more is not of Scripture, and therefore is of evil.

power about it that competes with a sacrament, or the real oblation of the soul; and we may reasonably doubt how far we may touch the smallest point thus delivered to us, when, in the absence of holy writ, we may shake the foundation of the highest. Her *inability* to change or to improve, therefore, is another objection to Romanism, as a trainer of men's minds.

3. We cannot doubt, politically speaking, the advantage of the developement of the human mind, in every department of knowledge, and *that*, in an entire freedom from all restraint except that which the laws of Almighty God impose. Not only is it so with the speculations of the moralist, and the civil wisdom of the politician, but with those mechanical arts, which, by enlarging the power of man over matter, are indispensable to that social advancement and material prosperity, the instruments of which these later times have seen so prodigiously accelerated. The faculties by which they are wrought are God's gifts, nor can we, without impiety, suppose that they were conferred for any other purpose than to be exercised—nor, without rashness, undervalue the triumphs which they have undoubtedly wrought—nor the extent of the beneficial social changes which, under a moral and regulating power, they are capable of producing. But, where the arts and sciences are cultivated, there must be freedom of thought—and this will inevitably tell upon the religious opinions of the age; you cannot stimulate and *force* the mind, on one side, and paralyze it, at your pleasure, on the other. Nor

It should sympathize with advances in knowledge.

can any system of faith which mixes up human inventions with divine truths, or confounds them with accessions incapable of a similar proof, ever withstand, not only the harsh scrutiny of the infidel, but the proper and reasonable examination of an intelligent age. But the Bible *is* capable of standing such a scrutiny, and of resisting alike the assaults of outward violence and of a false philosophy. Whether, in the contest between good and evil, which these latter times seem doomed to witness, it shall or shall not succeed in subordinating what it has no warrant to suppress, and in regulating what it would be distrust in God to wish to see destroyed, we cannot tell—but this we know, that it is the only weapon which God has given us, and the only one with which the Church of Christ *can* succeed in the attempt.

4. It is an inestimable advantage, and one which the possession of Scripture alone can give, to have an authority indisputably clear and distinct in the main points of faith and practice; and, on the acknowledgment of such an authority by the mass of the people, the very existence of sound order and moral civilization seems at the present moment to be depending. We have no longer audiences for mere intellectual exercise, nor flocks which receive, with an unquestioning dependency, the truths propounded to them. They do not comprehend tradition, nor can they appreciate the authority of past ages, nor realize the abstraction of a Church—but the clear words of Scripture they both understand and acknowledge; they have the power to penetrate the heart, and to convince the conscience

There should be an indisputable authority for the things taught.

which God has given them. *It is written*, and they cannot question it—*it is written*, and they can consult it for themselves—*it is written*, and it is no fiction of the preacher, or interested contrivance of the priest—it beats down strongholds, which nothing else can enter—it goes upon a common ground, which no other appeal possesses or can possess. Even where infidelity has been added to coldness and aversion to religious teaching, and where, in the effervescence of the political passions, every element of evil is in turn thrown up, the *word of God* is still the best instrument of regeneration, and offers the only sure basis of success.

It is impossible to eradicate the religious instinct from the human heart—and, whatever form it assumes, the Bible has something to meet it—its divine morality, its undeniable benevolence, its incomparable and varied interest—all give it a command over the *whole man*, which nothing else possesses. And, however desirable or necessary may be the resubjugation of the multitude to an acknowledged spiritual power, yet it may well be doubted whether any mere assertion of authority independent of Scripture proof—any false Catholicism, can ever make its way good, or preserve influence, if it acquired it. It was the *practical* growth of other circumstances, and its *theory* was calculated on the conditions of other times—and not on the universal principles of man, or of Christianity. It is not the Church of Rome, but the Church of England, which, if adequately supported, can, with the Bible in her hand, effectually deal with the uninstructed

and dangerous millions which are at present beyond her pale. She alone can labour in charity and in power among those who owe as little allegiance to the State whom they regard as their oppressor, as to the Church, whose Gospel influences they have never experienced.

And a com-
mission in
the teacher.

5. It is essential for an effectual popular teaching, that the teacher should be placed above the control of those whom he is called upon to instruct—not indeed above their sympathies, or above a reasonable dependence on their affection—I do not mean that—but above such a dependency of position as may affect the fidelity of his teaching, and colour it with the passions of those whom it is his duty to direct. Neither do I speak here of a dependency *for support*, or otherwise, upon the contributions of his flock, nor the slavery which necessarily attends upon it, but rather of such a *spiritual* position, as shall raise him above all temptation to conceal or soften down the truth; while it shall combine, if possible, the dignity of personal authority with the humility of a minister, and the tenderness of a brother. There is only one thing that can give this—and that is, a commission from Christ Himself, assured to us, not merely by the inward voice of the heart, moving us to the holy office by a love to man and God, but by the seal of an outward vocation. This direct commission from the source of all spiritual authority, and the grace which accompanies it, has, *under the acknowledged control of the written word*, such an awfulness and solemnity, as may well keep uncorrupted the truth committed to our charge—and

brings with it such a necessity of Apostolic meekness, and love unfeigned, and devoted labour to win souls to Christ, as may well lead those who have received the gift, to shew it forth, as alone it can be shewn, in holy works, an unfeigned devotedness to Christ, and the manifold fruits of the Spirit.

This is a condition of effectual teaching which dissent can never fulfil, and which, being unchecked by scriptural restraint, becomes full of danger in the hands of the Church of Rome. For it cannot be denied, that a vast influence *must* devolve upon those who work out such a system of national teaching; a system in which they who mould the popular mind derive their commission from a source beyond the control of the State, while, by acting upon men's minds and affections, they accumulate in their hands a power, the ruder and more material elements of which are alone within the reach of mere secular authority.

Under no conceivable circumstances, can the workings of ambition, and motives alien from that unsecular devotedness to the Gospel which ought to characterize the Christian Ministry, be wholly eradicated, though they may be overruled and neutralized, in so vast a body of men as are indispensable for the education of a people. But, when this becomes, not an unavowed tendency or a lurking infirmity, but a great principle, which subjects all things to this one purpose—when the turbulent and fiery blood of Becket is held forth to men's eyes, as though it were the pure and holy blood of Christ's martyrs—and when the gigantic ambition of Innocent and Hildebrand, is eulogized as the blessed zeal of

Apostles—when every thing, in the working of the system, tends not to influence, but to domination ; an authority of person and of office, beyond the control of moral laws and scriptural conditions ; *then*, not only the proper pre-eminence, but the very existence of the secular power is jeopardded, and the education of the people is only another name for an ecclesiastical despotism, and the degradation of the human mind. *This condition*, therefore, is only answered by the Church of England, who admits, not *only as a necessity to be submitted to*, but as a scriptural restraint, wholesome to herself and her spiritual ministrations, the authority of her secular head—and exercises her high and holy office, as the true servant of her Lord and Master, under the control of the Gospel and the admitted limitations of the written word. So that, multiply her means and her ministers as much as you will—enable her, *as far* as the countenance of the temporal power *can* give her strength to do so, to penetrate in every direction the uninstructed or infidel multitudes, till the whole commonwealth is leavened with the Gospel spirit—extend her ministrations from the cottage, and those, not habitations, but dens of extreme wretchedness which are the shame of our social system, to the senate and to the palace, and the State will only be blessing itself. The strength acquired will not merely be strength to the Church, as an ecclesiastical and separate body, but sinews to the commonwealth, and happiness to all. It is peace—it is virtue—it is the love and fear of God—it is order and obedience for conscience sake—it is that without which laws

are but words, and their sanction a mockery—all that makes the real spirit and power of kings and kingdoms!

6. There must be something further to justify the confidence of the State; some pledge for the permanency of the principles taught; something which shall raise its creed above the shifting of expediency, and the mutabilities of fortune; something which shall give a oneness of character to those submitted to its teaching, and a coherency in the rules of thought and action, to the successive generations of the State. This again is a condition which no form of Sectarianism can answer; because its very foundation is not cohesion but repulsion; making *that* the principle of its existence, which all polities, civil and ecclesiastical, abhor as a principle of ruin, and which the Gospel reprobates as a deadly sin: a law of self-destruction, the law of indefinite and uncontrolled separation; the assertion, not of a calm judgment subject to reason and Scripture, and studious of unity; but of a judgment, strictly individual; and a freedom utterly licentious, because contemptuous of precedent and antiquity.

With the adoption of any principle like this, the promise of a permanent and uniform teaching is incompatible; if any *teaching* at all, strictly speaking, be reconcileable to it. For it seems to involve an inherent uncertainty in the subject matter. Such a latitude of interpretation is entirely opposed to that objective certainty, independent of all individual caprice, which is necessary to the inculcation of

Perma-
nency of the
system of
teaching.

religious truth, as the basis of moral and intellectual training.

The absence of settled principles overthrows all authority in the teacher, and all claim upon the obedience of those committed to his charge; and is opposed to those fundamental laws of the human mind which require both the one and the other; and, even if it stop short of a *universal scepticism, of an ignorance from necessity, and a doubting upon principle*, there is a lack of that sobriety and quiet power which is exhibited in the inculcation of doctrines, where authority is presupposed to be beyond dispute; there is a lack too of that generous faith in the taught, which is the divinely appointed substitute for that feverishness of mind, which is always moving foundations, and prevents the religious growth and true advancement of the soul!

This great point, on the other hand, is secured in the Catholic Church of England. For, though she admits as matter of faith nothing which is not evidently proved by holy Scripture, yet she teaches *that* absolutely and dogmatically; giving in her Articles a guide to the interpretation of the written word, as the primitive times understood it; and fortifying it by the Catholic Creeds, and that tradition, which gives the last moral evidence which the subject admits of, and the final stamp to the fixed and unchanging faith, *once for all delivered to the saints.*

Nor can this pledge of unchanging doctrine be given by the Church of Rome any more than by dissent; she makes the written word subordinate to

tradition and the authority of the Church. She claims the power even of proclaiming new articles of faith; of dispensing, on reasons of ecclesiastical convenience, with the express commands of Christ¹; and of being bound only by what the Spirit of infallibility which is within her shall utter at the moment, for the existing emergency of the Church.

7. In any scheme which proposes to harmonize, as far as may be, any thing so perverse and eccentric as the minds of men, there must be a comprehensiveness of spirit, *studious of unity*—there must be a deliberate rejection of every thing, which, by burthening men's consciences, and multiplying, beyond warrant, the articles of faith, shall narrow the basis of agreement, and limit its catholicity.

Such a spirit is perfectly compatible with the most unbending adherence to all that God declares to be His truth, and an utter rejection, nay even, an abhorrence, of that false charity which would sacrifice truth to peace. No; every thing, or any thing, rather than abandon so much as one particle of sacred truth; any heart-burning, any discord, any sword, dividing, on earth, man against man, and nation against nation, rather than compromise the truth which Christ has entrusted to His Church. But, for nothing whatsoever, short of God's *clearly revealed will*, does the true Church of Christ dare to endanger unity.

Here again we have to thank God, for the truly Catholic Church of England, which, in taking Scripture, as understood by the primitive Church, and

¹ As, for instance, in withholding the cup from the laity—witness, likewise, the thirteen new articles, with their anathemas, added, by Trent, to the Catholic Creeds. A spirit of comprehension and unity.

taught in her Creeds as her sole canon, has assumed the largest basis of union possible, compatible with the rightful position of the Church itself, and the uncompromising claims of revealed truth. She does not confound what is essential with what is merely ancillary—she does not pronounce absolutely where Scripture speaks obscurely—she does not speculate on what is intentionally hidden, or tie down to the narrowness of a system what God has left grandly unrestrained; she does not refuse communion with any who retain the essence of a Christian Church—inherency in its Head, and salvation through faith in His blood.

The Spirit from above which guided her great reformers, and was with them in their secret meditations as fully, as He visibly upheld them in the fires, is quite as remarkably manifested in what they abstained from doing, as in what they did—in what they abstained from saying, as in what they have spoken—in their articles of faith. And, when we look at the Creeds of the Church of Rome, or at those of some of the Churches of the Reformation—when we consider the turbulence and the effervescence of men's minds, and the powerful hold which some doctrines, neither scriptural nor catholic, had upon the hearts of many of those holy men, it is little short of a miracle, that nothing sectarian, nothing peculiar, nothing other than Scripture, the very word as it came from God, should have mingled itself up with her incomparable formularies. They have the simplicity, the pure and serene depth, the broad distinct statement of great principles, the comprehensive charity of the Word of

God, to the ascertainment of whose doctrines they are the surest guide, and from the imbibement of whose spirit, they have a vital warmth and efficacy, which render them the noblest aid to a godly life that uninspired wisdom has ever given to mankind.

Accordingly, the truth which the Church of England holds collectively, the sects hold in separation, each presenting a false because a partial view, and distorting into an unnatural prominency, or perhaps exclusive occupation of the mind, those parts of the divine scheme, which, in her, are regulated and harmonized. Perhaps very few, even of the many great minds which she has produced, have, even intellectually, embraced the full magnitude of her scheme, or her best saints come up to the perfection of that spiritual training which she has provided for her children. But by all but the spiritually blind, the extent of the one, which embraces all states and conditions of life, and the sublime and simple purity of the other, is undeniable and undenied. Certain it is, that, if ever the Spirit of God shall incline men's hearts to the charity against which they sin, and the unity of which they have almost forgotten the name, in this scriptural breadth and yet simplicity of belief is laid the best foundation for so glorious a consummation. The sects may be absorbed into her bosom, without renouncing any real Scripture truth which they separately hold; and by only consenting to maintain it, in combination with other truths of the Word of God which they have lost or have distorted—and what ought we not to do? what ought we not to

surrender? what labours of love ought we not to undergo, to bring about even an approach to such a state, that the Lord's house may be built upon the hill of Zion, and all nations may flow unto her?

A capacity
for a na-
tionality.

Lastly, not only ought an educating Church to breathe a comprehensive spirit, but, with its Catholicity, it ought to be capable of assuming a *Nationality*—of taking a specific colour and complexion from the peculiarities which distinguish one country from another, as well as of communicating to it a portion of its own Catholicity. Such an accommodation is irreconcilable with genuine Romanism; not because its principles are really Catholic, and refuse, by reason of their comprehensiveness, to be limited by local or temporary peculiarities—for a true Catholic character *does* easily coalesce with all that is sound and true both in individuals and in nations—but because it is really intensely sectarian, and repels every thing which is at variance with its essential and selfish exclusiveness. There was a period indeed in the history of the world, before commonwealths, with a distinct vitality and character of their own, had formed themselves out of the confusion of all things which followed the breaking up of the Roman empire, when this very *non-nationality* may have given a cohesiveness and strength to the ecclesiastical power, essential to its existence, and in no other way attainable—but, as civilization gradually advanced, and civil polities were perfected, it became a formidable obstacle to national union and progression—and from that time to this, unless controlled

by the compression of a superior power, it has ever been disruptive and anti-social.

The contrary has always been the case with the Church of England, from its earliest establishment^h.

^h The old Saxon Church, likewise, was certainly free from the greatest of the Romanist corruptions, some of which her most distinguished sons vigorously opposed. Such was the worship of images, and the determination of the second Nicene Council thereon.

Bede, and Alcuin, and Rabanus Maurus, were noble lights in their generation, and their writings still bear witness against the inventions of Rome. The following, for example, are some of the evidences which they furnish against the master tenet of transubstantiation.

“ Finitis Paschæ veteris sollempniis quæ in commemoratione antiquæ de Ægypto liberationis populi Dei agebatur : transiit ad novum quod in suæ redemptionis memoriam Ecclesiam frequentare volebat, ut videlicet pro carne agni ac sanguine, sui corporis et sanguinis sacramentum substitueret. Benedixit panem et fregit, quia hominem adsumptum ita morti subdere dignatus est, ut ei divinæ immortalitatis veraciter inesse potentiam demonstraret, ideoque velocius eum a morte resuscitandum doceret. Et accipiens calicem, gratias egit, et dedit illis, dicens, Bibite ex hoc omnes. Gratias egit ut ostendat, quod unusquisque in flagello culpæ propriæ facere debeat, si ipse æquanimiter flagella culpæ portat alienæ, et quod in correptione facit subditus, portat alienæ, et quod in correptione facit subditus gratias Patri agit æqualis. Hic enim est sanguis meus Novi Testamento, qui pro multis effunditur in remissionem peccatorum. Quia ergo panis carnem confirmat, vinum vero sanguinem operatur in carne ; hic ad corpus Christi mystice illud refertur ad sanguinem verum, quia et nos in Christo, et in nobis Christum manere oportet.” (Ven. Bed. in Matt. 26. Opp. Col. Agr. 1612. tom. v. p. 77.) The same language is also used by the venerable expositor, in treating upon the parallel passage in St. Mark. (p. 145.)

“ Et qui manducat carnem meam, et bibit meum sanguinem, in me manet, et ergo in eo. Hoc est, ergo, manducare illam escam, et illum bibere potum, in Christo manere, et illum manentem in se

Even in the confessed periods of Romanist usurpation, it had not forgotten its old Saxon independence ; it

habere. Ac per hoc qui non manet in Christo, et in quo non manet Christus, proculdubio nec manducat (spiritualiter) ejus carnem, (licet carnaliter et sanguinis Christi:) sed magis tantæ rei sacramentum ad judicium sibi manducat et bibit, quia immundus præsumitur ad Christi accedere sacramenta, quæ alius non digne sumit, nisi qui mundus est : de quibus dicitur, Beati mundi corde, quoniam Deum videbunt." (Ibid. in Joh. vi. p. 509.)

"Aliud est sacramentum, aliud virtus sacramenti: sacramentum enim ore percipitur, virtute sacramenti interior homo satiatur. Sacramentum enim in alimentum corporis redigitur, virtute autem sacramenti æternæ vitæ dignitas adipiscitur. In sacramento fideles quique communicanter pactum societatis et pacis ineunt. In virtute enim sacramenti omnia membra capiti suo conjuncta et coadunata in æterna claritate gaudebunt. Sicut ergo in nos id convertitur cum id manducamus et bibimus, sic et nos in corpus Christi convertimur, dum obedienter et pie vivimus." (Raban. Maur. Mogunt. Archiep. de Instit. Cler. lib. i. c. 31. Colon. 1532. p. 51.) "Sumunt ergo fideles bene et veraciter corpus Christi, si corpus Christi non negligant esse. Fiant corpus Christi, si volunt vivere de Spiritu Christi." (Ibid. 52.) "Ergo quia panis corporis cor firmat, ideo ille corpus Christi congruenter nuncupatur. Vinum autem quia sanguinem operatur in carne ad sanguinem Christi refertur. Hæc autem dum sunt visibilia sanctificata, tamen per Spiritum Sanctum in sacramentum divini corporis transeunt." Ibid. 53.

Upon the Last Supper, Raban copies Bede.

"Quotiescunque enim manducabitis panem hunc et calicem bibetis, mortem Domini annunciabitis donec veniat. Quia enim morte Domini liberati sumus, hujus rei memores in edendo et potando carne et sanguine, quæ pro nobis oblatae sunt, significamus; novum testamentum in his consecuti, quod est novo lex, quæ obedientem sibi tradit cælestibus regnis. Nam et Moyses, accepto sanguine vituli in patera aspersit filios Israel, dicens, Hoc testamentum est, quod disposuit Deus ad vos. Hoc figura fuit testamenti quod Dominus novum appellavit per Prophetam, ut illud vetus sit quod Moyses tradidit. Testamentum ergo sanguine con-

bore the yoke with impatience, and not without irregular efforts to shake it off, long before the spirit of the nation had been ripened to a successful resistance to the intrusive Church. In feelings and principles, accordingly, it has always been national, sympathizing with the general fortunes and general progression of the State; and, without losing any genuine feature of universal Christianity, it has embodied into itself the grandest qualities of the Anglo-Saxon race; moulding, and regulating, and giving a uniformity of spirit, to the elements out of which the national character has been formed, but, at the same time, borrowing the very qualities which it was so powerful an instrument in perfecting and in perpetuating. Hence comes that orderly independence, which is alike removed from sectarian licentiousness, and a central power destructive of individual liberty—that clear moral vision, distinctness of view, and unbending adherence to really great principles—an inveterate distrust of all that is novel and merely speculative—and that solid logic, and practical sense, with an absence on the whole, of a merely corporate and *ecclesiastical* spirit, which distinguish its theological literature from that of any other Church or nation.

stitutum est, quia beneficii divini sanguinis testis est. In cujus typum, nos calicem mysticum ad tuitionem corporis, et sanguinis, et animæ nostræ percipimus; quia sanguinis Domini sanguinem nostrum redemit, id est, totum hominem salvum fecit; caro enim Salvatoris pro salute corporis, sanguis vero pro animæ nostræ effusus est." Raban. Maur. Comment. in Epist. Paul. lib. ii. cap. 11. Opp. Col. Agrip. 1627. tom. v. p. 324. Vide Soanes' Bampton Lectures, p. 406 and 412.

The fires of martyrdom purified her faith, and bound up, in an indissoluble association with her, the abhorrence of persecution, and the popular admiration of that heroic suffering, which laid the foundations of the national freedom in the Bible for which her Martyrs died—and, when the evidences of civil discord subsided, and the opposing elements gradually modified each other into a healthful balance, her own constitution likewise faithfully reflected the change; it was not without a struggle, but it still reflected it. She took from Puritanism all that it possessed of manly independence, and scriptural simplicity, without its bare austerity and fanatical hatred of forms—and from what has always seemed to the nation the semi-Romanism of Laud, she has taken the reverence for antiquity, and the beauty of holiness, without its superstitious formality, and its arbitrary spirit.

Having thus, from the first, been associated, not only with all the constitutional forms of the nation, but with its real spirit—having proved, at the glorious Revolution, its bulwark alike against tyrannical power, and papal corruption—even that last change, in our own times, in her state relations, which appeared at the moment to strip her of her ancient defences, has had no other effect than to awaken her spiritual energies, and to multiply tenfold her moral forces, and only real strength—she has lost just so much of outward protection, which in some respects was weakness instead of strength, as to exhibit her no longer in the eyes of the multitude as a mere Church by virtue of an establishment, and a creature

of the civil power, but truly as the Church of Christ in the midst of the nation.

Such is the great inheritance and power for the spiritual and intellectual training of mankind, which has descended to us—handed down by the Apostles, kept alive through long ages of darkness, the ravages of barbarians, and the confusion of all things—purified in the very fires, and purged by blood—identified with the national character, and built up with the national greatness—not faultless or blameless, but, with allowance to human infirmities, as pure as the Word of God can make her—not omnipotent over men's souls, but as powerful for her office as a simple trust in her Saviour can render her—not *eternal* in her present form, nor beyond change, but built up, in the main, with materials that shall endure, when all but the Word of God shall finally pass away.

In these last days, when not only the Church itself as the instrument of national training is in imminent danger, but really all that is most precious to the interests of man is perilled with her, do not let us be drawn away from her defence, and from that aggressive warfare on the corruption of the world which is an essential part of it, by imagining models of Churchmanship which have never existed; or impracticable schemes of discipline, the very subjects of which must first be won by us from the infidel wastes of the nation. The duties of the Gospel, and of a Gospel Church, are *simple and practical*, and depend on the vigorous carrying out of a few broad

and intelligible principles. In the authority which *they possess over men's hearts*, when accompanied by a devoted ministry, which makes Christ the beginning, middle, and end of its labours; and in no *mere* theories of Church authority, no haughty inculcation of abstract rights, the fulness of which *our own* negligence has forfeited; in no distinctions which, however true, are unintelligible to the mass of mankind, is to be found the true power of the Church of England, or of any Church. We must make up our minds to cling to her, and to defend her, and to use her, *as she is*, if the nation is not to slip from her teaching: we must make her the centre of our affections, and the standard of our judgment, holding brotherly fellowship with all her attached and true ministers and children, even though they do not regard her from the same point of view as ourselves; *love to Christ, and labour for Him, is the true bond of fellowship*. Combine every thing else with it, if you can; but, if that *be present*, do not distract the efforts of the Church for the salvation of souls, by speculations in doubtful points, and by the subtleties of a theology, which, though demonstrative in the cloisters, is powerless to deal with the conversion of the world.

Such a *visible society*, as the Church of England presents, is to the human mind indispensable; we cannot labour as *individuals*; we *must* have some centre of spiritual fellowship, and some definite shape to the faith. And any change, in the received phraseology of the Church, any fretful and impatient stirring after any other form of Catholicity than that

which she exhibits, any attempt to shift off her faith from the Scripture foundations on which she herself has placed it; any sectarian disruption of her old and cherished association with other Protestant Churches; any shrinking from *popular contact*; any slackening of the noble enterprise of missionary duties; any adoption of new ecclesiastical predilections, utterly alien to her true character, and the immemorial character of the nation, can only lead to evil. It may palsy all her efforts, it may destroy her nationality, it may make holy men, what they abhor, centres of sectarianism, and heads of schism; amidst the tumult of opinion and the storm of parties, it may make a wreck of the Church; and, if it be so, who shall gather up the fragments of it from the waves? a part of it will be absorbed in dissent, a part in Rome; but in its entirety it never can exist again. This is enough to make any man pause. At any rate, *let no young man in this solemn matter cast himself loose upon the Fathers*, or surrender himself to those who, whatever claims to the distinction they may have, are the professed interpreters and expounders of the Fathers' teaching, before he has maturely examined the truth of the Gospel by the *Articles of the Church of England*, under whose guidance God has placed him; before he has diligently studied the controversy with Rome in our masculine theology, the earlier theology of the Church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which, in its mighty masters of reasoning and of learning, is as well its true defender, as its genuine expositor. The great divines of the Church of

England, and not the Fathers, are the best and the most faithful expositors of the Gospel truth. This is a study; *and a hard study of many years*; but such a knowledge, and competency of judgment, as shall justify any man, so much as to tolerate the thought either of leaving her, or of reforming her, is not to be obtained at a less price than this. In the mean while, men's minds cannot remain *unsettled*; they cannot remain, earnestly, members of a mere ideal communion, a faint image of which, if so much as that, is all that they can discover in the Church to which they belong. And quite certain it is, that, not in the Church of England, but in the Church of Rome, is to be found the model of that mediæval Catholicity¹ which supplanted the pure doctrine, and simple forms of the Church Apostolical. It is solely to the advantage of that apostatizing Church, that, in the present struggle, every thing that sows dissention among us, every doubt thrown upon the doctrinal soundness of our Articles, or the *real Catholicity*, that is, if such a phrase means any thing worth attending to, the *Scriptural truth* of their teaching, must inevitably turn. In this educational office her *Articles* are quite as essential to her as the Prayer-book; nothing that shakes them, or any one of them, or any part of one of them, is a *via media*, but a *via Romana*, and so far a diminution of her fitness for the office; any step that removes us from them as the great landmarks of our teaching, both *positively* and *negatively*, will alienate us from the nation, and the nation from us; make us dangerous as spiritual

¹ For instance, the merit of the ascetic life, the reverence due to images and relics, the invocation of Saints and of the Virgin, purgatory, the power of the Sacraments, making the Eucharist, in popular apprehension, identical with transubstantiation, the power of the Clergy, and the efficacy of penance. Accept these, and you are divided by nothing but a word from Tridentine Rome.

guides, and utterly useless as intellectual ones. Re-suscitate her discipline if you please, enforce her Apostolical order, bring home to men's hearts her divine Liturgy, illustrate her by reason, by learning, by the bright and undeniable evidence of a holy and devoted ministry, careless of any thing but the winning of souls; but permit not an atom of the broad, and simple, and decisive teaching of the Articles to be touched. We shall then be safe, under God's blessing—they protect us from the Arian and the Socinian, and they will, now, protect us from the Romanist; our faith from corruption, our practice from superstition, and the nation, of which we are the teachers, alike from a moral degeneracy, and an intellectual degradation.



PRELIMINARY REMARKS

TO

LECTURE VII.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

I. 1. Christ in the character of King, as well as Priest and Prophet—2. two relations of the kingly power, internal and external.

II. How far the regal character is actually communicated to the Church—the power of excommunication essential to the Church—the Papist usurpations.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

TO

LECTURE VII.

I. 1. **T**HE more we contemplate the Evangelical offices of Christ, the more they are calculated to fill the heart with boundless gratitude for the interposition of so great and glorious a Being; and with wonder at the mystery with which the whole scheme is encompassed. Yet, as regards ourselves, it is most direct and practical, though it slides away on all sides into an unfathomable abyss; and the perfect adaptation of its provisions to the wants of human nature, in all their length and breadth, is not only within our comprehension, but really within the *experience* of the very lowest, whose heart is touched with a feeling of those wants, spiritual, moral, and intellectual, which the incarnation of the Son of God was intended to supply. What humility is there in it, and yet what grandeur! what majesty, and yet what affability! a double crown, so opposed, and yet in Him so harmoniously combined; the

crown of thorns, and that crown of triumph which outshines all the glory that can be named in heaven and earth. Great indeed is the mystery of godliness!

We have seen, how, through His eternal Priesthood, and that all-sufficient sacrifice on which its right of interposition is founded, we are brought, through faith, into communication with God, as our reconciled Father; and by what influences of the Spirit He brings home to the heart of His redeemed those divine truths, of which He is alike the intellectual fountain, and the inspirer of their moral and transforming power. We have likewise seen, that, as Priest and Teacher, He is constantly operating upon the souls which faith has united to Him; and that He has not delegated to any class of men, however consecrated by office, those mediatorial attributes; exactly as Almighty God, in the works of nature, did not retire into Himself, when the Genesis was completed, but does Himself, by an unceasing energy, work out those laws which He originally impressed upon the elements.

Christ's regal power.

We have now to regard Him in another aspect; one, which, though issuing from His humiliation, is not actually combined with it, as is the priesthood with the sacrifice; nor, like His office of spiritual teaching, does it imply, of necessity, a winding of His influence into the heart—a leading and moulding of the affections, rather than an overcoming of the will. His remaining office, to be exercised like the rest till God shall be all in all, is one of authority; and, however acknowledged by His true disciples to be an empire of

love, and to rest on a voluntary obedience, yet is necessarily armed with power, for the establishment of its rights, and the enforcement of a universal submission. And here, as in other points of the Gospel dispensation, if we are at liberty to speculate upon such a subject, we might suppose the economy of it to have been far otherwise than it is. When the Mediator had finally removed the obstructions which interposed between God and man, the authority over those who were thus reconciled, might have been directly exercised by Almighty God, *simply as God*; as it may be exercised towards those angelic Intelligences which have never stood in need of a Mediator, and have remained, uninterruptedly, in immediate relation to Jehovah.

There are, indeed, many difficulties in comprehending the scheme of Christ's Kingship which the Gospel proposes to us; and many metaphysical questions which may be raised, and which cannot be answered, as to where the line between God and the God-Man begins or ends; and where the *economy* of the Gospel, as the Fathers call it, is to receive its limit. Be this, Scripture full of the Kingship of the Messiah. however, as it may, we, as Christians, are bound to receive the plain declarations of the written word; and nothing can be more express than the true regal character of the Messiah, from the very earliest declarations of His coming, to the fullest and most minute descriptions of His person and offices which are to be met with in subsequent prophecy. "There shall come a Star Num. xxiv. out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel."^{17.} The Messiah is a King of kings, and a Lord of lords—He prescribes as a legislator—He judges the

guilty—He rewards the righteous—He governs us as His subjects—we are His soldiers and His servants, and He does not only appeal to our gratitude, but He demands our allegiance and our loyalty. It is thus that Isaiah declares His office; “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given—and the *government shall be upon His shoulder*—of His kingdom there shall be no end.” And so the Psalmist, “I speak of the things which I have made unto the King.” “Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty, according to thy worship and renown—ride on because of the word of truth, and meekness, and righteousness, and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.” “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever—the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.” So Zechariah: “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion—for thy King cometh unto thee.” So Daniel: “And behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given unto Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”

But, directly or indirectly, in fact, the Scriptures are *full* of the power and imperial triumphs of Him that should come—and to such an extent did this pervade the old Jewish Church, that it became an Hermeneutic rule, never departed from, that all passages in holy writ which spoke indefinitely of the king, were allusions to the Messiah. The error of

the Jews therefore lay not so much in this, that they believed the promised Messiah should be the greatest of sovereigns, such as no earthly conqueror could bear a comparison with; but in looking at Scripture and its declarations without that key, in the absence of which the letter is dead, and only a prison for the meaning which the Spirit has inclosed therein, they had lost the spiritual faculty, in the absence of all perception of spiritual wants, and of the real source of those moral and physical evils, under which not only they, but the whole creation groaneth together, expecting the time of their deliverance. Their views, therefore, were onesided; and, as is always the case with minds violently prepossessed, they were blinded to the clearest declarations of those Scriptures, on which they grounded their expectation of a triumphant Messiah.

Had it not been so, they would have combined the splendour of that triumph which will be the ultimate condition of the Church, by and through its union with its conquering Head, with what was announced with equal clearness—a bitterness of agony, and a depth of shame, corresponding to the final elevation of Him who bore, representatively, the burthen of humanity. But it needed a positive illumination of the Spirit to bring this home—even to the understandings of those who embraced the doctrine of Jesus, and who, in His death, mourned over the baffled hopes which they had built on Him who should have redeemed Israel. “Then opened He their understandings,” we are told in His conversa-

tion with the two disciples at Emmaus, that they should understand the Scriptures; and then He unfolded to them, from the Scriptures, and from all the Prophets, how that Christ must suffer, and, after that, enter into His glory. For the glory that was set before Him—for that universal dominion, by virtue of which, at the mention of His name, every knee should bow, in heaven and in earth—He endured the cross, despising the shame. Hence the regal title is not withheld from Him in the moments of His profoundest humiliation, but sedulously conferred upon Him. At the moment that the essential Godhead was veiled in flesh, and lay, to a common eye, concealed in as feeble a child as ever rested on the bosom of a mortal mother, the eastern sages, the first-fruits and representatives of the heathen who were to be His future inheritance, presented to Him such offerings, as kings alone have a right to receive. And, when He was abandoned by all human succour, and had Himself refused the aid which the legions of angels would have been ready to give; at the very time that, at the command of Pilate, He was scourged with rods, like the meanest criminal; His *bearing and His words were still regal*. “Art thou a King then? *thou sayest that I am a King.*” And, finally, the intended mockery of the inscription set over the cross, announced to all the world the real truth, in words which, under supernatural control, the pliant governor refused to change. *This is Jesus, the King of the Jews*. How much more is He a King now, when He has led captivity captive, and received gifts for

men—and having spoiled principalities and powers, is sat down at the right hand of God?

2. Now, there are two points of view in which this regal power of Christ may be advantageously considered, each of which deserves and requires a separate statement, though co-related and inseparable branches of the same authority. There is that exercise of it which He carries on within His Church, and for the peculiar ordering of His own inheritance; and there is another *external* to the Church, yet proceeding from His sovereignty within it. It is indispensable to protect it against its enemies with a penal and avenging power; especially to counteract that evil spirit who reigns in the children of disobedience, and who directs the forces of the world, whether material or intellectual, against the heavenly kingdom; and this branch of the subject we shall consider hereafter.

Within the Church then He has always been really and emphatically a King. He lays down not only doctrines, *but laws* for us, authoritatively and without appeal. Well might the people, when they listened to Him, Who, by the confession of all, spake as never man spake, have been struck by the air of natural command, and that indescribable authority that diffused itself over all the words that proceeded out of His mouth. He spake as one having authority, and not as the Scribes.

The mode in which the Prophets of old time prefaced the message which they conveyed to men, commanding that attention and obedience to which the words of no created being had a claim, was,

Christ's
Kingship
within the
Church.

“Thus saith the Lord—Thus saith the Lord of Hosts:” they bade heaven and earth keep silence before the Supreme Majesty, and receive into the heart the oracles of the Most High. They did not dare to intermix with what they spake any thing that savoured of human authority; any thing that could approximate what came from man, whose breath was in his nostrils, to the words and thoughts of the Supreme. But our Lord, in the flesh, spake on earth exactly as Jehovah spake from Heaven. “It was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill: but *I say unto you.*” “Who is this,” exclaimed the astonished disciples, “Who is this, who commandeth the winds and the sea, and they obey Him?” “Who is this,” they might with more reason have exclaimed, “who, being clothed with the aspect of a man, and of flesh and blood like ourselves, yet deals authoritatively with the very words of Jehovah; words which came not from the lips of man, however holy, but from the Lord of Hosts Himself, sitting between the Cherubim, while the voice of the trumpet waxed louder and louder in the ears of our fathers, and the whole mount quaked greatly. This can be no other than He who uttered them; and He now unfolds them, with the same legislative and imperial authority, with which, as the Angel of the Covenant, He first propounded them.”

All the words of Christ, in like manner, whether they came from His lips of flesh on earth, or whether spoken by Apostles and Prophets, *are King's words*—they are commands to be obeyed, laws which may

not be broken; the seal of supreme power authenticates them. The whole body of Scripture, therefore, may be considered properly in this light, not as preceptive, but *authoritative*—the *code of our King*. And if so, not only are additions to it, and mutilations of it, a sinful and presumptuous mixture of the earthly with the heavenly, and a sacrilegious removal of what God has fixed,—but they are, even if they go no farther, so many acts of *constructive* rebellion against the Supreme Legislator—a contempt of that authority, which communicates immutability to all that it enacts. And precisely the same offence against the majesty of the Lawgiver, as this addition to the written code or diminution from it, is *any* attempt to tamper with the declaration of the record so as to evade its direct and first meaning, according to the common usages of language, because it does not square with preconceived principles or private opinions.

Thus it is a rule even of human law, to admit of no extraneous interpretation to that which in itself is clear and consistent—for, what is thus clear, must be presumed to be the intention of the enacter. Much more is it so when He who formed alike the laws of thought, and the laws of language, has uttered His oracles in them, avowedly not for the learned, but for the simple, and speaks distinctly on all vital questions; under whatever forms it is thus diluted and evaded, whether by the coarse rationalism of the infidel, or by the more decorous instrument of traditional or ecclesiastical authority, it is an act, at best, of grievous presumption,

an offence against the truth, impugning the competence if not the authority of the legislator. But when the original laws are not only laxly interpreted, but actually subjugated to another and human code—when *systematic* additions and perversions, overlaying the simplicity, when they do not directly contradict the intention, of the canon, are announced under the very same sanctions, and forced upon men's belief with a fulmination of anathemas, which one trembles to read, and which are as awful as ever accompanied the enactments of the Sinaitic Covenant—this is not only a constructive offence against God as King, but it is a *real apostacy*—a renunciation of His authority as Lawgiver. The law is in the power of Him, and is, in fact, the law of Him, whoever he be, who assumes the absolute interpretation of it on principles of His own making, under whatever name and title the writing may profess to go—it is useless and foolish to dispute on such a trifle—the empty name is nothing. The wearing the king's cognizance, speaking in his name, and the most boundless professions of acting for his interest, is compatible, as history assures us, with the rankest hypocrisy, the most unprincipled ambition, and the most undoubted rebellion. So may Rome, contemplated in her system, though in words she acknowledges the legislative authority of Christ, and veils her greatest usurpations under that holy name, be well accounted Antichrist, not by loose analogy only, or the exaggeration of an angry rhetoric, but truly and

literally so ; as much so, in the consequences of her unscriptural claims and assumption of power, as avowed infidelity itself.

Again, the kingly authority of Christ being vested in Him, who, being Himself a Spirit, must be worshipped in spirit and in truth, must be correspondingly obeyed—and, as while He rules supremely over heaven and earth, He searcheth the very hearts and reins, He must, by all His true subjects, be worshipped with a loyalty, whose seat is not in the lips, but in the heart itself. It is impossible to love Him and to obey Him as our spiritual King, as long as there is any participation of the affections which are His due with any other object whatsoever. It matters not what they are—from the grosser idols of those who lose the man in the beasts that perish, up to the magnificent ambition of the statesman, the attractions of science to the inventive intellect, or those more specious forms which the self-righteousness of the human heart holds out for the reception of our spiritual and diviner nature. Whatever may be the shape which rationalism may take in opposing it, whether superstition or infidelity, it is the plain *command* of Scripture that we submit to the scheme of salvation through faith in the blood of Christ, as the Apostles propounded it,—and, that, in making our calling and election sure, we bring every imagination of our heart into an entire subjection and obedience to Christ. In proportion as this surrender is perfect, and every wandering affection is subdued, and an entire devotedness to Him who liveth and reigneth

As spiritual King Christ demands an obedience of the spirit.

is produced in its stead, may we be said to obey Him and to love Him as our King.

It is in this regal capacity that He bestows *perfect forgiveness*, and an entire amnesty for all the sins and offences which, in thought, word, or deed, we have committed against Him—the prerogative of mercy, boundless and wonderful, as His absolute sovereignty.

It is likewise, by virtue of this same regality, that He bestows on those who come to Him those gifts of the Spirit which He received for men, when He ascended into the heaven of heavens; and which He could not dispense, till He had conquered the pains of death, and assumed His throne in heaven. Hence, the moment the victory over the grave was accomplished, came the pouring out of His Spirit upon all flesh, the pentecostal gifts, and the baptism of fire; and those manifold graces, which, from the day when the Church was inaugurated into her solemn office, till she shall be presented pure and without spot to her heavenly Bridegroom, have testified to the residence of a mighty power within her. By the same regal discretion He withdraws His gifts from those who will not receive Him nor acknowledge Him; He disfranchises them of the privileges of their heavenly citizenship, and leaves them in that outer darkness of a worldly spirit, which is the certain forerunner, not only of the ultimate withdrawal of the light of God's countenance, but of an eternal participation in that kingdom of darkness, from which they have refused to come out into the glorious

liberty of the children of God. Finally, it is in this character that, overlooking the unprofitable services which are all that His best servants can render to Him, He not only gives them their wages for their labour in His vineyard, but proposes, out of the fulness of His kingly munificence, and the stores which omnipotent power places at His disposal, such rewards for His faithful servants, as render them, in sharing the throne of His glory, more than equals of the angels who never fell.

The weapons, therefore, in the warfare that is to win the heavenly crown, are not carnal, and the armour with which we are to be clad, is the whole armour of Christ—the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, and the breastplate of righteousness, the sandals of the Gospel of peace, and the helmet of salvation—this is the only armour with which we shall be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Hence it is that the constant warfare of the Christian has to be carried on, not against a merely defined and known body, external to himself, but against enemies who reside in the very bosom of Christ's Church, and who find their best protectors and their strongest bulwarks in the inherent corruptions of our own hearts. All these are the *melancholy inheritance of the natural man*; and the *world within ourselves* is the scene of our hardest struggles and most difficult warfare—the first which we have to encounter as neophytes, and the very last which, when we reach the fulness of the Christian stature, we have the power and grace to subdue.

In the world without there is more danger to be apprehended in its invitations than in its defiance—in the seeming good-will with which, from time to time, it caresses the Gospel, or at least makes a truce or composition with it, than in its open and professed opposition—it is, in fact, only another and more subtle form of that unconquerable hostility with which it regards the claims of Christ as King.

1 John ii.
15, 16.

“Love not the world,” says the Apostle, “nor the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

The kingdom of Christ, the antithesis not of temporal power, but of sin.

Hence the Church of Christ is a kingdom, not *antithetically* to the *temporal power or temporal government* at all, but only to the spiritual corruption and natural depravity of man. It strikes at the innermost root of corruption, the soul's hatred of a spiritual and holy God, as such; it thus makes possible the subjugation of those passions, which originate from causes far beyond the reach of civil politics, and are incapable of extermination by the rude material influence which they wield; while they are the source of those anti-social out-breakings of fraud and violence, which it is the duty of the magistrate to restrain by the sword which he beareth not in vain. It tends therefore to supply that want of a sovereign power over the spirits of men, which, from the beginning of the world, the framers of commonwealths have seen and lamented; which they have

in vain sought a remedy in a politic superstition and religious imposture, and which, from the lack of something to move the inner nature of man, and communicate with the invisible, has baffled their calculations, and belied their strongest hopes.

But, however imperfectly developed, this idea has always found an exponent in one shape or other; and, to any attentive observer of mankind, it has indicated, in a way not to be misunderstood, a fundamental law of humanity; and a necessity of civil society, which is answered, and alone answered, by mixing with the world the leaven of the Gospel, and establishing in the heart of it the spiritual kingdom of Christ. Hence it is—from its purely spiritual nature—from its dealing with the inner man—that it derives the universality and permanency of its application—that pliability to outward things, or rather, if one may so say, that *impassiveness* to material influences, which gives it its Catholic character; combining with all forms of constitution and government, and aiding all the legitimate purposes of the secular power, whether partitioned and balanced in a limited monarchy, or concentrated in the hands of a despot, or diffused through the masses of a democracy.

Every where, when it exists in its purity, or even in any tolerable degree of obedience to its heavenly and unseen King, the Church acts as a healthful principle—it operates on those individualities which governments can never reach; winding and insinuating itself and its beneficial influences into all the recesses of human existence, impenetrable, as they

are, to any power less subtle ; and counteracting those disruptive tendencies, which, in spite of the pressure of the temporal power, are always at work in dissolving the existing organization of society. But spiritual as are the objects, and inward the actual workings of the kingdom of Christ, a conformity to the outward condition of man was indispensable from the first. The *King indeed was invisible*, but the constitution of His kingdom was to *be visible*, because *its constituent parts* were necessarily so—*visible*, though so constructed as never for an instant to lose its *characteristic* of dependency, essential and inseparable, on what the *eye could not reach*, nor the *senses* recognise. Form mystically united to graces and spiritual operations ; outward instruments, dispensing, through faith, heavenly effects, with a subordination of such servants to minister as an invisible King requires.

It has an
outward
framework.

Hence an outward frame and type arose, so far as these necessities, and the propagation of the faith, rendered indispensable ; but, in the extreme simplicity which marks the original, as it came from inspired hands, there is a manifest caution not to obscure the *spiritual nature of the kingdom and the invisible King*, under the form in which its earthly condition was presented to mankind. From its first institution there were references, such as could not be mistaken, to what transcended the senses ; allusions, the more striking, from not being encumbered and overpowered by outward splendor, to the powers and grandeurs of that other world of which all Christians were citizens ; where,

at the right hand of their King, their affections were fixed; and in which the power of faith enabled them to dwell, as those who were only pilgrims and strangers upon earth. It did not so much *symbolize* the things eternal and spiritual, *as bring the soul into a direct communication* with them: and, to those whose blessed office it was to preside over the nascent Church, so much only of the sovereign power was assigned as fitted mortality, and the edification of the flock; with a sedulous exclusion of all that should prevent the eye of the believer from rising, constantly and without an effort, to the great Pastor, and real Bishop of their souls.

