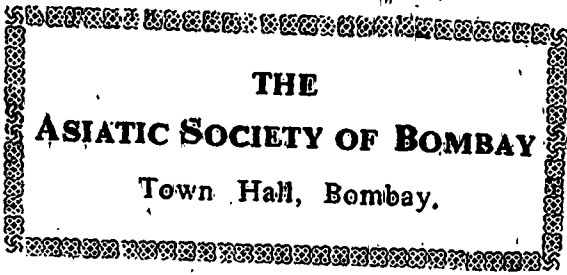


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**THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY**
Town Hall, Bombay.

THE OECUMENICAL COUNCIL

AND THE

INFALLIBILITY OF THE ROMAN PONTIFF:

A PASTORAL LETTER TO THE CLERGY

&c.

BY

111075

HENRY EDWARD

O.C.
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ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

LONDON:

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

1869.

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET



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CHAPTER I.

REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN,

In publishing, on the 27th of last May, the Apostolic Letters which direct us to invoke, in every Mass, the light of the Holy Ghost for the guidance of the coming Œcumenical Council, I refrained from adding any words of my own. But as the time now draws near when it will be my duty to leave you for a season, it seems fitting, and you may perhaps expect, that I should freely express to you the thoughts awakened by this event, and the intentions for which we ought to pray.

It has been said again and again, by those who desire what they say to be true, that the indiction of a General Council in ages past stirred the whole world, but in these days is received with complete indifference. If it be so, then the need of a General Council is proved, and the reason for convoking it is evident. If the Christian world be in a state of coma, it is time that the physicians should consult together. But is it the fact that the coming Council is ignored? What event in the last two years has excited so much attention? In what country of the Christian world has it been passed over in silence?

What Government has not occupied itself about it? There have been interpellations in legislatures, diplomatic circulars, hundreds of articles in a thousand journals in all countries of Europe, speeches in convocations, books, pamphlets, and letters in newspapers from the invited and the uninvited, an universal stir and excitement, not indeed within the unity of the Catholic Church, where all is calm in the strength of quiet and of confidence, but outside, in the political and religious world. The diagnosis of the case is, therefore, hardly correct. The patient is not insensible, but highly sensitive; lethargic at times, perhaps, and unconscious of the extent of his maladies, but fully alive to what is passing around him and impending over him in the future. It is true, indeed, that the indiction of the Council of Trent, for example, fell upon the conscience of Christian Europe while as yet it was visibly united to the Holy See. The errors of the so-called Reformation were already in activity, and the minds of men were deeply moved by many passions. The Civil Powers of Europe were then all Catholic, and had therefore a large participation in the Council. Now all is changed. Half of Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, England and Scotland, have ceased to be Catholic. The Civil Powers in countries of which the people remain wholly or almost altogether Catholic, are so no longer. It is not to be expected that they will be moved by hope or by fear, by good or by ill will towards the Council in which they have foregone their share. Nevertheless, even among them, both in public and in private, the

coming Council already exerts an influence which is ever increasing in strength and in significance.

So true is this, that the question, who have or have not been invited, or who have or have not a right to sit in the Council, has been raised by many who are not of the unity of the Catholic Church. We should have thought that this question would solve itself. The convocation of Parliament is addressed only to its members, and its members are those only who are subjects of the Crown and are duly invested with the right to sit. The indiction of the Council is addressed to the Bishops of the Catholic Unity, who are subject to the authority of the Church, and members of its world-wide empire. By the Bull of Indiction all Bishops are, not invited, but obliged to attend. It is not an invitation, but a citation. They can be released from the obligation to appear only by the Supreme Authority which imposes it. It has been erroneously imagined that the two Apostolic Letters addressed, the first, to the Schismatical Bishops of the East, and the second, to all Protestants and others not Catholic, were issued to give an Œcumenical character to the Council. But this is a transparent error. The Council, by containing either numerically or morally the Pastors of the whole Flock throughout the world, subject to the Apostolic See, is thereby, *ipso facto*, Œcumenical. These two letters, therefore, were addressed in paternal charity to those who once were, and now unhappily are no longer, of the Catholic Unity. Their presence is not needed to make the Council Œcumenical. They are exhorted to avail

themselves of the moment of reconciliation and of peace offered by the assembling of the Council; and all alike on one and the same condition, namely, a recognition and submission to the Divine Authority of the Catholic and Roman Church, by which the Council will assemble, deliberate, and make decrees. They who have the Episcopal character validly impressed by undoubted consecration would, upon submission to the Divine Authority of the Church, be admitted to sit with the Episcopate of the Catholic world. The invitation therefore is, first, to reconciliation, and then to verification of their episcopal character. The Bishops of the Churches in the East, now in separation from the Catholic Church, are without doubt, for the most part, validly consecrated. They might, upon the renunciation of schism and any doctrinal error, at once be restored to their rank as Bishops. There are others in the West claiming the episcopal character, and claiming likewise to be Catholic, as the Jansenists of the Low Countries, and others again nearer home. If they believe their episcopal character to be unjustly doubted or denied, the way is open for examination and redress. It is not for me to say what the Supreme Authority may or may not see fit to do. But this, at least, I may venture to say, for this the Supreme Authority has already done. It has invited all those who are now separate from its unity to avail themselves of this occasion. Let them bring before the coming Council any cause in which they have been wronged; any claims which have not yet been heard, any alleged rights of which

they have been deprived. Three hundred years of contention, misery, and declining faith—not to go deeper into the dark memories of the past—may well turn the hearts of men once more to the Church in which their forefathers believed and died. God is not glorified by divisions, nor is our Divine Master honoured by contradictions among those who teach in His name. Let us hope, pray, and labour for unity in the truth. There are many signs of the times which betoken a happier day. Not to go further back than the last forty years, there has come over England a change which may be felt. A distinguished French writer has said that in the midst of the old England which is passing away, a new England is arising. The England of penal laws, and slavery, and unequal legislation is gone; the England of to-day has emancipated men from religious penalties, abolished slavery, and given equal laws to the people of these realms. This new England of to-day, with all its maladies—and they are indeed grievous and menacing, inherited from the sins of our forefathers—is, nevertheless, just, fair, merciful, and generous. There is a benevolence growing up where once was ill-will; and a reaction has set in towards those who have been wronged and falsely accused. Of this, evidence is on every side, in private and in public life; and this will have results hereafter which the most sanguine now do not venture to express. There may, perhaps, be found here and there some half-educated minds, or some interested and violent persons, who keep up the old rail against the Catholic religion. But the English people do not now believe you and me to be idolaters.

Twenty years ago many did so. But the light of day, and their own good sense, has destroyed this superstition. They know us to believe in many mysteries of the supernatural order; but they profess to believe in supernatural mysteries themselves. They cannot call us superstitious or credulous, without accepting the name themselves. They are coming also to see that the supernatural order needs a more solid and stable foundation than they can find in the midst of their many contradictions; they see that at last they are compelled in argument to rest upon the witness and testimony of Christendom. But for whom does Christendom bear its witness? The day is past for appeals to antiquity. If Christianity and the Christian Scriptures are to be maintained in controversy against sceptical criticism, the unbroken, world-wide witness of the Catholic Church must be invoked. This consciousness of dependence has worked like a benign influence upon the minds of those who believe Christianity to be a divine revelation, and the books of Scripture to be inspired. And I joyfully bear witness that a pious belief in these two divine truths pervades the English people. In saying this I do not forget the materialism, ignorance, indifference, practical atheism of millions. Nevertheless the Christian tradition of England, though grievously mutilated and robbed of its divine authority, still survives. There are in the Anglican communion, and among Nonconformists, millions who believe in Jesus Christ, His person and His redemption, with a heartfelt and loving faith; and their faith bears noble fruits. Many of their errors

come from a jealousy for these very truths. It was a master-stroke of the enemy of truth to make them reject the words and the will of Jesus Christ out of jealousy for His Person and His work. As they who killed His disciples believed they were doing a service to God, so they rejected the unity and authority of His Church and sacraments ordained by Him, and doctrines which came from His mouth, in the belief that they were thereby honouring His Person and His truth. But this illusion of the One has been at last found out. Fair and truthful minds acknowledge at this day that every truth for which they profess to be jealous is menaced, and in a multitude of minds altogether lost. But they cannot deny that in the Catholic Church these very truths are not lost or menaced, but universally taught and believed in all fulness and precision. The mission and work of the Catholic Church in England is like that of S. Paul in Corinth. In the midst of a highly civilised, intellectual, luxurious, refined, philosophical, and contentious race, he preached 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' Some asked for signs and others for wisdom; some were incredulous, others were critical; they sought after learning, eloquence, logic: he preached, affirmed, and re-affirmed again, as one having authority, sustained by a consciousness of a mission and a message both alike divine. Men chafed against both the matter and the manner, and against the manner even more than the matter of his teaching. It was perpetual affirmation. They would not see that his divine authority was a part of his message, and that the divine cer-

tainty of what he taught was the foundation of that authority; that their 'faith might not stand on the wisdom of man, but on the power of God.'* If the people of England indeed believe in 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified,' we shall soon see the unity of faith arising out of our endless confusions: for to believe in Him we must know who He is, that is, that He is God, consubstantial, co-eternal, co-equal with the Father and the Holy Ghost, therefore we must know the Holy Trinity, One God in three persons and His Manhood, therefore His Incarnation, the perfect natures in One Divine Person, and thereby also the dignity of His blessed Mother as Mother of God. We must believe also what He has done for us, that is, the redemption by His most precious blood; what He has taught us, or the whole undiminished truth which He has revealed; and what He has commanded us, or all the institutions and obligations of His moral and positive law. All these four assemblages of truth are contained in the knowledge of 'Jesus Christ and Him crucified.' No one can be said to know Him who does not know who He is, what He has done, what He has taught, what He has commanded; but no one can know these things who does not know the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, the whole doctrine of faith, the whole order of the Church, its unity and authority, the institution of the Holy Sacraments, with all the grace they convey and the obligations they impose. But this is to know the Catholic Faith and the Catholic Church; and as men become once

* 1 Cor. ii. 5.

more calm and candid, as the storms and passions of three hundred years subside, they will see that in their haste and illusions they have wounded Him whom they professed to honour, and have destroyed His work whom they have desired to serve.

For the last thirty years there has been an awakening in the mind of England, such as, for three hundred years, has never been before. There is a sense of loss and of privation, an honest acknowledgment of the evil done by the so-called reformers ; a desire to restore what has been broken down ; a painful consciousness of division, contention, and uncertainty ; a conviction that these things are contrary to the will and commandment of our Divine Master : an aspiration after unity, a hunger for truth, a longing after the return of the Divine Presence which once dwelt in the old churches of England. Besides this, there is a consciousness that the Church of Christ cannot be cribbed up within four seas ; that it fills the world, and that the insular Christianity of England, even if it were perfectly united in itself, could not live long when disunited from the Christian world. The spread of the British Empire, and the spread of Anglicanism to the colonies, has still more powerfully awakened this aspiration for a higher unity. Wheresoever the insular religion of England goes, it finds a Church and a Faith before it, which contains islands and continents, and the whole world, in its unbroken unity. The colonies of Great Britain are acting powerfully, both in politics and religion, on the mother country. They both give and receive an influence which will deeply modify and assimilate

the whole British Empire to a type, not of the past, but of the future. The mother country has impressed its outlines upon the colonies; the colonies are now silently but surely transforming the mother country into their own likeness. But neither will ultimately prevail. Another image and likeness is returning upon both. The great principles, axioms, and maxims of our English law, derived from Catholic times and from the Catholic Church, lie imperishable at the foundation of our political order. They have been carried throughout our colonies, and have reproduced in all our dependencies a political and social homogeneous to our own. This unity of first principles would seem to promise for the British Empire a future of solidity and endurance, if only the insular narrowness of England be wisely effaced. The Tudor legislation in religion, which for three hundred years has afflicted England and persecuted Ireland, has never been able to establish itself in our colonies. There, the Catholic Church has been always freer than it is even now in England and in Ireland. The abolition of the Tudor statutes is as certain as the rising of the sun to-morrow. In Ireland it is already done. In England it will not long tarry. A larger and more living spirit of justice and charity is bursting the bands which human violence imposed upon the liberty of divine faith. In this our colonies led the way, and the mother country must inevitably follow. We have seemed to be paradoxical and provoking when we say that S. Thomas of Canterbury is regaining his hold on the hearts of Englishmen. But it is emphatically true. He died for the liberties

of the Church ; and the liberties of the Church, howsoever they may be embodied in some particular cause in debate, resolve themselves ultimately and necessarily into these two principles, or axioms of faith : the one, that no human authority whatsoever of kings, princes, legislatures, or human laws may come between the soul and God ; the other, that this perfect liberty of the soul in faith is derived from God, and has for its witness, guide and guardian, the Divine Authority of His Church. The English people have long professed the former of these truths. Even the established religion, the whole history of which is at variance with this principle, perpetually asserts it. One half of the English people have vindicated it by suffering under penal laws, unto bonds and death. It is this profound conviction which has helped to abolish the State Church in Ireland. The accumulated action of the colonies, of Ireland, and of half the population of Great Britain, will inevitably, and before long, abolish the state religion in England. The British Empire then, both in its political and its religious life, will have burst its bands, and will reconstitute itself upon a wider base than the area of our four seas. What faith, and what unity then, will be commensurate to such an empire, it is not difficult to foresee. Even the Russian despotism is powerless to maintain the unity of the Greek Church. Half the Russian population dissents from the established religion. If liberty of faith were granted, no church would long stand but that which is the fountain, guide and guardian, of the liberty of faith. To manifest this to the world, the Divine Head of the Church seems so to order

its destinies that the two chief fields of its power and expansion should be the British Empire and the United States. In these two vast spheres of intense intellectual activity and vehement energy of will, an episcopate of a hundred and seventy Bishops rules over missionary churches the most united, vigorous, and prolific to be found in the whole world. I do not know how others may have regarded the assembly of the Anglican Bishops of England and America two years ago. Something may indeed have invited the criticism as much of their own flocks as of others. But to me it was a subject of hope. It was an explicit evidence of the desire for unity which is working in various ways on every side. They, no doubt, desired to confine that union within their own system; but they felt that the insular narrowness of England is not enough. They invited America and the colonies to bear a part. This alone proved a wider desire and a higher aspiration, which such an assembly can never satisfy. It gave a great impulse to those who have been praying for reunion. They do not fear to declare that America and Australia are not enough without Catholic Europe; and that even Constantinople is not enough without Rome. These ideas have been scattered broadcast; and where they have lighted they have infused desires and prayers in myriads of hearts up and down in England and throughout the Anglican system, which nothing can extinguish, nothing can stay. They will work on in silence with a potency which is not of man only, preparing for a time when those who are separate from the only unity of Divine foundation will be irresistibly absorbed by its supernatural power and grace.

It is certain, then, that in England the indiction of a General Council has come at a time when the minds of men are specially prepared for it. Even if they had been silent, their silence would not have been the silence of indifference. But there has been no silence. Both in public and in private, by word and by writing, an interest serious and respectful has been shown.

But in this country the interest felt about the Council is chiefly, if not altogether, in its bearing upon religion. In France, besides this, perhaps the chief interest arises from its bearing upon politics. The debate in the Corps Législatif in July of last year shows how profoundly the minds, not of Catholics only, but of mere politicians, are moved by the anticipations of what the Council may decree. In a moment of haste and precipitation, some French writers and politicians have interpreted the condemnations in the Syllabus as a condemnation of the principles of 1789. This is enough to rouse a great turmoil. But is it well to take for granted, and to make us who are at a distance believe, that the principles of 1789 are such as the theology and the morality of the Christian Church must condemn? We would desire to believe, if we can, that those principles, even if they bear the marks of a period of excitement rather than of calm and measured thought, are nevertheless in some way reconcilable with the great laws of political morality which lie at the foundations of human society, and are consecrated by the sanction of the Christian world. I should be sorry to believe that there is anything indelibly impressed on the

political order of the great French people which is at variance with the intellectual and moral system of the Catholic Church.

In touching on this point, so dear to that illustrious nation, as hereafter in touching once more on another subject, relating to the history of 1682, I shall refrain as far as possible from using language of my own, lest unconsciously I should do, what a French writer has lately, unreasonably I think, and without cause imputed to me; that is, in any way wound ever so lightly the dignity of France. I shall in both cases use the words of devoted and distinguished sons of that great people. The Prince de Broglie, in treating of the variance between the Church and modern society, which is so sedulously preached by those who desire to exclude the Church from the political order, says that the Catholic Church has stood in relations with civil society these eight hundred years in all lands: 'from Constantine to Charlemagne, from Charlemagne to Charles V., from Charles V. to Louis XIV., from Louis XIV. to 1789.' 'Why, then, should there be one only date, 1789, when this spirit of adaptation in Christianity has failed, and one only society which is bound to divorce Christianity on account of incompatibility of temper? . . . In reflecting on this singular fact, which is the great problem of our times, I can only find one cause to assign, namely, the abstract and philosophical character which society in France, by the organ of its legislators since 1789, has always affected to give to the principles on which it is constituted.' 'France,' he adds, 'is the only nation

which has undertaken the generous but adventurous task to labour “not for one nation in particular, but for all the human race; not for one time, but for all times.” ‘The only thing I shall permit myself to say is, that it is this philosophical character, impressed on all our laws, which has passed also into our manners and our language, that brings with it a complication, until now without example in the relations of a State, and of a society, with the Christian religion, and even with any religion whatsoever.’ ‘To recognise the principles of 1789 with the character of universal obligation which they affect, is to add an appendix to the Catechism, and ten or twelve articles to the Creed.’ ‘The French Revolution in making itself philosopher, metaphysician, and almost theologian, has entered upon the territory of the spiritual. It is a Church which it opposes to the Church, and a new Catholicism which it desires to substitute for, or associate with, the old. A concordat is not enough; many a Council would be necessary to complete such an operation. Such is, to my mind, the true point of difference between society in France and the Church. It does not limit itself, as all its predecessors, to demanding of the faithful and of their pastors to pay the taxes, observe the laws, lend their aid to the regular action of public functions: it exacts of them on points of doctrine, such as the origin of sovereignty, the liberty of thought, the natural equality of man, a veritable profession of faith, accompanied by an *amende honorable* for all adhesion, in other places and at other times, to doctrines contrary to itself.’ ‘It is not very surprising

that a great institution, which has charge of souls in all the world, should hesitate to commit itself to a symbol of ideas so wanting in precision as to lend itself in fifty years to the Constitution of '91, the Charter of 1830, and to the *Plébiscite* of 1862.'

He then points out the ambiguity and uncertainty of a document which may be interpreted in four or five ways. 'Is it indeed the same principle which adapts itself to two interpretations so contrary to each other? In the matter of religious liberty, how many commentaries have we not had? There is the *administrative* interpretation, which recognises no other worships than those of which the State pays the heads, and fixes the legal status. . . . There is the *liberal* interpretation, which is much more respectful to the rights of individuals. . . . There is the *revolutionary* interpretation, which gives free course to all aberrations of thought. . . . So many schools are there, all sheltering under the common name of liberty of thought, of which the doctors and disciples, intolerant enough for each other, pretend alike to exclusive orthodoxy.'

'Imagine face to face our social elements, still in effervescence and in struggle, and that old power, resting on the immovable base of dogma clearly defined, which has seen crumbling at its feet the ruins of a hundred peoples and the dust of twenty ages.' He then imagines a dialogue 'between that antique spiritual power and the impatient sons of modern France. What do you ask of me? it seems to say to them. To live in peace with your governments? But I have already signed with them more than one con-

cordat, and it is not I that desire to break them. Not to preach insurrection against your laws? I foment revolution nowhere. Do you wish me to recognise those laws as the crown of social progress, and that I should propose them as such to the imitation of the whole world, and to the admiration of future generations? That is what you will never obtain from me. Speak to me of charity, of necessity, of equity, of accomplished facts to be accepted, of acquired rights to be respected: I hear you and understand you. But do not talk to me either of the ideal or of the absolute; for the ideal for me will never be any other than the future I am awaiting, and, in my eyes, the absolute is the Truth, which I represent.' 'This lays the finger on the substance of the debate. If the society of France is willing to be taken like all its predecessors, as a mixture of good and evil, imperfect as all human things, the peace with the Church will be made, if it be not made already. But if its demand be that it should be held sacred, and all but canonised, I doubt if it will obtain that favour. All the advocates in the world, able or ardent, impassioned or powerful, statesmen and sectaries, will waste upon it their pains and their eloquence.' *

These thoughtful and pointed words are enough to assure anyone how groundless and needless are the fears of politicians in France lest the Œcumenical Council should decree anything inconsistent with the true bases of civil society. And surely no French politician will admit that the principles of 1789 are

* *Revue des Deux Mondes*, février 1869: Le Christianisme et la Société, pp. 546, 553, par Albert de Broglie.

out of square with those bases of political right. We have, however, a proof which has now attained the dignity of a very touching historical fact. Some ten years ago a young French priest, Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the seminary of Langres, Léon Godard, published a short treatise on 'The Principles of '89 in Relation to Catholic Doctrine.' His object was, if possible, to remove the supposed contrariety between the principles of '89 and the principles of the Christian Church: a wise and charitable purpose to which we are all daily invited, I may even say provoked, by the alternate tones of perplexity and of challenge which come up from friends and foes. In a matter so difficult, and so prejudged by the passions of men, it is no wonder that a good young priest should so have written as to lay himself open to censures not unjust. With the true spirit of a Catholic and a Christian, he went at once to the Holy See and submitted himself and his work to correction. The book was subjected, by the highest authority, to examination; and an edition, corrected and enlarged, was printed in Paris in 1862, with the authorisation of the Roman censors, and a truly paternal and consoling letter from the Bishop of Langres. In that letter are quoted the words of the President of the Roman theologians, addressed to the Bishop. They run as follows:—'This work, tried by a severe scrutiny by certain Roman theologians, was found by them to teach nothing in any way opposed to the dogmas of Catholic faith; wherefore they judged that it may be published.' I remember that I once saw M. Léon Godard at Rome while his book was under

examination. He had visibly upon him the marks of sickness and of anxiety. Knowing how much he had suffered from the censures which had fallen upon him, I could not but express the sympathy every Catholic feels towards those who set so noble an example of sincerity and submission. Not long after, the tidings came that Léon Godard was gone to a world where there is no more any cloud upon the truth, nor any mistrusts among the servants of God. In the conclusion of his work, M. Léon Godard writes:—‘Such is our profession of faith in regard to the principles of ’89. We believe that they do not contradict any decision of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church, to the judgment of which we submit without reserve; and we are convinced that they are in harmony, in respect to opinion, with the judgment of the most accredited doctors of the Church and of the schools.’ ‘If, then, our pen has not betrayed our thoughts, it will be seen that there is nothing in common between our doctrines and those of false liberalism.’ . . . ‘We will maintain the principle of ’89 inscribed in the constitution of our country; but with all the explanations which we have given, and which no one has a right to exclude, because, as we have said, the epoch of ’89 is one of a double face, the one good the other evil; the one liberal in the legitimate sense of the word, the other revolutionary. The tactics of our adversaries are to draw us to a complete rejection of ’89, in order at once to accuse us of a desire to set up again the *ancien régime*, with all its abuses, and to overthrow our existing laws. These tactics we will baffle, and we

will not abandon an inch of ground which we have a benefit in defending and a right to hold.' *

The work of M. Léon Godard will go a long way to relieve the fears and to rectify the misconceptions of certain politicians and political writers in France. It will show that neither the Council nor the Syllabus, interpreted, not by any individual, but by the Holy See, need cause the fears—I would venture to use a familiar word, and say the scare—which in some quarters appear now to exist.

