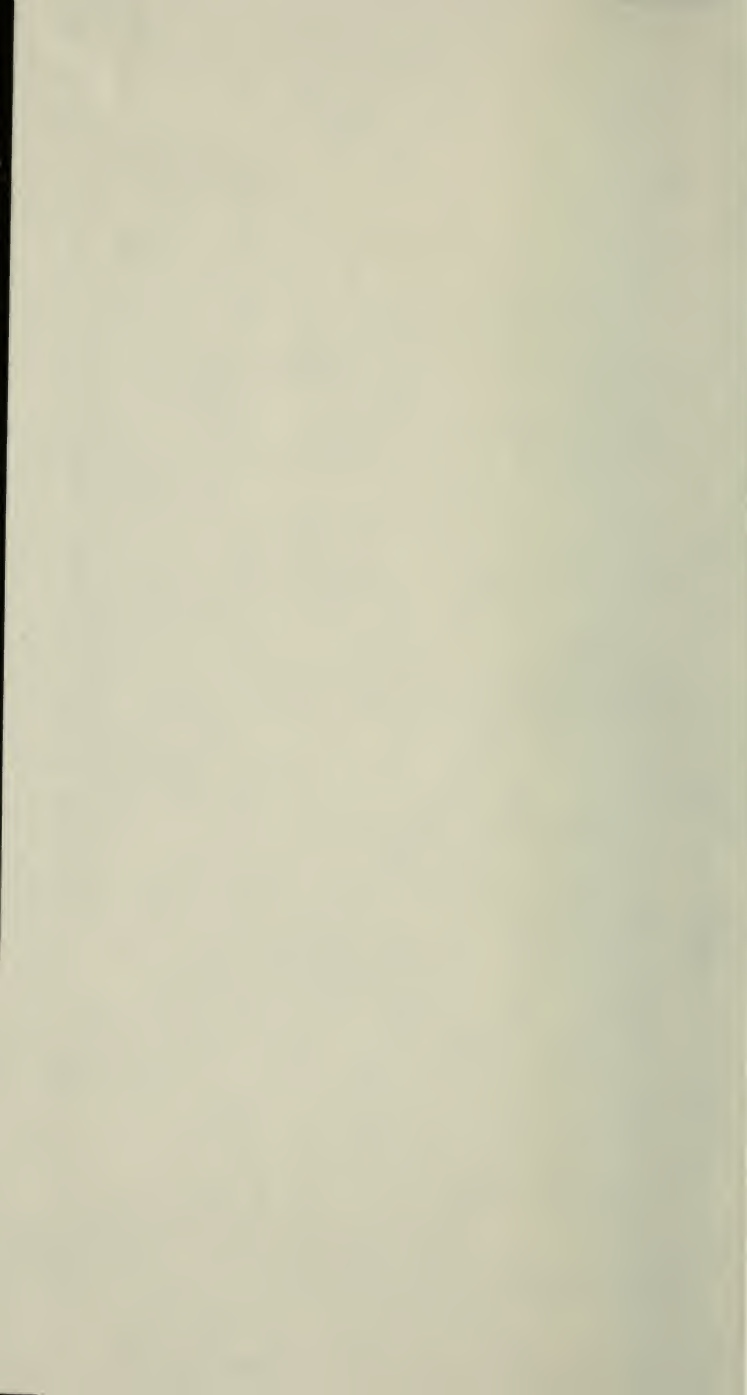


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THE REFORMATION:

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BRIEF EXPOSITION

OF SOME OF THE

ERRORS AND CORRUPTIONS

OF THE

Church of Rome.

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BY THE

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## THE REFORMATION.

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THE objection so long and so much urged against the Protestant Episcopal Church, as having retained the errors of the Romish religion, is being revived. And with mortification and shame we must acknowledge the fact, that efforts are now making, by Protestant Episcopalians even, to stigmatize the Reformation as being without principle and without use, and even a departure from the true catholicism of the church of Christ.

Emboldened by this extraordinary movement, a bishop of the Romish Church has published a "Letter, addressed to the Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church," inviting them to union with the Papists, and more than intimating that there is now but little which separates us from them; that submitting to the pope is necessary to the saving of our souls; and that, unless we do it, *numbers may break from our ranks.*

Whether we shall be more sure of saving our souls by acknowledging as our spiritual father him whom St. Paul justly styles "the man of sin," usurping authority above God himself, (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4,) some will be likely to question; but it is not the question which I now propose to examine. They who are

disposed to *break from our ranks*, will do us less injury as acknowledged Papists; and the sooner they make the change, the better for us, though I fear not the better for themselves. In regard to the Roman religion, I desire chiefly that people may know fairly what it is: if any truly prefer it, 'tis a matter between them and their God. And when, in those countries, where Popery wholly predominates, there shall be the same toleration, the same liberty given to all to teach what they believe, and to read what they will, as with us is given to them, I shall never complain of their increase. That Popery has been instrumental of *good*, of great good, (if any so please,) I have no intention to deny, but would rather bless God for all good that is done. I would, with St. Paul, rejoice that Christ, in his true character and office, is preached by those even who, in other respects, are in error, and their motives not pure. The apostle did not rejoice in what was evil, but in the good done,—that the knowledge of Christ was promulgated, and souls converted to God. There is no denomination of sincerely religious Christians who are not made instrumental of some good. But who can count the *evils* which corrupt doctrines and usurped power have produced? We are not to follow a multitude to do evil, but to embrace the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and leave the event with God.

It is not, I trust, more my duty than it is my desire, to treat all men, and especially those who are of the household of faith, with due respect. And it will not be improper to say something of the names by which Christians are distinguished. It is very common for particular sects to assume names, or to be usually distinguished by denominations, as peculiar to themselves, which might as justly be applied to others. And, for convenience, we give them those names, without acknowledging their exclusive claims. Some people are distinguished as *Deists*; but they

are far from being the only people who believe, what the word signifies, that *there is a God*. One sect of Christians are called *Friends*, and another, *United Brethren*; and yet other Christians are friends, and they unite as brethren. Some call themselves *Unitarians*, as believing in one God; though all the disciples of Christ believe that there is but one true God. We call some *Baptists*, which signifies baptizers; and, though we believe that other denominations also baptize, we consent that this one sect should be so distinguished. Those of our Church in this country are often distinguished by the word *Episcopalians*, when nine tenths, probably, of the Christians in the whole world, are also Episcopalians. The like is true of the term *catholic*, which signifies general, liberal, universal. It is somewhat arrogantly assumed by one sect or part of the universal church, as exclusively appropriate to themselves; and people are accustomed so to distinguish them. The Romish Church is usually called the *Catholic Church*; though it is but a part, and not the purest part, of the "One Catholic and Apostolic Church." And it should be always remembered that, when in the Apostle's Creed we profess to believe in "the Holy Catholic Church," we have no more regard to the Church of Rome than to the Church of England, or Russia, or Greece. We mean the whole body of those who, by baptism, have put on Christ, and are branches of him, the true Vine; and especially those who "are very members incorporate in his mystical body, — the blessed company of all faithful people." So far as the word means liberal, tolerant, or free, no church is less catholic than the Romish. There is, indeed, a manifest impropriety in applying this epithet exclusively to any one part or branch of the Christian church. The Church of England, or America, of Greece, or of Rome, cannot, of itself, be the Catholic Church, more than a part can be the whole. The Romanists, indeed, claim to be the

whole of the Church in which salvation can be obtained; and there are, perhaps, a few other denominations who make the like arrogant pretensions; but the truly catholic Christian has no such narrow views of that salvation which is by faith in Jesus Christ.

The whole system of the Romish religion most essentially depends on the Papal hierarchy, or the power claimed by the Bishop of Rome; and the word *Papists* is, of course, the most distinguishing and suitable appellation of the members of that communion. And for this reason it is that I use it, and not from any design or feelings of disrespect. There is the same reason and fitness in calling them Papists, as in calling us Prelatists or Episcopalians, and why the one should give any reasonable offence to them, more than the others to us, I cannot imagine.

The purpose of what is now proposed to be offered on the subject of the Reformation, is not any controversy with Papists or censures of Popery; but to show, (whether it be right or wrong,) what the Reformation is, — in what we profess to be reformed. What is now so confidently said, that there remains very little which divides us from the Romish Church, is, I fear, becoming the belief or view of many of our own people. It certainly is not merely fitting, but highly important, that they should be set right in this matter; that they should know in what and how many particulars the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States differs from what was generally held and practised in the church in the beginning of the sixteenth century, when the Reformation commenced.

Should it be said, that some of the particulars, which I may notice, are not held by the Romish Church, I rejoice if it be so, and have only to say, that at the time immediately preceding the Reformation, they did generally prevail, and were not, by

popes or clergy, condemned or opposed. We frequently hear it said of this point or that, though certainly taught and practised, where that religion fully prevails, is not required by their *church*. This seems to admit that such points are erroneous, and that we do well in rejecting them. They indeed who would know what popery is, should reside in the countries where it predominates, as in Italy, Portugal, and Spain. Where Protestants bear sway, as in England and in these United States, Romanism has a very different appearance. Or should it be said that the Romanists are, in some things, themselves reformed, we believe and rejoice in it; but we should not forget that this change for the better is the effect of the knowledge of the scriptures, and of the doctrines of Christ, which the Reformation has produced; and that the Romanists claim to be infallible,—to be free from all error, and that they never change. And so, too, if they give, as they very much do, plausible explanations, to obviate what seems to us objectionable, it shows that they are conscious that such explanations are necessary to reconcile their tenets to the holy scriptures, and that Protestants are wise in taking ground which needs no such explanation.

That the Church of Rome, under the pontificate of Leo X. and several of his predecessors, was, in doctrine, morals, and discipline, corrupt, very few, it is believed, who fairly consult the history of those times, will, at the present day, venture to deny. By the churches of several countries, those corruptions were, in the sixteenth century, more or less rejected; and some, we fear, in their zeal to remove the tares, have rooted up some stalks of the good wheat. It is enough, for our present purpose, to mention the Church of England, from which we emanate. As an independent National Church, she shook off the usurped authority of foreign powers, and asserted the liberty wherewith Christ has made her free.

What shall be said in the following pages may, it is hoped, help some to judge whether or not a reformation was necessary,—whether our Church has retained all that is essential to the religion of Jesus Christ, and has rejected any thing but what was a departure from the sure word of God, and was worse than useless.

And here I would briefly observe, that the claims of differing sects to be *Protestants* is no better argument against our use of the word, than their like claim to be *believers*, or *Christians*, or *disciples of Christ*, or *members of his Church*, is against our use of these appellations. The question is, Against what do we protest? If against any part of the truth of God, as revealed in his word, we err. I have, in these remarks, no controversy with the Papists, nor ill-will, I humbly trust, against any denomination of Christians. I desire to love all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth. In my attempt to show what the Protestant Episcopal Church in these United States now is, and our reasons for rejecting some things which other Christians hold, no offence to any will be intended, and it is hoped that none will be taken. “Let every one be persuaded in his own mind,” and “to his own Master let him stand or fall.” Whether this our Church has rejected too little or too much, we invite a candid inquiry, and would have every one, after due examination, act according to his true convictions, and to the knowledge and grace given him.

§ I. It has been before observed that the system of the Romish religion most essentially depends on the papal hierarchy, or the power claimed by the Bishop of Rome. Of course, it is proper that this should be numbered as the *first* among the points against which we *protest*. It was said by one writer, (if I mistake not, by an English bishop,) that it seems unreasonable that any of the Protestant Episcopal

Church should incline more to favor the Roman Church, "who are unsound in every thing but the ministry, than those Dissenters who are unsound in the ministry only." But, in fact, there is no other one point in which the Roman Church, in the view of Protestants, is more in error than in the ministry. They have set up an order of priesthood, of which true Christianity knows nothing, far above all other orders, and every thing human. The pope claims authority over all the ministers of Christ, of any grade, and indeed over all the powers of the earth, both civil and ecclesiastical. Of what his claims are, and what authority he has exercised, none who read ecclesiastical history can be ignorant. The Bishop of Arath tells us that the pope's power "*interferes with civil liberty and independence no farther than the divine law puts bounds to human power*, and says to the pride of man, Thus far shalt thou go, and here shalt thou break thy swelling waves." \* And as the pope claims to be the infallible interpreter of *the divine law*, this disclaimer amounts to no more than that the pope interferes with the civil liberty and independence of kingdoms and states no farther than what seems to him fitting. What he has in many instances done, and what power the Roman Church claims for him, is well known to all who have candidly made the inquiry. My present purpose is but to remind the reader that it is a power against which we *protest*. We deny that God has given such power to any one man; nor is there, indeed, any proof that Christ gave to any one of his ministers such authority over the others. The papal hierarchy is a power remarkably distinct from Christianity; the pope appoints the cardinals, and the cardinals elect the pope. He has various orders of clergy dispersed through the world, subject to himself, and not to the bishops of the churches. The

\* Letter, p. 12.

popes, indeed, have uniformly endeavored, and with too much success, to lessen the authority of Christian bishops, the more to exalt their own. It is remarkable, that, when they assume that office, they renounce or discard the use of their *Christian* names, given at their baptism. In this, indeed, they act consistently; as the office is no part of Christianity, it seems fitting that they should not, as popes, be distinguished by the sacred names which would indicate their connection with the church of Christ.

§ II. Another thing against which we protest is the pope's pretended power to dispose of kingdoms and states, and to excommunicate as heretics, all who deny his authority. That this he has done in a number of instances, none will deny; nor has the Church of Rome denied that he has this power; but on the contrary, has sanctioned it. To give one instance will suffice; and let it be that which to us, as a Church, is the most interesting.\* Pius V. thus introduces his bull for deposing Queen Elizabeth:

“He that reigneth on high, to whom is given all power in heaven and in earth, committed one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, *out of which there is no salvation, to one alone upon earth, namely, to Peter, the chief of the apostles, and to Peter's successor, the Bishop of Rome, to be governed in fulness of power.* Him alone he made prince over all people and all kingdoms, *to pluck, destroy, scatter, consume, plant and build,*” and so forth. In virtue of this supreme authority given him of God, he proceeds to excommunicate Elizabeth and all who adhered to her, and to deprive her of all title to the kingdom, and of all dignity and dominion.

We should constantly bear in mind that this infallible church of which he is the sovereign, with such unlimited power, never changes; it claims to

\* See, among many writers, Fuller's Church History, book ix. pp. 93, 94.



be free from all error. The pope would still do the same, if he could do it with safety, and to his own advantage. The light of the Reformation has, we know well, imposed a restraint upon the exercise of that power, but has effected no change in its arrogant claims. It is very natural, for some kings and princes, from their circumstances, and the superstitious devotion of their subjects to the papal authority, to submit to it through fear; and others find it for their interest and security, to acknowledge the pope's power, as the means of securing their own. How far it may endanger a republican government, to have within its bosom, a large body of people devotedly subject to their priests, and all those priests religiously bound and subject to a foreign power, is for the politician to consider. When two great parties shall be nearly balanced, one of them, by favoring the Papists, may easily succeed. How very much this state of things will naturally tend to strengthen and increase that denomination among us, is very evident.

§ III. We protest, also, against any power of the pope to set aside or counteract the laws of God, such as pretending to release men from the obligation of their solemn oaths, though God has commanded that our oaths shall be performed. For an instance of this we may take the following further extract from the bull deposing Queen Elizabeth: "We do, out of the fulness of our apostolic power, declare the aforesaid Elizabeth, being a heretic, and a favorer of heresies, and her adherents in the matters aforesaid, to have incurred sentence of anathema, and to be cut off from the unity of the body of Christ. And, moreover, we do declare her to be deprived of her pretended title to the kingdom aforesaid, and of all dominion, dignity, and privilege whatsoever; and also the nobility, subjects and people of the said kingdom, and all others which *have*

*in any way sworn unto her, to be forever absolved from any such oath, and all manner of duty of dominion, allegiance and obedience; as we do also, by authority of these presents, absolve them, and do deprive the same Elizabeth, of her pretended title to the kingdom, and all other things above said. And we do command and interdict all and every noblemen, subjects, people and others aforesaid, that they presume not to obey her, or her monitions, mandates and laws: and those which do the contrary, we do innodate (innodamus) with the like sentence of anathema."*

Should there hereafter, in this or any other country, be a war between Papists and Protestants, who can doubt but that the former would, by this same usurped power, be in like manner absolved from any oaths or laws, or allegiance, which would otherwise operate as a hindrance to their success? We abhor the Jesuitical doctrine that the end in view, if supposed to be good, justifies means in themselves wicked, for the gaining of that end;—that we may do evil that good may come. We might speak of unnumbered murders, massacres, assassinations, and other horrible crimes, which, by this diabolical principle, have been justified and approved. We condemn the principle, and we deny the right of any foreign power to interfere in the concerns of this country, either civil or religious. No bishop of Rome, or of Greece, or of England, has any influence or control, farther than that of Christian fellowship and love, over the Protestant Episcopal Church in these United States.

§ IV. Another thing which Protestants reject is, the power of the pope, or of any human being, to forbid a people or nation to worship God, which is usually called an interdict. I cannot give the reader a better idea of what this means, than by citing the account which the historian, David Hume, gives of

the one which Pope Innocent fulminated against John, king of England.\* “The sentence of interdict,” says the historian, “was at that time the great instrument of vengeance and policy employed by the court of Rome. It was denounced against sovereigns for the slightest offences, and made the guilt of one person involve the ruin of millions, even in their spiritual and eternal welfare. The execution of it was calculated to strike the senses in the highest degree, and to operate with irresistible force on the superstitious minds of the people. The nation was of a sudden deprived of all exterior exercise of its religion. The altars were despoiled of their ornaments; the crosses, the relics, the images, the statues of the saints, were laid on the ground; and, as if the air itself were profaned, and might pollute them by its contact, the priests carefully covered them up, even from their own approach and veneration. The use of bells entirely ceased in all the churches; the bells themselves were removed from the steeples, and laid on the ground, with the other sacred utensils. Mass was celebrated with shut doors, and none but the priests were admitted to the holy institution. The laity partook of no religious rite, except baptism to new-born infants, and the communion to the dying. The dead were not interred in the consecrated ground; they were thrown into ditches, or buried in common fields, and their obsequies were not attended with prayers or any hallowed ceremony. Marriages were celebrated in the church-yard; and, that every action in life might bear the marks of this dreadful situation, the people were prohibited the use of meat, as in Lent, or in the times of highest penance,—were debarred from all pleasures and entertainments, and even to salute each other, or as much as to shave their beards, and give any decent attention to their persons and

\* See Chapter xi.

apparel. Every circumstance carried symptoms of the deepest distress, and of the most immediate apprehension of divine vengeance and indignation."

All this extreme of suffering and distress upon a whole nation, was in punishment of John's not submitting to the will of the pope. Should any say that this is not now practised, we say that it was practised and observed by an infallible pope, and the Roman Catholic Church. If in this they have reformed, we rejoice. It is enough to add that it is another instance of the pope's assuming power over the nations of the earth, and exalting himself above the laws of God; and that Protestants view it as a great sin, and a most abominable tyranny and abuse of religion.

§ V. The manner of fasting, as practised by the Romanists, we cannot approve. It was predicted by St. Paul,\* that in times then future there would be a departure from the faith; among other abuses, commanding to *abstain from meats*, in consequence of which, fasting becomes a mere formal thing, the people obeying man rather than God. The priests command them to abstain from particular meats, or *indulge* them in eating, by their own assumed powers, as will best promote their interest and authority. Our Church appoints seasons for abstinence and prayer; but she pretends not to restrain us in that in which Christ has left us free. True religious fasting is a free act of devotion, in which, by abstaining from lawful enjoyments, and by earnest prayer, we endeavor to obtain grace to humble that pride which is natural to all, to subdue our sinful desires and worldly affections, and to become more spiritually-minded, and more ready and disposed to every charitable and good work. Except our hearts are humbled and our lives made better by it, our fasting

\* 1 Timothy iv. 1—5.

is of no use. To think that our fasting is meritorious, or to consider our abstinence in one season as an occasion or excuse for luxury, or rioting, or carnivals, at another time, is, as the apostle says, *a departing from the faith*, and giving heed to *seducing spirits*; it is an abuse of fasting.

§ VI. We also protest against absolution, as practised in the Roman Catholic Church, and the sale of indulgences. How naturally and how much these, as actually practised, encourage men in sin, and substitute the fear of priests for the fear of God, I leave the reader to judge. They are among the points in which we profess to be reformed.

§ VII. The canonization, as it is called, or apotheosis, of some people after their death, as being *saints*, in a sense in which other Christians, who have departed in the true faith of Christ, are not saints, done by the assumed power of the pope, is another thing of which we disapprove. We deny that the pope has either the power or the right to make such distinction in the characters of Christians deceased. So far as we can judge, some of his saints were not among the best of Christians; and whether they are saved, even, is doubtful. They who stoutly maintained the pope's power, and other peculiarities of the Romish Church, were the most likely to be thus honored; such, for instance, as the notorious Thomas à Becket. Mr. Southey observes, in his "Book of the Church," chapter x., and all history seems certainly to justify him in saying, that "the Greeks and Romans attributed less to their demi-gods than the Roman Catholic Church has done to those of its members thus canonized. They were invoked as mediators between God and man; individuals claimed the peculiar protection of those whose names they had received in baptism; and towns and kingdoms chose them as their tutelary saints." The

virtue which they were supposed to possess was also attributed to their images. Volumes, in proof of this, might be brought.

§ VIII. Another practice of the Roman Church against which we protest is, their forbidding the ministers of Christ to marry, according to what St. Paul also predicted of them, and contrary to what is more than merely allowed in the word of God. It is remarkable that, under the old dispensation in His Church, none but the sons of priests could be of the priesthood. Not only does the page of history, but a knowledge of human nature, teach us what must be the result of such a prohibition.

§ IX. Another point in which Protestants differ from the Church of Rome is, the pretence of working miracles. When God would make known his will to mankind, he has been pleased to give miraculous signs, to confirm our faith. These signs were shown on such occasions, and accompanied with such circumstances, as to convince all who beheld them. I shall not now enter into the inquiry when miracles ceased, or whether or not God does in every age manifest a miraculous providence. If he does so, it is, no doubt, in a manner suited to his character and wisdom, and on occasions worthy of such interference; not by the nodding of an image, or bleeding of a relic, nor to exalt our reverence for an idol, which he forbids us either to make or to worship. True miracles will, like those wrought by Moses, confound impostures, and compel opposers to say, as did the magicians of Pharaoh, "This is the finger of God."\* If evil spirits have still power of showing "lying wonders," † we may reasonably suppose that they will most readily do it, to embolden men to reverence images, and worship idols.

\* Exodus viii. 19.

† 2 Thess. ii. 9.

In nothing has the rule of Horace (*Nec deus intersit, &c.*) been more disregarded than in the thousands of pretended miracles, and false, and many of them very ridiculous, signs of this sort, which have disgraced the Christian name. Their natural tendency is to excite a distrust of all miracles, and to increase infidelity.

