



THE VICAR OF ST. MARY'S,

NOTTINGHAM,

VERSUS

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

OF

ST. BARNABAS.

BY THE

REV. R. W. WILLSON.

PART II.

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A R E P L Y,

ETC.

IN the foregoing pages of this Reply, the matters immediately connected with the building of the new Catholic church; the base motives assigned to me by Dr. Wilkins; the shameful means of defraying the expense, and of filling the church; these, with similar subjects, introduced by the Archdeacon, have been placed before the public; it remains for me, in the second part, to follow the Vicar in what forms the main burthen of his pamphlet,—the statement of *doctrines* which *he asserts* will be taught, and of practices which, *he says*, will be observed in the sacred edifice which he presumes to find fault with me for building. And, as this portion of his ‘Address’ is divided into sections, the first of which professes to give “*the objections commonly urged by us against the Established Church* ;”* whilst the second proposes to demonstrate “*by solid and substantial proofs*,” that “*many of the doctrines and practices of the Catholic (or as he vulgarly nicknames it, the Romish) Church* are super-

* Address, p. 7.

stitious and corrupt, being not only unsanctioned by, but in direct contradiction to the revealed word of God,"* I shall adopt a similar division.

And first to "*the objections commonly urged by Catholics against the Established Church.*"

These objections, the reader will of course expect, are such as are urged by our divines, as attacking and overthrowing the very foundations of that Church as a *Protestant* Establishment, and a *Reformed* Church. They will be such as constitute the ESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE between the two Churches; radical objections, pregnant with wide-spreading results; causes which draw after them effects; reasons which seem to us to condemn the whole scheme of '*Reform*;' principles which involve as mere details and corollaries, the adoption or rejection of all those individual tenets and practices which distinguish the two Churches.

That there are such objections, such principles, and such causes, is known to every one of the most ordinary study and knowledge of religion; nay is almost a self-evident truth, in as much as, if Christianity contain within itself no general principles which draw after them all matters of detail, then has mankind been left without the means of ascertaining God's truths, except by laborious investigation of which more than nine-tenths of the human race are utterly incapable. But there are such principles, and surely the Archdeacon has produced them. Nothing of the kind. Such principles might have had no existence as far as his pamphlet is concerned, and such objections never have met his observation. Is this sheer ignorance or pitiful trickery? Be what it may, before I take my leave of the Venerable the Archdeacon of Nottingham, he shall, if ignorant, be instructed, if wilfully misrepresenting us, exposed.

Learn, then, ye theologians, from Dr. Wilkins, that the ancient religion of this land has no higher

* Address, p. 7.

ground to take against her rebel child, the 'Reformed Church,' than *the Pope's supremacy; the claim to be the Mother Church; the denial of that Church's existence before Luther; and last but not least, the complaint that "at the Reformation our clergy were expelled from their benefices, and the churches taken from us, converted into Protestant temples of worship."**

And these pitiful matters of *detail* are then *our* objections against the Churches called 'Reformed!' These are the grounds on which the Reverend Dr. Wilkins thinks we refuse to dissent like him, and to become Protestants! Now let me inform him, that not one of these, nor all of these, *objections* need ever be treated upon in discussing the rival claims of the two Churches to be the spouse of Christ; let him understand that these are mere consequences or corollaries, which depend on vital and fixed principles, and according to the decisions come to on those principles must stand or fall; that not one of those matters has, of itself and independently of those principles, any force or power whatever in the controversy between the two Churches. Further, has Dr. Wilkins yet to learn that he begs the whole question, as regards his judgment on our doctrine, and acts inconsistently with the belief and practices of his own Church, when he takes for granted that no doctrine or practice is of divine origin which is not plainly written in holy scripture? Must I again go through the labour which I undertook for his confrere the Rev. Mr. Butler, rector of St. Nicholas', and lay the very groundwork of all controversy, and exhibit the fundamental principles on which both Churches are built, either on sand or on rock; to pass away, or to endure 'to the end of the world?'

However without treading in the same path that I followed then, I will endeavour to inform Dr. Wilkins what are some of our real, and as we deem them, unanswerable objections against his Church; reasons

which, whilst they justify every Catholic in receiving the controverted points stated above, are fatal not merely to the Established Church of these islands, but to every Protestant Church, just as they have destroyed every previous *reformed* Church, which, one by one, in ages past, have disappeared, and are now as things that never were; reasons which are even now, let me tell Archdeacon Wilkins, silently, but most effectively working their way and undermining Protestantism.

I. The first question for every Christian to examine and determine, is to ascertain what means Jesus Christ appointed to perpetuate amongst men the uninterrupted knowledge of his religion, so as to bring that religion within the attainment of every creature under heaven. At the distance of nearly nineteen hundred years from the time of Christ, how am I, and you, and each one to know, with that certainty which alone produces, and can be called, *faith*, what Christ really taught and his apostles promulgated?

That such means exist is certain; for an obligation is imposed on all men, under pain of eternal condemnation, to believe, if possible, that, and only that, which Christ taught. "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth (the gospel) and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*"*

But what is that means? Is it a book, or an authoritative teaching; a teaching by men; but by men whom Christ has promised to secure from error? If a book be that means, then whatever a man studying that book, with due dispositions, shall deduce from it as Christ's doctrines, is to him, *faith*, his *creed*, his *standard of belief*. His private and individual judgment, aided and guided in whatever way you please, whether by ministerial teaching, reading, antiquity, or by other aids at his command, is to him the last

* St. Mark, xvi. 15, 16.

court of appeal ;—the final, though fallible, tribunal before which each tenet and practice is brought, adjudged, condemned, or approved, on which he stakes his eternal destiny.

But if a book be not that means, nor individual judgment the appointed guide and final expositor, but there exist appointed, delegated, and secured from error by Jesus Christ, an authority to teach whatever Christ revealed, and his apostles promulgated ; then the doctrines and practices proclaimed as our Saviour's revelations and ordinances, are to be received with undoubting assent on that authority as the *faith*, the *creed*, and '*the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.*'

In either case the *principle* adopted is the groundwork and origin of every tenet and practice embraced, as much as the spring-head is the source of the waters that flow from it. One of these principles is believed by the Catholic ; the other, with unimportant modifications, by the Protestant, to have been Christ's selected means for perpetuating the knowledge of His religion.

Here was indeed a subject, an objection, worth producing, by Dr. Wilkins ; a system worth the labour of destroying ; for leave this foundation and attack individual parts which rest on it, and you still do nothing ; *destroy the foundation* and every tenet and practice built on that basement would at once topple to the ground. On *that authority* we believe in a spiritual supremacy vested for wise purposes, which every law-giver, not a mere leveller, has seen the wisdom of, and every country, even the most republican, has in civil matters adopted,—in St. Peter, not as a mere personal privilege, but as much an inherent and inalienable element in church government, as is an episcopal hierarchy, or a ministerial succession. On that authority we acknowledge the see over which that supreme pastor presides as the 'Mother and mistress of all Churches,' and so of every tenet and practice that is truly catholic, that is, of UNIVERSAL belief, and unchanging observance.

But it suited Dr. Wilkins' purpose to nibble at *details*, and not to discuss *principles*; but then why disingenuously give these as '*the objections*' of our Church to the claim of his to be accounted a, or the, Church of God?

Assuredly it did not suit his purpose; for he might have had to tell us whether the FIRST RULE of Christian faith, the FIRST means of conveying Christ's doctrines was his teaching authority, or a written book; whether Christ appointed any other means but that authority; he might have had to inform us where and when Christ wrote, or commanded a book to be written as the means of perpetuating the knowledge of his religion; where the apostles, the *five* apostles that wrote any thing, where they made that claim for their writings; where they assert that those writings were thenceforward to supersede Christ's appointed means of teaching; where they declare that they wrote for this purpose by His 'authority;*' where by his decree† otherwise than as every thing, whether for good or evil is in one sense, by God's will and permission; where they assert that those writings were to be the sole standards, or at all 'the standards of faith;‡ where that they contained or were designed to contain the whole counsel of God.§ These, and many such, matters the Archdeacon might have had to unfold to us;—matters of deep and awful interest; but he avoids such subjects, and parades the 'supremacy of the Pope,' the 'Mother Church,' and 'benefices,' as *the objections* of our Church to his. How easy it is for the Archdeacon to make such giants first, and then kill them.