* Les Principes de '89, et la Doctrine Catholique, par l'Abbé Léon Godard. Lecoffre, Paris, 1863.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE OPPORTUNENESS OF DEFINING THE
PONTIFICAL INFALLIBILITY.

HITHERTO our subjects have been obvious, and our way easy and clear. But now we approach to matters over which it is not possible, either to pass in silence or to venture on the declaration of any final judgment. I mean, the subjects with which the Œcumenical Council will occupy itself. You are already well aware that the preparatory congregations are seven in number, and that the matters distributed to them comprehend faith, philosophy, discipline, the relations of the Church with civil society, education, and the like.

We have heard on all sides that the Council will define this and that doctrine as of faith; then, again, we are assured that the moderation of wise men will prevent any such definitions. We learn, chiefly indeed from those who are out of the unity of the Church, but upon alleged communications from the most learned and most distinguished, as well as the wisest and most moderate, of the bishops and theologians in the Catholic Church, that this will be, and that will not be, entertained by the Œcumenical Council.

It can hardly be necessary, reverend and dear

brethren, to say to you that all these confident assurances are pleasant illusions. None but those who are admitted to the work of preparing for the Council know what is in preparation, and they are all bound by the Pontifical Secret. From them, nothing can be known; from others, nothing can be learned. As S. Augustine said: 'Nemo dare potest quod non habet.' We may therefore dismiss all those confidential communications.

But beyond this, they who believe, as we do, that an Œcumenical Council deliberates and decrees by an assistance over which human partisanship, political calculation, private interests, controversial rivalries, and human errors have no power to prevail, will have no anxiety as to the result, and no eager predispositions to express. If the Council should decide contrary to their previous judgment, they would rejoice to be corrected by its unerring guidance; if it should refrain from pronouncing on matters on which they previously believed a decision to be opportune or even necessary, they would with their whole heart submit their judgment, and believe that such a decision would be not only not necessary, but not even opportune. In this sense of perfect submission, springing from faith in the perpetual and infallible assistance of the Holy Spirit, all Catholics will await the final result of the first Council of the Vatican. All this hot anxiety as to its decrees belongs to minds used to the contentions of convocations which may err, or to the debates of Parliaments in which parties rule the day. But to those who believe with undoubting faith that the acts of the coming Council,

whatsoever they be, will be not only infallibly true, but wise and opportune, and that the result, whatever it be, will lay down a rule of faith in matters of belief, and a rule of thought and judgment in matters of prudence, there can be no anxiety, or impulsive desire for this or for that result. They will remain in a calm equilibrium of mind and will, ready with promptness and with joy to accept whatsoever decrees come forth as the wisest and the best. 'He that believeth, let him not hasten.'*

With this temper of mind, and with this submission of will, I may now take up the chief topic of the Pastoral Letter addressed to you two years ago on the Centenary of S. Peter; but, in doing so, I shall endeavour to lay it before you with the arguments adduced, *hinc inde*, on either side. We have been often told of late that one subject to be defined by the Council will be the infallibility of the Pope. They who tell us this are chiefly those who, being out of the unity of the Church, believe this doctrine to be false; and they rely upon statements made, as they allege, by Catholics few and rare in number, who do not believe the doctrine to be true, or by Catholics who, believing the doctrine to be true, nevertheless are of opinion that to define it would not be opportune.

With those who are without, we have nothing now to do. With the handful of Catholics who do not believe the infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ speaking *ex cathedrâ*, we will not now occupy ourselves. But the opinion of those who believe the doctrine to be true, but its definition to be inopportune

* Isaias xxviii. 16.

tune, deserves a full and considerate examination. We will endeavour so to weigh it, in preparation of heart to accept whatsoever may be decided by the supreme authority of the Church.

Once for all, let me repeat that we are now about to weigh the reasons, not for or against the truth of the proposition 'that the Vicar of Jesus Christ, speaking *ex cathedrâ* in matters of faith and morals, cannot err;' but assuming, for the time, that this proposition is certainly true, whether it be *opportune*, that is, timely, prudent, and expedient, that it should be defined.

I. REASONS AGAINST THE DEFINITION.

1. It may be said that no necessity or urgent reason can now be found for the promulgation of such a definition, inasmuch as the whole Episcopate and the whole priesthood of the Catholic Church, a few only excepted, together with the whole body of the faithful, have always received, and have even in these times received with veneration, docility and joy, the doctrinal decisions which have been published by Pontiffs, and recently by Pius the Ninth.

2. That for the determination of all controversies, and for the solution of all doubts, the decree of the Council of Florence respecting the supreme authority of the Roman Pontiff as universal doctor, together with the profession of faith enjoined by Pius IV. in conformity with the mind of the Council of Trent, is sufficient.

3. That in order to decide and to determine this

question fully and precisely, it would not be enough to declare simply the Pope to be infallible; but it would be necessary, at the same time, to declare, and that by a dogmatic decree, the form and the mode in which the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff is to be manifested: which would be a difficult question, and would involve the authority of the Holy See in many new and grave complications.

4. That the making of such a definition would be exposed to this intrinsic difficulty. Suppose the bishops not to be unanimous, what course should then be taken? Suppose, again, that they were unanimous in declaring the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff to be a doctrine revealed by Jesus Christ, and always and in all churches traditionally taught and believed, would they not, in the very act of defining the dogma, seem to profess that there is no authority in defining the faith inherent in the Episcopate?

5. That such a definition would be of doubtful utility, and would rather hinder the hope of re-uniting the Eastern Churches to the Holy See, for the genius of the Greek and Oriental mind is such as to recoil from every new word. It is well known what serious and endless controversies the single phrase 'Filioque' has stirred up. For which reason, in the profession of faith enjoined by Gregory XIII. for the Greeks, and by Urban VIII. and Benedict XIV. for the other Orientals, the very words of the Florentine Decree, without any change or addition, were retained.

6. That such a definition would retard also the return which we so much desire of Protestants to the unity of the Church; inasmuch as the new dogma

would excite and increase in large numbers a prejudice against the Catholic Church, and especially against the Roman Pontiff, and thereby render it more difficult for them to understand and to embrace the faith, by raising a suspicion that the doctrine of the Pope's infallibility is a novelty unknown in earlier ages.

7. That this question, concerning which it is by no means certain that there is any necessity to define it, might possibly raise divergencies among the bishops, who now are of one mind and heart in reverence and obedience to the Holy See; a result which would be most disastrous.

8. That it is not impossible that the defining of the Pope's infallibility might cause doubts, or, what is worse, dissensions among Catholics who are otherwise sound, and perfectly and willingly submissive, from conviction, to the authority of the Church; and that, because certain historical facts and documents are not as yet sufficiently explained; so that in many countries the minds of men are not sufficiently prepared for such a definition.

9. That such a new decree would be no remedy for the perversity and contumacy of the few persons who reject the decisions of the Supreme Pontiff, and appeal from them to a General Council, as the only judge of controversies; forasmuch as their aberrations come not from error of intellect, but from perversity of will. The infallible authority of Almighty God does not hinder men from rejecting the truth He has taught, and following their own errors. 'They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them; if they hear not them, neither will they believe' the defini-

tions of the Church. There is a difference, also, between a definition of the infallibility of the Pope and that of any other Christian doctrine. In the latter case, the authority of the Church may be sufficient to overcome any doubt. In the former it is this very authority, the principle and fountain of all certainty in faith, which is in question. Would it not, therefore, be more prudent to spare the weakness of those who are not yet able to bear this definition, which, though many think it to be useful, nobody thinks to be necessary? Would not the example of Our Lord and the Apostles commend to us this mode of proceeding?

10. That it may be feared lest, by a perversion of the true sense of such a decree, some may be induced to ignore and to despise the authority given by our Lord to bishops, especially in the condemnation of rash and pernicious opinions in philosophy and theology.

11. That it may also be feared lest bishops, whom for some years the Apostolic authority has been calling into activity, in order that they should not straightway send to Rome all doubts about books and matters of which it is their office to judge, might, by such a definition, be rendered more backward in exercising their episcopal office of judges of doctrine.

12. That it would soon probably follow from such a definition, by reason of the nature of man, that not only matter of doctrine on which the supreme decision of the Church is desired, but also many other kinds of business would be sent to Rome, there to be judged, decided, and solved; so that everything would crowd in to the centre of unity. And

great as is the erudition, experience, justice, prudence, and authority of the Roman Congregations, such a course would not be for the prosperity of the Universal Church; for the Church, as the Holy Ghost teaches, is a body, but the health of a body depends on the force and motion of all and each of the members. 'If all were one member, where were the body?' (1 Cor. xii. 19.) Nobody doubts that the chief member of the body is the head, and that in it, as in its centre and seat, the vital force resides; and yet no one will say that the soul resides in the head alone, which is rather diffused as its form throughout the members of the whole body.

These, then, are reasons for judging that a dogmatic decision on the infallibility of the Pope would not be opportune. Let that suffice which has been already declared, and has been believed by all; namely, that the Church, whether congregated in Council, or dispersed throughout the world, but in the Successor of Peter always one, is always infallible, and that the Supreme Pontiff, according to the words of the Council of Florence, is 'the teacher of the whole Church and of all Christians.' But as to the mysterious gift of infallibility, which by God is bestowed upon the Episcopate united to the Pope, and at the same time is bestowed in a special manner on the Supreme Pontiff, and by which gift the Church, whether in an Œcumenical Council or by the Pope without a Council, guards and explains the truths of revelation, it is not expedient to make further declarations unless a proved necessity demand, which necessity at present does not exist.

II. ANSWERS TO THE REASONS AGAINST THE DEFINITION.

On the other hand it is urged :

1. That if the Episcopate, priesthood, and people, are, with so few exceptions, unanimous in receiving with submission and assent the Pontifical Acts, there would not only be no risk in promulgating such a decree, but they would rejoice to see the formal reason of that Catholic submission justified by an authoritative definition; or, if the number of those who refuse submission be more numerous, a necessity thereby is proved for the declaration of the truth.

2. That the Decree of the Council of Florence ought to be sufficient; and would be, if it were not misinterpreted by those who deny the infallibility of the Supreme Pontiff, speaking *ex cathedrâ*. The existence of this misinterpretation by Gallicans and by Anglicans shows that the decree is not sufficient.

3. That the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope, held, as it is alleged, by all but a small number, is already subject to the questions as to the form and mode of its exercise. These questions will not become less clear by being defined; and by being made more clear, the complications which now arise from want of a clear declaration will be avoided. Erroneous or doubtful opinions give rise to complications; but truth excludes doubt and obscurity in proportion as it is precisely defined.

4. That if the bishops were not unanimous as to the making of a definition, no doubt the prudence of

the Council would know what course to take. The Council of Trent made no definition of the Immaculate Conception. It went to the very verge, but no further. If the bishops were unanimous in declaring the prerogatives of the Head of the Church, they would not thereby abdicate or divest themselves of any privileges or endowments divinely conferred upon the Episcopate. The divine endowments of the Church are not at war with each other. The Apostles did not cease to be infallible because their Head was so. The infallibility of the Church does not diminish the infallibility of Councils. The endowments of the body are the prerogatives of the head, and both have their proper sphere and their full and legitimate exercise. No bishop alone is infallible, nor is the whole Episcopate infallible without its Head. Of what, then, could they divest themselves by declaring their Head to be infallible?

5. That the hope of reunion with the East is alone to be found in the explicit recognition of the divine prerogatives of the Church. Reunion on anything short of this, on any base, obscure, ambiguous, or equivocal, would not endure for a day. The rent would be made worse. The Decree of the Council of Florence, which is alleged to be sufficient, was not sufficient for the Greeks. They accepted it, but as soon as they were again at Constantinople they threw it to the winds. Reunion is not to be gained or to be sought by reducing its conditions, like a bargain, to the minimum; but by an explicit and precise acceptance of the truth. Gregory XIII., Urban VIII., Benedict XIV., kept strictly to the Florentine Decree,

because no other existed then. No other exists at this day; and the question is, whether the events of the last three centuries do not demand a more precise declaration of the supreme authority.

6. That the return of Protestants to the Church is more retarded now by the apparent contradiction among Catholics on the subject of infallibility, than it could be by the definition of the infallibility of the Pope. They now reject the infallibility of the Church altogether, because they believe that we are divided, and therefore in doubt about it. What we seem to doubt, they are encouraged to deny. We seem to be in doubt because we are divided, not about the infallibility of the Church, but about the infallibility of its Head. They believe this answer to be a subterfuge. So long as the infallibility of the Pope is not authoritatively declared, they cover themselves under the shelter of those Catholics who deny it. And to our shame, they borrow their belief that the opinion is a novelty, not to be found in earlier ages, from ourselves. The Gallicans put weapons into their hands, which they use against all infallibility whatsoever.

7. That no divergence among the bishops is to be feared, the unanimity alleged above may assure us. But if it were to exist, in what would it be of greater moment than in respect to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception at the Council of Trent? The prudence of the Council, both natural and supernatural, would know how to deal with such a contingency; and if divergence in anything should arise, no diminution of filial and cordial obedience

to the Holy See could follow in those things where all are unanimous.

8. That if the pastors of the Church be unanimous, there is no fear of dissensions or doubts among the faithful. Rather, the dissensions and doubts, if any now exist, arise from the allegation that the pastors are not unanimous as to the infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ. It is of the highest moment to expose and extinguish this false allegation, so boldly and invidiously made by heretics and schismatics of every name. For this reason alone the sooner the unanimity of the pastors of the Church can be manifested the better, both for truth and for the salvation of souls. The same reason holds as to the supposed historical difficulties. They have been examined and exposed over and over again; but they will be perpetually repeated, and with increased confidence, so long as the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff shall seem to be left undefined. Where the Church has spoken, the faithful are not open to seduction. While the Church is silent, the spirits of error are clamorous and plausible. A definition would silence all voices but the voice of the Church.

9. That such a decree would satisfy those who, out of heretical perversity, oppose the Faith, or out of ignorance and insubordination excommunicate themselves by appealing from the Supreme Pontiff to a General Council, is not to be expected. But if there be a hope for them, it would be in rendering clear beyond all possibility of question the divine certainty of Faith; and this is closely connected with the divine authority of the Head of the Church. The example

of our Lord in sparing the infirmities of the weak, who were as yet unable to bear mysteries not yet revealed, is no warrant for keeping back any revealed truth because men will not believe the revelation already made. This would tacitly assume that the infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ is not a revealed truth. If it be a revealed truth, our Lord's example is not in point ; still less that of the Apostles, who 'kept back nothing,' and declared to the faithful 'all the counsel of God.'*

10. That the perverse interpretation or abuse of a decree must always be only partial, and can never be either widespread or permanent in the Church, and can therefore afford no reason against its being made, if the proper reasons exist for making it; and that the definition of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff can in no way lessen the authority of bishops as judges of doctrine in their own flocks, but on the contrary give great support to all their legitimate acts. It does not appear how bishops should be more authoritative because their Head is less so.

11. That, for the same reason, it does not appear probable that bishops would be less active as pastors and judges in their own churches because the doctrine which they already unanimously believe had received its formal definition. If the belief of its truth does not now produce these consequences, it does not yet appear why the definition of that truth should do so.

12. That, lastly, no centralisation of the ordinary administration of the Universal Church could legiti-

* Acts xx. 20, 27.

mately follow or be in any way promoted by a definition of the infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, in matters of faith and morals. Such a definition belongs to a higher order, with which the ordinary pastoral office of bishops can rarely have any immediate contact. Questions of faith and morals, on which the Church has not already judged, very rarely arise in any diocese. The infallibility here in question has no relation to the multifarious administration of dioceses. Such a definition as we speak of would either have no appreciable influence on the ordinary administration of bishops; or if any, only in the way of giving certainty and solidity to the judicial acts and pastoral jurisdiction of the Episcopate throughout the world.

For these reasons, it appears to some that the objections to such a definition have no sufficient weight to dissuade the Council from making it.

III. REASONS FOR THE DEFINITION.

Such then, reverend and dear brethren, is a brief statement of the arguments for and against, as to the question whether such a definition be opportune. Thus far we have weighed only the objections and the answers. Those who believe that such a definition would be not only opportune, but is urgently required by the circumstances of these times, give their reasons as follows:—

1. They think such a definition would be opportune because the doctrine is true; for if true, can it be said with prudence that to declare it is not oppor-

tune? Is not this question already closed by the fact that God has thought it opportune to reveal it? Can it be permitted to us to think that what He has thought it opportune to reveal, it is not opportune for us to declare? It is true indeed that, in revealing the Faith, God in His wisdom and compassion was slow, deliberate, and gradual, measuring His light to the infirmities of the human intelligence, and preparing the minds of men for a fuller manifestation, both of His presence and His kingdom. But this divine procedure, binding as it may be on us in dealing with heathen nations who have never heard His name, is in no way binding, nay, is not even permissible, in dealing with those who have been baptized into the full revelation of faith. From them nothing may be kept back. With them no economy can be admitted. There is now no 'disciplina arcani' among the members of His mystical Body. They are illuminated to know 'the Truth as it is in Jesus' in all its fulness: 'that which you hear in the ear, preach ye upon the housetops.'*

By 'opportune,' then, in the mind of the objector, must be meant something politic or diplomatic, some calculations of local expediency in respect to nations and governments. This sense of opportunity is proper to legislatures and cabinets in deliberating on public utilities and opinions; but in the Church of God, and in the truth of revelation, it is always opportune to declare what God has willed that man should know. Nay, more than opportune: if the infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ be a doctrine of

* S. Matthew x. 27.

Jesus Christ, 'necessity lieth upon us, and woe unto us if we preach not the gospel.'* It may, however, be said that many revealed truths are not defined; and that it does not follow that any doctrine ought to be defined, only because it is true.

2. This is indeed certain, but a further reason for defining it is easy to find. This revealed truth has been denied. There are two reasons for which the Church from the beginning has defined the doctrines of faith: the one, to make them clear, definite, and precise; the other, to reaffirm, and to defend them, when they have been called in question. If the infallibility of the visible Head of the Church had never been denied, it might not have been necessary to define it now. The true doctrine of justification was never defined till it was denied. The nature of inspiration has never yet been defined, but the denial which is now widespread may one day demand it. In like manner the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff has been denied. Its definition therefore becomes necessary. We affirm that it was never formally denied before the period of the Council of Constance, and that this modern denial of the truth renders its definition necessary. We are told by objectors that the denial is far more ancient and widespread: that only makes the definition all the more necessary. They who, to make the doctrine appear doubtful, or to prove it to be false, represent the denial of it to be ancient and widespread, in that proportion increase the necessity of declaring it by a dogmatic decree. Such a denial as emanated from the so-called Assembly of the French

* 1 Cor. ix. 16.

clergy in 1682 would amply suffice to show that the definition would be opportune.

3. And further: the denial of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff has already generated extensive doubt as to the truth of the doctrine. We are asked, if the doctrine be revealed, how is it that you allow it to be denied? If you are not doubtful about it, why not put an end to doubt by declaring it to be true? It is certain that not only Protestants believe the doctrine of the Pope's infallibility to be an open question among Catholics, but some Catholics are tempted to believe it to be theologically doubtful, and therefore not revealed; irreconcilable with history; a modern exaggeration arising from the adulation of courtiers and the ambition of popes. In France, to deny it has become a test of political independence. In England, some Catholics are stunned and frightened by the pretentious assumption of patristic learning and historical criticism of anonymous writers, until they doubt, or shrink in false shame from believing a truth for which their fathers died. The contact of the Catholics of England with the Catholics of France, good and beneficial as it has been, nevertheless introduced among us both books and habits of thought which were of the Gallican school. This has spread among us an opinion that the infallibility of the Pope, if possibly true, is nevertheless doubtful; and this doubt, dormant and harmless as it may be in pious and simple minds, who are never put to the test about it, and if tested would instinctively go right in spite of intellectual perplexities, is in restless and active minds full of danger, above all in a Pro-

testant country, and in the midst of all manner of controversial warfare. The admission of a doubt as to any revealed doctrine is fatal to faith in that doctrine.

4. It would appear, not only to be opportune that this doctrine should be placed beyond the reach of doubt by a dogmatic decree, but that such a decree would be specially opportune at this time, because the formal and systematic denial of the truth in question has arisen since the last General Council.

It may at first sight appear that this statement is at variance with the common assertion of theologians, that the denial of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff had its rise in the circumstances of the Council of Constance. Two distinct periods must be noted in this subject. From the Council of Constance to the Council of Trent this denial was confined to the opinions of a handful of men, and to the disputation of the schools in France. So little was it known elsewhere, that when the Church met in the Council of Florence, it made, without hesitation, its celebrated decree on the prerogatives of the Roman Pontiff as the Universal Pastor and Doctor of the Church. Nevertheless the erroneous opinion lingered on from the time of Gerson, Peter d'Ailly, and Almain, in what De Marca calls the 'Old Sorbonne,' to distinguish it from the Sorbonne of his own day. It is certain, then, that before the Council of Trent this opinion had not assumed the systematic and elaborate form given to it by the Assembly of 1682, and by those who have defended the Four Articles. This modern and dogmatic form of the denial of the

Pope's infallibility, *ex cathedrâ*, was completed in the seventeenth century, that is, since the last General Council.

5. Now, if the next General Council meet and separate without taking any notice of this denial, one of two inferences may perhaps be drawn. It may be said that Gallicanism has obtained its place among tolerated opinions; or, at least, that it may be held with impunity. It does not readily appear what could be said in answer to this. It would be hardly enough to say that it was not thought opportune to meet so grave a denial of a doctrine universally taught everywhere out of France, nor to carry into execution the acts of Alexander VIII., Innocent XI., and Pius VI., who have authoritatively censured it. 'Qui tacet, consentire videtur.'