Little as it seems to have struck the most piercing and philosophical minds of antiquity, it must have been, one would have thought, a wonderful sight, to watch this strange developement of new social principles, and of these powerful, and up to this time undiscovered, instincts of man. It must have been more interesting at a period, when what was elevated and moral in preceding institutions had decayed; when forms, merely material in intention as well as outward expression, were predominant, and there prevailed a general stagnation of all life, truly human, in the highest sense of the word, either in individuals or in states. For *such* was the moral condition of the world, when there arose, with an almost simultaneous expansion, these new centres of action and power, north and south and east and west, in obedience to one, who avowedly, and by the confession of all who worshipped Him, was a King; and, in that relation, exercised a real

Simultaneous growth of the Christian communities.

and universal authority. It exhibited a world organized within a world; and yet,—though its character was opposed to mere quietism, nay, stimulated activities of an extraordinary kind,—it so regulated its motions, and the play of its outward energies, as to avoid clashing with the relations of society, and the legitimate operations of civil government.

No wonder, that considering merely their state relations, however, and the due dependency of the subject bodies, that the eye of a mere politician should have looked with great jealousy on these new societies, gathering power daily from their gradual incorporation, and the independent action from which they originated; and should have regarded them as incompatible with the supreme authority, and the integrity of the imperial power. Certainly, no more decisive proof exists of the submission of the Christian communities to their unseen Head, and their real abjuration of any thing but a spiritual kingdom, than that, for three centuries, there should have been no instance of resistance to the civil power; and this, in spite of numbers rapidly increasing, a perfect mutual understanding, and a constant circulation, even through the most distant members of the body, of intelligence and a Catholic unity. But the kingdom of Christ was not of this world; and so they felt and acted.

A great preponderance in the State, and a real political weight, it was inevitable that they should finally obtain, both by the moral laws which govern human transactions, and the will of their heavenly King.

And though, perhaps, the pagan historians are not wrong, in attributing somewhat of the fall of the empire to the prevalence of the new religion¹, yet it was the sole refuge of all that is sound and paternal in the government of man by man; all that the masses of mankind instinctively claim, as the right of mere *humanity, as such*; all forces and influences, in short, *not material*, were preserved in these spiritual societies. They accelerated the time, when Rome, drunk with the blood of God's saints, as was her spiritual successor in after ages, was to suffer the punishment due to her sins, alike from civil discord, and the merciless fury of the barbarians; but they preserved, when nothing else could have done it, a better theory of polity, ecclesiastical and civil, under a divine Head, and a nobler civilization of mankind.

It is no wonder, therefore, not only that the spiritual kingdom in men's hearts, but *its visible forms*, and outward framework, survived the general wreck, along with the truths which they embodied and transmitted. But the vigour lay not in the *forms*, which had been, from the first, impressed upon the Church, however constructed for permanency; the real strength was from above; it came directly down from Him whose kingdom it was, and who had thus taken unto Himself His great power, and begun to reign on earth. And while, on the one hand, He shook to the earth the whole fabric of Roman domination, till not one stone remained upon another, so with the other He upheld His Church from

¹ Vid. August. de Civitate Dei.

the overthrow, in which all that the carnal eye judged to be strength was hopelessly submerged.

None of the
sovereign
power of
Christ com-
municated
to the heads
of these
societies.

But of this purely *sovereign character*, nothing, even in appearance, was communicated to the congregations of faithful men who composed the visible Church, and to the economy by which they were governed. There was a power and pre-eminence, and *that*, by divine authority and transmission, in their Pastor ; but neither in its nature, its extent, or in its mode of exercise, of an *absolute or regal character*. Not only the individual members of the Church, but those who presided over it, were debarred, by the tenor of the revelation of which they were the depositaries, of any power at all over the written record, of which, as their sole code, in union with the whole Church, they were the guardians ; though by eminence of office, the witnesses, and the appointed, but not infallible, expounders of it. But, *within these limits*, the deference due to them in matters of faith was confined ; and, by immemorial primitive usage, the promulgation of false doctrine, and any other teaching than that of the Catholic truth, not only rendered obedience unnecessary, but made resistance, from one and all, a holy necessity and bounden duty ; an act of indispensable loyalty to the unseen King, and acknowledged Head of the Church. And even within the sphere, which, under the limitation of a few general rules, was left open, in regard to public worship and Church discipline, the visible heads of the society claimed no arbitrary or undefined power ; and they acted, on all great emergencies, with the advice and assistance of the whole Church. Although, there-

fore, the line of office above their fellows was distinctly drawn, and maintained inviolate, in the chief pastors, from the laying on of whose hands the ministerial commission proceeded; and between those, who were called by the Holy Ghost to preside over individual flocks, and the flocks which they fed; there was no exclusion of the laity from a due share in the affairs and ordering of the Church. None of that exclusion from the sanctuary and common consecration of all Christians, which grew in the same proportion as hierarchical claims, and more *regal* pretensions, were successively advanced.

The form of government, in fact, so far as it was devolved on the heads of the Church, was *pastoral* or *paternal*^a—not as an accessory of another relation,

^a Of course the Romish theory is essentially regal. In illustration of it I subjoin a statement from Bellarmine, and the celebrated oration of Laynez at the Tridentine Council.

“ Cum demonstratum sit, monarchiam esse optimum regimen: secunda nascitur quæstio: An Ecclesiæ Christi, conveniat Monarchica gubernatio. Atque ut certa à dubiis separemus: In tribus nobis cum adversariis convenit. Unum est, in Ecclesia esse aliquod regimen. Nam Cantic. 6. dicitur: Castrorum acies ordinata. Actor. 20. Attendite vobis et universo gregi, quos Spiritus sanctus posuit Episcopos regere Ecclesiam Dei. Hebr. 13. Obedite præpositis vestris. Secundum est, regimen Ecclesiasticum spirituale esse et distinctum à politico, quando enim Paulus dicebat: Qui præest in sollicitudine, Rom. 12. Et; Qui bene præsumt, duplici honore digni habeantur, 1 Tim. 5. et similia: non dum erant ulli, ante certè rarissimi in Ecclesia seculares principes, quæ duo docet etiam Calvinus Institutionum, lib. 4. c. 11. §. 1. Tertium est, Regem absolutum et liberum totius Ecclesiæ solum Christum esse, de quo dicitur, Psal. 2. Ego autem constitutus sum Rex ab eo super Sion montem sanctum ejus. Et Lucæ 1. Et regni ejus non erit finis. Itaque non quæritur in

which, in condescending from the eminence of power, might thus exhibit itself in a becoming but self-

Ecclesia, absoluta et libera Monarchia, vel Aristocratia, vel Democratia, sed talis, qualis esse potest ministrorum et dispensatorum, cum dicat Paulus, 1 Corinth. 4. Sic nos existimet homo ut ministros Christi ac dispensatores mysteriorum Dei." De Romano Pont. lib. i. c. 5. Bellarmini.

Thus far there is nothing but what is defensible—but not so when he comes to the practical application of this principle.

"Etsi Christus unus sit et proprius Ecclesiæ Catholicæ Rex et Monarcha, eumque spiritualiter ac invisibiliter regat et moderetur, tamen eget Ecclesia, quæ corporalis et visibilis est, uno aliquid visibila summo Judice, a quo lites de religione exortæ componantur, quique omnes inferiores præfectos in officio et unitate contineat. Alioquis non solum Summus Pontifex, sed etiam Episcopi, Pastores, Doctores, ac Ministri omnes supervacanei essent." Id. c. 4.

"Quod unquam regnum fuit, quod non regeretur ab uno? et quanquam rex Ecclesiæ sit Christus; tamen ex eo colligemus Ecclesiam habere debere *præter Christum* aliquem unum a quo regatur, quod regna semper administrantur regio, id est, per unum qui omnibus præsit, et *siquidem rex præsens est per se id facit*—which we Protestants assert in all main points and spiritual effects—*si abest, per alium, qui dicitur pro Rex.* Sæpe etiam, Rege præsentē, generalis aliquis Vicarius constituitur." Ibid. c. 9.

This is a specimen of the exquisite management of this consummate controversialist—how completely he throws his reader off his guard, by granting apparently all that reason and Scripture demands, and then, by the finest approaches, insinuating the Romanist error or heresy.

"The morning being come, Laynez spake more than two houres, very fitly, with great vehemence, and master-like. The argument of his discourse had two parts; the first he spent in proving, that the power of jurisdiction was given wholly to the Bishop of Rome, and that none in the Church besides hath any sparke of it, but from him; and the second, in resolving all the contrary arguments, used in the former congregations. The substance was, that there is great difference, yea, contrariety betweene

imposed humility—but it was *the essence of the office*. Nay, the very exercise of that authority which is in-

the Church of Christ, and civill societies. For these have first their being, and then they frame their government, and therefore are free, and all jurisdiction is originally in them which they do communicate to magistrates, without depriving themselves of it. But the Church did not make itselfe, nor its governement, but Christ, who is Prince and Monarch, did first constitute lawes, by which it should be governed, and then did assemble it, and, as the Scripture saith, did build it; so that it was borne a servant, without any kinde of liberty, power, or jurisdiction, and absolutely subject. For prooffe hereof, he alleadged places of the Scripture, in which the congregation of the Church is compared to a sowing, to the draught of a net, and to a building: and when it is said that Christ came into the world to assemble His faithfull people, to gather together His sheepe, to instruct them, by doctrine and example. Then he added, that the first and principal ground, upon which Christ built the Church, was Peter and his succession, according to the words which He spake to him; Thou art Peter, and upon this rocke I will build my Church. Which rocke, howsoever some of the Fathers have understood to be Christ Himselfe, and others the faith of Peter, or the confession of his faith; yet the more Catholic exposition is, that Peter himselfe is understood, who, in the Hebrew and Syriacke, is called a stone. And continuing his discourse, he said, that while Christ lived in the mortall flesh, He governed the Church with an absolute monarchiall government, and, being to depart out of this world, left the same forme, appointing, for His Vicar, Saint Peter and his successors, to administer it as He had done, giving him full and totall power and jurisdiction, and subjecting the Church to him, as it was to Himselfe. This he proved of Peter, because the keyes of the kingdome of heaven were given to him only, and, by consequence, power to bring in, and shut out, which is jurisdiction. And to him alone it was said, Feede, that is, governe my sheepe, animals, which have no part or judgment in governing themselves. These things, that is, to be a key-keeper, and a pastor, being perpetual offices, must be conferred upon a perpetuall person, that is, not upon the first only, but upon all his succession. So the Bishop of Rome, from St. Peter to the end of the world, is true and absolute mo-

separable from such relations, was an act of love and tenderness—not of those that had a right to lord it

narch, with full and totall power and jurisdiction, and the Church is subject unto him, as it was to Christ. And as when His Divine Majesty did governe it, it could not be said, that any of the faithfull had any the least power or jurisdiction, but meere, pure, and totall subjection, so it must be said, in all perpetuity of time, and so understood that the Church is a sheepefold, and a kingdome; and that which St. Cyprian saith, that there is but one bishopricke, and a part of it held by every bishop, is to bee expounded, that the whole power is placed in one pastor, without division, who doth impart and communicate it to his fellow-ministers, as cause doth require. And in this sense Saint Cyprian maketh the Apostolique sea like unto a root, an head, a fountain, and the sunne; shewing, by these comparisons, that jurisdiction is essentiall in that alone, and in others by derivation or participation. And thus is the meaning of the words, so much used by antiquity, that Peter and the Pope have fulnesse of power, and the others are of their charge. And that he is the only Pastor, is plainly proved by the words of Christ, when He said, He hath other sheepe which he will gather together, and so one sheepefold should be made and one shepherd. The shepherd, meant in that place, cannot be Christ, because He would not speak in the future, that there shall be one shepherd, Himself not being a shepherd, and therefore it must be understood of another shepherd, which was to be constituted after Him, which can be no other but Peter and his successors. And here he noted that the precept, Feede the flocke, is found but twice in the Scripture: once given by Christ to Peter only, Feede my sheepe: againe by Peter to others, Feede the flocke allotted to you. And if the Bishop had received any jurisdiction from Christ, it would be equal in all, and no difference between Patriarchs, Archbishops, and Bishops; neither could the Pope meddle with that authority, to diminish or take it all away, as he cannot in the power of order, which is from God. Therefore he advised them to beware, lest, by making the institution of Bishops *de jure divino*, they doe not take away the Hierarchie, and bring in an Oligarchie, or rather an Anarchie. He added also, that, to the end Peter might govern the Church well, so that the gates of hell might not prevaile against it, Christ being neere unto His death, prayed effectually

over God's heritage, nor as towards *subjects*—but, as towards children and brethren—in pain and sorrow—with a reluctant severity, for the good of those who were chastised, or the preservation of the flock which they threatened to taint. “Feed the flock of Christ,” says St. Paul to the elders of Ephesus, “over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers;” feed them with the bread from heaven, which He hath put into your hands, and lead them to the pleasant waters, where they may drink life freely. It is an inexpressible privilege, even thus to be called as fellow-workers with the great Shepherd. How great should be our meekness and gentleness, when He has bowed so low, who is King of kings, and Lord of lords!

that His faith might not faile, and gave him order to confirm the brethren, that is, he gave him a privilege of infallibility in judgment of faith, manners, and religion, binding all the Church to hear him, and to stand firmly in that which should be determined by him. He concluded, that this was the ground of Christian doctrine, and the rock upon which the Church was built.” *Hist. of the Council of Trent*, by Padre Paolo, lib. 7. p. 610.

It has always been a part of the policy of Rome to keep back her power from the definitions of Councils, as something too sacred to be discussed. But the following is the definition of the Council of Florence, where it was absolutely necessary to make a statement upon this important point, and it is couched in terms *laboriously* moderate.

“Item, definimus sanctam Apostolicam sedem, et Romanum pontificem in universum orbem tenere primatum, et ipsum pontificem, Romanum successorem esse beati Petri principis Apostolorum, et verum Christi vicarium totiusque Ecclesiæ caput, et omnium Christianorum patrem ac doctorem existere; ut ipsi in beato Petro pascendi, regendi, ac gubernandi universalem Ecclesiam a Domino nostro Jesu Christo plenam potestatem traditam esse; quemadmodum etiam ingentis œcumenicorum conciliorum, et in sacris exponibus continetur.” *L'Abbe Concil. t. 13. p. 515.* Read in Belarmine the *practical* developement of these principles.

Matt. xii. 20. “He shall not break the bruised reed, nor quench

Matt. xi. 28. the smoking flax.” “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Yet with Him, though not with us, is inseparably combined the kingly power, with the pastoral tenderness.

Isa. xl. 10, 11. “Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him—behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him;” but “He shall feed His flock like a shepherd—He shall gather the lambs with His arm—and carry them in His arms, and gently lead those that are with young.”

It would have been a happy thing for the Church and for the world at large, if this subordinate but most holy and tender character in the rulers of the Church, had always been borne in mind. If it had been so, it is hardly credible, or possible, that any thing so beautiful in its Scripture theory, so adapted to the wants and requirements of a human society, and so consecrated by Apostolical institution, should ever have been called into doubt by a Christian community. It never could have been so, but for the most awful abuses and usurpation of power; and certain it is, that there was, at an early period, a wide departure from Christ's institution; and an invasion of His kingly prerogatives and Headship, as the offices of the Church were usually exercised in the unreformed Churches of the West, not only in the Romish hierarchy, but even in the separate

Usurpation of the kingly power by the Roman bishops. **Episcopates.**

But it becomes, not only an usurpation, but an apostacy, when thrown into that organized form,

in which the Church of Rome has consolidated her power^b. There is an Antichristian aspect from the first in the whole machinery, in which, with the

^b As a proof of the extent to which Rome carries the *claim* of mere authority, it might be as well to mention, that she burns heretics for their *resistance to Church power*, not for their false doctrines. “Rome never doomed her opponents to the flames for their errors, but their *contumacy*.”

“This is a well-known fact, to all who have examined the spirit, and even the letter, of the inquisitorial laws of Popedom. The case of John Huss is, however, so striking a proof of my assertion, that I must beg leave to refer the inquisitive reader to the account which Mosheim gives of that victim of Romanist ambition. The principal object of his invectives were the vices, not the errors, of Rome; and he rather opposed the tyranny of her ecclesiastical polity, than the unscriptural use of her pretended infallibility. It was because he did not submit to her *authority* that Huss was committed to the flames; for, as I have observed in a previous note, a full conformity with the Romanist creed does not exempt from the imputation and punishment of heresy, unless it is the effect of unbounded submission to the authority of the Church. Mosheim has made a most happy application to the conduct of Rome in such cases, of a passage in the well-known Letter of Pliny to Trajan concerning the Christians; “It became,” says the learned historian, “a dutiful son of the Church to renounce his eye-sight, and to submit his own judgment and will, without any exception or reservation, to the judgment and will of that holy mother, under a firm belief and entire persuasion of the infallibility of all her decisions. This ghostly mother had, for many ages past, followed, whenever her unerring perfection and authority were called in question, the rule which Pliny observed in his conduct towards the Christians.” ‘When they persevered,’ says he in his Letter to Trajan, ‘I put my threats into execution, from a persuasion, that, whatever their confession may be, their audacious and invincible obstinacy deserved an exemplary punishment.’ “Perseverantes duri jussi. Neque enim dubitabam, qualecumque esset quod faterentur, pervicaciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri. Plin. Epist. lib. 2. Ep. 97.” B. White’s Evidence against Catholicism, p. 239.

profoundest and most comprehensive combination, every thing, even the most minute, is connected with one central and gigantic Head. It is not, even in its *theory*, a spiritual government by Christ, in heaven, at all; but by an *earthly Christ*, with a plenary transfusion into him, of all the Saviour's offices and faculties—in *fact*, a *vicarious God*—as the Popes, in

² Thess. ii. so many words, have claimed to be. “Let no man deceive you,” says the Apostle, “for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition; . . . so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” This, at any rate, apart from all other claims or acts of apostacy whatsoever, is a complete dethronement of Christ as the head of the Church, and in utter contradiction to all the conditions and scriptural descriptions of His spiritual kingdom upon earth. And here I allude merely to the *spiritual pretensions*, and not the *secular usurpations*, of the papacy.

^{3, 4.}

We do, indeed, acknowledge a unity, and the necessity of a common governor, as well as teacher and priest, but we deny his visibility. This Head is Christ, ever present, but *invisible*, and yet uniting together His mystical body, both in heaven and in earth, by the operation of His all-pervading Spirit. In union with Him consists our real spiritual union with all the saints that have been and shall be—one faith, one hope, one baptism, one God and Father of us all. It would be a happy day, and blessed for us all, if, by God's grace, men's minds were so over-

ruled throughout Christendom, that the unity of the faith were *perfected* by the acceptance, in the Apostolic succession, of that badge of unity, which the ancient Church enjoyed, and we ourselves possess. But really earthly representative, or *representatives* of Christ, there cannot be. Here then, in the Scriptural scheme, though not in the Romanist, is an unchangeable difference between the kingdom of Christ upon earth and all temporal sovereignties whatsoever—that it has no visible head, nor any one with The Church has no visible head, *regal powers*, holding His place, and realizing His sovereignty to the eyes of men.

But, so long as there is subordination and government of whatever kind, so long there must be means of punishment, proportioned to the ends of the society so ruled—and even on the most truly paternal scheme, as in a family, such a power for protecting the society from offences, and punishing offenders, must necessarily exist.

Here again, however, will be an essential difference nor temporal punishments. between it and a secular kingdom, not only in the spirit of its procedure, but in the very nature of the punishment inflicted. The one has many means and modes, all of which, in their extreme application, must necessarily resolve themselves into loss of goods, or bodily pain or restraint, or utter physical excision from the body politic. Those which can alone be exercised by the Church, under its Head, must be proportionate to its special nature—*spiritual* therefore—such as may act on those immaterial sources of pleasure and pain, connected with the unseen state, and the powers

of the world to come, upon which alone a spiritual authority can properly and consistently act. The very moment that it transgresses these bounds, and borrows other instruments which are appropriated to a different kingdom, with distinct objects, it abandons, so far, its spiritual character.

And, as a necessary consequence of this,—though it may appear at the time to gain a temporary advantage and a more direct and available power, by acting on those outward and material interests to which the nature of man makes him immediately susceptible,—it does, by so doing, really lower its proper claims, degrade its nature, abandon the ground on which its true strength and authority reposes, and make itself *depend upon* that secular authority which, perhaps, it flatters itself all the time, that it is using as a subject and inferior. Those awful interests which are connected with the eternal world—and those hopes and fears, which being infinite in their extent, connect the soul of man with those tremendous powers, at the sense of which it is thrilled, in spite of itself, with a feeling immeasurably more profound than any other—all these are best preserved in their integrity, and in that influence which they cannot lose without extreme peril to humanity, by never condescending to the use of any inferior instruments. The very act of doing so, contradicts, in the opinion and sure judgment of mankind, that trust in unseen realities, and that communication with a power supernatural which is inseparable from the Church, as a spiritual society—it baffles

that effectual witness to the presence of Christ among men, a belief in which, if exemplified by a steady and practical dependence upon it, staggers even the boldest infidel—but is overpowering to candid and unprejudiced minds.

Since, therefore, the sense of security and calm hopefulness of spirit which the Church confers, proceed from those graces of which she is the ordinary channel, and by which the souls of the faithful communicate with their invisible King; since her children thus enjoy the signs and assurances of His love, and are enabled to rest, in quiet faith, amidst all the changes and confusion of temporal things—so, the power of effectual punishment must consist in a total or partial exclusion from these inestimable privileges. Indeed, Excommunication considered. if there is any power more than another inherent in the Church, merely as a society, as well as more clearly conferred upon her for her protection by her heavenly Master; any one more justified by uninterrupted practice from the beginning; it is that of excluding members from her ordinances and her spiritual pale. In one word, her substitute for temporal power, and her instrument of punishment, is *excommunication*—and an awful one it is, to minds religiously impressed—nay, where the soul is really awake to things spiritual, and to the sanctity of the ordained vehicles by which grace is conveyed in the Church, any earthly punishment is but child's play in comparison of it. For, in exact proportion to the blessings enjoyed within the Church of Christ, will be the miseries entailed by an exclusion from it. The fact of being driven,

though but for a time, and by an earthly sentence, out of the kingdom of light, into that darkness which may be felt,—to be thus thrust out from the protection of a loving and omnipotent Saviour and the shelter of the fold, and to be delivered, instead, into the will of our spiritual enemy—to feel the baptismal privileges, for the time, arrested and suspended—and, beyond this deprivation of the privileges of the Church on earth, to apprehend in the world to come that banishment from the presence of God, of which it is the symbol, and may be the awful prelude,—all this, unless the sufferer be sustained against it by a sense of right and duty, and the knowledge that the sentence is opposed to the truth of the Gospel, is quite enough to shake the soul to its centre. And, over and above this, if it is seen that Church privileges are not matters of course, but blessings which may be forfeited; and that acts cognizable by the Church at large may lead to their forfeiture, with the certain dangers and possible ruin which may follow an exclusion from the means of grace; nothing can be imagined better fitted to give a salutary warning to other men of the danger of unrepented sin. It is a great thing to shew its incompatibility, when it is discernible by the eyes of our brethren, not only with eternal salvation, but even with a *colourable hope of it, and the outward profession of the faith*; much more with the reality of those graces, of which, even in her present condition, the Church is God's appointed minister.

And, if an apostolic spirit tempered apostolic authority, the effect produced would be, beyond

all description, more awful, from the reluctance and brotherly sorrow with which the sentence would be accompanied—depriving the sinner of that support from pride and the sense of injury or insult, which the exhibition of secular wrath and mere human vindictiveness are calculated to give. But the exercise of an authority so essentially spiritual, should be committed, if possible, to those who bear spiritual functions¹; it becomes a mockery, when transferred from the assembled Church into the world; when executed by the civil power, and conjoined with *temporal penalties*. And so, in proportion to its awfulness in its extreme form, should be the *manifest* guilt of the criminal, and the dangers of impunity; the solemnities with which it is accompanied; and the caution that should be exercised, to ensure the righteousness of the sentence, and remove the inviolability inseparable from an *individual* exercise of such a discretion, by the association, as far as may be, of the Church at large, with the judgment pronounced. And certainly, with a view, not only to the interests of the Church itself, but to the rights of the State, where the one has fixed and constitutional relations towards the other, all pledges ought to be given which the most definite rules and provisions of justice can supply, to ensure that no dishonour to Christ shall be offered by a judicature, acting avowedly in His Name, and deriving all the authority which it possesses from the observance of His commands. It should be guarded, indeed, so far as the precautions of a provident reason can go, if for no other

¹ Not, however, that there should be no restraint on its exercise, by laical assessors or other securities, but the sentence at all events should proceed from the spiritual power.

cause, yet for this; that the same human passions and infirmities which are derogatory to the solemnity of civil justice, are *destructive altogether* to the influence of a spiritual judgment-seat, which, if it be any thing, must be the image, as far as earthly imperfection will allow, of Christ's own passionless and awful tribunal.

I do not say, however, that we ought to forget the abuse of this spiritual power by the see of Rome, irresponsible, as it was, to Scripture, and setting all human control at defiance—by which, emulous of the wrath of God Himself, she afflicted whole kingdoms at a stroke; and, by laying them under the shadow of an interdict, quelled at once the heart of kings, and the loyalty of nations, by that intolerable malediction. And, though no conjuncture of human affairs may ever again bring *such* an exercise of power within the range of possibility, we ought not to be unmindful of the capricious tyranny to which the laity would be inevitably subjected, by placing such a prerogative, or any approach to it, at the *uncontrolled* discretion of the Ministers of the Church! Nor, *when all human precautions have been taken*, must we lose sight of the principle, that to the Church does not belong that scrutiny of hearts and infallibility of decision which would always ratify her sentence at the tribunal of Christ—that she can only exercise the right under the limitations of Scripture, and, from first to last, *conditionally*—that the only point, therefore, which she can make absolutely certain, is exclusion from an outward communion in the visible ordinances; and that from the Church invisible and universal, no

act of hers, by its own virtue or inherent force, can possibly exclude.

But still no abuse however great, and no suspension however long, can destroy her right to the exercise of a power essential to her vigorous existence, and so decidedly conferred by Christ Himself as her inalienable privilege; the precious, because the *only* instrument of spiritual defence, consecrated by the invariable use of the primitive Churches; and, though desecrated *now* by secular elements, and the intermixture of penalties alien to its nature and destructive of its effects, yet still preserving a *nominal* existence, sufficient to attest the reality of the claim. It should be brought out distinctly; be fortified by well-considered precautions for its proper exercise, and form an avowed portion of the spiritual polity of the Church. It is necessary, as a public witness to her spiritual jurisdiction, and independence of the secular power; and would tend, more than any thing else, to point out the due relation of the Church to the State and her connection with it, without any injurious tampering with those principles, on which, for the advantage and prosperity of both, their alliance ought to be inviolably maintained.

But there is a portion of the Church system intimately connected with this penal power and flowing from Christ's regality, which must be here considered at some length.

Though it is one of those scriptural truths which have been fearfully abused by the Romanist, yet the doctrine of *ministerial absolution* is so important in many ways to the healthy condition of the Church

The doctrine of absolution and confession.

of Christ; and Scripture, with primitive antiquity, expresses itself upon it with so much distinctness; that we can have but an imperfect view of the powers really consigned by Christ to His Church, without a brief consideration of its nature and extent. On such a question the most satisfactory proceeding is to adduce some eminent and unquestionable authority, and, as the basis of what I am about to state, I shall confine myself, for the sake of easy reference, to Hooker and to Bingham—the first, perhaps, the greatest name among the Doctors of the Church of England; the latter, inferior to none in a consummate knowledge of antiquity.

“ It is true that our Saviour by these words,” says the former, “ ‘ Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted,’ did ordain judges over our sinful souls, gave them authority to absolve from sin, and did promise to ratify in heaven whatsoever they should do on earth in execution of this their office. To the end that hereby as well His ministers might take encouragement to do their duty with all faithfulness, as also His people, as submitting gladly with all reverence to be ordered by them; both parts knowing that the functions of the one towards the other have His perpetual assistance and approbation. Howbeit all this with two restraints which every jurisdiction in the world hath; 1. that the practice thereof proceed in due order; 2. that it do not extend itself beyond due bounds; which bounds or limits have so confined penitential jurisdiction, that although there be a power given it of remitting sins, yet, *no such*

sovereignty of power that no sin should be pardonable in man without it^c.” “If the ministers of Christ,” says the latter, “observe exactly the rules, which He has prescribed, in judging sinners and pardoning sin—if they neither through haste or partiality, or ignorance and error, condemn the guiltless or absolve the guilty; then their sentence, whether it be of remitting or retaining sins, will be confirmed and ratified in Heaven; because they act according to the tenor of their commission, and only as faithful stewards conforming to the measures and rules which their sovereign Lord has appointed them. . . . but this is that noted difference between the power of God and man in forgiving sins—the one does it by an absolute and independent authority; the other only by a subordinate and restrained commission, which is *rather a declaration of God’s will, than any sovereign power* invested in him. . . . Yet this does not hinder but that man may have a ministerial part in the forgiveness of sins, in such acts as are by commission entrusted with him^d.” So much for the power in general and its divine sanction. The difference between the views of the Church of Rome and the Church of England, supported by Scripture and antiquity, is thus stated by Hooker. “It is not to be marvelled at, that so great a difference appeareth between the doctrine of Rome and ours when we teach repentance. They imply in the name of repentance much more than we do. We

^c Hooker, lib. vi.

^d Bingham, vol. viii. p. 412.

1 " Ideo enim," says Bellarmine, " Deus fidelis et justus dicitur, dum peccata confidentibus remittit, quia stat promissis suis, nec fidem fallit. At promissio de remittendis peccatis iis qui confitentur Deo peccatasua, non videtur ulla exstare in divinis literis: exstat autem promissio aper-tissima iis qui ad illos accedunt, quibus dicitur est, Joh. xx. Quorum remis-eritis peccata, remittuntur eis." " Christus," he says again, " instituit sacerdotes judices super terram cum eâ potestate, ut, sine ipsorum sententiâ, nemo post baptismum lapsus reconciliari possit." Bellar. de pœn. l. 3. c. 2. Such

stand chiefly upon the due inward conversion of the heart; they, more upon works of external show. We teach above all things *that repentance which is one and the same from the beginning to the world's end; they a sacramental penance, of their own devising and shaping; we labour to instruct them in such sort, that every soul which is wounded with sin may learn the way how to cure itself; they, clean contrary, would make all sores seem incurable unless the priests have a hand in them. Touching the force of whose absolution they strangely hold, that, whatsoever the penitent doth, his contrition, confession, and satisfaction, have no place of right to stand as material parts in this Sacrament, nor consequently any such force as to make them available for the taking away of sin,—in that they proceed from the penitent himself, without the authority of the Minister, but only as they are enjoined by the Minister's authority and power. So that no contrition or grief of heart, till the Minister exacts it, no acknowledgment of sins but that which he doth demand, no praying, no fasting, no alms, no repentance, nor restitution for whatsoever we have done can help, except by him it be first imposed. It is the chain of their own doctrine; no remedy for mortal sin committed after baptism, but the sacrament of penance only¹—no sacrament of penance if either matter or form be wanting, no ways to make these duties a material part of the Sacrament, unless we consider them as required and exacted by the priest."*

According, therefore^e, to the primitive Church and to our own, the forgiveness of sins is attributed

is the Romanist doctrine—and such, incredible as it seems, is the doctrine of the Tractarian theologians—at least it is difficult to understand them otherwise.

^e The statements of Luther on doctrinal subjects are always eminently striking; and, though there are some points in the following passages which require modification by limiting truths, yet they are so vigorous, and strike so directly on the very head of the question, that they are worth citing. It should be observed, as I have noticed before, that the Lutherans attach great importance to the ministerial absolution.

Nothing can be more intensely Romanist—a doctrine not only opposed by holy writ, but almost as much so, to the ancient Fathers, who are the professed model of imitation.

“He first contrasted man’s pardon with God’s pardon. There are,” said he, “two kinds of remission: the remission of the penalty, and the remission of the sin. The first reconciles outwardly the offender with the Church. The second, which is the heavenly grace, reconciles the offender with God. ¹If a man does not find in himself that peace of conscience, that joy of heart which springs from God’s remission of sin, there is no indulgence that can help him, though he should buy all that have ever been offered upon earth.” He continues: “They wish to do good works before their sins are forgiven them,—whilst it is indispensable that our sins be pardoned before good works can be done. It is not works which banish sin; but drive out sin, and you will have works.

For good works must be done with a joyful heart, and a good conscience towards God, that is, with remission of sins.” He then comes to the chief object of this Sermon, which was also the great end of the whole Reformation. The Church had put itself in the place of God and His word; he rejects her assumption, and shews every thing to depend on faith in God’s word. “The remission of the sin is out of the power of pope, bishop, priest, or any man living; and rests solely on the word of Christ, and on thine own faith. For Christ did not design that our comfort, our hope, and our salvation, should be built on a word, or work of man, but solely on Himself, on His work, and on His word. . . . Thy repentance and thy works may deceive thee, but Christ, thy God, will not deceive thee, nor will He falter, and the devil shall not overthrow His words.” “A pope or a bishop has no more power to remit sin than the humblest priest. And even, without any priest, every Christian, even though a woman or a child, can do the same. For if a simple believer say to thee, ‘God pardon thy sin in the name of Jesus Christ,’—and thou receive that word with

¹ This is what one constantly finds in the Reformers—a tendency absolutely to identify the pardon with the sense of it.

' On this point there is very observable in many Churchmen a struggle of feelings—a desire to grasp the authoritative power which leads them to reject, as inadequate, a mere declaratory absolution—and yet a lack of courage to avow the Romanist doctrine. But it ought to be well observed, that there is no *via media* here—it must be one or the other. If not declaratory—then it is authoritative. If really authoritative, *you ought to be omniscient too*—for, pardon once pronounced, the guilty is exempt from punishment. The absolution is, ipso facto, an acquittal. Now in the very wisest of men, can we believe the absolu-

solely to the act of Almighty God, as that which comes and *can* come only from Him against whom we have offended, and who has the sovereign power to pardon; and it follows immediately on the appearance of true repentance, which itself, as well as the pardon, is attested by those fruits of the Spirit which God alone can enable us to work¹. But the Romanists attribute all this exercise of *regal power* directly to the Priest through the Sacrament of repentance. There is nothing subordinate or *merely declaratory*; all is absolute; and the will of the priest in granting absolution is with them *the cause* of that effect, which, really and truly, can only be wrought by the omnipotent power of God. This is an error most perilous to souls, and one to which, I fear, the scheme of penitential discipline, at present promulgated, has too great a tendency to approximate. Yet so strong is the force of truth, and common sense, and the words of Scripture, that, in direct contradiction of itself, the

firm faith, and as though God Himself spake it to thee,—thou art absolved.” “If thou dost not believe that thy sins are forgiven thee, thou makest thy God a liar, and shewest thyself to hold more to thy vain thoughts than to God and His word.”

“Under the Old Testament, neither priest, nor king, nor prophet, had authority to declare remission of sins. But under the New, every believer has this power. The Church is full of remission of sins! If a devoted Christian should comfort thy conscience by the word of the cross, whether that Christian be man or woman, young or old, receive that comfort with such faith as to endure death a hundred times, rather than doubt that God has ratified it. Repent; do all works thou canst; but let faith in pardon through Christ hold the first rank, and command the whole field of your warfare.”

D'Aubigne's Reformation, vol. i. p. 370.

¹ Council of Trent in fact confesses, that contrition made perfect by charity, does, at all times, reconcile offenders to God, before they come to receive actually the Sacrament of penance. ² Bellarmine likewise says, "that whosoever turns to God with his whole heart, has his sins immediately taken away; and if a man be really converted, his pardon can neither be averted or delayed." It follows, therefore, from their own confession, that, whatever effect absolution may have, which need not here be defined, it cannot at any rate be a cause to produce that effect which had already been wrought, before absolution was pronounced, and which no withholdment of the sacerdotal absolution can in any way reverse. And this is so clear, that, unable to deny the fact, the Romish casuists elude the conclusion by affirming, 1. ³ That in penitents who feel sorrow without love, the *act* of absolution confers this tenderness of heart, which is an indispensable condition of pardon. And, secondly, That, even where inward repentance cleanses without absolution, yet the reason to which its efficacy must be attributed is the desire felt by such penitents to receive that absolution, which circumstances prevent them from obtaining. The first, is a dangerous figment without any foundation at all; and, as to the latter, if it be granted to be true, that in a real penitent there must be a desire to obtain what we thus, for the sake of argument, suppose to be commanded, it is only a proof that it is the truth of the *inward contrition* which works all in all; and that the priest does not, even so much as by *ministry* and as the representative of his Master, forgive the sinner, or remove the stain of

tion and the true penitent heart to be *always coincident?* if not, what becomes of your omniscience? or, will the absolution secure God's pardon to the impenitent? Yes. Well then, what becomes of God's holiness, and the Gospel declarations? If you shrink from such a conclusion, and insert conditions, what becomes of the authoritative absolution? veil it as you please, it is merely declaratory—if the man be a true penitent, the pardon is ratified—if not, it does not avail him.

¹ Concil. Trid. Sess. 14. c. 4.

² Bell. de Pœn. lib. 2. c. 13.

³ This is that most dangerous distinction between attritio and contritio. "Attritio

solum dicit
dolorem
propter pœ-
nas inferni
—dum quis
accedit *at-*
tritus, per
gratiam Sa-
cramenta-
lem fit *con-*
tritus." Soto.
vid. Con. Tr.
Sess. 14. c. 4.

I have
observed in
a former
Lecture,
that, on the
important
question of
justification
by inherent
righteous-
ness, there
is much
more scrip-
tural in
the elder
than the
later School-
men. So it
is here. So
on the Sa-
craments,
on which
their views
were clear-
ly identical
with the
Reformers.
"Quod ad
circumcisi-
onem se-
quebatur
remissio,
fiebat, ra-
tione rei
adjunctæ
et ratione
pacti divini,
eodem plane
modo quo
non solum
hæretici,
sed etiam
aliquot
vetustiores
Scholastici
vulnerunt
nova sacra-
menta con-

guilt, or absolve from the punishment that is due to it. And this is the language of the elder¹ school divines^f; and, though they attribute other effects, unsanctioned by holy writ, to the act of priestly absolution, yet they ascribe the real removal of sin, and the eternal punishment due to it, to the mere pardon of Almighty God, without dependency upon the priest's absolution, as the cause by which it is effected^g.

^f Peter Lombard says, "that we may affirm with truth, and believe, that God alone remits or retains sins, and yet that He has given the power of binding and loosing to the Church. But He binds and looses after one manner, the Church after another. For He remits sin by Himself alone, who cleanses the soul from inward pollution, and looses from the debt of eternal death. But He has not given this power to the priests, to whom yet He has given the power of binding and loosing, that is, *of shewing who is bound and loosed*." Hom. Senten. b. 4. Hoc sane dicere ac sentire possumus, quod solus Deus dimittit peccata et retinet; et tamen Ecclesiæ contulit potestatem ligandi et solvendi; "Ipse enim per se tantum dimittit peccata: quoniam et animas mundat ab interiori mundâ, et a debito æternæ mortis solvit. Non autem hoc sacerdotibus concessit, quibus tamen tribuit potestatem solvendi et ligandi, id est, *ostendendi homines ligatos vel solutos*." And so Jerome in Matt. 16. tom. 9. p. 49. "Istum locum;" i. e. To thee will I give the keys, &c. "Episcopi et Presbyteri non intelligentes, aliquid sibi de pharisæorum assumunt supercilio, ut vel damnent innocentes, vel solvere se noxios arbitrentur; cum apud Deum non sententia sacerdotum; sed reorum vita quærat. Legimus in Levitico de leprosis, ubi jubentur ut ostendant se sacerdotibus, et si lepram habuerint, tunc a sacerdote immundi fiant; non quo sacerdotes leprosos faciant et immundos, *sed quo habeant notitiam leprosi et non leprosi*, et possint discernere qui mundus quive immundus sit. (Quomodo ergo ibi leprosum sacerdos mundum vel immundum facit, sic et hic alligat vel solvit Episcopus et Presbyter; non eos qui insontes sunt vel noxii; sed pro officio suo, cum peccatorum audierit varietates, scit qui ligandus sit, quive solvendus.)

^g "A reatu mortis æternæ absolvitur homo a Deo per contritionem;

But Romanist divines, throughout, manifestly labour under a sense of these difficulties, and waver to and fro in their statements, as the necessities of controversy constrain them—they struggle painfully and desperately to reconcile what holy writ has made irreconcilable—the Majesty of God as Judge, and of Christ as the Mediator, open to every sinner that approaches Him in the power of faith, with the independent power of the Church, and her prerogatives of vicarious royalty. Admirably well has the Church of England done her duty in leaving this attribute of her God and Saviour completely unencroached upon—unobscured by the slightest ecclesiastical interposition—alone in its awfulness and divine grandeur. Nor has she presumed either to *define* by abstract rules, or abandon to ministerial discretion, save in cases where the outward eye can judge¹, the extent of that sorrow which God requires. God Himself has not done so; nor does she fill up what He has left to her uncertain, or circumscribe His pardon. *The heart* is what He demands—and it is the sincerity of the offering, of which each man is the sole judge, which renders it acceptable in His sight—

manet autem reatus ad quandam pœnam temporalem, (this is the doctrine adopted by the Tractarians,) et minister Ecclesiæ quicumque, virtute clavium tollit reatum cujusdam partis pœnæ illius." Abul. in Defens. p. 1. c. 7. "Signum hujus Sacramenti est causa effectiva gratiæ sive remissionis peccatorum; non simpliciter, sicut ipsa prima pœnitentia, sed secundum quid quia est causa efficaciæ; gratiæ quâ fit remissio peccati, quantum ad aliquem effectum in pœnitente, ad minus quantum ad remissionem sequelæ ipsius peccati." Alex. Hales. p. 4. 9. 14. quoted by Hooker.

ferre gratiam." Allen de Sacr. in Genere. So Bellarmine states the opinion of Bonaventure, Scotus, Durandus, &c. Bellar. de Sacr. in Gen. c. 39. The nearer you get to Trent, the more decided the departure from Scripture. "Nos a communi-one quenquam prohibere non possumus, quavis hæc prohibitio nondum sit mortalis . . . quis enim sibi utrumque audet assumere, ut cuiquam ipse sit et accusator et iudex? Non enim temere et quodammodolibet, sed per iudicium, ab Ecclesiæ communi-one separandi sunt mali, ut si per iudicium auferri non possint, tollerentur potius, velut paleæ cum tritico. Multi cor-

riguntur, ut
Petrus;
multi tole-
rantur, ut
Judas;
multi
nesciuntur,
donec veni-
at Dominus,
et illumina-
bit abscon-
dita tene-
brarum.”
Rhen. ad.
de dog. Ter-
tull. (Hook.
l. vi.)

and it is His favour, through Christ, which supplies all that is wanting in the sacrifice of the penitent and the contrite heart. “God’s merciful inclination towards men,” says Chrysostom, “is such¹, that repentance offered with a single and sincere mind He never refuseth—no, not although we have come to the very height of iniquity^h.” And such is the consentient voice of all the Catholic Fathers, before Rome defined otherwise.

1 Yet there were some offences to which, as it seems, the ancient Church refused absolute resolution. “Quis enim,” says Tertullian, —now a Montanist, —“timebit prodigere, quod habeat postea recuperare? Quis curabit perpetuo conservare, quod non perpetuo poterit amittere? securitas delicti etiam libido est ejus.” Tertull. de Pudic. c. 9. So afterwards held Novatian. But this was going beyond the Church Catholic, which permitted one

But this point is only preliminary to a second; this may be true, that God withholds pardon from no true penitent, and yet confession of sins to the Ministers of Christ may nevertheless be a positive condition of the divine scheme, though forgiveness may proceed solely from Him. Has Scripture then bound them together, so that the one shall be *inseparable* from the other? Certainly not². The promises of divine forgiveness have no such limitation. When the Apostle presses upon his converts confession of sins, it is to one another; nor, in that passageⁱ, is it usually supposed, even by Romish commentators, that any other confession is intended but that which seeks the association of our brethren in prayers, or in reconciliation, or in the pardon of wrongs. Vainly does Bellarmine endeavour to wrest this text to his purpose, as well as the declaration of St. John, “If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Surely, had such been the intention,

^h Chrys. de Rep. Cas. lib. ad Theo. c. 4. p. 553. t. 4. ed. Par. ⁱ Jas. v. 16.

² “Miror autem,”

the Spirit would have said expressly, “ On condition that they are confessed to the Priest;” and, in omitting this condition, it must have been the design of Almighty God to emancipate this gracious promise from any such fetters, and to give it a Gospel fulness. And when it is added, that the Scriptures alike of the Old and New Testament abound in these proffers of God’s mercy, and that they are the burden of the Prophets as well as of the Apostles¹, is it possible that a believer in holy writ can submit to so important a limitation, without the sanction of the divine record? Yes, it is; if he presupposes that there is a second Canon, an unwritten traditive rule, by which the interpretation of the written word is to be regulated—but *it is impossible*, if the written Scripture be the sole authoritative rule of faith. Nor can it be *proved* that the Fathers, with all their zeal for the penitential discipline, judged other than scripturally in this question. Surely, otherwise Chrysostom would never have said, “ I wish thee not to betray thyself publicly, nor to accuse thyself before others. I wish thee to obey the Prophet, who saith, ‘ Disclose thy way unto the Lord—confess thy sins before Him—tell thy sins, that He may blot them out.’ ” Or again: “ Let the *enquiry and punishment* of thy offences be made in thy own thoughts; let the tribunal whereat thou arraignest thyself be without witness; let God, and only God, see thee and

says Calvin, “ quâ fronte ausint contendere confessionem de quâ loquuntur juris esse divini; cuius equidem vetustissimum esse usum fate-mur, sed quem facile evincere possumus olim fuisse liberum.” Calv. Inst. lib. iii. c. 4.

¹ The habit of dwelling on ecclesiastical antiquity as the interpreter of Scripture sorely indisposes the mind to pay due reverence to Scripture itself. What a postulatam in the examination of evangelical repentance, to put out of the question the Gospels and the Old Testament. Yet so has Mr. Wordsworth done in his learned, and, in many points, beautiful discourse upon it. Surely it is for Almighty God to limit His

¹ “ Non dico tibi, ut te prodas in publicum, neque ut te apud alios accuses, sed obedire te volo prophetæ dicenti, ‘ revela Domino peccata tua.’ ” Chrys. Hom. xxxi. ad Hebr. et ad Psalm. xxxii. Hom. v. de Incarn. Dei. itemque de Lazaro.

pardon, and thy confession^k." But whilst it is thus certain, both the conditions of it—from the Scripture and from the greatest of the Fathers, that there is forgiveness of sins in general, without confession to man *as a necessary condition*—another question must be answered, 1. Whether, though not *necessary*, it may yet be *fitting and desirable* in many cases? and, 2. Whether there may *not be some cases*, when such confession is *not only fitting and desirable, but indispensable?*

I. There can hardly be any question, that holy writ, both directly, by example and by precept, and indirectly by its whole spirit, *does* encourage between Christians a communication of their spiritual wants and necessities—they are bound together so strictly in the bands of the closest spiritual brotherhood, that *all* are interested in the joys and sufferings of each member of Christ. When the soul, therefore, is smitten with a sense of sin, and fearful of having forfeited the love of God and incurred the suspension of the covenanted blessings secured to those who are one with Christ—or, when, in that fearfulness of profaning holy things which a sense of unworthiness may inspire, it dreads approaching to the holy mysteries in which we receive Christ; it is not only the natural dictate of the heart, but the clear suggestion of reason, that we should unbosom ourselves to our brethren. "Only," says Origen^l, "be circumspect

^l Circumspice diligentius cui debes confiteri peccatum. Proba prius medicum, cui debes causam languoris exponere. Psalm 37. Hom. 2.