Again, it did not suit his purpose; for he might have been compelled to tell us *when* that book became the sole standard of faith: whether twenty, thirty, fifty, or a hundred years after Christ's death; during the lifetime of the apostles, or after the death of half, or of each and all; and fixing such period, have been

* Address, p. 28.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

fated to perceive himself entangled in a snare without escape at each and every attempt, by a plain appeal to facts. His theory would be confounded at every turn in history. He would have had to acknowledge that the writings composing that book were not collected together in any part of the Church for many a year after the apostles' deaths; that, when collected, more than one-third of those treatises were not admitted as inspired for *several centuries*; whilst *six hundred years* elapsed, and still a sixth part of that book was doubted of, nay rejected by half the Churches as uninspired, nay even as spurious. He might have had to tell his parishioners what such a book as the Bible, nay such a book as the New Testament, would have cost for hundreds of years after the death of our Blessed Lord, at the time when printing not having been discovered, each copy had to be taken by hand, and when paper not being invented, parchment, the perishable papyrus, and such materials were in use, raising the expense of a small volume to such an amount that none but the wealthy could afford themselves the luxury of possessing books. He might have had to acknowledge, that reading could not have been a common art,—one not to be looked for amongst the poor,—at a time, and for centuries on centuries, during which books to them were a sealed letter, a possession beyond their means or ability to purchase; then, when a few copies of the New Testament were, as we learn from Eusebius, deemed a fitting present to the mightiest emperor, the first Christian Constantine.

To proclaim as the sole means established by Jesus Christ for the conveyance of truth to all ages, and lands, for all men, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, a book which for years was *not compiled*; for ages was *not collected and authenticated*; which could *not be in the hands of millions*. for hundreds of years, *nor read but by a few*, and which eventually has become of easy attainment only through improvements in machinery and mechanic

arts,—to make this then the one means chosen and proposed by divine wisdom, and then flung open to all for all to understand as means and opportunities conspired to aid, or it may be, to confound, and this under penalties stretching through eternity to be incurred by all who found not there what Christ taught; was an arrangement so abhorrent from all that we are used to consider as wise, beneficent, and just, that it would tax not the Archdeacon's ingenuity only, but that of the wisest and most specious to defend it from the charge of being a snare for the souls of millions, who are debarred by moral and physical impossibilities, from using it; and when used, from being accounted a necessary and inevitable means, to judge from history and the experience of centuries, rather for multiplying sects, schisms, and errors, than perpetuating 'ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM,' ONE CHURCH. Here is one of our '*objections*' against his Church. I shall proceed to a second.

II. *The Vicar declares of his Church, that "she repudiates all claim or pretension to infallibility; she does not indeed, believe herself to be mistaken, BUT ADMITS THAT SHE MAY ERR IN MATTERS OF FAITH."** The Catholic is taught on the contrary, that the Church, the Church of which he is a member, **CANNOT ERR IN MATTERS OF FAITH.** Here then is another serious ground of *objection* and opposition, on the part of the Catholic, to every Protestant Church; a superiority which he advances, and which *until destroyed*, must keep him a Catholic. And observe again, that this is a principle like the preceding, on which the whole controversy between the Churches may be made to turn; a principle on which practically every other tenet and practice depends.

For if the Church *cannot err in matters of faith*, this, being no human privilege, must, if it exist, be derived from God's promise and superintendent care; which, if once persuaded of its exercise in favour of

* Address, pp. 59, 60.

the Church, every believer in, and disciple of, that Church, is at once free from any apprehension or doubt on every tenet or practice taught by the unerring authority of that Church. But if the Church '*can err in matters of faith*;' she *may* have erred, she *may* err, she *may* be in error "though she believes herself not to be mistaken." She *may* teach the truth,—but she *may* also teach error. The Established Church *may* be right, is all that Dr. Wilkins can say of her, but she *may* be wrong. If she *may* be in error, can any disciple of that Church be free from doubt, and this, remember on "MATTERS OF FAITH?" Can he say with an assured faith and certainty 'I BELIEVE,' when, after all, he professes, that he *may* be in error? Is not his highest and firmest act of faith at best but an OPINION, a mere 'I THINK;' an opinion which he holds, and on which he '*does not believe himself to be mistaken,*' but which he holds with this clear conviction overruling and destroying all certainty, that "*he may err in matters of faith?*"

Now would Dr. Wilkins have the Catholic come over to a Church which says of itself that it '*may be in error on matters of faith?*' Does he think that when he talks so glibly and peremptorily of our 'errors and superstitions,' that we forget that he admits all the while, that not only he, Dr. Wilkins, but his whole Church too acknowledges and confesses, that, after all, this judgment '*may be in error?*' Does he think to bring us to a Church which, at the very outset, is forced to admit, that, in its condemnation of our Church, in its abandonment of our Church, in the change of religion, graced as it was with the goodly name of a 'Reformation,' it may have been in error? Dr. Wilkins admits this; he *cannot* as Protestant deny that the abandonment may, in the sight of God, have been a dereliction of the true Church; that notwithstanding their schism, we may have been all along in the right, and they at every step in the wrong. May this be so, or not. If not, let me ask, *why* not? If *not*, then must he lay claim to infallibi-

lity, and thus commit a moral suicide; he must change the very principle on which his Church exists, and contend that his Church *cannot* ‘err in matters of faith,’ and if *his* Church cannot, then *the Church* could not; and if she could not err in matters of faith, then what becomes of the plea of a ‘*reformation?*’ He may quote holy scripture, he may argue as long as he pleases, but after all, as it is not about the mere *letter* of Scripture, but about the *meaning of that letter* that the dispute lies, he and every Protestant can be forced to admit that *his interpretation* of scripture is but HIS OPINION, and may be erroneous; that *he may err in matters of faith*, however far he may be from “*believing himself mistaken.*”

This is the position which the Catholic takes in ‘his opposition’ to the Established Church: this his vantage-ground. But Dr. Wilkins says nothing of all this; and would fain delude his readers into a belief that our opposition to his Church is a mere question about the transfer of benefices, ecclesiastical supremacy, Luther, and ‘such small deer.’

We believe then that Christ’s Church could not, and *cannot err in matters of faith*. That what the Church taught in the first age, when it had Christ’s apostles for its guides, will be taught to the end of time, under the ministry of men, fallible indeed of their own nature, but, as a body, the representatives of the Church, secured from teaching *error in matters of faith*. This, no human privilege, we believe bestowed by Christ’s most explicit promises. “*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*”* “*He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.*”† “*Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto*

* St. Matt. xvi. 18.

† St. Luke, x. 16.

you the word of God, whose faith follow.* “If he neglect to hear the Church let him be unto thee as an heathen man, and a publican.”† “Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”‡ “That thou mayest know how to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth.”§ “Believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they are of God. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, if they hear us.”||

With this conviction on our minds, this positive command from Almighty God to *hear the Church*, and with these promises before us, we recite the apostles' creed, and find that, in every age, the unerring authority of the Church has been deemed, and embraced, as a tenet of importance not inferior to the awful truths relating to the Godhead and the operations of the persons of the Blessed Trinity, and this belief expressed in the decisive words “*I believe the holy Catholic Church.*” No one in any age has been accounted a Christian who has refused to hear and believe this Church; and observe, not merely to express his belief in the mere *existence* of such a Church, to recognize such a Church militant as scattered throughout the universe, but to submit to, and *believe* the doctrines, taught by the Church; to receive the faith which that Church proposes, to admit that Church as his guide and teacher, from whose teaching there is no appeal; just as the declaration ‘*I believe God,*’ is not merely an assertion of his existence, or that ‘*I believe in a God,*’ but implies a submission to his divine revelation and teaching.

The faith contained in that creed is immutable and God's truth; the profession of that creed has, in every age, been required of every Christian, so that there never has been year, day, nor even hour since the apostolic times, when, if called upon, the believer

* Hebrews, xiii. 7. † St. Matt. xviii. 17. ‡ St. Matt. xvi. 18.