6. It cannot be said that the denial of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff is obscure, unobtrusive, and latent. It is patent, notorious, importunate, and organised. It exists, not indeed in power, as once it did in France; but it exists still. Its roots are yet in the soil and alive. It exists in a handful of active and hostile minds in England and in Germany, and it has been taken up by Protestants in both countries as a weapon of controversy or of contumely against the Catholic Church, and especially the Holy See. To find or to invent a division among us is their only hope. To foment the least divergence into a conflict is their chief policy. There can be no doubt that Gallicanism affords them their most advantageous attack. Catholics are visibly united on all doctrines of faith, even on the Immaculate Conception; but on

the infallibility of the Pope, Gallicanism has caused a divergence, which Protestants think or pretend to be a contradiction in faith. The combined action of Gallicanism within the Church and of Protestants without it, has given to this erroneous opinion a notoriety in the last two centuries, and especially in France and England, which takes it out of the category of imperfect and innocuous errors which may be left to evaporate or to be absorbed. It has inscribed itself in the history of the Church, and will live on until, by the Church, it is finally condemned.

7. Prudence would require the condemnation of any notorious error which may hereafter produce ill effects; but the denial of infallibility in the Head of the Church has already produced ill effects; nevertheless, so long as no condemnation is stamped upon the error, it will always pass for a tolerated opinion. Impunity is taken for acquittal. The faithful will never believe that it is wrong to do that which they see done every day, and even by ecclesiastics, without note of censure. They do not know that three popes have condemned the denial of their infallibility; and if they did they would justly say, 'But as we are not bound to believe the infallibility of the Pope, therefore his condemning the denial of his infallibility proves nothing. If he be infallible, why are we not told so; if he be not infallible, where is the harm of saying so?' The effect of this upon the doctrinal authority of the Church is gravely injurious. When it is affirmed that Scripture and tradition, and theological reason, and the acts of Councils, and the declarations of Pontiffs, all attest the infallibility of

the Vicar of Jesus Christ, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, and that three Pontiffs have prohibited the denial of it, and that the whole *consensus* of theologians, with the exception of a handful, and that a transient and national school, all alike declare the same, we are met at once by the question, 'Why, then, is it permitted to deny it? What may be done with impunity cannot be wrong.' 'Where there is no law, there is no transgression.' This may not be logical; but the answer to this is not obvious.

8. And further, the prolonged existence of this error keeps up a theological and practical disunion in mind and feeling among the faithful. Let the truth be declared, whichever way it go. Truth generates union and peace; doubt generates secret antipathies, contentions, and mistrusts. We live in an age and country where Catholics are compelled to hear, and, if not to read, at least to know, what the public opinion and public press of an anti-Catholic people can say against the Faith and the Church. They hear that their pastors are Ultramontanes; that they are exaggerated and extreme; one-sided and partisan, ignorant, superficial, and untruthful in history, untrusty in reasoning. All this they hear, perhaps, with offence and pain; but it leaves its blight behind. Secret doubts and misgivings arise. They say to themselves: 'Perhaps, after all, there is some truth in all this. If there were none, could it have been so often and so confidently said? Where there is smoke, there is fire.' A small number of Catholics, also—for what motives God knows—have added to this scandal, partly by writings bearing their names, partly by

anonymous writing in Protestant papers and reviews. All this would expire like smoke when the hearth is cold, if there were an authoritative declaration of the truth. Till then, they who, in the face of every kind of malevolent imputation and impertinent criticism, defend that which the Theological Schools of the whole Church, under the direct sanction of the Holy See, have both taught and teach in every Catholic country, must patiently bear the petulant and pretentious criticism of anti-Catholic minds, aided, unhappily, by some who bear at least the Catholic name. They will not, indeed, be unwilling to bear it for the truth's sake, nor do they care for any contempt for their own; but they have a continual sorrow for the scandal of the weak, the hindrance of truth, the perversion of minds, the alienation of hearts, the party spirit, the mistrust among brethren, and, worst of all, the mistrust of flocks in their pastors, which are caused by these animosities and infidelities.

9. Of these scandals, a direct effect is that the action of truth, both within and without the Church, at least in this country, is enfeebled. All who have experience in the state of minds out of the Church, and in their painful approaches towards it, and all whose duty it has been to hear and to read the objections of those who enter not in themselves and hinder those who are entering, will know that the alleged doubts about infallibility and the supposed extravagances of Ultramontanes return in every case with the constancy and monotony of the tide. The effect of this is to confuse, perplex, and indispose the will. A

dubious authority, like a dubious law, imposes no obligation. No one will submit to he knows not what. The contentions of Gallicanism and Ultramontanism obscure the authority of the Church, and make it seem to be doubtful. Utterly false and unreasonable as this is, it has its effect in alarming, confusing the mind, and rendering it incapable of discernment, and the will indisposed to submission.

On our own people within, thank God, such temptations have less power; but every priest will know by his experience what misery and mischief has been done to timid or scrupulous, or, again, to rash and contentious minds. It must never be forgotten that faith, like humility and purity, is a grace of the Holy Spirit. It is to be matured and strengthened by truth and by obedience; it may be endangered and extinguished by falsehood and disobedience. But doubt is the shadow of falsehood and the prelude of unbelief. If there be any truth of the faith in which ambiguity is perilous, it is the Divine and infallible authority on which all faith reposes. The infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ is the infallibility of the Church in its Head, and is the chief condition through which its own infallibility is manifested to the world. To convert this, which is the principle of Divine certainty, into a doubtful question, and one of the highest endowments of the Mystical Body, into a subject of domestic strife and fraternal alienation, is a master-stroke of the Enemy of Truth and souls.

10. It is some times alleged that if the infallibility of the Pope, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, were defined, it would meet with widespread refusal. Not so: rather, like

the Immaculate Conception, it would be met by universal acceptance. The same prophets in sackcloth prophesied unbelief, contention and schism, before the Immaculate Conception was defined. We were then told that there was not a trace of it in antiquity; that the Fathers were against it; that Schoolmen and Saints denied it; that to define it would separate the Church of to-day from the Church of the past, remove faith from the broad tradition of the Christian world to the airy basis of the Pope's authority, draw narrower the conditions of communion by adding a new test, and fatally divide the 'Latin Church.' The answer is before men's eyes. Nevertheless, we have volumes of matter, undigested and misunderstood, from Fathers and Schoolmen, published and republished, without a trace of consciousness that a complete exposure of all this incoherence has again and again been made. The same is now the prophecy as to the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff. There is no trace of it in antiquity; the Fathers knew nothing of it; the Schoolmen are against it; the Saints ignore it; the Councils exclude the notion of it; the tradition of thirteen hundred years refutes it; the adulation and ambition, the ignorance and the servility of the Roman Curia have invented a novelty which all the independent, learned, and noble-minded of all countries have, with irresistible logic and surpassing erudition, in vain resisted. We are told that this novelty is all that is now wanting to narrow the Roman Church to its Latin dimensions; that its definition will at once exclude all the independent, learned, and noble minds lingering and suffering

within its oppressive unity; that, as true friends of the 'Latin Church,' they urge us, with all cordial solicitude, to refrain from declaring the Roman Pontiff to be infallible; that our true policy is comprehension, the concession of points to which their patristic learning forbids submission, the explaining away of the Council of Trent to admit the Thirty-nine Articles according to Sancta Clara; that if, unhappily, under the blind pressure of the ignorant and the courtly adulation of the ambitious, and, above all, the subtle management of the Jesuits, this crowning aberration be added to the Roman theology, the Latin Church will finally stand convicted by Scripture, Antiquity, Fathers, Schoolmen, Councils, Historical Science, and all that is independent, learned, noble, and masculine in its own communion, and be thereby delivered over to its own infatuation and downfall. To these self-complacent advisers it is enough to say, 'Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia.' There is not to be found a theological truth, not as yet imposed as of faith, for which such a cumulus of proof exists of every kind and of every age, and under every one of the *loci theologici*, as for the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff. The evidence of the belief of the universal Church in the immaculate sinlessness and pre-eminent sanctification of the Mother of God, vast as it is, does not approach, either in extent or in explicitness, to the evidence for the infallibility, that is, the stability of faith in the Successor of Peter. There is no truth which already so pervades the mind of the whole Church, by unbroken tradition from the beginning; nor any which would meet with

a more universal and unanimous acceptance on its definition and promulgation. Even in France, the only country in which, for a time, and under the pressure of political causes, the doctrine has been opposed, the opposition exists no longer as a theology or a school. '*La doctrine française,*' as its friends truly but unwarily call it, lingers as a national tradition; surviving rather as a reminiscence than as a conviction.

11. The definition of the Immaculate Conception has filled up and completed the analogy of the new creation, and of the Second Adam and the Second Eve. It has also rendered precise and complete the doctrines of original sin and of grace. In like manner the treatise of Divine Faith has one part as yet undetermined, which would be completed by the completion of the doctrine of infallibility. The virtue of divine faith has for its formal motive the veracity of God, and for its ordinary means of knowing the revelations of God, the proposition of the Church. But if the proponent be fallible, the certainty on which the revelation comes to us cannot be divine. The Church, by the divine assistance of the Holy Ghost, is infallible, and the certainty of the truths proposed by it to our faith is divine. But if the Head of the Church be fallible, the certainty of truths because proposed by him—as, for instance, the Immaculate Conception—cannot be divine, and is therefore fallible; but if fallible, it cannot exclude doubt, and for that reason cannot generate faith. Where faith is, doubt cannot be; and where doubt is, faith ceases to be. The treatise

of Divine Faith is therefore incomplete so long as the infallibility of the proponent be not fully defined.

12. The same is true as to the treatise *de Ecclesia*. The infallibility of the Church dispersed or congregated is matter of necessary faith. The infallibility of the eighteen General Councils in which the Church has been congregated is also of necessary faith. But the Church, during the last eighteen centuries, has done a multitude of acts by its Head alone. Are these acts infallible or not? For instance, the declaration of original sin by Innocent I., and of the Canon by Pope Gelasius; and more recently, of the Immaculate Conception by Pius IX. What does the treatise *de Ecclesia* teach as to the Head of the Church and his prerogatives? Are his declarations and condemnations in matters of faith and morals fallible or infallible? The question has been formally raised, and is of the greatest practical moment. Until it be solved, the treatise *de Ecclesia* is so far incomplete.

13. The practical importance of this question will be manifest at once by remembering that for three hundred years the Pontiffs have elaborately and expressly condemned a long series of propositions in theology and philosophy. The 'Theses Damnatae' are very numerous. Now, are these fallible or infallible? Do they require of us the assent of faith, resting upon the Divine authority from which they emanate; or are they venerable utterances, to be respected indeed always, with assent if we agree with them, with silence if we do not? Has the

Church, then, for three hundred years, been mistaking doubtful utterances for certainties; and that in matters of faith and morality, involving the absolution of souls from sin? They who deny the infallibility of the Pontiffs have here a hard task to reconcile their theory with fidelity to conscience and to truth.

14. But to pass from the region of theology to that of politics. The definition of the infallibility of the Pontiffs, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, is needed to exclude from the minds of Catholics the exaggerated spirit of national independence and pride which has, in these last centuries, so profoundly afflicted the Church. If there be anything which a Catholic Englishman ought to know, it is the subtile, stealthy influence by which the national spirit invades and assimilates the Church to itself; and the bitter fruits of heresy and schism which that assimilation legitimately bears. The history of England, from S. Thomas of Canterbury to Henry VIII., is a series of steady encroachments of the civil power upon the liberty of the Church, in all its operations, in its possessions, discipline, elections, tribunals, appeals, and jurisdictions. The whole English Church became charged and saturated by the secular spirit; its whole mind was clouded, and its whole will was bribed, till under Henry VIII., by a few acts of intimidation, its resistance was quelled; and it fell, whole and altogether, under the power of the Crown. The schism once complete, the work of heresy was inevitable, and was pursued at leisure. Such might have been also the history of France from Charles VII. to Louis XIV. The

French monarchy confirmed its hold on the Church of France. The process of subjugating the ecclesiastical liberties to the parliaments and tribunals of the country was steadily pursued; but the Church of a great nation, or rather of an aggregate of nations, in close contact and affinity with the Holy See, with the memories and even the present influences of Avignon in the midst of it, could not fall under a royal master, as the Church of an island, far off and detached from Rome, fell under the violence of a royal tyrant. The great Church of France was led, indeed, to the verge of danger through its national traditions, but it has never passed the line. English nationalism became the Anglican schism. French nationalism checked itself at the Gallican Articles. The Anglican Reformation has no perils for the Catholic Church; it is external to it, in open heresy and schism. Gallicanism is within its unity, and is neither schism nor heresy. It is a very seductive form of national Catholicism, which, without breaking unity, or positively violating faith, soothes the pride to which all great nations are tempted, and encourages the civil power to patronise the local Church by a tutelage fatal to its liberty. It is therefore certain that Gallicanism is more dangerous to Catholics than Anglicanism. The latter is a plague of which we are not susceptible; the former is a disease which may easily be taken. Gallicanism is also the last form of Regalism yet lingering in the Church. The Imperialism of Constantinople and of Germany is gone. Time has rendered it obsolete, because impossible; the ecclesiastical prerogatives of medieval

Europe have likewise expired, with the religious unity which alone rendered them just. But the unity of the French nation renders it yet possible that influences and claims inconsistent with the liberty of the Church may still exist. Anything that fosters this idea of National Churches, independent, except in a few vital relations, of the Holy See, powerfully excites a spirit which is not filial. An Episcopate which depends as little as it can upon the Pope, rears a laity which depends as little as possible upon the Episcopate. I am not saying that such is the spirit of the noble and Catholic people of France at this day; but I should not be going too far if I were to give this as a description of Gallicanism, and of the spirit and tendencies generated by it. So long as the Articles of 1682 remain as a standard of orthodoxy, this spirit and tendency will be kept alive. When these Articles are buried, one of the worst germs of Regalism will be extinct.

In speaking of France, I think it a duty to guard against a misunderstanding which appears—contrary, I must believe, to all reason and justice—to have arisen from some words addressed by me to you, reverend and dear brethren, two years ago, in a Pastoral on the eighteenth Centenary of S. Peter's Martyrdom.* In speaking of the supremacy of S.

* Two pamphlets have appeared in Paris, the one by the Abbé St. Pol, Chanoine Honoraire, the other by the Abbé d'Upalgaz, de l'Université d'Alcalá. In both, and almost in the same words, I am censured for saying that Gallicanism produced the great French Revolution. No proposition so shallow was uttered by me. What I really did say, and here repeat, is, that, as the despotism of the Tudors corrupted the Church in England, and produced

Peter's See, it was inevitable that I should speak on the subject of Gallicanism; but I endeavoured so to do it as to avoid wounding, by the lightest word, the profound Catholic instincts of our brethren in France. Many of its most eminent sons, both ecclesiastics and laity, have so spoken to me of what I then said as to assure me that my words gave them no cause to think me wanting in heartfelt veneration and affection for the Church in France, glorious in all its history for martyrs, confessors, and saints; fruitful in all deeds of fidelity to the Holy See, and of charity to all mankind. I should not only grieve, but I should hold myself guilty of a high crime against humility, charity, and justice if I had so spoken; and I desire here and now, if any word of mine shall seem to be wanting in veneration and admiration for the Church and people of France, hereby to disclaim all fault, except for the want of skill in dealing with a delicate but inevitable subject. I make this declaration now by way of preface to what I am about to add. In the Pastoral of 1867 I was recalling to your mind the history of Gallicanism, and my words were these:—'The boldness or the unconsciousness with which Gallicanism is sometimes put forward as an opinion which Catholics are free to hold without blame, and as a basis on which Churches are to unite under the shelter of Bossuet, and as a

both Anglicanism and the revolutions which have destroyed it; so also the despotism of certain French monarchs paralysed the liberty of the Church, and produced both Gallicanism and the revolutionary reaction which has effaced Gallicanism in France. It is a little daring, and hardly respectful, to tell us that the martyred clergy of 1799 died for Gallicanism.

standard of Catholic moderation in rebuke of ultramontane excesses, makes it reasonable to tell its history. Gallicanism is no more than a transient and modern opinion which arose in France, without warrant or antecedents in the ancient Theological Schools of the French Church; a royal theology, as suddenly developed and as parenthetical as the Thirty-nine Articles, affirmed only by a small number out of the numerous Episcopate of France, indignantly rejected by many of them; condemned in succession by three Pontiffs; declared by the Universities of Louvain and Douai to be erroneous; retracted by the bishops of France; condemned by Spain, Hungary, and other countries, and condemned over again in the bull "Auctorem Fidei." * Whether I am justified in using these words, the next chapter will show.

Now, in the following chapter I will give the outline of the history of the doctrine of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff; and in doing so sufficient evidence will, I hope, appear by the way to justify the assertions of the above quotation.

What will appear may be thus stated:—

1. That Gallicanism has no warrant in the doctrinal practice or tradition of the Church, either in France or at large, in the thousand years preceding the Council of Constance.

2. That the first traces of Gallicanism are to be found about the time of that Council.

3. That after the Council of Constance they were rapidly and almost altogether effaced from the theology of the Church in France, until their revival in 1682.

* The Centenary of S. Peter, etc., p. 41.

4. That the Articles of 1682 were conceived by Jansenists, and carried through by political and oppressive means contrary to the sense of the Church in France.

5. That the Theological Faculties of the Sorbonne, and of France generally, nobly resisted and refused to teach them.

I am the more anxious to render this testimony to the Church in France, and to the Sorbonne, because I never fully knew, till I read the evidence published in this year by M. Gérin, how nobly that illustrious Church contended against the Articles of 1682.

CHAPTER III.

TRADITION OF THE INFALLIBILITY OF
THE ROMAN PONTIFF.

THUS far we have enumerated, briefly, the reasons adduced for and against defining the infallibility of the Pontiff, speaking *ex cathedrâ*. In order, then, to preclude as far as possible any ambiguity or uncertainty as to the limits and extension of the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pontiff, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, intended by me in this Pastoral, and by those known to me, who believe this to be a truth of revelation, I will once for all state the various opinions which have been put forward in opposition and in its defence. No better analysis can be found than that of Bellarmine, which I will therefore simply transcribe. After saying that the Pontiff may be considered in four ways—1, As a private person; 2, As a private Doctor; 3, As Pontiff alone with his counsellors; 4, As Pontiff with a General Council, Bellarmine says:—

1. 'Both Catholics and heretics agree in two things; first, that the Pontiff, even as Pontiff and with his counsellors, or even with a General Council, may err in controversies as to particular facts, which chiefly depend on the information and testimonies of men; secondly, that the Pontiff, as a private doctor, may err even in questions of faith and morals; and

that from ignorance, as at times happens to other doctors.

2. 'Next, all Catholics agree in two other things, "not indeed with heretics, but among themselves. First, that the Pontiff, with a General Council, cannot err in framing decrees of faith, or general precepts of morals. Secondly, that the Pontiff alone, or with his own private Council, whether he may err or not, in deciding anything in a dubious matter is, nevertheless, to be obediently listened to by all the faithful.

'These points so disposed of, only four opinions remain.

'The *first* is, that the Pontiff, even as Pontiff, although he define a doctrine with a General Council, may be a heretic himself, and teach heresy. . . . This is the opinion of all heretics, especially of Luther and Calvin.

'The *second*, that the Pontiff, even as Pontiff, may be a heretic, and may teach heresy if he define without a General Council. This is the opinion of Nilus and the later Greeks, of Gerson, Almain, and others.

'The *third*, that the Pontiff cannot in any way be heretical, or publicly teach heresy, even though he alone frame a definition: which is the opinion of Pighius in book iv., chap. 3, of the "Ecclesiastical Hierarchy."

'The *fourth*, which lies between these extremes, is, that the Pontiff, whether personally he can be a heretic or no, cannot, in any event, define anything heretical to be believed by the whole Church. "This is the most common opinion of nearly all Catholics," as S. Thomas says.

‘Of these four opinions, the first is heretical: the second not *proprie* heretical, for we see still that it is tolerated in the Church; yet it appears to be altogether erroneous, and proximate to heresy.’

It is to be borne in mind that Bellarmine wrote this before the Four Articles of 1682 had been framed or censured.

‘The third opinion is probable, but not certain.

‘The fourth opinion is most certain, and to be asserted.’*

Bellarmino in later years reviewed his ‘Controversies,’ and wrote of this point as follows:—

‘This opinion is more rightly the common *judgment* of Catholics; for *opinion* implies uncertainty, and we hold this judgment to be certain.’ And again, ‘I said that the opinion of those who teach that infallibility of judgment resides not in the Pope, but in the General Council, is not plainly heretical, but erroneous and proximate to heresy. We do not, indeed, venture to pronounce that opinion plainly heretical, because they who follow it have, neither they nor their books, been condemned by the Church. Nevertheless, it seems to us so manifestly erroneous, that it may deservedly be declared by the judgment of the Church to be heretical.’

In the Pastoral of 1867, I gave a number of quotations by which the strange misconceptions or misinterpretations of objectors are sufficiently precluded.

The words *ex cathedrâ* exclude all acts of the Pontiff as a private person or as a private Doctor, and confine the character of infallibility to those acts which

* Bellarm. Contrôv. de Summo Pontif. lib. iv. cap. 2.

are promulgated from the Chair of supreme authority as Universal Doctor of the Church in faith and morals.

We have been lately told, by those who desire to hinder the definition of this doctrine by secular opposition rather than by theological reason, that there are some twenty opinions as to the conditions required to authenticate an utterance of the Pontiff *ex cathedrâ*. I will therefore venture to affirm that no other conditions are required than this: That the doctrinal acts be published by the Pontiff, as Universal Teacher, with the intention of requiring the assent of the Church.*

This, then, is the opinion which, in the following pages, we shall exclusively intend by the terms *ex cathedrâ*.

It will be observed that the fourth Gallican Article differs from all the above-cited opinions, inasmuch as it asserts that the judgments of the Roman Pontiff in matters of faith are not irreformable, unless the assent of the Church—that is, either congregated or dispersed, either previously or subsequently—shall adhere to them.

The Gallicans maintained the infallibility of the See of Peter, but not the infallibility of his Successor.

The tradition of the Church, while it refuses to

* This cannot be better expressed than in the words of F. Franzelin, Professor of Dogmatic Theology in the Roman College:—‘Sive Concilio sive Pontifici infallibilitatis charisma competit, quando et quatenus, ut *divinitus constitutus magister* Ecclesiæ, *intendit* definitivâ sententiâ *docere Ecclesiam universam* auctoritate postulante *consensum* in veritatem propositam.

‘Locutio *ex cathedrâ* nihil est aliud quam descripta propositio authentica doctrinæ. Quid enim est cathedra apostolica nisi supremum authenticum magisterium pro universa Ecclesia?’

separate the See from the Successor of Peter, affirms the identity, and therefore the infallibility, of both.