§ X. All Protestants are, by the Romanists, denounced as heretics, however sincere may be their faith in Christ and the doctrines of his cross, and however godly may be their lives. There are not, it is hoped, any Protestants, of whatever denomination, equally uncharitable; none, we believe, of this our Church.

§ XI. That there is no salvation out of their Church, is another of their tenets. Though some may attempt to deny this, nothing is more evident than that it has been and is generally and very much held up to view, and thousands and myriads have by this claim been frightened into their church. The Bishop of Arath has tried its effect on the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church. "The papal supremacy," he kindly tells us, "is the rock on which the whole edifice of Christianity rests in immovable firmness. This is the *essential* centre of unity, around which all the faithful *must* gather, in harmony of faith and *obedience*. The will of our heart and of our petition to God is *for you unto salvation*; and we count as dross every worldly advantage, to gain to *the Catholic Church of Christ your souls*, and the *members* whose *eternal destinies* are bound up with yours."\* And what does this mean, if not that *the salvation of our souls*, and of all the *members* of our churches, depends on our acknowledging the *papal supremacy*, and that now we

\* Letter, p. 14.

do not belong to *the Church of Christ*? “Who art thou, that judgest another man’s servant?”

§ XII. This uncharitable spirit wars with the dead, and extends beyond the grave. Protestants are not allowed to rest in their burying-grounds. The mention of this will call to the reader’s recollection the pathetic complaint of the poet Young, whose daughter-in-law was thus, in Lyons, France, denied Christian burial:

—“On a foreign shore, where strangers wept, —  
 Strangers to thee, and, more surprising still,  
 Strangers to kindness, wept. Their eyes let fall  
 In human tears! strange tears! that trickled down  
 From marble hearts! obdurate tenderness!  
 A tenderness that called them more severe.  
 In spite of nature’s soft persuasion steeled;  
 While nature melted, superstition raved!  
*That* mourned the dead, and *this denied a grave.*  
 Their sighs incensed; sighs foreign to the will!  
 Their will the tiger sucked; outraged the storm;  
 For, O! the cursed ungodliness of zeal!  
 While sinful flesh relented, spirit nursed.  
 In blind infallibility’s embrace,  
 The sainted spirit petrified the breast,  
 Denied the charity of dust to spread  
 O’er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.”

We of the Protestant Episcopal Church do not presume to say that they are not of Christ’s church, though we think them, in many things, erroneous; and no Protestants, it is hoped, would deny them Christian burial, or be unwilling to sleep with them in the grave. In this world we would gladly unite with them, so far as is consistent with God’s revealed word.

§ XIII. Another and very important point in which we profess to be, and trust that we truly are, reformed, is, in the authority and use of tradition. The rule of faith, according to the Roman Church, is not merely the written word of God, but what



they call the whole word of God, both written and unwritten; in other words, Scripture and Tradition, and these propounded and explained by the Catholic Church, meaning exclusively their own as the only catholic church. The doctrine of our Church is, that "holy scripture containeth all things necessary; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." On this point, our Church is very decided and express. Every one, and of every grade, who is ordained to her ministry, is required, with his own hand, to sign a declaration of his belief in this doctrine of the sufficiency of the scriptures. And not only this; but when he is ordained with full authority "to preach the word of God," he solemnly declares his "persuasion that the holy scriptures contain all doctrine necessary for eternal salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ;" and also his "determination out of the said scriptures to instruct the people committed to his charge, and to teach nothing as necessary to salvation but that which he shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the scripture."

Much has been recently written and published upon this subject, to which the reader, if he is in doubt, is referred. We must have a standard to resort to; but as no one can be more doubtful or contradictory than tradition, to remedy this, the Romish Church resorts to her infallibility. In several things, what is called tradition runs counter to the scriptures, and *makes void the word of God*. The one or the other must be our authoritative guide: we must test scripture by tradition, or tradition by scripture. Our Church, and I believe all Protestants, have most decidedly taken the latter ground. Some have said that the Reformation is without principle; if this be not principle, and of the highest importance, I have yet to learn what is.

Some have urged, as an argument for the authority of tradition, that the apostles preached without scriptures. Any force in this argument I cannot perceive. Suppose this to be the fact,—that they preached without scriptures; the will of God respecting man's salvation was fully revealed to them; by the Holy Ghost they were inspired with the knowledge of all truth. The people had need only to know what they taught; which they who heard them preach did of course know. What was necessary for others and for all future times was, that, before their decease, they should leave a written record of the life and ministry of Christ, the fulfilment of the prophets in him, the doctrines which by his authority they taught, and whatever was wanting to complete the volume of God's revealed word. And this they faithfully and in due time did, setting to it their seal, and pronouncing a heavy denunciation upon those who shall *add to*, or *take from* the words of that book.

Can any one reasonably doubt whether or not the apostles wrote in their Epistles the same doctrines and other truths which they taught by their words? Indeed, we have recorded a number of their discourses and other acts, and know, of course, what doctrines they preached, and how they exercised their ministry.

But is it a fact, that the apostles preached without scriptures? Do we learn this from their recorded discourses? Take the first sermon which they preached, after being endued with power from on high, and by which three thousand were converted and added to the church. Was there no text, no appeal to the *written* word of God? Christ himself preached the scriptures in proof of his own character and authority; and he commanded his hearers to search the scriptures to obtain a knowledge of their Saviour, and of the doctrines of eternal life. The hearts of two of his disciples *burnt within them*, when,

“beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them, *in all the scriptures*, the things concerning himself.” See, also, Luke xxiv. 44—48. And see all the discourses of the apostles. And see particularly what St. Paul said to King Agrippa, Acts xxvi. 22, 23: “Having, therefore, obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing unto small and great, *saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come.*” The apostles preached the scriptures which were, by inspiration of God, written for their learning; and, by the same inspiration, they added to the written word of God what was wanting to give us a full knowledge of the gospel, and of what we must believe and do to obtain the salvation which is in Jesus Christ.

There is in fallen man a natural disposition to depart from the word of God, and follow, in preference, the *commandments of men*. This was very much the fault of God’s people under the old dispensation: they made void the law of God by their tradition; for which the Saviour severely reproveth them. See Matt. xv. 1—9. Far from giving any sanction to their tradition, he condemns it, and he appeals to scripture: “What is *written?* how *readest* thou?” Under the gospel dispensation, men are of like passions as they were under the Jewish; and we might reasonably fear and expect that such tares would still be sown,—that on the true foundation of apostles and prophets, of which Jesus Christ is the chief corner-stone, “wood, hay, and stubble” would be built,—that Christians, also, would “transgress the commandments of God by their tradition,” which, to our great sorrow and regret, we find so to be. At the time of the Reformation, Christians had in many things not only departed from the unerring standard of God’s word, but *had made it void*,—had received doctrines and adopted practices contrary to the holy scriptures, as (should the Lord permit their

continuance) may hereafter be further seen in these remarks.

Upon *oral* tradition there can be but little dependence. Almost all of our knowledge of times past is from the written pages of history: what concerns the Church is called Ecclesiastical History. From this we learn what have been the state and the doctrines and practice of the Church, from its earliest date to the present time. From history, we have full and satisfactory proof that we now have those scriptures which were given by inspiration of God. There is, from history, satisfactory evidence that we have the writings of uninspired men, of nearly the same age; of Virgil, for instance, and Horace, and Cæsar. The Mahometans have no reason to doubt of their still possessing the genuine writings of their prophet; and still better historical evidence have we of the authenticity of our Bible, without any resort to the *divine authority* of tradition, or to any infallibility of the Church.

It is reasonable to suppose, and, as we search for the truth, to expect, that, in the earliest ages, "the faith once delivered to the saints" would be the most truly regarded; and this does history confirm. Even in the apostles' days, schisms and heresies disturbed the church, and corruptions began to appear. *The spirit of antichrist was even then already in the world.\** In the church in Corinth were four denominations, though all of them, we doubt not, were of the one Catholic and Apostolic Church. The Christians in Galatia soon began to be removed from the gospel which Paul preached to them. And some of the seven churches of Asia, spoken of in the second and third chapters of Revelation, were much corrupted. But still they were all churches of Christ, and by Christ himself so acknowledged.

In the second century, when the first apostles

\* 1 John iv. 3.

were all removed from the Church on the earth, corruptions began slowly, and, at first, few in number, to take root in the Church. In the third and following ages, they increased more and more, until the times of the Reformation. Church history is very useful in its teaching at what times, and under what circumstances, trials, and temptations, Christians departed from the standard of the holy scriptures, and, like as the Jews had done before them, made void the law of God by their traditions. The Fathers, as we call them, were competent and credible witnesses of the facts, of which they had knowledge, and the transactions of the times in which they lived. Since the second century, we may well believe that the doctrines of Christ have in no age been better understood, and the holy scriptures more carefully, critically, and prayerfully examined, than by many Christians at the present time. Of the erroneous practices which early crept into the Church, we may hereafter have occasion to speak. Some of them have since been, if I mistake not, by most, perhaps by all, Christians discarded: such as, baptizing people naked; giving the Lord's supper to infants; forbidding Christians to kneel in prayer during a large part of the year; not allowing unbaptized persons to be present at public prayers; and delaying baptism till near the time of death.

The ancient writers in the Church should be examined as witnesses of facts, not as teachers of doctrine. As one writer observes, "On questions of interpretation, or sacred philology, they are not of much weight; for it is well known that either their attainments in biblical literature were small, or that their principles of philology were, to a great extent, fluctuating and unsound." Ceremonies which the Fathers have introduced, if useful, may, because useful, be continued; but we cannot be too cautious not to let their supposed *authority* sanction the practice of what is at variance with the scriptures. In

deed, nothing good should be rejected *because* it has, by other denominations, whether Papist or Protestant, been invented or in use; and, on the other hand, nothing superstitious or at variance with God's word may, for its *antiquity*, be safely followed. It is somewhat amusing to see, in some late publications, reasons urged, with apparent seriousness, to show that the Protestant Episcopal Church has a right to claim or adopt prayers long used by the Roman Church; as if it could be a matter of doubt whether any church or individual may or may not adopt or use any prayers, new or old, which are suitable and proper.

Some have referred to the Apostle's Creed, as an evidence of the great use of tradition. And what do we learn from that Creed, which we do not much better learn from the holy scriptures? except it be the *descent into hell*, which was not added to the Creed till several centuries after the apostolic age. Several of the most important doctrines of Christianity are not found in that Creed; and a great part of the Twelve Articles which it does contain cannot be rightly and fully understood without resort to the written word of God. On this subject, should the Lord permit, something more may hereafter be said.

And what is there essential to Christianity, taught us by tradition, which we do not find in the word of God? Is it Episcopacy? or Confirmation? or the Covenant and Membership of Infants in the Church? or observing the "first day of the week," as "the Lord's day?" or using written forms in social worship? or the sacraments ordained by Christ? The best and most satisfactory proofs of all these we find in the scriptures, and were they not there found more less clearly recorded, we should not insist upon them as an essential part of Christianity. We rejoice to find these things confirmed by the practice of the early Christians, but we receive them on the authority of the sure word of God.

§ XIV. The right of *private judgment* in religion, in contradistinction to the supposed authority of the church to decide for all its members what they must believe and do to be saved, is among the most important points wherein we differ from the Church of Rome. This authority some attempt to prove from the words of our Saviour: "The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat; all, therefore, which they bid you observe, that observe and do." The word of God will best explain itself. Much injury is done to the cause of truth, by *wresting* particular passages from their true sense, or by ascribing to them meaning which was not intended. In these words, our Saviour taught the people to reverence those who were authorized to be their rulers and to make laws for the government of the people. He does not tell them to *believe* all that the Scribes and Pharisees should teach as doctrine; but to *do* and *observe* what they should prescribe as rules of life. Those same Scribes and Pharisees had made void the law of God by their traditions and by their erroneous teaching. In this same chapter (Matt. xxiii.) and same discourse, our Lord severely reproves them for having taught doctrines contrary to God's word. (See verses 16—22.) Can any one believe that our Lord intended that the people should receive their false doctrine respecting the solemnity and obligation of oaths? No; he corrects their doctrine, and shows what should be received. He calls them *blind guides*; and he elsewhere says that they who followed those "blind leaders of the blind" would *fall*. And how did the apostles understand our Saviour? Did they, in regard to doctrine, *observe and do* as those blind leaders bid them? On the contrary, when the Scribes and Pharisees sat in council, which was most truly *Moses' seat*, and "commanded the apostles not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus," the apostles told them boldly that they should continue thus to preach, and that it was their duty to

*obey God rather than man.* The true doctrine has our Church embodied in her XXth Article: “. . . . . It is not lawful for the Church to ordain any thing that is contrary to God’s word written; neither may it so expound one place of scripture that it be repugnant to another.”

In examining this question, resort is sometimes had to the infallibility of the Church; which may hereafter require some consideration. And supposing that somewhere there is such infallibility, how shall a man find it, but by *searching for himself*? We are to *search for the old ways*; and who is to *search*, if not he who desires to find them? We will suppose that a man is inquiring, (and every man should inquire,) What is truth? What is the will of God respecting man here on the earth? Where shall wisdom be found? What must I do to obtain immortal life? He looks around and sees various teachers crying, “Lo here and lo there,” and doctrines contradictory prevailing throughout the world. How shall he decide on which to rely as sound and safe? How, but by exercising the reason, and by using the means of knowledge which he has or may have? Or shall he rather rely upon his teachers, and adhere, without examination, to the system in which he has been educated, or adopt as certainly true the religion of those among whom he lives? Shall he continue a Pagan or a Jew, a Mahometan or a Christian, without inquiring for himself which is according to the truth of God? Or suppose that there is some one in this our country, who is awakened to righteousness—who believes in Christ, and sincerely desires to be a member of his church; must he remain a member of the society or sect or denomination among whom he finds himself? or should he not rather search the scriptures and the history of the church in ages past, that he may be satisfied which denomination has the best claim to orthodoxy? whether the Greek, which is the



oldest, or the Roman, which is most numerous, or the Protestant, which is the most scriptural and apostolic? And suppose even that he has made this decision — he is a fixed and satisfied member of a church; must he make no further inquiry? must he not search for himself, but receive whatever is taught by his church, or its ministers, as certainly true? How was it in the first century? We read of the Bereans, who heard the words of life from inspired teachers, that, after they had *readily received the word*, “they searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” And for doing this they are highly commended. How different from this is the practice of that church which takes the scriptures from the people, not allowing them to search whether the things taught them are agreeable to the word of God! What Christ said to some, he says to us all: “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.” And how shall any one become wise unto salvation, if he do not search the scriptures? If a man would know what is the character of his Saviour — what he has done to redeem mankind — what are the doctrines of his cross — who are truly his ministers — and where his church may be found, — the man must inquire for himself. How else can he give to every one who asketh a reason of the hope that is in him? If tradition were to decide, to know where and what tradition is would require very careful investigation. If the church is to decide, every denomination of Christians claim to be truly the church, and he must remain where he is, or search for a better way. God’s word requires him to “try the spirits, whether they are of God;” to “prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.”

It is objected to the right of private judgment, that divisions will be the consequence, and that Protestants are divided. This must be ascribed to the frailty or corruption of mankind. This evil com-

menced, as we have seen, in the apostles' days ; and in the two centuries following, there were more sects and heresies, in proportion to the numbers of Christians, and in their doctrines and creeds more extravagant, abominable, and absurd, than what exists at the present day. The ancient churches now existing differ one from another ; as the Greek, the Roman, the Syrian, the Armenian, Novatian, Nestorian, &c. ; but we trust, though more or less in error, they are all of the one Catholic Church, built on the foundation of apostles and prophets, having Jesus Christ, the Son of God and only Saviour of men, for its chief corner-stone. The Romish Church within herself has been much divided. She has had her Scotists and Thomists, her Jansenists and Jesuits — her rival popes — her disputes about the immaculate conception ; one part of the church thundering decrees against another. Even where her infallibility resides, and where it is to be found, she cannot herself decide. And how, we should also inquire, has that church maintained the degree of union which it does preserve ? How, but by its intolerance and *carnal weapons* ? Let history say how Protestantism was suppressed in France and the Netherlands, in Italy and Spain. “When the strong man armed thus keeps his palace, his goods are in peace.” It is a sure way to make all of one profession, to kill those who dissent from it. And let it also be considered with what watchful care, and a spirit how intolerant, she debars her members of the means of knowledge, not permitting them to read, and search, and inquire for themselves what the scriptures teach, or Protestants truly believe. While they read and hear on one side only, prejudice and bigotry must usurp the place of charity and truth. And suppose that, as the Bishop of Arath proposes, Protestants should unite with Rome ; would the church then be united ? Will the other ancient churches above named, who are very numerous, and the church in

Russia, come into the same union, and submit also to the "papal supremacy?" If we think it our duty to conform in all things with some ancient church, why not with the Greek, which is much less corrupt? The truth is, that to unite with any church in what is opposed to God's word, is itself a sin, and what nothing can justify. Schism is a great evil, and should be conscientiously avoided. But heresy, or departing from the truth of God, is worse. Nothing will more truly unite men in religion, than the renovation of their hearts by the grace of God, and a sound and holy faith in Jesus Christ. This spirit of unity may be possessed by those who do not externally commune together in this world. We had better, indeed, be divided into many denominations, than to unite in what is false and unscriptural. The many corruptions which have crept into the church are of themselves a good proof of the vast importance of our faithfully exercising the right of private judgment, that we may try these spirits.

It may be well here to repeat what has been so often repeated, — that *reforming* a church is not *making* a church. Rejecting what is false, makes no change in what is true. A church may be both corrupt and divided, as was the church of Corinth, and yet continue to be a church. There was a time when God's church in Israel was so very corrupt, that the prophet Elijah thought that he was the only one who did not unite with the others in *bowing to idols*; but he determined, though, as he thought, alone, to reject what was false, and hold fast to what was true. Happily, he was not alone; there were, at that very time, *seven thousand* Protestants. So, too, had Joshua, before him, *protested* against the idolatries of God's chosen people, and solemnly declared that, though all the others worshipped idols, he and his house would serve none but the true God. And so should Christians still refuse to bow to an image, and to worship a piece of bread,

though in consequence they must, as thousands have done, suffer martyrdom.

§ XV. Denying the scriptures to the people is also by Protestants condemned. It is directly contrary to the command of Christ, who bids us "search the scriptures," that we may have a saving faith in him our Saviour. In his discourses, he evidently supposes that his hearers had read the scriptures, as no doubt they had; and he appeals to them accordingly, as did also his apostles. "What saith the scriptures?" is a question which they put to the people. St. Paul tells the Romans, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope." And to Timothy he writes, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." And he speaks of it as a great blessing to Timothy, that "from a child he had known those holy scriptures which were able to make him wise unto salvation."\* We have already seen the high commendation bestowed upon the Bereans, who, when they had inspired apostles for their teachers, still *searched the scriptures daily* for themselves, that they might know the certainty of those things wherein they had been instructed. And we are informed, too, of the happy effects of this their "noble" conduct: "*Therefore, many of them believed.*" *Through the comfort of the scriptures, they had hope.* No other book on earth has such comfort to give. What claim have they to freedom or independence, who dare not read this word of God but by the permission of a priest?

The policy of this prohibition is evident. If

people search the scriptures, they will be likely to see wherein many have departed from the word of God. From the same policy, other books are forbidden. The Papists will not allow their people to be present at Protestant worship,—not even at family prayers. This is among the means by which their boasted unity is maintained. To keep them in ignorance, is the surest way to preserve implicit faith and blind subjection.

§ XVI. The claim of the Romish Church to Infallibility we view as very false and presumptuous. That it is false, her many errors, and departure in so many things from the word of God, abundantly prove. A knowledge, indeed, of our fallen nature, might prepare us to expect that the church which has erred the most, should most confidently claim to be free from error. Of the merits of this claim, I leave them to judge who read her history. Councils, even of the ancient church, consisted of individual, fallible men, subject to err; and that they sometimes did err, “even in things pertaining unto God,” is too evident in their clashing, contradictory decrees. “Wherefore,” as our Church said in her XXIst Article, “things ordained by them as necessary to salvation, have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they are taken out of the holy scriptures.” It is enough for my present purpose to add, that the Protestant Episcopal Church makes no such claim of freedom from error, and she protests against such claim in any other church.

§ XVII. On the doctrine of Human Merit we differ essentially from the Church of Rome. She holds that men may merit salvation by their good works. We believe that our works, wrought through faith in Christ, and in obedience to God’s command, are pleasing to him, and are an evidence of our faith

and sanctification, and they strengthen our hope of being accepted in the Beloved, and blest in heaven; but we ascribe no merit to man which entitles him to claim salvation as his right or due: nor, indeed, dare we say of ourselves, or of the best saint on earth, that he is so sanctified as to live wholly without sin. The best Christians come short of what God's perfect law requires, and daily have need of repentance. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." We boast of no perfection, and we see no merits but in Jesus Christ. "By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast."\*

§ XVIII. Connected with their doctrine of Human Merit is that of Supererogation; or that man can do, and that the saints have done, more good works than what is necessary to their own salvation. These meritorious works they suppose to be collected into one vast treasury, of which the pope claims to have the key, and the power of dispensing it to the good and salvation of whom he pleases. That it may pass the more current, they add to this treasury the merits of Jesus Christ, which may seem to render it inexhaustible. But that the saints have added any thing to it, or have merits sufficient to save themselves, or that the pope has authority, more than any other minister of Christ, to say who may or may not partake of Christ's merits, we utterly deny.

The most of these points I mention briefly, and would that the reader should bear it still in memory, that my object is not to refute what we deem to be the errors of Popery; in that case, there would be very much to be said; but to show, what probably at the present day is not generally known nor well

considered, how many and how important are the particulars against which we protest, with some few of the reasons of the hope that is in us. As I am informed, from high authority, that there are some who are likely soon to *break from our ranks*, except we seasonably or soon *submit to the papal supremacy*, I wish that they may do it with their eyes open, and that others may judge whether or not it will be wise to follow them.

§ XIX. From the little said under the two last heads, the reader will be prepared to hear, and will scarce need to be reminded, that, on the great and very essential doctrine of Justification, the Protestant Episcopal Church differs materially from the Church of Rome. But, considering that another of the bishops of our Church has recently published an able and full vindication of our doctrine on this momentous subject, it will suffice here to mention it as among the doctrines in which we profess to be reformed.

§ XX. The next that I would mention is their doctrine of Purgatory, which is among the most profitable, (in a pecuniary view,) of the tenets of the Romish Church. The money which it has brought and still brings into the coffers of that church is incalculable.