§ Tim. iii. 15.

|| 1 St. John, iv. 1, 6.

might not, with safe conscience, subscribe the declaration of the creed "I believe the holy Catholic Church." Such a Church then there always has been, or the creed is false, and the subscription to it a fatal error; such a Church then has always been, or the creed becomes a standard of faith for one age and not another, not for all ages,—a Church not merely in character *holy and catholic*, but with an authority also to teach and to require submission to that teaching without fear or doubt of error. Such was God's privilege bestowed; such has been the faith of ages. Whosoever then resisted her, resisted a divinely established and protected Church; 'THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF TRUTH;' whosoever rejected her teaching, rejected God's authority; whosoever denounced her as superstitious, unholy and in error, vilified the *holy and chaste* spouse of Jesus Christ, and made null his sacred and emphatic promises.

And to make an application of the preceding reasoning to the question 'Where was your religion before Luther,' which derives all its force from such premises as the above, but which is boldly proposed by Dr. Wilkins as if of itself it forms one of our fatal objections against every Protestant Church, I will tell, and soon show the Venerable Archdeacon that it is not enough to give a silly tale about a weaver in the streets of Dublin, as a reply, but that this is a question which, with true and correct notions of the nature of a Church, of the commission it has to fulfil, and of the profession in the creed, will lead to serious and important consequences. Luther at one time '*stood alone*,' this he boasted of; this Tillotson too makes a subject of high commendation. If *alone*, where was '*the Church*?' Was he priest and people too? Was he, in his single person "a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments are duly administered?" Did he *believe the Church*? Did he acknowledge a Church of God, or any Church, as the creed required? Did he acknowledge the Church to be *holy*? Did he,

when he left the Church in which he was baptized and ordained, unite himself to the Catholic Church? Nothing of this. He '*stood alone*;' and that, if there be truth in the creed, if the creed be not a thing to be set aside at the pleasure and whim of every gainsayer, condemned him. Could he when he '*stood alone*' recite that creed with *truth*? He was condemned by that creed, for he denied the *existence* of a true Church; he was condemned by the creed, for he was united to no *catholic* Church; he was condemned when he denounced that Church, as does the Vicar, as superstitious and erroneous, for the Church was according to the creed *holy*; and the doctrine of that creed was but a summary of apostolic teaching and of the faith of God's Church.

He formed a sect, I know; but he *united* himself to *no existing Church*;—he denounced all existing

I take the liberty of quoting the following short passages from the *Eclectic Review* for last December. Although that publication is a bitter opponent of Catholicity, yet I recommend it to the notice of Dr. Wilkins, it may be of service to him.

"The common mode of fixing the introduction of different Popish doctrines to the dates of the councils in which they were first defined or defended, is sufficiently reprov'd by the remark that doctrines do not in general become matters of discussion and decision until after they are known, and that it is not the announcement, but the contradiction of them that leads to such proceedings. . . . The most active and direct organization of the day, in opposition to Popery and the most popular anti-Popish books, continually display evils and errors such as these. The sayings of individual men are made the sure criteria of the tenets of the Church: points upon which the Church is allowed to change, are confounded with points upon which it is not allowed to change. Small anecdotes are substituted for great arguments. In fact, reasonings are frequently employed, which, if used with as much virulence and as little wisdom, might be urged against any and every denomination of Christian men. . . . Silence is infinitely better than weak and foolish talking against Popery, or against any thing. We say it solemnly, we would rather that many advocates of Protestantism had been in the ranks of its opponents, than have done the work they have on its behalf, when we have listened to their pointless and inapplicable ratiocinations, half false, and half falsely treated against the faith of Catholics."—*Eclectic Review*, pp. 16, 17. Dec. 1841.

Churches; there was not one Church on earth that would receive him. He formed a sect, but he had *stood alone*, and error does not grow less by time and accidental circumstances. There is no prescription against the truth. If he began in error; if to '*stand alone*,' to separate from every Church and to believe in none be hateful to Almighty God, and repugnant to the Christian faith, then length of time, though it may propagate error, cannot obliterate it. There was a time when *he could not recite the creed*, and that time, long, or short, severed him and his system, for ever, from the Church of that creed.

What has been said of Luther, applies equally to every self-styled reformer in matters of faith. There was a time when they, one and all, disbelieved the Church; when they separated from the universal Church and stood alone, without a Church but what the two or three separatists formed, and without being in communion with any other Church; a time when, to justify themselves, they were compelled to deny the existence of any true Church, to denounce her as *unholy*, as not to be believed, for that she had taught error and practiced abominations. "Laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women, and children of WHOLE CHRISTENDOM—an horrible thing to think—have been at once DROWNED IN ABOMINABLE IDOLATRY; of all other vices the most detested of God, and most damnable to man; and that by the space of EIGHT HUNDRED YEARS OR MORE."—*Book of Homilies.—Peril of Idolatry.*

III. I might, in the third place, urge as another of the objections on which the controversy between the two Churches depends; the accusation of *schism* which we bring against the Established Church.* The authors of the change in this country separated

* I may here remark, that in the editions of the Bible published from 1562, to 1683, the word 'CONGREGATION' will be found substituted for the word 'CHURCH.' The phrase was suited to the time when the word *Church* was of too large an import for what was felt to be the Church of but a small section of one island, and without communion or connexion with any other.

from all communion with the rest of Christendom; from communion with that Church in which all had been baptized, and in which every minister had been ordained; they formed a new sect apart; and this of course, is schism, which Dr. Wilkins contends may be, and must be, under certain circumstances, incurred, but which we contend is a crime which nothing can justify, or even palliate. This I might readily demonstrate if only from the creed, if I had not already occupied more space in stating those fundamental matters than I can well spare for this brief pamphlet, which has chiefly in view to expose Dr. Wilkins' gross, unprovoked, and almost countless, misrepresentations of our doctrines. I must therefore content myself with an axiom from an authority which the Vicar even perhaps will not despise, the illustrious Bishop of Hippo, St. Augustine. "There cannot be any necessity for violating unity." "*Præscindendæ Unitatis nulla potest esse justa necessitas.*"

To dilate on this important subject would be indeed a far more pleasing task than to detect and expose the ignorance or rancorous feeling of Dr. Wilkins regarding Catholics; but though the labour may be somewhat monotonous and wearisome, it will not be, I trust, without its advantage to myself, and my religion, in enabling me to vindicate it from many foul aspersions cast upon it,—to the Archdeacon by showing him, if he be so ignorant, that he "blasphemes against what he knows not,"—and if he knowingly slander us, by shaming him into moderation and silence, if not into truth; and to the public, by exhibiting our Church not as those men that fatten out of its plunder describe it, but such as it is, "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing," nourished and cherished by Jesus Christ that it should be holy and without blemish.*

The method which I propose to pursue, is simple, and I hope, will be found satisfactory. I shall take

* Ephes. v. 27, 29.

one by one, each doctrine and practice ascribed to us by Dr. Wilkins, and compare his misstatements with our real belief and actual ordinances; expose calumny where it exists, ignorance of plain facts of history, and such distortions or forgeries of extracts and authorities, as present themselves in this most extraordinary pamphlet of the Vicar's; and I shall arrange them under distinct heads according to the doctrine or practice discussed. I foresee that to do this, within the usual limits of a pamphlet, with every subject brought forward by the Archdeacon, will be impossible, as he has heaped together almost every matter controverted by the two Churches, but I will proceed with the above method as far as my time and limits will permit me.

But, to do this the more satisfactorily, it may not be inexpedient for the sake of the ordinary, or the misinformed reader, to give a few plain rules by which every one may at once know, what is, and what is not, and cannot be, *an article of Catholic faith*; as well as to state such authorities as are deemed by us *final and irrefragable*.