In order to narrow the question, I may add that no one now contends for the necessity of General Councils. The framers of the Four Articles of 1682 were too intelligent to contend that the assent of the Church congregated in Council is necessary to an infallible declaration of the Pontiff. They contended only for the consent of the Church dispersed. But it will be difficult for them to show that such an opinion is to be found in the tradition of the Church. It is the inversion of the immemorial belief and practice of the Church. It will not be difficult to show, even in the narrow limits of a Pastoral, that the tradition of the Church is not to test the teaching of the Pontiffs by the assent of the Church, but to take the doctrine of the Pontiffs as the test of the doctrine of the Church. The Head spoke for the whole Body, and the utterances of the Head were the evidence of what the Body believed and taught. It can hardly be necessary to add that, in order to constitute an article of faith, two conditions are necessary, the one intrinsic, the other extrinsic : the former, that the doctrine to be defined be contained in the divine revelation ; the latter, that it be proposed to us by the Church as revealed.

If there be anything for which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness, it is to the stability in faith of the See and of the Successor of Peter.

If there be anything not yet defined which is nevertheless proposed, as of divine certainty, by the constant tradition of the Church, both dispersed and

congregated, it is that the Roman Church and Pontiff are by divine ordinance an infallible authority in interpreting the faith and expounding the law of God.

" It is obviously impossible now to do more than trace the outline of the subject; but this I will endeavour to do, and to point out that this doctrine in question has already passed through the historical periods which mark its progress towards a final definition.

For example, let us first look at the history of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. This truth was fully but implicitly contained in the universal belief of the Church, both east and west, as to the absolute sinlessness and pre-eminent sanctification of the Mother of God. This constituted the first period of unanalysed belief. The doctrine was thus commemorated, year by year, in the Festival of the *Ἁγιασμός*, or the 'Sanctificatio' of the Blessed Virgin. The second period was one of analysis, forced upon the Church by the Pelagian heresy, and arising also from the legitimate and inevitable intellectual action of the faithful upon the matter of faith. The Festival of the Sanctification of the Blessed Virgin legitimately became the festival of the Immaculate Nativity. The third period was the period of definition, in which the two opinions of the Immaculate Nativity and the Immaculate Conception contended together, till the one was continually so weakened as to lose all probability, the other was so confirmed as to become certain. The Immaculate Conception was then, at last, defined and proposed as a doctrine of revelation and an article of faith.

The doctrine of the infallibility of the Church,

though not as yet defined, is everywhere declared in the whole history of Christianity. It has likewise its distinct periods, steadily advancing to a definition. But it will be seen that the infallibility of the visible Head of the Church is intrinsically necessary to the infallibility of the Church. The same periods of simple belief, of analysis, and of definition may be traced. The first, in which the belief of the infallibility of the Church and of the Pontiff pervaded all the world, both east and west. This belief was not only professed but reduced to practice in the public action of the Church; and in every public and authoritative instance on record the infallibility of the Church is declared to rest upon the stability in faith of the Roman Church, or of the See of Peter, or of the Apostolic See, or of the Successor of the Apostle, or of the Voice of Peter, still teaching by his Successor in his Sec. The 'praxis' of the Church—that is, its immemorial, universal, and invariable procedure in the declaration of faith and the condemnation of error—implies and demands always as its motive the stability in faith of the Roman See, and in almost all cases explicitly declares it. This period extends from the beginning to the time immediately preceding the Council of Constance. The second period is, as before, one of contention and analysis, in which Occam, John of Paris, Marsilius of Padua, Nicholas de Clemangiis, Gerson, Peter d'Ailly, and others of less note, began to distinguish and to deny what had till then been always implicitly or explicitly believed. What they began in France was afterwards fostered by the jealousy of parliaments,

jurists, and Jansenists. The declaration of 1682 is no more than a mere modern refinement of the same doctrine, rude and inchoate at first, afterwards reduced to system and expression. It is to be borne in mind that the Articles of 1682, if they deny the infallibility of the Pope, do not affirm the fallibility of the Roman Church and See. The distinction '*inter sedem, et in eâ sedentem,*' is carefully guarded even by Gallicans. Instinct told them that to deny the infallibility of the Roman See was to deny the infallibility of the Church, and to depart from the whole *praxis* of the Church for the first sixteen centuries. The third period may be said to begin from 1682, in which the denial of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff was first enunciated in a formula. It opened the period of definition. The contests between those who maintained the Immaculate Nativity and those who maintained the Immaculate Conception led to a closer and more scientific analysis, from which two things have resulted : first, the elimination of the doctrine of the Immaculate Nativity as inadequate and erroneous; and secondly, the definition of the Immaculate Conception. So, also, the contests between those who maintain the infallibility of the Church, but reject the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff, have already resulted in an analysis of the whole subject of the divine certainty of faith, and the divine order by which the faith is preserved and propounded in the world; and from this will likewise follow in due time—whether now or hereafter, it is not for us to say—two consequences: first, the elimination of the doctrine of 1682 as inadequate and erroneous; and

secondly, a definition of the Infallibility of the Church, embodied in its immemorial and universal *praxis*, of which the stability of the faith of Peter, both in his See and in his Successor, is the primary and necessary condition. And as in the history of the Immaculate Conception a series of Pontifical prohibitions rendered less probable and less tenable the opposing doctrine, till the former prevailed and was solemnly defined, so with the infallibility of the Church and its Head.

First. In 1479 the proposition 'that the Church of the City of Rome may err,' was condemned in Peter de Osma by the Archbishop of Toledo as heretical; and this condemnation was confirmed in a bull by Sixtus IV.*

Secondly. The Articles of 1682 have been censured by Innocent XI., Alexander VIII., Innocent XII., and Pius VI., in the condemnation of the Synod of Pistoia.

Lastly. The proposition 'that the authority of the Roman Pontiff over Œcumenical Councils, and of his infallibility in questions of faith, is futile, and has been often refuted,' was condemned in 1688 by Alexander VIII.

We will first take so much evidence as the narrow limits of this Letter will allow, of the statement that, from the beginning of Christianity down to the times immediately preceding the Council of Constance—that is, for fourteen hundred years—the doctrine of the stability of the faith of Peter in his See and in

* Aguirre, *Defensio Cathedræ S. Petri*, tract. i. disp. xv. '45; and Roskovány, *Romanus Pontifex*, &c., tom. i. 630. Neitria. 1869.

his Successor was in possession, by the immemorial and universal tradition of the Church. From this it follows that they who deny it are innovators; that they who affirm the infallibility of the Pontiff, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, to be a novelty recently introduced, are, in the form of their argument, fighting in rank with those who affirm the doctrine of Transubstantiation to be an innovation of the Council of Lateran, and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity an innovation of the Council of Nicæa.

I will, however, invert the usual order in which the evidence is adduced. We will begin, not with the early centuries, but with the later. Even our opponents tell us that Ultramontanism, since the Council of Constance, has possessed itself of Christendom. It is undeniable, then, that for the last four hundred years it has pervaded the theology and practice of the Church.

We will therefore trace up the stream towards the fountain. We shall be able thereby to see, before the Council of Constance, what doctrine was in possession; whether any change is afterwards traceable. We shall thereby be able to appreciate the claims of Gallicanism to antiquity, authority, and truth.

In order to put beyond question that, for the last four hundred and fifty years, the belief of the infallibility of the Roman See and Pontiff has been completely in the ascendant, it may be well to call to mind certain facts.

1. First, it is admitted that the doctrine of the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff has been taught by the Roman Pontiffs, the Roman theologians, the

Theological Schools of all countries, excepting France, from the Council of Constance,* in 1418, to this day : that is to say, for four centuries and a half it has been the doctrine of all the religious orders, and eminently of the Dominicans, the Franciscans, and of the Society of Jesus ; of all Theological Schools, excepting the one before named ; and even of almost all universities. Is it credible that all these representatives of the learning and science of the Church should have erred, and all erred alike, in elaborating a novelty unknown to the Church till then ?

2. During these four centuries and a half three Œcumenical Councils, of Florence, Lateran, and Trent, have been held, and not so much as a whisper of doubt as to the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff was heard in them.

3. During these same centuries, three Œcumenical Councils have touched upon the authority of the Roman Pontiff, and they did so in these words. The Council of Florence in 1439 decreed:—‘ We define, that the Roman Pontiff is Successor of Blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and true Vicar of Christ, and the Head of the whole Church, and the Father and Doctor of all Christians ; and to him in Blessed Peter was delivered, by our Lord Jesus Christ,

* The Council of Constance had not the question of infallibility before it. In affirming that a Council was superior to the Pope, ‘ in his quæ pertinent ad fidem,’ it did not declare the Pope to be fallible. And even those words were resisted, not only by Cardinal Zarabella, but by the Cardinals and Ambassadors of France. Moreover, they were the act of only a part of one Obedience, in the midst of disorder and irregularity which would suffice to annul them, even if Martin V. had not carefully excluded them from his confirmation.

the plenary power of feeding, ruling, and governing the Universal Church.

The Council of Lateran, in 1520, condemned as heretical the proposition 'the Roman Pontiff, the Successor of Peter, is not the Vicar of Christ constituted by Christ Himself in Blessed Peter over all the Churches of the whole world.'†

The Council of Trent in four places describes the Roman Church as 'Ecclesiarum omnium Mater et Magistra.'‡ But the word 'Magistra' signifies the authority of teacher and guide.

Lastly. The Council of Constance itself gives an evidence of the Pontifical authority of the most decisive kind. In the last session of the Council, the Poles, because the Pope would not condemn a certain book, appealed to a future General Council. Martin V., therefore, in a public Consistory on March 10, 1418, condemned all such appeals. Gerson wrote against this condemnation, which runs in these words: 'It is lawful to no one to appeal from the Supreme Judge, namely, the Apostolic See, or the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, or to reverse his judgment in causes of faith, which, as *causæ majores*, are to be referred to him and the Apostolic See.'|| It cannot be unlawful to appeal from a fallible to an infallible Judge. But a General Council is infallible. The Pope, therefore, is not fallible. This proves two things: the one, what was the claim of

* Labbe, Concil. xviii. p. 526. Ed. Ven. 1732.

† Ibid. xix. p. 1052.

‡ Concil. Trid. Sess. vii. De Bapt. 3; Sess. xiv. De Ex. Unct. 3; Sess. xxii. 8; Sess. xxv. cont., De delect. ciborum, &c.

|| Gersonii Opp. tom. ii. p. 303. Ed. Antwerp. 1706.

the Pontiff in the Council of Constance; the other, how little that Council was swayed by the errors of Gerson.

I. TRADITION FROM THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE TO THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON.

But we are told that no one denies the rise of this opinion from the time of the Council of Constance. This, then, is one point of departure; and we will proceed to examine what was the faith of the Church before that date, ascending towards the source.

1. The first and least suspicious witness will be Gerson himself. He says, adulation 'concedes [to the Pope] that he is above law, and that it is no way possible that appeal be made from him, nor that he be called into judgment; nor that obedience be withdrawn from him, except in case of heresy. He alone can make articles of faith; he alone can deal with questions of faith, and the *causæ majores*; he alone, as has just been done, makes definitions, rules, laws, and canons; otherwise all that is defined, decreed, framed, or ordained by others is null and void. Nor can anything ordained by him be in any way whatsoever cancelled or annulled except by him alone; but he is bound by no constitution made by any whomsoever. *If I am not deceived, before the celebration of the holy Council of Constance this tradition had so possessed the minds of many pedants rather than lettered men, that any one who should have dogmatically taught the opposite would have been noted and condemned for heretical pravity.*'* But how should this be

* Gersonii Opp. tom. ii. p. 247. Ed. Ant. 1706.

if the *communis sensus fidelium* were not united against the dogmatiser? What bishop would have allowed or have passed such a sentence against him, unless the whole Episcopate had been united in the contrary principles and instincts? 'This tradition,' as Gerson calls it, could have had no authority, nor even existence as a tradition, if it had not been the immemorial and widespread belief of men. Adulation may make schools and cliques; it cannot make a tradition. The tradition was fatal to the novel opinions of Gerson and his master; and he solaced himself, like all innovators, in aspersing his brethren. Now, if any one can produce evidence to show that in this Gerson was wrong, and that evidence is to be found before his time of the denial of the infallibility of the See and Successor of Peter, let it be produced,* and it will be fairly examined. The infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ is in possession. It is for those who deny it to dislodge it if they can.

I will now take other evidence: and as far as possible from the public acts of Synods or of Episcopates. The few individual witnesses I shall quote will be those whose names have an exceptional weight.

2. When, in 1314, the King of France was endea-

* Theoph. Raynaud, tom. xx. p. 389, Cracov. 1669, sums up the question in these words:—'It were in vain to bring together a number of theologians, since all may be adduced who lived before the Council of Constance. *For this truth* [the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff] *was never called into controversy among Catholics before the time of the Councils of Bâle and Constance.* But all who went before *unanimously* taught that the definitions of Pontiffs, even without a General Council, made matter of faith, and that every judgment of faith belonged ultimately to the Holy See.' See also the whole of section xi,

vouring to compel Clement V. to declare his predecessor Boniface VIII. to be heretical, the French bishops, in an address to the Pope, speak thus: ‘It is no question of the heresy of a Pope, *as Pope*, but as *a private person*. For *as Pope he could not be heretical*, but only as a private person: for never was any Pope a heretic as Pope.’ *

3. The University of Paris, in 1387, addressed Clement VII., whom they recognised as Pope at Avignon, and by the mouth of the same Peter d’Ailly who afterwards so strangely deviated from truth: ‘We unanimously protest, that whatsoever hitherto has been done in this matter by them [the University], and whatsoever in the same, either now or at any other time, we may do or say in their behalf, we humbly submit altogether to the correction and judgment of the Apostolic See and of the Supreme Pontiff who sits in it, saying with blessed Jerome, “This is the Faith, most blessed Father, which we have learned in the Catholic Church; in which, if we have laid down anything less wisely or cautiously than we ought, we ask to be corrected by thee, who holdest the Faith and the See of Peter.” For we are not ignorant, but most firmly hold and in no way doubt, that the Holy Apostolic See is that Chair of Peter upon which, as the same Jerome witnesses, the Church is founded. . . . Of which See, in the person of Peter the Apostle sitting in it, was said, “Peter, I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.” It is to this, then, that the determination of Faith, and the approbation of Catholic Truth, and

* Theolog. Wirceburg. tom. i. p. 373. Paris, 1852.

the condemnation of heretical impiety, above all, belongs.' *

4. The Bishop and Theologians of Paris had censured certain opinions of S. Thomas in 1277. When S. Thomas was canonised, in 1324, Stephen, Bishop of Paris, withdrew the censure, in union with the Dean and Chapter and sixty-three Masters and Bachelors in Theology: in so doing he calls 'the Holy Roman Church the Mother of all the faithful and Teacher of faith and truth, founded on the most firm confession of Peter, Vicar of Christ; to which, as to the universal Rule of Catholic Truth, belongs the approbation of doctrines, the solution of doubts, the determination of what is to be held, and the confutation of errors.' †

In these two passages we have the testimony of the Bishop, Chapter, Theologians, and University of Paris in the century before the Council of Constance.

5. What was at that time taught in Paris was taught in England. Thomas Bradwardine, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 1349, in the preface to his book 'De Causa Dei,' says: 'I know what I will do; I will commit myself to that ship which can never perish, the ship of Peter. For in it our only Head and Master Christ in safety sat and taught: to teach us mystically that in the boat of Peter, the Church of Rome, the authority and teaching (*magisterium*) of all Christian doctrine should abide. To the judgment, therefore, of so authentic and so great a teacher I submit, and subject fully and

* Inter Gersonii Opp. tom. i. p. 702. Antwerp. 1706.

† D'Argentré, Coll. Judic. tom. i. p. 1, p. 222. Ed. Paris, 1728.

altogether myself and my writings, now and hereafter.' *

6. Clement VI., in 1351, writing to the Armenian Patriarch, says : ' If thou hast believed, and dost still believe, that the Roman Pontiff alone, when doubts arise concerning the Catholic Faith, can by an authentic determination, to which we must inviolably adhere, make an end of them ; and that whatsoever he, by the authority of the Keys delivered to him by Christ, determines as true, is true and Catholic ; and what he determines to be false and heretical is so to be regarded.' † Clement here plainly requires the Armenians to believe the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff as a truth of revelation.

7. It would be endless to quote from S. Thomas, but these few words will suffice : ' Therefore the Lord said to Peter, whom He made Supreme Pontiff, " I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not, and thou, when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren." And of this the reason is, that the faith of the whole Church must be One . . . which cannot so be kept unless questions of faith be determined by him who "presides over the whole Church ; so that his sentence be held firmly by the whole Church.' ‡ And again : ' And while in other parts there is either no faith, or it is mingled with many errors, the Church of Peter both is fresh in faith and pure from error : and no wonder, because the Lord said, " I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not." ' §

* Bradwardini de Causa Dei, Præf. Ed. Lond. 1618.

† Baronius, tom. xxv. ad annum 1351, p. 529. Ed. Luc. 1750.

‡ Summa, sec. 2^{da} quæst. i. art. 10. Ed. Ven. 1593.

§ Opuscula vi. In Symbol. Apost. Opp. tom. xvii. p. 70. Ed. Ven.

Now we may, without hesitation, take S. Thomas as the witness of what was taught both by the Dominican Order and by the schools of the Church in the century before the Council of Constance.

8. S. Bonaventure, in like manner, will represent the Franciscan Order: 'Peter, named from the Rock, was by the Lord placed as the foundation of the Church: "Thou art Peter, &c." Rabanus says that all the faithful throughout the world may understand that whosoever separate themselves in any way from the unity of his faith or of his communion can neither be absolved from the bonds of sin, nor can enter the gate of the kingdom of heaven. Therefore the Lord gave to Peter extraordinary powers over all the Apostles in the words, "And thou, when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren."'* Again, he says: 'If, in the time of the figurative priest, it was sin to oppose the sentence of the Pontiff, much more in the time of the revealed truth and grace, when it is known that the plenitude of power is given to the Vicar of Christ, is it sin, no way to be tolerated in Faith or morals, to dogmatise contrary to his definition, by approving what he reproveth, building up again what he destroys, and defending what he condemns.' †

9. The Council of Lyons in 1274 drew up a form of profession to be made *per modum juramenti* by the Greeks in the following words: 'The Holy Roman Church has supreme and full primacy and principality

* S. Bonav. In Expos. Reg. Fratrum Minorum, cap. i. tom. vii. p. 332. Romæ, 1596.

† Ibid. In Apol. Pauperum, respon. i. cap. i. p. 413.

over the Universal Church, which it truly and humbly acknowledges itself to have received from the Lord Himself in Blessed Peter, the Prince and Head of the Apostles, with plenitude of power. And as before all others it is bound to defend the truth, so also if any questions arise concerning the faith, they ought by its judgment to be defined. . . . And to the same all Churches are subject, and to it the prelates of the same render obedience and reverence. But to this [Church] the plenitude of power so belongs that it admits the other Churches to a participation of its care. . . . By mouth and heart we confess that which the Sacred and Holy Roman Church truly holds, and faithfully teaches and preaches.'

The formula, which is inscribed *Sacramentum Græcorum*, runs as follows:—

'I, N., recognise the unity of faith which I have subscribed . . . as the True, Holy, Catholic Faith; I accept it and confess it with heart and mouth; and I promise that I will inviolably preserve the same as the Holy Roman Church holds, faithfully teaches and preaches; and in the same I will always persevere; nor at any time will I depart from it, nor in any way deviate or differ from it.'*

If any one, with these facts and testimonies before him, can continue to affirm that the Articles of 1682 have any foundation in the two centuries before the Council of Constance, or that the doctrine now capriciously and invidiously styled Ultramontane is a novelty, he is bound to bring, what as yet has not been offered, some evidence of his assertion.

* Labbe, Concil. tom. xiv. p. 512, 513. Ed. Ven. 1731.

10. For the twelfth century we have two witnesses, both Saints; one a confessor, the other a martyr, and both our own: S. Thomas of Canterbury, and S. Anselm.

S. Thomas writes to the Bishop of Hereford: 'The fountain of Paradise is one, but divided into many streams, that it may water the whole earth. Who doubts that the Church of Rome is the head of all the Churches, and the fountain of Catholic truth? Who is ignorant that the keys of the kingdom of heaven were entrusted to Peter? Does not the structure of the whole Church rise from the faith and doctrine of Peter? . . . Whosoever he be that waters or plants, God gives increase to none, save to him who has planted in the *faith* of Peter, and rests in his *doctrine*.' Again he says of the Apostolic See: 'From this none but infidels, or heretics, or schismatics withdrew their *faith* and obedience.' *

11. S. Anselm, in dedicating his book on the Holy Trinity to the Pope, writes: 'Forasmuch as the providence of God has chosen your Holiness, to commit to your custody the life and faith of Christians, and the government of His Church, to no other can reference be more rightly made, if so be anything contrary to the Catholic faith arise in the Church, that it may be corrected by his authority; nor to any other can anything which may be written against such errors be more safely submitted, that by his prudence it may be examined.' † Again: 'Let those who

* S. Thomæ Epist. lxxiv. ad Suffraganeos, p. 167; Ep. cxxiv. ad Robertum Heref. p. 277. Ed. Oxon. 1844.

† S. Anselmi de Fide Trin. Dedic. p. 41. Ed. Ben. Paris, 1721.

despise the Christian decrees of the Vicar of Peter, and in him the decrees of Peter and of Christ, seek for other gates of the kingdom of heaven; for certainly they shall not enter in by those, the keys of which the Apostle Peter bears.*

If Saints and Martyrs do not represent the mind of the Church, where shall we seek it?

12. S. Bernard writes to Pope Innocent: 'It is right to refer to your Apostleship whatsoever danger and scandal may arise in the kingdom of God; especially those which touch the faith. For I judge it to be fitting that the injuries of the faith should there be repaired, where the faith cannot fail. For this in truth is the prerogative of that See. For to what other was it ever said, "I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not?" Therefore, what follows is required of Peter's Successor; "and thou, when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren."' †

13. In the same century, that is in the year 1149, Anselm, Bishop of Havelburgh, was sent by the Emperor Lothaire to Constantinople. He there held public disputations with Nechites, Archbishop of Nicomedia, on the errors of the Greeks. By the desire of Eugenius III., he afterwards put these disputations in writing. It will be borne in mind that Anselm was German by birth, and therefore a representative of a country remote from Roman influences. He was endeavouring also to win the Greeks from their errors, of which one was the denial of the pre-

* *Ibid.* Epist. ad Humbertum. Lib. iii. 65, p. 391.