^k Παρὰ τοῖς λογισμοῖς γενέσθω τῶν πεπλημμελημένων ἡ ἐξέτασις· ἀμάρτυρον ἔστω τὸ δικαστήριον· ὁ Θεὸς ὁράτω μόνος ἕξιμολογούμενον. Chrys. de confess. et pœnit. quoted above. "Ante Deum confiteri peccata tua, &c." Ps. 32. likewise above quoted. Vid. Cassian. Collat. xx. c. 8. p. 771. Prosper. "de vita" Contemp. lib. 2. c. 7. Bibl. Patr. tom. 8. p. 63. (Vid. Hooker, book vi.)

in making choice of the party to whom thou meanest to confess thy sin; know thy physician before thou use him." Moreover, in addition to the blessing of ghostly *counsel*, there is assistance to be obtained from the prayers of godly men, who, through the merits of the mighty Intercessor, have power to plead for their brethren at the throne of grace. And this is the very ground on which St. James exhorts Christians to mutual confession—because the prayer of the righteous man availeth much.

From this it will legitimately follow, that it *may be for the good* of the soul, though not indispensable, that confession should be made, even for secret offences, as it often was in the primitive Church, before the assembly of the faithful—and that the united prayers of the assembled Church should rise to God in behalf of their afflicted brother¹. "Let thy mother the Church," says Ambrose, "weep for thee—let her wash and bathe thy faults with her tears—our Lord loves that many should become suppliant for one." And, secondly, that it is *pre-eminently* to the Minister of Christ, watching under the great Pastor, over the souls committed to his charge, that such confession should be made; the wounded spirit should find in Him a physician, the bewildered a guide, and the penitent a comforter; one who may point out the remedies, and so instruct, that the sinner may mourn without despair, and hope without presumption. I do not say that *men must* come—but it is a blessed thing, in trouble and distress, so to come. For, though such an one

¹From early times, however, it was with difficulty that men were brought to this humiliation. "Hoc ergo," says Ambrose, "in Ecclesia facere fastidis, ut Deo supplices, ut patrocinium tibi ad Deum obsecrandum sanctæ plebis requiras" then, "Fleat pro te mater Ecclesia, et culpam tuam lacrymis lavet; videat te Christus mœrentem, ut dicat, Beati tristes, quia gaudebitis. Amat, ut pro uno multi rogent." Amb. de Pœnit. lib. ii. c. 10. Hear Tertullian in his passionate way, "In uno et altero Ecclesia est, Ecclesia vero Christus. Ergo cum te ad fratrum genua protendis; Christum contractas,

Christum
exoras.
Æque illi
cum super
te lacry-
mas agunt,
Christus
patitur,
Christus
Patrem de-
precatur.”
de Pœnit.
c. 10.

¹ This of course must depend upon the knowledge which a penitent has of himself and the Gospel.

Novatian, as recorded by Cassian, says well in such a case, “ Pœnitentiam agere debeo, non accipere ; necessaria mihi non est vel admonitio vel intercessio sacerdotis.” Cassian’s answer is too sacerdotal, and quite unscriptural. “ Non ita est.

Nam Deus qui eruditendis peccatoribus per prophetam adiutoria procurat, neminem sibi per se sufficere posse confirmat—quite sufficient if

might go immediately to God, and must from Him obtain forgiveness at the last, yet there is not always enough of faith or of courage to draw near to the mercy-seat. It is hardly possible, for example, that he who has once tasted of the heavenly gift and the powers of the world to come, and yet fallen away from grace, crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame, should be able at once to approach his Lord, as a merciful and faithful High Priest, who is both able and willing to save to the uttermost all those that come to Him. Surely it is but right that such mourners should have recourse to some one who has authority to give them succour and direction; who can rightly apply the word of God to their souls, and give them a true apprehension both of Him and of themselves.

The Minister of Christ¹ can usually judge better of the condition of sinners than they themselves, and than an ordinary Christian—and not only is it his office to call them to repentance, and to intercede with Almighty God—but he has an express power, when he finds them real penitents, to declare them absolved by God, and restored to His favour; to assure them further comfort, on the authority of his commission, that there are no sins which God will not forgive, if they bring with them to the mercy-seat the condition of pardon—repentance for their sins past, and a vital fruit-bearing faith in Christ their Saviour. And upon this account it is that the Church of England, though she does not bind it upon all men to make a particular confession of their sins to their Minister in all cases, yet does, in one specified

emergency, require it at their hands; "If there be any of you, who by this means cannot quiet his own conscience, (i. e. by confession to God alone,) but requireth farther comfort and counsel, let him come to some discreet and learned Minister of God's Word, and open his grief; that, by the ministry of God's holy Word, he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and to the avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness¹." And, in making private confession and absolution not necessary to all¹, but only to those whose special cases require it, and who cannot else obtain peace, our own Church keeps closer, not only to Scripture, but to the practice of the primitive ages, than the Church of Rome^m.

The French reformed Churches, modelled upon Calvin's scheme, do not practise private confession or absolution. But the German Churches, whether reformed or Lutheran, agree that all Christians, at certain times and seasons, should in the presence of their Ministers confess their sins to God—and seek, each, a particular pardon for themselves, through the power of the keys which Christ has committed to the Ministers of His Church—rejoicing in it, as a most gracious ordinance of God, and accepting the assurance of pardon as from the mouth of Christ Himselfⁿ. So much for the comfort

¹ Vid. Service for the holy Communion.

^m Vid. Bingham, Orig. Eccles. book 18. c. 3. s. 1. &c. for full proof of this—a most important point in the present controversy.

ⁿ Vid. Confess. Bohem. See likewise the Saxon Confession, which is equally strong.

he have the word of God and study it." Hom. de Pœnit. Nivnet. "Judicet ergo seipsum homo in istis voluntate, dum potest, et mores convertat in melius... a præpositis sacramentorum accipiat satisfactionis suæ modum," says Augustine, Hom. de Pœnit. "Debet," says Ambr. ad Pœn. Exhort. "Deo et sacerdoti confiteri," "so directly does the ancient doctrine tend to a necessary confession to the Priest." ¹ The necessity of confession is the prodigious step made by Rome on the primitive practice—a point in which the Tractarian divines follow not the ancient Church, but Rome. No

more effectual blow could be dealt to true penitence, than this transfer gradually of a man's conscience to the Priest's keeping— till it becomes completely indurated—no tyranny so insupportable can be imagined, no separation so complete between the soul and God.

¹ It was this public declarative absolution the absence of which Calvin regretted in his own liturgy.

² But nothing on which you have any right to build as evidence. It is not unreasonable to suppose that, in the case of the incestuous Corinthian, mentioned by St. Paul, a public confession of his offence preceded his restoration. There is no-

of confession and absolution in *many* cases to the sick conscience, and its moral necessity in others.

But the Church of England does, in fact, require a *public* confession of sin and unworthiness from *all* her members, before the absolution is pronounced by the Minister¹, which proclaims God's full forgiveness of all transgressions to those who have hearty penitence and a true faith; to all who have *confessed in this spirit*, and pleaded at the throne of grace for those divine gifts which are necessary to maintain the soul in union with its Lord. It is in every man's power to throw into the general confession his own personal sins, and, with all the pungency of sorrow which special transgressions may produce, to implore the Divine forgiveness—nor is the pardon and the sense of it less efficaciously applied, or comfortably felt, if there be a vivid faith, than if it were accompanied, as for the support of despairing souls it is in private confession and absolution, by the imposition of hands, or other forms which the Church has the power to prescribe to her Ministers.

In regard to a public confession of sins for open and scandalous offences, such as plainly broke the baptismal vow, and dishonoured the Church, such an exomologesis was probably, from the first, required in the primitive Church, and all the ecclesiastical writers after the first age abound in unquestionable allusions to it—and even in the earliest there are expressions which, without any unreasonable straining of their meaning², may be referred to the practice of it. It is, in principle, grounded on Scripture; and it may be maintained on the soundest

principles of reason and public expediency. It is this part of the primitive discipline which the Church of England has recorded her solemn wish to restore, and which, though not to be enforced, nor possible to be so, may well be an object of earnest desire—for surely they who have publicly transgressed, ought as manifestly to return, as they have gone astray^p. No better proof can be given of their unfeigned conversion—and it is making to the Church of Christ, whose members the sinner has offended, such reparation as he may, by the benefit of a public example, and a solemn warning to transgressors. Such a proof of penitency might well be followed, in the presence of the assembled Church, by a solemn declaration of absolution. But even this is a matter not of necessity, but of expediency—dependent on the state of the times and the condition of the Church—on the decay or fervour of that brotherly love in the members of the Church¹ which can alone render a public humiliation tolerable to the sufferer, or wholesome to others—and therefore the Church of England, leaving in the hands of her Ministers the power to repel from the Holy Communion notorious offenders, has only recorded her solemn conviction of the wholesomeness of such godly discipline, without prescribing it to her children as a necessity. Still, if the times should suffer it, she has the power

^p Confession, both public and private, was nearly abolished in the Eastern Church. Nectarius judged it more for the Church's honour to leave to men's own consciences what had been, before, revealed to the Priest.

de jicere." de Pœnit. c. 9. How must the sorrow of the soul have been lost in these forms ?
¹ Docetur et hoc apud eos ; quorum peccatum est publicum, atque ideo scandalum publicum, quando Deus iis largitur pœnitentiæ spiritum, externam pœnitentiæ testificationem non

thing to be gained, however, by the advocates of atoning penance or corporeal suffering by such an admission. The Apostolic Fathers give no more countenance to it than the Apostles themselves, nor to the long years of trial to which the penitent was subjected. The reality of the repentance is all that is looked to. In Tertullian's time the exomologesis had assumed an awful form; "Exomologesis prosternendi et humilificandi hominis disciplina est, conversationem injungens misericordiæ illicem de ipso quoque habitu; atque victu, sacco et cinere incubare, corpus sordibus obscurare, animum mœroribus

debere
abesse; et
hâc quidem
de causâ,
quò pro-
betur seu
planum fiat
lapsos
peccatores
qui pœni-
tentiam
agunt vere
se conver-
tere. Etiam
ut sit nota
reconcilia-
tionis cum
Ecclesiâ et
proximo;
atque ex-
emplo aliis,
quod refor-
mident et
vereantur.”
Harm. Con-
fess. §. viii.
c. v. cap.
Confess.
Bohem.

† The force
of the ab-
solutio,
according
to Rome,
lies in these
words,
“ Docet
sancta
Synodus
sacramenti
pœnitentiæ
formam, in
quâ præci-
pue ipsius
vis sita, est
in illis mi-
nistri
verbis
positam
esse ‘ Ego
et ab-
solvo.’ ”
Concil.
Trid. Sess.
xiv. c. 3.

from her divine Master to exert such an authority. But, whatever discipline she might exercise for the good of men’s souls, and however free she might be to absolve them absolutely from such penalties as she imposed, yet from sin she could only do it then, as she does now, conditionally and *declaratively*—neither condemnation nor forgiveness could go farther. And such was the sense of the best ages of the ancient Church.

In regard to the form “ absolvo te¹,” which, for stronger assurance and comfort’s sake, she directs her Ministers to use to earnest and fearful penitents, it is agreed among all profoundly acquainted with ecclesiastical history, that it was not known in the practice of the Church, till a little before the time of Thomas Aquinas, who wrote in its defence. It was truly asserted by his adversary that the primitive form was not by way of positive absolution, but by way of prayer, or benediction².

It only remains to consider, lastly, the question of *satisfaction*, on which such a fearful superstructure has been raised by Rome; whom learned members of the Church of England, to the great sorrow of all her true children³, seem following

¹ “ Absolutionem et remissionem tribuat tibi omnipotens Deus.” Not only Protestant writers, as Abp. Usher, but papists, (vid. Bingham, t. 8. p. 454.) have proved by the largest induction from the ancient Rituals and Fathers, that the old form of Absolution were all by way of prayer. And it is one of these points in which the voice of genuine antiquity is almost as decisively opposed to the Romanist scheme, as holy Writ itself. Nor do the strongest asserters of Church authority, such as Ambrose and Chrysostom, who both, occasionally, almost deify the Ministry, “ deificus ordo,” say a word of absolute remission, though much of sacerdotal intercession.

² I say *seem*, for on these questions considerable allowance must

without modification or concealment. Where there is a satisfaction, a previous injury is implied, and a due proportion between the offence committed and the reparation presented. Such is the injury which the sin of man has done to the sovereign will and the infinite love of his Father and King, entailing, by the unalterable laws of the divine government, an eternal punishment on the transgressor, unless the price of satisfaction be paid. This, which, in his feebleness man was unable to render, the Son of God, in hypostatic union with the nature that had sinned, has paid to the uttermost farthing. By His death upon the cross, and the sacrifice once offered, He has made *a full, perfect, and sufficient satisfaction* for the sins of the whole world. But, before His atoning blood can be applied to the soul, and we can become masters of this inestimable gift, Almighty God requires at the hands of all, such an earnest and heart-searching repentance as shall fit us for the due reception of it. Not that in itself it has any value, save that of propriety and fitness in a perishing sinner towards an offended God; but, by the will of God, we *are* thus made vessels fit to receive the fruits of Christ's passion. Repentance, with its works, therefore may be called a *satisfaction* to Almighty God, not in the sense of an adequate payment to His justice, but as that which He requires before He looks upon us with complacency, and is pleased, for Christ's only merit's sake, to forgive us our sins. And, though the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ is of such infinite worth, it is to be made; it is difficult to see where antiquity ends, and Romanism begins.

¹ Virgas et flagella sentimus, qui Deo nec bonis factis placemus, nec pro peccatis satisfacimus.
 “ Qui per delictorum penitentiam instituerat Domino satisfacere, diabolo per aliam penitentiam penitentiam satisfaciet.”

Tertull. de Pœnit. c. 5.
 The Greek express the same thing by ἱξιλιάσασθαι, atoning or free.

² In perfectione penitentiae tria observanda sunt; compunctio cordis, confessio oris, satisfactio operis,” etc.
 August. de Ser. Dom. in Mont. t. iii. p. 2.

³ “ Cum Deus irasci dicitur, non ejus significatur perturbatio qualis est in animo irascentis hominis, etc.”

fatally to err both against Scripture and the Catholic faith, to suppose that Almighty God *will be satisfied* as towards us individually, without the broken and the contrite heart, which, for Christ’s sake, He will not despise; or, as it is, on the other hand, to assert that *we satisfy and not Christ*; or that it is any thing but God’s infinite mercy through Him that accepts us on these conditions. It is in this sense that the Fathers, candidly interpreted, use the term satisfaction from the sinner to God, comprehending in it the whole work of repentance, and all that proves its reality.

“ We feel,” says holy Cyprian¹, “ the bitter smart of His rod and scourge, because there is in us neither care to please Him with our good deeds, nor to *satisfy* Him for our evil^p.” Augustine says², “ These things there are in perfect penitence; compunction, confession, and *satisfaction*; that as in these ways we offend God, in heart, word, and deed, so by these duties we may satisfy Him^q.” But, when Almighty God has, on our repentance and faith in Christ, forgiven a sinner, no wrath remains behind, no vindictive exaction, nothing in addition to Christ’s death and sufferings, now, effectually, through faith, appropriated. “ For God’s wrath,” says Augustine³, “ is not as ours, the trouble of a mind disturbed and disquieted with things amiss, but a calm, unpassionate, and just assignment of dreadful punishment to be their portion who have disobeyed; His true or free determination of all felicity and happiness unto men, unless their sins

^p Cyprian, Epist. 8. Epist. 26.

^q Hooker, vol. iii. p. 54.

remain as a bar betwixt it and them'." And such are God's declarations of pardon even towards the greatest offenders. "When I say unto the wicked, ^{Ez. xxxiii. 14, 15.} Thou shalt surely die; if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die." "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." The Gospel, as we have seen, pronounces forgiveness in the same terms; and neither in the examples which the Spirit gives us in the Old Testament, such as David and Manasses, though for the grossest sins forgiven; nor in the many instances where our Lord grants forgiveness; nor in the Apostolical Epistles and practice of the first primitive Fathers, is there so much as a hint, or a word, that a spark of God's wrath remained burning¹; or that, in the fulness of Christ's riches, and Christ's love, and Christ's atonement, any satisfaction remained to be made, either in this world or the next, to the vindictive justice of God. Such a doctrine dishonours^s God, undervalues

Is. i. 18.

¹ What a sense of vindictiveness seems to us to breathe in the old penitential discipline." "Hæc omnia," says Tertullian, after describing the fastings, and humiliation, and prostration at the feet of the presbyters, "exomologesis ut pœnitentiam commendet; ut de periculi timore dominum honoret, ut in peccatore ipsa pronuntiet, pro Dei indignatione fungatur, et temporalis afflictatione æterna supplicia non dicam frustretur, sed expungat, &c." See too Amb. de Pœnitentia et

^r Aug. Enchirid. de Fide, Spe, et Caritate. c. 33.

^s The duty of satisfaction as a mark of repentance, in the sense of *reparation*, and even of making up for *particular deficiencies* before, by a larger measure of good deeds *therein*, cannot be doubted. But it would be utterly impossible to separate the authoritative practice of satisfactions measured out by the priest from the most miserable abuses, however fairly the abstract statement may sound. Read the following passage from an eminent Romanist Divine.

Quæ opera injungi possunt pro satisfactione sacramentali ?

R. Quæcumque opera bona virtutis Christianæ; quia in statu naturæ lapsæ quodcumque opus bonum est pœnale et arduum naturæ corruptæ.

Chrys. celebrat. Homil. on the same subject. With all allowances, and with much that is beautiful and Scriptural, there is something very afflicting in the perversion of the Gospel by such men.

¹ Proceeding, of course, on a favourable interpretation. Without their charitable lenity, or, rather, let us say, this most reasonable allowance, the Fathers after the first age look towards Rome. But one decided passage is enough to limit a hundred indefinite ones.

the great sacrifice, runs directly counter to holy writ, and, as mighty theologians¹, teach us, against the real meaning and spirit of the greatest Fathers. I think a calm and dispassionate study of them will confirm this impression. Certainly it does not oppose this view that they term prayer, and fasts, and alms-

Quot sunt genera operum satisfactoriorum ?

R. Tria—oratio, jejunium, et eleemosyna. Ad hæc tanquam ad genera reduci possunt omnia cætera opera satisfactoria. S. Thom. q. 15. a. 3 ad 5. v. g. afflictio, morbi ad jejunium, sacra communio et quicumque actus patriæ ad orationem. . . .

Iter in genere orationum injungi possunt, semel aut pluries aut per plures dies aut septimanas sequentia :

1. Dicere quinque Pater Noster et Ave Maria, in memoriam quinque Christi vulnere, vel flexis genibus, vel brachiis extensis, vel ante crucifixum.

2. Recitare Rosarium, vel Litanias B. M. V. vel Sanctorum, &c.

3. Legere Psalmum Miserere, vel septem Psalmos pœnitentiales.

4. Audire missas, vel laudes, vel concionem.

5. Legere capitulum in Thomâ à Kempis.

6. Visitare Ecclesias, orare ante tabernaculum.

7. Statutis temporibus, mane, vesperi vel per diem, vel quotiescumque audierint sonitum horologii, renovent ore vel corde orationes jaculatorias, actus contritionis, vel charitatis : v. g. amo te Deus super omnia ; detestor omnia peccata mea. Nolo peccare amplius. Jesu crucifixe pro me, miserere mei, &c.

8. Prefixo die iterum confiteatur, vel saltem redeat ad confessarium.

Ad genus jejunii refertur quidquid ad mortificationem corporis pertinet ; ita injungi potest, vel jejunium perfectum, vel pars jejunii : v. g.

1. Jejunet Fereâ sextâ, aut sæpius.

2. Jejunet solum usque ad horam duodecimam.

3. Non bibat ante meridiem, vel post meridiem, nisi in prandio et in cœnâ, quamvis sitiât. Abstineat a vino vel a cerevisiâ forti.

4. Minus manducet, vesperi non nisi medietatem sumat, etc.

And this is the miserable formalism which the Church of England is urged to impose, instead of an evangelical repentance. Dens' Theolog. vol. vi. p. 246.

giving, works of satisfaction ; as proofs and evidences of real repentance, they are so in a legitimate sense. As Cyprian says, that those who have offended, “ should follow works of righteousness that wash away sin, (fit us, that is, for forgiveness through Christ, as signs of vital faith,) and be plentiful in alms-deeds, whereby souls are delivered from death; not as if God did, according to the manner of corrupt judges, take money to abate the punishment of malefactors.” “ Neither are they,” says Salvian, Non pretiosed affectu placent. “ with God accepted because of their value, but for *our affection’s sake*, which thereby shews itself^t.” Nor do they oppose the scriptural doctrine when they account *ecclesiastical penance* as *satisfaction* for sin, in the sense that open and notorious sinners, if repentance be real, ought to exhibit such visible marks of it, as may satisfy their brethren of the reality of their conversion. But my object is not so much to vindicate antiquity, or to recommend the adoption of its rules of penance or its dangerous phraseology, which widely deviates from the simplicity of Scripture ; but only to state the doctrine of the Church of England, in opposition to that of Rome ; and to shew that we may be defenders of the blessed doctrine of justification by faith only, and yet hold a real penitential discipline reasonably limited. And it is an important point to know that the Fathers after the first age, though, both in private and public penance, they overlaid it, yet still held firmly to the sole power of Christ to forgive sin ; and the entireness of that forgiveness,

^t Cypr. de Lap. p. 136. Salvian. ad Eccles. Cathol. lib. 1.

when there was the *reality* of a broken heart and contrite spirit.

As the sum of what has been said, in the ministerial absolution, Christ's sovereignty is untouched—and the secondary power which His Church thus possesses in the keys, and under these scriptural restrictions, is, 1. The forgiveness of sins or their retaining, which is contained in the due administration of the holy Sacraments. 2. The declaratory absolution of the word and doctrine. 3. The absolution by the prayer of the Church, or the intercession either of the Minister of Christ, or of the people conjointly with the Minister; and, 4. In the absolution^u from such

^u The following is the admirable statement by Bingham, on the *necessity of the ministerial absolution*—which is well worth studying, when, in direct opposition to Scripture, antiquity, and the Church of England, men insist upon it as *essential* to the forgiveness of sins.

“ Now the absolute and indispensable necessity of these several sorts of absolution in all cases whatsoever, is what, I conceive, neither our Church, nor the primitive Church ever asserted, though some of them are of much greater necessity than others.

“ For, 1. as to the absolution that is given upon private or auricular confession; that cannot be more necessary than the confession itself, which, except in some particular cases, is only matter of advice, rather than strict duty imposed upon all men under pain of damnation; as our Church with the primitive Church defends against the Romish imposition and yoke laid upon men's consciences in this particular.

“ 2. As to a general absolution upon a general confession, which is retained in our Liturgy, and is a defect in Calvin's; though it must be owned to be a very useful and edifying part and form of divine service, which Calvin wished to have inserted into his Liturgy, but could not obtain it, yet we cannot say it is so necessary a part of divine service, as that no Church can have absolution or remission of sins, without such a form of absolution in her

penalties, as, for the good of the offender's soul, and the spiritual safety of the flock, the Church, in the exercise of her unquestionable authority, may have thought it good to impose.

Liturgy. For this would be an unwarrantable condemnation of all Churches that want that particular form, though they otherwise supply it by preaching, which is the declaratory application of God's promises of pardon to His Church.

“ 3. The necessity of the absolution which is dispensed in the administration of the sacraments, is indeed the same as the necessity of the sacraments themselves. So far, therefore, as the one is necessary, so far the other is necessary likewise. But the necessity of the sacraments is not so absolute and indispensable, as that God cannot in many cases, where there is no contempt of His ordinances, save men without the external application of them by the hand of His ministers.

“ 4. For the absolution which is dispensed by the relaxation of the Church censures, though it be necessary to be sought after by true penitents in all ordinary cases, yet there are several exceptions in cases extraordinary, in which pardon may be had without a formal absolution. For what if a Bishop for unjust ends, or unworthy designs, refuse to absolve a true penitent, when he both gives true signs of repentance, and humbly desires absolution; will there be no pardon in heaven for him, who is so unjustly and imperiously denied it on earth by men, who exceed their power, which is only given to edification, and not to destruction? Bellarmine indeed says so, ‘negatur remissio illis, quibus noluerint sacerdotes remittere.’ Bellarm. de Pœnit. lib. 3. cap. 2.

“ ‘Forgiveness is denied to those whom the priests will not forgive.’ But this is carrying the priest's authority to an absolute sovereignty and arbitrary power, which has no foundation in Scripture or the ancient Canons of the Church. For even Pope Gregory the Great could tell these men, that the bishop in binding and loosing those under his charge, doth often follow the motions of his own will, and not the merits of the cause; in which case he deprives himself of this power of binding and loosing, who exercises the same according to his own will, and not according to the deserts of those who are subject to him; that is, his unrighteous judgment is of no value; it is reversed and cancelled in the court of heaven.” Bingham's Antiquities, vol. viii. p. 444.

Relation
between the
Church and
the State.

But to return to the relation between the spiritual authority and the civil power. That a connection between the Church and the Commonwealth is necessary for mere civil purposes, and the preservation of a public morality, may be considered as granted. Certainly it is so, so far as the ancient legislators are concerned in the question. For all of them, from the statesman whose institutions impressed a permanent character on the commonwealth, and who dealt practically with the original legislation which determined its political type, down to the mere philosophical speculator on civil government, agreed in this—they introduced their codes under a divine sanction, and placed the palladium of all social prosperity, not in the chamber of the senate, or the tribunal of the judge, but in the temple of the gods. A commonwealth without a state religion never entered into their conceptions—not merely for the interests of the governor, but for the permanent existence at all of the social state. And in modern times, whatever may have been the opinion of an inconsiderable class of speculative men, yet, till the bursting forth of that national atheism, embodied as a practical principle to men's eyes, which signalized the termination of the last century—a commixture of flame and blood, and all the ingredients of wrath and wickedness which could be fermented together—such was universally the *matter of fact*. With all the Gothic kingdoms, Christianity was not only united but incorporated, and hardly to be distinguished from the essence of their political constitution.

That the *principle itself* is a sound one, nay, fundamental to a Christian society, or *any society whatsoever* which acknowledges a God, and a superintending Providence over the affairs of men, it is scarcely possible for any religious mind to question—unless it be blinded by fanaticism, a false philosophy perverting the plainest dictates of practical reason, or the immediate interests of an unprincipled sectarianism. At the same time, it cannot in fairness be denied, that human infirmities and human corruptions, some of them most flagitious and inexcusable, have obscured that connection between things spiritual and temporal, which, at once, for the protection of the faith and the perfection of human society, the kingdom of Christ was intended to perpetuate and consolidate. Ecclesiastical ambition, as well as secular corruption, has debilitated those principles which lead to the association of all the duties and offices of life, public as well as private, with a divine sanction; which thus embraces all humanity, from the individual to the commonwealth in the union of *an acknowledged* relationship to the same God—a union in which the civil and religious elements are so combined without confusion, as to afford to each other in turn an indispensable support. The Western Church, in this respect, has perilled permanently the dearest interests of men, and stands convicted by the overwhelming testimony of history, of the most premeditated wrong-doing to the spiritual kingdom of Christ. For, arising naturally *from* her spiritual claims, and yet to be recognised as distinct from it, grew the papal

claims^{*} of *temporal* dominion—the greatest portent of wickedness, after all, which the world has ever witnessed; one which true Ministers of the Church of England should be the first to condemn; neither sheltering the sin, as unprincipled men excuse secular ambition, by the grandeur

^{*} In stating the opinions held by theologians on the temporal power of the Pope, Bellarmine divides them into three. “1. Summum pontificem jure divino habere plenissimam potestatem in universum orbem terrarum tum in rebus ecclesiasticis, tum in politicis per Christi adventum omne dominium Principum infidelium translatum esse ad Ecclesiam, et residere in summo Pontifice et vicario summi et veri regio Christi—et ideo posse Pontificem regna infidelium jure suo donare quibus voluerit fidelium. 2. Pontificem ut Pontificem, et ex jure divino, nullum habere temporalem potestatem, nec posse *ullo modo* imperare principibus secularibus, &c. 3. Tertia sententia media et Catholicorum theologorum communis. Pontificem, ut Pontificem, non habere directe et immediate ullam temporalem potestatem sed solum spiritualem—tamen ratione spiritualis habere saltem indirecte, potestatem quandam, *eamque summam in temporalibus.*” It is accordingly supported with wonderful argumentative resources. After reading the five first chapters of Lib. 5. de Sum. Pontif. on the spiritual nature of Christ’s kingdom, and therefore of Christ’s representative—we come to the conclusions which *he seemed to begin* by abjuring, “Asserimus Pontificem ut Pontificem etsi non habeat ullum mere temporalem potestatem, tamen habere in ordine ad bonum spirituale summam potestatem disponendi de temporalibus rebus omnium Christianorum. c. vi. Quantum ad leges, non potest Papa, ut Papa ordinarie condere legem civilem—vel confirmare aut infirmare leges Principum—quia non est ipse Princeps Ecclesiæ politicus *tamen potest omnia ea facere*, si aliqua lex civilis sit necessaria ad salutem animarum.” c. vi. ad fin. Then at the beginning of the next chapter he propounds as a necessary consequence, “Potestas civilis, subjecta est potestati spirituali quando utraque pars est ejusdem reipublicæ Christianæ, ergo potest Principio spiritualis *imperare Principibus* temporalibus.”

of the scheme, and the systematic resolution manifested in its execution; nor mitigating, by the euphemism of a "divine dispensation," the wholesome hatred of the mind for the projectors of such an usurpation. This power was by Hildebrand and Innocent exercised without concealment; but, while it is claimed at all, it matters not whether it be thus *directly* grasped, or whether the regulation of the affairs of state fall *indirectly*, according to Bellarmine's theory, into the hands of the spiritual head, from its necessity to the adequate carrying out of purely spiritual purposes. For, by thus doing, on whatever theory, not only was the papal chair placed in Christ's room, as a ruler over men's souls; but it likewise assumed the prerogative of His Kingship, in the control of earthly revolutions, and in that providence over commonwealths, by which He overrules the hearts of kings, and the fortunes of kingdoms, to the ultimate purposes of His will.

LECTURE VII.

I. The Reformation first distinctly distinguishes between the power temporal and spiritual—the dangers in a union with the State of forgetting, in any way, the spiritual characteristics of the Church—on Christ's kingdom.

II. No sufficient ground for the Millenarian hypothesis of a personal reign of Christ upon earth.

III. The restoration of the Jews, and the future prospects of the Church upon earth.

JOHN XVIII. 36.

“ Jesus answered, *My kingdom is not of this world.*”

I. **T**O the Reformation was *ultimately* due the establishment of the true theory on which states are emancipated, in temporal matters, from control by the spiritual power. Following Scripture, it laid down the principle of the magistrate's supreme authority, and its independency in all civil affairs *by divine institution*; and the consequent subjection in which, by the precepts of the Gospel, and the practice of the primitive Church, all Christians, in things pertaining to this life, are placed to the State. But it checked, on the other hand, the tendency of the State to fall off from its spiritual relation, by laying down a responsibility for the propagation of God's truth proportioned to the independence of action which it allowed, and the greatness of the office which it consecrated. But, even when the true nature of

The temporal power emancipated by the Reformation.

1 Not so however when we descend to the fourth century. Superstition breeds fanaticism, and then the step is easy to persecution. So does the possession of an exorbitant power dependent upon such abuses. Such began then to be the positions of the Christian rulers; "the deificus ordo," as Ambrose calls them. Even Augustine has expressions alien from the Apostolic spirit, and leaning to persecution, though his general tone is far otherwise. The bigoted spirit of Jerome breathes it much more unequivocally. Reformation was crushed with a high hand, worthy of papistical times. The

Christ's kingdom, and its relation to the secular authority, was thus brought out more clearly, side by side, by separating from its jurisdiction the civil duties of the State, and the accompanying renunciation of a foreign supremacy in favour of a natural Head, *all* was not yet done to develope its spirituality! For, though the submission of ecclesiastics to the authority of the magistrate had rendered the influence of the Church compatible with national independence, intellectual civilization, and, eventually, with political liberty; and though this gave the Church real strength by confining it more and more to its proper sphere; yet there still remained behind, infixed in the minds of men, a remnant of the ancient principle which demanded temporal punishments, as the correction of spiritual offences.

Such a principle never so much as entered the thoughts of the primitive Christians¹; and it is a striking proof, not only of the extent to which Rome had succeeded in ingraining the duty of persecution into the minds of men, but of its congeniality to that distrust of *God's own* ways of preserving and vindicating His truth, which is natural to us all, that, not only iron minds like Calvin's, but tender and melting natures like Cranmer's, should thus have supported the cause of the Gospel. Strange that they should thus have misunderstood the kingdom which Christ Himself has solemnly declared is not of this world; and where, whatever He may confer upon us in His bounty, He has *promised* us no other crown than the crown of thorns, and given His ministers no other

authority save that which touches the spirits and consciences of believers.

That this vast error has passed away from the minds of men; that it has been removed from the code of the Protestant, and the practice of the Romanist, is to be attributed, I fear, not so much to the concession of the ecclesiastical^a power as such, as

^a It is a point so frequently urged in extenuation of Romish persecution, and, from its undeniable truth up to a certain point, so calculated to convey an erroneous impression on a most important point, that it is necessary to draw attention to it. I subjoin for this purpose the following remarks from the pen of one to whom the Church is under more obligations than perhaps any man living.

“ We must confess the lamentable truth, that, in some instances, Protestantism has been thus polluted: yet, when we consider how slow the mind of man is to receive propositions, which at length become familiar and appear altogether incontestable, we shall not perhaps wonder at the circumstance, however we may deplore it. The sanguine spots of Rome long, more or less, adhered to those, who had reformed themselves from her superstitions: and the lessons, which had been learned in a corrupt school, were often but too faithfully carried into practice. This was only to be expected: for, except in cases of actual inspiration, the breaking in of light will always be gradual. Hence, in common equity, the masters ought to be blamed, rather than the scholars. Be this, however, as it may, there is a vital and essential difference, in the matter of persecution, between Popery and Protestantism, which ought never to be overlooked; though, for obvious reasons, the modern advocates of the Roman Church prudently pretermitt it. Persecution is part and parcel of Popery; but, in Protestantism, it is merely incidental. In making this assertion, I speak advisedly, not inadvertently: and I substantiate it on the very principles of Popery and Protestantism in themselves. A special doctrine of Popery is the infallibility and immutability of the Catholic Church so called, in all points which have been authoritatively determined by œcumenical Councils. Now the duty of persecuting and exterminating heretics with fire and sword is unreservedly propounded by at

treatment of Vigilantius and Jovinian is a melancholy proof of the declension of the times—the opportunity for retracing the path to primitive purity was not again presented to the Church for near twelve centuries. And yet those twelve centuries are now fixed upon, against Scripture and history, as the true era of Apostolical Church principles.

¹ vid. introductory remarks.

to the increasing intelligence of mankind, and the growth of civil liberty—to the manifest contradiction in the eyes of reasonable men, between a spiritual kingdom¹ and secular punishments—but mainly to the reiterated experience, that the heart of man, even in its sins, has a force in it beyond the power of the stake or of

least two œcumenical Councils, the third and fourth Councils of Lateran. See Concil. Later. III. can. 27. Labb. Concil. vol. x. p. 1522, 1523; and Concil. Later. IV. can. 3. Labb. Concil. vol. xi. p. 147—151. Such being the case, in a Church which avowedly can neither err nor change, the duty of persecution becomes an immutable and perpetual article of faith, always existing and binding, though not always capable of being carried into practice: nor can this conclusion be avoided by any modern Romanist, unless he be content to pronounce, that two œcumenical Councils have erred, and consequently that what he denominates the Catholic Church is both fallible and mutable. Persecution, therefore, is inherent in Popery: it is a part, an integral part, of the very system: nor can the Roman Church ever shake off its imposed obligation, without at the same time renouncing its own infallibility. But, with Protestantism, the matter is the very reverse. Unfettered by the chains of an imagined infallibility, Protestants censure and disown, without scruple, whatever deeds of their predecessors they observe to be unwarrantable and unscriptural. In their system, persecution is incidental, not inherent. Their fathers, so far as they practised it, learned the evil lesson in the school of Rome: but the deeds of their fathers they neither justify nor recognise as forming any part of their code of belief and duty. In short, popery stands precluded, by her own claim of infallibility and immutability, from reprobating and disowning the sanguinary abominations, which have systematically characterized the Roman Church. She may retort the charge of persecution upon Protestantism, to secure the purposes of controversy, and to mislead the sciologists of a babyish liberalism: but she well knows, that she dares not to join her rival, in pronouncing all persecution for conscience sake, by whomsoever and whensoever conducted, to be damnable, and accursed, and abominable, and unscriptural." Vide Faber's Calendar of Prophecy, p. 95—97.

the rack,—that suffering, therefore, for conscience sake, even for heresies in themselves deadly, is neither an instrument of personal conversion, nor of public example; but a martyrdom in the cause of human rights, and the certain means of extending, or giving a false consecration to an error, the conscientious conviction of which is attested by the magnanimous endurance of its punishment!

But, even short of this, to attach any material penalties whatsoever, by the intervention of the magistrate, to religious errors, *as such*, however low they may be in the scale of correction, is quite as much opposed to true Church principles—or, if it is to be palliated at all, can only be so in a state of society so unintelligent, as to invest the magistrate with the same power, and give that power the same direct influence over morality, as that which a father, by corporeal chastisement, exercises over a child; but even this is not a justification of the general principle, but only a palliation of a specific and temporary application of it.

Vid. Locke on Toleration, and Taylor's Liberty of Prophecy; the latter, the first real vindication of the rights of conscience ever addressed to modern ears; and a noble one it is.

Equally opposed to the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and unfriendly to its true interests and best influence, is the attempt to place it beyond the power of its enemies, by administering the main offices of the State directly by spiritual hands. This, in fact, is the principle of Hildebrand in a mitigated form, and holds the State, though nominally free, in a virtual subjection; whilst, by putting it into a false position, it is the inevitable destruction of the Church. And this it was which, when carried out by Laud, with his characteristic impetuosity and despotic

The direct exercise of temporal power incompatible with the spiritual nature of the Church.

temper, involved both Church and State in one common ruin, which, with false weapons, and means essentially unspiritual, he was labouring to avert¹.

¹ Vid. Laud on Episcopacy—it is but the spirit of the elder Churchmen mitigated, if mitigated, by more humanizing times.

But in all the struggles which men have thus made to subjugate more or less the secular power to the spiritual—a great principle, however imperfectly extricated, was nevertheless at stake. For Churchmen were wrong—not because religion is a thing indifferent, or heresy and schism other than awful evils—nor because men are to be abandoned to themselves, and to the imaginations of their own heart, in the concerns of the soul—nor because any scheme which should not lay down the fear and love of God as the first duty and interest of nations, was reconcileable with true statesmanship, or the unchangeable relations of man to his Maker. But they erred, either because they mistook the means, and operated unconsciously with instruments directly at variance with the objects which they had in view—or, which I fear was most frequently the case, because, being *themselves secular*, they secularized spiritual things; being themselves ambitious, they worked with the instruments that came nearest to hand; and knew not what their true vocation was, or the true spiritual majesty of Christ's kingdom upon earth. But the *idea*, on which they acted, is the predominant principle on which Scripture bases the administration of human affairs, and the only one under which societies can flourish—that commonwealths, call them by what name you please, or whatever be the distribution of the secular powers, must not only be *combined, in some way, with religion*, as even the heathens

But all States should be Theocracies.

saw, and the form of the Gothic kingdoms exhibited as a fact; but must be really *Theocracies*; and this is the base of all true theories on the union of Church and State.

For, firstly, that obedience to God and to His laws which is due from every rational creature, admits of no restriction in kind or limitation in degree—the political actions of any individual whatever, are the actions, and perhaps the most important actions, of *a moral being*—and having moral relations, and being subject to moral principles, they are just as much a part of his religious duty, as those of private life. None therefore are so high exalted as to plead exemption from that universal law which is irrespective of persons—but, in proportion to the extension of their spheres, and the greatness of their abilities, men have at once a richer offering to lay upon the altar; and a more awful responsibility to encounter, at the day of reckoning, to Him who made great minds for great purposes, and never separates privilege from duty. And wise men know well, that the growth of mankind into families, and the accumulation of families into the magnificent unities of commonwealths, are only an enlargement of the individual man with a proportionate multiplication of his duties and his moral and intellectual energies; that they are not an after-thought or an accident, but a condition essential to human advancement, and the result of a divine system. They see that this grandest form in which humanity can be represented, would dwindle into a mean and contemptible thing, only the more mean from its *mere material magnitude*, if those

elements of spiritual greatness which confer dignity and sublimity upon the man were excluded from the State.

But in order to rule the State, to regulate its principles, and train it into a godly citizenship, the commonwealth, as such, *must acknowledge* an imperial power above her; a law which is the foundation of all other laws, and which, as the condition of her existence, she is bound to obey. And this law must be not a mere inward sense of right, nor an intellectual abstraction; but the law of an *actual* and *living* Sovereign—of Him, whose vicegerents, within their proper sphere, earthly magistrates are—neither more nor less. But this being granted, we have to deal with God, not as nature guesses, but as revelation proclaims Him to be. His final and authoritative revelation is that of God as He is in Christ Jesus. Christ is He, whose universal laws are, from henceforth, the sole rule of kings and kingdoms, and, as the principles and limitation of all action, they must be admitted without hesitation or reserve. “Hallelujah!” is the song in heaven in the apocalyptic vision, on the spread of the Gospel into all lands, and the proclamation of Christ, as King, to the very ends of the world. “Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of God, and of His Christ.”

No men, however, or combination of men, can be expected to submit to a sovereign, whose controlling power, upon the acknowledgment of him, is to be

co-extensive with their moral action, on any ground less than an *absolute* claim on their obedience. This obedience, therefore, the Gospel *does* claim *absolutely as a right*; it makes no compromise, and submits to no mutilation; but claims admission into men's hearts, and power over men's lives, as the very and undoubted truth of God, with the most solemn warnings that the soul is perilled in its rejection.

Moreover, the visible Church of Christ, *in its primitive form and doctrine*, is the specific instrument by which that truth is propagated and preserved, and a perpetual witness maintained to the unseen Sovereign; and it is not to be received into a commonwealth as a machine of state policy, or merely as an admirable device for spreading through the length of the land a secular morality; but as a divine institution, for divine ends. And¹, wherever that pure apostolicity can be shewn in any branch of it, it is not to be regarded, as *one of many co-equal* bodies—but as the living representative, by virtue of her doctrine, organization, and succession, of the very kingdom which Christ Himself founded; and through which, and none other, its influences are to be permanently maintained, wherever it has seemed good to Almighty God to plant it.

It is on this ground that the Church of England, combining apostolicity of doctrine with apostolicity of form, claims the moral obedience of the nation, and the protection of its rulers. No mere political alliance, on the principles of Warburton or Paley, is

The primitive form of the Church, united with Apostolic doctrine, the divine instrument for the propagation of the Gospel.

¹ The Church in this primitive form was, in point of fact, the instrument of converting most of the western nations. But if purity of doctrine be otherwise unattainable, the outward Apostolical form can bind neither man nor State to obey longer the hollow shadow of a Church which Christ has deserted.

reconcilable with the truth of the Gospel, or the claim of Christ as universal King. Whether, indeed, united to the State or not, it is her duty and her glory to labour for the general good, irrespectively of secular support, or the decent honour of an establishment; and certain it is, that, being founded upon the eternal rock, she shall never perish, nor shall the gates of hell prevail against her. But, though *she* will survive, under any circumstances, the State will become an atheistic body and a corrupted mass without her—not a society or *an unity*, but a mere discord and a self-contradiction. And, for the adequate discharge of her national office, and the enforcement of that acknowledgment of Christ as King which the nation makes by its recognition of her, she has a right to demand, or rather, what beseems her better as the servant of Christ and of men's souls, it is her duty to *entreat*, for the good of all, a generous confidence and an uncompromising support.

She has no right, indeed, and makes no claim, to secular authority of any sort, and still less to a tyrannical control over men's faith; or any thing that shall exempt her from the necessity of depending, not on the interested patronage of the great, or *the fatal* protection of mere power, but the affections of her people; she grudges not *to any* that liberty of conscience, on the free exercise of which she herself is founded. But every form of succour, which is compatible with her spiritual nature, the development of her own spiritual energies, and the use of all the instruments of moral influence, she *does* ask in the

name of her Lord and Master, at the hands of those to whom He has committed the means to supply it.

Every friend of human advancement must deprecate, even on this ground only, the hour which shall divorce the Church of England from the Commonwealth. For, with its disconnection from the sovereign authority, and the consequent dissolution of the point of union¹ between the powers secular and spiritual, would perish, perhaps finally, from off the earth, the realization of that *theocratic idea*, which was propounded, for the imitation of mankind, not in the *form*, but in the *principle*, of the Jewish republic—that idea which wise and good men have ever sought to perfect, and which, in spite of some painful anomalies, and many short-comings both of Church and State, has found its nearest accomplishment in the constitution of this great kingdom, which not the calculation of statesmen, but the hand of Providence, has so marvelously compacted.

Nor would the Church herself, even *spiritually*, be other than a sufferer by the change. For, though she abandons, on some points, a freedom of action, which, if independent of the State, she would necessarily exercise, yet the loss is more than compensated by the advantages of this control in other respects. It prevents a waste of strength in the highest degree unfavourable to a concentration of her energies on objects purely spiritual; and to those influences which are propelling her, with a power that accumulates in proportion to her wants, to an active aggression upon the world, and a devoted struggle with the god-

¹ Vid. Coleridge on the Idea of Church and State; full of noble thought, such as that great philosopher is rich in;

pregnant expressions, which contain whole systems within them. Vid. the last book of Hooker, Eccl. Polit. Mr. Gladstone has made a noble contribution towards a right understanding of the

Church's relation to the State. But there are still better adjusted views in Mr. Maurice's Church of Christ.