Faith, *divine faith*, implies *revelation*; it is, says St. Paul, "*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,*"* but made known by divine wisdom. *Nothing then can be of faith but what God has revealed*. That revelation may be directly from God, as when our Saviour taught; or may be communicated by inspired men; as when prophets and apostles made known the will and truth of God. The Christian revelation was completed and made known by Jesus Christ and his apostles;—there has been *no new revelations* since his, or their, days. It follows, therefore, that nothing *subsequent to them and their times, could possibly be an article of faith*. Be the doctrine or ordinance what it may, if it originated *after* Christ and his apostles, it cannot be propounded as a revelation from God, nor be proposed

* Hebrews, xi. 1.

or received as an article of divine faith. Neither tenet, nor practice, nor miracle, nor anything whatsoever can be admitted as divine truth, injunction, or voucher, without being at the same time believed, to limit myself to the Christian code, to have *Christ for its author*. The tenet may be true, the practice laudable, the miracle genuine, but, if of date subsequent to the age of Christ and his apostles, it is but human; it cannot be divine; it cannot be a part of the deposit of faith.

But, though every revealed truth and article of faith must necessarily be limited in its origin to the days of Christ and his apostles, every such tenet may not at once, and in all Churches, have been acknowledged as divine. Such truths were indeed revealed, and essentially articles of faith; but, nevertheless, not terms of communion. Men might doubt of, and even reject them, and still be Christians, and members of the true Church. Thus the CONSUBSTANTIALITY of the Son with the Father, and the PROCESION of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, were ever most truly revealed truths, and articles of faith, but were not always essential terms of communion. They were ever generally believed throughout the Church, but until gainsayers, by denying those truths, caused the Churches to scrutinize their respective creeds, and to proclaim them as having been ever held in the Church of God as most blessed verities revealed of God, the ignorant or contraveners of these truths were admitted to communion, or were not accounted as obstinate and wilful heretics. But from the time that such declaration was issued by the Church, they were not merely truths revealed, but terms essential to communion. So with regard to many, nearly half the books of the New Testament. Those books were ever really inspired, but their inspiration was doubted of, nay rejected, in large districts of the Church, until the scattered evidences having been carefully collected and weighed, their inspiration was proposed by the representations of the

dispersed Churches as a revealed truth, and thenceforth the sacred origin of those books could no longer be doubted of, much less rejected, without repudiating an essential term of communion, and ceasing to be in connexion with the Catholic Church.

So, in every age, doctrines really revealed, like the above, and practically ever held in the Church dispersed, have been, when once called in question, examined and propounded as having been ever held as revealed by Jesus Christ, and thenceforward added to the terms of communion. This explains at once the usual objection, adduced by superficial writers, and copied, of course, by Dr. Wilkins,* respecting the NOVELTY of the tenets proclaimed by the Council of Trent. In all this, similar principles were followed, and a similar process observed. The principle, that nothing could be a term of communion but what had been divinely revealed; the process, the collection and examination of the belief of the various dispersed Churches on each disputed tenet and practice proved this.

Here, I may observe, nothing is left to mere human invention, learning, or sagacity; the whole matter is one of direct evidence, and practical belief. Such a doctrine had been ever held throughout the Churches, and held as revealed truth; it was, therefore, as such propounded;—another was of modern date and human invention, or of doubtful origin, it was therefore repudiated and rejected, “*they had no such custom, nor the Church of God,*” that Church which is “*the pillar and ground of truth;*” and with which Christ promised to be “*always, even to the end of the world.*” Bishops attended by their priests and deacons, assembling from all climes and nations of the earth—men speaking different languages—men totally unknown to each other—differing in manners, customs, and perhaps all other things, except being ‘*witnesses*’ of the truth, ‘as it was revealed by Christ Jesus our Lord.’

* Address, pp. 17, 18.

Councils DECREE; they do not INVENT. They examine evidence; they do not hazard conjectures. They state the received belief of the Church; they do not publish their own speculations. *Nil innovetur, nisi quod traditum est*; that is, *let there be no innovation, nothing but what has been handed down*; *quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus*; that is, *truth which everywhere, always, and by all has been held*; are the maxims by which they are guided.

The sources of that evidence are various; but that evidence must have been morally universal and really perpetual, or it cannot be admitted. To receive any other would be to violate the received and unchangeable principle that the *Church never changes*. These were limited by Jesus Christ; those depend, as in the cases stated, on the collation and perfection of evidence. Whether that evidence be found on writings, and those writings be by men inspired; or whether on the writings of men who have illustrated the Church in every age and land, provided it be clear and decisive of the origin of the tenet or practice, as from Christ and his apostles, it is enough.

But, observe, the writings of the fathers are not examined for OPINIONS, or mere EXPOSITIONS of TENETS, but for FACTS, and REVEALED DOCTRINES. Their statements of what were the tenets of their times and Church, not their own private speculations, are accounted evidence. The only points on which they *could not be deceived, nor deceive us*, are those on which their vouchers are received, namely, the *doctrine which their Church taught in their day*. Their opinions and expositions of holy scripture vary in value according to the judgment and skill of the writer; but when the writer states not his opinion, but the creed which he and his Church held; which he from his infancy had been taught, and had been commissioned to teach others; it is no longer a question of skill, but of simple honesty, of mere testimony; and that too in matters in which deceit was impossible. That which they had handled and taught, and

been taught, they certify to, and on such points alone are they appealed to as *authorities* or '*witnesses*.' And when that testimony to facts can be clearly traced, in unbroken succession, in every age and land, up to the days of our Blessed Redeemer, or, according to St. Augustine's rule, up to a period so near to the apostles' times that, though received throughout the Church, it is not known to have had any commencement subsequent to their days, then, and then only, is it to be accounted complete and satisfactory.*

Nor must it be forgotten that, in the days of the apostles, the knowledge of Christian truth was communicated to thousands and thousands, throughout the universe, written on the fleshy tablets of their hearts. The nations understood this doctrine; lived according to it; practised it, in all its most important elements, almost daily; and valued it as that which was, beyond every thing else, necessary to them and their posterity. The Christians of the first age, the scholars of the apostles, could correctly commend that doctrine to others; it was handed down by them as a most precious deposit to their children, and this not tied to certain phrases and set forms of expression, but conveyed, as it had been settled in their hearts, by various expressions, and confirmed by significant practices.

And I should think that the careful student of the holy scriptures, and of the means proposed by the apostles for perpetuating Christianity, whilst he cannot fail to remark that there is no declaration on their part, that their writings contain the whole council of God, or that there, and there only, it is to be sought,

* *Quod universa tenet ecclesia, nec Conciliis institutum, sed semper retentum est, non nisi auctoritate apostolica traditum rectissime creditur.*—*De Baptismo, contra Donatistas, lib. iv. c. xxiv.*—This principle is that every Church that admits the inspiration of the New Testament. The writers of the first century, and part of the second, do not quote from more than three of St. Paul's epistles.

must, at the same time, acknowledge that there is much evidence—direct and positive evidence—of a very contrary nature, pointing to other sources than their writings, as means for propagating the truth. Thus, to omit numerous passages in holy writ, in which St. Paul claims an equal obedience to whatever he had written, or spoken, as God's truths, the apostle of the Gentiles gives the following direction to Timothy, "*Thou, therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*"* This epistle is one of the last of the writings of the New Testament; but notwithstanding this, instead of limiting Timothy to the study of his (St. Paul's) and the other sacred writings of the new law, he reminds him to follow his example, and to select faithful men to perpetuate the faith, and '*form of sound words,*' just as he (Timothy) had been chosen for that purpose. St. Paul had, by word of mouth, instructed Timothy, and given him charge to teach others, whilst he, in his turn, was to appoint suitable men to fill the same sacred office for the benefit of another generation. This then, is one of the means specified by St. Paul for the propagation and perpetuation of the faith; a most useless procedure, if nothing could be derived from that means, or nothing learned from it with certainty.