† S. Bernard. ad Innoc. P. Ep. exci. tom. iv. p. 433. Ed. Paris, 1742.

rogatives of the See of Peter, both in jurisdiction and in faith. Anselm had every inducement to reduce to the narrowest limit the doctrines necessary to reconciliation. As the representative of the Catholic Church, to the separated East he spoke as follows: 'The holy Roman Church, chosen before all others by the Lord, has been endowed and blessed by him with a special privilege; and by a certain prerogative stands pre-eminent, and by a divine right has an excellence before all Churches. For while other Churches at divers times have been possessed by various heretics, and have wavered in the Catholic faith, that [Church], founded and consolidated upon the Rock, has always remained unshaken, and never, by any false and sophistical arguments of heretics, has been drawn away from the simplicity of the faith held by Simon Barjona; because it has always been defended by the shield of divine wisdom, through the grace of the Lord, against deceitful controversies. For it has never been shaken by any terror of emperors, or mighty ones of this world, because by the strength of the Lord, and the shield of a strong patience, it has always been secure against all assaults. Wherefore the Lord, [knowing] that other Churches would be greatly harassed by the inroads of heresy, and that the Roman Church, which He had founded upon the Rock, would never be weakened in the faith, said to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not; and thou, when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren." As if He had openly said: "Thou who hast received this grace, that while those are shipwrecked in faith,

thou abidest always in faith immovable and constant, confirm and correct those that waver; and as the provider, and doctor, and father, and master, have care and solicitude for all." * He rightly, therefore, received the privilege of being set over all, who received from God the privilege, before all, of preserving the integrity of faith.' Again he said: 'Why do you not rather receive the statutes of the Holy Roman Church, which by God, and from God, and in the next place after God, has obtained the primacy of authority in the Universal Church, which is spread throughout the whole world? For so we read that it was declared concerning it in the first Council of Nicæa by three hundred and eighteen Fathers. For it must be known, and no Catholic can be ignorant of it, that the Holy Roman Church was preferred before others by no decrees of Synods, but that it obtained the primacy by the voice of our Lord and Saviour in the Gospel, where He said to Blessed Peter, "Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock,"' &c. † Now this is language which, at the present day, would be called Ultramontane; but Anselm so addresses the Greeks in a perfect consciousness that he spoke the mind of the Catholic Church. And what he spoke, he wrote, as we have seen, by the command of Eugenius III. Not a trace is to be found that these words of Anselm were not a true expression of the immemorial and universal tradition of the Church in his day.

14. The Synod of Quedlinburgh, in Saxony, in 1085,

* D'Achéry, *Spicilegium*, tom. i. 194. Ed. Paris, 1723.

† *Ibid.*

condemned what was called the Henrician heresy: namely, that not only temporal but spiritual things are subject to emperors and kings. In the Acts of the Synod we read: 'When all were seated according to their order, the decrees of the Holy Fathers concerning the Primacy of the Apostolic See were produced: namely, that it is allowed to none to revise its judgment, and to sit in judgment upon what it has judged; which, by the public profession of the whole Synod, was approved and confirmed.' *

15. In the ninth century, that is in 863, a Council in Rome decreed as follows:—'If anyone shall despise the dogmas, commandments, interdicts, sanctions or decrees, in respect to Catholic faith, ecclesiastical discipline, correction of the faithful, the amendment of sinners, or the prevention of impending or future evils, wholesomely promulgated by him who presides in the Apostolic See, let him be anathema.' †

16. This canon was recognised in the eighth General Council, held at Constantinople in 869; so that the final and irreformable authority of the Roman Pontiff was recognised and declared under pain of deposition for clergy, and of excommunication for the laity until penitent. ‡

17. In the eighth century Alcuin writes to the faithful in Lyons: 'Let no Catholic dare to contend against the authority of the Church. And lest he be found to be a schismatic and not a Catholic, let him follow the approved authority of the Holy Roman

* Labbe, Concil. tom. xii. pp. 679, 680. Ed. Ven. 1730.

† Labbe, Concil. tom. x. p. 238. Ed. Ven. 1730.

‡ Labbe, Concil. ibid. p. 633.

Church.’* In the Caroline books—whether they be by Charlemagne or Alcuin—we read of the Roman Church that, as Peter was set over all the Apostles, so Rome is set over all the Churches. ‘For this Church is set over all the rest by no decrees of Synods, but holds its primacy by the authority of the Lord Himself, who said, “Thou art Peter,” &c. . . . Whence it is to be understood that holy and learned men in all parts of the world, shining with the light of teaching and science, not only have not departed from the Holy Roman Church, but also, in time of need, have implored help from it, for the corroboration of the faith; which, as we have already said and proved by examples, all members of the Catholic Church ought, as a rule, to do; so as to seek from it [the Roman Church], next after Christ, help to defend the faith: which [Church], not having spot or wrinkle, both sets its foot upon the monstrous heads of heresy, and confirms the minds of the faithful in the faith.’†

This testimony, by the way, is important for those who believe that Charlemagne imposed on the Roman Pontiff the insertion of the ‘Filioque’ in the Creed.

We have now reached the eighth century of the Church, before the separation of the Greeks, and while as yet they acknowledged the supreme authority, both in jurisdiction and of faith, of the See of Peter. The Greeks acknowledge the second Council of Nicæa as infallible, and in that Synod the letters

* Alcuin, *Opp.* in *Patrologia*, Migne, tom. c. col. 293. Paris, 1857.

† Carol. M. *Opp.* in *Patrologia*, Migne, tom. xcvi. col. 1020, 21. Paris, 1851.

of Hadrian to Tarasius, Bishop of Constantinople, were read and approved. In those letters Hadrian says, 'Whose (Peter's) See shines forth in primacy over the whole Church, and is Head of all the Churches of God. Wherefore the same Blessed Peter the Apostle, governing the Church by the command of the Lord, left nothing uncared for, but held everywhere, and holds, supreme authority (*ἐκράτησε πάντοτε καὶ κρατεῖ τὴν ἀρχήν*).' Hadrian then requires Tarasius to adhere to our 'Apostolic See, which is the Head of all Churches of God, and in profound sincerity of mind and heart to guard the sacred and orthodox form' [of faith]. The whole Synod cried out in acclamation, 'The Holy Synod so believes, so is convinced, so defines.'*

18. The African Bishops, in 646, addressed a Synodical letter to Pope Theodore, which letter was read and approved in the Lateran Council of 649, under Martin I. 'No one can doubt,' they say, 'that there is in the Apostolic See for all Christians a fountain, great and unfailing, abundant in its waters, from which the streams go forth copiously to irrigate the whole Christian world; to which [See], also in honour of Blessed Peter, the decrees of the Fathers gave special veneration in searching out the things of God, which ought by all means to be carefully examined; and, above all, and justly by the Apostolic Head of Bishops, whose care from of old it is, as well to condemn evils as to commend the things which are to be praised. For by the ancient discipline it is ordained that whatsoever be done,

* Labbe, Concil. tom. viii. p. 771, 5. Ed. Ven. 1729.

even in provinces remote and afar off, shall neither be treated of nor accepted, unless it be first brought to the knowledge of your august See, so that a just sentence may be confirmed by its authority, and that the other Churches may thence receive *the original preaching as from its native source, and that the mysteries of saving faith may remain in uncorrupt purity throughout the various regions of the world.**

This declaration of the African Synod, being read and approved in the first Council of Lateran, is therefore confirmed by its authority.

19. In the Pastoral of two years ago, I gave the evidence of the Sixth General Council, held at Constantinople in 680, in which the letter of Agatho was received as the voice of Peter. In this letter, addressed to the Emperor, after reciting the dogma of faith, Agatho thus speaks of the Roman See: 'Relying upon the protection [of Peter], this, his Apostolic Church, has never deviated from the way of truth in any way of error whatsoever; and his [Peter's] authority, as that of the Prince of all the Apostles, the whole Catholic Church of Christ and all the universal Synods always and faithfully have in all things embraced and followed. . . . For this is the rule of the True Faith, which, both in prosperity and adversity, this Apostolic Church of Christ, the Spiritual Mother of your peaceful empire, holds and defends as vital: which Church, by the grace of Almighty God, will never be convicted of erring from the path of apostolic tradition, nor has it ever yielded or been depraved by heretical novelties; but as it received in

* Labbe, Concil. tom. vii. p. 131. Ed. Ven. 1729.

the beginning of the Faith from its Founders, the chief of the Apostles of Christ, *it abides untainted to the end, according to the divine promise of our Lord and Saviour Himself, which in the Holy Gospels He uttered to the Prince of His disciples: Peter, Peter, behold, Satan hath desired to sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not. And thou, when thou art converted, confirm thy brethren.**

It was to this that the Fathers answered in acclamation: 'Peter hath spoken.'

On this evidence two things are to be observed:

First, that Agatho's declaration of the untainted orthodoxy of the Apostolic See until his day refutes the attempt of those who would fasten heresy on Pope Honorius, his predecessor.

Next, that the Fathers so little distinguished 'inter sedem et in eâ sedentem,' that they identify Agatho and the See as one and the same. They address him *αἰς πρωτοθρόνω σοι τῆς οἰκουμενῆς ἐκκλησίας, ἐπὶ τὴν στερᾶν πέτραν ἐστῶτι.* 'To thee, therefore, as the first See of the Universal Church, we leave what is to be done,' &c.†

20. It may perhaps be said that the language of Anselm of Havelburgh, quoted above, gives no proof of the mind of the Eastern Church. I will therefore add one more testimony, at a period when as yet

* Labbe, Concil. tom. vii. pp. 659, 662. Ed. Ven. 1729.

† Ibid. p. 1110. So S. Jerome: 'Ego Beatitudini tuæ, id est Cathedræ, consocior,' Opp. tom. iv. P. 2, p. 19; and S. Prosper, inter Opp. S. Aug. tom. x. App. p. 176, Paris, 1690: 'Sacrosancta Petri Sedes per universum orbem Papæ Zosimi sic ore loquitur.' S. Peter Damian writes to the Pope: 'Vos Apostolica Sedes, Vos Romana estis Ecclesia.' Opp. tom. iii. p. 221.

the Greeks had not accomplished the schism which endures to this day. This last evidence is contained in the Profession of Faith which Pope Hormisdas, in the year 517, required the Oriental Bishops to sign; and they did sign it. We have, therefore, in an authentic and public act, the response and acceptance, of the East, of the doctrinal authority of the Apostolic See. It runs as follows: 'The Rule of Faith. The first act of salvation is to keep rightly the rule of faith, and in no way to deviate from the decrees of the Fathers. And inasmuch as the words of our Lord Jesus Christ cannot be passed over, who said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," &c. . . . These words are confirmed by their effects, for in the Apostolic See religion has been always preserved without spot.' Then follows a condemnation of heretics and of all in communion with them. 'Wherefore we receive and approve all the letters of Pope Leo, and all that he wrote concerning the Christian religion. Therefore, as we have said, following in all things the Apostolic See, and professing all its decrees, I hope to be worthy to be in that one communion with you which the Apostolic See enjoins, in which is the perfect and true solidity of Christian religion: promising also that the names of those who are separated from the communion of the Catholic Church, that is, those who are not united in mind to the Apostolic See, shall not be recited in the Holy Mysteries. This, my profession, I have subscribed with my own hand, and presented to thee, Hormisdas, Holy and Venerable Pope of the City of Rome.—XV. Kal. April. Agapito

viro clarissimo Consule.’ * This Profession of Faith was signed, it is said, by 2,500 bishops. †

Another version of this formula is given by John, Bishop of Constantinople, in a letter to Pope Hormisdas. It runs almost in the same terms, but in two passages it is even more explicit. After the words of our Lord to Peter, it continues: ‘These sayings are confirmed by the effects, because in the Apostolic See religion is always kept inviolate;’ and afterwards it concludes: ‘But if in anything I should be tempted to doubt in my profession, I declare, by my own condemnation, that I myself should be partaker with those whom I have condemned.’ ‡

21. From the third Council of Constantinople in the seventh century, which is received by the Greek Church, we will pass to the Council of Chalcedon, one of the four first General Councils received, at least in profession, by Anglicans, in the fifth. This brings us to the period of undivided unity, and therefore, as they admit, of infallibility.

Now it is certain that S. Leo, in the most explicit language, claimed for the See and for the Successor of Peter an indefectible stability in faith. Two years ago I quoted his testimony, which is abundantly sufficient to prove this assertion. I will now add only two short

* Labbe, Concil. tom. v. p. 583. Ed. Ven. 1728.

† We have this on the authority of Rusticus, who wrote about A. D. 546. He says that the faith was confirmed ‘per libellos sacerdotum forsam duorum millium et quingentorum, imperante Justino, post schisma Petri Alexandrini et Acacii Constantinopolitani. Rustici S. R. E. Diac. Card. Contra Acephalos. Disp. Galland. Bibl. Max. tom. xii. p. 75.

‡ Labbe, Concil. tom. v. p. 622. Ed. Ven. 1728.

passages. Preaching on the anniversary of his election to the Pontificate, he says: 'Not only the Apostolic, but also the Episcopal dignity of Blessed Peter enters into our solemnity, and he never ceases to preside over his See, and he has always an unfailing fellowship with the Eternal Priest. For that solidity which, when he was made the Rock, he received from Christ the Rock, transmits itself to his heirs.'* Again: 'The solidity of that faith, which is commended in the Prince of the Apostles, is perpetual.'† 'If anything, therefore, is rightly done, or rightly decided by us it is by the work and merits of him whose power lives and whose authority is supreme in his See. . . . For [the faith of Peter] is divinely guarded by such a solidity that neither has heretical pravity ever been able to violate, nor heathen perfidy to overcome it.'‡

It was with this consciousness of his commission and prerogatives that S. Leo sent his Dogmatic Letter to the Council of Chalcedon. He peremptorily forbade, in his letter to the Emperor, that the doctrine of faith should be discussed as if it were doubtful. To the Fathers of the Council he wrote: 'Now I am present by my vicars, and in the declaration of the Catholic Faith I am not absent: so that you cannot be ignorant what we believe by the ancient tradition, you cannot doubt what is our desire; wherefore, most dear brethren, let the audacity of disputing against the divinely inspired Faith be altogether

* Opp. S. Leon.: In Anniv. Assump. Serm. v. 4. Ed. Ballerini, 1753.

† Ibid. Serm. iii. 2.

‡ Ibid. Serm. iii. 3.

rejected, let the vain unbelief of those that err be silenced. Let it not be allowed to any to defend that which it is not allowed to believe. By the letters which we addressed to Bishop Flavian, of blessed memory, it has been most fully and clearly declared what is the pious and sincere confession concerning the mystery of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

After the Dogmatic Letter of Leo to Flavian had been read, the bishops exclaimed; 'This is the Faith of the Fathers, this is the Faith of the Apostles. So we all believe; the orthodox so believe. Anathema to those who do not so believe: Peter has spoken by Leo.'†

In their letter to S. Leo the Fathers of the Council declare that he has preserved for them the Faith, being set as the interpreter of the voice of Blessed Peter (*παῶσι τῆς τοῦ μακαρίου Πέτρου φωνῆς ἑρμηνεὺς καθιστάμενος*); 'whence we also, using you as our leader in what is good and profitable, have manifested to the children of the Church the inheritance of truth.' . . . Of themselves they say that he presided over them as 'the head over the members' (*ὡς κεφαλὴ μελῶν*). Finally, they pray him to honour by his sentence their judgment (*τίμησον καὶ ταῖς σαῖς ψήφοις τὴν κρίσιν*).‡ But this judgment, which related to the precedence of Constantinople next after Rome, S. Leo cancelled and annulled. The Legates protested.§ S. Leo writes

* Opp. S. Leon. Epist. cxci. p. 1069. Ed. Ball. 1753.

† Labbe, Concil. tom. iv. p. 1235.

‡ Epist. S. Synod. Chalc. ad Leon. P. inter Opp. pp. 1088, 1090.

§ Ep. Marciani Imp. ad Leon. Papam, *ibid.* p. 1114.

to the Empress Pulcheria: 'The agreement of the bishops, contrary to the rules of the Holy Canons made at Nicæa, the piety of your faith uniting with us, we declare void, and, by the authority of Blessed Peter the Apostle, by a general decree we altogether cancel.* S. Peter Chrysologus writes to Eutyches, who had asked his judgment on his doctrine: 'In all things I exhort you, honourable brother, that you obediently attend to the things which have been written by the blessed Pope of the City of Rome, because Blessed Peter, who in his own See lives and presides, offers the truth to those that seek it. We therefore, for the love of peace and of faith, cannot hear causes of faith without the consent of the Bishop of the City of Rome.' †

And here we may stay our course. We have reached the period of undivided unity, when all the world looked to the See of Peter as the source of supreme authority in jurisdiction and in faith. The two keys of jurisdiction and of knowledge, intrinsically inseparable, are here visible in the hands of Leo. The two great prerogatives of Peter, 'Feed my sheep,' and 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not,' are as explicitly recognised in the Council of Chalcedon as by us at this day. I forbear to quote the testimony of individual Fathers. S. Augustine and S. Optatus would give it in abundance. But I have endeavoured to exhibit the tradition of the Church in its public and authoritative practice. I think it undeniable that throughout all the

* Ad Pulcher. *ibid.* p. 1158, sec. 3.

† Ep. Petri Chrys. ad Eutychen, inter Opp. S. Leonis, *ibid.* p. 779.

ages we have been reviewing there was a constant, universal, and unvarying tradition of the stability of the faith in the See and the Successor of Peter; and this world-wide fact will give us the true interpretation and value of the words of S. Irenæus, 'Ad hanc enim Ecclesiam, propter potiorem principalitatem, necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam; in qua semper ab his qui sunt undique, conservata est ab Apostolis traditio.'*

If any one shall answer that these evidences do not prove the infallibility of the Pope, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, they will lose their labour.

I adduce them to prove the immemorial and universal practice of the Church in having recourse to the Apostolic See as the last and certain witness and judge of the divine tradition of faith. That they prove this no one will, I think, deny. Even those who imagine that Honorius was a heretic have never ventured to incur the condemnation of Peter de Osma, who affirmed that 'the Church of the City of Rome may err.' Even the Gallicans of 1682 professed to believe the See to be infallible, while they affirmed that he who sat in it was fallible. Thus far, then, we have the line of testimonies running up from the Council of Constance to the fifth century; that is, to the period of the four first General Councils, when as yet the East and West were united to the See and to the Successor of Peter. The thought that either the See or the Successor of Peter could fail in faith is not to be found in those thousand years. With all the events of

* S. Iren. Adv. Hær., lib. iii. 2. sec. 21, note 27. Ed. Ven. 1734.

Honorius fresh* before them, the Fathers of the third Council of Constantinople responded to Agatho's declaration of the inviolate orthodoxy of the See and the Successor of Peter. The East and the West alike united in this. In the Formula of Hormisdas we have even more than this. The Roman Pontiff imposed subscription on the Oriental bishops of a profession of which the inviolate orthodoxy of the See and of the Successor of Peter is the explicit basis; and the Oriental bishops obeyed and subscribed. It will be observed, too, that they did this in faith of the promise made to Peter. Through those thousand years two texts are perpetually present: 'On this rock I will build my Church;' for the stability of the See. 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not;' for the stability of the Successor of Peter. It is to be observed, also, that the evidences adduced are not, with a few exceptions, the words of individual bishops or doctors, however illustrious. They are the decrees or declarations of Synods, of whole Episcopates in Rome, Africa, France, Saxony. They are the acts of General Councils, and, therefore, public documents of the Universal Church. On this evidence it may be affirmed, without hesitation, that for the first fourteen hundred years—that is, till the

* I cannot refrain from adding, that we have positive historical proof that Honorius did not err in faith. We have his two letters, which are perfectly orthodox. In whatsoever sense the words of the Council may be understood, they cannot be understood to accuse Honorius of heresy, with the proof of his orthodoxy before us under his own hand. Gonzalez, *De Infal. Rom. Pontif.*, disp. xv. sect. vi. § 1.

preludes of the great Western schism, and of the Council of Constance—the *praxis Ecclesiæ* is definite and undeniable, and that Gerson was right in saying that any one who had ventured to deny the infallibility of the See and of the Successor of Peter would have been condemned for heresy.

But if for heresy, in what light did the consent of the faithful, and the tradition of the Church, regard the truth denied? The correlative of heresy is faith.

This, then, is what may be regarded as the first period of simple, traditional faith, immemorial and universal, in the stability of the faith of Peter in his See and in his Successor; which, when analysed, is the infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ.*

II. TRADITION FROM THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE TO 1682.

We must here close the first period of this sub-

* It is with no little surprise, shared I believe by those who have read the evidence from the fifteenth to the fifth century—given in this chapter, that I read in the book ‘Janus,’ which has caused no little stir in Germany, the following words:—‘For thirteen centuries an *incomprehensible silence* on this fundamental article (Papal Infallibility) reigned throughout *the whole Church* and her *literature*. None of the *antient confessions of faith*, no Catechism, none of the Patristic writings composed for the instruction of the people, contain a syllable about the Pope, still less any hint that all certainty of faith and of doctrine depends on him.’ ‘The Pope and the Council, by Janus,’ p. 64.—The reader will judge whether an incomprehensible silence reigned on the perpetual stability or indefectibility of the Faith in the See and Successor of Peter, and whether there be any difference between this and the infallibility of the Pontiff. But these confident assertions may mislead thousands.

ject, which ends with the Council of Constance, and enter upon the second, which reaches from that Council to the Assembly of 1682. In this period, of about two hundred and forty years, the authority of the Roman Pontiff was far more explicitly manifested, by reason of the efforts made to diminish its amplitude. The Councils of Constance and Bâle may be said to have demanded the decree of the Council of Florence. This explicit declaration precludes the distinction between the 'See and him that sits in it.' The Council affirms that the plenitude of all power was given by our Lord not only to Peter, but, *ipsi in Beato Petro*, to his Successor in Peter. This decree is a summing up and declaration of the divine tradition we have hitherto been tracing upwards, century by century, towards its source. The second period may be called the period of contention, in which the authority of the Roman Pontiff has been subjected to a controversial analysis. Many things rendered this inevitable: The revival of the Roman jurisprudence filled the princes and civil powers of Europe with the principles and maxims of ancient Cæsarism.* They aimed at supreme and absolute power over all persons and causes, ecclesiastical and civil. In the Pontiffs they met their only obstacle; the only antagonist they could not break or bend. The pride of nationality is easily roused, and they roused it as an ally against the power of faith and the authority of Rome.

A still more dangerous auxiliary soon ranged itself on the same side.

* Bottalla, 'The Supreme Authority of the Pope,' p. 157 et seq.

The rise and rivalry of nationalities within the unity of the Catholic Church, which first generated controversies as to the supreme and final authority of the Roman Pontiff, soon led to divisions in the Conclave, and to doubtful elections. At the time of the Council of Constance the Church was distracted by three Obediences and three doubtful Popes.

The Council, from its opening to its fourteenth session, contained only one of the three Obediences. The second Obedience then came in. It was not until the thirty-fifth session that the three Obediences united, and a Pontiff of certain and canonical election presided over it, as S. Leo over the Council of Chalcedon, or S. Agatho over the third Council of Constantinople.