It is my earnest desire not to misrepresent the tenets of any denomination of Christians, and not to say any thing to increase the differing opinions by which the members of the "One Catholic and Apostolic Church" are unhappily in this world divided; but on the contrary, would willingly make any concessions, which the truth of God will admit, to promote unity among the disciples of Christ. The doctrine of Purgatory, as held by the Romanists, is, in itself, were it true, of such immense importance to mankind, and in its practical results, as

by them used, of such interest and deep concern, that evidently it ought not to be admitted, without clear, direct, and certain proof by revelation from God. But so obscure and unsatisfactory are the proofs alleged in support of this doctrine, that its advocates are very cautious in explaining it, and I desire to be equally cautious in stating what it is that they hold and teach. It is, so far as I can understand what they teach on the subject, a place where the just, or they who depart in the grace of God, expiate those venial sins which do not merit eternal punishment; that the redemption of Christ is from eternal punishment only; that the greater part of good Christians remain in that place of torment a time, how long is not decided, and suffer torments similar, while they continue, to those which the damned endure. The uncertainty of the time renders the doctrine more profitable to the priests; for they hold, further, that the treasury of the good works which the saints have done, beyond what was necessary to save themselves, is available for the benefit of souls in purgatory, and may be applied to shorten those sufferings, under the direction and control of popes and priests, and according to the money given to purchase prayers and masses for the dead. The heathen, before the advent of Christ, believed in a state similar to purgatory, and when converted to Christianity it is more than probable that they were instrumental in introducing the belief of it among Christians. Some early Christian writers use obscure expressions respecting an intermediate state, of souls departed, but a state very different from the popish purgatory, of which Protestants deny that there is any good proof. We deny also that there is any good authority for their distinction between sins mortal and venial. We believe that the penitent believer in Christ may fully trust in his one sacrifice for sin, and depart this life in peace with God. For the use, or rather the very great



abuse, which has been and still is made of this doctrine, the reader is referred to the history of the church during the last five hundred years.

Let us suppose, what is no uncommon case, that a poor woman loses a brother or a husband; if by any means she can get, say a dollar, and give it to a priest, it relieves her relation from purgatory for a time, say a month; after which the money must again be given, or the sufferings will be continued. God forbid that I should treat or think of such a subject with any lightness. But it is evidently a matter for serious inquiry, whether the relief in such case obtained is from the former or from the latter part of the sufferings. Whether the soul is taken out of purgatory for one month, and afterwards, if no money is given, is returned back to the place of torment; or whether it shortens the whole period one month,—reduces, say one thousand months of suffering to nine hundred and ninety-nine. There are many insuperable difficulties in this doctrine besides its want of proof. They are wisest and safest, who, while living, look for mercy and justification through him who is their only “Advocate with the Father;” and place no trust in masses, or in the piety of friends after their decease.

§ XXI. The doctrine of what is called Transubstantiation is, of itself, an insuperable barrier to the communion of Protestants with the Church of Rome. For that church maintains that the bread and wine used in the sacrament of the Lord’s supper are, by the consecration of their priest, changed and converted into the real body and blood of Christ; so entirely changed, that, notwithstanding what all our senses declare to the contrary, nothing of the substance of the bread or wine remains! and not into Christ’s body and blood only, but (what seems almost blasphemy to utter) into his human soul and his divinity! that merely by speaking these few

words, "This is my body," a piece of bread is changed to the true and eternal God, and as such is to be worshipped! All who do not believe this, that church anathematizes and declares to be accursed; and for the denying of it, myriads of faithful, pious Christians have suffered martyrdom, and rivers of righteous blood have been shed upon the earth. A greater insult to common sense and abuse of the credulity of mankind than this cannot be imagined.

That these words of our Saviour, in the institution of the sacrament, do not necessarily mean such a change, or any change of the substance of the bread and wine, is evident from the like use of language in many other parts of the scriptures: as when in Daniel it is said, "The ten horns *are* ten kings;" that is, they represent or signify ten kings. So in our Lord's parable of the tares he says, "The good seed *are* the children of the kingdom." St. Paul says, "They drank of that rock which followed them; and that rock *was* Christ;" it typified or symbolized Christ. And in the Revelation, "The seven stars *are* the angels of the seven churches: the seven candlesticks *are* the seven churches." A rock is not literally Christ, nor is a horn a king, nor a candlestick a church; but they fitly represent those things, as does also the broken bread, Christ's mangled body,—and wine, his blood. So is Christ said to be "the *Lamb* of God," as having been symbolized in the lamb slain for the Passover; but he is not a lamb, except in a figurative or spiritual sense.

And who does not know that this manner of speaking, naming a thing as being what it represents, is among all people common? Suppose that several persons are viewing a picture of the holy family, and one of them, pointing with his finger, should say, "That *is* Joseph, and that *is* Mary, and that *is* the child Jesus;" would they not all understand him to mean that those persons were *repre-*

*sented* in the picture? would not that manner of expression be wholly unexceptionable? would any one of a thousand be so absurd as to understand him as saying that what they saw was not paint and canvass, but two living parents and their child? And can we with any more reason believe that, when Christ said, "This is my body," he meant to tell the disciples that he held his own body in his hand? All our senses assure us that the bread, after consecration, still remains what it was before, without any change of its substance. That manner of expression proves no such change, because, with the utmost fairness and reason, it may be understood as meaning that the bread represents his body, and the cup (or wine in the cup) his blood. Indeed, if the words must be taken literally, the *cup* (not the wine) is changed into blood.

Hear, also, what St. Paul saith: "As often as ye eat this *bread* [not body] and drink this *cup*, [not blood,] ye do show [or commemorate] the Lord's death." And, again, "We are all partakers of that one *bread*." This doctrine, that man can so easily make him who is the Maker of all things, and without whom was nothing made, however it may exalt the priesthood, is by Protestants viewed as awfully profane and idolatrous. What is held by our Church is in her standards clearly taught.

Transubstantiation has, by way of proof, been compared with our Lord's miracle of changing water to wine. And are they similar? After the change, did it still, to the senses of men, appear as water? On the contrary, it appeared to the taste and other senses as wine, and the best of wine. The ruler of the feast, having *tasted* it, complimented the bridegroom for its excellence.

And supposing that Christ's words were to be understood in their most literal sense; what are his words? "This is my *body*." He does not say, "This is my *soul*, or *spirit*, or *divinity*;" nor has any

man the *shadow* of authority for saying that such was his meaning. If it be said, (and some do say) that these cannot be separated, then we virtually say, with some ancient heretics, that Christ did not die but in appearance only. For what is the death of man, if not the *separation* of his soul and spirit from the body? But we are told, of a certainty, that he did die; and, indeed, his death is what we commemorate in that sacrament. His words are, "This is my body, which is *given* for you;"\* "*. . . .* my body, which is *broken* for you:"† "given" and "broken" in his death, which was his sacrifice for our sins. And he adds, "Do this [eat this bread] in *remembrance* of me." The ordinance is commemorative,—that we may have in continual remembrance this inestimable benefit,—that we may never forget that, whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us—that he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And if with a true faith we *discern his body*, the sacramental benefits of that "one sacrifice for sin" will be sanctified, or spiritually applied, to the benefit of our souls. It also becomes an assurance to us that we are truly members incorporate in the mystical body of that church which is the blessed company of all faithful people. Our Church truly says that "the body and blood of Christ are spiritually taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper." All the benefits of our Lord's body, *given* and *broken* for our sins, which we need or can receive, are mercifully accounted to us in and by this obedience of faith thus working by love, and keeping the commandments of God. Our Church teaches that, by *duly receiving these holy mysteries*, the faithful soul *is strengthened and refreshed by the body and blood of Christ*; and has given all the explanation of this mystery which we need; and the many attempts to explain it farther do but "darken counsel by words without *knowledge*."

\* Luke xxii. 19.

† 1 Cor. xi. 24.

And the like may we say of the wine in the eucharist. Christ says, "This is my blood, which is *shed* for you"—which is *shed* for many. We commemorate that blood only which was "shed"—which fell from his body to the ground. And what else is meant by shedding blood? And does any one believe that Christ's blood, after falling to the ground and mingling with earth, returned back into his veins and arteries, and that the same blood is now in his glorified body? Christ took our nature, and was made perfect man, of the seed of Abraham. His body and blood were human, like ours. "But *flesh* and *blood* cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth *corruption* inherit incorruption." When Christ rose from the dead, and till his ascension, he appeared to men in the same body which he had offered in sacrifice; otherwise, there would not have been the necessary evidence of his resurrection, nor would he have "become the first fruits of them who sleep" in the grave. But are we to suppose that he now has such flesh and blood as he had while on earth, continually circulating and changing, and requiring food and breath to support life? The scriptures teach that he has now a spiritual and glorified body, and that our bodies, in the resurrection, shall also be changed. While on earth, his body was like unto ours; after death, ours shall be like unto his. "This corruptible shall put on incorruption"—"shall be made like unto his own glorious body."\*

If, then, the bread were actually changed into the body given and broken and the blood shed in his death, they would not be God, nor lawful objects of religious worship. If we had now a lock of our Saviour's hair, it would be idolatrous to worship it; we are forbidden to worship any created being or thing: "God only shalt thou serve." In the sacrament we do not commemorate that "glorified body"

\* 1 Cor. xv. 20, 35—54.

of Christ which now (probably without human "flesh and blood") sits at the right hand of God, united in one Person with his divinity; but that body which suffered the excruciating agonies of death—which was mangled with nails, and pierced with a spear, and afterwards laid lifeless in the tomb.

We may observe, further, that Christ's body cannot see corruption; but the sacramental bread does and soon see corruption. And we may well ask those who maintain the doctrine of Transubstantiation, how long after it is eaten does what seems to be bread remain the body of Christ? and in what stage of digestion does it cease to be so? And when eaten by dogs, or mice, or worms, do *they* eat Christ's material body?

So we may truly say that the wine, after consecration, contains alcohol, and will intoxicate those who drink much of it. Does not, then, the substance of the wine remain? Or will they profanely say that it is the blood of Christ which intoxicates the brain, causes drunkenness, and makes men worse than brutes?

We may add, that Christ's sacrifice was one, perfect and complete, not needing to be repeated; but the Papists hold that it is offered many times. His sacrifice, too, was for all mankind; they make it an offering for one only, or for a few individuals.

This section alone would be sufficient to show the necessity of the Reformation.

§ XXII. In the last section was mentioned our protest against the doctrine of the Papists respecting the nature of the sacrament called the Lord's supper: in the present, I would say something of their manner of administering, or rather of not administering it; of their giving the bread only to the people, and reserving the wine for the priests. In consecrating the bread, they depart, as if designedly, from the example of Christ, who took the bread and *brake*

it. This is a very significant act, and essential to a right consecration of the bread. Our Church so deems it, and accordingly directs the minister, while saying the words, to *brake the bread*. This the Papists do not; but give a small, *unbroken* cake or wafer to each communicant. Of course, the sacrament does not, to them, signify (to use St. Paul's words) that they are "all partakers of that *one bread*," or one loaf; each of them has a loaf or cake to himself.

But one of their grossest and seemingly wilful departures from the institution of Christ is, giving but one half of what he has commanded to be given; that is, the bread only. "Drink ye ALL of this," is as essential to the institution as the words, "this is my blood." Christ has never said that the bread is his blood, nor that, in any way or sense, it signifies or symbolizes his blood. Of course, giving the bread without the wine is no more a sacrament of Christ, than would be giving the wine without the bread; or would be baptizing in the name of the Father, omitting the names of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. St. Paul's words, twice used, "Eat this bread and *drink this cup*,"\* show (if any one can doubt of it) that the apostles gave both. It would have been strange indeed, had they, the inspired teachers of divine truth, thus mutilated a holy ordinance of their divine Master. It is difficult to imagine why the pope should, in this and other instances, so needlessly and boldly sanction direct departures from God's word, except (to use scriptural language) these things are done that the scriptures should be fulfilled, spoken by the apostle St. Paul of "that man of sin, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." †

\* 1 Cor. xi. 26, 27.

† 2 Thess. iv. 3, 4.

It may be of use and some satisfaction to the reader to make here an extract from "A Discourse on the Nature and Design of the Eucharist, or Sacrament of the Lord's Supper," by the Rev. Dr. Adam Clarke, author of the Commentary on the Holy Bible, pp. 40, etc. New York edition.

"Perhaps," he says, "to many of my readers, it may appear utterly improbable, that in the present *enlightened age*, as it is called, any people can be found who seriously and conscientiously believe the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Lest I should fall under the charge of misrepresentation, I shall here transcribe the eighth lesson of the '*Catechism for the use of all the Churches in the French Empire*,' published in 1806, by the authority of the emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte, with the *bull of the pope*, and the *mandamus of the Archbishop of Paris*:"

'Q. What is the sacrament of the eucharist?

'A. The eucharist is a sacrament which contains *really and substantially* the *body, blood, soul, and divinity*, of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the forms or appearance of bread and wine.

'Q. What is at first put on the altar and in the chalice? is it not bread and wine?

'A. Yes; and it continues to be bread and wine *till the priest pronounces the words of consecration*.

'Q. What influence have these words?

'A. The *bread is changed into the body*, and the *wine into the blood*, of our Lord.

'Q. Does nothing of the bread and wine *remain*?

'A. Nothing of them remains *except the forms*.

'Q. What do you call the *forms* of bread and wine?

'A. That which appears to our senses,—the *color, figure, and taste*.

'Q. Is there nothing under the *form of bread*, except the *body* of our Lord?

'A. Besides his body, there is his *blood, his soul, and his divinity*.



‘Q. And under the form of *wine*?

‘A. *Jesus Christ* is there as *entire* as under the form of bread.

‘Q. When the forms of the bread and wine are divided, is Christ divided?

‘A. No; *Jesus Christ* remains entire *under each part* of the form divided.

‘Q. Say in a word *what* *Jesus Christ* gives us under each form.

‘A. *All that he is*; that is, *perfect God* and *perfect man*.

‘Q. Does *Jesus Christ* leave heaven, to come into the eucharist?

‘A. No; he always continues at the right hand of God, his Father, till he shall come at the end of the world, with great glory, to judge the living and the dead.

‘Q. Then how can he be present at the altar?

‘A. By the almighty power of God.

‘Q. Then it is not man that works this miracle?

‘A. No; it is *Jesus Christ*, whose word is employed in the sacrament.

‘Q. Then it is *Jesus Christ* who consecrates?

‘A. It is *Jesus Christ* who consecrates; the priest is only his minister.

‘Q. Must we *worship* the body and blood of *Jesus Christ* in the eucharist?

‘A. Yes, undoubtedly; for this body and this blood are *inseparably united* to his divinity.’

“Volumes may be quoted to the same effect; but it is hoped that the above will suffice to show that I have in nothing misrepresented this doctrine, as generally and very strenuously held by the Papists.”

In regard to what is in the above Catechism declared, that *Jesus Christ* is entire under each part of the bread and wine, however divided, I would add to what was said in § XXI., that it is the belief of Protestants that the spirit, the divinity of Christ is in all places and every where; but that a human

body, or any one particle of matter, can be at the same time in several places, seems to me as impossible as that two added to two should amount to two only. Christ is spiritually, and to all intents and purposes of our need, for "the strengthening and refreshing of our souls by his body and blood," present in all places where this sacrament is rightly administered. There may be two or more bodies exactly alike; but how they can be identical and but one, no one can imagine, and no one is of God required to believe such a direct contradiction. Christ positively declares (John xiv. 23) that he, with his Father, will make his abode with them who love him and keep his words. This is truly effected by the Holy Ghost, which is "the Spirit of the Father," "the Spirit of the Son," "the Spirit of Christ," and which dwells with good Christians; but if the body of Christ cannot, in any one place, be separate from his spirit, then his material body is in every good Christian as much as it is in the bread and wine of the Lord's supper.

It will not, I trust, be deemed unsuitable to observe here, that Henry VIII. of England, who is sometimes and very erroneously spoken of as a Protestant, was a rigid Papist in all but the pope's supremacy, which, from political, and, we may fear, selfish views, he discarded. Transubstantiation was chief among the "six articles," for the denying of which so many of those who were truly Protestants were, in his reign, cruelly persecuted. The wickedness of Henry, as did the treason of Judas Iscariot, and the persecutions which the apostles suffered, "turned out for the furtherance of the gospel." The wisdom of God brings good from evil; by his overruling providence, he makes the wrath of man to praise him, and all things to work together for the good of his people. It is much the practice of the Papists to stigmatize and blacken the motives and moral character of those who were any way instru-

mental in promoting the Reformation; and Protestants are not free from the like fault. It proves nothing on either side, but the want of that charity which "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth." One might expect that the belief of the Papists, that the greater part of their own communicants are, immediately after death, sent to purgatory, to be punished with torments beyond what language can express, would make them cautious how they magnify the faults of others; that they would remember (and God grant that we may all remember) the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged, and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."

There is no one thing that I more desire on earth, than to see Christians united in this life, before they depart to that eternal world in which they hope to live together in perfect harmony and love. Neither the piety nor the wickedness of a few individuals proves the orthodoxy or the heresy of the church or the sect to which they belong. We must resort "to the law and to the testimony." We must "let God be true, and every man a liar." We are all concluded under sin; and the best saint on earth, far from having righteousness that can save others, cannot, by his own merits, save himself. There is no name given under heaven, whereby we can be saved, but that of Jesus Christ.

Of the doctrine that the bread and wine are to be worshipped, as the Papists hold, I may say something hereafter. The withholding of the wine from the people, I now mention as the twenty-second of what we deem essential errors, and against which we protest.

§ XXIII. Another practice of the Roman Church, held by Protestants in abomination, is that of carrying in procession, through the streets of large towns,

a piece of bread which they call the *Host*, and which not only do they themselves worship, but oblige those whom they meet to bow and offer idolatrous adoration. They who are of the reformed religion will not, of course, submit to this, except in outward appearance; as Naaman, perhaps, bowed in the house of Rimmon. But whether such a compliance, in violation of the second commandment, (of the letter, at least,) is not a sin, is worthy of serious consideration. The example of certain Jews, in refusing to “*fall down and worship the image*” which Nebuchadnezzar had *set up*, is much more worthy of imitation; as is also that of thousands of holy martyrs, who have voluntarily suffered the most excruciating torments, rather than (in outward appearance even) worship idols. The safest course is, an undeviating adherence to sound principle, leaving the event with God. Let us not forget who has said, “He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.” In this country, where, through God’s blessing, we enjoy religious freedom, we are not subjected to this particular trial; and I may well here repeat what in the commencement of these remarks was said: He who would know what Popery is, must go where no other religion is tolerated. The inestimable blessing of religious liberty is evidently increasing in the world. The light of the Reformation continues to penetrate into the dark regions of idolatry and superstition. The pope has already lost very much of his power, which we trust in God he will never regain; and his adherents will find it more and still more difficult to blind the eyes of people, and prevent their searching for themselves what is the truth of God. We do not say that men will cease to be idolaters; the whole history of ages past teaches us to fear the contrary. “Men love darkness rather than light.” “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.” The external form of

religion will probably continue to be more pleasing to the unrenewed heart than "the inward part, or thing signified." How large a proportion of those "who profess and call themselves Christians" may continue to prefer the commandments of men to the word of God, He only knows. With regard to human authority, every one should be permitted to worship God according to the reasonable persuasion of his own mind. Censure even, cast upon men for using this liberty, is a degree of persecution. If any prefer to *go out from us, being not* (in heart) *of us*, let us not judge nor cease to pray for them. If they act conscientiously, God may receive and bless them. The prediction of the Bishop of Arath, that, in case we do not, as a Church, submit to the pope's supremacy, some *will break from our ranks*, is already being verified; and how many more will follow, need cause no painful anxiety. God will take care of his Church; and if we who remain in it faithfully obey his word, he will daily add to *our ranks* "such as should be saved." They who carefully, with prayer, *search for the old ways*, (truly so called,) who desire to hold fast to what truly appertains to ancient Christianity, and to reject what is corrupt, erroneous, and superstitious, will, we believe, still find in the Protestant Episcopal Church a safe asylum. And good reason have we to hope that our ranks are much more likely to be increased than diminished.

§ XXIV. Another article of the Latin or Roman Church against which we protest is what is called *the Sacrifice of the Mass*, or the doctrine that, in the celebration of the Lord's supper, the priest *offers* the real body and blood of Christ, literally understood, as *a true and expiatory sacrifice* for the living and dead, equally meritorious with that which Christ himself offered upon the cross; and that this may be offered for any *individual* who is dead, if he has left money to pay, or if any who are living will pay the

priest for doing it. Supposing this doctrine to be true, of what immense value must wealth be! A few dollars may save a soul! The doctrine of our Church is, that God "gave his only Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, who made there, by his one oblation of himself, once offered, a *full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction* for the sins of the whole world, and did institute, and in his holy gospel command us to continue, a perpetual *memory* of that his precious death and sacrifice." We do it as Christ commands, "in *remembrance* of him." There is, indeed, a general sense, in which any religious offering may be called a sacrifice. Such, at the celebration of the eucharist, are *our alms and oblations*; such *the gifts and creatures of bread and wine which we offer*; and such "our *sacrifice* of praise and thanksgiving. . . . And we offer and present unto the Lord ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living *sacrifice* unto him." But we do not consider these offerings as being in us meritorious, or as making any expiation for the sins of ourselves or others; but, on the contrary, we acknowledge that we are unworthy to offer any sacrifice, and pray God not to weigh our merits, but pardon our offences.

The sacrifices under the law given by Moses, as the apostle to the Hebrews has clearly shown in chapter X., were shadows of good things to come; they were typical of Christ: they looked to him as the substance, — as "the Lamb of God, who *truly* taketh away the sins of the world" — "who, after he had offered one sacrifice for sin, forever sat down on the right hand of God." By his stripes we are healed; in him we have complete redemption. The Jewish passover was prophetic, directing the eye of faith forward to the death of Jesus Christ, in the fulness of time to be *offered once for all*; and in the Lord's supper we look back to the same all-sufficient

sacrifice. It being full and complete, and offered for all, it needs not to be repeated; and no act of man, whether priest or layman, can, by words spoken, or money given, add any thing to its efficacy, or render it more perfect, or more extensive, or more availing. "By one offering, he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." The pretence of thus repeating his death evidently implies that Christ's sacrifice was not full and complete. It implies that he should "offer himself often" — that "he must often have suffered." \* Protestants choose to rely on the sacrifice which Christ himself made for their sins, rather than on this mercenary traffic of the priests. It seems that, according to their own views, in taking money for masses, they sell Christ to be *crucified afresh*. The traffic is certainly lucrative in a high degree: what Judas received was as nothing, in comparison. In saying this, I pretend not to judge of their sincerity or their devotion, nor whether or not they are accepted of God. It is worthy, however, of repeated remark, that the most of their doctrines and practices, which, in our view, are departures from the word of God, are wonderfully adapted, certainly, if not designed, to add power to their priests, and wealth to their church. How vast, beyond what human language can express, must be the power which can change a piece of bread into the eternal Son of God, and offer him, at pleasure, an expiatory sacrifice for any man or for all men! And what reasonable man, if he can, indeed, bring himself to believe such doctrine, would not, at his death, gladly leave a part, or, if needed, all, of his estate, to rescue his own soul from future punishment? The Protestant, like the martyr St. Stephen, will, at his dying hour, look unto the "Lord Jesus" rather than to any pope or priest, to "receive" and save his soul. How, indeed, a mass offered for an

\* Heb. ix. 25, 36.

*individual*, can be considered as the identical sacrifice which Christ offered *for all men*, cannot, without light from Rome, be imagined.