The Church as well as the State benefited by an union.

less principles of the times. The sanction of the State frees her from that temptation to strain her spiritual influences, which irresistibly besets a Church isolated from secular support; and which renders the union of both, when it is grounded on true principles and the acknowledgment of Christ's supremacy over men and states, not an instrument of ecclesiastical tyranny, but the most effectual barrier against its establishment—the best pledge of a Christian moderation, and of an earnestness, for the good of all, in the propagation of divine truth, rather than the selfishness of personal authority, and a priestly domination. It frees her Ministers from that suspicion of carnality which attends the violent struggles, ambitious of reputation and popular influence, which are the lot of those who have no definite position or acknowledged rank in the eyes of men—and from that debasement into *mere* politics, and sympathy with the temporary agitations of the day, which, not so much from choice as an overbearing necessity, go far, in sectarian hands, to turn faith into faction, and to secularize, on principle, the Gospel of Christ.

Again, its control regulates the violences of party feeling; it imposes a wholesome impediment on those sudden outbreaks, which the earnestness of religious opinions and the unthinking impetuosity of popular zeal have a tendency to engender. These more than once, in our own times, have threatened the Church with disruption, and might still, in a fit of momentary fury, render those convocations, which, in health and union, might be effectual means at once for the manifestation

and fuller growth of her spiritual life, only the monuments to the world of a hopeless discord, or the actual instrument of her subversion.

Undoubted therefore it is, when due regard is made, on one hand, to the rights of the civil authority, and to the inalienably spiritual independence of the Church, on the other; that, in this union, the best provision is made for the extension of Christ's kingdom, and the thorough impenetration of the State with His spiritual power. And, if we can suppose the animation of the religious spirit, and the obedience of men's hearts to their divine King, to be carried throughout the land, till high and low, and rich and poor, fashioned thought, and word, and action, upon the Word of God—why then, with all the remaining infirmities of human nature, and the drawbacks of disease, and sin, and death, it would be the nearest approach to a heavenly condition, which the transgression of Adam has left to this world the possibility of attaining—“they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, saying, *Know the Lord*, for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord—for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” Jer. xxxi. 34.

II. That Christ's kingdom upon earth will ever assume a constitution nearer to the secular type, or cease, in all that makes it real, to be hypersensuous, with spiritual rather than temporal blessings as the covenanted accompaniment of it, and governed by an invisible though present Head, there is no solid ground

either in reason or Scripture for supposing. But it has been a received opinion, nevertheless, that, before the actual dissolution of all things, and the creation of the new heavens and the new earth, Christ shall live on earth for a thousand years; and shall reign in triumph with His saints, visible to men's eyes, dispensing secular prosperities as well as spiritual graces, and invested with all the accompaniments of a temporal sovereign.

Nor has it remained in the mere form of a speculation—it cannot, indeed, well do so, for it has elements about it, calculated to agitate deeply the believing mind, if the advent of the Saviour can be so approximated to the present moment as to lay hold directly on men's hopes and fears. No doubt it has always had, and now has, sober and learned advocates—pious ones it never has wanted—but still in those intervals of its long existence, when it has been vehemently pressed upon the belief of men, few opinions have, in feeble minds, created more extravagance, or even, in our own time, taken more unhappy possession of powerful though unregulated intellects.

Antiquity it may certainly plead. The truth is, that if there be any ecclesiastical tradition, venerable more than another from its unquestionable antiquity, and, in the common mode of arguing now-a-days on such questions, traceable to the Apostles, it is the doctrine of the Millennium, and the Saviour's *personal reign* on earth.

But if we scrutinize it closely, it seems to have originated from Papias^b, a friend and disciple of

^b Irenæus, lib. v. adv. Hæres. c. 33. says of Papias simply,

Saint John, and well fitted, from the loose character of his mind, to misunderstand the meaning of the

“ Ταῦτα δὲ καὶ Παπίας Ἰωάννου μὲν ἀκουστὴς, Πολυκάρπου δὲ ἐταῖρος γεγονώς, ἀρχαῖος ἀνὴρ, ἐγγράφως ἐπιμαρτυρεῖ ἐν τῇ τετάρτῃ τῶν αὐτοῦ βιβλίων.” There is in this remark nothing that asserts Papias to have been the originator of the tradition, as Mosheim observes with truth, but merely cites him as a testimony, albeit, of course, the most ancient to which he had the power of referring. Eusebius says, “ Ἄλλα δὲ ὁ αὐτὸς συγγραφεὺς ὡς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἀγράφου εἰς αὐτὸν ἤκοντα παρατίθεται, ξένας τέ τινας παραβολὰς τοῦ Σωτῆρος καὶ διδασκαλίας αὐτοῦ, καὶ τινὰ ἄλλα μυθικώτερα· ἐν οἷς καὶ χιλιάδα τιὰ φησὶν ἐτῶν ἔσσεσθαι μετὰ τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνάστασιν σαματικῶς τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ βασιλείας ἐπὶ ταυτησί τῆς γῆς στησομένης· ἃ καὶ ἠγοῦμαι τὰς Ἀποστολικὰς παρεκδεξάμενον διηγήσεις ὑπολαβεῖν, τὰ ἐν ὑποδείγμασι πρὸς αὐτῶν μυθικῶς εἰρημένα μὴ συναρακότα· σφόδρα γὰρ τοι σμικρὸς ἂν τὸν νοῦν, ὡς ἂν ἐκ τῶν αὐτοῦ λόγων τεκμηράμενον εἰπεῖν, φαίνεται.” Euseb. Ecclesiast. Hist. lib. 3. c. 39. The few notices given at the beginning of the chapter confirm, as far as they go, the estimate which Eusebius had formed of the capacity of Papias, in which subsequent critics coincide: (vid. Neander, Church Hist. on the Chiliasmus of the second century.) But the original conception of a temporal reign and resurrection of the saints came originally from Jewish sources. And as the world was created in six days, God resting from His work on the seventh, so the Millennial reign was to form the sabbath of the world's existence, as the close of God's temporal dispensation. “ Veri simillimum est,” says Mosheim, “ plures ex Judæis Christianos, quo concordiam quodammodo Judaici dogmatis de terreno Messiae regno cum Christianorum de Servatoris nostri cælesti regno sententiâ, speique Judaicæ cum spe Christianorum constituerent, duplex Christi regnum, duplicemque discipulorum ejus spem mente concepisse atque tradidisse, doctoresque Christianorum multos inventum hoc sive probasse, sive, ut alia quædam, tolerasse, ut faciliorem Judæis ad civitatem Christi transitum redderent.” De Reb. Chris. ante Constant. lib. 3. Tertullian, like Justin, speaks of the opinion as the general opinion of the Church, nor is there any thing which leads us to suppose that his sentiments on this question, as a *Montanist*, had any sectarian character. He wrote a whole book, which has now perished, upon

Apostle on a subject so easily admitting of mistatement; and then, with that eagerness for an inspired

the subject, entitled, *De spe fidelium*. The constant opposition between the external heathen world and the Church would naturally predispose the minds, especially of Judaized Christians, to embrace at once the theory of a visible and earthly triumph over their enemies; and the *sensuous* turn of those early ages would naturally give it the specific form which it actually assumed. Hence it was that Irenæus accuses those who oppose it of *Gnosticism*—a charge to which the peculiar *anti-realistic* tenets of that sect would give a specious colour, even in the case of anti-Millenarians, who were not and could not be identified with the heretical party; “*Transferuntur,*” says Irenæus, “*quorundam sententiæ ab hæreticis sermonibus.*” lib. v. c. 32. The opinions of Nepos seem to have been of the same complexion as Irenæus; and, in assailing the anti-Millenarians, he seems to have proceeded on the same topic, charging them with an over-refining spirit, destructive of all reality in the Scripture descriptions and promises—the very position of the modern Millenarians. The title of his celebrated book, which led to the anti-Millenarian efforts of Dionysius, was

¹ De Rebus
Christ. ante
Constant.
Cent. 3.

ἔλεγχον Ἀλληγοριστῶν λόγων. The following passage of ¹Mosheim discriminates, with so much truth and justice, the different shades in the Millenarian *sensuousness*, that it deserves a careful study. “‘*In divinis promissionibus,*’ inquit Gennadius, ‘*nihil terrenum vel transitorium expectemus, sicut Melitani sperant. Non nuptiarum copulam, sicut Cerinthus et Marcion delirant. Non quod ad cibum vel ad potum pertinet, sicut Papiâ auctore, Irenæus et Tertullianus et Lactantius acquiescunt. Neque post mille annos, post resurrectionem regnum Christi in terrâ futurum, et sanctos cum illo in deliciis regnatos speremus, sicut Nepos docuit, qui primam justorum resurrectionem et secundam impiorum confinxit.*’ Aptissimus hic locus est ad diversas Milliariorum, uti vocari possunt, primæ ætatis sectas distinguendas. Quatuor enim Gennadius eorum sententias enumerat: quarum princeps est Melitanorum obscure hic exposita, nec a veterum aliquo, quod ego quidem sciam, declarata. Altera est Cerinthi et Marcionis, qui omnis omnino generis voluptates, nominatim illas, quæ ex utriusque sexus conjunctione proveniunt, pollicebantur, ex conjugis idcirco in novâ illâ Hierosolymâ locum fore, statuebant. Paulo honestior tertia

sanction which naturally marked the opinions, however vague and speculative, of the early Church,

est Papiæ, quam Irenæus et alii sequebantur : quæ quidem nuptias in illud regnum recipere verebatur, at cibi tamen potusque voluptatibus cives ejus recreatum iri, non dubitabat. Cibaria vero quibus hæc placebat opinio non talia promittebant, qualia nostra sunt, gravia, opima, concoctu difficilia, verum excellentiora, nobiliora, subtiliora : ex quo efficitur, corpora etiam meliora, leviora, sicciora justis in vitam revocatis ab illis tributa esse. Quarta denique sententia Nepotis nostri est, qui generatim sanctos in deliciis regnatos esse, sciscebat—clarum est, hunc neque nuptiis, neque convivia et epulas inter civium Christi oblectationes retulisse. Concedebat sine dubio domicilia splendida, commodissima, amœna, cœlum serenissimum et temperatum, voluptates aurium, oculorum, odoratus, forte etiam novum quoddam et æthereum alimentorum genus, quale corporibus conveniat a nostris toto genere differentibus—maximam tamen felicitatis partem in animorum oblectationibus, in perpetuâ cum sanctissimis mentibus consociatione, in consiliorum et operum divinorum contemplatione, in quotidianâ scientiæ divinarum, humanarumque rerum amplificatione, in purissimi amoris sensu, in gaudio ex intelligentiæ et perspicientiæ incrementis nascente ponebat.” Two principal causes contributed to suppress in a great degree the Millenarian doctrines; the first was the stress which the Montanists laid upon them, propagating, in accordance with their fanatical dreams, the most extravagant representations of what was to take place during the Millennium. This gave a great advantage to its opponents, who pushed it to the uttermost; retorting the heresy which Justin and Irenæus would have laid to the charge of the anti-Chiliasts. This was done directly by Caius, a Roman Presbyter, who branded it as altogether the invention of the impure and abominable heretic Cerinthus.

The other cause was the *spiritual* character and influences of the Alexandrian school, which contributed so powerfully in many ways to mitigate the extreme *realism* of other schools. Origen himself was an extremely zealous opponent of the sensuous representations of the Millenarian kingdom, and endeavoured to give a totally different sense to the passages in the Old and New Testament, on which the Chiliasts relied. “Simpliciores quidam nescientes distinguere ac secernere quæ sint quæ in Scripturis

to give it circulation as an unquestionable Apostolical tradition. Its wide propagation, therefore, is not to be wondered at, both from the nature of the doctrine itself, fitted, as it is, to arrest men's minds, and from its easily combining with what we know to have been a general impression in the early Church—the speedy reappearance of the departed Saviour to judge the world in righteousness, and to avenge upon the heathen the cause of His saints. It was held in its grossest form by the heretic Cerinthus, who turned the kingdom of the spirits of just men made perfect into a Mahometan paradise^c. From this the Church itself and the orthodox Chiliasts

divinis interiori homini, quæ vero exteriori deputanda sint, vocabulorum similitudinibus false ad ineptas quasdam fabulas et figmenta inania se contulerint: *ut etiam post resurrectionem cibis corporalibus utendum crederent.*” Origen. in Proem. Comm. in Cantic. tom. iii.

^c How completely Jewish and Rabbinical were the notions of Irenæus, the following well-known passage will testify. “Prædieta benedictio (Matt. xix. 29.) ad tempora regni *sine contradictione* pertinet, quando regnabunt justi surgentes a mortuis—quemadmodum Presbyteri meminerunt, qui Johannem discipulum Domini viderunt, audisse se ab eo, quemadmodum de temporibus illis docebat Dominus, et dicebat, ‘Venient, dies in quibus vineæ nascentur, singulæ decem millia palmitum habentes, et in unâ palmite dena millia brachiorum, et in uno vero palmite dena millia flagellorum, et in unoquoque flagello dena millia botrum, et in unoquoque botro dena millia acinorum, et unumquodque acinum expressum dabit vigintiquinque metretas vini. Et cum eorum apprehenderit aliquis sanctorum botrum, alius clamabit.’ Botrus ego melior sum, me sume; per me Dominum benedic.” Middleton and Whitby ridicule this passage as equalling in extravagancy the wildest Rabbinical fables. Certainly it does throw an air of

were free, and I only mention this abuse of the theory as a fact,—not to throw an undeserved reproach on a doctrine held by so many holy men. But there was another form of it, which, albeit conceived in a nobler spirit, and free from palpable corruption, fell far beneath the sublime idea of Christ's kingdom, which we find in the Apostolic writings; and which, low and worldly as it is in comparison, was devoutly held by those whose sanctity none can doubt, and who do not usually misunderstand the scope of the Christian revelation. We find it asserted by Irenæus and Justin that it was held, as an article of faith, by the Church¹ at large in their day; and so it continued in the West, till, with other so called Apostolical traditions, the administration for instance of the Eucharist to infants, it was rejected by the Tridentine Council.

¹This shews how little the large assertions of the Fathers on favourite points are to be admitted—one would suppose from Justin, that none but the heterodox questioned it.

ridicule on the whole tradition, and it is manifestly for this and not the mere *general fact of a Millennium*, that he appeals to the authority of Papias. Iren. adv. Hær. lib. v. c. 33. For all that the most marvellous ingenuity and consummate learning can supply to vindicate this passage, and indeed the Millenarian hypothesis in general, see the Introduction to Mr. Greswell's work on the Parables. Irenæus, however, was a good and holy man, and the temporal happiness of the saints in his hands, as in that of Tertullian and others, is humanity and the human dwelling-place on earth, purified and exalted. After quoting some texts of Isaiah, in the like positive manner, *sine controversiâ*, he says, c. 35. "Hæc enim alia universa in resurrectione justorum sine controversia dicta sunt, quæ fit post adventum Anti-Christi, et perditionem omnium Gentium sub eo existentium, in quâ regnabunt justi in terrâ, crescentes ex visione Domini; et per ipsum assuescent capere gloriam Dei Patris, et cum sanctis Angelis conversationem et communionem, et unitatem spiritalium in regno capient."

It is easy to say of a favourite doctrine, it is the opinion of the Church.

Do not let it be forgotten, that Augustine accounted infant-communion as much an Apostolical tradition as infant-baptism.

The Mille-
narian hy-
pothesis
identical
with the
Jewish con-
ception of
the Mes-
siah.

The first point, which strikes us, in looking at this expectation, is its identity with those carnal interpretations of the Kingdom of the Messiah, which formed, in the Jewish mind, the great obstacle to the reception of our Lord; and which nothing, but the searching fires of persecution, and the gradual opening of their eyes to the spirituality of Christ's Kingdom, seem to have eradicated from the heart even of the Apostles themselves. Nor is it surprising that the new converts should readily embrace it; for it was recommended after all not so much by Jewish prepossession, as by those carnalizing propensities which then, as now, lay at the bottom of all men's hearts; and, without denying the faith as it is in Jesus, it presented, by its proximity in time, and consequent adaptation to our impatience under lifelong hopes and habitual mortification, a readier and more available solace to the afflicted than the final inheritance of the saints in light.

Yet nothing can possibly be more opposed to the whole tenor of our Lord's discourses or His solemn warning of the baptism of blood and the bitter cup, which, instead of regal honours, should await His true disciples. And, though the sufferings of the Apostles and early Martyrs were, in their intensity, special, and not extended to *all* Christians; and though we cannot deny the *uncovenanted* peace which Christ has sometimes accorded to His Church; it is manifest, that, in these descriptions of His Kingdom, He is not speaking of temporary circumstances, or local cha-

racteristics. It is of that fixed hatred, with which, even when it does not persecute, the world requites that contempt for its grandeurs and pleasures which marks those who have taken up their cross^d.

At any rate, the crown which the Apostles and the first martyrs were to receive was above; “Re-Matt. v. 12.joice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward *in heaven.*” And if this should be the case even with those, the first and the greatest, they that should sit hereafter on thrones, judging the twelve

^d Never was an hypothesis encumbered by such innumerable difficulties in principle and detail, as the Millenarian, nor marked by such loose interpretations of Scripture. It is said by Millenarian writers, that even to the Apostles themselves a Millenarian condition is promised in the text, “And every one that hath forsaken house, or brethren, or sister, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or land, for my Name’s sake, shall receive an hundred fold now in this present time, houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, and in the world to come, eternal life.” But our Lord has in another passage expressly declared, that those who shall be thought worthy to be the children of the resurrection neither marry nor are given in marriage—but that they should be like the Angels in heaven. And in the second place these blessings are promised specifically, *ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ*, in this time or in this life or season, which cannot well be referred to a period broken off from the existing order of things by such a discontinuity as the conflagration of the present world would occasion. And it must not be forgotten either, that woven in with this enumeration of blessings is “*μετὰ διώγμων*” with persecution—pain, and sufferings, which are wholly incompatible with the rest, and perfect prosperity of the Millenarian condition. The promise evidently implies that the riches of God’s grace and the Saviour’s love shall make their very persecutions a source of positive delight; a possession of Christ more than equivalent to all worldly possessions multiplied an hundred-fold. The whole together is an argument against the Millennium, because these words plainly declare that the only unmixed blessings in reserve for them were *in the world to come*, *ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ*.

tribes of Israel—if even they should not enter into rest save through much tribulation, much less ought the disciples at large to have expected as a covenanted condition, joy and prosperity here as well as the crown of the saints in heaven. And yet, no small portion of the early Church seems, notwithstanding, to have indulged such a hope.

The text in the Apocalypse. There is a minute dissection of this text in Whitby, well worth studying. 'The souls,' this is a peculiar expression, 'reigned with Christ.' But where? Christ reigns now, but His throne is in heaven; of the earth there is not a hint. There are obscurities over every part of it. But this is treated in a subsequent note. Vid. Pol. Synop. Rev. c. xx.

But let us come to the text in the Apocalypse *

* I will mention here a point which does not seem to have been sufficiently attended to in this highly metaphorical passage. It is the *souls of the martyrs* who are particularly designated; but why they rather than the other saints of God? This is hardly reconcilable with the condition of a state where universal love shall prevail, and not only persecutions shall have ceased, but a heavenly peace, befitting the actual presence and reign of the Saviour, shall have driven from the world all signs and recollections of an anti-Christian spirit. Not but that the eminent martyrs of Christ have been endowed with every other grace; but that the specific spirit of martyrdom is precisely that for which, in a Millenarian state, there would be the least call. But it agrees perfectly with *men, in their spirit*, a figurative resurrection of themselves, in a world still hostile. When John the Baptist is said to come in the spirit and power of Elias, there was in many striking points an exact resemblance. Not only did he resemble him in the spirit of boldness and zeal, but he was called upon to exercise a similar commission under similar dangers, and to endure similar trials of spirit from the opposition and persecution which he underwent in his zeal for the Lord, similar to those which the great Prophet of the law had to endure in his day. So it may be here—and the analogy of Scripture be preserved—yet in a state of universal love this could not be. It may mean, therefore, a succession of faithful servants of Christ, who shall heroically vindicate the honour of the Gospel, and propagate a knowledge of it among mankind, in spite of dangers, and perilling their lives in the cause. There is an entire propriety and truthfulness in the expression. Such were the noble band who from an early period have witnessed against the papal corruptions—our own Reformers, and they who now bear the tidings of salvation to the ends of the world. Per-

which is the sole scriptural authority on which this Rev. xx. 4. hypothesis has been *directly* reared. If there be

fectly in harmony with this is the declaration that “*on such the second death hath no power.*” v. 6. This is hardly applicable to glorified saints, but eminently adapted to the case of those who are exposed to persecution for Christ’s sake. They may be slain for the testimony of Jesus, but then when men have killed the body, they have no more that they can do. The martyrs for the faith shall be exposed to no more death—the *second death has no power over them*—while those who persecuted and slew them will be cast into the lake of fire. A similar declaration is made in the Epistle to the Church at Smyrna—where some of the saints in danger of imprisonment and death are called upon to be faithful, with the encouraging promise, “He that overcometh shall not be hurt by the second death.” And in chapter xxi. 8. the first description given to those who will have their part in the lake that burneth with fire *is the fearful*, those who have lacked the noble martyr-spirit. Lastly, the declaration that they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him, is perfectly compatible with a state of grace, not yet exalted into a state of glory. For the believer is said to have been raised with Christ, and made to sit with Him in heavenly places. Eph. ii. 6. He is *now* sitting with Christ in heavenly places, as having been *raised* with Him. So in 1 Peter ii. 9. believers, in their *present* state, are called a kingly priesthood. In Rev. i. 6. they are described as being made kings and priests. The sitting and reigning therefore with Christ may well take place in this life, wherein the Redeemer exercises a sovereign authority over the world. The kingship moreover is joined with the priesthood, and they usually go together. But the first is of a spiritual nature, “ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood;” 1 Pet. ii. 5.; so the second must be spiritual too, and its authority and power of the same order; the period of the priesthood of the believer is likewise described in Scripture as of this life, and therefore the time during which *he reigns* will be likewise in this life. Both the priesthood and the sovereignty indeed may and will be continued into eternity, and be infinitely exalted and enlarged—but here is a true and real spiritual kingdom, and a true and real spiritual priesthood notwithstanding.

any principle of interpretation more reasonable than another, it is this, that the clear declarations of holy writ shall regulate every thing on the same subject which is doubtful or obscure—that the literal should yield to the metaphorical, or the certain to the equivocal, would be to reverse the laws of reason, and to involve the science of Hermeneutics in inextricable confusion. No statement therefore, in itself obscure, and in a book confessedly so highly figured, can control the unequivocal declarations of our Lord Himself.

Scripture mentions only two comings of Christ to the earth.

Now our Lord describes but one more coming of Himself to the earth—He came once to save it—He shall come again to judge it. Upon His descent from heaven, with all His holy angels with Him, all nations are immediately assembled before Him^f; and,

^f Scripture, contrary to the Millenarian hypothesis, represents, *in very numerous passages*, the reward of the righteous and the punishment of the ungodly, as taking *place simultaneously*, and *in passages, which, beyond dispute, refer to His second coming*.

For instance, Matt. xiii. 37. The separation of the tares from the wheat; the burning of the tares, and the shining forth of the righteous.

Matt. xiii. 47. The net cast into the sea; the casting the evil into the fire, and gathering the good into vessels.

Dan. xii. 21. The awakening a part of mankind to everlasting life; of a part to everlasting contempt.

Matt. xvi. 27. Christ's coming, and rewarding *every man*, according to his works.

Matt. xxii. 11. The casting out of the man without the wedding garment, and the banquet of the accepted guests.

Matt. xxv. 14. The parable of the talents.

Matt. xxv. 31. The coming of the Son of man in His glory; with the reception of the faithful into the kingdom prepared for them, and the banishment of the wicked into everlasting fire.

John vi. 39. joined with John xii. 48. The raising up at the

upon passing sentence upon the just and on the unjust, both the multitudes of the wicked and the glorified saints are conveyed to their everlasting habitations; the one to eternal chains under darkness, the other to the company of heaven, and the inheritance prepared for the saints from the beginning of the world. "This same Jesus," say the angels at His ascension, Acts i. 11. "which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven;" with clouds, that is, and great glory, and His holy angels with Him; not to dwell on earth with you,

last day of what God has given to His Son; and the judgment, at the same last day, of him who has rejected the Gospel.

John v. The rising of the good to life, and the evil to damnation.

Acts xvii. 31. The judging of the world in righteousness by the man whom He hath ordained, i. e. the whole world, good and bad.

1 Cor. xv. The destroying of all enemies to Christ, and the swallowing up of death in victory to the just.

2 Cor. v. 9. The judgment-seat of Christ, at which *all* shall receive the reward of the deeds done in the body.

2 Thess. i. 8. Christ revealed in flaming fire to the wicked, and glorified, at the same time, in His saints.

Vid. 2 Tim. iv. 1. 2 Pet. iii. Jude 14. Rev. i. 7. There is but one escape from this enormous weight of opposing evidence; and that is, by holding that the whole thousand years is *one* day of judgment, the end of which, in the sight of God, may synchronize with the beginning. But, apart from all other considerations, the awful events which separate the Millennium from the end of the world, and are days of turmoil and unparalleled trouble, are utterly irreconcilable, on such a theory, with Scripture or right reason.

On this hypothesis, moreover, Scripture ought to speak, not of *the* resurrection, but the *two* resurrections; for a gulph of a thousand years, in the chronology of a world only 6000 years old altogether, cannot be thus built over; nor the events at the two extremities be compelled to meet together, as though the interval were imperceptible.

but to assume you with Himself into that Paradise wherein He is gone to prepare a habitation for you.

Acts iii. 20, “ And He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was
21. preached unto you; whom the heavens must receive, until the times of restitution ^s of all things (or rather the accomplishment of all things) which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy Prophets since the world began”—evidently therefore at the end of the present system, for they will not be accomplished till then.

So Saint Paul, in his description of Christ’s coming, connects the issue of it, throughout, not

^s The rendering of ἀποκατάστασις by restitution does not express the meaning of the passage, nor is it intelligible; there is no sense in speaking of the restoration of all things which God has spoken; though a fulfilment of them is natural, and reasonable. And no where has God spoken of the earth being restored to its former, or paradisaical condition; even *if* the whole outward conditions of it *were* ever more akin to a heavenly perfection in all material beauty than we have any reason to suppose.

What the Prophets have spoken of, has been the coming of the Son of God on earth in the flesh to redeem mankind; His life, and death, and resurrection, and ascension, the preaching of the Gospel to the Gentiles, the reign of Antichrist, and the restoration of the Jews. These things, though all declared by the fore-knowledge of God as designed to be, still wait their accomplishment; and till then, the heavens retain the person of Christ. Mr. Faber has insisted on this reading of ἀποκατάστασις in his Calendar of Prophecy; and I subjoin the following from Whitby; “ ἄχρι χρόνων ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων, is, by the Syriac, rendered, until the fulness of the time of all things; by the Arabic, till the time in which all things shall be perfected or finished; by Tertullian, adusque tempora exhibitionis omnium; by Irenæus, atque ad tempus dispositionis omnium; by Œcumenius, till the time that all things do, εἰς πέρας ἑλθῶν. And for the confirmation of this import of the word, we have the suffrage of Hesychius and Phavorinus, that ἀποκατάστασις is τελείωσις, the consummation of a thing.

merely with a judicial distribution of rewards and ^{1 Cor. xv.} punishments to the righteous and the wicked, but with ^{2 Cor. v. 9.} the final and irrevocable condition of both. ^{2Thess.i.8.} So the Apostle Peter connects the second advent, with such a dissolution of the frame of the earth, and conflagration of the planetary heavens, as is incompatible ^{2 Pet. iii. 7, &c.} with any thing, which, like the literal Millennium, still requires, when its temporary blessedness is past, the same local geography. For the same material earth, with its very mountains, and rivers, is the scene of the events which are to follow the re-liberation of the deceiving spirit from the abyss—the warfare of the apostatizing powers upon the saints, and their final overthrow by fire from heaven. The same is evidently the meaning of the Catholic Creeds ^h from

^h The testimony of the Catholic Creeds, the substance of which was handed down by immemorial tradition, is decisive against the idea that Millenarianism was the primitive doctrine of the Church—it never was the doctrine of the Church at large—though Dr. Burnet affirms that it was the general doctrine of the primitive Church from the times of the Apostles to the Nicene Council. But, putting the above decisive argument out of the question, it could never in that case, (as Whitby well observes,) have made any schism in the Church, as Dionysius of Alexandria says it did, declaring, at the same time, how fully he confuted it, and reconciled the brethren that were contending about it.

Whitby likewise observes, that the old doctrine of the Millennium differed in many material points from that which is asserted by the modern patrons of it. But *at the present day* it seems advocated, at least by a large body of pious men, in *its precise patristical form*, with all its Jewish character, and Rabbiical ornaments; 1. including the rebuilding of the temple, as Lactantius, Justin, and Barnabas assert. 2. The resurrection, not only of all the martyrs, but of all the saints—according to Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, and Lactantius. 3. The personal presence of

Vid. the
Collects for
the first
and third
Sundays in
Advent.

the beginning, and is not only necessarily implied, but distinctly expressed in the formularies of our own Church.

Christ—as Papias, Justin, Lactantius, and Irenæus. 4. A profusion of earthly goods and temporal splendour, and all terrene and sensuous pleasures consistent with holy living. And this, on certain postulates of interpretation, is legitimately drawn from Scripture—the *literal* interpretation of the Jewish phrases in the Prophets *being assumed* proves the first incontestably—the second is proved, by *assuming* that the texts descriptive of the blessedness and glory of the saints, belong to this first resurrection—the third is established likewise by *assuming* that this reign is the time of *restitution* of all things, till which time the heaven must contain Christ—and the last by *assuming* the literal interpretation of the language in which the Prophets foretel the future blessedness of the Church. It is an old charge against the *opponents* of their hypothesis, among whom in every age the Church has numbered some of its best and wisest sons, that they allegorize Scripture, and do away with its *realities*—as if the future blessedness and glory of the Church were not realities; and such as faith now feels and knows to be so, though its conceptions of them are poor and faint—as if the actual triumph of the Church already, in its earthly growth, were not a *sublime reality*—as if a spiritual Israel, inheriting the name and essence of the seed of Abraham, and from which *no promise of God's love and favour is separable*, were not a *glorious reality*—as though the earthly senses, and what they see, and touch, and taste, were other than ministrant to the higher faculties; or the material beauties and riches of this lower world unfit images for the intellectual and spiritual wealth of the heavenly kingdom. But the Millennium gives to the mind a definite and measurable object—definite in time, in place, in enjoyment—it furnishes infinite food to the imagination, and wanders, by the aid of loose connections and analogies, up and down the prophetic Scriptures, moulding every particle of them into a stone to support this splendid superstructure. It makes an earthly heaven—pure and noble, as far as it may be—but still an earthly heaven—and here lies its great fascination. The great proof of the influence which a warm fancy exercises in its adoption, is an undue vehemence of assertion certainly

It will follow therefore,—in regard to such declarations of holy Writ as appear to announce the coming of our Lord to visit His people or punish His enemies, at an earlier period than the consummation of all things,—that, whatever meaning they are intended to convey, at any rate *one* interpretation is expressly excluded—and that is, His *literal* and *personal* appearance, which, on such unquestionable evidence, is to be coincident with the end of the world, and, on all the rules by which language is interpreted, cannot happen till that event arrives. This strikes at the *foundation* of the whole scheme—it is a preliminary objection, and an insuperable one—Scripture does not furnish *the fact*—the one unequivocal text,—necessary to give a Millenarian clue to the intricacies of prophecy; and a specific direction to those *indefinite* texts, which, *the leading principle being assumed*, may be made to minister scriptural evidences in its favour. But, on any thing short of such a basis of *fact*, or the assumption of it, they minister to this hypothesis no evidence which may not be easily refuted.

In the lack, likewise, of any such express and unequivocal announcement, whatever descriptions of power and grandeur we find in Scripture, and specially in the old Prophets, couched in material types, and evidently referring to the future prosperity of the Church, must be understood, not of an earthly

greatly disproportioned to the arguments adduced in its support; and too frequently an intolerance towards opponents whose reasoning certainly deserves respect. I speak of course of the *theory in its rigid* form—portions of it, with more or less modification, most theologians adopt.

condition of things incompatible with the nature of the Church in her probationary condition, but of her spiritual extension and success. Or else, of that kingdom of glory which awaits her when her trials are over, and of which holy writ, with one voice, declares that “eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love Himⁱ.”

ⁱ One consequence of the Millenarian hypothesis, and a most important one it is, is this ; that it absorbs into itself *all* the texts of Scripture which are descriptive of the blessedness of the saints ; any one conversant with Millenarian writings is aware that such is the case. The *eternal* condition of the Church, therefore, is left in total darkness, and revelation only opens to our view the delights which await the servants of God during this thousand years which must manifestly come to an end, and which are separated from the consummation of things by events of great importance which Scripture has placed in the interval. A writer, who advocates the Millennium with great ability, avows this to be the case, and says, “Beyond this we cannot advance—for, should it be asked what dispensation shall succeed to these wondrous transactions ? we can only reply, in the language of inspiration, that when Jesus shall thus have reigned in His mediatorial glory, until all things shall be subdued unto Him, then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; and then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.” “Now when I consider,” observes an able writer on the other side, “that a period of a thousand years bears a less proportion to eternity than the smallest grain of sand does to the whole earth, I never can conceive that the Holy Ghost has given such numerous and glorious descriptions concerning the state of the saints during the period of a thousand years, and has left the infinitely more important eternity which follows wrapt in darkness ; or with nothing more revealed concerning it than what would appear to me to indicate a diminution rather than an increase of their blessedness and glory ; namely, that their King will cease to reign in His mediatorial glory at the end of the period.” Gipps on the Millennium.

2. But, even in the absence of such arguments as these which demonstrate that a Millenarian reign of Christ is contradictory to the statements of holy writ upon the identity of our Lord's final and second appearance; it is opposed, in the view which it takes of the nature of the Church, in principle as well as in fact, to all the analogies of God's dealings with His people, and the unquestionable laws upon which they have been hitherto regulated. They have been, from first to last, *progressive*—progressive, not from earthly adversity to earthly prosperity, but in leading the mind from forms to spirit, from temporal promises to heavenly ones, from a miserable present condition to a glorious hope and faith in things unseen. In the Mosaic law, for instance, victory over their enemies, a land flowing with milk and honey, and all other outward prosperities, were the inducements held out to obedience, and the covenanted evidences of the presence and favour of Jehovah. But, in the Prophets, a progression is clearly discernible, things spiritual come more and more prominently forward, and the true nature of the Church and of her blessings is more clearly pronounced, and educed from the ceremonial husk.

And, whatever might have been the case with the popular mind, the saints, of old, we know looked not to transitory promises. "These all died in faith," Heb. xi. 13. says the Apostle, "not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off; and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims upon earth." Much

more then, when Christ has brought life and immortality to light, is the Christian taught to set his affections upon things above, and not on things on the earth, and to look for a kingdom in heaven, and a promise beyond the grave^k. The hypothesis

^k It is frequently asked, as if it admitted but of one reply—"To what then have Christians to look forward, if not to this palpable and intelligible reward? How are our hopes to be sustained, and for what are we to struggle?" The reply is, "for those things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, those things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." Surely it is more than an earthly existence, albeit exalted, and with outward nature more gloriously adorned, to which the exhortations of Scripture point. For, beautify it as you will, the Millenarian bliss is still a fleshly residence on earth—with lands, and houses, and temporal plenty. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt." "Provide yourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not." All those who are risen with Christ have not set their hearts and affections on the earth, but on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. "Our life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall they that are Christ's appear with Him in glory." But, if the teaching of the Millenarians be true, and the possession of temporal power, and the secular offices of a material kingdom, be the special blessings promised to the eminent servants of Christ—if, on the principle of Irenæus and Tertullian, they be the specific remuneration for patience and long-suffering, what reason is there that the Christian should not earnestly seek, and profoundly value them? You may say with the latter, that it is the copia spiritalium you value most—but still they are incorporated with the profuseness of this earthly Canaan and inseparable from it. How comes it to pass, that, when our Lord wishes to comfort His Apostles in the prospect of their martyrdom, He does not tell them that the time shall come when joy and gladness should be their portion *on earth*, but only that great should be their reward in Heaven; that when their trial is over, they shall receive a crown of glory above? Certainly, if our Lord and His Apostles knew of this

in question, therefore, involves an actual retrogradation to the beggarly elements of another covenant, and in the absence of direct Scripture testimony to support it, it must even on this ground be rejected.

3. But the same contradiction to established analogies, and God's declared intention, as it appears to me, is involved in another part of the scheme, which connects it, as it is usually proposed, with the establishment not of a *spiritual* priority, but of a temporal headship in the Jews.

temporal reign, at all events they did not consider that it was capable of ministering that consolation which the heart of faith required. Nor can it be explained on any rules of reason, how this temporal paradise in the promised land, of which the ancient Patriarchs must be sharers along with the later saints, is reconcileable with the express declaration of the Apostle to the Hebrews. He distinctly tells us, that those holy men expected no reward on earth, nor did they regard that Canaan wherein they were temporary dwellers as their country; but had set their affections upon their true home, the celestial Canaan. They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims upon earth; that they were not mindful of that country from whence they came out, but sought a better country, that is, a heavenly. They were our forerunners in the heavenly race, and in their footsteps, after our Saviour Christ, we humbly follow—how can our hopes differ from theirs? our country from their country? our home from their home? “In a word,” says Dr. Whitby, “to foretel times of peace and plenty to succeeding ages, to raise the expectation of a people whose backs are bowed down, and have been long enslaved and afflicted, is very suitable to the divine economy of the first covenant; but to promise plenty and the goods of fortune, as the reward of Christian piety and patience, and let them know that if they suffer for the sake of Christ, He will be sure to raise them up to plentiful enjoyments of the goods of fortune—this is too mean, too much beneath the sublime spirit of Christianity, to be one of her great and precious promises.”

No secular
headship
promised to
the Jews.

For surely, in the separation of the Jews from the rest of the nations, it does not *appear* that Almighty God ever intended a secular supremacy at all; or such a restriction of spiritual blessings as should ensure an *unchangeable spiritual* superiority. Before their election, the Church and the Church's promises were not so confined—they were made to all mankind before the special covenant with Abraham. Through him, too, the blessing was to become universal, and God's mercy to diffuse itself once more, from its temporary limitation, into a boundless application—and the frame-work of the law, for the preservation of which the children of Abraham were chosen, lost all its value, as a badge of exclusive favour, the moment that the reality arrived, and the light to lighten the Gentiles was finally revealed. All that was eternal and universal about it, its moral constituents and spiritual meaning, remained after it, because they existed before it; and, with the object of the distinction, the distinction itself, as a *superiority*, disappeared for ever, on the breaking down of the separating pale.

In Christianity there was no longer Jew or Gentile any more than bond or free; and Paul and Peter neither retained nor ever claimed any superiority over their heathen brethren in virtue of their national distinction. They were only members of the general congregation of the faithful—the real spiritual Israel, the descendants of the Father of all that live by faith, our Father as well as theirs, holy Abraham. This was the privilege of the chosen nation, that they were the elected depositaries of the word of life;

that, from them, according to the flesh, the King of kings should spring; that, out of their nation should come the first heralds and apostles of the truth, they on whom the Church is built, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone—and that to them, as the elder brethren, the first announcement of salvation through the Son of David should universally be made. Round that Church, and from it, have sprung up the daughter Churches of the world; and he is ignorant of his spiritual genealogy and glorious descent, who does not trace it up to the Jewish Church, itself the descendant of the Patriarchal—he has no heart for recollections of spiritual tenderness, who does not regard with true and filial reverence that venerable mother of us all. Truly in this propagation of the faith from Mount Zion till the world is filled with it, the prophecy of Isaiah has been magnificently fulfilled. “ Arise, Is. lx. 1—4. shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee; the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see; all they gather themselves together; they come to thee; thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.”

4. But, even if Almighty God had designed this temporal and spiritual headship for them *originally*, yet they had themselves forfeited their privilege, and voluntarily renounced their glorious inheritance! So our Lord declares in the parable

of the wicked husbandmen. So, in the parable of the two sons, where one said and did not, and the other first refused, but then repented and went. So, in the marriage feast, where they who were first invited were rejected on their refusal of the gracious invitation; and they who were despised and poor, and the very outcasts of mankind, were gathered together into the palace of the king, and partook of the regal feast.

But to fix them again in their ancient seats, not merely as restored to God's forfeited favour, but as an imperial nation; and to bring the kings of the Gentiles to their feet, in a literal homage, would be a direct accomplishment of that restoration of the kingdom to Israel, which our blessed Lord refused as contrary to His spiritual dispensation, and the principle of which He repudiated as a carnal conception. It was this very advent which they expected, bound up, as it was, with every national hope and traditional pride, and from their inveterate attachment to it they rejected Him who was sent unto them—the spiritual King who had no beauty that they should desire Him—and were, themselves, finally rejected.

Christ's
personal
presence.

5. (1) And this brings me to another point inseparably connected with the former—the *abode* of the descended King of Israel during the supposed Millennium is restricted to Jerusalem¹—and

¹ This likewise is inseparable from the Millenarian scheme, *which must stand or fall with it*. “In regni temporibus,” says Irenæus, lib. v. c. 35. “revocatâ terrâ a Christo, et reâdificatâ Hierusalem, de quâ ait Propheta Isaias, Ecce in manibus meis de-

his presence is thus contracted not only into a national, but the strictness of a *local* residence—the walls of a

pinxi muros tuos, et in conspectu meo es semper. Et quotquot ex credentibus ad hoc præparavit Deus, ad derelictos multiplicandos in terrâ, et sub regno sanctorum fieri, et ministrare huic Hierusalem, et regnum in eâ, significavit Hieremias Propheta.” (It is the Book of Baruch however which he quotes *with a not unusual patristical laxity.*) But the celestial Jerusalem described in the Apocalypse he considers as subsequent to the Millennium; “His itaque prætereuntibus super terram, novam superiorem Hierusalem ait Domini discipulus Johannes descendere, quemadmodum sponsam ornatam viro suo; et hoc esse tabernaculum Dei, in quo inhabitabit Deus cum hominibus. Hujus Hierusalem imago illa, quæ in priori terrâ Hierusalem, in quâ justi præmeditantur incorruptelam, et parantur in salutem.” Tertullian, however, seems to identify them; “Nam et confitemur in terrâ nobis regnum repromissum, sed *ante cælum*, sed alio statu, utpote post resurrectionem in mille annos in civitate divini operis Hierusalem cælo delatâ, quam et Apostolus matrem nostram sursum designat, et *πολίτευμα* nostrum, id est, municipatum in cælis esse pronuntians, alicui utique cælesti civitati eum deputat. Hanc et Ezechiel novit, et Apostolus Joannes vidit, et qui apud fidem nostram est novæ Prophetiæ sermo testatur, ut etiam effigiem civitatis ante representationem ejus conspectui futuram in signum prædicarit. Denique proxime expunctum est orientali expeditione. Constat enim, Ethnicis quoque testibus, in Judæâ per dies quadraginta matutinis momentis civitatem de cælo pependisse, omni mœniorum habitu evanescente de profectu diei, et alias de proximo nullam.” Tertull. Advers. Marcionem, lib. iii. c. 24.

In regard to any future temple at Jerusalem—temple in the elder sense there can be none. Scripture knows but of three temples. The first, the glorious temple erected by Solomon, and destroyed by the Babylonians. The second, erected after the Captivity, and far inferior to the first in material splendor—but far more glorious, as the Prophet has foretold, by the coming of the Messiah, whose presence, from time to time, consecrated it. Thirdly, the collective mystical body of Christ, in which, as in one mighty building, compacted together of living stones, the Spirit of Christ dwelleth.

city, or the miserable compass of an earthly palace. This is utterly opposed to the universality of the Christian kingdom; and to those principles of its unity which depend on inherency in its Head, with His influences spiritually diffused, and a power which is the same *every where*. Among the Patriarchs, indeed, this presence of God was indicated not by spiritual communication merely, but by a local glory. In the Mosaic tabernacle, the Shekinah rested, in visible flame, upon the overshadowing Cherubim—in the temple of Solomon, Jehovah still maintained His local habitation in the Holy of holies—and this circumscription to His people of His *actual presence, as it seemed*, and of His *favourable presence, as was the fact*, was inseparable from a scheme which prescribed one place for worship, and the pouring out of that blood of sprinkling which was the shadow of the true. But in the Gospel revelation, temple of Christ there is none, in the sense in which the temple of Jerusalem was so; the true shrine of the living God, is the hearts of His people every where, without exception of place, or limitation of time; the priest is every where, the effectual sacrifice always applied to the heart by faith, and the ear of the Eternal ever open to our prayer. “Jesus saith unto her, The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.” “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit; and they that

worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." And that this universal presence was somehow connected with our Lord's departure from earth, is clear; for He tells His disciples, that, unless He thus leaves them and assumes His mediatorial throne in heaven, this diffusion of the Spirit could not take place.

(2) There is, besides, something revolting to our feelings, as well as at variance with all the conclusions of our reason, in this—that when our blessed Lord^m

^m Nothing is more obvious than that Christ is often said to *come*, whether to punish or to reward, without a personal presence. Our Lord declared the speedy destruction of the Jewish nation, for their rejection of the Gospel, by His own coming in clouds and great glory. All the events He then declared, Matt. xxiv. 33, 34. were to take place before the existing generations passed away. "When ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled." "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye unto another; for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." And comings of Christ are foretold in other passages, which cannot be understood of His personal coming, because they have taken place; whereas He has not yet come personally. He speaks of His coming, and manifesting Himself, in a special manner, to them that love Him. John xiv. 21—24. He announces His coming to the Church at Ephesus to remove her candlestick, Rev. ii. 5.—of His coming quickly to the Church at Pergamus, to fight against those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. Rev. ii. 15, 16. All in perfect harmony with the language of God in the Old Testament. Holding this in mind, and what I should venture to insist upon, as a fundamental principle of interpretation,—the clear sense of our Lord's own declaration as the rule to which every thing else must conform,—there is no difficulty in shewing that Zech. xiv. really gives no support at all to the Millenarian interpretation. It is said, ver. 3, 4. "Then

has received in His mediatorial kingdom over heaven and earth the reward for His agony and bloody sweat, for His cross and passion—nay, when He has been again received into the bosom of the paternal glory, and its ineffable bliss,—He should be abased, with a new humiliation and a gratuitous dishonour, to an earthly habitation, and the unutterable meanness of a secular kingdom. That he should *for this* desert the heaven of heavens, that majestic height from which He administers the worlds, and controls the peoples; that He should for this renounce, in His nature as Man-God—not for thirty, but a thousand years—the communion with the Godhead; Light with Light—very God with very God—*it is*, I think, on the grounds of Scripture and reason, *inconceivable*.