It is clear that not one of the believers so instructed could innovate on any point without knowing it; or, if ignorant, could that innovation fail to be discovered and corrected by the surrounding believers, and the usual means of perpetuating the truth to all. To innovate was to abandon the truth, and the religion of Jesus Christ, and to incur knowingly the most fearful penalties. To propagate that innovation was to seek to ruin souls, and to be accountable for them to Almighty God, and to introduce a practical change

* 2 Tim. ii. 1, 2.

corresponding with the change of creed. Hence, besides the written testimony of the Christian writers, there was concurrent with that testimony and overruling it, a practical and uniform custom or tradition, not oral merely, but symbolized, made tangible and of every day action in one or other of the usages, sacraments, and external modes of worship in the Church. Hence, the liturgies, monuments of art, festivals, and such memorials as writers use when proving the divine origin of the Jewish religion and their sacred books; A living, symbolized, and traditional belief, written testimonies of the fathers, with varying force, but all conspiring to one end; these, and other elements, constitute that evidence which passes under the generic name of tradition, and of which the decrees of councils and the articles of public creeds are the organized expression. But be that tradition what it may, let it comprise all, or only a part, of those various elements, no doctrine however recommended, could be acknowledged as divine, but such as was evidently exhibited as received from age to age as derived from Jesus Christ. Every Church admits such doctrines in practice, whatever may be its theory; none stand more in need of such evidence than the sects which profess to derive their faith from the written word of God. Without that evidence, the sacred scripture has no authority.

Thus there is this essential difference, a difference which ought never to be lost sight of, between doctrines propounded by the Catholic Church as articles of faith and terms of communion, and those prescribed by the Established and other Protestant Churches, that the decrees of councils, and the articles of our creeds are professedly and essentially, NOT DEDUCTIONS OF A FEW ASSEMBLED MEN, but the expression of a universal belief attested by every species of evidence and fact, to have always been, and every where held as derived from a preceding and yet a preceding age up to the days of our Blessed Saviour. Whilst the thirty-nine articles (in the

time of Edward VI. there were forty-two!) of the Established Church, and the creed of every other Protestant Church, are deliberately and formally propounded as the *expositions and opinions* of a few prominent men, sagacious and learned it may be, but still erring and fallible men, and men who not unfrequently proclaimed their speculations under all the excitement of angry and heated controversies. This is to follow '*human inventions*;' this is indeed to sacrifice one's private judgment to men no wiser perhaps, nor better than ourselves; this is to have a *human religion*; whilst the Catholic holds it his pride and consolation, that he yields belief to no man, or set of men, to no private exposition of the holy scripture, or mere opinion, but merely gives assent to the accumulated evidence of every age and land, borne to a plain practical fact of which ignorant and learned, rich and poor could, in every important case, be equally valuable witness, that such a doctrine or practice was that of the day in which they lived, and had been received as such from their fathers.

To the doctrinal decrees, therefore of general councils, as representing the Church universal, and giving expression to its belief; to the public creeds as received by the Church, we yield assent, AND TO THEM ONLY. We receive as articles of faith whatever God has revealed, and we acknowledge as terms of communion, the doctrines and practices which those councils, and those public creeds, have authoritatively proposed. These are the RECORDS OF OUR FAITH; and by these, and these only can we be honestly and truly judged. *Obstinately and knowingly* to assign anything as an article of faith, or term of communion which is not registered there, would, we believe, be heresy, and a violation of the first principles of our Church. It is then by these standards that I mean to bring, one by one, the Reverend Vicar's statement of what he is pleased to say will be taught in the church of St. Barnabas, now being erected. For greater perspicuity I shall place

each subject under a distinct head, and in his own words.

I. ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE AND THE LATIN VULGATE.

1. "*The English translation (the Douay and Rhemish version) is used by such few Romanists alone, who have license from their priests to read it.*"* There is no license required from priest or bishop; all may, all are encouraged to, read it. Further, there never has been a license required by any Catholic in this country; the only formal prohibition ever published in this kingdom, was after the Anglican Church had separated from communion with the Catholic Church, and was a *Protestant prohibition*, and actually required a *Protestant license*!

Again, the rules of the 'Index' were never promulgated, and therefore were never in force, in this country; those rules were first issued in the sixteenth century, and therefore, by the foregoing principles, were never deemed, and could not be, anything more than mere regulations of local and variable discipline. They have long since been everywhere repealed; formally repealed at Rome; as the occasion which gave rise to them had ceased.

2. "*In the churches and places of public worship, the Bible read is the Latin Vulgate, and none other.*"† 'The gospel and epistle of the day, the psalms and other such portions of scripture as form our public worship, are always read in the ENGLISH VERSION. Alas! Dr. Wilkins! what is truth?

3. "The Protestant Bible is translated out of the *original tongues*; theirs out of the **LATIN VULGATE**, and diligently compared with the originals."‡ These small matters tell when literary honesty is concerned. But the main business is the relative value of a translation from the originals solely, and one which has for its basis St. Jerome's version, called the Latin Vulgate, diligently compared with the originals.

* Address, p. 24.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

Now, is not Dr. Wilkins aware, that many biblical scholars acknowledge, that the authority of the Latin Vulgate is equal, if not superior, to that of any, or of all the originals, or rather manuscript copies of the originals as they have come down to us? Is he not aware that the manuscript copies used by St. Jerome are more ancient, by several centuries, than any of the copies now known, much more than any used by the Protestant translators under James I.?

Again, is it true that the present Protestant translation is solely a version from the originals? Is it not rather true, that it was published under much the same circumstances as ours, with a given translation for its basis, diligently compared with the originals? Is it not a fact that, in the instructions given to those translators, whether forty-eight in number, as Dr. Wilkins asserts, or more truly forty-seven, though fifty-four were originally appointed,—they were directed to use the '*Bishop's Bible*' as their guide, to deviate from it as little as possible, and to consult such modern versions as were then in existence? Thus the difference between the translations of the two Churches is chiefly this; that the Catholic translation had for its guide a version as ancient at the least as the fourth century, a version hallowed by constant use in the universal Church, and published long before the rise of the modern controversies, and therefore unbiassed by them; whilst the Protestant translation was to have for its direction a modern translation, used but in a small corner of the world, and by a small sect, and written by fierce partisans, at a time of hot excitement and party bias.*

* Dr. Wilkins, in a note, finds fault with our translating *μετανοεῖτε*, by *pænitentiam agite*, or do penance. At all events this translation has antiquity in its favour, it dates as high, at the lowest, as the fourth century of the Church, and probably is of more remote antiquity. If then it be supposed to countenance any doctrines or practices of our Church, repudiated by Protestants, it had but that countenance for more than a thousand years before the name of Protestant was known. It was not invented to answer any party or sectarian

“The Latin Vulgate *was revised for a third time* by Lucas Brugensis, with the assistance of several divines of Louvain, in 1573.”*

Revised for a *third* time, more likely a thirteenth time, and, I give this as another specimen of the Archdeacon's amazing ignorance, the ‘*Vetus Itala*,’ or old Italic version, was revised in the fourth century by St. Jerome, and his revision used throughout the Churches, under the name of the *Vulgate*. The multiplication of copies (all by the pen be it remembered) and other causes, produced various readings, and numerous errors. Alcuin, in the eighth century, in order to remedy this evil, undertook a revision of the *Vulgate*, at the command of Charlemagne. Similar motives led Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, to attempt another in the eleventh century. Cardinal Nicholas and others engaged in the same holy labour in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But the evil was not cured, though abated. Robert Stephens, be-

purpose. But the contrary is so palpably the case with the different editions, or versions of the Protestant Church, that any one conversant with the shifting controversies of the day, might easily, from the different changes in the versions of the Established Church, tell to a nicety, what system of theology was uppermost when those changes were effected.

And as Dr. Wilkins has given what he considers an error in our translation, which I leave him to settle with the illustrious scholar St. Jerome, and the primitive Churches that used that translation, I will, out of twenty similar glaring perversions of the *originals*, that occur to me, select the following one as a choice specimen, of “*general fidelity*.” The question of communion in one kind is one much discussed between the two Churches, and is paraded with much solemnity by Dr. Wilkins. Now, as the sacred scripture, in a passage of St. Paul to the Corinthians, (1 Cor. xi. 27) clearly establishes that the whole sacrament is received under either form, whether of bread or wine, in these terms, “Whoever shall eat this bread *or* drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be *guilty of the body and blood of the Lord*,” the Protestant translators changed the obnoxious *or* into *and*, and at once made the apostle speak in conformity with their sentiments and in condemnation of ours.