§ XXV. The doctrine that the Lord's supper is an Expiatory Sacrifice, making satisfaction for the sins of men, — the same as that which was offered by Christ himself, leads, of course, to another doctrine, equally erroneous, — that the man who administers the sacrament is a priest in the sense in which Christ himself is a Priest. This, too, we reject. In our Prayer-Book, and in the offices of our Church, the word *priest* is, indeed, often used, but not in that sense — not as designating one who offers a real sacrifice, making expiation for sin. With us, the word means the same as presbyter or elder; it means a minister of Christ, ordained with power to commemorate the sacrifice of Christ in that sacrament. He pretends not to *repeat*, but to “*show forth*, the Lord's death” — to do *in remembrance* of Christ what he commanded.

The Pagans had priests many and sacrifices many, and idols and gods unnumbered; but they were all abominations in the sight of the true God, the Lord Jehovah. Under the Mosaic Dispensation, there were, indeed, priests and sacrifices of truly divine appointment; but, as above observed, they were typical; they were prophetic symbols of the one only true Priest and true Sacrifice — of that “Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world.” The law, as St. Paul says, “was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ;” and it is desirable that Christians should profit more than they generally do by its instruction. “It had a shadow of *good things to come*, but not the very image of the things.” It could “never, with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year, continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. . . . For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin.”



In the holy scriptures, the ministers of Christ are not called priests; but he is himself so called. Aaron was a priest, as Moses was a mediator; both typical of him whom God hath ordained to those high and holy offices. And they who are blest with a true knowledge of him need no other, and acknowledge no other priest or mediator.

§ XXVI. One of the distinguishing peculiarities of the Christian religion is, that it has but one Priest, and needs no other. In religions of man's invention, they have priests taken from among men. The priests appointed according to the law given by Moses, as we have in the last section seen, were types prefiguring the Saviour, and designed, as were the other parts of that law, to prepare mankind, God's chosen people especially, for the advent of the Messiah, and for the gospel dispensation. Man can offer nothing that will take away the sins of others, nor *can he redeem his own soul*. We have one Priest, who is "the Lord from heaven," the eternal Word and Wisdom of God. This Word, being *made flesh, and dwelling among us*, offered himself to expiate our sins. And having made this "one sacrifice for sin," perfect and complete, there was no need of its being repeated. He then ascended into heaven, where he now sits at the right hand of God, as our Advocate with the Father, and the only prevailing Mediator between God and man. He is in himself sacrifice, and priest, and altar. And as we need no other propitiatory sacrifice, and no other priest to offer it, so of course we need no other *altar*, whereon to make atonement for the people. In this, also, we differ from the Romanists, who have what they call altars, at which their priests officiate, and on which they pretend to make an expiatory sacrifice. In the scriptures, the board on which the bread and wine, in administering the Lord's supper, are laid, is not called the *altar*, but the *table*: the same is true

of our Prayer-Book, properly so called, which ends with the Psalter, as may be seen by ‘the table of contents;’ and also in the offices which follow the Psalter, for ordaining deacons, and priests, and bishops; and for consecrating a church it is often called a table, but not an altar. In the office of institution recently added to our Book of Common Prayer, the word *altar* is used, not certainly in the sense in which the Papists use it; nor is it, I trust, from any change in the doctrines of our Church on this very material point, but rather in compliance with what seems to be becoming common language, without any regard to doctrinal propriety. We pretend not to offer on that board any expiatory sacrifice; we offer devoutly “our alms and oblations,” and with great solemnity the “gifts and creatures of bread and wine, . . . according to Christ’s institution, in remembrance of his death and passion.”

And here I have occasion to introduce a question (in my view) of much importance, respecting which I fear that there may be some difference of opinion among the clergy of our Church: it is, whether any doctrine of Christ, or religious propriety, requires that our ministers or people should worship with their faces towards the communion-table, rather than in any other direction, or whether the practice of so worshipping has not arisen from the doctrine of Transubstantiation, and does not countenance that doctrine? The Papists, we know, are consistent, however idolatrous, in doing it; they have constantly before their eyes, and on the table, a cake of bread, which they avowedly worship as their God. But we have no such image or visible Deity on our communion-table; nor can we give any good reason for supposing that God is there present more than in any other part of the church. Christ has, indeed, positively declared that he is *in the midst of his people* who meet to worship in his name; but I would not infer from that gracious promise, though it is un-

doubtedly fulfilled, that the minister is bound to pray with his face to the congregation; yet I do say that, if God is particularly present any where, it is among his people, rather than upon the table. In regard to this question, it is fitting that all things be *done decently* and to *edifying*. Decency may require that the people should face the minister, when he preaches, and perhaps when they pray, though this last may well be doubted. Both decency and convenience render it fitting that, when the priest officiates in administering the Lord's supper, his face should be towards the table, where his business is, except when he speaks to the people. In administering baptism, when he says, "Sanctify *this water* to the mystical washing away of sin," it is decent and fitting that he should turn his face toward the water, and even touch it with his fingers. And so in the Lord's supper, when he comes to the consecration of the elements, it is convenient and fitting that he should remove from the end of the table where he has performed the foregoing part of the communion-service, and "stand before the table," with his back to the people, that he may more conveniently "order the bread and wine," and "with more *readiness* and *decency* break the bread before the people, and take the cup in his hands." In all this there is no unfitness, nor any thing like idolatry or superstition.

Some have urged, in justification of their table worship, that the table is in the rubric called "the *holy table*." Is this a good reason for worshipping towards it? Can the Church, by a word, create an object of worship? It is a *holy table* in a scriptural sense of the word holy, and so are all other parts of the church; but things sanctified and to be considered as holy, are not, therefore, things to be worshipped. If they were so, the bodies of living Christians would be the most suitable objects of adoration. We are repeatedly told from the highest authority,

that their bodies are holy, being the temple of the Holy Ghost dwelling within them. St. Paul says to the Corinthians, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? the temple of God is *holy*, which temple ye are."\* Here, again, is much better reason (if either of them be *any* reason) for the minister's worshipping towards the people, than towards the table. Indeed, if in worship we turn towards any thing, *because* we deem it *holy*, it must, in the nature of things, be in some degree idolatrous. It implies that the God whom we worship is particularly in that place, and *the turning to it* for that reason, because of its *holiness*, is, of course, an act of adoration. The Bible is called holy, and more truly so called than any table. And ought we, then, to turn toward the Bible when we pray? It has been observed of the Papists, that *in their churches* they appear to be very devout; and has it not also been observed that when they are so, their eyes are steadfastly fixed upon some image or picture? The Pagans are still more devout in the presence of their idols.

The time was when God did visibly manifest his presence in his temple at Jerusalem, and towards that temple were all his people commanded to worship; but now, under the Christian dispensation, "the hour," as Christ told the Samaritan woman, John iv., "is come when *we* shall neither in *that* mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father, . . . when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." Whether the worship of which in this section I express my disapprobation, is worshipping the true God in spirit and in *truth*, I leave with the reader to judge. In what is the chief point will, I trust, a vast majority of our Church agree, that we have no sacrifice, priest, or altar, in

\* 1 Cor. iii. 16.

the sense claimed by the Church of Rome. I would suggest the propriety of adhering, in this and other things, to scriptural language, more than some Christians do. They who prefer calling "the Lord's table" *the altar*, ought at least to understand what they mean. When our ministers, as some of them do, call upon those who are to be baptized or confirmed, to "come forward to the *altar*," I would affectionately ask them whether the word *chancel* would not be more suitable?

§ XXVII. Another point of difference from the Church of Rome is the *number of sacraments* which Christ has ordained in his church. In our Church Catechism is a very excellent definition of "what we mean by this word *sacrament*;" that it is "an outward and visible sign of an inward spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof." Of these we acknowledge "two only as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say, baptism and the supper of the Lord." By *generally necessary to salvation*, we mean those which, generally speaking, are required of all who would be saved in Christ; that a sincere and faithful use of them would be beneficial to every Christian. The Romanists hold that the number is seven, including, besides Baptism and the Eucharist, Confirmation, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. Their notion of a sacrament differs, no doubt, from ours. Though they should hold that they are all ordained by Christ, and have outward signs of spiritual grace, they will not say that they are all *generally necessary to salvation*. But few are required to receive *holy orders*, and abstaining from *matrimony* they seem to view as a great virtue, and vastly meritorious. It is, by the way, somewhat singular that they should view marriage as a *holy sacrament*, and yet deem both men and

women less holy for their receiving it! Vows made wholly to refuse this sacrament they extol exceedingly, and think it so meritorious as to justify the neglect of almost every duty towards their fellow-men. Of this their Monachism and Convents afford abundant proof.

If I mistake not, they view these seven ordinances as outward actions or sacred signs, ordained by Christ, and that they are sure means of bringing grace to our souls. After baptism and the Lord's supper, confirmation seems to come the nearest to our notion of a sacrament; but we have no proof that it was *ordained by Christ himself*; we view it rather as having been instituted by his apostles, which is sufficient authority for its being received and practised as a divine institution. We differ, too, from the Romanists, in not dignifying it with the name sacrament, and in rejecting all unauthorized superstitious ceremonies in its administration; we do it, as did the apostles, simply by prayer and laying on of hands.

Their fourth sacrament is Penance, of which I may hereafter say something under the article Repentance. As this has no *outward visible sign ordained by Christ, as a certain means of grace to our souls*, I cannot perceive with what fitness any Christians should call it a sacrament. It is very profitable, however, to their church, in a pecuniary view, and adds much to the power of their priesthood.

Their authority for their sacrament called Extreme Unction, is taken from what is recorded in the fifth chapter of the Epistle of St. James. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil, in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him." The power of working miracles was then still continued in the church; and this was a promise

that such prayer of faith, by the elder, should be blessed in the cure of the sick. Here, then, is nothing corresponding with what is now called the sacrament of Extreme Unction. Instead of being raised to life and health, the sick whom they thus visit, if I mistake not, in almost every instance, soon after die. Is not this a flagrant abuse of that passage of the scriptures? And is it not very hazardous for any Christian now to rely on such a ceremony for the pardon of his sins?

Matrimony we believe to be a divine institution, ordained, not properly speaking by Jesus Christ, but by God at the creation of the first human pair. But what *visible action* or *sign* has it, *assuring grace to the souls* of married people? Matrimony is not "generally necessary to salvation;" there is *generally* neither merit nor sin in the single life. In God's sight "marriage is honorable among all men," whether clergy or laymen; but none are, by the law of Christ, positively commanded to marry.

§ XXVIII. The point on which I would next remark is one which presents us with a very humiliating view of human folly, and shows how blind is man without the light of the Sun of Righteousness. In reading the history of this world, nothing is more remarkable than the propensity of mankind to the *worship of images*. This, from time immemorial, has been prevalent throughout the heathen world; and the history of God's church, from the days of Moses to this present time, give mournful and abundant proof that his chosen people have, at various periods, been much inclined to this abominable pollution. But a very short time after the Israelites had, by the mighty, outstretched arm of the living God, been delivered from bondage in Egypt, and even while Moses was in the holy mount, receiving the tables of the law, did they make a calf, in imitation of the Egyptian idolatry,

and worship the image. And what was their subsequent conduct, in imitating the idolatries of the nations around them, the sacred historians have informed us. Indeed, they who attentively read God's word must clearly see that one great purpose of divine revelation is and has ever been, to make known to his people and to all men the pernicious evil of such idolatry, and to promote the knowledge and worship of the one only and true God.

It might reasonably have been supposed that the second commandment, which so clearly and fully forbids the worship of any images, and the making of them for that purpose, would effectually preserve all, whether Jews or Christians, who believe in God, and desire to render him acceptable homage, from this gross pollution. We are forbidden to make any image or imaginary likeness of the true God, as is fully shown in Deuteronomy iv. The Lord Jesus Christ, the living Saviour of men, who is one with the Father, is the only image or likeness of God whom he has authorized men to worship. God has revealed himself to us "in the face of Jesus Christ," in "whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He, our divine Saviour, is appointed of God as the only Mediator, through whom we have access unto the Father. How evidently the Papists are guilty of this "pollution of idols"—of *making images, and falling down and worshipping them*, I leave to those who are acquainted with their worship to judge. It is scarce necessary to say that rejecting all worship of images is one essential article of the Reformation. Protestants hold such idolatry in utter abhorrence; they regard the second commandment; how many of us violate the first, by setting up idols in our hearts, God only knows.

It was by degrees, partly in opposition to the Jews, and long after the apostles' days, that pictures and images began to be introduced into Christian churches. The pollution was then much opposed



by Churches, and Councils, and the Emperors, though they were not at first introduced to be objects of religious adoration. But, after being introduced, — as any one acquainted with human nature might expect, — the worship of them gradually came into use, chiefly through the influence of popes. It is a remarkable and a mournful fact, that this and almost every other corruption of religion have been introduced by the priesthood. The laity, generally speaking, are more ready to hear than the clergy to preach the pure doctrines of the cross of Christ.

In justification of bowing to images, it is often said that the homage is not offered to the image, but to the being which it represents. Of the true God, as I said, we are forbidden to make any material image or likeness; *his* image, since the ascension of Christ, is to be formed in our hearts only, *according to the pattern revealed to us from above*. And if the image is of any other being than the true God, whether the homage be offered to the image or to the saint, is immaterial; for both are, so far as I can see, equally idolatrous. The heathen said, and no doubt truly, that they did not worship their images, but the beings whom their images represented; and what well-informed Christian would more willingly worship the false god than its image? Why the Papists have been at so much pains to conceal from the people the knowledge of the scriptures, and of the second commandment in particular, is very obvious. In instances not a few, when a new image has been set up, to honor the saint or idol, and bring the shrine into repute, indulgences have been granted by the pope to all who would devoutly visit it. So highly do they estimate this species of idolatry, that worshipping an image, which is one of the greatest sins, they consider so meritorious as to atone for other sins.

It is remarkable, and not, I trust, improper here to notice, that about the time of the establishment of

the Papacy, in the early part of the seventh century, the Mahometan imposture also commenced. These, by some writers, are denominated the two grand apostacies from the Christian faith, the one overrunning the Eastern, and the other the Western Church. The latter, the Romanists, are advocates for image worship; the former abhor and oppose it. These great evils, we may believe, were permitted in just punishment of Christians, for their departure from the pure simplicity of the gospel; for their dissensions, strifes, and worldly affections. And ought we not in this to see and to admire, not only the justice, but the wisdom of an overruling Providence in balancing errors, and counteracting one great evil by another? The Mahometans, as also the Jews, being, as they are, dispersed through a great part of the world, must have a salutary effect in opposing the blind folly of image worship, and in enlightening mankind in that fundamental article of all true religion,—that there is but one God, and he the only just object of religious adoration. And when other nations of the earth shall be converted to the faith of Christ, those strenuous opposers of image worship will, we may believe, have no small influence in preserving the Church from idolatrous corruptions.

§ XXIX. Another species or form of idolatry, and similar to that last mentioned, is the practice of praying to angels, and also to dead men and women, which is well known to have been the general usage of the Latin or Western Church, at the time of the Reformation, and by the Papists is continued and justified at the present day. Whether this worship be called prayer or invocation is immaterial. A large part of our prayers to the true God are also invocations. It would be easy to direct the reader to many of these invocations which are published and much used, and which are direct prayers for grace and aid.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, whom they call "the mother of God," and "the queen of heaven," with many other appellations shocking to the ear of Protestants, they worship, so far as we can judge, more than any other deity; and have more pictures made and images erected to her honor, than to any other god or goddess.

God has made his angels ministering spirits, and, as we have reason to believe, they watch over his people for their good; and often have they been sent to this earth as messengers of peace and love. To them, if to any created beings, it would seem that we might call for heavenly aid. But we read in the nineteenth and twenty-second chapters of Revelation, that this is expressly and repeatedly forbidden; we are still, to the end of the holy scriptures, commanded to "worship God," and no other being.

What is particularly the state of the soul after death till the resurrection and the day of judgment, has not been revealed to us, because, no doubt, it is not necessary for the regulation of our conduct in this world, and for preparing us for our eternal state. "*Secret* things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are *revealed* belong unto us;" and happy would it be, if with them Christians were more contented, and were less disposed to pry into those times and seasons, and other things "which the Father hath put in his own power." The world is very little wiser for all the volumes that have been written on the subject of the intermediate state, and for any and for all the attempts of men to be *wise* in religious knowledge *above* or beyond what is "written for our learning" in the word of God. Our Saviour's words to the penitent thief on the cross, and his parable of the rich man and Lazarus, seem to give us the clearest and almost all the knowledge we have of the present state of souls departed from this life. Two places of departed spirits our Lord mentions; one with himself in *paradise*, the other a

place of *torment*. This latter could not be a popish purgatory; for Christ expressly states that there is no possibility of passing from either one to the other. But, in my judgment, it may be doubted whether these or any other passages in the Bible, were intended to give us any distinct knowledge of what will be our state between death and our final judgment. And it is, indeed, doubtful, whether we have any language which can convey to our understanding a clear knowledge of the spiritual world. By what language can we give to one who was born blind, a knowledge of light and of colors?

But it is enough for my present purpose to say that we have no knowledge of the present state and capacities of souls departed; and whether or not they can hear our prayer, or do any thing for our benefit, we are ignorant. And we know of a certainty, that we have no manner of need of their mediation. God, in his unspeakable mercy, has appointed and has graciously accepted one Mediator, who is ever more willing to hear, and infinitely more able to help us, than all the saints and angels in the universe. To Him, as did the holy martyr Stephen, will the well-informed Christian look for grace and salvation. God has also given his Holy Spirit to dwell within us, to sanctify our affections, and to help us to do and to be what God's word requires. He, who is "the Spirit of the Father," and "the Spirit of Christ," is more powerful than all that is in the world, and is ready to help you in every case and every time of need.

I need not repeat what has been so often and truly shown, that praying to a saint supposes him or her to be possessed of divine attributes; of omnipresence; of being able to read the hearts and know the thoughts and desires of all men and in all places. Is not this idolatrous? The deities that the heathen worshipped had lived on the earth; some of them, no doubt, had been men or women, who had lived

well, and had been benefactors to mankind. Why was it more idolatrous to worship them, than to offer like homage to those whom the pope is pleased to call saints? To worship Minerva than St. Winefride? Hercules than St. Patrick?

And who has given the pope authority to decide who are blessed as saints in heaven, or who are beings to whom the adorations of men may be addressed? It is not, indeed, strange, or very inconsistent, that they who believe that a priest, by speaking three or four words, can change a piece of bread into the eternal God, should also believe that their great high-priest, whom some of their writers denominate "our Lord God the Pope," has power to decide what man or woman deceased, may be invoked in religious adoration.

And are we sure that saints, whoever may be truly such, are more concerned for our good than those who are not so blessed? It is remarkable that in the parable of our Saviour above referred to, it is not Abraham or Lazarus who expresses concern for the living, and requests that means may be used to prevent the loss of their souls, but he who was "in torment;" and the request was denied, not on the ground of his being unqualified to make it, but because the living have the scriptures, containing the revealed will of God.

§ XXX. The greatest evils that have befallen the church of God, next after the departure of its members from the standard of his word, are its divisions; and the daily prayer of "all who profess and call themselves Christians," should be that they "may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, and in the bond of peace," as well as "in righteousness of life." Such unity of spirit can never be effected but by the Spirit of God, enlightening the minds and ruling the hearts of men. "To bring into the way of truth all such as have

erred and are deceived," requires the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, for which we should "pray without ceasing."

But other means are to be used. Christians will not be united till they know and clearly understand wherein and why they differ. With this knowledge, each one may inquire and examine for himself, and if he does it in an honest and good heart, and with humble, fervent prayer, he will "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in him;" and also to do it "with meekness and fear," which is very essential, that he may do it to good effect. My chief purpose, as I have repeatedly stated, and wish it to be constantly kept in mind, is to give our own people a knowledge of the points or articles *wherein* we differ from the Church of Rome; a knowledge which our people seem much to need, especially at the present time. In giving reasons *why* we thus differ, I aim at little more than a brief statement of the points wherein that difference consists. If in any of the articles I have misrepresented the tenets of the Romish Church, no one would regret it more than myself. I wish not to diminish their usefulness;—I would gladly unite with them, and all Christians, so far as it may be without departing from the truth of God, as taught in his word. If I truly state wherein we differ, the subject may be as useful to them as to ourselves; it points out to them what their church stigmatizes as our heresies; and gives them occasion and opportunity to examine and judge for themselves; happy would it be were they, by their priests, permitted thus to examine and to judge. And should any of our brethren of other Protestant denominations deign to look at these remarks, it is hoped that they will be less inclined, than in times past, to accuse us of Popery;—many of them certainly may see that while we differ from themselves but in three or four points at most, which we deem essential, we

differ from the Romanists in more than ten times as many.

Twenty-nine of these points I have already mentioned, the last of which was the offering of prayers to the dead. The one to which I now ask your attention, is praying *for* the dead. Among all the errors against which we protest, there is no one which seems more accordant with our natural feelings than this; it seems to flow from a pure and charitable spirit. But we are commanded to worship not only in *spirit* but in *truth*; we are to "pray with the spirit and with the understanding also." And what do we *understand* in our praying for dead men and for dead women? What authority have we for believing that such prayers will be of use to the dead or to the living? What do they imply? and to what does the practice lead? We have no divine authority for such a practice; nor do we know what is the present state of those who have departed this life. The Bible is silent upon the subject, which it would not be were it a practice which could be of good effect. The gospel of Christ is a revealed religion, and wholly of divine authority. What may be our natural feelings, or desires, or wisdom, is of little amount and of no authority; if indeed we were to follow our own imaginations it would lead to confusion and every evil work.

And what, I repeat, does this practice imply? If we pray in faith and with any meaning, it implies the presumptuous and unauthorized belief, that God will hear, to their benefit, our prayers for the dead. And it leads to a belief in the doctrine of Purgatory, one of the worst of the corruptions which have crept into the Church. This is undoubtedly its practical effect. It leads also to other superstitious practices. It encourages men to delay repentance and continue in their sins in the expectation that others will pray and offer masses for them after their death. And

also to trust in their money to save them ; for when they have no longer use for it in this world, they can leave it to purchase of their priests such masses and prayers. This increases very much the power and the wealth of the priests, and must be with them a very prevailing argument for the continuance of the practice. This practice also derogates from the glory of Christ, the only Mediator whom God has accepted. The doctrine that there is to be another state of probation after this life is of immense consequence, and cannot reasonably be received without divine authority, clear and express. To receive it on human authority would be a perilous presumption. Though praying for the dead was introduced into the church at an early day, probably in the third century, and although some individuals of the Reformed Churches have favored it, by our Church, and by Protestants generally, it is discarded as a practice wholly unauthorized and of very evil tendency.