(3) Neither do we know whether our eyes *could*

shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle—and His feet shall stand in that day on the mount of Olives,” &c.; and again, in ver. 5. “And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with Thee.” Now, in the *first* place, this going forth of the Lord is to take place upon the present earth; (ver. 4, 5, 10, 11.) whereas we know for certain, that, upon the coming of our Lord the second time, the earth will be burnt up, with all the works that are therein. 2. Ungodly persons remain, after this going forth of the Lord, in rebellion against Him, and warfare against His people, and subsequently fight against Jerusalem. Whereas we are informed beyond a question, that the ungodly will be punished with everlasting destruction from His presence, and will, at the second coming, go into everlasting punishment. As the events, therefore, cannot happen after the real second coming of Christ, and as they do take place after the going forth of the word, the latter cannot be identified with the former, but must be understood in some figurative sense.

behold Him, as He is; or whether the aspect of His transfigured body would not be, to those that dwell in the flesh, a consuming fire. Look at the description of Him in the Revelations; “His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters; and He had in His right hand seven stars, and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength”ⁿ. Rev. i. 14—17.

ⁿ It must not be forgotten by those who are disposed to accept the Millenarian scheme as actually propounded, that whether they do it upon the strength of a literal interpretation of Apocalypse, c. xx. or patristical tradition, or both, *it is impossible to disconnect it from the personal reign of our Lord on earth along with His risen saints*; for it is with Christ that they shall live and reign. To divorce those blessed and pre-eminently favoured souls from Him, to be with whom is their most earnest wish in the flesh, and is their greatest bliss when freed from it; or the resurrection from the dead, from Him whose voice alone can open the graves, would be scarcely possible on other grounds for the boldest interpreter of the Scriptures; but, limiting our views to the present palmary text, it cannot be a matter of doubt at all. And from this supposition the most able and learned advocates of a Millenarian reign of the risen saints shrink back; nor can they bring themselves so much as to contemplate its possibility. “That Christ,” says Dr. Burnet, “should leave the right hand of His Father, to come and pass a thousand years here below, living upon earth in a heavenly body; this, I confess, is a thing which I never could digest.” And a far greater man, Mr. Mede, says, “I dare not imagine, of this presence of Christ in His kingdom, that it should be a visible converse upon earth; for the kingdom of Christ ever hath and shall be—*regnum cœlorum*—a kingdom whose throne and kingly residence is in heaven.” But the two are inseparable, on all the laws of reasoning and legitimate interpretation. “*Veniet Dei Filius,*” says Lac-

And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead."

Finally, it would be a complete reversal of that law of probation, to which, as far as we can see, God has subjected our faith, from the beginning ; and any such manifestation of the Divine presence as must ac-

tantius, " et mille annis inter homines versabitur, eosque justissimo imperio reget." Lact. Inst. vii. 24. "Hic dicitur," says Jerome, speaking of Papias, (de Vir. Ill. cxviii.) " mille annorum *Judaicam* edidisse *δευτέγων*, quem secuti sunt Irenæus, et Apollinarius, et cæteri qui post resurrectionem aiunt in carne cum sanctis Dominum regnatum." " Sanctos cum Christo in terra regnatos docuit Nepos." The Egyptian *decorator* of the doctrine, Gen. c. 55. When we consider the prodigious change in the aspect of God's government of His Church before the final assemblage of saints and angels in heaven, which this coming of our Lord on earth for this Millennial reign will effect, and when we look at the minuteness with which our Lord and His Apostles speak of the second coming, I confess it seems to me quite incredible, that neither the one nor the other should enlarge or insist on this peculiar view of it. To say the least, it ought to induce great caution and hesitation in insisting upon it. And much as I reverence the piety and good works of the many eminent servants of God, who have gone so far as to insist upon the coming of our Lord to His Judaical kingdom, not only as possibly within the scope of the prophecies, but *indispensable to their fulfilment, and a portion of Christ's reward, without which His crown of glory is incomplete ; I cannot but fear* the ultimate result, not only of such an interpretation in itself, but of such a *mode* of propounding it. When we consider the number, the eminence, and the holiness, of those who interpret, and have in all ages interpreted, spiritually, the kingdom of the Son of David, it is surely over bold and confident. When we consider that God's truth is imperilled on this private interpretation ; and that, in an infidel age, its advocates would really seem to propound it, as the *most* certain fact in the prophetic Scriptures ; it is an inconsiderate confusion of truths with opinions, and an identification of the mind of the Holy Ghost with the latter, which no prudent Christian ought to hazard.

company the Saviour upon earth, however short of the intolerable Majesty which He wears in heaven, would be a more emphatic sign than the Jews ever demanded in the height of their unbelief. "Give us a sign from heaven," they said, but such an one as this they never dreamed of. Neither a sign of fire and cloud in the midst of the sky, nor His coming down from the cross as the King of Israel, could *compare, in irresistible demonstration,* with such evidence to the senses, as His Millenarian presence would afford. Men would not be living by faith, but by sight; and, whatever might be the hardness of the heart, incredulity would be impossible when the senses were overpowered by a visible Majesty; and submission would be, not of will, but of irresistible necessity, when there was a manifest *revelation* of a power to save or to destroy.

Vid. Abp. Whately's Parish Sermons. Whitby on the Millen. Pol. Syn. Rev. c. xx.

6. There is another objection, purely hermeneutic, to the whole scheme as regards the ancient prophets. From the manner in which the Gospel of Jesus Christ runs through the promises, and the consequent subordination to that *one grand idea* of all that is preparatory and ministrant to it, it is so arranged, that, not only the ceremonial of the Jewish law, but the people itself, the temple, and all that separated it from the nations, must be supposed to contain, in *spirit* and in *inward meaning*, the universal Church of Christ. It results from this, that all that applies to God's true Israel, should be referable to the Christian, not secondarily, *but by eminence*; and that, where not necessarily limited by the context, the future glories of Mount

Hermeneutic objections to the scheme.

Zion and Jerusalem should be so many descriptions of the predestined triumphs of that Church of which Mount Zion is not only the *significant symbol*, but the actual representative and real mother.

This connection is not an arbitrary one, but profoundly grounded in the analogy of Scripture and the reason of the thing; and it is the key, as well to the practical application of the prophetic Scriptures to individual believers, as to the historical fortunes of the Church of Christ; and has been adopted, as the principle of interpretation, by the universal Church from the beginning. Let us examine for a moment such texts as these¹; “Sing, O heavens, and rejoice, O earth, and break forth into singing, ye mountains; for the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy on His afflicted.” “Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their faces to the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet.” “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee; for I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Israel, thy Saviour.” “Thou shalt call Thy walls *salvation*, and Thy gates *praise*. The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be to thee an everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.”

¹ Vid. an excellent commentary of Jerome on these Scriptures—he was, like the other great Fathers of his time, a decided anti-Chilias.

Is. xlix. 13.

Is. xlix. 23.

Is. xliii. 2, 3.

Is. lx. 18—
20.

One might quote a large portion of the Prophets, in passages equally magnificent.

Now, I do not call into question for a moment the application of these and similar passages, in a primary but lower sense, to the literal Zion; yet I cannot but think, that to look, as do many zealous supporters of the Millenarian kingdom, to the imperial restoration of the Jews, as their final consummation and *literal* accomplishment, is a degradation of the meaning which the Spirit intended to convey, and which to the full height of earthly language it has expressed. But how low does it seem, when all these glorious figures, all this *air of universality* and unlimited greatness, such as nothing on earth can pretend to approximate, are confined, as *a full* accomplishment of them, to the rebuilding of a temple, no longer the only dwelling place of the Most High, and the restoration to its own land of the feeblest among the nations.

On the other hand, if, *without excluding the lower sense*, they are extended, as their meaning dilates, to the whole spread of the Gospel, issuing as it did from Mount Zion, and to that universal submission to the cross of Christ, which, with all drawbacks, is a magnificent thing to think of, and really a triumph over unparalleled obstacles not less than divine; still more, if the eye is carried yet farther, and the final enthronement of the Church in heaven is comprehended in it—then and then alone, the subject is worthy of the expression, and justice is done to the magnificent language

Rev. xxi.
10.

ib. 22.

of the Prophet—the truth, after all, when thus considered, is *grander* even than the glory of inspired words in which it is conveyed. “And he carried me away in the Spirit,” says the Apocalyptic Prophet, “to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of the heaven from God, having the glory of God. And I saw no temple therein, but the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.”

There are some other objections, which, after these which I confess I cannot but think overwhelming, it would be hardly worth while to mention, but for the inherent interest of the subject, and its importance in every statement, however brief and imperfect, of the nature of Christ’s kingdom upon earth. For instance, when the earth has been enjoying a universal sabbath of a thousand years, and the whole world has been destroyed at the commencement of the period; how is it possible, that, at the termination of it, the innumerable hosts which assemble against the people of God should be produced? From whence are they to come? 2. How will be fulfilled the promise of Christ to His saints, that they will be *where He now is*? According to this scheme, when Christ thus comes again, they who have been His most eminent saints and mightiest ministers shall not be raised immediately to life eternal, but to that which is temporal—so that they will be welcomed not into heavenly but earthly mansions—they will not appear with Him in glory

till they have lived again on earth; and if it be true, that death shall not be swallowed up in victory till the second resurrection, they must die again, before they shall enter into their reward.

Again, the Apostle assures us, that, *when we are literally raised*, our bodies will instantly undergo a transformation—our corruption will put on incorruption, our mortal will put on immortality. But what can bodies so framed have to do with earthly affluence, temporal prosperity, and the appliances of that mortal state for which they are then unfitted? Why feed angelical natures upon earthly bread? Is it not inconsistent with reason that, while they who are raised at the general resurrection shall immediately enter into the heavenly glory, the eminent saints and martyrs of God shall be raised to an *earthly life*? And not only so, but that, like their Lord, they must be drawn from peace and rest, and those joys which, even if they be not advanced to the beatific vision, yet occupy all the faculties of the departed saint, in order to assume a corruptible body, which clogs even the souls of ordinary men!

We cannot think it necessary to argue, as Tertullian does, that reparation for former wrongs is required by the body as well as the soul. “By way of compensation for those things which, in this world, we have either despised, or have lost, since it is both just, and worthy of God, to exalt His servants there where they have been afflicted in His name.” “For in that very condition,” says Irenæus, “in which they were afflicted, and in all ways proved by suffering, it is but just

“ In compensationem eorum quæ in sæculo vel despexitur vel amisimus siquidem et justum et Deo dignum, illic quoque exultare

famulos
ejus, ubi
sunt et af-
flicti in
nomine
ipsius.”
Tert. ad
Marc. l. iii.
c. 24. “In
qua enim
conditione
afflicti
sunt, om-
nibus mo-
dis probati
per suffe-
rentiam,
justum est
in ipsâ reci-
pere eos
fructus
sufferen-
tiæ.” Iren.
l. v. c. 32.

that in the same, they should receive the fruits of their suffering.” In other words, according to these Fathers, bodily mortification must, by God’s justice, be repaid by bodily delights, earthly humiliation by *earthly* exaltation, the figurative crown of thorns by the real crown of gold. This cannot be held without a degradation to the sublime hopes of saints and martyrs, who, for the sake of their Lord, and the hope of that better resurrection, welcomed the stake and embraced the flames—not for temporal delights, or a carnal paradise, but that they might be with Christ, which is far better. As if a changing of our vile body into the likeness of His glorious body, did not transcend all imaginable remuneration for temporary sorrow—as if one hour of such glorious and spiritual communion with Christ were not worth a thousand earthly Millenniums.

III. So much on this point have men made the word of God of no avail through their tradition. But whilst there are such grave and apparently insuperable objections to the supposition, that the kingdom of Christ in this world will ever be so far changed from its present condition as to be ruled by our Lord in a visible and local headship, and overflow with temporal delights; there are two subjects commonly associated with it, and inseparable from the spread of Christ’s kingdom, and both of them singularly interesting to a Christian, which rest upon a very different foundation of reason and Scripture.

1. The first is, the *restoration of the Jews to their own land*, as a part of the Christian kingdom—

to that land which is no longer peculiarly theirs, but is infinitely dear to the heart of *all* believers—ravaged indeed by the spoiler, inhabited by the robber, and oppressed by the infidel—but still the land of God's chosen people. We look on it as a land not only with the unobliterated footsteps of the Godhead, on almost every hill and valley—not only with every spot, from Lebanon to lowly Bethany, consecrated by the presence of saints and prophets, from holy Abraham to the Apostles ; but infinitely hallowed by those recollections of the Saviour of men, which, with a noble superstition, have led the faithful in every age from the ends of the world, to look upon Olivet, and Bethlehem, and Calvary—with feelings so sublime and reverential, that it would be profanation to compare with them any emotions, however thrilling, which scenes of national conquest, heroic exploits, or imperial splendour, have the power to awaken.

I mention this, because these associations, if there were nothing else, would lead us to regard favourably any views which rendered probable the restoration of converted Israel to their ancient seats, the inheritance of their forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed for ever. The more we look upon them, at once as the chosen of Almighty God, and yet visited by His most tremendous plagues and emphatic rejection ; as exalted above all other people, and yet the object, as a nation, of an amount of wrongs quite unparalleled in history ; an excess of national suffering, we may well call it, such as has befallen no other race, till they have wrung out the very dregs of

the cup of trembling; the less disposition do we feel to question the national reparation of such sufferings—or to doubt their restoration, however beyond example, to an inheritance lost for eighteen hundred years, and the reappearance of their scattered remnant as a nation among the nations. The wonder of it is in its favour—for, in fact, in a history marked throughout by miracles, in proportion to the unparalleled nature of such a resuscitation of the dry and scattered bones of the nation, would be its verisimilitude and its harmony with their past and present fortunes.

Not but that, even as it is, we can discern one great, if not sufficient, reason for that providential arrangement, which has preserved them from absorption among the nations, even if their national condition should remain unaltered, and the curse still rest upon mount Zion. There *is* reason enough in the attestation which it affords, as a matter of fact, beyond the doubt of the sceptic and the scorn of the infidel, to the truth of the Scripture history; and in the fruits of that unalterable hatred to the Gentiles which has preserved, beyond the suspicion either of Christian forgery on one hand, or the unfaithful tampering of the Jewish guardians on the other, the integrity of the sacred records.

But the tenor of the prophetic writings, as understood more generally by the interpreters of later ages, manifestly point to something beyond this, and a national restoration more decisive, and accompanied by more signal marks of Divine favour, than the first restoration from the Babylonish captivity is able

to answer. Our Lord Himself, indeed, predicted that total destruction of the temple at Jerusalem, which left not one stone upon another; and that permanency of desolation, which, as a monument of divine wrath, no national effort, nor infidel wisdom bent on frustrating the sure word of prophecy, should be able to remove; but He nevertheless *limits* the period during which the desolation of the city should continue. “Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, *until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.*” Luke xxi. 24. He evidently indicates, that, whenever the time of the fulness of the Gentiles should arrive, the holy city should be rebuilt. And so St. Paul, in regard to that spiritual conversion which we inseparably connect with their temporal restoration, says still more expressly: “I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery—that blindness in part is happened unto Israel, *until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.*” Rom. xi. 25—27. “And so all Israel shall be saved,” as it is written, “There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.” And then, marvelling at that wisdom of God by which He confounds human calculation, and overrules all the revolutions of the world to His purposes, he exclaims, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!”

It would appear, therefore, from the sure word of prophecy, that the universality of the kingdom

of Christ upon earth, will be completed by gathering into the fold God's ancient people, *as a people, and in a national form*; and, as their disruption as a nation was the result of their rejection of the cross of Christ, so their acceptance of that same Jesus, and looking upon Him whom they pierced, will be accompanied by the removal of the Saviour's blood from the heads of themselves and of their children; and set them free for ever from that *voluntary* malediction, which has been so fearfully ratified by the judgments of Almighty God! And as the first preaching of the Gospel was entrusted to the Jews, so, on their conversion, they will most probably act, *once more*, the part of Missionaries to the Gentiles, and take the lead in that extension of the truth which will precede the coming of Christ to judgment, and the consummation of all things.

2. In the second place, it is perfectly consonant to holy writ, as well as to that hopeful and magnanimous spirit which in Christianity, as in other things, is indispensable to the performance of great actions, and is inseparable from faith, to suppose that the Gospel will hereafter act on a wider range than it has ever yet possessed; or certainly, that, *where it does prevail*, it will exercise a profounder influence on the heart of its professors, shine forth in more unquestionable evidences of its spiritual power, and impress a more decided character alike on individuals and on commonwealths. It needs not, for this result, that we suspend the moral laws by which the world is regulated, or introduce any change

inconsistent with the principles of God's providential government, and incompatible with a probationary state. We need not ascend to the height, nor descend into the depth, for the power to work it—it is at our doors—it is in our hearts—dormant perhaps, but still there in all its strength. *The mere extension*, by God's blessing, of vital Christianity, as the real regulator of human actions; and the acknowledgment of Christ as the King and Legislator of the world, as the guide of all intelligence, as well as the fashioner of all hearts; would produce, in the state of things on earth, not indeed such an angelical condition as the dreams of the Millenarian anticipate, but a mighty practical revolution beyond the schemes or grasp of infidel philosophy, and a nearer approach to the Paradise which we have forfeited, than mankind has yet seen.

The only question to be asked is this; Granting such to be the purport of Scripture, as I think it is, is this likely to be a *sudden* and an *imminent* change? It *would seem not*, if the present order of things continue; for certainly it would be far from the truth to assert, that there is any thing *now* in the aspect of affairs, even among ourselves, which would be-token to an ordinary eye such a regeneration of society; or that in the *principles* professed by other states nominally Christian, there *is* already such a recognition of the divine law as to lead to a *speedy* acknowledgment of Christ as universal King, and of His Gospel as the unquestionable code of the nations. It would likewise be blindness to passing

events to believe that there is any *preparatory* amelioration, under God's chastisements, even among those people, which have, of late years, been tried the most in the extremities alike of national greatness, and national degradation. It is evident that there are not many among them who have drawn the true lesson from the demonstrated insufficiency of political philosophies to renovate the social condition, or the cultivation of the scientific intellect to advance the moral perfection of the race, or satisfy one enduring and noble desire in the heart of man—that few are disposed, even in the impatience of disappointment, and the conviction which sorrow brings, to have recourse to the Gospel; or to try what the effects may be of grounding human greatness not on pride, but on humility, and submission to an absolute rule and sovereignty placed beyond and out of ourselves. It is an awful view to take, but it would appear, as though, in the revolutionary and infidel spirit, when liberated from the last decencies and conventional restraints of Christianity, there were something insuperable by moral force, and impregnable to experience—a buoyancy of faith in what is evil, unabashed by failure, and germinating fresh hopes from the successive annihilation of the old—a true enthusiasm of evil in which the whole order of moral obligation is reversed, and the conscience seared with a hot iron. We are forced to believe that the cure for moral and national evils, and the regeneration of our race,

are really, *and in good faith*, sought through instruments, which are self-destructive, opposed to God's nature, and contradictory to eternal reason.

When such principles and active energies of evil have really thoroughly penetrated the masses of mankind, and rooted themselves there with that conviction which accompanies every thing, good or evil, which men have been accustomed to consider as undisputed truths; when they are received as traditions, are fortified by example, have their heroism and self-devotion, and the applauses of the multitude,—and when, as a necessary accompaniment of all this, the moral machinery by which such evils are to be counteracted bears no assignable proportion to their magnitude and inveteracy; the condition of a people thus circumstanced appears such an approach to a moral reprobation, as never yet, in the history of the world, has been capable of regeneration. The iron restraint of arbitrary power, and the politic view of the necessities of order and a certain amount of morality to uphold temporal rank and secure secular prosperity, have no tendency to *purify* the antisocial and explosive elements which they repress. The very violence employed tends, for a time at least, to unite and consolidate them; and, should it be successful, and subdue the anti-christian forces to a tone compatible with a relaxation of constraint, such an *apparent* amelioration, from the lack of religious instruments to effect such a change, cannot result from the diffusion of a higher and a better morality, which grows not either

under tyrannical power or civil convulsions ; but solely from the taming down of men's minds to that extremity of debasement, in which the boldness and manhood, such as it was, of the anarchical temper is lost ; and all is dissolved into one level degradation, where literature and the arts only subserve the senses, intellect only hardens the heart, and the last capacity for civil liberty is destroyed with the abjuration of all morality, and the final rejection of the Gospel.

Here and there a spark of the Christian spirit may appear, but a national recognition of Christianity seems impossible. The Papacy never can regenerate the nations which she has been the great instrument of apostatising—and, supposing that, in the decay of the Mohammedan power, the cross of Christ should gain what that debasing superstition has lost—supposing that, with the acknowledgment of a Christian and spiritual kingdom a real civilization should arise,—not a mere outside form of it, a mimicry of real intellectual and moral vigour, but such a change as shall invigorate the higher humanity, and raise the capacities of the people—supposing that therefrom policies should grow, able to regain that national unity which is now decayed ; yet how many ages must elapse before such a change could be completed, or any approach to a general Millenarian condition accomplished.

The fertility of the fields of the East, indeed, might again be easily evoked, and the Euphrates and the Tigris, instead of rolling through pestilential

marshes, might quicken, once more, the boundless harvests of the Assyrian plains—but the moral growth of man is slow, national faith is not wrought out in a moment, and Christianity cannot, in a generation, recover the retrogradation of a thousand years. But still, where the natural wickedness of the heart has not been sublimed into a philosophical creed; where natural instincts, however corrupted, still remain; where faith in things unseen is not eradicated by a general infidelity, and truth proscribed from the national mind by atheistic institutions; there still remains a field, where, according to God's ordinary dealings, the truth of the Gospel, recommended by superior knowledge, and the dignity of a great and civilized nation, might widely spread, and perhaps permanently prevail.

Not that, even in those regions of the East, where Christianity has begun to operate and may again prevail, there are no obstacles to the Gospel to be apprehended from speculative infidelity as well as the ordinary resistance of the heart—there is much of the same arid soil there, as in the West, uncongenial to faith, and impenetrable to that humility which is the necessary precursor to the acceptance of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Surely all this should enter into our calculations, when we contemplate the future evangelization of the Mohammedan and Hindoo nations, with a holy zeal indeed, but irrespectively of times and seasons, and of the slow diffusion through bodies politic of the Gospel leaven. It does not render it impossible—

God forbid—but the process must be slow—the growth of many years, and the fruit of indefatigable labour. One thing it ought certainly to impress upon our minds, as a conviction without which no efforts of our own can prosper—that a work so great and difficult must be wrought out by God's especial blessing, and such an effusion of His holy Spirit as shall strengthen the weakness of His servants—shall enlighten the ignorant, and soften the infidel. But supposing, as holy Scripture seems to me to intimate, that such a glorious change will be accomplished, and that there shall be a wide spread of Gospel truth and Gospel power till it cover the world as the waters cover the sea—there are considerations even then, which must modify our hopes, and temper our anticipations of a Millenarian purity °.

° There is nothing in Scripture to justify the conclusion, that the binding of Satan means a complete suspension of his influence, or a removal of *sin* from the world at large. *Man's heart has sin enough without the temptation of Satan.* Nor will there ever be a time, till the final judgment removes both sin and death, when the people of God will be free from warfare in their own souls, or Satan cease from influencing with a fatal delusion multitudes of souls within the visible Church. The text, moreover, seems to confine the suspension of his power to deceive, to some grand delusion, probably, like Mohammedanism, upon the *nations*—the people without the pale of the Christian Church.

At all events, if we explain it to mean merely a partial suspension of his influence in mundane affairs, the analogy of Scripture is in favour of such an interpretation. Thus *even at present*, Satan and his angels are described as being “cast into hell”—“delivered into chains of darkness, and reserved in everlasting chains unto the judgment of the great day.” 2 Pet. ii. 4. and Jude

Surely, under no circumstances can we reasonably expect a greater effusion of spiritual power than that which accompanied the Apostolic age—and if we could equal them, all things taken together, still what innumerable obstacles to a perfect purity are there in the inherent corruptions and infirmities of human nature, which in the flesh we can never

6. So the occasion of the disciples of Jesus casting out devils, drew from our Lord the declaration, “ I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.” And in this very book of Revelations, which is more to the purpose, chap. xii. 7. “ And there was war in heaven ; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven . . . He was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” *Now here is a strength of expression at least equal to that which we are now considering ; and yet the best commentators consider it to have been fulfilled when idolatry, as the religion of the Roman empire, was overthrown by Constantine and his immediate successors.* If a person unacquainted with the genius of the prophetic Scriptures were to interpret this passage with reference solely to the force of the expression, as it stands by itself, he would certainly infer, that less could not be intended than the total suppression of idolatry, and subjugation of the satanic influence. Yet, in reality, the fulfilment only extended to the Roman empire, and left the greater part of mankind, as now, sunk in gross idolatry. And even in the Roman empire itself, idolatry, though no longer the religion of the state, can hardly be considered to have been effectually suppressed ; and soon sprang up, after its temporary defeat, with fresh vigour under the papal rule.

No doubt every thing in these and other prophecies is not partially but completely fulfilled according to the divine intention, and there are many spiritual relations and connections in them all which we cannot discern or estimate—but there is enough in what I have here mentioned to suggest great caution in the *specific* fulfilment on which ardent minds insist—*admitting no degrees or any thing short of what they judge the very mind of the Spirit.*

shake off—corruptions which must not only affect individuals, but even the collective body, the Church. Our Lord's words, over and over again, are express in proof of that intermixture of the evil with the good, which no spirit of separation can escape, and no Millenarian sanctity, while human nature is unchanged, can ever remove; the consummation of all things alone shall purge off the dross, and refine the Church into a uniform and permanent purity. Unless we bear this in mind, a heated imagination will lead us into errors which may be practically dangerous—we cannot enter into the true meaning and scope of the prophetic declarations of the intended results of the Gospel, and shall be led to look for a future accomplishment of them, alike opposed to the conclusions of experience, and the intention of the Divine counsels.

Consider for an instant the glorious prophecy of Is. xi. 6—9. Isaiah, in which he paints the effects of the evangelical kingdom, and describes a paradisaical condition Is. xxxv. 1. in which the desert itself shall blossom, the very beasts which God has armed for war and rapine Is. ii. 4. shall forget their nature, and the sword be turned into the ploughshare and the spear into the pruning hook. Consider too the angelic announcement of glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men. *Both declarations, if they are good for any one period of the Gospel on earth, are good for all—they are unrestricted in time, and universal in their application to the results of the*

Gospel. Then combine with this, not only the appalling truths of past history, and the experience of the present, but our Lord's own emphatic declaration, "Think not that I am come to send peace Matt. x. 34. on earth; I came not *to send peace, but a sword.*" Then say what conclusion is to be drawn from this apparent contradiction? Certainly not, that such is not *the tendency* of the Gospel, or that such would not be its necessary results, if it were received, as it ought to be, by those for whose salvation it was projected, and wrought alike into the hearts and the practice of mankind. No. But the true conclusion seems to be this, that the prophetic descriptions and the angelical annunciations are *the type*—the *perfect idea* and conception of the Gospel kingdom in the mind of Almighty God—a plan miserably marred by the elements on which it was to act, and scarcely recognisable in its *actual* exhibition among mankind. Exactly as, to compare divine things with earthly, the noblest conceptions of the painter or the sculptor are marred, in their actual setting forth, by the inferiority of the materials upon which the master mind may be compelled to work. And so it was in the typical and preparatory dispensation; for, not only was the *idea* of the Theocracy never perfectly realized, but it scarcely ever approached to a realization—it never existed adequately, nor was developed consistently, but in parts and fragments only—just sufficient to answer the divine purposes, and no more—its only true representative was in the idea and counsel of God, as recorded im-

perishably, and adumbrated to us in the Mosaic and prophetic writings.

It will follow, from all this, that, though we are most probably correct in anticipating a larger extension of Christ's kingdom, yet that there is no ground for supposing that its progress will be other than slow and gradual—or that, even at its height, there may not be some portions of the world excluded, by a self-rejection, from it; and that the Church itself will not only still encounter enemies from without, but corruptions and dissensions from within.

But, meanwhile, it is ours to labour though the event is in God's hand—the very initiation into Christ's kingdom is a vow to a life militant, and to the endurance of all things for the sake of Him whose crown we hope to share. If we cannot conquer, we can fight—and, if it be not God's good pleasure that we should evangelize the world, we can at least be witnesses of God's truth in it, and to it.

And this brings me to the last point touching the Millenarian kingdom, on which Christ's decisive words may throw a distinct light. If there be that correspondence between the end of the world and the destruction of Jerusalem, which His entire amalgamation of the one with the other expressly announces to us, it will give us a reason, and an awful one, independent, of all uncertain speculation, and of holy anticipations which it may not be the purpose of God to realize, for sounding the trumpet of the Gospel from one end of the earth to another. “This Gospel of the kingdom,” says our Lord, “shall be preached

in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, *and then shall the end come.*" So speaks the prophet Daniel, that at the end of the world, many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.

And *this* may be, after all, the true meaning of the Apocalyptic resurrection—of the souls of the saints to reign with Christ. The change produced upon the soul by the transforming power of the Gospel is uniformly called *life*, and there is nothing at variance with the boldness and yet precision of the prophetic style, in calling the reanimation of the saints and martyrs of ancient times in a band of like-minded successors, by the name^p of a resurrection of the men

^p Nothing is more frequent in Scripture than the application of the word resurrection to the restoration of a Church—such perhaps as is intended by *the rest of the dead* living at the end of the thousand years—when the regeneration of the Jewish Church shall aid in the general establishment of the faith of Christ, and crown the work of the spirits of the martyrs and confessors.

So saith the Prophet Isaiah, Ἀναστήσονται οἱ νεκροί, c. xxvi. 19. So God speaks to the Jewish nation by Ezekiel, saying, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Ezek. xxxvii. 13, 14. The Prophet Hosea speaks thus; In those days, ἐξαναστήσομεθα, we shall rise up again and live before Him. Hos. vi. 2. And the Apostle speaking of the very matter, viz. the conversion of the Jews, saith, It shall be even to the Gentiles, ζωὴ ἐκ νεκρῶν Moreover the Scripture doth more frequently mention the restoration of the Church, and her return from a low, captive, and afflicted state, under the metaphor of a new life, a life from the dead, a reviviscence of God's Church and people. Thus when God moved the Persian kings to let the Jews return into their own land, He is by Ezra said to give them, ζωοποίησιν. Ezra ix. The Psalmist, speaking of himself God's people also, useth these words. Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken

themselves. So indeed, on another occasion, holy Scripture speaks directly of the appearance of a man

us. Psalm lxxi. 20. And the Church speaketh thus to God, *Zwōsisis ἡμᾶς*. Psalm lxxxv. 6. . . . But the chief seat of this metaphor is in the 37th chapter of Ezekiel, where God is introduced enquiring of the Jews in Babylon, *Εἰ ζήσεται*, Can these bones live? and promising to put the breath of life into them, and saying, ‘I will put my Spirit into you, and ye shall live’ in all which places the very word which Saint John useth to express the first resurrection is here used to express the return of the Church from her obscurity and thralldom, to a glorious state. Why, therefore, may not the word in Saint John bear that sense which it so often bears in the prophetic writings, and twice in the New Testament, when spoken of the Gentiles?” Vid. Whitby.

Even if we take the words of the text, Rev. xx., literally, it seems to me that it is so far from confirming the Millenarian hypothesis, and identifying this period, whatever it be, with the reigning of the saints with Christ, that it proves something irreconcilable with it. This doctrine is urged, *as of vital interest to all*; but if so, there can be no doubt that the Holy Ghost would have so couched its announcement, as to mark beyond contradiction its universal application. And in other passages, such as Rom. viii. 11. 1 Cor. xv. 51. 2 Cor. v. 15. Phil. iii. 20, 21. which foretel the blessedness of the saints after the coming of Christ, *a phraseology is used which evidently includes them all*. And as all the saints are to reign with Christ after His second coming, such a description would be given as would harmonize with that event. These seem unquestionable principles—let us now apply them. 1. Verse 6. limits the reigning to those who partake of the first resurrection. This therefore will exclude all those saints who remain alive at the time of the second coming of Christ, because they will not partake of any resurrection, as they have not died. As therefore this verse limits the whole to those who have experienced a resurrection, such an essential difference between this statement and that which is given 1 Cor. xv. and 1 Thess. xiv. is hardly compatible with the supposition, that the inspired writers are narrating the same events. And really not only does this description exclude all the living saints, but it would exclude by far

in his own person, when our Lord interpreted it of the spirit and the power of the man. The mighty Baptist, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, was Elias—because he came in his spirit. So our own glorious martyrs, who sealed with their blood the Gospel which their tongues had proclaimed, came among us in the spirit and the power of those blessed saints and apostles who first taught the truth

the greater part of the saints who *have* died. It would do so in two ways; 1. they are those who have borne testimony to Jesus, and for the word of God, and who worshipped not the beast and his image. This limitation would at once exclude all the saints who lived during the four thousand years which preceded Christ's first coming—all those vast multitudes of them who lived during the first ages of Christianity, previous to the establishment of the papacy: and, 2. It is specifically those who have suffered martyrdom; τῶν πεπελεκίσμενων. These and these only are the objects of this resurrection, and therefore, though the fact may be interesting to us, as every fact recorded by the holy Spirit must be, I do not see of what *practical* importance it can be to the generality of Christians. And again: still arguing on the supposition of a literal resurrection of the martyrs—it does not follow *that it will be on earth*. They will reign with Christ, and His throne is in heaven, from which He administers His earthly kingdom; and to this effect is the opinion of a Millenarian divine, quoted by Whitby. 1. That the first resurrection here mentioned will be a literal resurrection of those that have lost their lives for the testimony of Christ, to enjoy eternal life in heaven a thousand years before the general resurrection, as the martyrs of the Old Testament were with the body of Christ. Matt. xxvii. 52. They shall reign with Christ, not on earth, but in heaven, where Christ is, and shall be, till He come to judgment. 2. Not only the martyrs shall then rise to heavenly bliss, but their murderers shall then also arise, to eternal punishment, according to Daniel xii. 2. And many of them that sleep in the dust shall arise, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

as it is in Christ Jesus, who spoke again to the Church, in these their successors, as they had spoken at the first; and who, through those whom God had thus raised up, bequeathed anew to us and to our children, an uncorrupted faith, and the inheritance of the word of life.

So, again, in the spiritual change which has so marvellously spread through the length and breadth of the land—in the universal life which has animated, what, by the confession of all, were but dry bones till the Spirit of God came thus from the four winds and breathed upon them—the martyrs of old are living again—in the devoted zeal with which men leave the pleasures of home, and the manifold delights of civilization, to encounter the sea, and the desert, and the barbarism of savage men, content to do all things, and to suffer all things, so that they may save souls—the martyrs of old are living again—in the universal spread of the word of God, and the hunger and thirst which fill men's souls for the possession of the truths which it contains—in those labours which emulate the Pentecostal gift, and have rendered the book of life into every tongue and language under heaven—in that rising and spreading union of a holy discipline with the spirit and the truth, and the sending out of the Church in its totality, unabridged of its perfection of form, and yet undamped in its missionary fervour, to feed and train the flocks to which the pure word of God is brought—in all this, the saints and apostles of old are risen again.

“*They shall live,*” says the prophet, “*and reign*”

with Christ.” And they are living and reigning *now*, carrying to lands and continents unknown to the first propagators of the Gospel the tidings of salvation, and that last *solemn witness to the truth*, before the announcement of which the end shall not come. No, brethren: it is not without an object, far beyond the aggrandisement of a mere temporal power, the ostentation of wealth, and, I may say, the childish pride of conquest, that the influences and power of Britain penetrate every corner of the earth—she alone carries with her the hopes of man—this is the secret of it—she is the bearer of the everlasting Gospel; and armies and fleets only prepare the way for the Missionary, for Him who with beautiful feet beareth the glad tidings of salvation on the mountains of heathenism, and publisheth peace. To open the way to schools, and the humble village church, and the goings in and out of the Christian Pastor, may seem to the worldly statesman but a poor result of so much politic care and warlike enterprise—the utilitarian speculator on the extension of commerce will treat it with indifference as the dream of enthusiasts—and the philosophic infidel will regard it with unmerited contempt. We know this, but what of it? The lowest believer with the Bible in his hand knows better; “I am wiser than my teachers, because I know thy word.”

Hence, doubtless, from the same divine design, comes the synchronizing of this unparalleled zeal for the propagation of the Gospel, with the expansion

of the mechanical powers of man; the dominion over the elements which science has given, and those instruments of intercommunication which are annihilating space, and bringing the most distant portions of the earth together; hence the universal subjugation of those barbaric nations which once lay beyond the reach of civilization, to the larger intellect and material resources of the West; hence the universal and uncontrollable spread of the knowledge of good and evil, and every thing that can stimulate the human mind; all indicate an awful period in man's history—a vast providential crisis, the issue of which no eye but the All-seeing can discern, and no hand but the All-powerful can overrule. The Gospel must be preached in all lands before the end come; and this apparatus of means, and the unparalleled concentration of them in the hands of the only state on earth which acknowledges Christ as her King, and His law as *of right* supreme within her, is necessary for the final consummation.

May the grace of God keep us who are Christ's ministers alive to the spirit of our holy vocation, and brace up our loins for this great day of battle. We are not only saved by the cross, but we have likewise to bear the cross—and, even if outward peril or affliction did not chastise us, we must, in order to discharge our duty as faithful soldiers, do it for ourselves. Not indeed by maceration of the flesh and corporeal mortification, which is, after all, the lowest sphere of self-subjugation; but by such

vigorous and manly self-discipline, such Christian devotion and self-denial, as may not only bring the body into subjection, but so raise the soul, that it may despise the temptations of earthly pleasure, whether of the senses or of the intellect; be crucified to the world as the world is to it, and be ready to sacrifice all that we possess, nay, ourselves, our souls and bodies, for the extension of the Gospel, and the establishment of the kingdom of Christ upon earth. Hallelujah! *For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever. Amen.*

LECTURE VIII.

PART I.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.



SUMMARY OF THE WHOLE QUESTION, AGAINST PAPAL ROME.

I. The regal power of Christ—as exercised in protecting His Church against *its external* enemies, spiritual and temporal. A spiritual power opposed to Christianity—not merely with a deadly hatred and violent opposition—but with a super-human *intellectual power*. That power manifested, 1. In the old idolatry and philosophizing. 2. In Mohammedanism. 3. In the Papacy.—Against all and each of which power is given to Christ to protect His Church.

II. Practical results in the Christian life, and mode of viewing God's earthly providence.

III. Finally, the judging and avenging power of Christ.

LECTURE VIII.

PART I.

“ All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. *Therefore go ye.*” MATT. XXVIII. 18.

I. **I**N the preceding discourse, we have considered the general nature of Christ's spiritual kingdom, as exercising a constant and *interior* influence over the hearts of His true people ; as, in its essential truth, therefore, independent, up to a certain point, of outward circumstances, and any visible form whatsoever ; and inscrutable to any eyes but those which search the hearts and reins. We have considered its general connection—*general*, but not invariable—with the outward type and definite ordinances which Christ Himself has instituted, and the position in which that *outward* and organized body stands to the invisible King, who is its guide and effectual ruler. We have traced the relations which the visible society of the Church ought to maintain to that essentially outward and temporal sovereignty which

is likewise of God's ordinance, and by which earthly kingdoms are administered—and finally the reasons which Scripture gives us for looking forward to a larger extension of the Gospel, and the universal acknowledgment of the Messiah's kingly authority, from one extremity of the earth to the other.

The kingdom of Christ external to the Church.

But there are still some important points in the kingly character of the Messiah which require a distinct notice however brief. The amount, I mean, and nature of those imperial prerogatives, which are economically vested in His hands, with an external exercise for the protection of the Church; the specific *nature* and source of the opposition which it has to overcome, and the principal forms which that opposition has assumed; and that most solemn judgment office, by the execution of which, in the final reckoning for the deeds done in the flesh, the circle of the Messiah's regal attributes will be completed, and the awfulness of unapproachable majesty and power exalt the mercy and the tender love in which He is first revealed to men.

Now it will appear by a consideration of the words of my text, that, as a preliminary indispensable to the exercise at all of His sovereignty over the Church and for the Church, and therefore for its spiritual prosperity and permanent existence, not only a *portion* of power, vast perhaps, but still limited, was vested in His hands—but that *all* power, alike uncircumscribed in extent and in its mode of exercise, has devolved upon Him. We can, in fact, conceive nothing, at once more pre-

cise and comprehensive than these few words—it is manifest, that the claim of authority which they announce spans the universe—in *heaven and in earth*. Nor, again, is it possible for us to find any thing more express and clear than *the connection* instituted between the two ideas which are brought into juxta-position, “*All power is given Me in heaven and in earth ; therefore go ye.*” He is now omnipotent—there is no portion of the world over which His controlling presence does not extend ; there is therefore no domination, whether spiritual or secular, which is capable of resisting Him, or harming those who shall go forth in the power of faith and in the strength of His name ! The fulness of time is come ! “*therefore go ye.*”

This is wonderful, even to us who look at the Lord in His glory, with the adoration of ages and the worship of all nations bowing at the feet of Jesus of Nazareth ; who regard the cross, not as the symbol of shame, but as the consecrated token of a Divine Majesty. But it must have sounded strangely indeed in the ears of His disciples who saw Him in the weakness of His unhonoured flesh ; athirst as they were for earthly dignities and the names which signalize them, but unfamiliar, as yet, with their Lord’s divine titles ; nor, in their carnal heart, comprehending the extent of the change which had been wrought by the endurance of the cross and of the grave. And yet they were indeed the sober and truthful words of the Lamb that was slain, of Him that died, but who liveth evermore ; of Him, who, but a few weeks

before, was the despised and rejected of men, who had not where to lay His head, and who, during the hour of the powers of darkness, hung like the basest of malefactors upon the accursed tree. What a contrast! From Calvary and the tomb in the garden, to that more than regal and angelic power which encompasses all things; both visible and invisible—it is a step for the God-man to make, but certainly for no being less glorious than Himself. Yet such had been the plan conceived, in the Almighty mind, before the foundations of the world were laid; and such, however dimly seen, or imperfectly understood, had been the *precise* order announced, of old, by the Prophets and inspired Teachers of the Jewish Church. It was *necessary* that Christ *should suffer, and so enter into His glory*; not accidental, either of them, but both indispensable to the divine counsels us-ward. So that, in the scheme of Almighty God, *all* the work of redemption, and the rescuing, out of a corrupt and perishable world, of a peculiar people, the sons of grace and heirs of immortality, was to be wrought out, *as a work of power*, by the hands of the Mediator; not merely as a work of grace, in reference to Himself, but emphatically *of power*, both in regard to inward changes to be accomplished, and outward opposition to be overcome. The unutterable sacrifice, and the bloodshedding that was to wash away the sins of the world, was but the commencement; to build up, stone upon stone, the kingdom that was to rise on this foundation; to complete what was begun by the very same

The protection therefore of the Church to the end of the world is Christ's.

hand which began it; to uphold it to the end of the world, by a continual guardianship against external assaults; and to exercise, with an indefatigable energy, the powers which resulted from His atonement, till death shall be swallowed up in victory—all this likewise belongs to the Messiah in His glory. Hence, the peculiarity of the Gospel economy; the Almighty, in the exercise of strength and authority, as of all other attributes, is impenetrable and unapproachable, save through His adorable Son. Not only His *mercy*, but His *power* towards us is exercised through His intermediation; though it may not be so to other beings, yet *to us* He has retired into Himself; we see Him not, and feel Him not, save through the glimpses of glory and majesty, and the putting forth of strength and wisdom which issue from the God-man. And this shall be the case, till, at the consummation of all things, the Son shall lay down His mediatorial kingdom, and God shall be all in all.

There is something more, therefore, than that which a vague ascription of power to Christ, necessarily conveys to a mind, which merely glances at the general meaning without analysing what it contains. For to make this at all available for the grand purposes of the Gospel—the providential ordering of events, which men truly yet loosely attribute to the Most High, must form a part of it; that unceasing watch which the eyes that never slumber nor sleep exercise over every created thing; the sovereignty of inspection, the sovereignty of regulation and over-ruling, the sove-

reignty of reward and punishment, all this has, for a time, been transferred by a solemn charter, into the hands of the mediatorial King. And the point to be insisted on here, and distinctly to be apprehended, is this; that He holds it, not in that He is God equal with the Father, the very and eternal Deity, nor in that He is man; but in that He is the Christ, Immanuel, Jehovah with us, the unspeakable mystery of God manifest in the flesh. And on the principle universally inculcated in Scripture—that God deals with man, in and through Christ alone, and that the Church is identified with its Head—the existence of the Gospel in this hostile world, and most unstable scene, cannot be separated from this arrangement.

And thus, therefore, He addresses His Apostles, and in them His Church; His ministers first, and then all who by faith have come to Him, to the end of time. “Behold! all power is given to *Me*—take therefore my commission; go ye who are not your own, but bought with a price, *Mine and in Me*, and make all the world my disciples, in deed and in truth. Go! as the ambassadors of Him who is no more the sport of the wicked, and gives no longer His cheek to the smiter, though you may be called, as He has been, to submit to that bitter contumely; but who, from the throne which is fixed in heaven, will be the strength of your weakness, and the glory of your shame, and will shelter you under the everlasting wings. *Go ye*, upon your mission of love and mercy, though the

heathen rage, and the high places of wickedness take their counsel together—though you may sow and not reap, and all the passions of the world that sitteth in darkness will strive to quench the light, and trample under foot the blood of the covenant, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it *be afraid*. They who are against you are formidable indeed, both in themselves, and those unseen powers of evil which prompt them with a wicked wisdom, and support them with a wicked strength—but My strength is greater than theirs, and I will, before the end come, bring them low before you, simple and weak as you seem, and helpless as indeed you are without your King. And as you fear not for the Gospel, so fear not for yourselves—though they persecute you from city to city, and condemn you to the cross or to the sword or to the fire, for My name's sake—yet your very sufferings shall be a triumph to Me and to you; for the hearts of men are in My hand to dispose and mould them as I will; and you shall at once by your very death spread far and wide the faith in Me, for which you offer yourselves up, and shall find that for yourselves the death of the body, which is all that men can inflict, is the gate to heaven—for them that conquer is laid up, at My right hand, a crown of glory, that fadeth not away, eternal in the heavens. Go forth then and conquer, the servants of Him, who, along with His marvellous love for you, even a tenderness unspeakable and beyond the affection of man, is now, for your sakes, and the Church in you,

Lord of heaven and earth. *Behold, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.*"

Such then is the clear scriptural fact, the power given, and the spread of the Gospel grounded upon it; and if we turn our thoughts seriously to the subject, even for a moment, it will be evident that no power less than the greatest, and no station lower than the highest, could have sufficed for the purpose which the Mediator has undertaken to fulfil. So that it is no ostentation of majesty in Him, nor a super-erogatory power, but essential, and for a practical purpose, to which it *exactly* answers. The assumption by our Lord, upon His ascension, of the regal authority, and His sitting down, on this inauguration into His glory, at the right hand of the Majesty on high, was thus the *natural* preliminary to that outpouring of the Spirit, which accompanied the early propagation of the Gospel, and which in a full and flowing measure was never to desert it; and it shows the consistency of the whole divine plan, and its dependency on the *combined* offices of Christ, when the priesthood is thus effectuated and protected by His Kingship, and each accomplished in its order.