* Address, p. 25.

tween the year 1528 and 1546, published no fewer than six different recensions. But his efforts gave umbrage to the Sorbonne, and justly. He was guilty of a gross fraud in publishing one of his recensions, with Calvin's notes, under the name of Vatablus, who indignantly repelled the imputation thus fastened on him. Hentenius, a Louvain divine, undertook to produce a more correct edition, and a *third* attempt to remedy the errors into which the manuscripts of the Vulgate had fallen from the time of the previous recensions to that of Stephens, was made by certain divines of Louvain, aided by Luke of Bruges (Lucas Brugensis). This Dr. Wilkins calls the "*third revision of the Vulgate.*" It would seem impossible for any one pretending to enlighten his parish upon biblical topics, to make so egregious a blunder, but so it is.*

5. "The *infallible* Council of Trent decreed, 'That in the public lessons, disputations, preachings, and expositions, *this* (the Latin Vulgate, edited by Pope Sixtus IV.) should be accounted *authentic*, and that no one should *dare* or *presume* to reject it on any pretence whatsoever.'†

The Council of Trent closed in the year 1563, the edition of the Vulgate published by Sixtus V. did not appear until the year 1590; twenty-seven years consequently after the termination of this council which Dr. Wilkins says commanded his edition to be used!

* I was at a loss to discover the origin of the above ridiculous sample of the Archdeacon's want of accuracy, but I think I have discovered it. In the Rev. Hartwell Horne's second volume of the 'Introduction to the Study of the New Testament,' after an account of the various recensions of the Vulgate given above, to which I had occasion to refer, I met with these words, "a *third* corrected edition was published by Lucas Brugensis, with the assistance of several other divines of Louvain, in 1573. He is speaking of editions *subsequent to the 13th century*, of which the Louvain was the *third*, and Dr. Wilkins must have 'read up,' or 'crammed,' as it is called, for this grand occasion, when, no doubt, he intended to extinguish the Catholics in 'his parish.'

† Address, p. 25.

Archdeacon Wilkins must have become perfectly blind by his imprudent animosity against Catholics. This is another specimen of his discretion and accuracy! And Dr. Wilkins quotes too the words of the council, and forgets not to give his reference to the very session of the council, in which a book, not published for twenty-seven years afterwards, is proposed as the only authentic version of the Church! Of course the quotation, as far as the point for which it is adduced is concerned, is a mere "ingenious device." Perhaps Dr. Wilkins will blush when he refers to the twenty-fifth page of his pamphlet, and observes his sneers at Sixtus IV.—Sixtus V. I presume he means, and at the Council of Trent.

What the council really appointed, and said, was merely this, that the Latin Vulgate should be accounted the *authentic* version of the Church. *Modern* religions have formed for themselves *modern* versions; the *ancient* religion selected the most *ancient* in existence; the *authentic* version of the Established Church is one devised by men actuated and biassed by the mere opinions which they had embraced; the *authentic* version of the Catholic Church is one that had been universally adopted in the Church long before the birth of those controversies which now unfortunately divide the two Churches.

II. CANON OF SCRIPTURE AND THE DEUTEROCANONICAL WRITINGS.

1. "*As the Jews rejected it (the Apocrypha), and no allusion is ever made to it in the New Testament, and it was never received as canonical until the Council of Trent (1546), we (Protestants) do not admit it in proof of any religious doctrine.*"*

The canon, or list of sacred writings, admitted by the Jews, was enlarged at various periods. Who, or what authority, enlarged the canon, we know not. Neither do we know, *except by tradition*, of what books precisely that canon consisted. The deutero-

* Address, p. 26.

canonical writings of the Old Law were written subsequently to the last enlargement of the canon; they had not been admitted into it, apparently, at the downfall of their city, by the Hebraistic Jews, though the Hellenistic Jews are said, with some reason, to have received them as canonical.

Neither was the same list of writings admitted even by all the Hebraistic Jews, or Jews of Palestine. The Sadducees, as well as the Samaritans acknowledged no increase of the canon, and limited it to the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, the latter however added an interpolated book of Joshua. The Pharisees, and other parties, agreed in the canon enlarged at various periods, the one now received by the Jews. But has Archdeacon Wilkins no better ground for so fundamental an article of his creed as the canon and inspiration of the Old Testament, than a *Jewish tradition*? or will he admit the reception of these books as inspired by the Jewish Church as an irrefragable proof, and deny that authority to the decrees of the Christian Church? At all events, here it is admitted that TRADITION, ay, a JEWISH TRADITION, and a *partial tradition*, is his authority for receiving as canonical and inspired the books of the Old Law. Does then Dr. Wilkins forget his denunciation of tradition, in the very next page, in which he declares that *no reliance can be placed on a tradition of vital importance transmitted through "a channel, running the length of one or two hundred years."** And here is a vital doctrine in part running in the channel of tradition for something like two thousand years, and yet the Archdeacon finds that he can, and must place reliance on it, even though that doctrine be so fundamental a one as the inspiration and canonicity of holy writ. But "*no allusion is ever made to it in the New Testament.*" Neither is there any specific allusion to one-third of the books of the Old Law. There is mention of the 'law and the prophets,' 'the law, the

* Address, p. 27.

psalms, and the prophets,' but is this to make allusion to each book, or one-third of the books?

Again, there is allusion made to books *not now in the canon*; to books accounted *spurious*; to Pagan poets; and will Dr. Wilkins contend that allusion to those books proves his present canon to be imperfect, and therefore, not the whole word of God? Further, has the Archdeacon yet to be informed, that the New Testament quotations are as frequently from the Septuagint, as from the Hebrew, and that the Septuagint version contained as canonical or without distinction whatever from the other writings most of the deuterocanonical books of the Old Law.

But, "*it was never received as canonical until the Council of Trent.*" It is indeed lamentable that a man holding the office of Archdeacon, and claiming to be the spiritual guide of a whole parish, can be found to publish such an assertion. Why, is it necessary to tell this gentleman, that of the catalogues of sacred and canonical writings given by ancient writers, there is scarcely one, however imperfect in other respects, out of nearly twenty that have come down to us from the first six centuries, that does not acknowledge, one, or more, or all the writings, which he repudiates? Let him learn that of the fathers, there is scarcely one, who, though he may not give a catalogue, does not, when occasion requires him to name them or quote those writings, propose them as divine and sacred scripture; whilst some of the most eminent for biblical knowledge and study, as the great Origen, the most learned man on such matters, that, perhaps, ever illustrated the Church, have actually written long treatises in defence of their inspiration, occasioned by the very objection used by Protestants and copied by Dr. Wilkins, that those writings were not a part of the Jewish canon. I will further take the liberty to inform Dr. Wilkins, that decrees of councils, of councils held more than a thousand years before the Council of Trent, recognized those writings as canonical.

I will subjoin two testimonies, one of each kind,—one from a council, and another from a father of the Church. The father shall be the bishop of Hippo, the immortal St. Augustine, because he is lauded in the Book of Homilies, and even by Dr. Wilkins.