§ XXXI. It will suffice briefly to mention as another article of our Reformation, the practice of the Roman Church of using in their mass and public prayers, the Latin language, which is to almost all who pretend to unite in it, an unknown tongue. With those who will continue and defend such a practice, it can be of little use to reason. We are bound to render a *reasonable* service, and how can it be such to those who do not understand what is offered in their name, and as their prayer to God? In the apostles' days there were individuals who, in their prayer-meetings, seem to have been vain of displaying their gifts of tongues by praying and giving thanks in such foreign languages as were unknown to many, probably to most of the people present, who, of course, could not with propriety say "Amen," in response to the prayer. What St. Paul has written upon this subject in his first Epistle to the



Corinthians, and fourteenth chapter, may justly be applied to this present article, and must, we might expect, be decisive with those who revere the precepts of an inspired apostle. They who will persist in worshipping "in an unknown tongue," may "pray with the *spirit*," but certainly do *not* "pray with the *understanding* also."

§ XXXII. The next article which I would mention, is what is called Auricular Confession; the Roman Church makes it imperative on all her members to confess their sins to a priest; a practice which, like most of their other distinctive principles, adds very much to the power and wealth of their priesthood. It is not only fitting, but the duty of Christians to *confess their sins one to another*, especially to those whom they have injured, that they may make restitution, and obtain forgiveness; and also to confess such faults and offences as others have a right to know. By making known our feelings to our Christian brethren, we may hope to obtain better knowledge of our religious state, and of our duty as Christians. But there are many secrets, which, though they may be connected with what in God's sight is sinful, had better not be known to man. And that laymen are bound to confess to priests, any more than priests to laymen, no good reason, nor divine authority can be given. The confession should be voluntary, without human constraint, and its object be, as above said, to make restitution, or to obtain counsel, or to increase our sorrow for having done amiss. The practical effect of the Roman auricular confession is, on the part of the priests, gaining the secrets and the wealth of the people, and on the part of the people the notion most evidently and very generally is entertained, that if they advance the money required, do penance, repeating perhaps a few ave-Marias, or visiting the shrine of some saint, and obtain absolution from one

of their priests, their sins are forgiven, and they feel wholly at ease respecting what is past. Though the priest may say, with all sincerity and truth, that the absolution is given on condition of their repentance, the practical effect is too evidently as I have stated; there is, in practice, and very naturally, an undue and perilous reliance on the formality. What immense power and influence must be added to the priests by knowing the most important secrets of every family and individual, may easily be conceived. That men should be willing that such questions should be put to their wives, and sisters, and young daughters in the confessional, as are found even in the published rules of that church, have seemed to me strange and astonishing. One who had been educated among the Papists says, "I learned (in the confessional) more sins than ever I had heard of when conversant in the world." What effect many of the questions which are known to be put to females must have on the priests themselves, may easily be imagined. Of what is done in private, and in convents especially, where all is secret as the grave, will not be known till that day when all the works of darkness shall be brought to light. That the people of this our free country, should have such awakened suspicions and fears of the private meetings of the people called freemasons, who are *men* only, and they respectable members of society, mingling with the community in all the affairs of life, and yet manifest such apathy respecting the secrets of the confessional, and of men and women wholly retired from the view of the world, has long to me seemed unaccountable.

§ XXXIII. Another point in which we cannot agree with the Papists is their substituting penance for scriptural repentance, and directing sinners to a priest rather than to God, that they may obtain remission and forgiveness. This is admirably adapted

to what is evidently the great and overruling object of Popery, properly so called, which is to exalt the priesthood, enrich the church, and subjugate the world. In this it may be truly said that it is uniformly consistent, and *never changes*. To Protestants, that church appears certainly not duly to regard the repentance, which the scriptures require as necessary to our pardon and acceptance, that inward grace, or state of the mind which is "repentance towards God." According to the tenets and practice of that church, it seems, certainly, that forgiveness of sin is to be obtained by outward acts, and the absolution of a priest, rather than by contrition, by godly sorrow, abhorrence of sin, renovation of heart and conversion to God, through faith in Jesus Christ. To sustain this, their doctrine, the word "repent," as used in the scriptures, is rendered, in their translation, *do penance*. This is done by paying money, abstaining from some article of food, visiting some image, saying a number of *ave-Marias*, or by some other prescribed performance. One grand feature of the Papal system is its substituting forms and ceremonies, and the commandments of men for inward grace and the religion of the heart. Their sacrament called *penance* is not "ordained of Christ himself," but ordained by a frail, erring, and sinful man; and the promise of its "inward spiritual grace" is not of divine authority. The substituting outward forms for inward grace, for the religion of the heart, is remarkably adapted to the propensities of our fallen nature, and is of itself sufficient to recommend that religion to a great part of mankind. (1 Cor. ii. 14.) Till their heart is renewed by a living faith in Christ, any religion will be more acceptable to men than the submission of their mind and will "to the holy commandment delivered unto them" in the word of God.

What a door their sacrament of penance, connected with their practice of auricular confession, opens

to immorality; what a temptation to impurity, especially where every thing is profoundly secret, and the confessor prescribes the penance, may easily be imagined! I would not willingly say a word to darken the character of any Christians. Very few of us are so free from sin, as to be qualified to cast the stone at others. But to show what will naturally be the evil tendency of any tenets or practices, is no departure from Christian charity. If any one desires to see a brief statement of some of the proofs of the actual effects of penance and other Papal tenets on the morals, may consult the appendix to the second volume of a work called the Protestant, Essay III. Our Saviour has taught us to pray, "Lead us not into *temptation*." But we do not sincerely and truly thus pray, except we carefully avoid temptation.

So far as penance may be truly called religious abstinence; so far as by suffering ourselves we relieve others from suffering; or when, by denying ourselves lawful pleasures, or other good things of this life, we make either ourselves better, or others more happy, it is, we may believe, a sacrifice acceptable to God; but the notion that mere voluntary suffering or pain, or *afflicting our soul for a season*, is meritorious, or that it will atone for sins past or future, is a perilous delusion. The Lord will ask us by his prophet Isaiah, "Who hath required this at your hand?" The heathen and idolaters, those, especially, of Hindostan, excel all Christians in this imaginary merit and delusive self-righteousness. If we expect pardon of sin and eternal life for the merits of any sufferings, but those of our Saviour, Christ, we deceive ourselves, and "are fallen from grace."

§ XXXIV. We differ, also, from the Romanists respecting the canon of scripture. They receive as inspired of God those ancient writings usually called

the Apocrypha. Why they receive them, is sufficiently obvious; they contain some passages which seem to give countenance to the corrupt tenets and practices of their church. Protestants reject them for the very good reason that there is no evidence of their having been written by inspired penmen; there is no good authority for receiving them as the revealed word of God. They are not found in the ancient Hebrew Bible. They were not received by Christians till the fifth century, when the church had become, in many things, corrupt. They contain things which are at variance with the true scriptures, and things, also, which are absurd and unworthy of belief. But they are valuable as writings of considerable antiquity, and in some of them are found interesting historical matter; in others, noble sentiments and rules of moral life, for which reasons "the Church reads them, (or parts of them,) for example of life, and instruction of manner, but does not apply them to establish any doctrine."

§ XXXV. Another error, which appears to us great, and which we reject, is the multiplying intercessors, to the dishonor of him who is truly our "advocate with the Father." God in his merciful goodness has been graciously pleased to appoint his only begotten Son to be a Mediator between himself and us, his erring, sinful creatures, and has declared himself well-pleased with his Son's mediation. This Lord from heaven came to this earth, and took our nature. By his whole life and sufferings on our behalf he manifested that he is a compassionate High-Priest, touched with the feelings of our infirmities, and that, through him, we have access to the Father. And God has appointed no other advocate, and he does not promise to hear us for the merits and intercession of any other being, nor to accept us but in him the beloved. Is it not very foolish in men to rely upon, or to wish for any

other intercessor than him whom God has chosen and appointed to that momentous office? Is it not, besides being very idolatrous, a dishonor to Christ to beseech any dead man or dead woman to intercede for us at the throne of grace? Is any one more ready to hear us, or more able to help us, or more loved of the Father, than our Lord Jesus Christ? Peter, and Paul, and Mary, were sinners like ourselves, and are not themselves saved but through the merits of Christ's sacrifice for their sin. Some seem to rely on the strange (may we not say blasphemous) doctrine that Mary, being the mother of Jesus, and "the mother of God," may control her son, and, by her maternal influence, constrain him to do what, without her interference, he would neglect! There may be occasion, hereafter, to speak more particularly on this point. It will suffice now to remark, what is indeed very remarkable, that whilst our Lord was on the earth, when he "made himself of no reputation," and was "in the form of a servant," he reproved her for interfering with what appertained to his conduct, or ministry. (John ii. 4.) After Mary had performed the momentous office for which she was selected from the daughters of Eve, that of bringing the Saviour into the world, and doing for him what the law required, it is very remarkable that so very little is said of her, and that little so said as to make it evident to all who read the scriptures, that after Jesus commenced his public ministry, she was no more venerated by him and his disciples than other pious women; than the sisters of Lazarus, for instance, whom "Jesus loved." While a child, he was subject to Joseph and Mary, his reputed parents, by which he gave a good example to all children. And yet, when he was but twelve years old, he began to remind them that he had an office to perform wholly independent of their parental authority. When his mother said to him, "Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold thy father

and I have sought thee sorrowing," his answer more than intimated that he had a great work before him, in which no other people, not his mother, even, were authorized to interfere: "How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? They understood not the saying which he spake unto them." And it seems strange that, after the revelation which had been made to his mother especially, she should not understand his meaning. And yet our Saviour was not regardless of the fifth commandment. He had all the affection for his mother, which, *as man*, he ought to have. He made provision for her comfortable maintenance while she lived; he commended the care of her to his beloved disciple John, who, after Jesus' death, "took her unto his own home." But, *as Christ*, his relatives, and the objects of his particular regard, are his faithful disciples. Thus, when it was told him, "Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee," — he answered and said unto them, "My *mother* and my brethren are those which hear the word of God and do it." Much reason have we to adore the wisdom of that divine Providence which has so ordered these things, that there is not even the shadow of authority for that idolatrous veneration which, to the disgrace of Christianity, is offered to the mother of Jesus.

§ XXXVI. I have endeavored that the remarks under each section should be no more than are necessary for a concise view of the difference between Papists and Protestants, and of the need of reformation. And the reader should not forget that what renders the subject tedious, — the *great number* of the articles, shows its importance, and is a good reason, not only for their being published, but also for their being carefully read and well understood. Whether we have rejected any part of the truth of God, as it is revealed in Jesus Christ, each one for

himself may judge. As Archbishop Laud says, "Protestants did not get that name by protesting against the *Church* of Rome, but by protesting (and that where nothing else would serve) against her errors and superstitions." It is no departure from the church, to reject the things in which the church has erred, and that which is at variance with the word of God.

Episcopalians should be aware that they occupy a middle ground in the great religious controversies of the present day. Though unhappily there are jarring dissensions among Protestants, and differences of belief, and though some of several denominations have recently, and with much acrimony, assailed the Protestant Episcopal Church, not "knowing (what is so evident) that we are set for the defence of the gospel" and of the Protestant cause, this need give us no great anxiety; we may well believe that the great majority of Christians will continue to be, as they ever have been, Episcopalians. The great contest in "the good fight of faith," is to be, on the one hand, with those who have added to God's word apocryphal scriptures, false doctrine, and corrupt tradition; and on the other hand, with them who have taken from it what is essential to Christianity, "making the cross of Christ of no effect," and leading those who profess and call themselves Christians, a downward course to unbelief and laxity of morals. True, Catholicism is in most danger of being, on the one side, corrupted by Jesuitical artifice and idolatrous superstition, and, on the other, of being "spoiled through philosophy and a vain deceit, . . . after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Being warned from heaven to "*beware*," let us continue in the straight and narrow way, and "turn not to the right hand or to the left." The differing denominations of those who are called orthodox Christians agree in holding and teaching the most essential principles of the gospel, and may



be considered by us as laboring, more or less directly, in behalf of the true catholic church, and well may we rejoice, and determine, with St. Paul, that we will rejoice that by them "Christ is preached."

What I next mention, is the difference between Papists and Protestants respecting the power of priests to forgive sin. In addition to my former remarks on their views of repentance, of their sacrament of penance, and of their sale of indulgences, it is sufficient for my present purpose to say, what is but too evident, that, as matter of fact, the great majority of Papists, after confessing to a priest, and receiving absolution, feel no compunction for their sins, nor do they generally appear to have that "repentance towards God," which God himself requires as necessary to their forgiveness and to their being "accepted in the Beloved." So far as we may reasonably judge, they trust in the absolution as a complete exculpation. And under the sanction of an indulgence, they appear certainly to look forward to sins in future without any remorse of conscience or fear of punishment. Let those who doubt of this, be at the pains to observe how it is practised among them. Protestants send the sinner, not to a priest, but to God, for perfect remission and forgiveness; exhort him to rend his heart, and not his garments, and to turn unto the Lord his God, who alone can forgive sin. The ministers of Christ, in our view of this momentous point, have power and commandment from God, "to declare and pronounce to his people, *being penitent*, the absolution and remission of their sins." God "pardoneth and absolveth all those who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel." Without that scriptural "repentance which is not to be repented of," giving money, or killing a heretic, or visiting any image, or saying a thousand ave-Marias will avail us nothing. They, of the Papists, who have, for instance, been engaged in the service of their church, to assassinate kings, or

to blow up a house of parliament by gunpowder, or to invade the territory of a people whom the pope has excommunicated, far from feeling compunction for such atrocious sins, have thought the deeds vastly meritorious, and have expected a high seat in heaven as their reward. In such cases, they have confessed to a priest, and been absolved, before the horrid crimes have been perpetrated. Such has been practically the view of Romanists of the efficacy and effect of absolutions pronounced by their priests.

§ XXXVII. Monachism, or monkery, we view as a great evil; as a priestly order of human invention, and not properly appertaining to the Christian ministry. It is not now what it was in its original institution. The first monks, so called, were those who were driven by persecution into retired and solitary places, living awhile alone in cells, and, soon after, forming themselves into societies. "They hoped to find that peace among the beasts which was denied them among men." Whether such retirement, to avoid persecution, was consistent with their duty as Christians, may well be questioned. Our Lord told his disciples, when "persecuted in one city to flee to another," where they might be received, and their labors be blest. But he did not direct them to retire from the society of men, and spend their unprofitable lives in idleness and ease. But whatever may be said of the earliest monks, in the third and fourth centuries, they afterwards became very corrupt. "The Reformation had a manifest influence in restraining their excesses, and rendering them more circumspect and cautious in their external conduct." By hundreds of writers this is confirmed. Mosheim observes, that as early as the fifth century their licentiousness was become a proverb. In the seventh century, their vices had much increased. About this time they devoted themselves wholly to advance the interests and maintain the

dignity of the bishops of Rome, who exempted them from the jurisdiction of all other bishops, so that they are not improperly denominated "the pope's militia." At the time of the commencement of the Reformation, says the author last named, (Cent. xvi. sect. 1,) "The prodigious swarms of monks that overspread Europe were universally considered as cumberers of the ground, and occasioned murmurs and complaints every where. And, nevertheless, such was the genius of the age, . . . that these monastic drones would have remained undisturbed had they taken the least pains to preserve any remains, even, of the external air of decency and religion that used to distinguish them in former times. But the Benedictine and the other monkish fraternities, . . . forgetful of the gravity of their character, and of the laws of their order, rushed headlong into the shameless practice of vice in all its various kinds and degrees." "The monastic orders and religious societies have been considered by the Roman pontiffs as the principal support of their authority and dominion. It is chiefly by them that they rule the church, maintain their influence on the minds of the people, and augment the number of their votaries." These are not properly ministers of Christ, but of the pope, and wholly devoted to his service. Monastic institutions have been significantly denominated "the plague-spots of Europe." Several of the civil powers of Europe have become so far emancipated from papal despotism, that some of them have removed, and others are now removing, these *plague-spots* from their dominions. That such pestiferous institutions may never be transplanted to this our country, pious Christians should daily pray.

§ XXXVIII. The unscriptural exaltation of celibacy, or ascribing merit and peculiar sanctity to the unmarried state is an error of pernicious tendency, against which we protest. This was among the

earliest corruptions of true religion. The notion of any peculiar holiness appertaining to the single state, is wholly imaginary, without foundation in nature or religion. "It is easy," as one writer says, "to perceive the process by which infirm minds passed into the error of attributing sanctity to celibacy. The law of Christian purity knows of no such confusion of ideas. The very same authority which forbids adultery enjoins marriage." And yet so very much is this divine law by the Romanists perverted, that none, it is believed, will accuse me of departing from truth or charity, in saying that with them it was, and I fear still is, easier for their priests to obtain absolution for adultery than for marriage. The consequence of vows of living in single life, has been generally such as might most reasonably be expected; they have tended much more to the diminution, than to the promotion of chastity. I have formerly noticed the inconsistency of considering marriage a pollution, and yet a holy sacrament. This imaginary sanctity is a perversion of the pure doctrine of God's word, and has caused other corruptions of religion, and much impurity and vice. The incontinence of their priests, from popes down to friars, is matter of history, open to those who choose to read it; but much rather would I conceal than spread the knowledge of such abomination. So long as morality is understood to consist in obedience to the declared will of God, it can never be imagined that a man is defiled by living in matrimony, any more than by *eating with unwashed hands*. Such artificial holiness, or refinement upon natural instinct, is subversive of pure and undefiled religion.

§ XXXIX. *An idolatrous regard to relics*, Protestants justly reckon among the corruptions of the Catholic religion. To what extent and ridiculous extremes this is carried, is well known to those who have given attention to the subject. This idolatrous

corruption began as early as the fourth century to disgrace the church. The relics of saints were esteemed as "mighty ramparts, which are capable of protecting towns from the military assaults of their enemies; as champions by which all disasters are turned away from us; as strong rocks which dissipate and nullify the snares of unseen demons, and all the craftiness of Satan; as possessing such astonishing virtues, that the very touch even of the shrine which contains them will bring down a blessing, and that the touch of the relics themselves will accomplish all the desires of those who are admitted to so great a favor."\* That the Romanists avowedly worship what they pretend to be the wood of the cross on which Christ suffered, abundance of authorities and proofs may be given.

The holy scriptures are so far from giving any sanction to this idolatrous practice, that throughout their sacred pages they bear testimony against it. In the thirty-fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, we read that "Moses, the servant of the Lord, died in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord; and he [the Lord] buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor; *but no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day.*" This concealment of Moses' sepulchre, was by divine wisdom undoubtedly ordered for some important purpose. And this purpose is shown to be the more important, and our desire of knowing it is much increased, by a remarkable passage in the Epistle of St. Jude, where it is said that "Michael the Archangel, contending with the devil, disputed about the body of Moses." It is, I think, sufficiently evident to every reader, that the body of Moses was concealed from the knowledge of the Israelites, to prevent that idolatrous veneration for his remains, which would have corrupted the nation and offended God. Though idol

\* See Faber's Difficulties of Romanism, chapter XVI. and the authorities there cited.

worship is of all things the most unreasonable, absurd, and injurious to religion, and though nothing is more directly and uniformly forbidden in the word of God, still, there is in human nature a strange and general propensity to this pollution. The descendants of Abraham were chosen out of the world, that they might abhor idols and worship the true God; yet they were much given to idolatry. We might well suppose, what the scriptures clearly teach, that this idolatrous propensity is from the instigation of evil spirits; and we can easily understand why the grand adversary should wish the people to know where the body of Moses was buried, and why it was thus concealed from their knowledge.

That the people would have worshipped the body of Moses, had they known where it was deposited, is confirmed,—if it needs confirmation,—by what we have recorded in the eighteenth chapter of the second book of Kings. King Hezekiah “did that which was *right in the sight of the Lord*, according to all that David his father did.” And particularly he pleased the Lord by his zeal in suppressing idolatry. “He removed the high places, and brake down the images, and cut down the groves, and *brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense unto it.*” Thus we are told that for several ages the people had offered divine honors to that image of a serpent, which, by an express command of God, (Numbers, xxi. 6—9,) Moses had made and set up on a pole, that the sight of it might heal the wounded Israelites. No relic that can be named would be more truly valuable, or more gratifying to the curiosity of Jews or Christians; none that we could now more wish to see than that brazen serpent. It typified, indeed, the cross on which Christ suffered, “signifying what death he should die.” It very affectingly reminded the Israelites of

God's mercy to their fathers, and of his promise to raise them up a Prophet like unto Moses; and it also reminds us of those institutions which were intended to be as "a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." Had the cross been preserved, there is much reason to fear that the like idolatrous adoration would have, by Christians, been offered to it. Indeed, it is a fact, that the wood which is shown in various places, as pieces of the true cross, is avowedly worshipped. It is not necessary to give any proof of what nobody will deny. Had we the real cross entire, *known to be* that on which Christ suffered, it would, no doubt, be still more grossly idolized, and there would be the same reason for destroying it, as for breaking the image of the brazen serpent. Protestants worship, sincerely, we trust, and as devoutly as any Romanist, him who suffered upon the cross, as the only Mediator between God and man; but do not worship the wood to which he was nailed, nor "the spear which pierced his side."

It is said that Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great, a woman eighty years old, found at Jerusalem, in the fourth century, by digging in the earth, the cross on which Christ died. This, to say the least, may reasonably be doubted. Helena, we doubt not, may have believed that she had found what she sought for; but that wood should remain for so many ages buried in the ground without perishing, and that after so long an interval, it should be identified, are things highly improbable. If any should resort, as do the Romanists, to miracles, we have good reason for saying in reply, that divine wisdom would be more likely to destroy, than to preserve it by miracle.

And supposing that the empress Helena did, after three hundred years had elapsed, and after much searching, find the true cross, this fact alone shows us how very little the Christians of the first three centuries regarded relics. The first disciples must

have known well, had they thought the matter worth regarding, how the cross was disposed of. And if it was not soon after the crucifixion destroyed, (which is the most probable,) there could have been no difficulty in ascertaining where it was; and had they felt any particular veneration for it, there could have been no occasion in the fourth century to *search* for it as something long disregarded and lost. It is remarkable that we do not find, in all the New Testament, that Christians of the first century had any religious regard for relics of any sort. The *doctrines* of the cross — of Jesus Christ and *him crucified*, and the duties of Christian life — what we must believe and do to be saved — repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, were the things which the first preachers of the gospel desired to know; and these they were faithful to teach. But even then, while the apostles lived, there was operating in the minds of some Christians, the same carnal propensity to depart from the spirit of religion, as we learn from Revelation and from what Paul wrote to the Corinthians. Many, like the Galatians, “having begun in the spirit,” endeavored to be “made perfect by the flesh,” superstitiously “observing days, and months, and times and years.” While the apostles lived, these evils were almost wholly suppressed: but soon after their decease, tares, as Christ predicted, were sown among the wheat in the field of his kingdom; — errors gradually crept into the church. Upon the foundation of Christ, Christians soon began to “build wood, hay, stubble.” Among other corruptions which continued to increase till the Reformation, this idolatrous regard for relics is among the most pernicious. Few things can be named which have produced so much gross deception and imposture as the traffic in this trumpery, and its exhibition to the credulous. These relics are viewed, and as managed, they prove to be, the most productive riches of the churches which contain



them; for "they bring no small gain to the craftsmen." Their genuineness is proved by pretended miracles.