For it cannot be too constantly or precisely fixed in our minds, as a most certain principle of the utmost practical importance, that, in all that makes it saving to the soul and the power of God unto salvation, the Gospel of Christ stands in irreconcilable opposition to the world, and all that,

by natural order and connection, *is in and of the world*. That such are the difficulties which accompany its reception into the hearts of men, as a principle of action, that, from first to last, it is strictly and literally, both within and without, a supernatural work, demanding, every instant, the active forces of the divine *power*, as well as the tendernesses of the divine compassion. It cannot *maintain itself*, no, *not for an instant*—the soul of the believer, in whom individually it is developed, has no independent life within it, no principle of self-conservation conveyed with the gift of grace; or indeed conveyed at all, apart from the constant communication of Him who is the way and the truth and the life, and able to resist the external and internal enemies which are always acting upon it. The King must be present as well as the Priest. Devise what formulas you please of Church prerogatives, the Gospel has quite as necessary a tendency to decay and perish, if the *direct* operations of this power are suspended by men's sins, as the material world has to dissolve, if that which gives consistency and even existence to its fluxional elements, were withdrawn from under it. There might be the framework and the name of the Church, but no more.

Hence, no *security* can be provided for the *general* perpetuation of vital religion from one generation to another. No gathering of men into the fold of the visible Church, no inherited system however accurately jointed and compacted into a uniform action, no immemorial prescription, no sanctity

Impossible to secure the prevalence of vital religion from one generation to another.

of rites and apostolical ordinances, no names and awful titles, can bequeath to its members the *certain* possession of the Spirit of life. The basis of human nature, upon which the Gospel acts, is unchanged and unchangeable—no scheme of perfection can work permanently upon such elements. And, though the body of the visible Church presents to the eye the same broad aspect from day to day, yet, as it is in a stream, so it is here; fresh individuals are ever mixing with the body, and insinuating into its former comparative purity, the corruption which they bring with them into the world, the strength of which no volition of man can mitigate, nor any progression of the race abridge of its universality. We carry the inherited Adam within us—this is the truth—and the heart of the latest born of yesterday is, by nature, exactly what it was in the first child of our fallen forefather. It demands, therefore, in each succeeding generation, a renewal of the same struggles, and the processes of the same grace, to regenerate it into the Divine image; and early familiarity with the truth sometimes only thwarts it. I would not be misunderstood in saying this. I do not mean to undervalue, God forbid, either the duty, or the blessed effects, under the Divine assistance, of religious training, when rightly understood and spiritually conducted. I do not place other than the highest value upon it, next to the Spirit of God Himself; for, in the educational office of the Church, it is the appointed instrument in moulding men's affections; and in regulating the judg-

ment of those who from their mother's womb, in the persons of their parents who are her representatives and agents, are committed to her charge. Nor would I do dishonour to the holy rite in which we anticipate the yet unexpanded seeds of evil, as far as is possible, by that grace which Christ does not withhold from the youngest of His flock that are brought to Him to bless.

But it is useless to theorize, for the *fact* remains—you do not, and you cannot, as a matter of course, convey by inheritance the grace necessary to change the heart. I think, indeed, thus much is beyond a question—that *if* the Spirit of Christ *thoroughly* pervaded the Church, and *if* His lambs were fed as He has given us abundant food and encouragement to do it withal, one holy generation *might* be succeeded by another as holy. But, *as it is*, and with the over-confidence which men from the beginning have placed, and do place, in forms disconnected from their conditions, experience has left no doubt of that fresh-generated corruption which the Church, in a holier condition, might neutralize, and which, even as it is, she does mitigate; though to eradicate it, is clearly beyond its charter, in less than a Millenarian condition. And in the apocalyptic description of that state, it is inseparably connected with a binding in temporary chains of that subtle and treacherous spirit who works with a fatal skill on the principles of sin within us; and who, in disappointing the fairest hopes and corrupting the holiest things,

counteracts the wisdom which educes good from evil, by extracting evil out of all things good.

The Gospel a struggle against spiritual principalities and powers.

And this brings me to the second point; that *outward* influence, which, with this ineradicable corruption of the human heart, for its fulchrum, requires, imperatively, the controlling check of a kingly and antagonist power. For the Gospel is eminently *a struggle*, the termination of which has yet to come; and the world spiritual is the scene of an active trial of strength, of which the souls of men are the prize; albeit, this gigantic struggle, in the eddies of which we are tost, sweeps around us *unnoticed*, except in the fruits and the visible effects of it. It is, thus, far more than a metaphorical warfare between the principles of good and evil within us; for these are only the reflections, after all, of that *prime personal good and evil* of which they are, respectively, derivatives; and the true contest lies between the Saviour, and those spiritual principalities and powers whose kingdom upon earth He descended from the bosom of His Father's glory to subvert.

It was not therefore the devices of a human intellect, nor the resources of a mind moving within the limits of *any* faculties known to us, however multiplied or profound, which were called into action, from the first, to impede the establishment of the Gospel, and corrupt the purity of the faith; for that might have been compatible, perhaps, with another economy.

Of course to institute any comparison between divine and created intelligence would be absurd—but still

these beings, however fallen, are, not only of a nature, but of a capacity, super-human and angelical; and however certainly doomed to that tremendous world of torment, which by an awful exercise of Omnipotence was created for them, evil for the evil, they yet possess, at present, notwithstanding their future woe, a power which may well be dreaded the more from their despair. Nor are these multitudes of evil spirits engaged in a merely *virtual* and *constructive* resistance or a hypocritical compromise between good and evil; under one or both of which forms the sins of men are usually couched. On the part of man it is an unpremeditated opposition to the will of God, *as such*, rather than one of forethought; but with them it is an undisguised hostility, and an avowed rebellion, and nothing less than this. With how much success this warfare is carried on, against the designs of the Most High, and the ultimate fate of the race which is exposed to their temptations, and is the peculiar subject of their power, both the word of God and the experience of mankind are full. And can we wonder at it? They command a machinery, so vast and powerful for evil, in that organization of mischief which ages have completed, and stratagems so inexhaustible, that the scanty faculties, perverse will, and the ill-regulated passions of such a being as man, must, if abandoned to themselves, inevitably fall a prey. All these instruments of mischief, moreover, which had been in action from the fall of our first parents, were stimulated into a sharper hatred, and a more energetic exertion, by

the actual advent of Him who, as the seed of the woman, came to bruise the serpent's head. His destruction, and with him, that of the regenerating and saving truth which He came to announce to mankind, was necessary to complete the triumphs of this infernal warfare. The kingdom of Satan could not consist with the kingdom of Christ. "The Son of man," said our blessed Lord, "is come to destroy the works of the devil." "I saw Satan," says our Lord on another occasion, kindling as it would appear, at the moment, with a holy triumph at the destruction of our great enemy, and his fall into the penal abyss, "I saw Satan, like lightning, fall from heaven." "*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down from the earth, thou that didst weaken the nations!*"

If, therefore, it has not pleased God to destroy this power, He has at least tempered it down to a degree compatible with the existence of a kingdom of light—and, though it be a mystery to us why it is not still more effectually exercised, yet do we rejoice that the Head of the Church received in His mediatorial kingdom the strength and the wisdom, without which even this success could never have been achieved. Over and over again, but for this, would the light of the Gospel have been finally extinguished; over and over again would the little flock have been swept away in those great revolutions, which periodically convulse mankind and subvert kingdoms, involving in ruin the laboured

results of human strength and wisdom, and laying bare to the very foundations that which alone they seem to leave behind them,—those grand and indestructible principles of good and evil which defy eradication, and constitute the essence of man. Over and over again, when persecution, instead of destroying, had only purified and animated; and the Church had only gained vigour and elasticity from the violence of the trial—when, in fine, the world and its power had proved an unequal match for the divinity which was seated in men's souls; when a recognised authority, the seductions of security, and the reverence of mankind, were found to work *more effectually* for its subversion; art would have accomplished the *baffled purposes of violence*, and the perverseness of heretics, or the craft of cunningly devised fables, would have made the blood of the cross vain, and the gracious purpose of God for the salvation of mankind of none effect.

The point then which, at the risk of repetition, I wish to bring out, is this—that as in good, so in evil, whether of force, or of moral and intellectual influences, there is nothing, that bears directly or indirectly on the Gospel, which comes of *chance*—there is in these revolutions of the world, whether political or of opinion, so far as they tend to evil of themselves, or can be perverted to it—not only a hostile violence, but a bad providence—a true *pre-science of malignity*—a something, whatever it be, which is subtle to corrupt, and wise to destroy—as vast in comprehension, as it is in action inde-

fatigable, which must infallibly triumph, unless it be overmastered by a greater and holier strength, both physical and intellectual, than itself. And this too, not by figure, but really—being that truth in the constitution of the world, of which men have always been conscious, and which found an exponent in the schemes of Manes and Zoroaster.

An evil intelligence discernible in the history of mankind.

We may scoff at an evil spiritual influence, but facts disprove such a shallow philosophy. Look at the history of human errors, and you will see at once, not only the depth of human ingratitude and that irremovable taint of perverseness and apostacy which marks all the relations of mankind to Almighty God—for that is obvious enough to any one—but a *specific* adaptation of the corruptions of divine truth to the characteristics of the human mind. There is a wise adjustment of the system to the weakness and prejudices of human nature; and an introduction, in a way to give no alarm, and a fine shading off from bad to worse, of fatal innovations on the will of God, and on those truths of revelation which have been, from the first, the inheritance of mankind. Now, it is not enough to call this natural—though it is *natural, no doubt*—it is so, if I may thus express myself, *passively*; that is, the heart *accepts* and *adopts* what is presented to it, in accordance with its tastes and prepossessions. But it may well be questioned whether there be in the human mind, with all its corruptions, that accurate discrimination of judgment in things evil, and that

active adroitness in seizing and working on the weak parts of truth which is so characteristic of great errors. It is obviously the result of intelligence acting upon system, and with a consummate knowledge alike of the nature upon which it is to practise, and the differences between the essential and circumstantial points of those truths, the corruption and destruction of which is the great object proposed; and an accurate analysis of which is a part of the conditions on which success is dependent. The very variety of the means employed, the shifting complexion of the error, till from error merely it darkens into unequivocal sin; and a superficial contrariety, where the base is unaltered and the principles invariable, is an additional evidence of design, and the systematic operation of the same fruitful and sagacious mind.

Nor, when we come *to details*, will any thing, in the wickedness of the human heart, be sufficient to explain in many respects the phænomenon in question. For, though *it is* a fertile soil for every iniquity both of principle and practice to grow *in* and grow *from*, yet there is in general such an absence of *mistake* in regard to the relation of the error to the *period* in which it is generated; there is such an adaptation of its perversion of truth to the circumstances of *specific epochs and national emergencies*; such a combination of collateral influences and agencies all circulating round one point is discoverable in the leading delusions and apostacies which have made the

truth of none effect, that it requires some other theory than mere human corruption, as an adequate explanation of the facts—they are clearly too large for so narrow a basis. And so emphatically true is this intellectual and moral adjustment of errors to times and circumstances, that, from the first, it would be quite out of the question to shift *the chronology* of spiritual delusions and declensions, without making their production a contradiction and their success an impossibility!

The earlier
idolatry.

I shall not *dwell* on the *chronological* phases of the corruptions of primitive truth—but it is necessary to call your attention, as an example of this artifice, to the gradual substitution of emblematic worship, the immediate object of which was palpable to the senses, for the worship of the heart to the unseen Jehovah; *how* it was contrived, and by what appeals to natural feelings, that the great bodies of the universe, which do indeed manifest His glory and proclaim His power, and seem, if not to demand a *primary*, yet to *justify* a *secondary* veneration, were permanently substituted for the Creator. How men sunk lower and lower, more and more indulging the tendencies of the heart to worship something, yet something approximated to humanity; till the gross worship of idols, wood and stone, with the cotemporary deification of every earthly passion, obliterated at last, not only the memory of the all-filling Spirit and Almighty Father, but even that first idolatry which has so many charms for

the imagination; and may be varnished over by such plausibility of symbolism, and the necessities of the outward senses. *You could not improve the process.*

Neither is there here time to do more than direct attention, in passing, to the delusions immemorially adjusted even to the *peculiarities of climate* and the *face of nature* with the moral conditions which usually accompany them; that old contemplative mania, or sooffeism of the East; that Manichæan attachment of all evil to matter; and the ascetic discipline, by which the soul impatient of the degradation of the flesh, would fain approximate, in a mystical communion, to the eternal Spirit out of which it flowed, by a conquest, not *over sin as sin*, but over the physical infirmities of human nature. And then, that other form of superstition, with a greater admixture of the sinful and penal element, *the atoning efficacy of self-inflicted torture*, which, with a deep consciousness of moral wants, and fear of a punitive attribute in the Godhead, wholly distinct from any mere physical inferiority, peopled the cells and deserts of the East, *of old as they do now*, with heathen saints and hermits, long before it was adopted into the system of patristic Christianity. Nor can we *dwell* on what is equally geographical and characteristic—the unconcealed self-dependency, and dialectic rationalism, which combined with the pantheistic system in the Greek philosophy—no gift of Almighty God, as the theologians of the Alexandrian school would make it, but, in its actual and practical form, a device of Satan. But especially in

The sooffeism of the East, and dialectic rationalism of Greece.

these systems we discern, in all their variations, the influence of a deluding spirit on the same unchanging principles as their basis. In all three He avails Himself of man's incapacity for realities, discernible by faith indeed, but beyond the grasp of the practical mind, or the cognizance of the senses; of the same aversion to contemplate steadily the moral attributes of a personal God; of the same pride and self-admiration; of an adoration, in fact, of self, under other names and forms; and a reliance on *his own strength* for the acquisition of virtue or the removal of the Divine displeasure. Are there not the *palpable* marks of an evil intelligence throughout, in the modification of the aliment presented to the mind, and the congeniality of the sin to the individual character, which is most striking and instructive? I cannot but think there is.

At a later period, with what skill and *perception of the decisive points* were the first *heresies* of the Church directed against the main articles of the Christian faith, the personality and divinity of our Lord, and the adorable Trinity! How dexterously managed were the Gnostic frenzies, with the boundless play which they afforded to the imagination; the false elevation of their doctrines; and that subjugation of the physical to the spiritual and intellectual, combined with portions of the Christian exegesis, which it held out to minds really superior to the senses! With what ingenuity and fertility of invention were they joined on to the Christian faith; and with what fine insinuations of its poison after its

The Gnostic errors.

avowed forms were finally suppressed, did it still continue to corrupt, in some important points, the very faith which had triumphed over it!

Again: What attractions were held out to minds of the highest order, by the philosophy of Plato, and the theurgy grounded upon it—with what plausible reasoning and shew of holy motives were the principles of this better rationalism amalgamated with Christianity, and the Gospel in its very fountain-head corrupted by it!

I now come to a point, on which *I do wish to dwell*—these are mere introductions to the two master-pieces of this science of evil, which for twelve hundred years have run a cotemporary course, and will both in the fulness of time be consumed by the coming of the Lamb, and His final visitation on the infidel and antichristian powers. The more accurately they are analysed and their relations discerned, the more must any mind be struck by the sagacity exhibited in selecting the leading idea, the profound combination in the details, and perfection of policy in accommodating them to outward conditions, which are exhibited in the apostacies of Mohammed and of Rome, *if I may apply* the name to both¹. I mention them together, because Scripture and the greatest modern interpreters have so combined them; but with the clear understanding that a broad distinction is to be drawn between them. Both operated to the destruction of true religion, both have had a most disastrous influence in the propagation of superstition and idolatry. Fabulous legends, un-

The apostacies of Mohammed and Rome.

¹So they are counted, and so they are called by the best, and most dispassionate of the English Theologians. Even by Bp. Van Mildert. Mr. Forster has presented Mohammedanism in a new light to us—as the fulfilment of God's promise to Ishmael—and a divine instrument of truth, so far as it vindicated the worship of God from idolatry.

certain traditions, and corrupt interpretations of Scripture are characteristic of both. But the Papacy maintained, *not efficaciously* indeed, but yet undenied, the essential doctrines of the Gospel. The one is an apostacy real but constructive; the other, is a direct renunciation of true religion. The one, consequently, still admitted, and admits of correction; the Christian Ministry, the Christian Sacraments, the word of God, may all be restored in their proper place, and their scriptural purity; and accordingly, by the blessing of God upon the Reformation, Christianity, in many Churches, *was* restored to its primitive purity, whilst the latter admits of no remedy, but the avenging arm of God and a complete excision. And yet with what a shew even of reason, and a vindication of the honour of Almighty God, was the former accompanied in its earlier propagation, and its first announcement to those vast and corrupted regions which its martial fanaticism overwhelmed and chastised¹. It could not indeed boast of reason, against the pure Gospel as preached by the Apostles, as the eyes of men had seen it in the early Church, and as the holy records imperishably testify it to be; but, on some points, an overwhelming force of reason it certainly did possess, as against the broad enormities of the existing Church, its fierce feuds, its infinite subdivisions of heresy, its moral depravity, and degrading idolatries. But it was only by a profound adjustment to the times far beyond the reach of a rude Arab or renegade Jew, that a system intellectually contemptible in itself, and

¹ Every where in the Eastern Churches, the Arabs accused the Christians of idolatry. "You worship a goddess," they exclaimed; and not only a goddess, but a crowd of lesser deities.

morally degrading to humanity, could yet, by the force of one sublime and fundamental truth, prominently asserted and vindicated beyond the reach of rivalry, make a direful apostacy look like a re-assertion of the truth; and so corrupt a system bear a favourable comparison even with that *popular* faith in Christ crucified, which had practically renounced its Saviour, and, as far as men's eyes could judge, forgotten its God! I say nothing of the political combinations, involved in its appearing in the world at that moment, and never realized together, before or after, and its specific adaptation to the other secular conditions of the time; but solely, here, of its religious aspect, its Judaical and Christian relations.

And then, where is the mind, and where is the pen, which can fathom the depths of the Romish mystery, and unravel the maze of that tortuous iniquity! considered, I mean, not *morally*, but merely *intellectually*, as a given system for a given object; that object being the practical annihilation of the Gospel of Christ, and of God's way of saving souls through faith in Him, without renouncing the name, or *avowedly*, in any way, throwing off allegiance to Him on whom it professed to be founded. In its relation to this grand problem, and in this double face of the scheme, who can estimate it adequately? who possesses at once the analytic and synthetic capacity, the knowledge of man in himself and his historical phases, to adjust to the given end the several parts of that complicated whole? to trace the true bearing of its diverse yet

harmonizing errors; and the perfect inter-dependency of them all in its spirituo-secular whole; then to shew how the central spirit circulates through the very extremities of the system, till we trace it, as an anatomist does a vein or an artery; and thus to make intelligible to ordinary minds, not the wickedness of it—for *that* a child, with a Bible in his hand, may discover and demonstrate to others—but its grasp of thought, and appreciation of all imaginable combinations in the weakness of nations and the corruption of the heart; in fine, the *gigantic comprehension* displayed in this unparalleled invention of evil, and revelation of Antichrist. That this character, not of accidental corruption to which *any* scheme may be liable, but of an *essentially Antichristian scheme*, is, at all events, eminently applicable to Papal Rome, if not exclusively so, which is another question, is the decided opinion, I may say, of all, or nearly all, the great Protestant Divines of former times. Thus judged, not merely those who, in the heat of controversy, or the exaggerated horror of all that was Romish, whether *specifically* opposed to the Gospel or not, might be led to colour too deeply their interpretation of Scripture with the passions of the moment; but the coolest and most sagacious heads of later times, who have looked at Scripture, not out of the whirlwind of religious peril and revolution, but in quiet thought, the dispassionate retirement of the closet, and the unclouded lights of history.

And this I say, not because I wish to throw any doubt on the competency of the *first* Reformers

themselves to judge on this great question; for, with the Bible in their hands, and not only hearts to feel but comprehensive intellects to grasp it, they had before their eyes, as *familiar things*, those corruptions and practical workings of the Papal system which men now-a-days look back upon, through the softening of time, with the incredulous wonder of security; in the comparative harmlessness of a dialectic definition, or a Synodical article. Only put an admirer of Romanism to live awhile amidst the idolatries and degrading superstitions of Italy and Spain¹; let them be under his eyes, let them meet his ears, let them not be filtered through refined intellects, but let them be embodied in the practice and the gross faith of the multitude; let them act themselves out, *unrestrained by adventitious impediments*, in their real workings on the heart and conscience—in one word, let dialectical notions be contrasted with facts, and Trent translated into experience. And surely this—and no theoretic opinion, no abstract propositions, or the dependency of logical statements—is the only rational mode to judge of Rome, and of the vast intelligence which has rendered such a scheme, as this proves in practice to be, intellectually plausible, and morally tolerable. Nay, brethren, some of us may not be able to untwist the Romish knot, but we may cut it, which is better. “Can men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? *by their fruits ye shall know them.*” If the propositions of Trent were as scriptural, *in mere abstract statement*, as they are demonstrably anti-scriptural; were there no visible

¹ In the midst of Gospel light, one imagines actual idolatry impossible among Christians. How falsely, every body knows, who has crossed the Irish or English channel. Consult the opinion of Mr. Gladstone, no ultra Protestant, on the worship of the Virgin. Consult Mr. Froude, who, himself, is compelled to confess that the mass of the people in Romish countries are idolaters. And let no man hastily imagine that he himself can draw, in practice, the line between latria and doulia and hyperdulia. No man can do so, who shall once have said, “Orate pro nobis.” And how consonant even to high

intellects under certain circumstances such worship may be, there is a striking instance in the life of Niebuhr, who, in the agony of domestic loss, actually invoked the spirit of his departed Amelie to succour him. Weigh the great intellect of the man, and who shall say, that demonomolatriy,—the invocation and worship of departed spirits,—is incompatible with refinement of mind? It lies low down in the heart, *this principle of idolatry*; and the first objects of it were the great benefactors of mankind, the demigods of admiring nations.

connection of cause and effect between these subtle definitions of Canonists and Schoolmen, and the popular practice, as, clearly and traceably, there is one; still, that is nothing worth, in the eye of true wisdom; *it is a practical matter, and not a speculation.* See and hear, and then judge; the tree shall be known by its fruits.

I believe, *therefore*, that, in the broad question at issue, the Reformers and their cotemporaries were not only good, but the *best* judges; but I mention the great, the learned, and the pious of subsequent generations to remove objections, not unfair ones, I confess; and to shew the unanimity on the subject till there came the force of present passions and feelings to disturb it; till a natural revulsion of independent intellects from old traditions; or a gladiatorial display of dialectical skill; or opinions which though sincere have not been tested and searched by fire and persecution as were those of the Reformers, and tried like as silver is tried; till one or all of these has striven to turn the stream backwards, and reverse the judgment of preceding ages.

I need not state therefore, that I cannot think, that all the learning and ingenuity, and, I must say, the Christian moderation, which have of late been called into exercise for the subversion of the generally received opinion, have altered the great features of the case—some of the details they may have affected, but no more. For the identification of Rome, if not exclusively, yet *preeminently*, with the man of sin, and the great apostacy from the faith foretold by the

Apostle, remains where it was, and where Newton and Mede and Hurd, in their incomparable works, have put it¹. She still remains, ineffaceably, on any fair principle of interpretation, the persecuting power of the Apocalypse, whose throne is on the seven hills, and who has made the earth drunk with the cup of her abominations. If this awful character can be fairly deduced from holy writ, as a noble band of commentators has judged, and not merely the headlong fury of controversialists snatching up any weapon that comes to hand, it is inevitable that it should be used polemically—nay, truth and justice demand it. For equally certain it is, that, if it be so, or if there be so much as *a reasonable suspicion* that so tremendous a guilt as this of systematic apostacy attaches to Rome, not only is it not *unjust* to raise the voice of warning against her *as a system*, upon this *specific ground*; but it is a bounden act of common duty to Almighty God, and common charity to mankind, so to do. At the same time it should, beyond a question, be done with all Christian caution; there should be a reasonable discrimination, and a charitable regard to individual prejudice, and traditional feeling—a principle, which, whatever may be their practice, I know not that any dispute. Nothing, in fact, is more obvious, or more just, than the distinction to be made between the system, such as history proves it, in its totality, to be, and those who live under it by no fault of their own. Nor is Christian tenderness to the one, and the utmost forbearance in thinking and judging of them, other than perfectly compatible with

¹ Bossuet has done all that the most finished ability can effect to shift off from Rome the apostate character. It was a matter of life and death to prove the heretical character of the unhappy Churches of Christ which still survive in Dauphiné and Piemont.

¹ This should be most carefully remembered, and they do great injustice to Anti-Romanist writers, who would fain confound condemnation of the Papal system with a lack of charity to our individual Romanist brethren. Nothing can be more distinct.

the most uncompromising reprobation of the other¹. No doubt those who are *actually* partakers of her sins, or shall be so, will be liable to the extremity of the plagues denounced by Scripture against her; but not simply as spiritually subjects of Rome—not merely because, in the arrangements of Providence, they have been placed in the midst of a system over which they have no control, in the crimes of which they do not share, and out of which it may be that they have only extracted the portion of good which remains uninjured within her. Many a saint of God has dwelt within the limits of Rome after the Reformation as before it. But this cannot and ought not to protect the whole papacy, *as such*, as well as its individual doctrines, from that Christian indignation, and that unsparing dissection by the scriptural knife, which, up to the present moment from the beginning, it has been the practice of our greatest theologians to exercise—nor, though it leaves *souls salvable* within her, can it diminish the evident perils to which it exposes their salvation.

Nor does *the retention of the great doctrines of the faith, and a nominal confession of Christ as Head of the Church*, avail in the least degree to protect her from the charge that she is acting upon Antichristian principles; nay, that she is Antichrist in deed and in truth, and destroys, by the most effectual means, that very Gospel, of which she professes to be the sole depositary and guardian. For I wish strongly to impress *the fact*, that this open form of Antichristianism would be *self-destructive*,

and *subversive* of the *professed foundation*¹ upon which she has raised her spiritual supremacy. It would not only be a sin, but, with a view to the intellectual conditions of the system, it would be a *fatal blunder*—incompatible with the profound policy which has framed it. And not only does the Apostle represent the man of sin as sitting in the temple of God, presiding therefore over the Christian Church; but, from the nature of the case, the power of Rome and the enormity of her claims are inseparable from such a connection with the Church and temple of God. No *avowedly Antichristian scheme* could ever have obtained spiritual power, have claimed infallibility, or grasped the thunders of the Vatican.

The question is, what is the fact, as we have seen it, partially, in the preceding discourses? Certainly that she has, at one time or other, combined into her system all that the Gospel proscribes and God abhors—all that can, if carried out, not only ruin souls, but enslave and degrade mankind. She has incorporated, with a guilty pliancy, into her practice, the worst superstitions of the worst ages; and, under the shelter of the most spiritual of dispensations and the perfection of God's wisdom, she fosters that very idolatry which brought down the wrath of God upon the nations of old, and the people which He had chosen to put His name there. *Rome is demonolatrous—she is the worshipper of deified men*². Is not this like apostacy?

She has been a blasphemous Church. She has been so *directly*. Her Pontiffs have claimed and assumed

¹ I believe this to be an essential point to be noticed, and a complete reply to the assertion so frequently and triumphantly made, that, Rome not avowedly denying Christ cannot be Antichrist. It is not a question of words, but of things; and no *distinct infidel power* could ever ultimately and effectively have caused such a spread of infidelity, as has resulted from the apostate Christianity of the Papacy. The world would have shrunk back from it. The poison would have neutralized itself.

² This cannot be doubted by any dispassionate examiners of the Romish system. Nay, the Pagan and Romanist

idolatry are as nearly identical as may be. Read Middleton's Letter from Rome; and the same point has been subsequently argued and exemplified by Mr. Blunt.

¹ For these claims, see Bp. Newton's 23d Dissert.; Apology and Defence; and Bp. Downham's "Papa Antichristus." I leave these great authors to defend themselves against the charges of ignorance and misrepresentation. But, even if all such direct impieties were disproved, it would not matter. But these charges are not to be got rid of; the claims sleep, but they remain unchanged.

divine attributes and the titles of the Divine Majesty; they have permitted themselves to be called Gods on earth—Dominus Deus Noster—Alter Deus—Rex Regum et Dominus Minorum¹—and one who did not quite affirm so, yet described himself as "forsan citra Deum, sed multo supra hominem." They have proclaimed themselves as the representatives of the lawless one, by claiming, in solemn decrees and deliberate canons, an exemption from the control of all laws, human and divine; "Papa facit quicquid libet, etiam illicita, et est plus quàm Deus."

But, even if they had not done so, *directly, yet constructively*, and by necessary inference, they have claimed the attributes of God. For instance, they have exercised, as their proper and undeniable prerogative, the power of forgiving all sin—yet who is it that forgiveth sins but God only? Of opening and closing at their unlimited will and pleasure the gates of heaven and of hell, "extendit se Papæ potestas ad cœlestia, terrestria, infernalìa;"—yet, "I am the first and the last," says Christ, "and *I* have the keys of heaven and hell." They have partitioned the world, they have distributed kingdoms and dethroned kings, as plenary administrators of the earth and all that it contains, "credere Deum nostrum Papam non potuisse statuere prout statuit hæreticum censeretur;" yet "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men," says God, "and giveth it to whomsoever He will." What is *this but taking God's attributes, and denying Him?*

Again, *Rome is a Church of blood*—she breathes

slaughter, like Saul, and her name is *persecution*^a. It is not of accident, or of ignorance—no one would deal hardly with either—but upon rule and principle; she has slain more than fell beneath the unskilful fury of the pagan enemies of the Church, and has worn down by incessant persecutions the saints of the Most High. We cannot separate that terrible invention, at the very mention of which men tremble—the *inquisition*—from her name, and from *centuries* of her practice. What is this but an apostasy? God is love, and the Gospel, if any thing, is the manifestation of love.

Rome is a revolted Church. She has destroyed its spiritual nature as established by its King and Founder, and has placed a secular power and pomp in the seat of Christ Himself. Yet, saith Christ, “*My kingdom is not of this world.*”

Rome is a *sectarian* Church. She has practically nullified the Catholic Creeds, and substituted, under the form of addition and exposition, a *faith and creed of her own devising*, neither to be found in Scripture nor tradition, yet, “Ye shall not add to my word,” saith God, “nor diminish aught from it.” Is not this like apostasy?

She has departed from Catholic and Apostolical government, in carrying out her unchristian scheme of visible unity, and broken off from its true fountain the Apostolical succession of the Church. She has closed the book of God, and shut out the people from the word of life, which is all men’s inheritance;

^a It may be accounted illiberal, perhaps, so to say. Yet, what reasonable man can doubt it, who remembers, within the last few years, the persecutions of the Zillerthal, and the cruel severities, urged unrelentingly, at the present moment against the Piemontese Churches.

No scheme of amended Popery has ever received the sanction of authority. Its high claims are too precious to renounce. Vid. in Abp. Wake a triumphant comparison of Popery, as represented by Bossuet, and the ancient and authorized system. The Bull unigenitus, whilst it overthrew the liberties of the Gallican Church, has fixed, in unchangeable rigidity, many points which the doctors of the Sorbonne would have softened to a more scriptural tone.

¹No greater injury has been done to the truth of history and the principles of sound religion, than the efforts made of late to present Hildebrand, and Innocent, and Becket, to the eyes of the young, as so many saints and confessors of God.

Next to the reverence due to the great Benefactors of mankind, the greatest security to virtue and true religion is that traditional horror of tyrants, spiritual and civil, which history has bequeathed to us. Such things go far to make the character of nations.

and well she may; for the Word says, we are saved by faith—Rome, by works. The Word, of grace—Rome, of *merit*. The Word affirms that itself is the *light of life* to them that read it—Rome, that it is of itself poison and death. The Word says that there is but one Priest—Rome that there are many. The word, that Christ is all in all—Rome, that the Church is so. She has changed the Church into the priesthood, and the priesthood into a tyranny. She has put down the Mediator from His throne of power and His throne of intercession, and denied the full efficacy of the atoning blood; thus *practically denying Christ as Saviour, as she had before practically denied God as God.* ¹All this, I wish to impress upon those of my younger brethren that hear me, is *no matter of opinion, no speculation in any way*, but, as touching the Papal Church when taken as a whole, mere facts of history, which no one can gainsay. That Papal Rome therefore, considered in that unity of ages which her own claims to a constant and unchanging infallibility fasten upon her beyond contradiction, is *intensely Anti-christian*, cannot surely be denied—more subtly and profoundly so than any thing which the wit of man has imagined. Subversive of the Gospel which Christ ushered into the world, and, as such, ruinous in its tendencies, to the souls which He came to save.

Nay, this is certain—that, had any one in the earlier age of Christianity, in anticipation of the future falling away from the Church, taxed his imagination to conceive a power within the temple of God which

should combine all the possible elements of active sin and virtual apostacy with the *title* of Christian, he never *could* have devised any thing, either in claim or in practice, which should approach this *portent*, for a portent it is, the like of which the world has never witnessed save in the impiety and soul-destroying craft of Papal Rome. Whether *she be the Antichrist*, and answer the definition which the Apostle Saint John has given of the temper and spirit which is designated by that title, is thus practically answered. By open avowal certainly she is not, and for this simple reason, because, as was observed before, it would be self-destructive—but rather the contrary, because to keep the name, and destroy the thing, was the object proposed, *effectively and consequentially she is, even that*. And the most awful manifestation of the unmixed infidel spirit¹, denying the Father and the Son, which the world has witnessed, or the imagination can conceive, or even the direful types of prophecy foreshadow, was the genuine result of her system—*infidel nations*, as we have seen in a former discourse, are her proper growth, and certain ultimate developement.

Whether there may yet be laid up, before the final consummation of all things, any more intense and unmitigated form of infidelity, the shadow of which is even already projected among us; whether there be yet in reserve any personal and *individual* antichrist, who shall concentrate in himself, in a higher degree of guilt, with a mightier power of evil and a more avowed blasphemy, the antichristian and infidel attributes; is therefore a question of little real importance. It may

¹ See this unmixed infidel spirit and the conspiracy of the French Atheists in the work of Abbé Baruel, the statements of which have never been contradicted. Of this the French Revolution was only the natural manifestation.

¹ It is inconceivable how any theologians could have been so rash, as to fix on this period as that of the developed Apostolic system in its purity. Yet this the Tractarian divines have done. *The evidence of its degeneracy is overwhelming*, as any one may see for himself, who will consult the 22d Dissert. of Bp. Newton, and turn to the passages to which he refers. Let us allow, as I think must be allowed, that he great preachers of that period were themselves *substantially* sound, and that much which Rome changed into things, was with them only words and rhetoric; yet in the multitude it was idolatry. Any how,

be so, or may not; the Fathers may be right, or those able commentators in later times may be so, who have studied the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse with stronger lights of history, a keener sagacity, and a better apparatus for interpretation. But, even if it be so, it will not make the papal system a whit less antichristian; it will not answer one of the accusations of history, nor wipe out one from the catalogue of her sins. It could not recall or unmake one result of that great practical scheme, from the effects of which, at a period when such impressions are permanent either for good or evil, and their effects beyond remedy, the platform of the Western empire will never recover. Imagine what you will, no individual antichrist, in a reign of three years, could, by any enormity of sin, or vastness of power, emulate the crimes of twelve centuries!

But, with the enormous claims of the hierarchy excepted, and the single supremacy of Rome, the rudiments of this apostasy, according to the certain testimony of history, were expanding long before¹. Here again it is a matter of fact, of *mere experiment*; and how stands the truth? Why, that the Church of the fourth century was half apostate, though it is now recommended to us, as the perfected model which was only sketched, in its outlines, by the rude or negligent hand of the Apostles; the precious treasure-house of traditions which the generations next the Apostles knew nothing of. With all its great masters of eloquence and theological teaching, it was, on the evidence of contemporary historians, and the copious records it has itself bequeathed to us, dishonoured with many pol-

lutions of practice, and some broad corruptions of doctrine—the veneration of relics, and the invocation of saints, all the *elements* of the avowed demonolatry of future times, the *great apostacy foretold by St. Paul*, were being very rapidly developed. They were not manfully opposed by scriptural truth, as one should fondly have hoped, nor checked by the great popular leaders who then illustrated the Church; but were stimulated to the uttermost by their glittering rhetoric, while they adorned with a meretricious fancy, or mitigated with wretched palliatives, what they ought to have taxed their powerful eloquence to overthrow from its very foundation. The ascetic discipline, and the unchristian doctrine of the angelical *merit* of celibacy, had even before taken a fatal hold upon the Church; and, *in phraseology*, the priesthood and the sacraments had assumed their Romish aspect, and were fast ripening into the reality of it. Whatever palliation therefore Rome may plead, and it is considerable, from the non-origination of these corruptions, let her receive it; whatever guilt other individuals or Churches may have incurred, or do incur still, by any portion of the apostacy, let it be fully laid to their charge. Resting on the word of God alone, neither more nor less, we are not tied to the practices of the Church of the fourth, or of any other century; and, though we lament to attach to illustrious names and holy men the guilt of contributing in any degree to an Antichristian system, and corrupting the purity of the faith; yet, *as a matter of fact*, and thinking as the Church of England thinks, it cannot be denied—

invocations to saints and martyrs can be produced, and a veneration of relics, which Rome cannot exceed even in Basil, Chrysostom, and the Gregories of Nyssen and Nazianzen. Besides, no thing can be more distinct than the disclaimers on the part of the Tridentine Council, or Romanist controversialists, of any thing, in all this, trenching on the solemnity of God. If similar disclaimers be good for the divines of the fourth and fifth century—the same allowance must be made to Rome. You have more over lying miracles and pretended attestations from heaven to the sanctity of relics, and ascetic

saintship such as Rome has never exceeded. If you take the fourth century, you must take it *altogether*—false miracles and all—and this the writers in question have clearly seen. There is no *via media*.—Look on the period *leniently*; and, with Scripture in your hand, adjust what is doubtful to it, as our Reformers did; and though it verges on apostacy, in its great and good men, it witnesses, with every drawback, to Apostolic truth. Or, on the other hand, assume this as the period which is to regulate all ages that succeed it—the development of the pure Church of the Apostles. Do this, and you are practically

so it was. But what *they* did from inadvertency, Rome did on principle; what they commenced, she methodized and perfected; and then put it into effectual action by that centralizing and all-pervading power of the Papacy, which circulated into every corner of Christendom, and acted on it, as on one man. Such was the mighty visible system, Hierarchical in its form, and organized by the Evil Intelligence, against the kingdom of Christ in the West. The most *visible embodied* system—but accompanied by other more *avowed Antichristian principles*, as its effects became more marked upon the nations. And the same mind which moulded Romanism in all its changes to the exigencies of the times, and threw it into such forms as suited the social and intellectual circumstances of the moment, is marked in the schemes of professed infidelity which followed each other till the close of last century; passing through the earlier Socinianism into Deism, and at last, into undisguised Atheism—the awful negation which men enthroned in the place of God. Throughout, under whatever name, *all* is marked by the most exact adaptation to times and nations—there is nothing precipitated, nothing out of place, or out of proportion.

Specifically then, it is against these two opposing systems of evil, in the East and in the West, that the great Head of the Church has been called to exercise His regal power in its defence, lest the gates of hell should prevail against it. And, though it has been no part of His design

to vindicate the whole body of the visible Church from the effects of human sin and spiritual subtlety; yet a true remnant, *the real Church Catholic in the bosom of the visible society*, He has preserved from first to last. And in the Reformation He did more—He wrought out the deliverance of whole visible Churches for the future preservation and effectual vindication of the Gospel; as He has still preserved the time-honoured Churches of the East, the Churches of the Cyrils, and the Chrysostoms, and the Basils, to be regenerated, as we humbly trust, by the Gospel teaching and evangelical Episcopate of the English Church.

But, not only in the *form of positive evil* and an organized system, is this malignant influence observable—but *negatively* in counteracting what is good. Hence come the hitherto imperfections even of such vast and manifest deliverances of the Churches from the Romish usurpation—hence mighty designs ultimately marred—great plans, magnificently traced out for God's glory, left maimed and in fragments—holy purposes interrupted or perverted—great principles rendered ruinous and self-destructive by excess—every thing marked, even in its best and most hopeful form, by a malignant counteraction, enough to deteriorate what it had not strength enough to prevent or to destroy.

But still, even in this aspect, the guidance and interference of the unseen King is ever at work, and distinctly traceable to the eye which shall read the records of history by the light of the Gospel. By

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what management of persons or instruments it is brought about, or what limits are put to the machinations and power of our spiritual enemy, we cannot ascertain—we see the mere second causes combining to produce these great results, but how we know not—whether by pre-designed adaptation, or the *immediate* overruling of Divine wisdom or power, or by both at once, it matters not. It is the work of the Head of the Church, who sitteth between the Cherubim, be the earth never so unquiet; and that is enough for us to know; an effectual support and consolation amidst the changes and chances of the world. It is the Lord Christ; it is enough for us that He doeth what seemeth Him best; He sitteth King over all, God blessed for ever.

II. But I wish to come to a more practical consideration of this kingly and preserving power, and one more within the comprehension and even experience of most of us, and necessarily implied in that which we have considered, though apt to escape us in considering the Church as *a body*; I mean, the kind and degree of influence necessary to protect us from the same watchful and *destroying power*, and which every individual in the Church of Christ requires, to enable him to endure unto the end, and secure his ultimate entrance into the kingdom of the saints of God! Surely nothing less than a *power* truly divine can break in pieces the heart of stone within us, and make it, as a heart of flesh, pliant to those impressions of heavenly love, which is the

earnest of God's favour, and the real commencement of heaven. But the point to which I wish to draw your attention is not so much this fact, and first principle of faith, as the manner in which it is brought about *practically*; and with reference to the outward circumstances in which we are placed, and from which, as they are overruled for good or evil, beyond *our own disposal*, such powerful moral influences proceed—as a work that is not so much of *grace* as of power *and management*. How multiplied are the means by which this result is accomplished, and by which we are effectually moved, and protected from counteracting influences; how various are these instruments of grace, which are adjusted with a specific care, and, so to say, an exquisite science, to all the singularities of individual character! And, I imagine, that most thoughtful minds, when they analyse their Christian course, discern somewhat of that complication of little incidents, the combination and arrangement of all of which we feel to have been necessary to bring out, to its final issue, the spiritual condition of every one amongst us! Thus it is that all things work together for good to those that love God, by that union of wisdom and power which grasps the magnitude of the star, because it is fully present with every atom of it, and dwells with each Christian as intensely as though there were none else in the world besides—and this, great truth as it is, faith alone can realize. And then consider this incessant superintendence and unwearied Providence, wonderful, as we see, in the case of a single

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subject of it, as watching and acting simultaneously over thousands and millions of beings like ourselves, in every people and nation under heaven; and ministering, effectually, from one generation to another, in the salvation of souls—and our minds, lost alike in its vastness and minuteness, can form no clear and accurate conception of the greatness of the attributes which are necessary to a work like this. Yet without this exertion of *power*, thus minutely applied, and accurately measured to the occasion, there can be no real providence; nor, as built up of *individual* souls really changed into a spiritual nature, and preserved in actual communion with God, could the universal Church of Christ have continued to exist. As a theory of morals, or as a system of speculative theology, it might indeed have struggled on to the world's end; or, if mankind endured it in such a form, the imposing externality of a so-called spiritual kingdom might have survived. But the Gospel is not an abstraction, or a form; and, as a spirit and a power in the hearts and souls of men, preserving them from a moral decay by its *individual* influences; as a restoration of the lost and earthly to a heavenly vigour, and a final triumph over the powers of darkness and the gates of hell, it could never have existed at all, or must have perished with the passing away of its earlier propagators.

Necessary
to the main-
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And surely, there is something wonderfully adapted to the actual economy of the dispensation under which we live, and the *peculiarities* which distinguish it from all other schemes whatsoever which have been even

so much as imagined, that the exercise of this *power*, so indispensable to the Church, *collectively and individually*, should be brought so completely within the reach of our sympathies, and recommended to our hearts, far more than, in our present condition, could have been the case, had they been exercised by Almighty God, *solely as God*. It is a matter of rejoicing and infinite gratitude that it is to Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us, that these high and regal powers of protection and guidance have been consigned—King of kings, and Lord of lords—till all things shall be subdued under His feet, in a literal and actual conquest, and death and hell are cast for evermore into the lake of fire!

Now all this, as the statement of a fact, without any of the aids of eloquence, or an appeal to personal feeling, has a something wonderfully striking and magnificent about it, and, even as a speculation merely, would be indescribably interesting. But I do not dwell upon it here, to kindle up the imagination, or to feast the eye, by a description of the greatness and the triumph of Him who from our Priest and Teacher is become our King. Nor do I fear that it will have this effect; for though there is so much in Scripture, its higher truths and manifestations of man's hopes and God's glory, to lay hold on the whole soul, and elevate the imagination to the utmost pitch, with every thing about us that aspires indefinitely after what is great and glorious; yet this, I believe, in all cases, is only instrumental to

more important purposes. If we receive them into our hearts with a true simplicity of faith, and muse upon them till they become incorporated with us, they have a direct and intended influence upon *the conduct*; they co-operate in that sanctification of heart and life which is the finished work of faith. This is the effect of the contemplation of the sublimest of them; and, if they require a higher elevation of feeling; if they bring with them, while we regard them, an accompanying expansion of the intellect as well as of the heart, we must be on our guard that it may not terminate here—a mere feast of the mind and of the feelings—it is God's purpose, that by laying hold more completely of every faculty of our nature, they may stimulate us the more to move and to act.

The practical tendency of the doctrine of Christ's regality.

II. And, in this view I think, that the actual reign of Christ at this instant, over all things and over all beings, as the administrator of the world, has a most important influence on our perception of other truths, and a most practical purpose to answer. Salvation, we all know and confess, there is absolutely none out of Christ Jesus; He is the beginning, the middle, and the end of our faith, and there is no other name under heaven whereby we may be saved but His. But to accomplish this—He must not be an object of *occasional* meditation, or a notion floating hither and thither in the mind, without a settled place and definite connections. He must not be considered, as men are too apt to regard Him, as the mere title of our worship of

Almighty God, with a general designation of office, to fill up the end of a prayer—nor even as a Saviour from sin, whose great act of love towards us has been accomplished, once for all, but who thenceforward has lost the powers and attributes of an active being, and exists, to us-ward, only in the *results* of His one magnificent work of love and mercy. As the expiator on the cross, and as the Judge upon the throne, before which all nations shall be gathered, and thus occupying the two extremities of our view, men *do* regard Him—but leave the long interval between these vast exertions empty of any specific exercise of His office of *power*—full of the agency and providential operations of the Godhead, but unoccupied by the fulness of the *God-Man, as such*; as we found in the Priesthood, that men loved to exclude Christ's *actual* intercession, though they call Him Mediator. It is this impression of Christ's royalty, against which I wish to contend. I wish that we should look upon Him as a God and Kingly Redeemer, every moment, present in power as well as grace, in whom for protection from indefatigable enemies, we have a direct and personal interest, not to be transferred to Church or Priesthood; as one, who, in human affection, but, at the same time, in the omnipresence and omnipotence of His essential Godhead, is acting in us and for us, and amongst us, every instant of our lives, a far sublimer thing than a visible Church however potent. And by reason of the *definiteness* of the idea of the God-Man and so to say, not only our knowledge of His love, but our

familiarity with His person, we may accomplish this.— For thus far, God in the flesh has condescended to the infirmity of our human affections and limited the infinite. We are thus enabled to attain that personal acquaintance and realization of His glory, and of the Father through Him, which, without this, might be dissipated into vague imaginations; thoughts, whose vastness eludes the mind, and which become unpractical from the lack of something to unite us to their object, in a more intimate relation than any intellectual effort can supply.