St. Augustine, A.D. 395. “Let him who desires carefully to examine the sacred writings, in receiving the *canonical* scriptures, follow the authority of the greater number of the Catholic Churches; amongst which Churches assuredly are those which are *apostolic sees*, and have received epistles from the apostles. This rule he will observe, therefore, with regard to the *canonical* scriptures; he will prefer such as are received by all Catholic Churches, to those which some do not receive; and with regard to such as are not received by all, he will prefer those which are received by the greater number, and by the more eminent Churches, to those which are received by the smaller number, and by Churches of less authority. But if he should find some received by the greater number of Churches, others by the more eminent,—which I think can scarcely happen,—I think such scriptures are to be by him held as of equal authority. *The entire canon of the scriptures,** with respect to which the preceding considerations are to be applied, is comprised in the following books:—There are five books of Moses; one book of Josue, the son of Nun; one small tract called Ruth, which seems rather to belong to the beginning of Kings; then four books of Kings and two of Paralipomena, not following one another, but proceeding as it were, together and connected. The above are historical books, and contain a connected account of the times in order of events. There are others somewhat distinct from the preceding, which do not observe the order of time, and are all unconnected with each other, as *Job, Tobias, Esther, Judith, and the books of Maccabees, and the two of Esdras*, which last present a more regular

* Totus canon scripturarum his libris continetur.

succession of historical events from the close of Kings, and of the Paralipomena. Then follow the prophetic writings; of which there are David's Books of Psalms, and those books of Solomon, the Proverbs, the Canticle of Canticles, and Ecclesiastes; for the two books one called *Wisdom* and the other *Ecclesiasticus* are styled Solomon's, from a certain resemblance to his writings, but are very uniformly declared to have been written by Jesus the son of Sirach; *which two books, however, since they have deserved to be received INTO AUTHORITY, are to be reckoned amongst the prophetic writings.** The rest are the books of the twelve prophets, which, as they are always united, are reckoned one book. After them are the prophets who have left us books of greater length,—Isaias, Jeremias, Daniel, and Ezekiel. *In these forty-four books is comprised the AUTHORITY of the Old Testament.†* Of the New Testament there are four gospels; fourteen epistles of the apostle Paul; two epistles of Peter; three of John; one of Jude; one of James; the Acts of the Apostles in one book; and the Revelation of John in one book. *In all these books they who fear God, seek his will.‡*

It is then an incontrovertible fact that St. Augustine acknowledged and proposed the *very same books of scripture* as divine and canonical which are now received by the Catholic Church. On this point then, at least, Dr. Wilkins is not of the same faith with St. Augustine, and the Christians of his Church.

A.D. 397. *The third Council of Carthage*, or, according to another computation, the sixth, was held in the year 397, and was presided over by Aurelius,

* Qui tamen quoniam in auctoritatem recipi meruerunt, inter propheticos numerandi sunt.

† His quadraginta libris Testamenti veteris terminetur auctoritas.

‡ In his omnibus libris timentes Deum, et pietati mansueti, quo erunt voluntatem Dei.—*De Doctrina Christiana, lib. ii. c. 8, n. 12, 13, 14, tom. iii. par. 1 ed. Bened.*

bishop of Carthage; at which also the illustrious St. Augustine was present. The forty-seventh canon contains the following complete catalogue of the sacred writings:—“Moreover it is ordained that *nothing beside the CANONICAL scriptures be now read in the churches, under the name of DIVINE scripture.* Now the *canonical* scriptures are these: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, the books of the Paralipomena, Job, David’s Psalter, *five books of Solomon*, the books of the twelve prophets, Isaias, Jeremias,† Ezechiel, Daniel, *Tobias, Judith, Esther, two books of Esdras*, and *two books of Maccabees*:”‡ then follow the usual books of the New Testament.

In another council, held at Carthage, in the year 419, a similar decree was issued.§ And I may add also that Pope Gelasius, aided by a council of seventy bishops, promulgated at Rome in the year 497, a similar canon of the sacred writings, except that but one book of Maccabees is named. So much for the Vicar’s third reason for rejecting the deutero-canonical books of the old law, “*that they were never received as canonical until the Council of Trent.*”

I will conclude this subject by giving Dr. Wilkins, a clear, and what, with his persuasions, must, until he shall have studied somewhat more the history of the holy scriptures of which he talks so freely, but really seems to know so little, a bold challenge. The canonicity of about one-third, or rather more, of the

* Labbe. Concil. tom. ii. p. 1177.

† Item placuit ut præter scripturas cononicas nihil in ecclesia legatur sub nomine divinarum scripturarum. Sunt autem canonicæ scripturæ. It may be as well to observe, that St. Augustine remarks that *Baruch* was usually quoted and considered as by Jeremias.—*De civ. Dei. lib. xviii. c. 33.*

‡ In some Greek translations the Maccabees are omitted, but they are mentioned in all the Latin copies, and in Cresconius’ Code, himself an African bishop,

§ Beverege Cod. Can. t. i. p. 549—or Labbe, t. ii. p. 1062.

New Testament was once doubted of; those books are, therefore, classed as deuterocanonical. Now, as the Archdeacon of Nottingham rejects the deuterocanonical books of the *Old* Testament, but admits those of the *New*; it must be that there is more evidence for the canonicity of the latter, than the former. This is what I deny, and I venture to defy Dr. Wilkins to prove. Nay, I will do more. Let Dr. Wilkins choose any century he pleases, from the first to the sixth, or sixteenth; cite whatever evidence that age furnishes in favour of the deuterocanonical books of the New Testament, and I pledge myself to produce evidence for evidence, writer for writer, passage for passage, witness for witness in favour of the deuterocanonical books of the Old Law. Will Archdeacon Wilkins accept this challenge? The subject is an all-important one,—he has brought this subject openly before his parishioners, without any provocation on my part, and we now stand before the public,—and from my soul I pray that God may strengthen him who holds the truth—will he meet the challenge? I will venture to predict that he will do no such thing. Dr. Wilkins indeed dare not. And if he dare not, from conviction which actual examination will soon bring, then must he not to have a clear conscience, either reject both, or admit both? I can see no alternative. So true it is that the system of the Established Church, like every other erroneous system, by rejecting one truth, endangers all truth.

III. TRADITION AND THE WRITINGS OF THE FATHERS.

1. “*They hold the traditions of men of equal authority and sanctity with the revealed word of God, and in some instances as superior to it*”*

The unprejudiced reader of the foregoing remarks will know that, so far from this being the fact, we do not account the *tradition of men* as of any *authority* whatever. We admit no doctrine but what Almighty

* Address, p. 26.

God has revealed. Were a Catholic to make the assertion put so flippantly forward by Dr. Wilkins as our faith, he would at once stand convicted of heresy.

2. "*To their writings (those of the Fathers) they look and refer with the same reverence, as to that of the recorded word; and yet as if to make their reasoning apparently the more preposterous in this respect, we find them referring to the later fathers, in preference to those of the three first centuries.*"*

Both these assertions are untrue; the first heretical; the second a mere silly slander.

3. "YOU WILL PERHAPS ASK, DOES OUR (the Protestant) CHURCH REJECT TRADITION? I DISTINCTLY ANSWER: IT REJECTS ALL AND EVERY PART OF SUCH AS IS CALLED DIVINE, OR SACRED, OR CANONICAL, FOR THERE IS NONE SUCH."

Indeed! is there not? Does the Established Church reject all notion of a sacred and divine tradition? of a *canonical* one, I never heard before. Assuredly it does not. That amongst the ignoble herd of witlings, and youthful theologians there may be found in the Established Church another person so ignorant as to agree with Dr. Wilkins, I will not deny; but I defy him to produce a single writer of eminence who does not admit the existence of such tradition. I have before me passages from Hooker, Taylor, and Tillotson,† which acknowledge and vindicate their existence and acceptance; and I have no doubt, that very trifling labour would enable me to add passages from every writer of weight and dis-

* Address, p. 29.

† The passages from Hooker, Taylor, and others, may be found in my controversy with the Rev. W. J. Butler; I will subjoin an extract from Tillotson. "We allow that tradition, oral and written, do give us sufficient assurance that the books of scripture which we now have, are the very books which were written by the apostles and evangelists; nay, further, that *oral tradition* is a competent evidence in this case; but withal we deny that oral tradition is therefore to be accounted the rule of faith.—*Vol. x. p. 254. 1820.*

tion, who has been called upon to give an opinion on this subject.