We have reason to believe and occasion to be thankful that, in regard to such relics, the wise providence of God, as in older times, has so interfered, that very few if any things of this sort were by the Christians of the first century preserved, or have since been found. If any relic of the Saviour had been discovered; the clothes that he wore, or things that he wrought with his own hands; the spear which pierced his side; the nails which pierced his hands and feet, or the cross on which he died, we cannot doubt but thousands and millions of deluded souls would have worshipped them. We may so judge from the well-known propensity of mankind to idolatry and image-worship; and we may so judge from the homage which is and long has been paid to things of this sort, which, at best, are doubtful, and many of them known to be false. It is remarkable that no traditionary knowledge of the person of Christ, or of Mary his mother, or *her grave*, was preserved by the primitive Christians. St. Paul says, "Though we have known Christ *after the flesh*, yet now henceforth know we him no more." They were then occupied in things infinitely more important; what he had done and what he had taught to save mankind. How vain, then, as well as idolatrous must it be in men to make pictures or images of *Christ after the flesh*, and to "bow down to them and to worship them?" Protestants, like Sautre, the first English martyr to the Reformation, "worship him who suffered on the cross; but not the cross on which he suffered." We have no proof that the apostles of Christ regarded that cross as more precious than any other wood.

That these relics may be truly called "lying wonders,"\* will appear but too evidently to those who

\* 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10, 11.

consider what things they pretend to exhibit; such as "the instruments of our Lord's crucifixion; the clothes wherein he was wrapped in infancy; the manger in which he was laid; the vessels in which he converted water into wine at the marriage feast; the bread which he brake at the last supper, and the vesture for which the soldiers cast lots." They pretended to produce "portions of the burning bush; of the manna which fell in the wilderness; of Moses' rod; of Samson's honey-comb; of Tobit's fish; of the blessed Virgin's milk, and of our Saviour's blood. Also, the blood of St. Januarius; the picture of the blessed Virgin, drawn by St. Luke; one of her combs; some relics of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; a part of the bodies of Lazarus, and of St. Mark; a finger and an arm of St. Ann, the mother of Mary; a piece of the Virgin's veil; the staff delivered by our Lord to St. Patrick, and some of Joseph's breath, which an angel enclosed in a phial, and which was long adored in France, and was afterwards carried to Venice, and from Venice to Rome." In Loretto, they pretend to show the house in which Mary lived at Nazareth, "as having been carried there by four angels, and set down twice on the way." This legend "received the sanction of successive popes. Indulgences were promised to those who visit it in devotion."\*

I endeavor, in these remarks on the Reformation, to refer to authors that are of easiest access to common readers; which authors give authorities for what they affirm.

§ XL. The idolatrous *exaltation of Mary*, the mother of Jesus, is among the worst corruptions of Christianity; and against this, also, we are constrained to protest. Every Christian views her as the most

\* See the Protestant, chapter LII. and Southey's *Book of the Church*, chapter X.

distinguished on earth among the daughters of Eve. But this distinction does not exalt her to the honor of being worshipped, nor render the religious adoration which is so much addressed to her, the less idolatrous; it does not authorize us to put any trust in her, as our advocate with the Father, or with our Lord Jesus Christ.

The natural disposition of mankind to idolize men in proportion as they are distinguished in this world, is well known. Heroes and kings and emperors, while alive, or after their death, have been thus worshipped in all ages of the world. In the estimation of those who "believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," Mary has the highest honor ever bestowed on woman, and all generations will continue, as they ever have done, to call her *blessed*; to admire her *happiness* in being thus distinguished. But this distinction gives her no title to divine honors, nor to any kind of religious adoration, more than is due to any other son or daughter of Adam's fallen race. Mary, in common with all others of the human family, is "concluded under sin." In being the mother of Jesus, she was merely passive; she has done nothing to *merit* salvation; and if she is saved, which we trust she is or will be, it is by that blood which was shed for us all — her sins are washed away, not by the *birth*, but by the *death* of her Saviour. In the wonderful plan of our redemption, it was required that Christ should be "made of a woman." And in being so made, he is not the Saviour of Mary more or less than of other women. And so far as we know and are taught of God, thousands and myriads of others may be in heaven as blessed and as highly honored as she. That the Christ might assume and sanctify our fallen nature, he must be "the seed of the woman;" must be born of some female. He assumed our common nature, and not particularly the nature of any individual.

It is very remarkable, and much to our present

purpose, that, as was before briefly noticed, our Saviour, after the commencement of his ministry, and acting as the Christ, paid no particular regard to his mother. He does not call her his *mother*, but "*woman*," in which there is an evident fitness. In the three instances recorded of his speaking to her, two of them were reproofs of her interfering in his business: "Woman! what have I to do with thee?" As our common Saviour he is "the seed of *the woman*" — "the second Adam" — "the Lord from heaven." He has a common relationship "to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith." In regard to religion and spiritual life, his mother and his brethren, — those whom he especially regards, are his faithful disciples, — they who are united with him as branches with the vine. Of this he made repeated and very remarkable declaration. Thus, "It was told him by certain who said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without desiring to see thee. And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are those which hear the word of God and do it."\* "While he talked to the people, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. And he answered and said to him that told him, Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother."† These are his family — these his household; these are the relatives who are especially his favorites and friends. No earthly connection or relationship is worthy to be compared with this, by which we become the brethren of Christ. By adop-

\* Luke viii. 21, 22.

† Matt. xii. 46—50.

tion and grace we are the sons of God, and heirs through hope of his everlasting kingdom. There are other passages of the gospels of the like import.

No one indeed can read the history of our Saviour Christ, without observing what is so evident, that he showed more attention and favor to his disciples, than to his mother or to any of his relations according to the flesh. And the like did his disciples. In all the Acts of the Apostles Mary's name is mentioned but once, and that once in a way which does not distinguish her as honored above the other *women and his brethren*. In their epistles they speak particularly, and in high commendation of many other women; but say nothing of Mary the mother of Jesus. This silence we may well believe was providentially designed. The Lord foresaw what idolatrous veneration would be shown to Mary, and has manifested the same wisdom respecting her as he had long before done in concealing the body of Moses, and causing the brazen serpent to be destroyed. Our great prophet has so ordered the revelation of God's will, and of the doctrines of life, that Christians have nothing to justify or excuse this Maryolatry,—this idolatrous exaltation of Mary.

It seems strange that any reasonable person should suppose, or could possibly believe that Mary now, in the heavenly mansions, has an influence over Christ, exalted as he is at the right hand of God, when we are so clearly taught that in his state of humiliation, while here on the earth, he did not allow her, in any degree, to meddle in the exercise of his ministry. But in this, as the well-informed Christian clearly sees, "he has done all things well." And yet such is the perverse disposition of mankind to depart from the truth of God, and to worship the creature rather than the Creator, by a very large part of Christians, prayers and invocations and praises have been offered to Mary as to a being who, in every place, can hear the petitions, and know the hearts and the

wants of all (millions at the same time) who call upon her, and is able to give them temporal and spiritual blessings. The ancient Pagans attributed less to their demigods than they who claim exclusively the name of Catholic, attribute to her whom they worship as "the mother of God," and the "queen of heaven." The King of heaven they do not so often address in words of adoration, as her whom they denominate its *Queen!* There are many *ave-Marias* to one *Pater noster*. Juno, the pagan *queen of heaven*, was not so much adored. Mary has probably more pictures, shrines, and images, than any other god or goddess that can be named.

So popular has long since become the worship of this *heavenly queen*, that "each of the monastic orders claimed the Virgin Mary for its especial patroness. Some peculiar favor she had bestowed upon each. She had appointed their rule of life, or devised the pattern of their habit—enjoined upon them some new practice of devotion, or granted them some singular privileges; she had espoused their founder with a ring, or fed him like a babe at her breast! Each of the popular orders had (as they taught and some no doubt believed) been assured by revelation, that the place in heaven for its departed members was under her skirts!"\* Many other things equally false and still more extravagant have been taught respecting her; some of them are too fulsome, indecent and disgusting to be repeated.

Of direct prayers offered to Mary by Roman Catholics, vast numbers may easily be collected. The one following is cited as a sample by Faber in his *Difficulties of Romanism*, p. 191. "Comfort a sinner and give not thine honor to the alien or the cruel, I pray thee, O thou queen of heaven. Have me excused with Christ, thy Son, whose anger I

\* Book of the Church, chapter X.

fear, and whose fury I vehemently dread; for against thee only have I sinned. O, virgin Mary, full of celestial grace, be not estranged from me. Be the keeper of my heart; sign me with the fear of God; confer upon me the soundness of life; give me honesty of manners, and grant me at once to avoid sins and to love that which is just. O virgin sweetness, there neither was nor is thy fellow." "To the industrious repeater of this prayer (Mr. Faber adds, p. 193) Pope Celestine was pleased to grant three hundred days of pardon." So much more meritorious and effectual did he, and do, we fear, thousands of others, deem it to pray to Mary, than to pray to God through Jesus Christ.

§ XLI. In the last section, something was said of the idolatrous exaltation of Mary the mother of Jesus, as being superior to other human beings, and an object of religious adoration. Among other inventions for this purpose is what is called her *Immaculate Conception*; that she was conceived and born spotless and pure, without original sin. In honor of this is a Romish Festival held on the eighth of December. The Papists, however, are not among themselves agreed respecting this doctrine, which has indeed been a subject of much controversy and division in that church which boasts so much of its unity. The Scotists and Franciscans strongly advocated this tenet; while the Thomists and the Dominicans were violently opposed to it. In Spain, especially, the controversy was so great, that authors have compared it to "a violent hurricane, giving much trouble and perplexity to several of the Roman pontiffs," who, with all their power and infallibility, feared to give a decided opinion in favor of either party. It is enough for my present purpose to remind the reader that it is wholly without proof; there is no good authority for saying or believing that

Mary was not, like all others of the human race, *conceived and born in sin*. Christ took our sinful nature (himself being without sin) to change and purify it; but if Mary, his mother, was, unlike the rest of the human race, without sin, he did not take a *sinful* nature. But all the orders and sects and denominations of those, who submit to the dominion of the pope, agree, as Mr. Southey says,\* “in elevating Mary to the highest rank in the mythology of the Romish Church. Many of them pretend to trace her in types throughout the Old Testament. She was the tree of life; the ladder which Jacob had seen leading from heaven to earth; the ever-burning bush; the ark of the covenant; the rod which brought forth buds and blossoms, and produced fruit; the fleece upon which alone the dew of heaven descended. Before all creatures and all ages she was conceived in the Eternal Mind; and when the time appointed for her mortal manifestation was come, she, of all human kind, was produced without the taint of human frailty.” Such was the doctrine taught by many of the Papal Church, and against it the Reformers protested.

Our Church in her annual services commemorates two interesting things respecting Mary; her annunciation and her purification; but in both of them regard is chiefly had to our blessed Saviour; in the former, to his *incarnation*, and in the latter, to his *presentation* in the temple, in fulfilment of what the law required, both of them being interesting parts in the great work of redemption. There is no proof or intimation in the word of God, nor representation in the services of our Church, that Mary is more divine, or more holy, or more worthy of adoration than other pious, Christian people, or that she is in any thing superior to a mere human being. We honor her as the mother of our Saviour, and *call her*

\* Book of the Church, chapter X.



*blessed*; but religious worship offered to her or to any creature we view as idolatry.

§ XLII. What is said in the first chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, of the *blessedness of Mary*, seems to have been by many misunderstood. In the twenty-eighth verse it is written that "the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, [or full of grace,] the Lord is with thee: *blessed* art thou among women." Again, in the forty-second verse, her cousin Elisabeth, saluting her, said, "*Blessed* art thou among women;" and in the forty-fifth verse, "*Blessed* is she that believed." And in the forty-eighth verse, Mary herself said, "From henceforth all generations shall call me *blessed*." From the first of these passages "is formed the *ave-Maria*, or hail Mary, in repeating of which consists a great part of the devotion of the Romanists. But there is nothing in that, or any other passage of God's word, which gives any the least authority for praying to Mary." Many Christians are favored of the Lord and full of grace. The word *hail* is no more than a friendly, common salutation. When Christ used it to Mary Magdalene and other women, (Matt. xxviii. 9,) will any one say or believe, that he worshipped them?

"Blessed art thou among women," is a congratulation most justly offered to this, the most distinguished among the daughters of Eve. But the like was long before said of Jael. "*Blessed above women* shall Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, be; *blessed shall she be above women* in the tent."\* The same Greek word is used. See the Greek translation called the Septuagint, which was used by the apostles; "Blessed is she that *believed*," and blessed is every one who truly *believes in Jesus Christ*.

In the forty-eighth verse another Greek word is

\* Judges v. 24.

rendered blessed: "all generations shall call me *blessed*," or happy, as the word means. And so she has been, and will be called while the world endures. We doubt not but she truly believed, and if so, she will, in the end of the world, be among those to whom the Judge will say, "Come, *ye blessed of my Father*, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Our Saviour pronounces blessedness on many descriptions of people in this present world: "Blessed are *the poor in spirit*; blessed are *they that mourn*; blessed are the *meek*; blessed are the *merciful*;" and so of many others. It was very natural that Mary should be much affected when she thought of the very high honor of being the "woman" of whom the promised "seed" should be the "fruit;" an honor which, we cannot doubt, thousands of Jewish women had ardently desired, and for which they had earnestly prayed. Very naturally, and with the utmost confidence, might she say, "All generations shall call me blessed." What greater happiness in this world can a believer in Christ imagine?

In the eleventh chapter of St. Luke's Gospel is a passage which very clearly shows of what nature and degree, in the view of our Saviour and of the inspired writers, is the blessedness of Mary. A woman, who had for some time listened to his discourses, such as "never man spake," and probably had seen the miracle which he had just before wrought, as was perfectly natural, thought of the great honor and happiness of being the mother of such a son, and could not, it seems, refrain from expressing aloud the thoughts which so affected her mind. She "lifted up her voice and said unto him, *Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou has sucked;*"\* using the word that Mary used. Our Lord's reply to that woman's remark is

\* Luke i. 48.

worthy of the very serious regard of all Christians, and theirs, especially, who would exalt Mary to the honor of receiving religious adoration. "But he said, *Yea, rather blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it.*" This is very decided, and from the very highest authority; it is perfectly intelligible, and it exactly corresponds with what the scriptures uniformly teach. We have before seen that Christ, as our Saviour, on several occasions declared that those whom he chiefly acknowledged as his *mother, and sisters, and brethren*, were not his kindred after the flesh, but his faithful disciples; those who believed his doctrine and obeyed his word. And here he positively declares that *to hear the word of God and keep it*, is more blessed than being the woman of whom he took his human nature. There was nothing meritorious in being his mother; in that, Mary was merely passive. Its blessedness was the honor, the favor of being thus distinguished "among women," and being gratefully remembered and honored by all generations, while the world continues. But this honor, this favor, great as it is, in itself implies no assurance of immortal blessedness; whereas, *they who hear the word of God and keep it*, shall be forever *happy*; shall be saved with an everlasting salvation. Mary herself is saved, not by being the mother of Jesus, but by hearing and keeping God's word. "Blessed is she that *believed.*" No honor of any woman in the church on earth can equal Mary's; while the world endures, will the disciples of Jesus view it as a great and very high favor to herself that she was the mother of such a son; but they who hear the word of God and keep it will be blest forever. In this world, they may not, like Mary, be called happy; they may be despised and persecuted, but hereafter, "they shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their heavenly Father." Not generations of men only, but the host of heaven shall call them happy; even Christ their Judge shall say,

“Come, ye *blessed of my Father*, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.” To all who hear the gospel, is freely offered this greatest of all *blessedness*.

§ XLIII. In the last three sections, something has been said of the idolatrous worship offered to Mary the mother of Jesus; of the very false doctrine of her immaculate conception, and of the blessedness ascribed to her in St. Luke’s Gospel. Another point which, for the purpose of increasing the superstitious notions of her sanctity, and the supposed merits of celibacy, much taught by the Romanists, is her perpetual virginity. Respecting this point, I can very cordially say with the Rev. William Goode, in his excellent and learned work, on “the Divine Rule of Faith and Practice,” that “it is with much unwillingness that I enter upon the discussion of this point lest I should appear to speak slightly of one so highly honored of God, and to whom, if upon earth, we should be disposed to pay higher reverence and respect, than to the most potent empress that ever sat upon an earthly throne.”\* What he says on this subject in the pages following this quotation, I recommend to the perusal of those who have access to the work; and it may be truly said to be a work “for the times.”

The *early* writers, who have treated of this subject, were of different opinions. They who favored the conceit of Mary’s perpetual virginity did not view the belief of it as being necessary to true piety or a religious faith, nor did they appeal to *tradition* in proof of it; but endeavored to prove it from the scriptures; and this all who are acquainted with the scriptures know to be an entire failure. The scriptures, so far as they appear to regard this question, lead us to the contrary belief. And, as the writer above referred to says, p. 158, “It is worth observing

\* Vol. ii. p. 152, Philadelphia edition.

how the ground for belief of this doctrine has been shifted. The fathers who defend it place it upon the testimony of scripture, and arguments drawn from the propriety of the case. Our opponents, with the Romanists, seeing that nothing of the kind can be proved from the scripture, fall back upon *tradition*, and quote the testimony of the very fathers, who appeal to the scriptures for the proof of it, as evidence of its being a doctrine established by an uninterrupted tradition of the church." And we may hope, by the way, that the existing controversy between Protestants and those who are not improperly called *Low* Papists, will have, among some good effects and more bad ones, this, of a better and more general knowledge of what is the just authority of tradition respecting essential articles of the Christian faith. On this much agitated and very interesting subject, several learned and very excellent works have been recently published in England, and some of them republished in this country. It is remarkable that this dogma of Mary's perpetual virginity is among the chief articles of religious belief, which, it is now said, we learn from tradition; and the very little or rather no importance of this, shows how little we should gain by tradition, were its authority equal, as the Romanists contend, with the holy scriptures. We make no objection to any one's believing this, but protest against its being taught as a necessary article of belief, and stigmatizing, as unsound in faith, those who think it unessential. Religion has gained nothing and has lost much, by the various attempts of Christians to make that necessary to salvation in Jesus Christ, which God, in his revealed will, has not made necessary, and by pretending to be wise in spiritual things, beyond what he has caused to be written for our learning. Christians will never be united, nor their religion appear in its beautiful garments of salvation till they agree in taking God's word for their guide, and "are per-

sueded that the holy scriptures contain all doctrine required as necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.”

§ XLIV. To render the exaltation of Mary more complete, and the religious worship paid her more extensive, there is added what is called her *Assumption*, which, to give it the greater sanction, the Romanists commemorate by a festival. They teach, that as she was born without sin, so she died without suffering; and that her body being too pure and precious to see corruption and turn to dust like other human remains, was taken up into heaven and there glorified. This they pretend to prove by presuming that had her body been deposited any where on the earth, a treasure so precious would not have been concealed from the early Christians. I have had occasion already, in section XXXIX., to give a much better reason for the ignorance or disregard of the Christians of the first century of the place where the remains of Mary were deposited. If her body was *providentially* concealed from the knowledge of the first Christians, it was for the like reason that the body of Moses was concealed from the Jews. But it is far more probable, that her grave was forgotten by reason of the little regard of the first Christians to such things:—for the like reason that they did not preserve the cross on which Christ suffered, and many other relics, which, were they now to be seen, would by thousands be worshipped. It is enough under this head to say that we have no manner of proof, nor any good reason for believing or supposing, that her earthly remains did not, like the bodies of other mortals, return to the earth, “ashes to ashes; dust to dust.” This pretended assumption of Mary’s body, is but one of the “signs and *lying* wonders,” which are predicted in the word of God.

Errors and corruptions began early to be sown in the church, like tares among wheat. In the first

century, they were scarcely visible. In the second, they began to appear. In the third and fourth, their number and their growth increased. In the fifth, sixth and seventh, they arrived to a baneful maturity, and they who did not embrace them were branded as heretics.

May that blessed Lord, who has caused all holy scriptures to be written for our learning, give us grace so to hear and read and learn, and inwardly digest them, that, by patience and comfort of his Holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which he has given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

§ XLV. I have noticed above forty articles or points practised by the Western Church, so called, at the commencement of the sixteenth century, against which those pious Christians, who thought that they were bound to obey God, rather than man, and to take the holy scriptures for their principal guide, protested. There are many more articles which may be added to the catalogue of those already noticed; but my present purpose is to mention but a few more, and the most of those few but briefly. Protestants should be well aware of "the face which Popery can assume, when addressing itself to an educated mind;" and particularly of what is very common,—the saying that such and such things are not the doctrines of the Roman Church. And it is proper that I should often remind the reader that I speak not so much of their doctrine, as of their practice; of what their religion is, as seen by Christians and by the world. I judge not of their hearts or motives or belief. In their bloodiest massacres and most cruel persecutions, they may "think that they do God service."\* They who would know what are the *doctrines* of the Church of Rome,

\* John xvi. 2.

will do well to read the history and the decrees of the Council of Trent, and the Catechisms of that church, which have been published. Our Saviour Christ has given us a plain rule of judging in these things: "By their fruits ye shall know them." Their *fruits* we can see, and from these form the best judgment of what the *tree* is. The profession of men is a very uncertain criterion of what they truly are. Strictly speaking, we do not protest against any *Church of Christ*, however corrupt, but against its corruptions; against its departure from God's word. I am not pretending to show what the Church of Rome *avows* as its doctrine, but what in practice she certainly tolerates, and by which, as a hierarchy, she is chiefly sustained.

In section XXXVII. I said something of monkery and monastic institutions, and of the reasons why Protestants reject them. The good which they have effected has, as we believe, been overbalanced by more and much greater evils. In this forty-fifth section I would direct your attention to the subject of *nunneries*; — to those convents in which myriads of females are imprisoned for life. In Europe, where those institutions are of long standing, and their evil effects on morals and practical religion are better known, many of them have been suppressed, and those remaining are watched with a more jealous eye. In this country, where they are little known, and where every artifice is used to render them popular and attractive to the vanity and enthusiasm of young females, some have been recently established, and there is reason to fear that their number may be increased. The burning of a convent in this vicinity, a few years since, by a lawless mob, though as nothing when compared with the massacres of Protestants in France and Ireland, and other places, was an enormous outrage, condemned, I believe, and detested by every pious Protestant in our country, and it has excited the sympathy of thousands, and



will have no small tendency to the increase of such institutions.

I shall not speak of the arts which are well known for many ages to have been used to induce females to take the veil, as it is called, nor shall I question the sincerity or the piety of any amongst us who may prefer that mode of life. But we know what human nature is. The spirit of enthusiasm and the love of notice and of fame, which will induce the young widow of Hindostan to be burnt with her husband's body on the funeral pile, will very naturally operate in the mind of a Christian female, who hopes to live many years at ease, and to enjoy the fame of her supposed *sacrifice* and devotedness to God. Even the spirit of martyrdom has been, in many cases, especially in later years, contaminated by this love of fame. It has been sought for in a way at variance with our Saviour's direction: "If they persecute you in one city, flee to another," which the apostles accordingly did. That love of excitement, which is natural to man, and prefers, "wonderful works" to *good* works, operates too much among Protestants, and is one cause of our division.