And yet I am afraid, that from this, whether it be from hostility to things unseen, or a fear of *realizing that* which must bring with it the constant sense of an outward and controlling power, the mind even of professed Christians is found, instinctively, to shrink; and to bring home Christ to our hearts, and to dwell upon Him there, with this sense of His presence and conviction of His personality, is a task, perhaps, of all the most difficult which the soul has to accomplish. But the more intensely and habitually we dwell on the mighty offices which He discharges; the more we follow them into their details and definite relations to ourselves; the more likely is the whole mind to be filled with the one great idea, which is to us the centre of all things, and this vivid and almost sensible perception to be formed within us. This vivid perception it is which outward and ceremonial systems attempt to supply—but by human means, and a rationalism which will always signally fail. It is quite a mistake to suppose that the heart

is to be changed by the senses—no : lead the soul to dwell in faith on the offices of Christ, and this great end will be attained. And we must consider them, not as notional, but as *facts*, and His authority as bearing on our daily lives. It is a transfer of authority such as is sometimes seen in a temporal kingdom ; albeit, with limitations from the nature of that Triune God, from whom and in whom are all things, which are contradictions to a finite capacity. It is the most important of all facts, and the state of the universe turns, at present, upon it.

If men, therefore, could see and know Christ as The world sustained by Him He is in His greatness, in regal power overruling and controlling all things and all men—if they could but discard, in this matter, the illusions of the senses, and the prejudices of the natural understanding—if they could throw away from them that voluntary darkness which blinds them to the power which governs and sustains the universe of matter and spirit—if they could but rise, as Christians, into that sphere of faith where the spirit moves freely, as an emancipated being, with the strength of a giant, and the unclouded eye of an angel—what an inconceivable change would immediately present itself, as the interior of things was gradually opened, and the invisible and infinite came out from behind the material world which had concealed it ; as the realities of that spiritual dominion which alone, of all things, is substantial and enduring, were presented to our consciousness ! Wherever we look, it is Christ, who presents Himself to us, above us, and below us, and around us,

and within us—Creator, Saviour, Sustainer, Infinite King—we cannot escape Him, for He fills the universe—God over all, blessed for ever! Well may the Church sing, “*Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ!*” Well may the prophet proclaim, “Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given—and the government shall be upon His shoulder—and His name shall be called, *Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God!*”

Is there any one insensible to the encouragement under the difficulties of the Christian course, which thoughts like these are calculated to give; with what an elasticity of heart, under the conviction of such a presence as this, must the extension of the Gospel among men be undertaken by His servants, who see the Unseen, and Jesus, in His glory, standing at the right hand of God!

Moreover, how great a power there is, in such considerations as these, to remove that feeling of shame, which is seen in unsteady and unconfirmed Christians, of a bold profession of their faith in the midst of the world; that low-mindedness which is impatient of the reproach of that cross which is our true boast and glory! Nay, a shame to be detected, even in the reverential use, in expressions of dutiful love, of that name of whom all the family in heaven and earth are called.

This could hardly be the case if men carried within them not only the recollection of inestimable benefits to awaken gratitude, but that which is calculated to *kindle courage and a noble pride*, the vivid conviction

that He to whom it belongs is the very Being who deals out our daily bread, whether of nature or of grace, who is the actual Sustainer of our life, and who, with a discretion which is uncontrolled, and a power which is boundless, confers eternal life upon whom He will. The glory of the ascension and the throne in heaven at the right hand of God, may well do away with the shame of Calvary. Our loyalty to an earthly sovereign, if we are susceptible of manly and generous sentiments, only grows the more intense and resolute from the presence and power of His enemies and ours, and it will be woe to us, if our loyalty to the invisible King does not exceed that of the world.

It is scarcely possible, moreover, that we should be content to go on, with a mere loose and careless profession, dwelling in the generalities of Christianity, and the outward shadows of the Gospel, if we were really persuaded from the bottom of our hearts, that He from the searching peculiarities and singularities of whose law the heart unfaithfully or disdainfully shrinks, is the one King under whose dominion we are momentarily living; and whose eye reads the secrets of our souls, not only with the displeasure of a neglected teacher, or the reproachfulness of a rejected Saviour, but the withering wrath of a King. I cannot think, that with these thoughts, or thoughts like these, it would be possible—and of the more importance does it become that the presentation of Christ as a living Power and Potentate, whose presence, as He

goes in and out among us, is really discernible, by the attentive eye, in the affairs of men, should be a portion of our teaching till it becomes to our flock an habitual thought, and an abiding conviction. For surely it does not seem fixed in men's minds with sufficient precision, and the distinctness of the Gospel declaration. We speak familiarly of committing ourselves to God's providence, and we are right in so doing—for God's providence it is—but still that providence is exercised, in the present dispensation, by and through Christ. We speak of God's gifts and graces to us—here too we are right, for His they are; but it is *immediately* from Christ that they come, and they are the regal gifts which, since He has led captivity captive, and assumed His throne in heaven, He bounteously and freely bestows upon all His dutiful children. We pray for God's supporting hand in the hour of death—we are right, for it is His hand; but it is Christ through whom the succour which we ask must be administered, and it is He who with His rod and His staff must uphold us in that dark valley. He it is, into whose hands the departing spirit is committed, and whom, when the righteous seeth Him, as did Stephen, at the right hand of God, his face, with the anticipation of glory, and the joy of beholding Him who died that he may live, becometh like the face of an angel. Again, we speak of Christ's coming to judge the world in righteousness; but we do not see that He is here already, and that the Redeemer, so mighty in saving,

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has already the strength to punish; nay, that the seat of judgment is set up among the nations long and long ago, and that the Saviour sitteth upon it. When we speak, therefore, of the wrath of God upon reprobate Jerusalem, and that Mount Zion which He once loved, and where the angel of His presence dwelt among men, we are right in doing so, for it is the truth; no other wrath could have been like that, a consuming fire; but as before, it is only the truth half told—for it was the Son of Man, the rejected and crucified Messiah, who, as He had Himself foretold, *then* descended with power and great glory; and, though the heathen armies were His instruments, and the blind fury of men was alone the visible worker of its own signal miseries, yet He was Himself, though unseen, taking vengeance upon those whom His justice had condemned. So we speak, sometimes, in moments of deeper conviction than usual, of the woes and sufferings of nations being the visitation of God upon their sins; and, when we look at the desolations of war or of pestilence, we recognise in them God's ministers, and acknowledge the inflictions of His hand. *It is the truth, but not all the truth*—for it is the *Lord's Christ*, acting in His kingly and judicial capacity, and already calling the nations of the earth to a reckoning, for the rejection or the abuse of the Gospel; and terribly pre-showing that great day, when His controversy with the nations will be finished, and He shall tread out, *in His last wrath, the winepress of Almighty God.*

The vengeance which Christ, as King, will execute upon His enemies.

III. And the principle contained in these remarks has brought us, finally, to consider the last and most awful aspect of the regal authority of Christ. Up to this point, though invested with an unlimited power and a divine majesty, the whole character of the Saviour *us-ward* has been that of unmixed mercy, apparently unlimited in extent and unchastised by sterner elements; only in unspeakable condescension and love towards mankind. Even that strength and active power by which His regal majesty is accompanied for the protection of His Church, as far as we have yet seen, have been only *defensive* in their operation, with nothing of *aggression* about them, and still less of a vindictive severity. But when we regard Him as Judge, invested with retributive authority; in His sentence irreversible, and in His righteous wrath, inexorable; collecting before His dreadful tribunal the multitudes of fallen spirits, and all the sons of Adam, the quick and the dead; with no one lingering *infirmity* of His earthly manhood to temper the austerity of the divine and the immutable;—this is an aspect *wholly* awful, and, but for the assurance of His unparalleled love, even the heart of the holiest of His saints would sink within them.

And there is something very marked and emphatic in the delegation into the hands of the God-Man of this supreme and inalienable character of the Creator—it forms, if I may so express myself, a counterbalance to that revelation of *pure mercy* in the Saviour, which would have been an imperfect

and *onesided* view of the moral attributes of the Godhead. Originally the balance was redressed in the reverse order. When the sin of man had drawn an impassable line between the creature and the Creator, and had changed the familiar love of a Father into the sternness of a righteous Judge, it was followed by a display of boundless love, and such a mercy as no created thought could have anticipated was revealed in the power of the atoning Saviour. But this issuing forth of love in the midst of wrath was *no change* in the Divine nature ; no removal of that tremendous portion of it which fences in its ineffable purity and abhorrence of sin, with the inevitable fires which consume the guilty. Justice was reconciled with mercy in those who accepted the terms of forgiveness propounded, but its severity remained unmitigated towards those who had not sought the appointed refuge, nor been sealed through a living faith with the offered blood of redemption. But then, as judgment was softened by mercy, so *now* into the very hands of mercy itself the execution of the final wrath is committed. “The Father judgeth no man,” says our blessed Lord, “but has committed all judgment unto the Son.” What a combination of all awful and adoring feelings is awakened in the bosom of the Christian, by this union, in the person of his Lord, of what, if they were not harmonized in His marvellous attributes, would seem irreconcilable extremes, perfect love and perfect justice !

How inconceivably awful must the guilt of sin be,

when it shall receive its sentence and its punishment from Him who came down from the bosom of His Father's glory to *die for sinners* ! What a pledge has Almighty God given of the *necessity*, whatever its precise nature may be, of avenging His violated law, by making Him, who is love and essential mercy, the judge of the award ! How impossible, on the other hand, to escape the scrutiny of Him, who being Himself the Author and Inspirer of the glorious Gospel, the Sacrifice, the Teacher, and the Priest, shall now search the hearts and reins of them who have borne His name and professed His truth ! How great a joy to those, who, being bought by His blood, have been purified and sealed by His Spirit, and will recognise upon the seat of judgment Him, the assurance of whose pardon they have long since carried in their hearts, while they testified the glory of His Gospel in their lives !

This it is which, *during His life in the flesh*, carries such an undercurrent of majesty and awfulness throughout every accent, either of praise or condemnation, which fell from the lips of Him who spake as never man spake. He who pronounced, "Blessed are the meek," "Blessed are the merciful," shall Himself in His great glory ratify this blessedness, by His final sentence, in the presence of angels and men and the assembled universe. He who said, "*Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites,*" shall Himself execute the woe as Judge, which He denounced as Prophet. He, who stood as the vilest of malefactors before the High Priest, who was scourged

by Pilate, set at nought by Herod and his men of war, and crucified between two thieves, shall be visible and recognised, in the midst of His angels and the consuming fires, by those that spat upon that sacred face; and smote, and tried, and judged, and slew Him. Behold! *He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall wail because of Him.*

So, in the *prophetic* descriptions of the Messiah, these two offices of love and judgment are often combined in a wonderful manner; the one passing off and naturally modulated into the other, with an inseparable association of ideas, which marks the original conception of the Messiah as embodied in the person of the God-Man. The super-human majesty and power, and the super-human tenderness, and unutterable condescension, are alike His peculiar attributes. “Behold,” says Isaiah, “the Lord God ^{Isa. xl. 10,} shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall ^{11.} rule for Him;” and instantly after, “He shall feed His flock like a shepherd, He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” And still, more awfully, in another passage, is combined His love for His redeemed, with the terrors of a consuming and inexorable wrath upon the enemies of His Church; “Who is this that cometh from ^{Isa. lxiii.} Edom; with dyed garments from Bozrah? this, that ^{1—3.} is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength? I that speak in righteousness,

mighty to save.” “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me: *for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.*” In similar awful language, embodying the most terrific conceptions that ever made the imagination flame forth into an outward expression, is the description in the Apocalypse; “He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations; and He shall rule them with a rod of iron; and He treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” “And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written: *King of kings, and Lord of lords.*”

Rev. xix.
13—16.

And, as was before intimated, this awful and avenging character He sustains *at present*; and as a necessary preliminary to the consummation of judgment, when all the elements of wrath shall be thrown together, without any intermixture of love and forbearance to mitigate their excess. He is at this moment, and has been from the first assumption of His regal throne, thus judging and chastising the peoples. And in one important respect, He *judges* and condemns and chastises exclusively, at the present—and that is, in the case *of nations*; for excepting in this world these gigantic unities and representatives of man collectively can

have no real existence at all—they *become mere notions*. It is *here* only, before they dissolve into the individualities which alone can appear before the literal judgment seat, that they can be brought before the tribunal of Almighty God, and receive at His hand, the measure of their iniquities. “In Ps. lxxv. 8. the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red ; it is full mixed, and He poureth out of the same ; and as for the dregs thereof, all the ungodly of the earth shall drink them, and wring them out.” It is in this *temporal* form, therefore, that, throughout the holy volume, the wrath of God is threatened upon guilty nations and impious sovereigns, and, as history testifies, has been, from first to last, awfully accomplished.

Hence, from the beginning, the successive rise and fall of empires, as they grew ripe for punishment, and the measure of their iniquities waxed full. Hence Tyre and Sidon are places for the fisherman’s net to dry on—Babylon, a habitation for wild beasts—Rome itself a ruin, in the midst of that new-grown spiritual grandeur, which has not yet been consumed by the same avenging fires, which most surely await it at last. Hence, after the coming of our Lord upon earth, and the general proclamation of the Gospel, the threats upon those who reject it, nationally as well as individually. The whole book of the Apocalypse is only a long series of the successive judgments of the Lamb of God upon the infidel and apostate nations of the earth, accompanied, in the midst of its figures, by such accurate marks of time

and characteristic circumstances, as leave scarce the possibility of error in marking *by prophecy*, as we have already done *by fact*, those enemies of the heavenly King, and of the Gospel, upon whom those consuming vials have yet to be poured, or are now pouring—Mohammedanism and the Papacy; and finally, the avowed *and national infidelity*, the un-mixed form of Antichrist, which the latter has been the direct instrument of producing.

Thus, *already*, it was the rejection of the Gospel, and the persecution of God's saints, which brought upon heathen Rome that succession of calamities, which turned the heaven into darkness, and the earth into blood, and out of whose troublous convulsions the Papacy gradually arose into her room—hence, to punish the Church, came the Mohammedan flood, coeval with the¹ Papacy, and the ebbing of which keeps faithful pace with the coming dissolution of the Western apostacy—hence already, within our own recollection and that of our fathers, the twenty-five years scourging of the papal kingdoms, including the whole platform of the Western empire, with an amount of bloodshed and national suffering, such as history does not record since the destruction of the Roman empire; and in which the scale of ruin was exaggerated into a magnitude, and accompanied by a colossal exertion of moral and material forces, which is unparalleled from the beginning of the world! *Protestant England*—and let this well be marked—*Protestant England, the ark of the faith*, and witness of the truth as it is in Jesus, alone remained unvio-

¹ Even the Papacy itself might be thus considered, not only as an anti-christian power to be punished, but as itself a punishment for the previous corruption of the Gospel.

lated, for Christ was with her. All this was the vengeance of the Lamb, a foreshadowing of that fuller revelation of it, if fuller there can be, in which the man of sin and the infidel power, which are indissolubly leagued with it, shall be finally consumed by the brightness of His coming, and the blasting of the breath of His displeasure. All this, in the style of the sacred Prophets, is Christ coming to judgment—and truly and literally it is so—the same Judge—the same sins to punish—the same majesty to vindicate—the same inexorable justice to visit the guilty—as at the final day of reckoning, of which, these temporary inflictions, and outward calamities, however widely-sweeping in their extent, and bitter in their accompanying woes, are faint types only, and feeble adumbrations. Only in this they differ, that the judgment upon nations does involve, to a certain and unavoidable extent, the suffering of the innocent as well as of the guilty, while the latter judgment shall be strictly individual and discriminating.

When this last judicial act shall come, is not revealed—we are only sure that, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and that, when it comes, we may lift up our heads, for the time of our redemption draweth nigh. Whenever it comes, therefore, it shall be no terror to us, and we are sure, that all who are Christ's shall feel, as they are called to the tribunal, such a blissful assurance of acceptance, that, in all the terrors of that day, they shall stand without fear by the side of their Lord. When the resurrection, therefore, which

will accompany the judgment, and will usher in this *last regal act of the God-Man*, will take place, we know not; it may be sooner or later—to-morrow, or a thousand years hence; but this we know, that it shall come, when men least expect it, like a thief in the night;—men shall be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, when, of a sudden, the sound of the trumpet shall rend heaven and earth asunder; the sign of the Son of man shall be seen, by all eyes, flaming between the heavens and the earth, and every soul of all flesh shall hear the summons, “*Come to the judgment.*” And *they shall come*; young and old, king and slave, rich and poor, from Adam to the latest-born, shall be hurried to the throne. Then shall men, in their anguish, say to the rocks, “*fall on us;*” and to the hills, “*cover us*, and hide us from the wrath of the Lamb; for the day of His vengeance is come, and who shall be able to stand?”—We shall be raised to judgment in a *moment*; in the twinkling of an eye, we shall all find ourselves clothed with our new bodies, and standing, ripe for glory or for destruction, before Him whom all eyes shall see. Literally *all* shall be raised—the kingdom of Hades shall be utterly spoiled—not one that ever died shall be left behind—the earth shall give up her dead—the sea shall give up her dead—the very air itself shall surrender all that it holds of the dust that was once alive; all the sons of Adam, for the first and the last time, shall see each other face to face. It shall be accompanied by tokens of wrath, and fearful convulsions of nature. Nay, nature herself shall die, and

be no more—there shall be an utter and final dissolution of the earth that now is—the planetary heavens shall be rolled together like a scroll in the fire, and shall pass away with a great noise—the elements shall melt with fervent heat; both heaven and earth shall flee away from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and there shall be instead of them a new heaven and a new earth. The Saviour of the world, the Prophet, Priest, and King, surrounded by innumerable angels, to dignify this winding up of the economy, before God becomes again all in all, shall prepare for His last act—the books shall be opened, and the final sentence shall issue from His lips. “Before Him,” He says Himself, “shall be gathered all nations; and then shall He separate the one from the other, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats. And He shall put the sheep on His right hand, and the goats on His left. Then shall the King say to those on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer Him, saying, When saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer,

and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Do thou, O Lord, who art our Prophet, Priest, and King, pour out upon us, the Spirit which thou hast promised to them that love thee. Be unto us that which thou art to all that believe, life and light and the resurrection from the dead, that, being changed from strength to strength, and fashioned into thine image, we may be ready to meet thee at thy last and glorious appearing, and reign with thee world without end. Amen.

LECTURE VIII.

PART II.

CONCLUSION.

SUMMARY OF THE WHOLE AGAINST THE TRACTARIAN THEOLOGY.

I. Distinction to be observed between Romanism and the Papacy.

II. State of the Church of England from the Reformation to the nineteenth century.

III. Services of the Tractarian Divines. The essential Romanism of their doctrines *as a system*.

LECTURE VIII.

PART II. CONCLUSION.

GAL. IV. 9, 10.

But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

MY great purpose in the preceding discourse was to sum up, from our previous investigation, those grand features in the Church of Papal Rome, in which it offers the most emphatic opposition to the Gospel of Christ, and assumes, not only an unchristian, but an *antichristian* character. The principal materials for this statement are broad historical facts, and recorded claims of which no candid or reasonable man can doubt, and which fall quite as much under the cognizance of the secular, as the ecclesiastical historian.

And, in thus considering Romanism and its relation to the revealed offices of the Saviour, it is not only undesirable, but impossible, to dis sever it from

those Papal pretensions which men would now wish to be forgotten. But this must not be, for they have been the direct instrument in consolidating that prodigious Church system which is now dazzling men's eyes with a false image of the kingdom of Christ; and have given it that commanding position among the recognised *powers* of the world, which, for so many centuries, renders the civil institutes and temporalities of society of no account in the comparison. This visible unity has been its principle of strength from first to last—this has given cohesion to the whole—and from the authority of this central power have emanated those Councils and those Canons which have given a substantive shape to its creed, and so subjected it, beyond evasion, to argumentative discussion. It is this, which, by its claims to exemption from error, and the ordinary mutability of human affairs, has incorporated into itself the pretensions and the acts, and the otherwise fugitive errors of twelve centuries, as completely as if they were the transactions of to-day.

This likewise gives that peculiarity of character and definite outline, both geographically and chronologically, in which spiritual Rome becomes the subject of prophecy, and is separated off from similar elements of corruption which are loosely dispersed through other systems, and are inherent in the nature of man; but which, except in the case of Rome, have never obtained a perfect development, and an outward organization. When therefore the great divines of the Church of England

so reason as to fix upon the Romish system, in its totality and in its self-assumed unity of ages, certain denunciations of divine wrath clearly expressed in Scripture, it is no refutation to reply, that the errors and the sins in question, and the miserable results of them, may be detected elsewhere. The answer is obvious—all this may be true, and is true—and from the conditions of human nature it must, to a certain extent, be the case in all religious communities, however scripturally constituted. No code of abstract articles, however free from error; no training of the mind, however carefully calculated, to give to the masses of mankind, submitted to its guidance, a consistent scriptural character, can do more than approximate such a result; it can do no more than partially repress those unchangeable passions which are always marring the purity of the Gospel, and tinging the manifestation of it to the world with secular corruptions. But, save in the case of Papal Rome, they are not authorized; they are the incidental corruptions of the system, and not its essence; or they arise from the system having no sufficient play, and not from the beating down of all opposition to it.

But this is not the only mode of viewing the Romanist, or, more specifically, the Papal system; there is another, and, in many respects, a mitigated form, in which, in modern times and among ourselves, from the decadence of the secular Papal authority, it is apt to be regarded. Men dis sever it entirely from its *gross* corruptions, and

strip off from it, as so many temporary accidents, the practical enormities, revolting to the common sense and feeling of mankind, which have dishonoured its doctrine. And then, having abjured the lessons of experience, and selected from her multitudinous formularies those principles, either of faith or practice, which are most reconcilable to Scripture, and most susceptible of a specious defence by reason, they adjust their judgment of Rome to this partial view, and arbitrary purification of her system.

But I am not disposed to deny, that, practically speaking, such a *selection and re-combination of doctrines* has a real existence, and is constructed on a uniform and intelligible principle. It is in itself a substantive system, though it becomes merely arbitrary and one-sided in any comprehensive examination of *the theory* of the Church of Rome, and utterly indefensible in any historical view of her claims. It *may be separated* from her enormities, though not from her errors; and hence it is, that, as, by this process, many minds, regarding the doctrinal system of Rome ab extrâ, have brought themselves, by the aid of an original bias perhaps towards her, to regard her principles with favour; so minds trained up within her pale have, in every age, similarly tempered her doctrines to a point compatible with personal piety, and the beauty of the Gospel character. And there are other reasons for this—the application of greater or less stimulants to personal ambition, the pressing necessities of controversy, the variations in the political position of the

Church, the opportunities, greater or less, for the systematic cultivation of the meeker graces of the Christian character—the predominance of the gentle and meditative over the energetic faculties—all this must greatly modify the practical results of such a scheme, and falsify any universal or indiscriminate condemnation.

There is, in fact, something, which has no name, at work in the depths and mysteries of this nature of ours, which is always setting at nought general and dogmatic formulas; and, as no mechanism for the moulding of the character to a prescribed model, or the reduction of man's intellectual eccentricities to the same uniform rule, however admirable, has ever reached the accomplishment of its object; so, there is at work in human nature a remedial power, a *vis medicatrix*, which tempers evil with good, and, even in systems apparently the most corrupt, produces, by fits and starts, results which belie all calculation. So it is, unquestionably, in the system of Rome; and it would be a mark of great decline in Christian charity, and of that catholicity which ought to be the result of the Gospel received into the heart, if we shut our eyes against this truth. It can never be right or wholesome to unlearn the sympathy which our fathers have felt with all that is sound and scriptural within her—the piety and contemplative devotion of Fenelon, the magnanimous self-devotedness of Charles Barronico, or the missionary earnestness of a Xavier or a Vincent Saint Paul,

can never cease to awaken within us that admiration which is due to holiness of life, and a self-abandoning exertion for the amelioration of mankind.

Let no man, therefore, presume on the absence, among our Romanist adversaries, either of exalted virtue in the higher stations of their Church, or of Christian love and holiness among its lower ranks; or of much food for a genuine devotional temper in its services and offices of prayer; or of a careful verbal protestation against abuses in its authorized formularies and canons; if he does, he is not in a condition, either of intellectual preparation or practical acquaintance with the facts of the case, to prosecute the Romish controversy with reason or success. In the present position of Rome and the Protestant Church of England, such caution is indispensably necessary; and there is danger, else, lest sacred principles, the assertion of which is indispensable to the purity of the Church of Christ and the discharge of her great office among mankind, should be jeopardized in an unparalleled crisis, by the assertion of extreme positions which are controverted by facts. The power of the Gospel is too strong to require any aid from exaggeration, or crude and partial views of the case; and the forbearance of Christian charity is too deeply founded in the truth of things to fear lest we should hazard it, by joyfully recognising the image of Christ, wherever it is to be found, even in those whom, collectively, we judge to be in error that endangers the soul.

So that both the peculiarity of our position and the magnanimity of a good cause prescribe the same course—to defend the truth with neither addition nor diminution—and with an eye to *it* rather than to Rome ; certain that no immediate advantages can ultimately justify a party policy. May God guide the minds of us all into the boldness and yet the caution which we require !

Before I proceed to apply these remarks, or to draw any general conclusions from the preceding Lectures on this secondary Romanism within our own Church, which has, in so many ways, been forced upon our view, one or two principles may advantageously be kept in mind ; 1. One great difficulty, and *a real one*, in a system, which, like Christianity, is bound up in a visible community, though its ends and aims and the operations of its principles are inward and spiritual, consists in the exact relation of the *inward to the outward*—the importance to be attached to those ceremonies with which it is utterly impossible to dispense, and those outward appliances to the training up of the mind in holiness, without which any attempt at pure spiritualization must inevitably fail. When we consider the different points of view from which men equally devout may regard, and have in all ages regarded, those two elements of Christ's kingdom ; the difference of mental constitution, and the influence which the circumstances of the moment may fairly exercise in determining to which of the two sides our weight should be

thrown; it is clear, I think, that much moderation should be shewn in judging of the sentiments of good men upon this relation of the spirit of true religion to its forms.

2. Another point, involving much of *real difficulty*, is *the extent* to which an overruling power should be admitted to act in the internal regulation of the Church; how far it may prescribe, with authority, to its individual members; and the degree of practical obedience which ought, in conscience, to be paid to it. Admitting fully the unquestionable fact, that there is some such an authority on one side, and the duty of obedience on the other, this question still remains; and, with regard to the *precise* abstract principle, as well as in its application, according to times and the circumstances of the Church, there must be a considerable latitude of opinion, on which no hasty restriction should be placed, nor an extreme attachment to individual views be exhibited by any of us.

3. From the very conditions of human nature, and the ever-varying corruptions to which the Church of Christ on earth is exposed, there will always be a more striking prominence given, at any particular period, to some *one side of Christian* doctrine. A perfect balance in the exhibition of the faith, in which all parts of it shall hold their exact theoretical relation, is hardly possible, with man as he is—we must oppose *specific errors*, which can only be done by thrusting forward, in opposition, the antagonist truth—and this leads, of necessity,

to the *exclusive importance* attached to it, though that exclusiveness is only apparent, and the result of an overbearing necessity. This, with the fullest assent to the principle, that truth is one, and that the essence of the Gospel system remains unaltered all the time, is, I think, an unquestionable fact which no party feeling ought to hide from our view.

4. It is a universal historical fact, that periods of intense exertion, whether political or religious, are followed by corresponding periods of relaxation—periods, in which, not unfrequently, the very principles which had elicited in their defence the most persevering efforts, are abandoned with a facility equal to the earnestness with which they had been previously prosecuted. Or, if they retain their power over the popular mind, yet other principles, which had been obscured while the struggle lasted, begin to force themselves on the attention of reasonable men.

If the latter be the case, there comes the question—where to draw the proper line? where to fix the barrier, beyond which the influence even of great principles may be injurious and self-subversive; destroying the very cause whose vitality depends on their success and general reception? This requires the most consummate management and prudence; and a clear sagacity is required to discern where a great principle is really at stake, and where it is a matter of indifference, or the subject of a reasonable compromise. For, both in religious and political contests, it is impossible, unless under very rare circumstances,

for any leaders to be masters of a crisis, without using or awakening that enthusiasm, which yet becomes unfit for the temperate march of affairs, and is a formidable obstacle in the way of a permanent settlement.

This makes the task even of the wisest and most far-sighted rulers extremely difficult; but it becomes infinitely more so where there is that tenacity of power which refuses to surrender what can no longer be retained; and that lack of comprehensiveness which fails to discern the true genius of the times, and to class the relative importance of principles. Hence came the long struggle of the popular spirit awakened by the Reformation, against the restraint of Church authority and the power of Church forms under the rule of Laud—the proved impossibility of tempering the former by principles adapted to other periods, and the overthrow of Church and State in the contest of extremes.

Meantime the *religious* bearings of the question were gradually merged in the political—the influence of Rome over the faith and consciences of men was comparatively unnoticed in her connection with secular despotism—and so it went on, with a sad forgetfulness, on both sides, of the true spirit of the Gospel, and the vocation and attributes of a Church, till, on the final arrangements at the Revolution of 1688, this view of the question seemed alone to remain fixed in men's minds. The spirit of true religion had vanished. Henceforth it was no longer the salient and expansive power of Protestantism, on its

positive side—its connection with the salvation of men's souls, by the simple principles of the Gospel—its spiritual aspects, in short—which recommended it to the Commonwealth and the support of the great ; but it was its negative side—its erastianism—its dependencies on the political power. Nor was there any thing calculated to withstand effectually these false views, in the nonjuring school. With much of piety, and sanctity of life, there was a narrowness of view about it, and a superstitious subserviency to forms, which, being still farther aggravated by its separation from the Church, and disunion from the intelligence of the nation, deprived it of any wholesome influence. It had no power of acting on men's minds ; it was a form ; it was an ecclesiastical sect, and nothing more ; as a religious influence, it was emasculated by renouncing those grand principles of the Reformation, in which alone are combined the energies which, from henceforward, will have the power of religiously moving nations, *though others may widely influence individual classes.*

All this time the Church, as a body, slumbered and slept—and, during a period, on the whole, of unexampled prosperity and national progression, there was no movement within it, which indicated an organic life—nothing to mark an existence, independent of all secularities, and sustained by immediate contact with an unseen spiritual Head. *It was an establishment*—it had ceased to be a Church. There was about it much of intellectual vigour still, much learning, much quiet usefulness, and an example, here

and there, of eminent piety in high places. But palsy had stricken it, as a whole—its members had no sense of unity or of brotherhood—and, every now and then, in the efforts made to modify subscription to the Articles, there was manifest proof of the gradual insinuation into a part of her Ministry of a Socinian and rationalizing spirit. It was that same spirit which had taken fatal possession of those non-conformist congregations, which had been animated, for a while, by those distinguished men, who dignify their earlier history, the Baxters, and Howes, and Henrys; men who redeemed an involuntary separation from the national Church by great abilities, and eminent holiness; and who sustained for a while a system radically unsound, by that sense of individual religion which was fast decaying in the Church and in the nation.

But this period of tranquil prosperity, blindness to high truths, and indifference to the religious principle, was fast approaching a termination. A totally different character signalized the end of the eighteenth century—the era of peace and national submission was over—men's minds, beginning with France, were stirred up from the very bottom. The infidel forces had gradually collected while men slumbered, and were destined, by an unexampled explosion, to work, through the passions of ungodly men, a terrible punishment on the great for the power which they had abused; and utter ruin on one branch of the Church Catholic, which had connived at the corruptions by which she profited; and, clad in purple

and fine linen, had forgotten the poor for whom she should have pleaded, and the ignorant whom she should have enlightened.

Our own country, by the protection of Almighty God, escaped the general wreck, and came out of the contest with a constitution undestroyed, and a Church, with its privileges untouched, and its wealth unconfiscated. But still, there was no spiritual awakening about her, as a body,—it was her political aspect and relation—it was her prescriptive rights and the prerogatives of an establishment—her claim to the respect of the State and the obedience of the people, rather than her own responsibilities, which occupied the minds of Churchmen—her undoubted and immemorial union with the constitution of the Commonwealth—her moral and civilizing influences, and profound though quiet connection with all that was really sound and healthy in the nation—what she did, and had done, rather than what she might have done, and could do, if all her energies were awakened—and what, in fact, *she must do*. Yes, here was the main point—though all the rest was perfectly true, as far as it went—*what she must do*, if she would save the nation and herself from the most imminent dangers, and the assaults of a popular spirit, the growth and force of which could no longer be concealed from the eyes of observant and thoughtful men.

The period was full of danger—but, mean while, the providence of the Head of the Church had been preparing from afar off the forces which were to resist

the tempest. So long ago as the middle of last century, in the midst of the general slumber, two remarkable men had sprung up in the bosom of the Church, and had commenced that spiritual movement, which, both within and without her, has never since been checked—but has gone swelling on and on, till it has pervaded the length and breadth of the land. Both of them were singularly endowed with popular eloquence, and the power of moving, as one man, the hearts of the greatest multitudes. But one of them, John Wesley, was as remarkable a man as any age or country has produced—resolute, calm, indefatigable—combining with a stern personal asceticism, a rare sympathy with the minds of other men—with the most piercing and far reaching sagacity, that profound enthusiasm, which gives to great truths the power by which they overbear opposition, and conquer mankind—a mind legislative, systematic, creative, fixing what would have been, in other hands, the heats of the moment, in a permanent form; and embodying, in profoundly calculated institutions, the spirit which, in the case of Whitfield, evaporated after a few convulsive efforts, without any lasting result.

Amidst the vehement opposition of authority—the scoffs and contempt of the learned, and the violences of popular outrage, these men succeeded in conveying spiritual consciousness, and the purifying influences of the Gospel, to wildernesses into which the Church had never attempted to penetrate—and to thousands of souls within her pale, whom the indifference of

her Ministers had permitted to walk on in darkness. But the power of these remarkable men lay in the great truths which they preached—truths which, from the beginning until now, have carried their own witness with them, and commanded the hearts of mankind. As at the Reformation, it was the announcement of the Gospel, as contained in the written word, which moved men's souls so deeply—and, with all the drawbacks of enthusiasm, and the other evil influences which are always found to accompany the resuscitation, partial or general, of the religious spirit, it has permanently impressed an ameliorating influence on countless masses, which would otherwise have been abandoned to practical heathenism. In the mean time, there was not wanting a succession of Ministers within the Church, who, through evil report and good report, announced the same long-neglected doctrines; and they had grown so strange to men's ears, that, though they are fundamental truths, and the very message of Christ, they were denounced at first as but little better than heresy. But gradually the spirit of reformation spread; the dead slumber of the Church was effectually broken; the once despised doctrines were widely recognised, not only as the unquestionable truths of Scripture, but as the authorized teaching of the Church of England. Henceforth her Ministers ceased to be the “apes of Epictetus;” they spoke to men's souls; they began *from Christ* as the source of life, instead of working up *to Him*; in one word, they preached Christ crucified, the beginning, middle, and end of our faith. Along with

this bold and simple scriptural teaching, there went necessarily hand in hand, a less secular life in the established Clergy—an indefatigable zeal in all good works, an earnestness hitherto unknown, and a primitive abandonment of soul, and body, and substance, and every thing, so that Christ might be glorified, and His Gospel win its way in the hearts of men.

With this change *within* her, the Church was regarded in a different spirit from *without*; the bands that connect her with the poor and ignorant were no longer disrupted; men acknowledged in these examples of apostolic zeal, the sign and seal of a truly apostolic Ministry; gainsayers were rebuked, friends were encouraged, the multitudes of the people were recalled to her half-deserted fold; and, when the storm came, she was sufficiently rooted in the affections, as well as the immemorial traditions of the nation, to withstand its violence. Whatever faults theological hostility may detect, whatever occasional extravagances or imprudences a calm judgment may lament, whatever deficiencies there remained for an enlarged wisdom to supply; yet herein lies the enduring praise, which the judgment of history will pass upon the evangelical clergy; *they restored the Gospel, when its vital truths were buried under a cumbrous pedantry, and its supernatural influences degenerated into a formal morality; they reconciled the Church to the nation, and the nation to the Church, and so they saved both.*

But still, though the dry bones were covered with

flesh, and stood again upon their feet, all was not done; the mission to rouse and to awaken had been gloriously accomplished—there remained to order and to train. Even the main Gospel truths, in the absence of which religion is dead, and in which alone lay the power to regenerate the Church and nation, in some instances wore to thoughtful men not a catholic but a sectarian aspect, from the lack of other truths, or at least from the lack of a *systematic statement of other truths*, with which, in a harmonious subordination, but an indissoluble connection, the word of God has bound them. The *truths were* there—there, essentially and by necessary inference; but they had no avowed place. The Fathers were utterly unstudied; the true relation, or the relation at all of the Church of England to primitive antiquity, was forgotten; the records of ecclesiastical history, as a whole, unconsulted, and Church order overmuch and unwisely despised. I do not mean, in saying this, to sit in judgment or to pass censure; much of this was inevitable—almost all of it could plead reasonable excuse—I merely state it as a fact.

I do not think it can fairly be denied, in short, that there were many wants felt; great instincts of the Church, in search of something which they had not yet found, though they were rapidly approximating to it. This grew more and more into a settled conviction—and now, that men's spirits were ripe, and could bear to have it propounded without immersing the Gospel in mere outward forms, it came. But there are yet two other points,

which, as entering powerfully into men's feelings, and insensibly moulding their opinions at this eventful period, must not be omitted in this enumeration.

1. The convulsions which, from the troubled depths of a diseased social system, threatened the overthrow of every existing institution, had taken a tone of decided hostility to the Church; and not only anarchist and infidel—which was natural—conspired her ruin; but, with the exception of the followers of Wesley, to whom the lasting gratitude of the Church is due, the great dissenting bodies likewise; they were utterly reckless of ultimate consequences, and unmindful of the peril which threatened the very existence of the Gospel in the overthrow of the Church, under whose mighty shadow they themselves had been sheltered.

2. The supreme power of the State, with which, in all former occasions of danger, the Church had been intimately combined, and to which, as an integral part of the constitution, she had been accustomed to look for support, seemed inclined to abandon its natural position and duty, and to lend its hand, with a suicidal violence, to the work of demolition. Such was the awful aspect of affairs, at that troublous period, that men's hearts were failing them for fear; and it seemed impossible to say, how soon the hour might arrive, when the time-honoured alliance of Church and State would be finally dissolved—the one stripped of its consecration, and the other of its temporal protection. If so, there was no help in worn-out formulas, and the Church must be abandoned entirely to her own resources.

It was natural, therefore, that Churchmen should look anxiously round for some other protection, and that their thoughts should be intensely directed to her union with that Divine Head who has promised, that the power of hell shall not prevail against her. Nay, even that large body within her, who, blinded by the immemorial union of the Church with the State, had lost any conception of her true nature, as a spiritual polity, felt their thoughts drawn into the same channel; or, if they did not reach the grandeur of her spiritual relation, they discerned that the Church must fall, or sustain herself, apart from secular patronage, in the hearts and convictions of the people.

And lastly, from the habit of considering Rome, for so long a period, as spiritually dead; rather as an invader of those political rights whose exclusive possession was jealously guarded, than as exercising any real power over the hearts and consciences of men; there prevailed, almost universally, an utter ignorance of her real character, as a Church. On some points indeed men's minds had been kept alive, and at no period of our history had they been more sensitively awake; but they were precisely those points which were most intimately connected with political questions, and available for popular purposes; her insatiable ambition, her dreadful and systematic persecutions, the idolatry of her popular practices, and the proveable falsehood of any pretence to an altered temper, or an ameliorated creed. All these were within the power of every one to estimate; no one has ever doubted of them;

and, when there has been nothing to restrain her, they have shocked all reasonable men, because they heathenized those whom God has committed to her charge.

But all this concealed from men's eyes the purely religious part of the question. They knew not, and they cared not to know, where the root of her corruption lay; and that every thing else was insignificant in her anti-scripturality, compared with her doctrine of justification by works. They did not know that Rome would repudiate all other charges as the calumnies of enemies, ignorant of her guarded formularies; as abuses of the true doctrine, perpetrated against her will, the corruptions and abominations of the darker ages; and that, not mere assertions, but specious reasons might be adduced to exempt her, in the eyes of all but the acute student of her history, from the more odious part of the charges against her. Nor did they know what fragments of ancient truth were contained within her, and what monuments of real piety she was able to present. Now that the last sound of the contest which had shaken the world at the Reformation had died away, men falsely believed that these questions could never be resuscitated; dwelling on the traditions of successive generations, and on those triumphs of the Reformers which seemed to them more complete than they were in reality, they were wholly unprepared to resist an attack: they had forgotten the use of their weapons, and tempted a surprise which could not but succeed.

It was only necessary to assault them by arguments which they had never considered, and specious statements of which they had not the least previous conception. Still more, if all this were concealed under the guise of Church of England principles, they were liable, unsuspecting of deceit, to be drawn into a semi-Romanism before they were aware, and were ready, with their teachers, as point after point was disclosed, to exclaim, "where was the use of the Reformation? it was a sin, and the sooner the children repair the crime of their forefathers, the better."

It was at this moment and in this combination of circumstances, when men's minds and hearts were in suspense, and prepared to receive obediently any impulse in harmony with their pre-existing feelings, that the impulse really came. There appeared that series of remarkable essays which have been the centre and exciting cause of the most signal religious movement since the first struggle of the Reformation, and the contest which sprung from it; till the adjustment, such as it was, of the claims of Church-order with the ultra-Protestant elements, gave an interval of religious repose.

This is not the place to trace the progress of those writings and other works of the same authors—nor to shew how, partly by their intrinsic interest, and not a little by an able management of those facilities for the diffusion of opinions which the present times afford, they gradually spread over

the land, and began to exercise, whether for good or evil, an undeniable influence to which no observer of the times could be blind. That their first results were beneficial in many ways, few, I imagine, are disposed to deny. At any rate, they soon became a power, *a real element* in the Church, compelling attention to itself—a centre and rallying point of spiritual influences—a something which had a clear vocation, which it was rapidly fulfilling, in the modification of the existing Church-system.

Now, with all reasonable allowance for that concurrence of circumstances, without which no religious or political movement was ever yet successful, and in the absence of which, no intellect, however powerful, can effectually work, it is impossible for a candid mind to deny to such results adequate causes in the writings themselves—rare qualities and powers in the minds which wrought them out. In a word, if we regard the whole phænomenon with a philosophical eye, it must be confessed, whatever judgment may be formed of their ultimate tendency, that so wide an influence could never have been exerted, or the approbation, however qualified, of wise and good men have been obtained, unless they had successfully struck some deep chord—had hit on some real wants of the period—and brought out distinctly into light certain substantive principles which, before their appearance, had required an adequate exponent, and had found none.

There was unquestionably about them, that, without which, in religious and moral questions,

mind can never act upon mind—a most deep conviction of the reality of the truths propounded—an unaffectedly reverential spirit, pervading, with a superstitious minuteness perhaps, but still pervading, the smallest forms and expressions of the divine life. And there breathed throughout them a certain elevation of feeling, a contempt for expediency, and a prominent exhibition of the immutabilities of the faith, and the divine authority of the Church of Christ, which served as a support to wavering minds—they stood in broad contrast to that hostility to all establishments, and that shaking of all received opinions, which gave so marked a character to those anarchical times. If we review all the writings of the school, they possessed a clear and often pungent style; occasionally a moving and almost tragic eloquence; and a rich scattering over them of really profound thoughts, which probed unsparingly the religious and political deficiencies of the times. There was, moreover, a dialectic subtlety, without any parallel, as far as I know, in our theological literature—a knowledge of Christian antiquity as contained in the works of the Fathers, which was then, comparatively speaking, a rare acquirement in the Church of England. There was also in some of the most remarkable of their writings, an analysis of the heart in many of its most striking religious phases, and a perfect comprehension of human nature in its spiritual relations, which, with all the drawbacks of a peculiar system, I think is unequalled in any writings of the day.

But it is impossible to consider these works merely as so much literature, to be judged by critical laws. For, as they proceeded they assumed a more serious aspect; from touching on acknowledged defects in the existing system, they embraced, in turn, every topic of theological investigation, and every point of faith and practice. Many views, at first obscure, were clearly developed; sympathies strange, till now, to all but a small section of English theologians, were openly avowed; and a full-grown system of ecclesiastical polity at length announced, the establishment of which would be incompatible with the existence of the Church of England, as at present constituted; or the existence of a Church in *any* form which should prominently avow *anti-Romanist* elements.

The whole question is now altered. It becomes impossible, for instance, practically, and unfair, argumentatively, to consider these writings as other than a consistent whole; not as dissertations to be separately examined, but a compact and indissoluble system; for, as such, its eminent authors propound it to our acceptance. Many practices, consequently, in themselves indifferent or laudable, naturally excite suspicion from their connection with other principles, or avowed subordination to them; principles which are subversive not only of the specific theology of the Church of England, as defined in her Articles, but, on the deliberate judgment of all Churches save one, of the plainest declarations of Scripture itself. Men are not to be blamed for thus considering

them; it is no solid ground of accusation against practical minds that they should be tenacious of great principles, and jealous of any thing which, even by the remotest implication, shall subvert or nullify them; nay, that they should refuse even to give these writers credit for the valuable truths which they *do* contain, but which may be drawn from other sources without such admixture of error. No wonder they should refuse to consider them, as other than a whole, and not only so, but in that connection in which the crowning work of the series has put them¹.

But is not this unfair? No. There are great truths in Popery—there are great truths in natural religion—there are great truths in many ethical systems, which are, collectively, dangerous. The principle of regarding a system, in its *characteristics*, rather than in its generalities, is so reasonable whether in ethics or religion, that, though a general condemnation may seem to involve truths on which, in themselves, we set a high value, yet, if we would not sacrifice the Gospel, such condemnation is here inevitable. But, to avoid the charge of sweeping and indiscriminate censure, however unreasonable, I cannot but avow my conviction, that, with all their distortion and exaggeration of generally admitted truths, and their unquestionable opposition to the specific doctrines of the reformed Church of England, these remarkable works *have* greatly contributed to the re-establishment among us of principles, both religious and political, which the times

¹ Tract 90; a tract adopted by all the Tractarian divines. And either to separate the preceding works of the School from this famous tract, or to separate from *this* the undisguised Romanism of the British Critic, which is deduced by the strictest logic from the principles of the other, is in every way irrational, and most unjust to the learned conductor of the latter work.

demand, and the best interests of the Church and the commonwealth required to be practically embodied.