But it was in the fourth and fifth sessions, while as yet only one Obedience was present, that the decrees which represent the novelties of Gerson were proclaimed. They were null from the beginning, from the nullity of the assembly, the irregularity of the voting, as well as the heterodoxy of the matter. They were protested against as soon as read, and let to pass, not only because opposition was vain, but because their passing was, *ipso facto*, void of effect. But into this it is needless to enter. So long as a Gallican remains, the Gallican version of the Council of Constance will be reiterated. It will be remembered how Gerson complained of the condemnation, by Martin V., of those who appealed from the Pope to a General Council. This one Pontifical Act, pub-

lished in the Council itself, ruined the fourth and fifth sessions from their base.

In order to appreciate correctly the real nature of those sessions, we may recall to mind what were the theological opinions taught at that time by Gerson, in Paris. We shall readily see, first, of how little weight is the authority of his name ; and next, how analogous was the course of erroneous opinions in France with that of the opinions which issued in Anglicanism in this country.

The following propositions are a sample of much to be found in his writings:—

‘The decision of the Pope alone, in matters which are of faith, does not as such bind (any one) to believe.’*

‘The decision of the Pope binds the faithful not to dogmatise to the contrary, unless they see that manifest error against faith, and great scandal to the faith, would arise from their silence if they should not oppose themselves. . . . If persecution of their opinions, and punishment should ensue against them, let them know that they are blessed who suffer persecution for justice sake.’†

‘A simple person, without authority, might be so excellently learned in Holy Scripture that more confidence is to be had in his assertion, in a doctrinal case, than in the declaration of the Pope; for the Gospel is to be trusted rather than the Pope.’‡

* Gersonii Opp. Ed. Dupin, Ant. 1706 : tom. i. De Exam. Doctr. Consid. 2, p. 9.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. Con. 5, p. 11.

Bishops 'in the primitive Church were of the same power as the Pope.' *

'It is ridiculous to say that a mortal man may claim to have power of binding and loosing sin, in heaven and on earth, while he is a son of perdition,' &c. †

'The Roman Church, the head of which is believed to be the Pope may err, and deceive and be deceived, and be in schism and heresy, and fail to exist.' ‡

'It appears that if the Pope be wicked and incorrigible, the King or Emperor of the Romans has to apply the remedy by convoking a Council.' §

'Bishops (oppressed by Popes) may reasonably carry their complaints, not only to the Pope and a General Council, which is the most fitting tribunal, but to orthodox Princes.' ||

'Here is a foundation for the possible case of subtraction or suspension of obedience to any Pope rightly elected.' ¶

These are the first principles of the Anglican schism, which has always justified itself by such writers as Gerson, Peter d'Ailly, Nicholas de Clemangiis, and by their later followers, Dupin, Van Espen, and Febronius.

In quoting the opinions of Gerson, which every Catholic must lament and reject, it would be unjust

* Tom. ii. De modis uniendi, p. 174.

† Ibid. p. 168.

‡ Ibid. p. 163.

§ Ibid. p. 178.

|| Tor. ii. De Statu Eccl. p. 533.

¶ Tom. vi. De Auferib. Papæ, p. 218.

not to bear in mind the circumstances of the times, which forced upon him and others questions altogether new. Confidence in the supreme office of the See and Successor of Peter, in matter of faith, had been rudely shaken by the disputed election of two and of three claimants to that supreme power. Though it was not logical, it was only too natural that the doubts should spread from the election to the office, and that the contending Obediences should endeavour not only to prevail over their opponents, but to protect, as they thought, the authority of the Church and the integrity of the Faith from dangers inseparable from the co-existence of two and three claimants to the supreme office of Judge in doctrinal causes. A good and a prudent motive can be supposed for this error. In denying the infallibility of the Pontiff, and in affirming the infallibility of Councils, Gerson no doubt thought to provide a broader and surer basis for the faith of Christendom. So much it is but justice to suppose. Nevertheless, his opinions are erroneous, even to the verge of heresy, and have scattered the seeds of a wide growth of heretical errors from that day to this. It is no wonder that Protestants have claimed Gerson as a forerunner and an authority. Villiers, a Protestant writer, in his book called 'Influence of the Reformation of Luther,' says that Gerson and Richer were the leaders of the religious revolution in France.*

In the last analysis, the great Western schism is no more than the rivalry and contention of Na-

* Bouix, *De Papa et de Concil. Œcum.* tom. i. 493. Paris, 1869.

tionalties. What individuals have never been able to effect against the unity and authority of the Church, nations have endeavoured to do. And no more luminous evidence can be found of the divine stability of the Church, both in its unity and its authority, than that it should have been able not only to heal the great Western schism, but for four hundred years to preserve both unity and authority as it is at this day, and that, too, in the period of the most vigorous and vehement development of modern nationalities.

But to return to the thread of our subject. It is certain that the opinions of Gerson soon lost their hold, even in the Sorbonne. The Council of Florence eighteen years afterwards, that is in 1439, effaced the traces of the fourth and fifth sessions of the Council of Constance by its well-known decree, which, if it does not explicitly affirm the infallibility of the See and of the Successor of Peter, implicitly and logically contains it. That well-known decree is no more than the final expression of the immemorial and universal practice and faith of the Church, by the infallible authority of a General Council.

Forty years later, that is in 1479, the condemnation of Peter de Osma by Sixtus IV. affirms the contrary of his error to be of faith, namely, 'that the Church of the City of Rome cannot err.'

In 1544 the Faculty of Louvain published two-and-thirty Articles against the errors of Luther. The twenty-first runs thus:—

'It is to be held by firm faith that there is one true and Catholic Church on earth, and that visible,

which was founded by the Apostles and endures to our time, retaining and holding whatsoever the Chair of Peter hath delivered, does deliver, or shall hereafter deliver, in faith and religion; upon which [Chair, the Church] is so built by Christ the Bridegroom, that in those things which are of faith it cannot err.'

The 25th Article runs:—

'Those things are to be held by a firm faith which are declared not only by express Scripture, but also which we have received to be believed by the tradition of the Catholic Church, and which have been defined in matters of faith and morals by the Chair of Peter, and by General Councils legitimately congregated.'*

The great Western schism, and the erroneous opinions in the Council of Constance, had their legitimate development in the Protestant Reformation: and this, by separating part of Germany and England from the Church, cleansed its unity of an infection which threatened not unity alone, but the foundations of faith. We are often told, with much pretension of wise and benevolent counsel, not to draw too tight the conditions of communion, or to define too precisely the doctrines of faith. No doubt this advice was given at Constance, Florence, and Trent. But the Catholic Church knows no policy but truth; and its unity is extended, not by comprehension of error, but by the expulsion of all that is at variance with the health and life of faith. We shall see hereafter how this plea was put forward in

* Roskovány, De Rom. Pontif. tom. ii. 35.

1682, as it is at this moment, on the eve of the first Council of the Vatican.

In 1579 the clergy of France, assembled at Melun, decreed as follows:—

‘Bishops and their vicars, to whom this charge is committed, shall take care that in all synods, diocesan and provincial, all and every one, both clerics and laymen, shall embrace, and with open profession pronounce that faith which the Holy Roman Church, the teacher, pillar, and ground of the truth, professes and cherishes. For with this Church, by reason of its [principality] primacy, it is necessary that all Churches agree.’*

In 1625 a document was drawn up by the Assembly under the title of ‘Address of the Assembly-General of the Clergy of France to the Archbishops and Bishops of the Kingdom.’ It was never published, for some reason not clearly known. It is given in the ‘Procès-Verbaux,’ printed by order of the Assembly in 1762-5. In the 157th article it runs as follows:— ‘The bishops are exhorted to honour the Holy Apostolic See, and the Church of Rome, the Mother of the Churches, founded in the infallible promise of God, in the blood of the Apostles and Martyrs. . . . They will respect also our Holy Father the Pope, visible Head of the Church universal, Vicar of God on earth, Bishop of Bishops and Patriarch of Patriarchs, in a word, the Successor of S. Peter; with whom the Apostolate and the Episcopate have had their beginning, and on whom Jesus Christ has founded the

* Roskovány, *ibid.* tom. ii. p. 105.

Church, in entrusting to him the keys of heaven, *together with infallibility of the faith*, which we have seen endure miraculously immovable in his successors unto this day.' *

We now come to a period in which the Church in France, with the Court and Government, gave its testimony to the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff, by a series of public acts which admit of no reply. From the year 1651 to 1681 the Jansenistic controversy was at its height.

In 1651, eighty-five bishops of France wrote to Innocent X., praying that the five propositions of Jansenius might be judged by the Apostolic See. They say : 'It is the solemn custom of the Church to refer the greater causes to the Holy See, which custom the never-failing faith of Peter demands in his right that we should perpetually observe. In obedience, therefore, to this most just law, we have determined to write to your Holiness on a subject of the greatest gravity in matter of religion.' At the end of the letter they add : 'Your Holiness has lately known how much the authority of the Apostolic See avails in the condemnation of the error in respect to the double head of the Church ; "straightway the tempest was calmed, and at the voice and command of Christ the winds and the sea obeyed." ' †

After the condemnation of Jansenius by Innocent X. on June 9, 1653, the bishops of France again wrote, on July 15 : 'In which affair,' they said, 'this is worthy of observation, that as, on the relation

* Roskovány, *ibid.* tom. ii. p. 175.

† *Ibid.* tom. ii. p. 180.

of the bishops of Africa, Innocent the First condemned of old the Pelagian heresy, so, on the consultation of the bishops of France, Innocent the Tenth proscribed by his authority a heresy directly opposite to the Pelagian. For the Catholic Church of that ancient time, sustained only by the communion and authority of the See of Peter, which shines forth in the decretal letter of Innocent to the Africans, followed by another letter from Zosimus to the bishops of all the world, subscribed without delay the condemnation of the Pelagian heresy. For it clearly saw, not only from the promise of Christ our Lord made to Peter, but also from the acts of the earlier Pontiffs, and from the anathemas launched just before by Damasus against Apollinaris and Macedonius, while as yet they were not condemned by any synod, that judgments for the confirmation of the rule of faith made by the Pontiffs, when consulted by bishops, rest upon a divine and supreme authority throughout the world; to which all Christians are in duty bound to render the obedience of the mind.*

It is here to be observed that the condemnation of Pelagianism by Innocent I. without any General Council has always been received as infallible; and next, that the French bishops here declare the 'obedience of the mind,' that is, interior assent, and not only obsequious silence, to be required of all Christians.

On September 2, 1656, the bishops wrote to Alexander VII. almost in the same words. They call the letter of Zosimus 'a peremptory decree,' and

* Ibid. p. 190.

quote S. Augustine's well-known words: 'Finita est causa rescriptis Apostolicis,' &c. *

In the year 1660 the bishops wrote again, if possible, in stronger language. They declare: 'In thee, as in the Successor of Peter, is firmly seated the strength of us all.' †

Lastly, in the encyclical letter of the assembly of the clergy, on October 2, 1665, they declare: 'The circular letter which the General Assembly of the clergy of France wrote to all the bishops of the kingdom on the 15th of July 1653 shows that the submission which we have been used to render to the Holy Father is an inheritance of the bishops of France, who, in a synod held under Charlemagne and Pepin, made a solemn declaration of their will to preserve their unity with the Roman Church, and to be subject to S. Peter and his Successors to the end of their life.' ‡ They add, that all the Churches of France were in a perfect will to follow all that the Pontiff should order in matter of faith; and add: 'This is the solid point of our glory, which renders our faith invincible, and our authority infallible, so long as we hold the one and the other inseparably united to the centre of religion, by binding ourselves to the See of S. Peter,' &c.

We have here six solemn acts of the French bishops and assemblies, recognising in the most explicit terms the stability of the faith of the See and

* D'Argentré, *Collectio Judiciorum*, tom. iii. p. 2, p. 280. Paris, 1736.

† Zaccaria, *Anti-Febronius Viindicatus*, diss. v. cap. 2, p. 242. Rome, 1843.

‡ D'Argentré, *Coll. Jud.*, tom. iii. p. 2, p. 312.

of the Successor of Peter. It may be said with truth, that the memory of Gerson and of the old Sorbonne was by this time simply effaced from the Church of France. The condemnation of Jansenius rested, and rests to this day, upon the peremptory and irreformable decree of Innocent X. The bishops of France, on March 28, 1654, wrote to the Pontiff on the subject of the Jansenist evasion as to the question of fact respecting the propositions. They declared that the Jansenists were endeavouring 'to take away a part of the ancient deposit of faith, the custody of which was entrusted to the See of Peter by Christ, by dishonestly drawing aside the majesty of the Apostolic Decree, to the determination of fictitious controversies.*' It is clear that the bishops here recognised the supreme and plenary authority of the Pontiff in all its amplitude of faith, morals, and dogmatic facts.

This was at that time the doctrine of France. In a meeting of the leading Jansenists, held in the Faubourg St. Jacques, on the publication of the Bull of Innocent X., Pascal suggested that he had heard it said that the Pope is not infallible. Arnauld immediately answered, that if they should pursue that line of defence 'they would *give good reason to their opponents to treat them as heretics.*' †

This part of the subject, then, may be summed up in a quotation from Peter de Marca. The Jesuits, in their College in Paris, had maintained in 1661 a thesis affirming the infallibility of the Pope in faith, morals, and dogmatic facts. The Jansenists endeavoured to

* Ibid. p. 825.

† Bouix, De Papa, &c., p. 564.

stir up the government, to censure it. Peter de Marca, just then translated from the Archbishopric of Toulouse to Paris, declared that the opinion which affirms the infallibility of the Roman Pontiff, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, is 'the general and received opinion, approved by the Church of Rome and by the schools of Christendom.' He adds: 'This opinion is the only one which is taught and embraced in Italy, Spain, and the other provinces of Christendom;' and that 'the opinion which is called the opinion of the Doctors of Paris is placed in the rank of those which are only *tolerated*.'* This was before 1682 and the Pontifical condemnation of the Four Articles. Again, he says: 'Finally, it would be to open the door to a great schism to endeavour to overturn these theses, so long as they are understood in accordance with the common opinion; because not only such an opposition tends to ruin openly the constitutions published against Jansenius, but even to dispute publicly and with authority against the power of the Popes as infallible Judges, when speaking *ex cathedrâ*, in matter of faith, which is conceded to them by the consent of all the Universities, except the ancient Sorbonne.' In the same document he goes on to use the words quoted in the Pastoral of 1867: 'The great majority of the doctors [in France], not only in theology, but also in law, follow the common opinion, which has foundations very hard to destroy, as has been already said, and *they laugh at the opinion of the Old Sorbonne*.' †

* Zaccaria, *Anti-Febronius Vindicatus*, dissert. v. cap. 2, s. 5, Notes.

† *Ibid.* note 5.

I hope that I have sufficiently justified the statement made in 1867, that the Gallican opinions have no warrant in the ancient traditions of the illustrious Church of France.

III. FIRST FORMAL ENUNCIATION OF GALLICANISM.

We must now enter upon a less pleasing part of our subject, the revival of the opinions of the 'Old Sorbonne,' and their fabrication into the Articles of 1682.

It would be out of place to recite the details of the contest which arose from the thesis in the College of the Jesuits. The Jansenists attacked the infallibility of the Pope, because they were condemned by two Pontifical constitutions. They had influence enough with the Government to persuade the ministers of Louis XIV. that the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope was dangerous to the Regale, and even to the Crown of France. The Government and the Parliament prohibited the theses. The Sorbonne resisted the dictation of Government in theology. The Parliament insisted on its obedience, and commanded the Faculty to register its decrees respecting the infallibility of the Pope. Out of this arose a conflict which required seventeen decrees of Parliament to reduce the Sorbonne to obedience. Finally, the expedient of the Assembly of 1682 was decided on as a means of giving a doctrinal and authoritative character to the theology of the Court and Parliament. The history of this policy of Colbert and his colleagues shall be

given from the work of M. Gérin, Judge of the Civil Tribunal of the Seine, who has in this year published a number of documents hitherto unknown, and conclusive in proof, in behalf of the Sorbonne and against the Government.

The French writer already named has publicly censured me for saying, in the Pastoral addressed to you two years ago, that the Four Articles of 1682 are a 'Royal Theology;' and that in the assembly by which they were passed, the Archbishop of Cambrai opposed them. I think it due to you, reverend brethren, as well as to myself, both to repeat these statements and to prove them.

This writer, signing himself the Abbé St. Pol, thought to overturn my statement by quoting a passage from the Arrêt du Parlement, in which it is said that the Articles were passed unanimously (unanimentement). Who ever doubted that the Parliament would say so, and did say so? But with what truth it was said, we shall now see. The Abbé St. Pol admits that the Archbishop of Cambrai resisted until convinced. The Archbishop resisted until he obtained an assurance that the Articles should not be imposed by authority on the Theological Schools of France; which assurance was, nevertheless, immediately violated by an order of the King.*

We have it, also, upon the evidence of the Pro-

* Gérin, *Recherches historiques sur l'Assemblée du Clergé de France de 1682*, p. 201. Paris, Lecoffre, 1869. But I need say no more on the fidelity of the Archbishop of Cambrai. His courageous successor, in a noble address to his clergy on the 10th of September last, has abundantly proved the truth of my statement in 1867.

cureur-Général De Harlay, one of the chief managers of this whole transaction, that 'the majority' of that Assembly 'would with all their heart have changed their mind the day after if they had been allowed to do so.' * This evidence is beyond all refutation and all suspicion. It occurs in a private letter to Colbert, hitherto unpublished, and henceforward never to be forgotten. But I shall have occasion to return upon this document later.

In M. Gérin's volume incontestable proofs of that date are to be found in the letters, memorials, and private documents of Colbert, the Archbishop De Harlay, and the Procureur-Général, to establish beyond all controversy (1) that the Assembly of 1682 was neither Synod nor Council of the Church of France, nor even a representative assembly of the French clergy; but an assembly of Archbishops, Bishops, and others nominated by the King, or elected under every kind of pressure and influence of the Court, in the midst of strong and public protests by such men as the Cardinal Archbishop of Aix and the Vicar-General of Toulouse. As a sample out of many, the following will suffice. Colbert wrote to the Bishop of Avanches: 'Sir, the King has judged that you will be able to serve him more usefully than any other . . . in the assembly formed of the clergy. His Majesty commands me to write to you, to say that he has made choice of you,' &c. Bossuet writes to De Rancé: 'The assembly is going to be held. It is willed that I should be of it.' Fleury writes: 'The King willed that the Bishop of Meaux should be of

* Ibid. p. 389.

it.' In the same terms Colbert wrote to the Archbishop of Rouen. In the same way the elections were forced at Toulouse, Narbonne, and Aix, indeed in every place; so that Daniel de Cosnac says: 'Cette manière de députation ne me paraissait pas trop glorieuse.' To give any idea of the complete nullity of these pretended elections, it would be necessary to transcribe the third chapter of M. Gérin's work.

But (2) another fact of much greater importance both to the unity of theological truth, and of the illustrious Church in France, is this—that the Faculty of Theology at the Sorbonne, together with the other Theological Faculties in Paris, not only steadfastly and courageously resisted the Four Articles, but it may be truly said that they never received them. The shadow of acceptance which was wrung from a certain number by acts of intimidation and violence on the part of the King, the Court, and the Parliament, is abundant proof that the Four Articles were never accepted by the Theological Faculty of the Sorbonne.* The importance of this is great and manifold. It completes the rejection of the Four Articles by every great Theological School. It clears the great name of the Sorbonne of a shadow which I had hitherto feared must rest upon it; and lastly, it clears the Church in France from participation in an event which must always grieve those who revere and love its noble Catholic traditions.

* This was notorious:—

'La Sorbonne défend la foi,
Et le clergé l'édit du roi.'—*Chansons du temps.*

I will endeavour, as briefly as I can, to give the substance of M. Gérin's evidence.

The Edict of March 20th ordered that the Four Articles should be registered in all the Universities and Faculties of Theology, and taught by their professors.

The Faculties of Theology in Paris were composed of 753 doctors. The houses were those of the Sorbonne, Navarre, the Cholets, St. Sulpice, several religious orders, and others.

Of these, Fleury tells us that the regulars, to a man, maintained the infallibility of the Pontiff; that the congregations of secular priests were of the same opinion.

We have before us a secret report, drawn up for Colbert by some doctors, partisans of the Court, in which they arrange in two classes, *Pour Rome* and *Contre Rome*, the theologians of the Faculties in Paris.

Of the Sorbonne they say: 'Except six or seven, *the whole house of the Sorbonne is educated in opinions contrary to the declaration.* The professors, except the syndic, are so greatly opposed to it, that even those who are *paid by the King* are not willing to teach any one of the propositions which were presented to his Majesty in 1665; although, in the Colleges of the Sorbonne and Navarre, there are chairs founded to teach controversy. The number living in the College of the Sorbonne is very considerable. *They are all united in Ultramontane opinions except four or five.* All the professors, even the royal, except the syndic of the Faculty, are of the same maxims.' *

* Gérin, p. 343.

Of the House of Navarre, every professor, except one, was Antigallican.

St. Sulpice, the Missions Étrangères, and St. Nicholas du Chardonnet.—That ‘those who have given an opinion in this matter (of the Four Articles) are of the opinion of the Sorbonne.’ And of St. Sulpice it was said that it was the seminary of the whole clergy of the kingdom, and that there were many houses which looked upon it as the parent house.* Of St. Sulpice, in 1665 it was declared that the whole body was extreme for the authority of the Pope.

The Carmelites, Augustinians, and Franciscans were all Ultramontane.

Such were the men whom Louis XIV. commanded to register and to teach the Four Articles.

The first President de Novion, the Procureur-Général de Harlay, and six councillors, were charged to carry this declaration of the Edict to the Sorbonne on the 1st of May 1682. Three hundred doctors were present. The dean by seniority, Betille, was enfeebled with age. When the registration of the Edict was demanded, the Faculty desired time and deliberation. But Betille answered, ‘*Gratias agimus amplissimas,*’ and ‘*Facultas pollicetur obsequium;*’ on which the deputation withdrew, and Betille with them. The three hundred remained, expecting their return, and demanding a deliberation; but the absence of the dean rendered it informal. They then separated. Some days after, the Procureur-Général demanded the registration of the Edict. The Faculty answered that they could give no answer before the 1st of June.

* Ibid. p. 345.