And supposing that females enter nunneries ever so voluntarily, and after mature consideration and counting the cost, which in many cases they doubtless do, why should they be *imprisoned*? Why, by locks and bars, and the most rigid supervision, be debarred of all free intercourse with the rest of the world,—of their relations even? If this be necessary to preserve their virtue, it is hardly worth what it costs. "There is, indeed, far more true holiness in the discharge of duties in the midst of the temptations of the world, than in flying from both duties and temptations to the artificial atmosphere" of a convent. It is, besides, a very easy thing, for those who are hid from the world, and are seen only in such manner and place as they choose, to maintain

the reputation of sanctity. But it is not so with those who live in society, and engage in the business and duties of life and religion; their works and their manners, both in public and domestic life, are open to those who are best qualified to judge. By their fruits they are known.

Imprisonment for life, is justly deemed the greatest of punishments, that of death excepted, and many think that this even should not be excepted. And to me it has seemed strange that a civilized people, Christians even, should suffer their citizens, without law or conviction of crime, to be thus wholly debarred of their liberty. Is it right,—is it not very great cruelty, that a young girl, because in a fit of enthusiasm or disgust with the world, or for other cause, enters the convent, should endure, in consequence, this dreadful punishment? If it be said that she is reconciled to her condition, and happy in her confinement, why not then tear away the grates, open the doors of her prison, and release her from all restraint? Do this, and then, and not till then, shall we believe that she has no desire for liberty. That such hopeless confinement has, in ages past, caused a vast deal of wretchedness is known to the world, though not by Christians, as it should be, considered. How very much more suffering has been endured in nunneries, we shall not know till that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, and the works of darkness be brought to light. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu says, after visiting a nunnery at Vienna, “I never in my life had so little charity for the Roman Catholic religion, as since I see the misery it occasions so many poor, unhappy women.” But I would not dwell on this: I am pleased in believing that those sufferings, and indeed, the number of convents, are being diminished. And I hope, through God’s blessing, I may never have “*little* charity” for any denomination of Christians, and especially for those who steadfastly main-

tain so many of the essentials of Christianity, as “do Roman Catholics.” But I would contend for that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. He came into this world not to subject men to bondage, but to liberate the captive.

What our Saviour and his apostle Paul said of the cares and sufferings of the married state, has regard chiefly, as St. Paul expresses it, to “the present distress;” to the peculiar circumstances of those times. And in all ages, there are many men and women, who, without retiring from society, prefer a single life. And in some cases, no doubt, they may not only avoid the labor and trouble of family cares, but may serve God more quietly by living in a single state. But why should they retire from the field of duty, and from the sight of man? The command of our Saviour is, “Let your light so *shine before men*, that they may *see* your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.” In the apostles’ day, there were women particularly devoted to the duties of religious life: but they were widows who had been married and brought up children, and they were not to be so devoted, till they were sixty years old. Their duty was especially to instruct the younger of their own sex. (See 1 Tim. v. 9, 10; and Titus ii. 3, 4, 5.) Such deaconesses would be infinitely more profitable in the church than nuns. The establishments of Shakers (so called) in our country, are less inconsistent with pure and undefiled religion, than Popish convents. They are not drones, but are honestly industrious in a lawful calling, and are useful members of society, but not so useful as they might be. And their devotion to a single life is indeed voluntary; for they are not imprisoned nor debarred of that liberty which is the gift of God; nor is their conscience entangled by any unlawful oaths. And we have good reason to believe that their morals would not suffer by a comparison with the convents of any country. It is said

of Napoleon, who excelled in worldly wisdom, that he refused to permit perpetual vows to a convent which he had founded, because the nuns might afterwards prefer returning to the world, where they might become useful members of society; and said that "nunneries assail the very roots of population, and that it is impossible to calculate the loss which a nation sustains in having ten thousand women shut up in cloisters."

The lawfulness of such vows may be questioned, both on political and on Christian principles. Whether the law of the land allows of such extrajudicial oaths, and especially whether it allows a young girl to swear that she will retire from the common duties of social life, and consign herself to perpetual bondage, should be considered. And whether such retirement to convents and nunneries, where, comparatively, they can be of but little use to the world, or to the church, or to religion, is not, in the sense of our Lord's parables, *burying their talent in the earth*, or *keeping their pound in a napkin*, should, by the Christian, be still more seriously considered. Of those who are blest with health and strength, God requires a life of active benevolence, fruitful in good works. Instead of living at ease in the enjoyment of what others have given for charitable use, they should themselves labor, that they may have wherewith to "support the weak," and "to give to him that needeth."

It is, I believe, becoming more and more a conscientious principle with Protestants, that all should enjoy a free and full toleration in the choice and the exercise of religion, and that persecution is condemned by the gospel of Christ. No one, I believe, is more averse to persecution than myself. And though I view the *vows* of those who enter cloisters as sinful; as tempting God; as swearing that they will never do what may afterwards appear to be their duty, and the will of God respecting them; and

though I view the *imprisonment* of nuns as wholly unjustifiable, I am neither authorized nor desirous to judge those who think differently. To their own Master let them stand or fall. As convents have been generally managed, I view them as prejudicial to morals and to religion. Yet if the *vows* and the *imprisonment* were discontinued, they might be rendered useful as charitable institutions for the benefit of some whose age or state of health, or other circumstances, render such an asylum both convenient and justifiable.

§ XLVI. I propose to say something on the subject of *persecution*, and the Romanist "will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself." That Protestants are in some degree justly liable to such retort, I shall not deny. My desire is to view this, and every other subject, with candor and impartiality. We naturally see a *mote in a brother's eye*, sooner than a *beam in our own eye*. As it is the duty of every private Christian to consider his own sins and imperfections, rather than the faults of others: so is it with all parties, and sects, and Christian denominations. It is far more agreeable to Christian charity, and vastly more profitable to search for our own errors and deficiencies, than for what we may deem the corruptions or faults of any other community of Christians.

Though with grief and shame we acknowledge that Protestants have been guilty of persecution, they who know any thing of the history of the Church during the last three or four hundred years, must think it strange that the Catholics, (as they affect exclusively to denominate themselves,) should be our accusers! And yet so it is. To give one from a thousand instances: Pope Pius V., in his sentence of excommunication against Elizabeth, queen of England, speaks of her persecuting the Papists, and of her forbidding "the exercise of the true religion,

which (he says) Mary, the lawful queen of famous memory, had, by *the help of this see*, restored." He had the assurance to say this in the face of the world, lauding her, whose most cruel persecutions have justly given her the name of *Bloody Mary*, and when the fires of Smithfield were so recently extinguished! It was also about the time of that general and most bloody massacre of St. Bartholomew's, when so many thousands of Protestants of every age and sex were in cold blood murdered in Paris, and other parts of France, and for which there were great rejoicings in Rome. The popes undoubtedly then, though I would hope not now, thought it a meritorious act in Papists to kill Protestants, and a very great wickedness in Protestants in any way to persecute Papists. We may believe that there are now but very few, if any Protestants, who justify any persecutions, even those of their own brethren, in times past. Most gladly would I extend the same charitable remark to those of the Romish Church; but they would not accept it as *charitable*, or as complimentary; they say that their church never changes in doctrines or tenets; and with grief I add, that we have great reason to fear that they say it truly; that the same spirit remains, waiting for the power and opportunity of acting. We should be ever ready to acknowledge past errors, and continually to increase in all virtue and godliness of living.

In reading church history, few things, if any, are more painful to a pious disciple of a merciful Saviour, than the intolerant spirit of myriads who professed and called themselves Christians. The weapons of their warfare were carnal. The gospel, like the religion of Mahomet, has been propagated by the sword, and nations compelled to be baptized. None certainly, who have borne the Christian name have erred more wickedly in this, than they who boast of unchangeable perfection and infallibility. We boast of no perfection in this; but trust that we are in a

great and happy degree *reformed*; we are like Gideon and his little band, though "faint, yet pursuing." With the utmost confidence we appeal to the fact, that much, very much, has been effected;—that Protestants, through God's blessing, have been instrumental in checking, in a very great degree, the horrors of persecution.

The difference between Papists and Protestants in this, may now be seen throughout the world. In those countries where the full power still remains in the hands of the former, Protestants are not, even in this age of light and liberty, tolerated; they are not allowed to build churches and worship in them;—they may not publish what they believe by preaching or by the press. There is a small place of Protestant worship in the city of Rome, which they were constrained, if I am rightly informed, to grant. When the act giving the Papists the same political privileges as the Protestants, was discussed in the British parliament, those who opposed it, urged among other reasons, the fact, that at that very time, Englishmen were not permitted in Rome, even to meet for social worship. *Soon after*, a small place of worship was allowed them. In France, and some other countries called Catholic, their power is restricted. And how is it in these United States and in the British dominions, and other countries where the reformed doctrines prevail? The Papists have precisely the same liberty as others; to build and to preach, and to publish what they please, and it is a liberty of which they avail themselves to the utmost extent. And no Protestant Episcopalians, I believe, desire that the religious liberty of any sect or denomination should be restricted. We ask for that liberty only which we gladly allow them;—that they would do to others as they would have others do to them. But while things continue as they are, we see what great advantage they take of Protestant toleration. While we allow our people to read their books, to

attend their worship, and their convents and schools even, without restraint, they, as far as is in their power, pursue the contrary course. They have their *Index Purgatorius*,—the Bible even, which Christ commands us to read, they consider as a book, by the knowledge of which their religion would be much endangered. They will not allow their people to be present at family prayers, in the houses of Protestants where they reside.

The evident consequence of this course is that they, the common people, especially of their communion, are generally ignorant of the reasons why we protest against many of their practices, and they are taught to believe many things respecting the tenets and practice of Protestants, which are wholly untrue, and which we of the Episcopal Church should abhor. My desire is that the people may have equal liberty to “prove all things,” and that they may *understandingly* “hold fast that which is good.” If any, after fair and full examination of what the truth is in Christ Jesus, prefer uniting with the Roman Catholics, my wish is that they may not be opposed or injured,—“to their own Master let them stand or fall.” We know who has said, that if any man build on the foundation of Jesus Christ, *wood, hay, stubble*, at the great day of trial his works shall be burnt, and he will *suffer loss*; and though, by the foundation on which he builds, he may *be saved*, it will be *as by fire*; not as we believe by the fire of their purgatory; but as a man surrounded by combustible materials on fire, escapes from the peril, leaving all behind. (1 Cor. iii. 10—15; xlvii.) We protest also against what is called *The Inquisition*; that most horrid tribunal of which a pious Christian can scarcely think without shuddering. The history of its tortures and unparalleled cruelties are so well known, and by Protestants so generally detested, that I need not dwell upon them. It is an institution peculiar to Popery, and has been by the popes, and



by their influence and authority, introduced into several countries. And as their laws are like those of the Medes and Persians, which alter not, we cannot doubt but that the Inquisition will be again introduced whenever and wherever their power and their policy will admit of it.

The name of Inquisitors was, it seems, first given, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, to certain persons, or legates, appointed by Pope Innocent III. to search for and extirpate those whom he stigmatized as heretics, among the people called Waldenses. These people, distinguished also by other names, inhabited some parts of the Alps, and the south of France. Their views of religion were similar to what Protestants now hold, and it is probable that their ancestors had never embraced the corruptions of Popery. The persecutions they endured in the thirteenth and following centuries were horrid in the extreme. "These spiritual champions, who engaged in this expedition, upon the sole authority of the pope, without either asking the advice or demanding the succors of the bishops, and who inflicted capital punishments upon such of the heretics as they could not convert by reason and argument, were distinguished in common discourse by the title of Inquisitors, and from them the formidable and odious tribunal called the Inquisition derived its original."\* The pontiffs found those instruments so useful for their purpose, "that they established missionaries of a like nature, or, in other words, placed Inquisitors in every city whose inhabitants had the misfortune of being suspected of heresy." They had influence enough to establish this tribunal in Spain especially, in which Protestants were numerous, who, by the most horrid cruelties, were extirpated. But for persecution Protestantism would probably have prevailed in France and Sp<sup>a</sup> and

perhaps in Italy, no less than in England. "The Romanists proceeding upon the principle of exterminating heresy, did their work effectually in Spain. If our bloody Mary, instead of dying providentially when she did, had lived to the age of Elizabeth, the same work would have been done as effectually in England. Every person whom they suspected of favoring the doctrines of the Reformation was seized without respect to sex or rank, and all whom they failed to terrify into a recantation were burnt." \*

Let us love those who love the Lord Jesus Christ. All who believe in the essential doctrines of his cross, especially that he is the Son of God, and that he has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, should desire, and should endeavor to be united.

§ XLVII. The chief object of these remarks is to call the attention of our people to the reasons of the Reformation, and to the points wherein Protestants, those especially of the Protestant Episcopal Church, disagree with the Roman Catholics. And this for three reasons: First, because a bishop of the Roman Church, by a printed circular directed to our bishops, and intended no doubt, to operate upon the laity, has represented that a large part of Episcopalians, in England especially, have become so favorable to the distinctive tenets of the Papists, that very few points remain to justify a separation. Secondly, because this is fast becoming the most important subject of theological controversy throughout the Christian world; and, thirdly, because of the ignorance of our people, and, I fear I may say, the apathy of Protestants generally, respecting the points of this momentous controversy. And though I suggest, under each head, some few of the reasons for our rejecting what we deem dangerous errors, it should be kept in mind that what I say is but little of what might be

said, and has been written and published, upon this controversy.

In the present article, I would say something of the effects of baptism, and of sin afterwards committed. I am well aware that among Christians, Protestants especially, there is a diversity of opinion on this subject. And some very serious Christians seem to be in doubt respecting what are precisely the effects of baptism, upon infants particularly. And, perhaps, it would be wise in some teachers to be less positive on a subject so mysterious. It is sufficient, for my present purpose, to show that the Protestant Episcopal Church differs from the Romanists on the subject, and, especially, on the doubt and difficulty of obtaining pardon of sins committed after baptism. The Papists, if I mistake not, teach that all past sins are washed away by the act (*opus operatum*) of baptism, and that they who sin after baptism have no second fountain to wash away this uncleanness; they have no more such *easy access* to a perfect remission and forgiveness. If they do obtain pardon, it must be by their sacrament of penance, and meritorious good works, such as visiting the shrine of some saint or favorite relic. But, generally, such must, as they teach, be after death expiated by the excruciating pains of purgatory, as long, we may say, as their pope sees fit to continue these sufferings; for, according to their practice, he has full power to shorten, and even to terminate these sufferings.

Of the doctrines of our Church on this momentous subject none of you can be ignorant. She says, in her sixteenth article, "They are to be condemned which deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent." She declares to her members, as by God's word she is authorized, that "if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;" that he has commissioned his ministers "to declare and pro-

nounce to *his people*, being *penitent*, the absolution and remission of their sins. 'That he pardoneth and absolveth *all those* who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy gospel ;" and that " he hath *promised* forgiveness of sins to *all those* who, with hearty repentance and true faith, turn unto him."

In regard to the effects of baptism, we know that a part, and, I believe, the greater part of Christians have been baptized in infancy, and, of course, all the sins which they *commit* are after baptism. If any say that original sin is washed away by the *opus operatum* of that sacrament, they must, of course, hold that infants who die unbaptized are "damned." But original sin cannot be truly called *their sins*; these are what individuals actually commit. If the doctrine were true that there is no promise of forgiveness of sins committed after baptism, receiving it, in early life, especially, must seem fearful to those who are sensible of their natural infirmities. This notion was imbibed by some Christians in early centuries, and the effect was, that some delayed baptism, that they might more safely live in sin, and others, from fear that their sins after baptism would not be forgiven.\* If this notion were correct, baptizing infants would seem to be placing them in awful peril; for though we believe that some sanctifying efficacy accompanies their baptism, we have no certain evidence that they who have been baptized in their infancy, are not, other things being equal, as liable to commit sin as they who have not been baptized. If their sponsors are faithful to bring them up, as the Church requires, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, this makes a great difference. We may well hope that a truly penitent believer in Christ will be forgiven. We know that one Simon, as recorded in Acts, though baptized by a minister of Christ, "full of the Holy Ghost

\* Bingham, book XI. chapter VI.

and of wisdom," not having true repentance, was not forgiven; for an apostle declared him to be "in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity." Peter exhorted him to *repent*, which, had he done, he would probably have been forgiven.

Our Church teaches that the sanctifying grace of the sacraments depends on the state of the mind (in adults, certainly,) when received. She "requires of persons to be baptized; repentance, whereby they forsake sin, and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them." And of those who come to the Lord's supper, not only that they have repentance and faith in God's mercy, through Christ, but also a thankful remembrance of his death, a purpose to lead a new life, "and to be in charity with all men." And she declares, (Article XXV.,) that "in such only as worthily receive the sacraments they have a wholesome effect or operation." She teaches "the necessity of baptism, *where it may be had*; but she does not teach, nor does the scripture teach that there is no forgiveness to any penitent believer till he is baptized. Baptism is a sacramental sign and assurance to a penitent believer that his sins are forgiven, and that he is "a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven;" that he is a member of Christ's church, and in covenant with God, which assurance they have not, who are unbaptized. And to baptized children the same great blessings are sealed; to them it is an assurance, when they come of age and take upon themselves the sacramental obligation, that, if they repent and believe in Christ, their sins are forgiven, and that they "are children of God," and, saith St. Paul, "if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that they suffer with him." Baptism, when rightly viewed, is a great comfort, and strengthens our faith through life. To this holy sacrament may you, who were baptized in child-

hood, continually look back as to a token of God's mercy to your soul through Jesus Christ; that you live in your Saviour; and that if you sin, (in case you repent,) you have him as an advocate with the Father, who is the propitiation for your sins; "for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

§ XLVIII. We differ, also, from the Romanists respecting their claim to be exclusively the *Catholic Church*, and their denying that the title belongs to any Christians who are not of their communion, who do not bow to the authority of their pope. We hold, as do most Christians, that there is "One Catholic and Apostolic Church," including all of every age and nation who are "members incorporate in the mystical body of Christ;" it is that general or universal church, "which is the blessed company of all faithful people;" of all who "are heirs, through hope of God's everlasting kingdom." Of the impropriety of denominating any one branch of this church general "*the Catholic Church*," as though no others appertained to it, has been already noticed. They may as justly make exclusive claim to the name of Christian, as that of Catholic. They do claim, indeed, to be the whole Church, and stigmatize, as heretics, those who protest against the errors mentioned in the sections preceding; even the Greek Church, which is more ancient, and less corrupt than themselves, they do not allow to be of the Catholic Church. The reason of their being so tenacious of this title is sufficiently evident. And, also, as I would here particularly observe, you may easily see the reason why they are so ready to complain of being treated with disrespect, when they are designated by words the most appropriate and suitable to distinguish them from other Christians; such as Papists, Popish, Popery, and the like. No other Christians, I believe, are in like manner querulous and arrogant in their claims to respect. Others are,

as they ought to be, willing to be distinguished by such appellations as are most characteristic of their tenets, or of what is most peculiar to themselves. One sect of Christians is distinguished by peculiar notions respecting baptism, and they are willing to be called Baptists. They, whose most distinguishing tenet is that every congregation of Christians is a complete church and independent of all others, make no complaint of being called Congregationalists or Independents. We who, in this country, are most distinguished by adherence to the Episcopal government, or the order of bishops in Christ's church, are willing to be distinguished as Episcopalians, and our religion as Episcopacy; and when called prelatists, we make no complaint. So, too, there are many who maintain that the true Church of Christ is neither Congregational nor Episcopal, but Presbyterian, and they are not offended at being called Presbyterians.

Now there is no one sect or part of the Church Catholic, by any one tenet so strikingly distinguished from all others, as the Church of Rome is by its popes. They are an order of ecclesiastical rulers peculiar to that church; necessary, indeed, to its hierarchy and very existence as a distinct part of the Church Universal. How then can they be otherwise so well and so accurately distinguished from other Christians as by such appellations as refer to that, their most distinguishing tenet? We view the Romanists as a respectable body of Christians, and would not treat them, — I certainly would not treat them disrespectfully. We often call them Catholics, in compliance with custom, and in complaisant submission to their uncharitable claims, not meaning by such phraseology to allow that they have any better claim to it than the Greek Church, or the Church of England, or of Russia. They call us *heretics*, a most opprobrious term, and deny to us any hope of salvation, while they would have you think it dis-

respectful to call them Papists ; though their whole system depends on the pope's supremacy ! I am thus particular respecting this point, that you may be reminded of the reason and the propriety of our denying to them the exclusive right to the term Catholic, and of the unreasonableness of their complaint of being treated with disrespect, when we call them Papists. The reason why they are so tenacious of this title, you can easily perceive ; it is to support this claim of being the whole Universal Church, " out of which there is no salvation."

§ XLIX. Protestants differ from Papists in the number of days appropriated to the commemoration of saints departed this life. By the latter, almost every day of the year is thus appropriated. By us, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, some few of such days are observed, in commemoration of saints, not of doubtful character, but of the holy Evangelists and first inspired teachers of the Christian faith ; and to those few we render no idolatrous honors. It is well known that, at the Reformation, the Church of England retained some old customs, not only in compliance with the (then) popular prejudice, but from the correct principle of not separating from other Christians on account of things in themselves indifferent, nor rejecting ancient usages any farther than the word of God, and the purity of religion require. The appropriation of days and seasons to the commemoration of the more remarkable events of the Saviour's history, we consider as highly proper and of good effect. The addressing prayer, or invocation to saints, is a practice, which, as the Bishop of London says, " began in poetry, and ended in idolatry." When we assemble on the saint's days, so called, for public worship, it is our duty, in obedience to the Church, to use the service appointed, — in which there is nothing superstitious or exceptionable. In regard to these days, we may



well apply the words of St. Paul to the Romans: "One man esteeming one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it." My views on this subject correspond with what the present Bishop of London has expressed in his late Charge, p. 32. "I desire *more particularly* to call your attention to the duty incumbent upon you, of celebrating divine service upon each of the days on which we commemorate the leading events in the history of our blessed Lord; not only his nativity, crucifixion, and resurrection, but his circumcision, his manifestation to the Gentiles, and his glorious ascension." He evidently thinks, as I certainly do, that "those observances, which are appointed in honor of our blessed Lord himself, and the solemn commencement of our great penitential fast, (Ash Wednesday,) are entitled to peculiar respect."

I have now mentioned forty-nine particulars of the practice of the Western Church in the sixteenth century, which we view as corrupt, idolatrous, and contrary to the revealed will of God, and, accordingly, reject them. Many others might be added, such as their addition to the three orders of the Christian ministry, and setting up one called the pope, claiming authority over all the churches, and also over the kings, and rulers, and nations of the earth, and the power of setting aside the laws of God. Also, various orders of Monks, Jesuits, and Friars, devoted to the papal hierarchy. These, and others, we reject, as not belonging to the Christian ministry. Those who are truly the governors and teachers in the Church they have degraded, styling them the *secular* clergy, and their authority is in a great degree usurped by popes, cardinals, abbots, and other monks. With them, all bishops are sub-

ject to the pope. “*Bishop of bishops* was an idea abhorred by the primitive church.”