In the first place, as we have seen from the peculiar circumstances under which the revival of true religion had been brought about in the Church, and the position of its principal instruments, there had ensued, even in the minds of men whose services to the Gospel were inestimable, an entire forgetfulness of the Church as a *whole* combined for a specific purpose, and with divine instruments corresponding to its vocation. It is useless now to enquire how far the same movement, in all that was healthy and valuable about it, might have been accomplished without such deviation from rule and order. But, be that as it may, all feeling of a spiritual subordination in the order of the Ministry was passing away from men's minds—and with *that* the grand principle of cohesion and unity in the visible body catholic.

Connected with this independency was the view taken of that *commission*, and authority resulting from it, which the Church of England has inherited from the Apostles; every portion of which must of necessity fall into contempt and disuse, if the keystone of the arch is displaced. When the presiding power of the chief Pastors shall be schismatically rejected, or, from forgetfulness of duty on their part, or on ours, shall be neglected and practically nullified, the spiritual power derived from them must likewise fall, and should it do so, should such a conviction ever gain ground widely in men's minds,

and a rightful Ministry be rejected, no individual zeal could preserve the Church of Christ from instant decay and ultimate destruction. The duty of saving, at any risk, our brothers' souls alive,—the duty of propagating the Gospel, wherever there is a son of Adam to accept it—the responsibility of individual Christians, as such, to God, for the souls committed to their charge, within their respective spheres—God forbid, that, in zeal for the honour of the Ministry, any of these certain Gospel truths should be denied. But all this without servants of God specially called and chosen to their office, as pastors and leaders of the flock, would be utterly unavailing to keep alive among men the faith of Christ.

And, springing from the same cause, is another important point. Being intent only on the spiritualities of the Gospel, and their power over men's souls—dwelling, intensely and exclusively, on the inward processes of the spiritual life, and on the experience of the truth of the Gospel which is vouchsafed to every devout disciple who will do God's will—men had learned to throw completely into the background the outward forms of the Church, and even the visible ordinances of Christ Himself. I count the latter of great importance; and I cannot but think, that, absorbed in justification by faith only, its vitalizing power, and its sole appropriation of the merits of the Redeemer, we were in great danger of forgetting the importance of those holy rites, by which faith is confirmed and grace is increased—

and, generally, of those other outward means, by which the divine life, in its equable and unobtrusive vigour, is strengthened and supported within us.

We had become forgetful of another important truth, and one which, more than any thing else, if it were once carried out, with a primitive spirit, by the Church as Christ's body, would tend eminently to combine still closer all true Christian hearts; and would present her to the eyes of mankind, in a light which could not be mistaken, as *the* great organ of all benefits, spiritual and temporal, to them whom Christ has redeemed. I mean, the duty of collective almsgiving as well as individual charity—the presentation of our substance, for Christian uses and the promotion of God's glory, not at hazard, but in some stated proportion, and with the consecration of prayer and thanksgiving—and above all, her duty, in her collective capacity, to labour for the evangelization of the world. I would here, by no means, be misunderstood. We are all infinitely indebted to those labours, so long *of necessity* individual, and unincorporated with the system of the Church, which have been made by good and able men, for carrying out the Gospel of Christ into all lands, and rendering the blessed book which contains it into all tongues in which God can be praised. Nobly too have the great dissenting bodies laboured in the same sacred duty—and I would rather my hand withered, and my tongue clave to the roof of my mouth, than write or speak other than praise of so good a deed. The blessing of God has been manifestly upon their labours; and it is

a ground of hope and confidence that such spectacles as these, both within her and without her, have quickened the whole Church unto a holy emulation. Before this, it was one of those points, on which she had forgotten the terms of her charter, "Go ye, and teach all nations," and would fain have claimed the fulness of the blessing, and the power of Christ's exclusive presence within her, while she neglected overmuch the indispensable conditions of it.

We ought to wish God speed to all such exertions, come they from whom they may, come they from love or from contention; still Christ is preached, and souls are saved. Nor can any man say when the period will arrive, if ever, when the aid of popular assemblies, and popular eloquence, with their inherent dangers to Christian simplicity, and godly motive, can be finally abandoned, with justice to these great Christian objects.

But the sooner the better—for unquestionably the other principle is the true one—so recommended by every feeling of Christian brotherhood, by apostolical precedent, and the propriety of entreating, as a Church, the blessing of Almighty God upon our oblations, that it cannot fail to win its way among us, if discreetly urged; it may be slow, but its progress will be sure, and its ultimate adoption certain. Who could then set any bounds to the exertions of the Church of England? No irregular efforts, however zealous; no feverish excitements, however vehement; no state-endowment, could produce such resources, a wealth so blessed both to givers and receivers, as

these eucharistical gifts incorporated into the services of the Church: they may embrace, too, and should embrace, in their mode of application, the laity as well as the Ministry, in a perfect union; and the whole body would act with that effective yet quiet power, which makes a healthy condition both in individuals and communities.

It is surely a great thing, and one full of hope for the ultimate destiny of the Church, to have set such principles afloat, and to see with what deep and sure power they are daily and hourly working in the minds of men. It is a great thing to see an approximation to that condition of things, of which, as yet, the Church of England has exhibited no example; and yet without which her power can never be adequately exerted, her resources drawn forth, nor her divine commission testified before men; I mean, the combination of energy and order in her outward exertions—one grand harmonious movement with the regular march, and the irresistible power of the swell of the ocean; and within her, the action in their due proportion of all the means of grace in combination—prayer, and the word preached, and the holy sacraments; apostolic simplicity, and plain Gospel truth with the apostolic commission; the teaching of the Church with the undivided authority of the word.

In all these points, the able authors of the system which we are examining, have powerfully contributed, directly and indirectly, in producing a result at which, considered in itself, all sons of the Church of England must rejoice. Nor do I think that any object of real

evangelical truth can be promoted, by withholding an acknowledgment which justice demands. But, two replies may be made to the importance attached to these principles, from whatever source they may have been introduced among us; and specifically as connected with the system in question. "Is not," it may be said, "every one of these principles either overstated, or conjoined with opinions at once dangerous to the truth, and adverse to our received Anglican theology?" I think it is; with the episcopal commission there have been conjoined unscriptural views of its absolute essentiality to a true Church; these divines have raised the mere outward, and, so to say, *material* succession, a thing in itself only to be probably proved, above Christ and the Gospel, above truth and the apostolic teaching; they have moreover conjoined with it, extra-scripturally, and against practical experience, a *peculiar grace for the preservation* of the truth, which, except upon the theory that Rome is the only true Church, has not so much as the shadow of a foundation, *thus stated*; and which thus risks the existence of the Church of Christ in that of the Church of Rome. They have clothed the Ministry, episcopally ordained, with an authority subversive of all Christian liberty; a possession, by virtue of their office, of an irresponsible teaching and a doctrinal *inerrancy*, which is irreconcilable with reason or with the Gospel; and a power of conveying saving grace by the sacraments which is diametrically opposed to the word of God. In the sacramental *forms*, therefore, they have arbitrarily concentrated

all the power of the Gospel, shut out the soul from direct communication with the Father of spirits, through the ever-present Saviour, substituted physical influences for spiritual, and seem sometimes to change the Gospel into a *mere externality*; a ritual rather than a faith.

“ But,” it may be further urged, “ apart from all that you acknowledge as perversions or exaggerations in these doctrines, is there not in them something that tends, essentially, to abuse? In impressing on the Church this patriarchal, not to call it monarchical form, are you not trenching on that brotherly equality which, in the Apostolic institution, manifestly characterised the Ministry? Are you not asserting a principle which must end in the establishment of a despotism, subversive of the truth, and incompatible with the Gospel? And in insisting on an apostolical and exclusive commission at all, with or without the addition of the episcopal office, are you not laying open the door to the assertion of a thousand special privileges, injurious to that proper independence of any teacher but Christ, which is the privilege of the Church at large; and ruinous to those offices of love, those practical ministrations, and those mutual dependencies, which ought to unite the teacher to the taught, and the taught to the teacher? Again, by insisting thus upon the importance of the sacraments, are you not burying spirit in form? transferring the seat of faith from the heart to something else? and making salvation depend upon that, which a moral or physical necessity may prevent you

from receiving, and the efficacy of which may depend, not on your own faith, but on the will of Him from whose office the consecrating power flows?"

It might be replied to all this, "Thus it may certainly be, and the dangers of which you speak are not imaginary—but we have the authority of Scripture; and, therefore, come what will, and foresee what consequences we please, as possible or probable, it is our duty to obey and practise that which, even by probable inference, can be shewn to have a divine sanction." But there is another reply, which goes further than merely silencing objections by God's absolute authority, and which supplies a satisfactory solution of the difficulty. It must be allowed that the results in question are very likely to happen, and are subjects of reasonable apprehension. But we have a provision of Almighty God Himself, by the proper application of which, and the retention of that commanding position in which Scripture places it, the subordination of the outward to the inward may be preserved; the spiritual relations of the Church of Christ on earth, and the privileges of its individual members may be maintained, without marring the beauty of holiness, and rendering order, and the dependencies of a visible Church, an impossible thing; nay, making each of them a support to the other; the outward ministering to the inward, and the inward animating and sustaining the outward. Those commanding principles which constitute our full security against these abuses, are *justification by faith only; and the sole authority of Scripture*, combined with its use, as a duty and as

a right, by all Christian men—the faith of the Apostolic Churches, and the mighty basis of our own.

And in these vital points it is, that the system now proposed for our adoption is so pre-eminently dangerous; here lies its manifest unscripturality, and its complete divergency from the Church of England; this it is, which, with whatever superficial variation from the phraseology of Rome, by its assertion and illustration in every variety of form, justifies an extreme alarm and aversion in those who recognise, in those two principles, the sum of vital Christianity, the sole conditions of its effectual reception now, and pledge of its transmission to them who come after us. Here it is, that, to demonstration, it symbolizes with Rome, and *is* Romanism; Romanism, indeed, in its best form, and capable, as we have seen, by inherent self-contradiction, of working out here and there a scriptural result, but *still Romanism*. Nor, after the occurrences which have of late startled the Church of England, and made her enemies rejoice, can it be asserted, that this is to make a charge unjustified by facts, or which ought to be offensive to those theologians themselves who have so frankly and undisguisedly proclaimed their Romish predilections, and something next to abhorrence of the Protestantism of the English Church¹. These vital resemblances are not repudiated by them—this identity in all things, but those enormous corruptions, and unsustainable pretensions, which are reprobated by Romanists themselves, and the removal of which from the Church which they dis-

Vid. Lect.
4th and 5th.

¹ This ought to be observed, for it seems to me quite a mistake to suppose that the Tractarian divines deprecate a practical identity with Rome

honour, has been ever a matter of pressing anxiety, and sometimes of laborious effort. But whether the charge be offensive or not, the evidence to that effect is to candid minds, adequately acquainted with Romanist theology, irresistible. They repudiate, even scornfully, and with every variety of contumely, justification by faith only; so does Rome; for such rejection, and the substitution of its opposite, is, as every one knows, the corner-stone of her theology; justification by inherent righteousness is their doctrine, and so it is that of Rome. That this justification is conveyed solely by the Sacraments, *ex opere operato*, is their teaching; so it is the teaching of Rome^a. It is from the Romish formularies, and the Romish polemical writers, that are derived their distinctions, their arguments, and their definitions on this question; nor can any theoretic difference whatsoever be discovered upon this vital point, and if there could, the *practical* identity remains.

“And yet,” it may justly be argued, “is it not strange that men, of unquestionable piety as well as abilities—men, at whose feet, in all that constitutes renunciation of the world, many of those who discern, in their teaching, the most imminent peril to the Gospel, would be well content to sit, should thus propound what the simple Scripture absolutely negatives? that they should cling, along with the Romish doctors, with such extreme tenacity to this false position—alike opposed to the first obvious meaning of holy writ, by most men’s confession, and to the

in these points. Just the reverse, both in the principle of tradition, and justifying holiness they are at pains to shew their perfect agreement.

Hence, by necessary inference, the Reformation, in their eyes, has swerved from the first principles of the faith.

Nothing can be weaker than to defend these divines on the principle, that they *mean right* but speak rashly.

Such defenders estimate ill the luminous intellect of the men—though for some obvious reason, there is an occasional rancillation of phrase, they mean what they say, that Rome is right and the Reformation in deadly error.

^a Vide Lecture IV.

letter, at any rate, and elaborate definitions of the Anglican formularies. Surely there must be some great principle, which, however perverted, lies at the bottom of this—something which gives to the heart and conscience as well as to the reason, an assurance of its truth.” I think that there is—and it is the broad scriptural fact, that the vocation of the Christian is to holiness—that the new creation of the soul by the Spirit, is a creation unto good works—that the regenerated soul, therefore, is not a barren tree, but rich in the fruits of the Spirit, and outwardly distinguished, by a renunciation of the world, from those who have not savingly received the Gospel. Now, unquestionably, if there were any incompatibility between this fundamental fact of the Christian life, and the doctrine of justification by faith only, the latter could not stand; for, that God is a God of holiness, and cannot look upon iniquity, much less love it, is fundamental to all religion whatsoever, and a condition anterior to any reception of the truth as it is in Jesus.

I shall not here repeat the arguments already adduced, on this subject, in the Lecture upon justification by faith only, or the full reply which they furnish to the objections of its adversaries. But one or two observations must be made, indispensable to an understanding of the real state of the question. There is, no doubt, a distinction to be drawn, between the life of a Christian, fairly engaged in the prosecution of his Christian course and evidencing his change of soul; and the first free act of mercy

towards him conveyed through the instrumentality of faith. For from henceforth he has new capacities, as well as new engagements—not only duties to accomplish, but a strength adequate to discharge them conveyed to him by a solemn covenant. The abstract principle of faith becomes, as Luther somewhere says, incarnated—a spiritual life exhibiting itself outwardly by vital actions, and that diversity of operations the play of which attests its existence to other men's eyes. There is no opposition therefore, but, on the contrary, there is a perfect harmony between justification by faith only, and an enforcement of those outward signs of its presence, and those duties which we have now the strength to discharge. Again: good works, though no meritorious cause, and altogether the effect of something else, are indispensable to final salvation; and by our works, be they good or be they evil, we shall be acquitted or condemned before the judgment-seat of Christ. Nor is the internal holiness, which, though imperfect, is still, as far as it goes, a real transference into ourselves of the primary righteousness of Christ, the work of a moment. It is a gradual work, branching far and wide, demanding many moral helps and exertions of our own will, and opens a boundless field for practical instruction and Christian edification. Nor again do we do otherwise than preach Christ—when we insist on the sacredness of His ordinances—when we dwell on the loveliness of His example—when we carry out the divine Spirit which was in Him, without limit, into all the details

of the Christian life; never forgetting, in every thing that we inculcate, our dependency on Him who is alone our life. This ought to be borne in mind, or we shall fall, in this subject, into narrow views irreconcilable with the practice of holy writ, and into a minute and technical theology, injurious to ourselves, and dangerous to those great truths, the inculcation of which is nearest our heart. Sound in reason, and demonstrable from Scripture, as I believe to be the definitions of saving faith which we owe to the divines of the Reformation, yet a practical renunciation of all trust but the merits of Christ may, certainly, exist without them; and finally, any view which shall speak but one set phrase, imposes on itself a one-sidedness, from which no management, however judicious, can set it free.

All these allowances must be made; *but they will not alter the present case*; the system under discussion has not in view the mere inculcation of Christian holiness, but to shift the whole question to a new base, and to *reverse* the relative position of faith and works, as cause and effect; to put faith on the same footing as any other grace or duty, and no more; and to transfer the justifying power, solely, to works or inward holiness.

And it is partly from the necessities produced by this assumed relation of faith and works, and partly from other causes, that springs the incompatibility between this system and the Church of England, on the relation of Scripture and tradition. But again, I am not disposed to deny, that as

in faith and works, so here likewise there is a substantive truth, and a most important principle, in close connection with the error. The Catholic consent of all ages, and of all Churches, with every reasonable deduction from it, and a rejection of that literal universality which is claimed for it, *is still a real thing*—the primary truths of the Gospel do enjoy this mighty witness to them from the beginning—there is a powerful moral influence about it, ratified alike by reason and the general consent of mankind. And so there is a *reality* in the traditional teaching of the Ministry, essential to the due reception of Scripture truth, and combined in a thousand ways with the written Canon. But the doctrine in question is more than this; authoritative tradition is the rule of faith—Scripture nothing except as interpreted by it¹. What avails, with this, a profound reverence for Scripture? Rome pays it likewise;—or to hold that nothing is to be received for the truth of tradition which contradicts the written word? Rome does the same;—or to believe that all things *simply* necessary to salvation are contained in Scripture? so does Rome;—or to refuse to accept oral traditions, unless confirmed by at least some *implication* in Scripture? Rome does the same;—or to profess to prove tradition by the unanimous consent of the Fathers? Rome does the same.

But if this be so, who is to propound this traditive Gospel, to clear up the doubts which attend the investigation of it, and present it to the acceptance of the faithful? Here is a point which requires

Vid. Lect. 5.

¹ It matters not how you disguise it, whether as a double Canon, or Scripture interpreted by tradition, or tradition proved by Scripture, the issue is the same; Scripture, by itself, is *not the Canon*, but something external to it, which determines the meaning of the record. Rome demands no more—call this authoritative something tradition, and her cause is really gained. “But Scrip-

ture must be interpreted, surely," it may be replied," and tradition is only this interpretation." But *who is to interpret the interpretation?* God knows how to express Himself in human language as well as men, and the Bible is simpler, in vital points, than any comment.

determination; and it is determined. The Episcopal Church, in her Ministers, is this authority; it is upon their judgment that the whole superstructure rests. The salvation of the soul therefore depends absolutely on them; every thing, all truth, all instruments for attaining it, all guidance in practising it, all wisdom for the resolution of doubts and removal of difficulties, finally, the dispensation of all the gifts and graces which constitute the supernatural character of the Gospel rests with them. The Church is thus indefectible; she is the very substitute for Christ Himself; we dare not, therefore, as we value our souls, look beyond her; she is to us as God Himself; on her witness all Catholic truth rests; if we ask for other evidence, we are emperilling its very existence, and exposing our own souls to positive infidelity. The inevitable result of such a principle is precisely that which the system itself loudly proclaims for our adoption: we must not speak of the ordinances of God, but the ordinances of the Church; we are not to look up to Christ, but to the Church; the Church, by the Divinity resident in her, is the beginning, middle, and end of man's salvation upon earth. And each man's minister is to him the representative, and the sole depository, of this infallible truth; for such a claim is useless, unless the commission confers it upon all whom it consecrates. *You may call it the Church, but it is in truth the Priest.*

Here, likewise, I do not deny the existence, at bottom, of a great substantive truth; but one scarcely to be recognised by the scriptural eye, in the portentous

authority thus substituted for it. And now let this theory of Church authority be joined on to the dogmas of tradition, and justification by inherent holiness; and not only have we Romanism, in its doctrinal spirit, but the very form of it developed, and outwardly expressed; nothing is wanting to the perfection of the hierarchy, but that central and visible supremacy—that *recognised one*—which crowns and consolidates the Romish scheme. And even this will follow by clear deduction from the principles already admitted; and, if it did not follow logically, yet its establishment would be secured by the force of theological and historical prepossession. In all these points, tradition, justification, and the ministry, *it was always a delusion to speak of a via media*; thoughtful men were right, when, even in the cautious forms in which they were originally propounded, they discerned, from afar, that ultimate Romanism, the introduction of which into the bosom of the Church of England seemed to most men an idle dream—an impossibility.

But the truth is, that all systems have a tendency to range themselves, harmoniously, round some one commanding principle. In their first formation indeed, there is often an apparent self-contradiction, a lack of solidity and cohesion, before the whole is adjusted to its true ultimate tendency, and the affinities of thought have combined, like to like. But this, of course, does not continue long; for, either the falsity of the original principle will be discovered and abandoned, or all heterogeneous elements will be

cleared away, and the true unity of the scheme be perfected.

One thing is quite evident, that, from whatever cause it may have originated, not only is the ultimate developement of the system *practically Romanist*, but, at an early period, *the standing point of the writers*—the view which they took of every thing—was essentially Romanist likewise. From hence arose that feeling, without an example in the Church of England, even in her most Romanizing theologians—of intense hatred to the very name of the Reformation, and a systematic depreciation of the Reformers by every weapon which controversy can supply; from sarcastic insinuation to the most injurious assertion; every thing that could debase their motives in the eyes of men, and strip them of that prescriptive veneration which made their memories a sacred thing to the Church and to the nation. Hence comes *that*, which is a very remarkable characteristic of works so distinguished for intellect and extensive learning—an absence of any thing like an extended knowledge, in their totality, of the principles of the great men whom they have attempted to degrade; or, of those works into which they have poured their hearts and mighty minds, for the permanent instruction of the Church. There is not unfrequently a perversion of their doctrines, and misrepresentation of their views; and, as they, whose moral greatness and exertions for God's truth, had made them the deliverers of mankind from an insupportable tyranny, are thus held up, as schismatical disturbers of the Church; so their writings are, of course, heretical

perversions of the Gospel. All is partial, all is one-sided in this; no comprehensiveness of view, no candour, no real discussion of great questions; but a gathering up, from the right hand and from the left, of every thing that could minister support to foregone conclusions.

The same is the case with those patristical authorities which their works present so profusely. No one can deny that there is real learning; and that the result of it, in the artificial combination into which it is thrown, is to lend a strong support to the opinions which the Fathers are thus called upon to confirm. But, as before, they present only one view of the question. Before the judgment of these authors can really be ascertained, there is a vast mass of materials of a very different tendency to be diligently studied and compared. The one-sidedness of their patristical views is a demonstrated fact to any one, who, however unacquainted himself with that voluminous literature, has studied the admirable works which this controversy has called forth¹.

But one thing should be carefully borne in mind, by all who are inclined, in this matter, to bow to authority, and to general assertions, the truth of which they have no means of testing. A thorough examination of the remains of primitive antiquity, *is not a desideratum unaccomplished*. The whole of this enormous mass of evidence has been thoroughly sifted and weighed by those giants of the reformed Church of England whom God raised up, with capacity, and resolution, as

¹ Vid. Mr. Goode's excellent book upon the rule of faith, for abundant proof of this. And there is much evidence of it in the preceding Lectures, iv. and v.

well as learning, equal to this indispensable task ; every canon, even, of the old Councils was vigorously analyzed, and not a document overlooked which could throw a light upon the mind of Catholic antiquity during the compilation of the Anglican articles. The result of this laborious scrutiny ought to satisfy every reasonable mind ; it is, that, not only the practical teaching, but the specific doctrines of the Church of England, and specially, her views of justification by faith only, have the *consentient testimony of all primitive antiquity*. When we see among us a race of theological giants who can rise to the mighty stature of our Cranmers, our Ridleys, our Jewels, our Beveridges, our Ushers, and a host of other great and holy men, then it will be time to reconsider the verdict of the Reformers ; but, till then, no wise or sober man will admit the thought of it, or allow the consent of real primitive antiquity to the Articles of the Church of England to be a debateable question.

Vid. Lec-
ture iv. on
justifica-
tion by
faith only.

Again : the same one-sidedness, which is observable in their views of the Reformers and of the Fathers, is quite as strongly marked in the adduction of authorities from the Church of England, of dates subsequent to the Reformation ; they are true, as far as they go, and may reasonably be allowed to modify any extreme expressions in an opposite direction ; but, as any one may easily satisfy himself, they present, with few exceptions, only half the question ; on tradition, on justification by faith only, on the holy Sacraments, these great men are nearly unanimous in

condemnation of the doctrines which they are called upon to support, *in that specific form, at least*, in which, on this system, they are presented. Is there any insincerity or lack of good faith in this? I think, certainly not; but there is no investigation, no disposition to a calm collation of authority; and this deprives the writers of all weight as dispassionate judges, or as authoritative guides to other men. Natural such a mode of collating evidence certainly is—perhaps, with *strong* prepossessions, it is unavoidable—we all spontaneously appropriate whatever in other men's opinions seems favourable to our own, and overlook whatever opposes them.

And in this case, it could not be otherwise with the assumed premises—¹that such and such doctrines are the infallible Catholic truth, on which the salvation of souls depends—that any thing opposed to them is necessarily false; and that any sentiment, in the works of holy men, which seems inconsistent with it, must, in reason as well as charity, receive a lenient interpretation, and be modified to the requirements of the Church doctrine.

¹ This assumption is very strongly marked in the works in question.

And this brings me to another characteristic of the whole system—*it has no foundation*—the conclusions are perfectly sound if you admit the premises—but if you call for proof *of them*, they fall to the ground. From first to last, the conclusions, to take the best view of the case, stretch far beyond the base on which they are rested. The statements are often probable, more or less, but, on any fair estimate of *adduceable* evidence, no more than this—no more

even *on their own showing*. And yet on this are built conclusions which are to have the force of certainty, and carry authority with them—principles which are unhesitatingly announced as the very truth of God, and essential portions of the Gospel of Christ, the rejection of which endangers every other verity of revelation. But where is the evidence for primitive teaching as a *divine* informant equal to the Scriptures? where is the evidence for the *divine* institution and obligation of the penitential discipline? where is the authority for the doctrine of reserve in religious teaching? where is the evidence for restricting the covenanted mercies of God to one form of Church government, however essential we believe it to be to the perfection of a Church? where is the evidence for the Episcopal grace, untransmissible save in an absolutely uninterrupted continuity? where is the evidence for the *physical influences* of the Sacraments, and their power, *ex opere operato*? where is the evidence for the transubstantiation or semi-transubstantiation of the elements in the Eucharist? All these, and other doctrines, which form an essential part of the system, are utterly incapable of proof from Scripture, such as reasonable men have a right to demand for any thing that claims their acceptance *on a divine authority*; do what you will, you cannot join them on to the Apostles—they are utterly extra-scriptural, not to say anti-scriptural—human speculations, and no more.

From these positions comes another argumentative necessity—if the evidence for these doctrines, thus

accounted not secondary but essential, cannot be raised to an equality with those prime Scripture-truths which are acknowledged by all Christians—yet something may be done, to bring down *the latter* to the evidential level of the former—the whole faith of the Christian must be lowered, as in this system it is, to a *mere probability*, a high one perhaps, but still admitting much uncertainty—destitute to the last of assurance. In consequence, the whole teaching of the holy Scriptures is elaborately obscured, and involved in artificial difficulties which no simple-minded Christian, from the beginning till now, ever experienced in its study¹; these doubts and difficulties are multiplied, till certainties and probabilities, revealed verities essential to salvation, and ways and means more or less instrumental but not essential, are all brought into one indistinguishable level; and the mind, thus effectually bewildered and entangled, if it is not disposed to abandon altogether its Christian hopes, is glad, in its despair, to accept the only alternative—tradition, and the authority of the Church.

And then, from the like necessity is drawn another leading principle, in the absence of which, all that has been assumed of the divine authority of tradition will be of no practical avail at all. For, confessedly, *the three first centuries*, to which, up to the present moment, most of our great theologians have limited the *evidential* appeal in support of Scripture interpretation, furnishes out of its records very insufficient materials for the structure of this vast system.

¹ This I think is one of the dangerous portions of these works; and it is one quite as powerfully marked in them, as in Romanist writers. No arts are left untried to depreciate the word of God apart from traditional interpretation.

Well then—where shall we find tradition at that period of its growth which will answer the requirements of the case? In the fourth and fifth centuries we find all that is wanted for the purpose, ready to our hands—that is, in a period of the Church, which, though illustrated by great names—theologians, who still held, *substantially*, the great Gospel truths—is, notwithstanding, marked not only by unscripturalities of expression, but by unquestionable signs of fast coming apostacy, of which, a very moderate acquaintance with the records of the period is quite sufficient to satisfy any candid mind, which holds the doctrines of the Church of England. Here, however, the record *is* ample enough, and Romanising enough, if we look at it with Tridentine eyes, and examine it with the main Romanist hypotheses already granted. And if this be so, and if indeed we find here the genuine Church-system of the Apostles opened to us in its doctrinal and ceremonial perfection, another formidable conclusion inevitably follows. The invocation of saints and angels—the power of relics, and of consecrated places, where the bodies of the saints repose—the angelical virtue of celibacy—the adoration, or something very like it, of the virgin—the sacrifice for the dead and living—a state of purgatory—and all the superstitions of a symbolical worship, are forced upon us by unquestionable evidence. They must therefore be accepted as portions of divine truth—yes, it is proposed to us in this third century of the Reformed Church of England, to account them as much of divine authority, if not as

clearly pronounced, as the Incarnation and Divinity of our Lord¹, and the doctrine of the blessed Trinity.

But, if so, there presses on the mind this solemn enquiry. Is it possible that any Church, which *with a false scheme of justification*, has deviated so far from the Apostolic model, thus fully and authoritatively transmitted, as to reject, alike in theory and practice, such essential portions of the Catholic faith, can be a pure Church, or even a true Church at all? And, on the other hand, can any Church which retains them along with the true doctrine of justification, though with some adhering corruption, against which her own most eminent members protest, be rightly stigmatized as idolatrous? Which, in fact, is the true representative of the Church Catholic and Apostolical—the Church of England, or the Church of Rome? if the system in question be, what it professes to be, the undoubted truth, no man capable of drawing a conclusion, can possibly hesitate. If this be so, the sooner we ask forgiveness of the papal chair, and repair the schism of the Reformation, the better.

Moreover, I cannot help feeling that there is interwoven with the whole system, as in the scheme of Romanism, even in its best form, *a real, though subtle rationalism*, a mixture of mere human *pre-suppositions* with divine truth, and a modification of the latter by the former. And that even minds of a highly devotional temperament, and which would abandon life itself, if it came to the point, rather than surrender the main truths of revelation,

¹ I should be glad to escape from this conclusion, but I know not how it is to be done, so long as tradition is maintained as a *divine informant*, and the *interpreter* of Scripture, and the doctrine of the fourth century as its proper development. Hence the necessity of Tract 90.

may practically admit large intermixtures of this dangerous element, no dispassionate observer of mankind can question as a general proposition, whether he may demur or not to its application in the present case. Of this description I consider the assumption, that the outline of Church order given us by the Apostles, does not contain *all essential* truths touching that order—and that their silence on particular points of faith and practice is not a sufficient rule to us whereby to discriminate between essentials and non-essentials—what is to be received as Apostolical—and what, *as merely ecclesiastical*. That we have no right to say, “this is not provable from Scripture, and therefore is not of divine authority; it may be expedient or not, it may be lawfully enjoined or not, but in itself it does not bind the conscience;” but that all, even *the minutest portion* of this gigantic system is equally divine and indispensable to the attainment of the end—the growth of the soul in grace. I cannot doubt that this unauthorized yearning for what God has thought proper to withhold, that is, a Mosaic ritual for the Christian Church, and the consequent attempt to supply it, at all risks, and at whatever straining of evidence, is in principle rationalistic.

The assumption that a written record, confessedly divine, and, on its own abundant showing, containing all things necessary to salvation, shall yet be full of dangerous ambiguities, even on vital points; and that, on some important doctrines it should express itself in language the obvious meaning of which

is opposed to the truth of God, is likewise rationalistic.

The assumption that there is a permanent want in humanity of a visible mediator between the soul and its God—that a proper human priesthood therefore is an essential provision of the divine dealings with mankind to the end of the world; and, that whether the tone of the divine record seem opposed to it or not, such a statement should and must be acted upon as a fundamental principle of the Church, without offending against the reverence due to God's word, is likewise rationalistic.

That there are many yearnings in the human heart for mysteries; for communication with the unseen world, for the system of emblematic worship, and material aids to devotion; that such undoubted natural tendencies, and *asserted* natural necessities ought to receive their gratification, whether Scripture ratifies it or not; and that such consonancy with the human heart is, *pro tanto*, a proof of the divine original of the system, is rationalistic.

The assumption that the most prominent doctrines in the Gospel, the exhibition of God's wonderful love to man in the death of His Son, and the offer of free forgiveness to sinners through faith in His blood, are to be kept from Christian men, and form no essential portion of Christian instruction, in spite of Scripture precept and practice to the contrary, is rationalistic.

The denial of forgiveness of sins and full readmis-

sion into God's favour, to post-baptismal offences ; and the accompanying theory of the atoning nature of corporeal mortification, with the intolerable yoke of sacerdotal penances, *as essential to* God's forgiveness, though no mark of such a limitation of the divine favour is to be found in Scripture, but the contrary, is rationalistic.

Finally, the whole opposition to the doctrine of justification by faith only—*that* faith necessarily bringing forth good works—is essentially rationalistic, and supported on carnal principles. *Justification by works* is a prominent part of all religions of which we have any record, with the single exception of the mode of reconciliation with God, which is revealed to us in the Gospel. I will only observe here, that, upon this Romanist theory of justification by works, there is an *amount of such* works, usually ascertainable if we have not fallen from our baptismal state, which, *as works*, are sufficient for the purposes of eternal salvation—they are the accurate fulfilment of a precise condition. But if so, where is the line to be drawn ; if you remove the grand principle that works have no justifying power, and that they cannot afford any ground for God's pardon, where are you to stop ? If you can produce *works* enough for salvation, why not *more than enough* ? If both the eminent saint, and the ordinary though sincere Christian, are both, by reason of their works, in a state of salvation, and so far both alike, is it reasonable to suppose that the superior holiness of the first is to be thrown away ? “ Surely,” you

may reply, "he will receive a higher reward." No doubt: but why should not a portion of his reward consist in this, "that the worth of his good deeds shall overflow to the general good of the Church, and be put to the account of other men's souls? It is in consistency with the Gospel scheme that it should be so, for it is only enabling the saints of God to follow Christ's example, and assigning to *their* merits, as to *His*, a proportionate value. In a word, why should not works of supererogation be accounted a portion of God's truth—not found in Scripture, indeed, but a truth of tradition, and harmonizing with it? and what a glorious object of Christian charity is thus held forth to us—not only a crown of glory to ourselves, but the power to become saviours to other men?"

These are not idle questions at the present moment, but very practical points which Rome can answer for us, if we will take warning in time. And the same principles lead to a completely rationalistic view of Christian holiness altogether. How exquisitely *human*, though divine, is the example of holy living proposed for our imitation in our blessed Saviour, and, in their degree, in His Apostles! So pure and stainless, yet so unaffectedly natural and unrestrained; so rich in all those social sympathies which bind man to man, and so free from all that is stern, ascetic, and penitential; there is no resemblance between the true Christian and Gospel model, and that mediæval saintship, with its hardening self-tortures and intense struggle with the best affections

of man's nature, which is now propounded as the perfection of the Christian character. There is a fundamental error in the whole conception of Gospel holiness, its nature and its manifestations, which, with its obtrusive rationalism, distorts the whole scheme of the Christian life. Meanwhile, no one doubts the necessity of self-denial to the perfection or even existence of the Christian character; but this surrender of meats and drinks is the very lowest of the mighty sacrifices which the Christian makes to His Lord and Master—we dare not thrust them forward; with a true faith, they are matters of course—without it, they lead infallibly to superstitious formalism. And certainly there never was a greater mistake made, than in supposing that there is any *real opposition between the carnal mind and such a view of the Gospel life*; on the contrary, it is the very scheme which men, apart from revelation, have ever proposed to themselves; the Stoic and the fanatic Hindoo can exhibit more triumphs over our natural wants and feelings than Christ and His Apostles.

But, besides these peculiarities, which the system under examination derives from the Romanist standing point which it has chosen, there are others which must force themselves on every one's notice. There is a powerful *monastic and scholastic* element, independent of Romanist prepossession. To the first of these I would attribute, not so much the ascetic character which is marked upon it, as that *comparative* exclusion from the Christian life, and

the whole conception of the Christian Ministry, of its social activities, of its moral influences, of its practical dealing with the souls of other men, as real life presents them to us; a lack of that diversified play of the spiritual affections, and management of men's varying spiritual wants, which enter so largely into the experience of the ministerial office. The main point of view, in which the whole system would seem to represent the relation of Minister and flock, nay, the sole communication between the individual soul and God, is the public service of the Church; this is not only the centre of holy living, where all its duties culminate, but it would seem rigidly circumscribed within the limits of the material house of God; contemplation and the altar to realize it, constitute the Christian life. Hence comes that painful attention, not only to the grander portions of the divine service, but to the most minute subdivisions into which it is possible to transfuse a portion of the devotional spirit; an exquisite insight, strange to the times in which we live, into the dependencies of the whole; and the attachment, by a devout fancy, of an intellectual meaning to the very hooks and fringes of the Christian sanctuary. From this tone of mind, there arises, not only a fitting reprobation of all that is not in harmony with such a service, where God in Christ is the master idea, or of all ostentation and unchristian display; but, in the ruder activities of the Christian life, a sensitiveness of organ which requires, *without* the sanctuary, that even regularity and measured harmony which reigns *within* it; no dissonant

Vid. Lec-
ture ii.

sound, no disturbing glare, nothing to break a prescribed and authoritative uniformity. I do not mention this in blame, but otherwise: there is not only a beauty, but, properly applied, a profound truth about it, which it would be well for us if it were largely carried out. But when we look at the whole sphere of the Church, and its manifold relations; when we come to deal with things as they are, it may lead to much theoretic misapprehension, and much in practice injurious to the pressing wants and real interests of the Church.

The *scholastic* element has been productive of much greater injury; it has given a real perversion to the system. From hence has come, quite as much as from any necessity of position, a tendency to tortuous representations of simple questions; a subtlety which is never satisfied, so long as a distinction can be found, or fancied; an incapacity for breadth of view, and a horror of receiving as an adequate statement of a doctrine that scriptural decision, which presents no doubt or difficulty to an average intelligence and candid mind, but is irreconcilable with a dialectical treatment. Hence the painful feeling of doubt produced by the perusal of these works; that singular power of *dissolution*, without *construction*, unless the necessity of taking refuge in the Church, which follows the demolition of other supports to faith, be so considered. Hence comes a contempt for writings conceived in the simplicity of Scripture phraseology, and a pronounced tendency to a Christian *γνώσις*; an abandonment of the principle that

the true knowledge which availeth unto life eternal, is the growth of faith in the simple heart, and, in its greatest earthly perfection, attainable by the humblest disciples of the Gospel. Hence the predilection for the great scholastic divines of Rome, and that mode of theologizing which the Reformation for a while destroyed; and that gladiatorial temper which, without any adequate motive, has led to the shaking in men's thoughts of those conclusions of history on men and systems, which had become portions of the national mind.

From the combined influence of these scholastic and monastic elements, other dangerous results have arisen. Meditative men are often admirable judges of abstract principles, but not so of their application to those conditions of men and manners, which did not enter into their theoretic statements. A mind, which finds its very existence in thinking, almost necessarily systematizes beyond the truth; it gives a definite shape to that which a practical temper and experience of mankind would leave indefinite—and confounds the strength of its own conviction, with the capacity of the truths thus evidenced to prove themselves to the minds of other men, differently constituted, and with a different standing point. For instance, we hold the Apostolic succession, and the Episcopal scheme, to be most important truths. But, in a separation from other principles and habits of thought, are they capable of being so demonstrated to other men? is it certain that men cannot doubt about them without heresy, or reject them

without hazarding their salvation? is it not the very height of rashness, to put them on a footing with the Incarnation, and the blessed Trinity? Is it not permanently indisposing men's minds, to a calm consideration of important principles, thus to run counter to a *fact* of which every intelligent Christian is a competent witness? Again, is it not full of danger, not to recognise other *facts*, which the world at large recognises as undeniable? Has not the Church, for instance, sometimes obscured her own commission? have not multitudes risen up among us, who owe their hopes of heaven, and their Christian civilization, to other ministrations? is it not a *fact* that such ministrations have been largely blest?—There are likewise *broad facts*, matters of experience, touching Baptism and the Holy Eucharist, which are so evident to men's senses, that it is a perilous experiment to contradict them by extra-scriptural theories of either—may not ignorance of such facts, or inadvertence to them, lead to the worst practical consequences to the interests of the Church?

From this theorizing temper comes such a scheme as a reunion between the great disrupted Churches of the West—a scheme full of grandeur to a mind imbued with antiquity, and fixed on the *material* unities of the Church, but utterly impracticable, without the abandonment, on the part of the Church of England, of all her evangelical peculiarities. But there is a *positive* evil in all this. It may not be God's will that this nation should ever be reunited under the shadow of the Church; but at all events,

an approximation to such a consummation is a practical object and a practical duty. Charity, a gentle and forbearing demeanour, the use of temperate reason, a frank acknowledgment of our own former deficiencies, might do much—there are many holy and moderate men, in the ranks of dissent, well worth winning. Is it then politic, is it catholic, is it Christian, to thrust forward, in boastful separation, every point of difference? is it Christian to close our eyes to the one faith, one Lord, one baptism, which, wherever there is no *formal schism*, though there may be a *material one*, still unites us in one brotherhood? Is it *reasonable* to refuse to recognise, as in their possession, *those facts* of the spiritual life, and those precious portions of truth, which they *know* that they enjoy, and the presence of which among them has been acknowledged by our own greatest Divines? is it wise to cover, with unmerited obloquy, the names of Howe, and Baxter, and Doddridge, and Robert Hall? I do not say this to palliate schism, or the enormous evils inseparable from dissent, but to give the Church of England that scriptural advantage, in the eyes of our non-conformist fellow-countrymen, of which these Romanist perversions fatally deprive her.

But here is exhibited the full action of that *ecclesiastical* feeling which pervades every portion of the scheme; the priesthood and not the people, or the people merely through the priesthood, engage every sympathy of it. This it is which, discontented with those moral laws by which holy Writ has secured,

conditionally, a boundless influence, and unquestionable sanctity to the Ministry, has hedged it in, at the suggestion of a false wisdom, with power and privileges which must ruin what they profess to support. And this it is, which, combined with other peculiarities, has perverted the history of past ages, and rendered these writers insensible to the changes produced by time and the extension of knowledge. A primitive Bishop in perilous times, and close on the Apostles, might, for many reasons, have wholesomely exercised an influence, which, at a different period, might be destructive to the Church. A system of penitential discipline, practicable in small societies, where every member was closely united in brotherly love with every other, might be very unsuitable for a Church whose position, in those respects, is diametrically opposite. And where, from the lack of books, and the power of consulting them, the Priest alone was acquainted familiarly with the word of God, a dependency of his flock upon him might be necessary and wholesome, which might be as impossible as it is undesirable, when the means of consulting the word are universally diffused.

Finally: in addition to these peculiarities of position and training, there is one personal characteristic of these writers, which, while in some respects it raises their intellectual position, makes them the most dangerous guides possible in striking the balance between conflicting systems, and in extricating the *truth* from theoretic admixture. They are eminently distinguished by imaginative power, fervid,

rapidly darting to conclusions, and instantly, in all subjects presented to them, assimilating every thing that is congenial to their temperament. Hence their love of the *material and the sensuous*; all their conceptions of the Church of Christ, without exception, lean to this side. The forms of outward beauty, by which the infinite may be shadowed forth to men's perception—an orderly magnificence—the *inward, not inwardly embraced, but struggling for an external manifestation*. There is nothing of that, which, intellectually speaking, is of a much higher and nobler order; an adequate conception of the *unsensuous* spirituality of the Church; that invisible Church universal, unlimited by time, or space, or nation, which is the true mystical body of Christ.

Hence that incredulity observable throughout, of the power and commanding position of *faith*; faith the realizer of the Unseen, not outwardly, but *to itself, and within*; an ignorance of the elevated tone which it communicates to the mind, by communicating *with the Invisible, through the Invisible*; of the moral independence which it confers, and its utter incompatibility with that profusion of outward rites, and Judaical symbolizing, which appeals to a totally different faculty. Hence the whole character of their scheme of worship; that preference of Romish forms, and an expression of a Romish theory, even in the productions of that noble art of architecture, whose sublime and devotional results, under the influence of the chastened genius of Christianity, are only marred by what scriptural

minds regard as allied to dangerous errors, and a stern reason, as fanciful puerilities! Hence the feeling which places Christ and Christ's presence *every where but in the heart*; the unwillingness to imagine forgiveness of sin without a tangible priestly absolution; the necessity of visible centres not to *lead to Christ*, but to present Him to the senses; the inability to realize that presence, at the holy Eucharist, without a *material* theory; and a physical immixture of the Spirit with the elements before they can conceive its accompanying influences. Hence too the greatest perversions of ecclesiastical history; a measuring of Gospel purity by outward grandeur; the yearning for the Romish unity, and, from mediæval architectural splendour, the inferring a high tone of principle, and a purer spiritual condition. Hence much of the interest of their works; their touching eloquence, their tone of undoubting enthusiasm when they shake off their dialectical trammels, their profound earnestness—in such powerful and favourable contrast to a large proportion of the later theology of the Church. Hence their fascination for the young, whose susceptibility for generous and uncalculating emotions, and sense of the beautiful and the sublime, they have so powerfully excited.

But it is time that I conclude. The system is Romanism; not partially, but essentially; not *yet* Romanism, indeed, as historical recollections have expressed it, or as the conclusions of reason have demonstrated it to be; not Romanism in *all* its palpable and revolting incongruities to the heart and under-

standing. But—Romanism, as it has, in all ages, represented itself to the young and to the devout—Romanism, as it is, when purified by elevated feelings, and minds originally trained in Scripture truth—Romanism, as it combines with itself all that is grand and beautiful in art, specious in reason, and seductive in sentiment—Romanism, which may be safe, in those scripturally trained minds, who have presented it to themselves and to the world in this beautified shape—but Romanism, still perverting the truth of the Gospel while it *decorates* it—Romanism, which though it looks paternally and benignly in the amiable spirits of its present advocates, involves principles ever fatal to human liberty and progression—Romanism, with the establishment of whose *theory* the Articles of the Church of England cannot coexist, and whose unseen and unavowed operations in *practice* will paralyze her spiritual power, and destroy the Church of Christ, by substituting human forms for her Prophet, Priest, and King.

Note.—In the foregoing analysis I have taken what appear to me the unquestionable characteristics of the system, both in and beyond the Tracts. It is often observed, that they who have condemned the system, have not read the works; I believe that quite as many defend it, in entire ignorance of the written documents. If any one desires to make a dispassionate investigation, there is an Index to the Tracts, published by Hatchard, which contains a most full and impartial reference to every passage of importance under its proper head. One great difficulty in giving an estimate of the doctrines in question arises from this, that it is easy to point out on almost all points a variation of expression, sometimes a contradictory statement; but the *Key is to be sought in Tract 90*, and that is unfolded in the British Critic.