No apostolical and divine traditions! Then what is the inspiration of holy scripture? What the canon of sacred writings? What is the baptism of infants? How does this same Dr. Wilkins prove the propriety, or necessity of this rite in his 'Voice from the Font,' but from tradition, which he *now* openly rejects? Had we not his own printed words, it would be impossible to believe such palpable contradictions; how is his flock to know *when* he teaches 'sound doctrine?' Again, where is the clear proof for transferring the obligation of keeping 'holy the Sabbath day' to the Sunday, or first day of the week, but from tradition? Where does he find the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father *and the Son*, but as divine tradition? These, and I might add many others doctrines, are some of them amongst the most fundamental articles of belief, truths on which, especially in the Protestant system, the whole fabric of Christianity rests, and yet they are no where in the written word of God; they are divine and apostolical doctrines conveyed and preserved to us by tradition. If not thus conveyed to us, will Archdeacon Wilkins do that which the most learned have faltered at, demonstrate, *from scripture only*, the truths above named? If he cannot, and assuredly that is the case, then if *not recorded* in holy scripture, and they are, nevertheless, divine and most blessed truths, certainly there is but one other source from which they can be derived, one other ground on which they can be received and taught,—they are divine and apostolical truths preserved, and made known to us by tradition. And let the vicar of St. Mary's remember that, in her articles, his Church gives no other motive for belief in a specific canon of sacred writings, than a uniform and undoubted tradition.

IV. 'THE MOTHER CHURCH.'

As 'the Vicar' twice recurs to this subject, and bestows on it the unusual distinction of referring to

facts which he thinks prove that the Church of Rome is *not the mother and mistress of all Churches*, as our creed professes, I will take a few minutes' trouble to correct his usual error on this subject, and dispose of his facts.

1. If the Church of Rome is not the 'Mother Church,' what Church was it in which Luther, Cranmer, and the first 'reformers' were baptized? For let the '*superstition and errors*' of that Church be what they may, she was still *their* 'Mother Church;' for I never heard that a mother's 'errors' destroyed the title of mother.

2. From what Church had the first English Protestants this ordination? Not from the Church of Rome, I suppose, lest this prove her *their* Mother Church; but if not from her, will Dr. Wilkins inform us whence they procured a commission, derived by succession from the apostles? They separated indeed from that Church; but if the Established Church be the 'Mother Church' to the Presbyterian and Dissenters, who have reformed her 'reformation,' is it not equally undeniable that the Church of Rome is the 'Mother Church'—to the Established Church?

3. If the Church of Rome should claim to be the Mother Church to this country, from having brought to it the fath, by miracles and labours of missionaries sent by St. Gregory I., or, if Dr. Wilkins will have an earlier conversion for this nation* by missionaries sent by Pope Eleutherius, and these Popes should insist with St. Paul† that, "*though ye hear ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the*

* The Archdeacon thinks that St. Paul converted this country to Christianity, and refers to Theodoret. A writer as ancient as Theodoret, Pope Innocent I. says "St. Peter is the only apostle that preached in the West." Origen is the first writer who speaks of any conversions in Britain, but this was after the time of King Lucius and Pope Eleutherius, spoken of in the text.

† 1 Cor. iv. 15.

gospel," the Vicar would still have to admit the Church of Rome, as our Mother Church.

4. But "the Churches of Jerusalem, Ephesus, Thessalonica, and others had been established before Rome existed, and therefore that Church could not be the mother of all Churches."* Not in order of *time* certainly, but could it not be in order of *government*? And let Dr. Wilkins understand, that it is not *time*, but *government* that infers subordination, and confers authority, and that the *præ-eminence* claimed for the Church of Rome in our creed. Christ did not invest *towns*, but *men* with government, and wherever that government was, there was the 'Mother Church.' Though a good king may be the father of his people, yet he need not be the oldest man in his kingdom. So in episcopal sees, that which is the daughter in the order of time, may be the mother in the order of government. Suppose there had been bishops of Llan Elevely, or St. Asaph, as indeed there were, before there were any at Canterbury or York, must these latter sees lose their authority as *metropolitan*,† or Mother Churches?

* Address, p. 13.

† *μητροπολις*, metropolis, i.e. mother-city. In this sense the Council of Constantinople applies the term Mother Church to the Church at Jerusalem, in the very epistle addressed by the synod to Pope Damasus in excuse for not attending at the Council at Rome to which he had summoned them "the real members" (*nos velut membra propria accersivistis*) of a body of which he was the head, and in which they tell him, that they have deputed these bishops to acquaint him with all that had passed at the council (*Ibid.* p. 964) one regulation of which was, (*Can. iii.*) to raise Constantinople to the dignity of a patriarchate, but with the clause, that the see of Constantinople should be the second in dignity, THE BISHOP OF ROME BEING THE FIRST.

Dr. Wilkins refers to the synod of Arles, held in 314, at which three British bishops, Eborius of York, Restitutus of London, and Adelfius, styled *Coloniæ Loudeninsis*, were present, together with bishops from Italy, Spain, and other bishops, all from the Western Patriarchate. This synod was called, principally, to consider the errors of the Donatists. Why the Archdeacon names this synod does not appear, unless it be to show, that the British

Church of that age was not in communion with, and admitted no spiritual authority in, the Roman Pontiffs. Now the facts, arising out of this synod, and bearing on this subject, are the following:—1st. The British bishops were in communion with the rest of the Western Church, with the bishop of Rome, to whom, with the bishops assembled at Arles, they addressed a letter stating their determinations. “Joined,” they say, “with the common band of charity, and *with the tie of unity of our holy mother the Church, we salute the most religious Pope (Papa) with deserved reverence.*” (Labbe, tom. 1, p. 1425.) Thus, the British bishops were united with the Western Churches;—not so the present Established Church of England;—they, with the body of bishops, write with reverence to the Pope, as a common father, plead *unity* with him, and acquaint him with their proceedings;—not so again the Church of Dr. Wilkins.—2d. They denounce rejecters of tradition, as “men of unbridled minds, burthensome, and pernicious;” (Ibid. lib. i.) they speak of them as men, “whom the *present* or presiding *authority of God*, (*præsens auctoritas Dei*) and tradition, and the rule of truth repudiate.” (Lib. i.) Not so Dr. Wilkins.—3d. They regret that the Pope (Sylvester) was not there in person, as, had he been, “the sentence against such men would have been more severe,” (lib. i.) and they declare of the see of Rome, “*that there the apostles daily continued to sit (apostoli quotidie sedunt)*, and their blood continually attested God’s glory.” (Lib. i.) Does this agree with Dr. Wilkins’ views, either as regards the Papal power *to aggravate by her sole voice the sentence of a synod*; or as regards the *succession of that see to an undying apostolical authority*; or the martyrdom there of the apostles SS. Peter and Paul. Remember Dr. Wilkins tells us, that *all inferences from history* are against not merely St. Peter’s having been bishop of Rome, but at Rome at all.—4th. In the same letter, they declare that they communicate their determinations to the Pope, that “they may be *made known to all, by him who holds the greater dioceses.*” (Lib. i.) Does the first of these facts imply no superiority, or centre of unity? and the second, whilst to the ordinary reader, it shows that the bishop of Rome presided not merely over *one* of the ‘greater dioceses,’ but over “*the greater dioceses,*”—to the student acquainted with Ecclesiastical History, and the divisions of the Roman empire under Constantine, these words will at once point to the Pontiff’s patriarchal power over the Western Churches, in which Britain was included.—5th. Thus much from the letter of the synod of Arles, in 314, to Pope Sylvester: and in the preamble to the canons of that synod, the bishops repeat, that “with common consent they have made known to the Pope their decrees *that all* may know what to observe for the future.” And in the first canon on the agitated question of the observance of Easter, they define, “that it be observed on one and the same

day, throughout the world, and that according to custom the Pope should direct letters to all for that object." Thus the Pope is to fix the day for keeping Easter; his appointment, all are to comply with; and this was no new duty or power, but the custom in the Church of God.—6th. There is also another canon, the nineteenth, of which I should much like to see Dr. Wilkins' explanation. I will give the original words, and a translation, or interpretation, of its meaning. "De peregrinis episcopis qui in urbem solent veneri, placuit eis locum dari ut offerant." It has seemed good, that a place, or opportunity, be afforded to the stranger bishops to offer sacrifice. What meaning will the Archdeacon give to the obnoxious word 'offerant,' which both from scriptural and ecclesiastical usage, conveys the meaning of the oblation of sacrifice. If this interpretation be correct, here is another element of difference between the bishops of the British Church and the modern Establishment. So much for the synod of Arles, which furnishes its quota of evidence to the supremacy of the sovereign Pontiff; and I thank Dr. Wilkin's for giving me an opportunity of laying it before 'his parishioners.'