I might notice many superstitious fooleries and puerile conceits, which, to say the least, are worse than useless. There is in our fallen nature a propensity to substitute forms and ceremonies for the true spiritual religion of the heart, the inward fear and worship of Almighty God. The word of God requires us, through Jesus Christ, the one and only Mediator, to “worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him.” The slavery of formal ordinances is a bondage from which Christ has redeemed us, and the folly of returning to that slavery St. Paul has very fully shown. If any one doubts this, let him read the Epistle to the Galatians.

In the style, and manner, and neglect, of preaching, a reformation was much needed. The little preaching then in use, was chiefly on the legends of saints, pretended miracles, the authority of the Church, the increase of its revenues, and the distinctive principles, or rather practices of the papal system. To give one sample from a thousand, when Zuinglius, afterwards a great reformer, appeared to take charge of the church in Zurich, to which he was elected, the chapter fearing that he might favor the Reformation, “it was agreed that *the most important duties attached to his new office, should be distinctly pointed to him.* You will use your utmost diligence, he was gravely admonished, in collecting the revenues of the chapter, not overlooking the smallest item. You will exhort the faithful, both from the pulpit and in the confessional, to pay all dues and tithes, and to testify, by their offerings, their love to the *Church.* You will be careful to increase the income that arises from the sick, from masses, and, in general, from all ecclesiastical ordinances. The chapter added, As to the administration of the sacraments, preaching, and personally watching over the

flock, these also are among the duties of the priest; but for the performance of these you may employ a vicar to act in your stead; especially in *preaching*."\*

We may well suppose that such regulations did not cause him to be less favorable to the Reformation. Enriching the Church was much more regarded than the renewal of the mind with holy affections, and the wood of the cross, than the evangelical doctrines of him who suffered upon it. Preaching "Jesus Christ and him crucified," is the ordinance which God has appointed for producing "repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ." We know, indeed, as St. Paul says, that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;" but, as the same apostle adds, "How shall they *call on him* in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" Were there no other good fruit of the Reformation, than this which it has so wonderfully produced, the preaching Jesus Christ as "the way, and the truth, and the life," as "the end of the law for righteousness to every one who believeth," we might well believe that it is the work of God, ordered by his overruling providence, though fallible men, and, perhaps, some worldly, wicked men, were made the instruments of this wonderful revival.

We may say with Bishop Stillingfleet, that we charge the Romanists "with those reasons for separation which the scripture allows; such as idolatry, perverting the gospel and institutions of Christ, and tyranny over the consciences of men, in making things necessary to salvation which Christ never made so. But none of these things can, with any

\* D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation. Vol. II. p. 311.

appearance of reason, be charged on the Church of England, since we profess to give religious worship only to God. We worship no images; we invoke no saints; we adore no host; we creep to no crucifix; we kiss no relics. We equal no traditions with the gospel; we lock it not up from the people, in an unknown language; we preach no other terms of salvation than Christ and his apostles did; we set up no monarchy in the Church, to undermine Christ, and to dispense with his laws and institutions. We mangle no sacraments, nor pretend to know what makes more for the honor of his blood, than he did himself. We pretend to no skill in expiating men's sins when they are dead; nor turning the bottomless pit into the pains of purgatory, by a charm of words and a quick motion of the hand. We do not cheat men's souls with false bills of exchange, called indulgences, nor give out that we have the treasure of the Church in our keeping, which we can apply as we have occasion. We use no pious frauds to delude the people, nor pretend to be infallible. These are the things which the divines of our Church have, with great clearness and strength of reason, made good against the Church of Rome."\*

I omit even to mention many things which we deem as superstitious, and tending to idolatry. Those which I have noticed are abundantly sufficient to the object which I have in view, — to inform such of our people as have not given much attention to the subject, of the points of controversy between Papists and Protestants, and how great was the necessity of a reformation. Allow me, brethren, to repeat, that it is against these heresies, idolatries, and corrupt practices, that we protest, and not against any church of Christ. In rejecting those corruptions, we do not separate from the "One Catholic and Apostolic Church," but rather adhere to it more stead-

\* Stillingfleet's Works. Vol. II. p. 649.

fastly, and in its greater purity. And, as St. Peter said to those who had "made the commandment of God of none effect by their tradition," "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto men, more than unto God, judge ye."

Having, in many of the last sections, shown the reasons and necessity of the great Reformation in the sixteenth century, it seems to be proper, before I dismiss the subject, that some brief notice should be taken of the principal objections which the Romanists urge against it.

One objection, often urged, and the most relied upon, is the division among Protestants. This they think to be a good proof that the Reformation is an evil work: that men should not be allowed to "search the scriptures," nor to judge for themselves, what are the doctrines of Christ, and where his church is to be found: that by continuing in the old corruptions, and, as the good Bishop of Arath says, *submitting to the pope*, we should all be united.

It is easy to show, and often has been shown, that the Papists have not been themselves so united, as they would have it believed. But passing that, we may reply, that to unite in what is opposed to the truth of God's word, far from being our duty, is a great sin. The apostles have taught us, by their example, even at the risk of our lives to obey God rather than man. This the reformers did, and thousands and tens of thousands accordingly and patiently suffered the most excruciating deaths. What is called union in the Church of Rome, is indeed intolerance. They have not allowed people to inquire for themselves, and to profess what they sincerely believe to be the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. Their people have no liberty of conscience; but are compelled to believe what they, who assume to be "lords over God's heritage," command, or endure prisons, pains, and death. Their remedy for divisions is the

greater evil. It is much better that Christians should be divided into as many sects or denominations as were the Corinthians in the first century, than that the conscience should be enslaved. The first settlers of this State were all united, as long as they suffered no one, who differed from their opinions, to live among them. But who of us now would be willing that those persecuting laws should be revived? Were they by any one sect of Protestants now revived, the Papists would themselves be among the loudest in complaining. Nothing will truly unite men in religion, but the renovation of their hearts by the grace of God, and faith in Jesus Christ.

This reasoning of the Papists would prove that the gospel should not be preached; because, as Christ foretold, it does "not bring peace on earth, but a sword," and produces divisions among families and friends. As our Church truly says, Article XXXIV., "It is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies be in all places one and utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed, according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word."

People, as they ever have done, will continue to differ in opinion. The early fathers of the church, of whom so much is said, differed in opinion one from another, and on points, too, of much importance, and some of them seem to have differed from themselves. Christians were divided in the apostles' days, and much more in the three centuries next following. This is shown by many writers.\*

I have often wondered at the confidence with which some learned writers speak of the union and perfect harmony and agreement of the early Christians. In what is essential, the most of them, no

\* See one of the most recent and most easy of access, Good's Divine Rule of Faith and Practice, vol. I. p. 332, &c. See, also, Mosheim, cent. I. p. ii. chapter V.

doubt, agreed; they built on one and the same foundation, Jesus Christ, as our only mediator and advocate with the Father; in other things they differed. Can any one believe that the Galatians and Philippians, when St. Paul wrote to them, were in all things agreed? Of no church do the scriptures speak more than of that at Corinth. Though they were so enriched by the divine favor, that they "came behind in no gift," yet how divided! in one church four denominations! how irreverent at the Lord's supper! how irregular in their prayer-meetings! Look, also, at the seven churches of Asia. How soon a large part of them had erred! According to the number of professing Christians, there were more sects, and heresies, and schisms, in the two first centuries, than at the present time; and none at the present day are more extravagant or absurd. Any one who doubts this, needs but to read the short, but very learned work of Peter King on the Apostles' Creed. Indeed, most of the heresies of modern times are old ones revived under new names. The word and the Spirit of God, with the doctrines and sacraments of Jesus Christ, are the true bond of union among Christians.

Division among Christians is a great evil; but God, who is infinitely wise and governs all things, can, and he does make it subservient to some good, as might easily be shown. When this subject is rightly viewed, we need not wonder at St. Paul's rejoicing that *Christ was preached of contention* even. It is vastly better that he should be preached "of good-will;" but when the true doctrines of the cross are preached from a spirit of emulation and sectarian zeal, some good is produced; the knowledge of Christ is extended, and souls are converted to God. In this we should all rejoice, and may the Lord help us to say, "We will rejoice

In our Lord's parable of the tares of the field, he teaches his disciples to be very cautious in any at-

tempts to root them out, lest the good wheat should be injured. By no Christians has this precept been disregarded more than by the Church of Rome. Under pretence of purifying the church from heresy and error, they have exceedingly injured the good wheat; thousands and myriads of the best and most pious Christians have they put to death. Indeed, it may be generally and truly said, that in their persecution they have rooted up the wheat and left the tares to grow.

Another objection often made is, that the reformers were wicked, ungodly men. That such an objection should come from such a quarter, all, who have any knowledge of what the Church of Rome then was, and for centuries had been, may well wonder. Protestants boast of no perfection or infallibility. If Paul considered himself as among the *chief of sinners*, well may a sense of our unworthiness humble us before God, and cause the best Christians daily to pray, as Christ has taught them, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." We know, too, that the infinitely wise God can make the wrath of man to praise him; the evil designs of the wicked to promote the good purposes of his providence, and to turn out for the furtherance of the gospel. And were the reformers as bad, as malice can represent them, it would not in any degree prove that the doctrines of Christ, maintained by Protestants, are not according to the word and will of God; nor that they have rejected any thing as idolatrous and corrupt, which was taught by Christ and his apostles. With this view of depreciating the good work of the Reformation, no one character has been more stigmatized and pointed at than Henry VIII. of England. It is an unpleasant thing to speak of the faults of any individual; of those, especially, who profess to believe in Jesus Christ. But I could never see that Protestants, as such, have any interest, more than Papists, in de-



fending the character and morals of that king. He rejected, (very wisely, I think,) the pope's supremacy. It was chiefly a political question, whether a foreign power should have rule and collect tribute in England. The time, we may hope, is not far distant, when all kings will have the wisdom and moral courage to do the like. The time has already come, when, evidently in consequence of the Reformation, the pope can no longer place his foot on the necks of kings and emperors, nor compel them to hold his stirrup, while he mounts his horse. Excepting this point of the supremacy, which Henry for political, and, I fear, from selfish reasons rejected, he remained till his death, a bigoted and persecuting Papist.

“Talk they of morals?” There was no one thing that called louder for a reformation, than the immorality of Christians, of the clergy especially, and of the monks chiefly, at the commencement of the sixteenth century. The Papists themselves, the more pious of the clergy and laity throughout Europe, deeply lamented the depravity of the times, and demanded a reformation of many abuses. And it required the utmost art and energy of the pope, “the man of sin,” and the aid of his monks and cardinals, to prevent a general reform. Let those who read the very abusive language uttered and published against Henry VIII., and his second wife, and against Luther even, read also the history of Pope Alexander VI., — his court, his mistresses, and his most infamous children. They lived at the time of Henry and Luther; and people of more abandoned, wicked lives cannot well be found on the page of history. Are the Papists the people to *cast the stone* at Henry and Luther?

It will suffice here to add, that the reformers gave abundant proof of their sincerity and renouncing the world; — of their faith in Christ and trust in God, by the sufferings and deaths, which, in defence of the gospel, they so patiently endured.

Protestants are sometimes asked, "Where was your Church before Luther lived?" And they have but to answer, "Where it now is, and ever will be to the end of the world." The Reformation has founded no new church. How often must we repeat, that rejecting what is false and erroneous, makes no change in that which is true? We protest against no church of Christ; but against the errors and idolatrous superstitions which Popery has added to the truth of God.

Some have said, that the Reformation is a *failure*. As well may they say that Christianity is a failure. Where will you find Christians more pure in doctrine, — more holy in practice, — more tolerant in spirit, — more free from idolatry; in worship more scriptural, or in zeal more engaged in propagating the true principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ, than in Protestant churches? Though earnestly engaged in "fighting the good fight of faith," the "weapons of their warfare are not carnal." Our prospects of success and of doing good were never more encouraging than at the present time. And, as it seems to me, he must be much prejudiced or willfully blind, who does not see, that the Reformation has effected and is still effecting great and permanent good in the One Catholic and Apostolic Church. Whether or not it be a failure, something perhaps may be added hereafter.

Having said something in reply to the objection to the Reformation, it seems proper to add some few remarks upon the good fruits which have resulted from it. To do justice to this subject would require a volume. I would briefly remind you, that,

1. It has evidently produced some reformation in the Church of Rome. Compare the *morals* of the court of Rome since the Reformation, with what they were during the three centuries previous, and you will be surprised at the contrast. The *power* of

that court has been very much diminished. The thunders of the Vatican, at which the world then trembled, are now heard with pity, mingled with contempt. That infernal and most horrid machine of Popery, the Inquisition, we trust in God will not much more, by any Christians, be tolerated. That lucrative traffic, the sale of indulgences, has, in consequence of the Reformation, become, comparatively an unprofitable business.

2. The ungodly spirit and bloody hand of persecution have been very much restrained, and toleration, on true Christian principles, is happily and very much increased. In this good work the Reformation has uniformly taken the lead and is now far ahead.

3. The true spirit of missions, and efforts to convert the heathen, not by carnal weapons, or by hiding or perverting the truth, but by that "sword of the spirit, which is the word of God." Preaching more generally the doctrines of Jesus Christ, and him crucified, is also among the noble fruits of the Reformation.

4. The preaching of the Roman clergy has been changed for the better, especially in Protestant countries. They now preach less of saints and relics; of masses and purgatory, of popes and "mother church," and more of Christ. In this last, I fear, they are still in all countries much deficient, and that the worship of Mary, where Protestants are not spectators, is but little diminished.

5. The Reformation has produced far more kindly feeling toward the Jews, and labors to open their eyes to their true Messiah, not by the Inquisition, but by their own holy scriptures, and by the gentle means of persuasion and love. It was owing to the spirit and power of Popery, that they were formerly persecuted in England, even.

6. And easily might it be shown, and evidently indeed may it be seen, that the Reformation has

been, to a great degree, instrumental in diffusing a correct knowledge of the civil, as well as the religious rights of men, and of enlightening the people in the true principles of liberty and free government. Very much more might be added on the subject of the good which Protestants have effected.

Should any one ask, seeing the Church of Rome has apparently, in some degree reformed, why we should not, as the Bishop of Arath urges, return to it? I answer,

1. It is a reformation forced upon it; the Romanists will themselves tell you that they never change. And,

2. Why should we go to them? rather they reject their errors and unite with us. Have we not the words of eternal life?

3. We never have departed from the One Catholic and Apostolic Church. We have merely rejected what is unscriptural, superstitious, idolatrous and false.

4. We would gladly, and are ready to unite with them and all Christians, in whatever "is good unto the use of edifying," and according to the word of God. And,

5. To unite with any Christians in what is erroneous or unscriptural, is going, not *to* the true catholic church, but *from* it.

It must be acknowledged that the court of Rome knows wonderfully well, how to turn all times, and changes, and events, to its own advantage. They are certainly "wise as serpents," whether or not they are "harmless as doves." "The children of this world are wise in their generation," and "the children of light" may learn something from their consistency and zeal. And so may Protestants from the Romanists.

In the Edinburgh Review of Parke's History of the Popes, No. CXLV., are remarks upon this sub-

ject, which the reader, I trust, will readily excuse my transcribing.

“It is impossible,” says the reviewer, “to deny that the polity of the Church of Rome is the very master-piece of human wisdom. In truth, nothing but *such polity* — could have borne up *such doctrines*. We will, at present, advert to only one important part of the polity of the Church of Rome. She thoroughly understands, what no other church has ever understood, how to deal with enthusiasts. In some sects, particularly in infant sects, enthusiasm is suffered to be rampant. In other sects, particularly in sects long established and richly endowed, it is regarded with aversion. The Catholic (Roman) Church, neither submits to enthusiasm, nor proscribes it; but *uses* it. She knows that when religious feelings have obtained the complete empire of the mind, they impart a strange energy; they raise men above the dominion of pain and pleasure. She knows that a person in this state is no object of contempt. He may be vulgar, ignorant, visionary, extravagant; but he will do and suffer things, which it is for her interest that some one should do and suffer; yet from which calm and sober-minded men would shrink. She accordingly enlists him in her service; assigns him some forlorn hope; sends him forth with her benediction and applause. The ignorant enthusiast, whom the Anglican Church makes her enemy, and, whatever the polite and learned may think, a dangerous enemy, the Roman Church makes a champion. She bids him nurse his beard, covers him with a gown and hood of coarse dark stuff, ties a rope round his waist, and sends him forth to teach in her name. He costs her nothing. He takes not a ducat away from the revenues of her beneficed clergy. He lives by the alms of those who respect his spiritual character, and are thankful for his instructions. He preaches, not exactly in the style of Masillon, but in a way which moves the passions of

uneducated hearers ; and all his influence is employed to strengthen the church of which he is a minister. In this way, the Church of Rome unites in herself all the strength of establishment, and all the strength of dissent. With the utmost pomp of a dominant hierarchy above, she has all the energy of the voluntary system below. It would be easy to mention very recent instances, in which the hearts of hundreds of thousands, estranged from her by the selfishness, sloth and cowardice of the beneficed clergy, who have been brought back by the zeal of the begging friars.

“Even for female agency there is a place in her system. To devout women she assigns spiritual functions, dignities, and magistracies. In our country, if a noble lady is wooed by more than ordinary zeal, &c. &c. At Rome, the countess of Huntington would have a place in the calendar as St. Selina ; and Mrs. Fry would be foundress and first superior of the Blessed Order of Sisters of the Gods.

“Place Ignatius Loyala at Oxford ; he is certain to become the head of a formidable secession. Place John Wesley at Rome ; he is certain to be the first general of a new society devoted to the interests and honor of the church. Joanna Southcote, at Rome, would found an order of Barefooted Carmelites, every one of whom is ready to suffer martyrdom for the church ; a solemn festival is consecrated to her memory, and her statue, placed over the holy water, would strike the eye of every stranger who enters St. Peter’s.” Diversity of opinion, which divides Protestants into parties and sects, Rome so uses as to increase her numbers, and strengthen her power. In this she is “wiser in her generation than” Protestants. We are, undoubtedly, unwise in suffering things of little or no importance to divide us ; and not only unwise, but sinful, in suffering such divisions to excite animosities and uncharitableness between those of differing denom-

inations. Though we worship in separate communions, if we would all worship the same God and Saviour, teach essentially the same doctrines, in the unity of one and the same spirit, and if all of us, each in his own way, were to labor in love, the ill effect of our divisions would be very much diminished. They who believe in and practise what is essential to Christianity, and necessary to salvation, should love as brethren. And especially at the present time, when the religion of Christ is so powerfully assailed by those who add to God's word on the one hand, and take from it on the other, all who build on the foundation of Christ should unite in one and the same spirit, if not in the same mode of worship.

No believer in Christ should permit his faith to be weakened or disturbed by those divisions; they were foretold by Christ and his apostles; they are the fulfilment of prophecies, and however they may disgrace religion, they confirm its truth. And, for the encouragement of Protestant Episcopalians I would add, that if our Church adheres steadfastly to her distinctive principles and her present standards, she is likely to be a happy asylum for all who would avoid the idolatrous corruptions, or the specious infidelity, by which the religion of Christ is beset, on the right and on the left.

I have now finished my remarks, which are intended to remind you of the corruptions which we deem to be idolatrous, unscriptural, and inconsistent with the religion which Christ has established and his apostles preached. You stand now on solid ground. Take heed that you are not enticed to depart from it. "To the law and to the testimony." Use the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free. "Search the scriptures," and pray God so to enlighten your minds, that you may truly understand them.

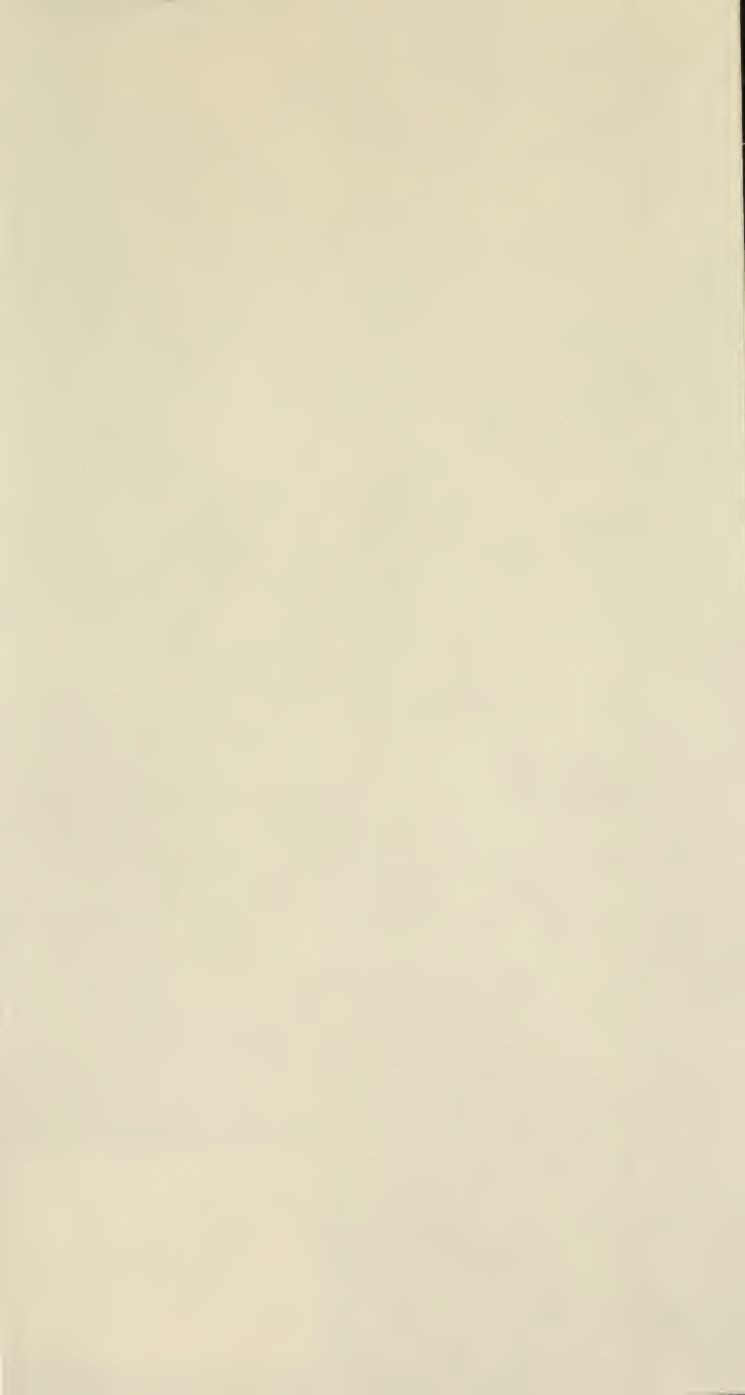
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**RD-17**











Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: Jan. 2006

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