The king, therefore, on the 10th of May, wrote to the Syndic, saying, 'that he heard that "quelques docteurs," certain doctors, were disposed to discuss the Edict;' and added: 'It is my will that if any one betakes himself to do this, you stop him, by declaring to him the order which you have received from me in this present letter.'*

Some advised a second deputation of the Parliament. But Colbert writes to the Procureur De Harlay that he was afraid of two things: the one, 'to let so much authority be seen;' the other, '*of letting it become known to the Court of Rome that the opinions of the Faculty on the subject of the Declaration of the Clergy are not in conformity with the contents of that Declaration.*'†

The 1st of June passed without any new order for the registration of the Edict. The opposition had become much more vivid. Colbert wrote to De Harlay, telling him that 'the king had received a letter, saying, that "all was lost;" that the king was thinking of expelling MM. Masure, Desperier, and Blanger, who appeared to have a chief part in the affair; but that it would be at variance with his principle, of avoiding as much as possible the appearance of any opposition on the part of the Faculty, or the using of authority on the part of his Majesty.'‡ De Harlay, in answer, addressed to Colbert a document, dated June 2, under the title of '*Projet de réglemeut pour la tenue des Assemblées de Sorbonne.*' After giving his opinion that it was wiser

* Ibid. p. 351.

† Ibid. p. 352.

‡ Ibid. p. 354.

not to send the Parliament a second time to the Faculty, and not to exhibit a great manifestation of authority, he insists that public opinion must be managed, and an appearance of liberty must be left to the Sorbonne. He then goes on in the following: 'It is not altogether without pretext to think it strange that the Faculty should complain of the form of the king's Edict, and of the new submission, and of the Chancellor of the Church of Paris, and finally of the obligation to teach a doctrine, when declared by an assembly of the clergy, *of whom the greater part would change with all their heart to-morrow, if they were allowed to do so.* But, after all, no one was wanting in respect to the Edict of the King,' &c.*

On the 16th of June, at six in the morning, an usher brought an order of the Parliament, forbidding the Faculty to assemble, or to deliberate, and commanding a certain number to appear in the Parliament, at the bar of the ushers, at seven o'clock. When they arrived, the First President addressed them, calling them a cabal, unworthy of confidence and of the marks of esteem with which they had been honoured.

The Edict, the Declaration of the Clergy, was then registered by command.

On that same day De Harlay wrote to the Chancellor Le Tellier the following letter, which will for ever destroy the illusion that the Four Articles were the free and voluntary expression of the opinion of the Church of France in the seventeenth century. It runs as follows:—

* Ibid. p. 355.

16th June, 1682.

MY LORD,

After avoiding, as far as depended upon my care, to employ with ostentation the authority which it pleased the king to give us *to bring the Faculty of Theology to obedience*, in the hope I had that the doctors, who are in very great number, very learned and well intentioned, would prevail over the contrary party; nevertheless, the way in which their deliberations yesterday began, and the assurance we received that *the evil party would prevail to-day by about fifteen voices* (as you have without doubt been informed), having made me change my opinion, I therefore thought no more of anything but executing the order of the king, which M. de Seignelay brought us yesterday. You will see, my Lord, by the Arrêt of which I send you a copy, as well as by the address which M. the first President made to the doctors who came to the Parliament, the manner in which we proceeded; with much regret on my part, and with equal pain that I am obliged to have a hand in these affairs, *we applied remedies almost as disastrous as the evil*, and because we are still exposed to many disagreeable consequences.*

He then details the reforms necessary to make the Sorbonne 'serviceable to the king,' which consists simply in expelling the Ultramontanes, of whom eight were commanded to depart that same day, or the day following; and further, in stopping the salaries of those who could not produce a certificate of having taught the Four Articles. We find a memorandum, dated 11th August 1685.† 'The professors of the Sorbonne went to the Royal treasury to demand their payment, according to custom. Three were paid. For the three others, they were told that, as they had not satisfied the order of the king, which

* Gérin, p. 359.

† Ibid. p. 375.

obliged them to teach the Propositions of the Clergy, they would not be paid until they had given satisfaction.' *

So resolute, unanimous, and constant was the Sorbonne in its opposition to the Four Articles, that the Advocate-General Talon, on June 22, 1685, wrote to the Secretary of State, that 'his Majesty knew better than any one how important it is to stop the progress which the cabals and evil *doctrines of the College of the Sorbonne* were making in the Faculty of Theology.' He adds that there was only one Professor, 'qui enseigne nos maximes.' † 'The evil doctrine of the College of the Sorbonne' is that which M. l'Abbé St. Pol, Chanoine Honoraire, calls at this day 'l'ultra-Catholicisme en Angleterre.'

I will now add only two more quotations.

In 1760 the Abbé Chauvelin, Counsellor of the Parliament of Paris, deadly enemy of the Jesuits and of the bishops who defended them, reporter of the Procès against the Society of Jesus, published,

* Ibid, p. 376.

† How deeply the national spirit had pervaded the minds and language of men at that time, appears from the constant use of such phrases as, 'la doctrine française,' 'les opinions françaises,' 'nos maximes.' We find also Massillon writing, 'comme évêque français.' The words grate strangely on the ears of those to whom the Church of God is more than nation, country, and kindred. I cannot refrain from quoting the noble and delicate words of the Archbishop of Cambrai to his clergy in synod on September 10th last:—'There is no nation that may claim the privilege of having, in the bosom of the Catholic Church, its theology apart, and its peculiar doctrines, which a kind of prescription gives it the right to preserve for ever. Understood in this way, these national doctrines would be evidently incompatible with Catholic unity; and they would bring on in time, and by the force of events, the divisions which consummate under our eyes the final ruin of Protestantism.'

without name, the famous work, 'La Tradition des Faits.' In it we read a summary of all I have endeavoured to detail.

'When the attempt was made to oblige all ecclesiastics to profess the (*maximes de France*) opinions of France, what difficulties were there not to be encountered! It was necessary to *wrest* an assent from many of them; others opposed obstacles which all the authority of Parliament had great difficulty in overcoming. There was need of all the zeal, and all the lights of certain prelates, and certain doctors attached to the true opinions, to reclaim *the great number of Ultramontanes* who were found among the clergy of France. There may be counted seventeen orders which Parliament was obliged to make, to *force* the Faculty of Theology to register the regulations of 1665, and the doctors to conform to them. The learned prelates who drew up the celebrated Declaration of 1682 met with no less contradiction in getting it adopted. *The ecclesiastics never ceased to rise against it, until the Parliament employed its authority to constrain them.* When the Parliament endeavoured to enforce the registration of the Edict of 1682 by the Faculties, the pretexts and the subterfuges to avoid it multiplied without end. The University and the Faculty of Law submitted without any difficulty. *But it was necessary to come to the exercise of authority, to bring the Faculty of Theology to obedience.'* *

We seem rather to be reading the history of the Anglican Reformation than of the glorious Church of France.

* Gérin, p. 389.

One more quotation shall be the last. In the Session of the Assembly on the 24th November, 1682, the Promotor Chéron, after saying that Louis XIV. surpassed David in gentleness, Solomon in wisdom, Constantine in religion, Alexander in courage, all the Cæsars and all kings on earth in power, applied to him this Byzantine text; which I do not translate, but leave as I find it. 'In exercitu plus quam rex, in acie plus quam miles, in regno plus quam imperator, in disciplina civili plus quam prætor, in consistorio plus quam judex, in Ecclesia plus quam sacerdos.' *

You will remember that in the former Pastoral I only said that Gallicanism was a Royal Theology, and no part of the Catholic tradition of the glorious Church of France. I here give the first proof of my assertion; and shall be ready, if need be, to add more hereafter.

In the Pastoral on the Centenary I recited the prompt and repeated censures of the acts of the Assembly by Innocent XI., April 11, 1682; Alexander VIII. in 1688 and in 1691; the retraction, by the French Bishops and by the King, of the Acts of 1682; and finally, the condemnation of the insertion of the Four Articles in the Synod of Pistoia by Pius VI., in the Bull 'Auctorem Fidei.' To this, much might be added; but as one Pontifical condemnation is enough for those with whom we are now dealing, I forbear to add more.

Such, then, is the present state and aspect of this question. We have traced it, first, through its first

* Ibid. p. 301.

period of constant, immemorial, universal, and public practice, down to the Council of Constance; secondly, through the period of conflict, and therefore of analysis, from the Council of Constance to the Assembly of 1682; thirdly, from 1682, in the Pontifical Acts by which the opinion adverse to the infallibility of the Successor of Peter, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, has been, if not condemned, at least so discouraged that the opposite opinion may be affirmed to be at least certain, if not *de fide*, though not imposed as of universal obligation. In this stage of the question an Œcumenical Council meets. The question, therefore, is not whether the doctrine be true, which cannot be doubted; or definable, which is not open to doubt: but whether such a definition be opportune, that is, timely and prudent.

Those who maintain that the time is ripe, and that such a definition would be opportune, justify their opinion on the following reasons:—

1. Because the doctrine of the infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, in matter of faith and morals, is true.

2. Because this truth has been denied.

3. Because this denial has generated extensive doubt as to the truth of this doctrine, which lies at the root of the immemorial and universal practice of the Church, and therefore at the foundation of Christianity in the world.

4. Because this denial, if it arose informally about the time of the Council of Constance, has been revived, and has grown into a formal and public error since the closing of the last General Council.

5. Because, if the next General Council shall pass it over, the error will henceforward appear to be tolerated, or at least left in impunity; and the Pontifical censures of Innocent XI., Alexander VIII., Innocent XII., Pius VI., will appear to be of doubtful effect.

6. Because this denial of the traditional belief of the Church is not a private, literary, and scholastic opinion, but a patent, active, and organised opposition to the prerogatives of the Holy See.

7. Because this erroneous opinion has gravely enfeebled the doctrinal authority of the Church in the mind of a certain number of the faithful; and if passed over in impunity, this ill effect will be still further encouraged.

8. Because this erroneous opinion has at times caused and kept open a theological and practical division among pastors and people, and has given occasion to domestic criticisms, mistrusts, animosities, and alienations.

9. Because these divisions tend to paralyse the action of truth upon the minds of the faithful *ad intra*; and consequently, by giving a false appearance of division and doubt among Catholics, upon the minds of Protestants and others *ad extra*.

10. Because, as the absence of a definition gives occasion for these separations and oppositions of opinion among pastors and people, so, if defined, the doctrine would become a basis and a bond of unity among the faithful.

11. Because, if defined in an Œcumenical Council, the doctrine would be at once received throughout

the world, both by those who believe the infallibility of the Pontiff and by those who believe the infallibility of the Church; and with the same universal joy and unanimity as the definition of the Immaculate Conception.

12. Because the definition of the ordinary means whereby the faith is proposed to the world is required to complete the Treatise 'de Fide Divina.'

13. Because the same definition is required to complete the Treatise 'de Ecclesia deque dotibus ejus.'

14. Because it is needed to place the Pontifical Acts during the last three hundred years, both in declaring the truth, as in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and in condemning errors, as in the long series of propositions condemned in Baius, Jansenius, and others, beyond cavil or question; and, still more, to make manifest that the active infallibility of the Church, between Council and Council, is not dormant, suspended, or intermittent; and to exclude the heretical supposition that infallible decrees are left to the exposition and interpretation of a fallible judge.

15. Because the full and final declaration of the divine authority of the Head of the Church is needed to exclude from the minds of pastors and faithful the political influences which have generated Gallicanism, Imperialism, Regalism, and Nationalism, the perennial sources of error, contention, and schism.

For these and for many more reasons, which it is impossible now to detail, many believe that a definition or declaration which would terminate this long

and pernicious question would be opportune, and that it might for ever be set at rest by the condemnation of the propositions following:—

1. That the decrees of the Roman Pontiffs in matter of faith and morals do not oblige the conscience unless they be made in a General Council, or before they obtain, at least, the tacit consent of the Church.

2. That the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks in matter of faith and morals, as the Universal Doctor and Teacher of the Church, may err.

They have also a desire, which springs from their fraternal and grateful affection for the illustrious Church of France, the Mother of S. Germanus, from whom England derived the Episcopate, and the Guardian of the Holy See, glorious for a long history of splendid deeds of faith: it is, that the Bishops of France should, in this first Council of the Vatican, stand forth to lead the voices of the Episcopate in asking that the infallibility of the Vicar of Jesus Christ may be declared by a decree of the universal Church.

There was a day in which the great family of S. Dominic rejoiced the whole Catholic world, when, at the feet of Gregory XVI., it laid its petition that the words ‘conceived without original sin’ should be inserted in the Litanies. The suffrage of that illustrious Order closed up the circle of unity among the faithful.

The suffrage of the illustrious Church of France for the closing of a divergence, now become historical, among the pastors and faithful of that great Catholic

people, would give joy to the whole world. They may claim the glory of this act as a prerogative, for a reason like that which has moved brave legions to claim the peril and the glory of leading the last and crowning act of some great warfare at its glorious close.

CHAPTER IV.

TWO EFFECTS OF THE COUNCIL CERTAIN.

WHETHER the first Council of the Vatican will define that the Vicar of Jesus Christ, speaking *ex cathedrâ*, in matter of faith and morals, is infallible or no, is, and, till the event, must remain a secret with God; but whatsoever the decision of the Council may be, we shall assuredly know that its decision is infallibly right, and we shall embrace it not only with obedience, but with the interior assent of mind and will.

There are, however, two things which the Council will certainly accomplish. First, it will bring out more visibly than ever the only alternative proposed to the human intellect,—namely, rationalism or faith; and next, it will show to the civil powers of the Christian world the inevitable future they are now preparing for themselves.

As to the former, it will be more than ever manifest that the basis upon which God has willed that His revelation should rest in the world is, in the natural order, the testimony of the Catholic Church, which, if considered only as a human and historical witness, affords the highest and most certain evidence for the fact and for the contents of the Christian revelation. They who deny the sufficiency of this human and historical evidence ruin the basis

of Christianity; they who, under the pretensions of historical criticism, deny the witness of the Catholic Church to be the *maximum* of evidence, even in a historical sense, likewise ruin the foundation of moral certainty in respect to Christianity altogether. If the historical evidence of the Catholic Church for the stability of the faith in the See and the Successor of Peter be not sufficient to prove, as a fact of history, that the Christian Church has so held and taught, history is altogether a poor and slender foundation for the events and actions of the past. The pretentious historical criticism of these days has prevailed, and will prevail, to undermine the peace and the confidence, and even the faith of some. But the 'City seated on a hill' is still there, high and out of reach. It cannot be hid, and is its own evidence, anterior to its history and independent of it. Its history is to be learned of itself.

The Catholic Church is not only a human and historical witness of its own origin, constitution, and authority; it is also a supernatural and divine witness, which can neither fail nor err. In the natural order of human evidence, it is a sufficient motive to convince a prudent man that Christianity is a divine revelation. This motive of credibility is sufficient for the act of faith in the Church as a divine witness. In the supernatural order, the Church is thereby known to be divine in its foundation, constitution, and endowments. The same evidence which proves Christianity to be a divine revelation proves the Catholic Church to be a part of the faith of Christianity, and to be likewise the incorporation and channel of truth.

and grace to the world. The same evidence which proves the Catholic Church to be divinely founded, proves it also to be infallible; and the same evidence which proves the Church to be infallible proves the infallibility of the See and Successor of Peter. I have already said that the evidence for the infallibility of the See and Successor of Peter exceeds in explicitness and extent the evidence for the infallibility of the Church, without reference to its Head and centre. But this *cumulus* of evidence proves that the Church and its Head are the visible and audible witness, sustained and guided by a divine assistance in declaring the revelation of Jesus Christ to the world. It is not, therefore, by criticism on past history, but by acts of faith in the living voice of the Church at this hour, that we can know the faith. It is not by the fallible criticism of the human mind on the dubious, or, if so be, even the authentic writings of uninspired men, but by faith in the divine order of the Christian world, that God wills us to learn the doctrines of revelation. Unless historical criticism lead us into the presence of a Divine Witness, and deliver us over to His teaching, our highest certainties are but human. No historical certainty can be called Science, except only by courtesy. Even Theology, which may be resolved into principles of absolute certainty by way of faith, is not properly a science.* It is time that the pretensions of 'historical science,' and 'scientific historians,' be reduced to their proper sphere and limits. And this the Council will

* Greg. De Valent. tom. i. disp. i. q. 1, p. 3, pag. 22. Ingold. 1592.

do, not by contention or anathema, but by the words, 'it hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us.'

The other certain result of the Council will be, to make more than ever manifest to the civil powers of the Christian world the inevitable future they are now preparing for themselves.

A member of the Corps Législatif in France, two years ago, announced that, in the Bull of Indiction of the Council, the Holy Father, by omitting to invite the civil governments to take part in it, had proclaimed the separation of Church and State.

A moment's thought will be enough to explain why no civil government was invited to attend. What government, at this day, professes to be Catholic? How should any government which does not even claim to be Catholic be invited? What country in Europe, at this day, recognises the unity and authority of the Catholic Church as a part of its public laws? What country has not, by royal edicts, or legislative enactments, or revolutionary changes, abolished the legal status of the Catholic Church within its territory? On what plea, then, could they be invited? As governments or nations, they have, by their own act, withdrawn themselves from the unity of the Church. As moral or legal persons, they are Catholic no longer. The faithful, indeed, among their subjects will be represented in the Council by their pastors; and their pastors are not only invited, but obliged to be present. If any separation has taken place, it is because the civil powers have separated themselves from the Church. They have created the fact, the Holy See has only recognised it. The gravity of the fact is not

to be denied. It is strange that, with the immutability of the Church, and the 'progress,' as it is vaunted, of society before their eyes, men should charge upon the Church the responsibility of breaking its relations with society. The Church at one and the same time is accused of immobility and of change. It is not the Church which has departed from unity, science, liberty; but society which has departed from Christianity and from faith. It is said: 'If Christian unity be destroyed, if science have separated from faith, if liberty choose to reign without religion, a terrible share of the responsibility for these evils rests upon the men who have represented in the Christian world unity, faith, and religion.' Does this mean, upon the Episcopate, Councils, and Pontiffs? Who, if not these, 'have represented in the Christian world unity, faith, and religion'? Have they, then, misrepresented these things to the world? If so, who shall represent them? and where, then, is the Divine office of the Church? The Pontiffs have been for generations lifting up their voice in vain to warn the governments of Christendom of the peril of breaking the bonds which unite civil society to the faith and to the Church. They have maintained inflexibly, and at great suffering and danger, their own temporal dominion, not only for the spiritual independence of the Church, but for the consecration of civil society. But the governments of the Christian world would not listen; and now a General Council meets, and the place where, as at the Lateran, at Florence, and at Trent, they would have sat, is empty. The tendency of civil society everywhere is to depart further and further from the

Church. Progress in these days means to advance along the line of departure from the old Christian order of the world. The civil society of Christendom is the offspring of the Christian family, and the foundation of the Christian family is the sacrament of matrimony. From this spring domestic and public morals. Most governments of Europe have ceased to recognise in marriage anything beyond the civil contract, and, by legalising divorce, have broken up the perpetuity of even that natural contract. With this will surely perish the morality of society and of homes. A settlement in the foundations may be slow in sinking, but it brings all down at last. The civil and political society of Europe is steadily returning to the mere natural order. The next step in de-Christianising the political life of nations is to establish national education without Christianity. This is systematically aimed at where-soever the Revolution has its way. This may, before long, be attempted among ourselves. It is already in operation elsewhere. The Church must then form its own schools; and the civil power will first refuse its aid, and soon its permission, that parents should educate their offspring except in State universities and State schools. The period and policy of Julian is returning. All this bodes ill for the Church; but worse for the State. The depression of the moral order of right and truth is the elevation of the material order of coercion and of force. The civil powers of the world do not choose this course; they only advance in it. There is behind them a power invisible, which urges them onward in their estrangements from the Church; and that unseen power is at work

everywhere. It is one, universal, invisible, but not holy; the true natural and implacable enemy of the One, Visible, Universal Church. The anti-Christian societies are one in aim and operation, even if they be not one in conscious alliance. And the governments of the world, some consciously, others unconsciously, disbelieving the existence of such societies, and therefore all the more surely under their influence, are being impelled towards a precipice over which monarchies and law and the civil order of the Christian society of men will go together. It is the policy of the secret societies to engage governments in quarrels with Rome. The breach is made, and the Revolution enters. The Catholic society of Europe has been weakened, and wounded, it may be, unto death. The Catholic Church now stands alone, as in the beginning, in its divine isolation and power. 'Et nunc, reges, intelligite; erudimini, qui judicatis terram.' There is an abyss before you, into which thrones and laws and rights and liberties may sink together. You have to choose between the Revolution and the Church of God. As you choose, so will your lot be. The General Council gives to the world one more witness for the truths, laws, and sanctities which include all that is pure, noble, just, venerable upon earth. It will be an evil day for any State in Europe if it engage in conflict with the Church of God. No weapon formed against it ever yet has prospered. The governments of Europe have been for the last year agitated and uncertain; the attitude of France is wise and deliberate, worthy of a great people with the traditions of Catholic

history at its back. The attitude of other great powers is also hitherto dignified and serious, proportionate to great responsibilities. Lesser potentates and their counsellors may circulate notes and resolve questions, and furnish matter for newspapers; but they are not the men to move mountains.

Whilst I was writing these lines a document has appeared purporting to be the answers of the Theological Faculty of Munich to the questions of the Bavarian Government.*

The questions and the answers are so evidently concerted, if not written by the same hand, and the animus of the document so evidently hostile to the Holy See, and so visibly intended to create embarrassments for the supreme authority of the Church, both in respect to its past acts and also in respect to the future action of the Œcumenical Council, that I cannot pass it over. But in speaking of it I am compelled, for the first time, to break silence on a danger which has for some years been growing in its proportions, and, I fear I must add, in its attitude of menace. The answers of the University of Munich are visibly intended to excite fear and alarm in the civil powers of Europe, and thereby to obstruct the action of the Œcumenical Council if it should judge it to be opportune to define the Infallibility of the Pope. The answers are also intended to create an impression that the theological proofs of the doctrine are inadequate, and its definition beset with uncertainty and obscurity. In a word, the whole correspondence is a transparent effort to obstruct the free-

* *Times*, Sept. 20, 1869.

dom of the Œcumenical Council on the subject of the infallibility of the Pontiff; or, if that doctrine be defined, to instigate the civil governments to assume a hostile attitude towards the Holy See. And this comes in the name of liberty, and from those who tell us that the Council will not be free!

I shall take the liberty, without further words, of dismissing the Bavarian Government from our thoughts. But I must declare, with much regret, that this Munich document appears to me to be seditious.

Facts like these give a certain warrant to the assertions and prophecies of politicians and Protestants. They prove that in the Catholic Church there is a school at variance with the doctrinal teaching of the Holy See in matters which are not of faith. But they do not reveal how small that school is. Its centre would seem to be at Munich; it has, both in France and in England, a small number of adherents. They are active, they correspond, and, for the most part, write anonymously. It would be difficult to describe its tenets, for none of its followers seem to be agreed in all points. Some hold the infallibility of the Pope, and some defend the Temporal Power. — Nothing appears to be common to all, except an animus of opposition to the acts of the Holy See in matters outside the faith.

In this country, about a year ago, an attempt was made to render impossible, as it was confidently but vainly thought, the definition of the infallibility of the Pontiff by reviving the monotonous controversy about Pope Honorius. Later we were told of I know not

what combination of exalted personages in France for the same end. It is certain that these symptoms are not sporadic and disconnected, but in mutual understanding and with a common purpose. The anti-Catholic press has eagerly encouraged this school of thought. If a Catholic can be found out of tune with authority by half a note, he is at once extolled for unequalled learning and irrefragable logic. The anti-Catholic journals are at his service, and he vents his opposition to the common opinions of the Church by writing against them anonymously. Sad as this is, it is not formidable. It has effect almost alone upon those who are not Catholic. Upon Catholics its effect is hardly appreciable; on the Theological Schools of the Church it will have little influence; upon the Œcumenical Council it can have none.

I can hardly persuade myself to believe that the University of Munich does not know that the relations between the Pope, even supposed to be infallible, and the civil powers have been long since precisely defined in the same acts which defined the relations between the Church, known to be infallible, and the civil authority. Twelve Synods or Councils, two of them Œcumenical, have long ago laid down these relations of the spiritual and civil powers.* If the Pope were declared to be infallible to-morrow, it would in no way affect those relations.

We may be sure, reverend and dear brethren, that this intellectual disaffection, of which, in these last days, we have had in France a new and mournful example, will have no influence upon either the Œcumenical

* Bellarm. Opuscula. Adv. Barclaium, p. 845, ed. Col. 1617.

Council, or the policy of the Great Powers of Europe. They will not meddle with speculations of theological or historical critics. They know too well that they cannot do in the nineteenth century what was done in the sixteenth and the seventeenth.

The attempt to put a pressure upon the General Council, if it have any effect upon those who are subject to certain Governments, would have no effect but to rouse a just indignation in the Episcopate of the Church throughout the world. They hold their jurisdiction from a higher fountain; and they recognise no superior in their office of Judges of Doctrine save only the Vicar of Jesus Christ. This preliminary meddling has already awakened a sense of profound responsibility and an inflexible resolution to allow no pressure, or influence, or menace, or intrigue to cast so much as a shadow across their fidelity to the Divine Head of the Church and to His Vicar upon earth.

Moreover, we live in days when the 'Regium Placitum' and 'Exequaturs' and 'Arrêts' of Parliament in spiritual things are simply dead. It may have been possible to hinder the promulgation of the Council of Trent: it is impossible to hinder the promulgation of the Council of the Vatican. The very liberty of which men are proud will publish it. Ten thousand presses in all lands will promulgate every act of the Church and of the Pontiff, in the face of all civil powers. Once published, these acts enter the domain of faith and conscience, and no human legislation, no civil authority, can efface them. The two hundred millions of Catholics will

know the decrees of the Vatican Council; and to know them is to obey. The Council will ask no civil enforcement, and it will need no civil aid. The Great Powers of Europe have long declared that the conscience of men is free from civil constraint. They will not stultify their own declarations by attempting to restrain the acts of the Vatican Council. The guardians and defenders of the principles of 1789 ought to rise as one man against all who should so violate the base of the political society in France. What attitude lesser Governments may take is of lesser moment.

May He in whose hands are the destinies of kingdoms and of nations guide the rulers of Christendom by a spirit of wisdom and justice at this crisis of their trial. This Council will assuredly be 'in ruinam et in resurrectionem multorum.' If Christian nations be desolated, then will come the alternatives of anti-Christian socialism, or the Catholic order of the world, purified in the fire and reunited to the centre of stability and justice, from which it is now departing. Those who desire such a future are busy in scattering fears, mistrusts, and falsehoods as to the acts of the Council, and even of the intentions of the Sovereign Pontiff. These ignoble tactics have been rebuked with a calm and dignified severity by the bishops of Germany, whose words I had rather use than my own: 'Never will the Œcumenical Council declare a new doctrine which is not contained in the Scriptures, or the Apostolic traditions. When the Church makes a decree in matter of faith, it does not proclaim a new dogma; it only sets in a clearer light an ancient and

primordial truth, and defends it against new errors.' 'In a word, the Œcumenical Council will declare no new principle, nor any other than that which is already graven on your hearts by your faith and conscience; or than those which have been held sacred for ages by Christian peoples, on which repose, and have ever reposed, the welfare of States, the authority of magistrates, the liberty of nations, and which are at the same time the foundations of true science and true civilisation.' *

There is one thing against which it is our duty to be on our guard; I mean a fearful and timid anxiety as to the results of the Council and as to the future of the Church. It is the illusion of some minds to imagine that the Church was strong once, but is weak now; that the days of its supremacy are over, and that now it is in decline. The reverse is the fact. There was never a time since the Apostles descended from the guest-chamber to traverse the world, when the universality of the Church was so manifest, and its divine jurisdiction so widespread. There was never a moment when the unity of the Church both within and without, that is the unity of the faithful with their pastors, and of the pastors with their Head, the unanimity of pastors and flocks in faith and in charity, was so solid and invincible. From the mystery of the Holy Trinity to the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, there is not a doctrine of faith on which Catholics in all the world differ by a shade. Peter's faith has not failed, and the Church rests on Peter's faith. We may be upon the eve of

* Address of the Bishops at Fulda, Sept. 6, 1869.

a great conflict, but the conflict is the forerunner of a greater manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth. The eyes of men are looking one way, as they that look for the morning. They are hungering after rest, certainty, and truth. They have sought it up and down, and have not found it. The broken cisterns will hold no water; and the dim tradition of a fountain far off and yet at hand, closed to the world but ever open to all who will, is rising again upon their memory. The nations of the Christian world have been deceived, and turned against the Mother that bare them. But the unrest, and the unsatisfied craving of the heart and of the reason, is drawing them once more toward the only Church. All countries, above all our own, are conscious, in their political, religious, and intellectual life, of desires they cannot satisfy, and needs they cannot meet. 'As he that is hungry dreameth and eateth, but when he is awake his soul is empty: and as he that is thirsty dreameth and drinketh, and after he is awake is yet faint with thirst and his soul is empty; so shall be the multitude of all the nations that have fought against Mount Sion.'* It is the conflict with the Church of God that has wasted and withered the spiritual and intellectual life of Europe. England, with all its faults, is very dear to us. It has still a zeal for God; and the face of our land is yet beautiful with the memories of our Saints and Martyrs. The Council has moved it with strange and kindly aspirations. England hopes for some clearing in the dark sky which for the last three hundred years

* Isaias xxix. 8.

has lowered upon it; for some light upon the horizon; some change which will open to it once more the unity of Christendom and the rest of immutable faith. You will labour and pray that this visitation of the Spirit of God, now sensibly breathing over England, and over all the Christian world, may open the hearts of men, and prepare them for His voice, which, through this Council, is calling them home to the Mother of us all, the only fountain of grace and truth.

I remain, reverend and dear Brethren,

Your affectionate Servant in Christ,

✠ HENRY EDWARD,

Archbishop of Westminster.

ROSARY SUNDAY, 1869.

POSTSCRIPT.

WHEN the foregoing Pastoral was already printed, I received from Paris Mgr. Maret's volumes, 'Du Concile Général et de la Paix Religieuse.' I am sorry that I did not see them in time to weigh certain points raised in them before publishing what I have here written.

The Bishop has, however, re-stated so clearly the opinion he maintains, in the preface to his work, that I am at no loss to compare it precisely with the doctrine maintained in this Pastoral.

In making that comparison, I trust I shall use no word at variance with the fraternal charity and respect due from me to Mgr. Maret, both in person and as a brother.

He says of his own opinion, which shall be stated in his own words,* 'As truth cannot be contrary to itself, this doctrine is easily reconcilable with the doctrines which are the most moderate of the School which bears the name of Ultramontane. What Divine right, what certain right of the Sovereign Pontificate is there, which is not enunciated and defended in our book? The Pontifical infallibility itself is not therein denied, but brought back to its true nature. We acknowledge and prove that the Pope, by his right to *consult* or to *convoke* the

* Du Concile Général et de la Paix Religieuse. Préface, xxvi. vii.

episcopal body, by the possibility in which he is of acting always in concert with it, possesses in virtue of the Divine order the assured means to *give* infallibility to his dogmatic judgments.'

From this I gather :—

1. That the Pontiff possesses a *means of giving* infallibility to his judgments.

2. That this means is the *right of consulting* the episcopal body.

From this it would seem to follow—

1. That, apart from the episcopal body, the Pontiff is not infallible.

2. That consultation with the episcopal body is a necessary condition of giving infallibility to his judgments.

3. That the Pontiff *gives* infallibility to his judgments by *receiving* it from the episcopal body, or by his union with it.

If I understand this statement, it denies the infallibility of the Pontiff altogether; for it affirms it only when the Pontiff has *given* to his judgment what he has received from the episcopal body, or what he cannot have without it.

In this process the words of our Lord seem to be inverted. It is his brethren who confirm him, not he who confirms his brethren.

The endowment of infallibility residing in the body flows to the Head when in consultation with the Episcopate. It is *influxus corporis in Caput*, not *Capitis in corpus*.

The doctrine I have maintained in these pages is as follows :—

1. That the endowment of stability or infallibility in Faith was given to Peter, and from him, according to our Lord's words, *confirma fratres tuos*, was derived to his brethren.

2. That this endowment, which is again and again called by the Fathers and Councils the 'Privilegium Petri,' or the 'Prærogativa Sedis Petri,' was given *in him* to his Successors.

3. That the Successor of Peter still 'confirms his brethren' by the possession and exercise of a divine right and endowment, not only of consulting them or of convoking them, but of witnessing, teaching, and judging by a special divine assistance which preserves him, as Universal Teacher in faith and morals, from error.

The office of Peter was not to be confirmed by, but to confirm, his brethren; the same is the office of his Successor, even when apart from convocation or consultation with the Episcopate *as a body*, whether congregated or dispersed.

In the testimonies I have quoted it is evident that, in virtue of a divine assistance, the dogmatic judgments of the Pontiff *ex cathedrâ* do not *receive* from the episcopal body, but *give* to the Universal Church, an infallible declaration of truth.

I must ask you to review the evidence I have given, in all of which the promise of our Lord, 'I have prayed for thee,' &c., is either expressed or understood; and Peter's privilege of stability in faith is ascribed to his Successor as the inheritance of his See.

Mgr. Maret proceeds to ask, 'Do we contend against

the authority of judgments *ex cathedrâ* when we affirm, with the great masters in theology, that there are certainly judgments of that kind only when the Pope employs the most certain means which God gives him to avoid error; that is to say, the concurrence of the bishops?’

If I understand these words, they mean :—

1. That no judgments are certainly *ex cathedrâ* except when the Pontiff acts with the concurrence of the bishops.

2. That the Pontiff is bound to employ the means which is the most certain to avoid error; namely, the concurrence of the bishops.

The doctrine maintained by me, under the guidance of every great master of theology of all Schools, Dominican, Franciscan, Jesuit, so far as I know, excepting only theologians of the Gallican school,* is, that judgments *ex cathedrâ* are, in their essence, judgments of the Pontiff, *apart* from the episcopal body, whether congregated or dispersed. This concurrence of the episcopal body may or may not be united to the act of the Pontiff, which is perfect and complete in itself. It is to the *Cathedra Petri*, apart from the Episcopate, that the faithful and pastors of all the world throughout Christian history have had recourse. For instance, the condemnation of Pelagianism by Innocent the First, and of Jansenius

* Of this I think sufficient proof was given in the Pastoral of 1867. But I may refer to Aguirre, *Defensio Cathedræ Petri*; Gonzalez, *De Infallib. Rom. Pontificis*; Schrader, *De Unitate Romana*; Theoph. Raynaud, *Ἀντὸς ἕφα*; who expressly prove this point by ample quotations. The words of Peter de Marca, p. 106 *supra*, are alone enough.

by Innocent the Tenth, were appeals to the *Cathedra Petri*; and judgments *ex cathedrâ*, to which the consultation of the African or of the French bishops respectively contributed no influx of infallibility. And those two judgments were regarded as infallible, from the moment of their promulgation, by the whole Church.

If there be no certain judgments *ex cathedrâ* apart from the episcopal body, what are the judgments of Alexander VIII., Innocent XI., and Pius VI.?

What are the condemnations in the 'Theses Damnatæ?' The episcopal body was not united with the Pontiff in their publication. When did it become so? Till this concurrence was verified, these Pontifical Acts, according to Mgr. Maret's opinion, were not *ex cathedrâ*, and therefore were not certainly infallible. How long were they in this tentative state of suspended or conditional infallibility? Who has ever discerned and declared the epoch and the crisis after which they became judgments *ex cathedrâ*? Silence is not enough. Even strong terms of adhesion are not enough. The bishops of France received the condemnation of Jansenius by Innocent X. as infallible in 1653, but in 1682 published the Four Articles.

All this, if I rightly understand it, seems to present an inverted theory, at variance with the tradition, *praxis*, faith, and theology of the Church.

But further, if the Pontiffs are bound to employ 'the most certain means' to avoid error—namely, the concurrence of the episcopal body—they must either convoke a General Council or interrogate numerically the Episcopate throughout the world. Is

this an obligation of the divine order? If so, where is it to be read? In Scripture it cannot be looked for. In tradition it is not to be found. In history we have the direct reverse. We find the Pontiffs witnessing, teaching, deciding by the authority of Peter. We find the Episcopate appealing to their judgments as final. We find the faith of Peter, taken not only by the faithful, but also by the bishops, as the rule of faith, and the text of what is to be believed by all the world.

If the concurrence of the Episcopate with its Head be 'the *most certain means*' of avoiding error, because it is the full, ultimate, and, so to speak, exhaustive act of infallible judgment, nevertheless the privilege of stability in faith divinely granted to the See and Successor of Peter is *a certain means* of avoiding error; and that certainty, though *extensivè* it be not adequate to the certainty of the whole Church, which included always the See and Successor of Peter, is nevertheless intrinsically and by divine ordination certain, to the exclusion of the possibility of error.

Why, then, is the Pontiff bound to take 'the most certain means,' when a means divinely certain also exists? And why is he bound to take a means which demands an Œcumenical Council or a world-wide and protracted interrogation, with all the delays and uncertainties of correspondence, when, by the divine order, a certain means in the Apostolic See is always at hand? For instance, was Innocent X. bound to consult the whole episcopal body before he condemned Jansenius? or Alexander VIII., when he condemned the 'Peccatum Philosophicum'? or Sixtus

IV., when he condemned as heretical the proposition that 'the Church of the City of Rome may err' ?

It would seem to me that if any such obligation exists, or if declarations *ex cathedrâ* are only certain when the episcopal body has been consulted, then the action of the Pontiffs, from Innocent I. to Pius IX., has been out of course; and their doctrinal judgments fallible always, except when the Episcopate concurred in them; and for that reason almost always uncertain, because, except in a few cases, we cannot be certain, by explicit proof, whether the episcopal body has concurred in those judgments or no.

I know of no Ultramontane opinion with which this theory can be reconciled. The Ultramontane opinion is simply this, that the Pontiff speaking *ex cathedrâ*, in faith or morals, is infallible. In this there are no shades or moderations. It is simply aye or no. But the opinion we have been examining affirms the Pontiff to be infallible, only when the episcopal body concurs in his judgments. But if the episcopal body have not pronounced or even examined the subject-matter, as, for instance, in the question of the 'Peccatum Philosophicum,' or in the Jansenistic propositions, or in the questions 'De Auxiliis;' I would ask, are then the judgments of the Pontiff either not *ex cathedrâ*, or if *ex cathedrâ*, are they not infallible? But if they are not infallible they may be erroneous, and if the Pontiff in such judgments may err once, he might err always, and therefore cannot ever be infallible. I see no means of reconciling this opinion with that of any Ultramontanes, however moderate. They are *frontibus adversis pugnantis*. With all my heart, I desire to find a mode

of conciliation: not a *via media*, which is the essential method of falsehood, but any intellectual analysis and precise mental conception which might satisfy the mind of Mgr. Maret as to the infallibility of the See and of the Successor of Peter. I cannot but add in passing that much confusion seems to me to arise from this whole notion of '*moderate opinions*.'

The Pontifical judgments *ex cathedrâ* must be either fallible or infallible. If it be immoderate or exaggerated to affirm them to be infallible, how is it not equally immoderate or exaggerated to deny their infallibility? Either way the affirmation and the denial are equally absolute, trenchant, and peremptory. I see just as much, and just as little, moderation in the one as in the other. Either both are moderate or neither. And yet those who affirm the Pontifical infallibility are held up as warnings, and they who deny it as examples; the latter as patterns of moderation, the former as exaggerated and extreme. But they are both in extremes. Aye and no are equally exclusive, and admit of no degrees.

Is it not the truth that moderation is a quality, not of the intellect but of the moral nature? Certainty admits of no degrees. Doubt may; but certainty excludes doubt and all its gradations. To be moderate, cautious, forbearing, self-mistrusting, and considerate of opponents in all doubtful matters, is a virtue; but in matters that are certain, to fail in saying that they are so, is to betray the truth. To treat certainties as uncertainties in mathematics is not intellectual, in revelation is unbelief. The only moderation possible in matters of theological certainty

is to speak the truth in charity, ἀληθεύειν ἐν ἀγάπῃ; to diminish the precision of truths which are certain, or to suffer them to be treated as dubious, or to veil them by economies, or to modify them to meet the prejudices of men or the traditions of public opinion, is not moderation, but an infidelity to truth, and an immoderate fear, or an immoderate respect for some human authority.

Mgr. Maret further declares: 'We do not combat the Pontifical authority, except so far as it is identified with the system of the pure, indivisible, and absolute monarchy of the Roman Pontiff, and so far as his absolute monarchy and his personal infallibility are made one exclusive whole.'

Once more I am afraid of doing injustice to the Bishop of Sura. If I understand the doctrine which I suppose I must now call Ultramontane, but would rather call, as all the schools of Christendom do, Catholic, it is this--that the supreme and ultimate power, both in jurisdiction and in faith, or the *clavis jurisdictionis* and the *clavis scientiæ*, was committed first and for ever to Peter, and in him, as the Council of Florence says, to his Successors. The Episcopate succeeding to the Apostolate received, *servatâ proportione*, a participation of the pastoral care and of the endowments of the Church. What Peter was to the Apostles, the Pontiffs are to the bishops. What they have in part, he has in plenitude. I am unable to see that the primacy and infallibility of Peter in any way lessened or detracted from the authority and endowments of the Apostles; nor does it appear how the authority and endowment of his

Successor shall lessen or detract from those of the Episcopate. Bishops are not less authoritative because their Head is more so. Bishops are not less judges of doctrine in an Œcumenical Council because their Head, in the intervals between Council and Council, is, by Divine assistance, guided and sustained so that he shall not err in interpreting the faith and expounding the law of God. It is in behalf of the whole Church, pastors and people, that the Spirit of God preserves from error the Head, on whom all so depend, that an error in his guidance would mislead the whole flock, or break the Divine unity of the Church, or undermine the witness and the *magisterium* of the universal Church. Bishops are not elevated by the depression of their chief. The least bishop in the world feels himself elevated and strengthened by the belief that the words 'Ego rogavi pro te' were spoken to his Chief and Head, and that, in union with him, and through him, he is confirmed in the infallible faith of Peter. I know of no monarchy pure and absolute beyond this.

To sum up the comparison of these two opinions. The opinion of Mgr. Maret would seem to place the infallibility of the Church in the whole body as its proper residence, and by result in its Head.

The doctrine here maintained is that infallibility was communicated by the Divine Head of the Church to Peter as His visible representative and Vicar upon earth, and through him to his Successors and to the Church for ever.

In virtue of this order the Church is always infallible, both actively in teaching and passively in believing.

In its active infallibility it is secured from error, whether dispersed, as it is always, throughout the world, or congregated, as it rarely is, in Council. Only eighteen times in eighteen hundred years has it met in Council; but through all those eighteen centuries its active infallibility has been, not intermittent but continuous, both in its Episcopate with its Head, and in its Head as Universal Pastor and Teacher, both of pastors and flock.

The stability, indefectibility, or infallibility of the faith of Peter are three modes of expressing the same Divine fact.

If this be monarchy pure, indivisible, and absolute, then I fear I must come under the author's censure, though I cannot admit its justice or understand its terms. If Mgr. Maret does not intend to condemn this, then, I think, I will even hope that his learned mind has suffered some illusion, perhaps arising from a want of precision in some who are opponents, and from a want of chastened language in those who are about him. I most sincerely and ardently share in his desire to see all divergences corrected in the enunciation of truth, pure, clear, and lucid as the river of the water of life. I have consciously no thought in my heart but to promote this unity of mind and will; and in what I have written, if there be a word to wound save where truth compels it, I hereby record my desire to blot it out.

Stability signifies the immovable firmness of the Faith in standing against all assaults of power and force: indefectibility, the imperishable vitality and light of faith, which can never fail: infallibility,

the unerring discernment of truth in detecting and destroying falsehood in the midst of the intellectual aberrations of the Christian world. These three endowments are various in their operations, but identical in their nature and their source. It is the perpetual Divine assistance, derived from the perpetual presence of the Spirit of Truth in the Church, which sustains the Faith of the See and of the Successor of Peter, stable, indefectible, and infallible; that is, in one word, 'Yesterday and to-day and the same for ever.'

I do not know how other minds may be affected by the history of Christianity, in which, as I have very briefly shown, the eyes of men and of nations, in all lands were always turned to the See and the Successor of Peter as the centre and source of this stable, indefectible, and infallible faith. To me this manifests the 'Privilegium Petri' with the evidence of light. Two hundred and fifty-seven Pontiffs in unbroken line have witnessed, taught, and judged in causes of faith. Against three only do the modern adversaries of the Pontifical infallibility bring charge of heterodoxy. Two hundred and fifty-four stand unchallenged in their immutable stability of faith. Of those three, two, Liberius and Vigilius, are not charged with heresy. Whatever be the fault of Honorius, supineness or hesitation, heterodox he was not; heretical he could not be, for his own letters remain to prove the orthodoxy of his teaching. But these three are all that the most relentless adversaries of the 'Privilegium Petri' have ever been able to adduce. To my mind, these threads of mist upon the

world-wide splendour of two hundred and fifty-seven Successors of Peter, in no way affect the confidence with which we say of them in S. Leo's words: 'Soliditas enim illa, quam de Petra Christo etiam ipse Petra factus accepit, in suos quoque se transfudit hæredes;' * and of his See in the words of prophecy: 'Thronus ejus sicut sol in conspectu meo et sicut luna perfecta in æternum, et testis in cælo fidelis.' †

* Bellarm. De Summo Pontif. lib. iv. cc. viii. to xiv. In die Assumpt. Serm. v. cap. 4.

† Psalm lxxxviii.



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