William Elfe Taylor

Popery: its character and its crimes

POPERY:

ITS CHARACTER AND ITS CRIMES.

BY WILLIAM ELFE TAYLER,

With Fourteen Illustrations, from MSS. and Rare Books.

“I WILL CAST ABOMINABLE FILTH UPON THEE.”—Nah. Iii. 6.

LONDON:

SEELEY, BURNSIDE, & Co.; WARD & Co.; NISBET & Co.;
AND HOULSTON AND STONEMAN.

1847.

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Illustration of the Power exercised by the Papal Church over the Invisible World, copied from a highly illuminated Missal of the XV. Century.

PREFACE.

In that warfare between Popery and Protestantism—which is every day becoming more serious—one of the most usual and successful methods employed by Papists, is that of misrepresenting the true character of Popery, in order to accommodate it to the taste of Protestants. Hence no more important task can possibly be attempted, than that which forms the object of the following pages—to exhibit the *real* doctrines and practices of Romanism—from its own writers—in all their actual malignity, and demoralizing results.

The members of the Church of Rome have, for some time, affected to consider the term *Papist* as a nickname. There is, however, nothing in the word to justify such an objection to its use. The Author has, therefore, constantly used it, as being, in his opinion, the most correct designation he knows, for those whose chief peculiarity consists in maintaining the supremacy of the Pope, as Vicar of Christ, and Head of the whole visible Church.

The writer makes no apology for the use he has often made of other works. In cases where he has met with clear and forcible statements, establishing that particular point which the Author had in view, he has gladly availed himself of them, as far more *unexceptionable* testimony than any statements of his own.

To have given the originals of the numerous quotations from the Latin would have swelled the work beyond the intention of the Author. Should the wish, however, that this had been done, be generally expressed, it is his intention to meet this wish by publishing a supplement.

The writer entertains towards Papists nothing but the kindliest feelings. And although his opinions of the system they profess are strongly expressed, he sees no inconsistency in cherishing towards them the sincerest goodwill.

The work is devoutly commended to the blessing of the God of all grace, and the prayers of His people of every name.

Bristol, March, 1847.

INTRODUCTION.

That Christianity, the greatest blessing which Infinite Love has bestowed upon man, should have proved the occasion of a greater evil than any which the world since Adam's fall has ever witnessed, is a truth no less strange than it is plain and incontrovertible. That system of doctrine and practice which we term Popery is nothing more than that which Christianity became in the hands of unrenewed men. It was the natural—almost the necessary—result of the truths and ordinances of the gospel having passed into the hands of those who had not the grace of God; and as "the corruption of the best things is the worst," so corrupted Christianity has proved the worst evil under which our sinful world has ever groaned.

As Christianity contains the brightest and fullest manifestation of Jehovah which has been afforded, so does Popery, or corrupted Christianity, constitute the fullest development of human wickedness that our globe has ever witnessed. The previous dealings, however, of God with man exhibit precisely similar results. When it pleased the Most High to choose one nation for Himself, and reveal to that people the knowledge of Himself, to perform the most wondrous miracles on its behalf, and to bestow upon it various other privileges—so far was all this from proving a blessing to the Jews, as a people, that the innate depravity of their nature rendered it the greatest of evils. Not one of the men and women who came out of Egypt escaped the just judgment of heaven. In after times the whole nation practiced the most abominable idolatry. Jehovah Himself, by the mouth of Ezekiel, expressly says that *their wickedness far exceeded that of all other nations;* and the awful judgments of a just God in repeatedly delivering them as captives into the hands of the heathen afford a striking proof that the manifestation of Divine light to the unrenewed heart only serves to call forth its wickedness.

The next grand step in the manifestation of God to man was the actual incarnation of Jehovah Himself. God in the form of man dwelling amongst them, and instructing them by His perfect example and His infallible teaching. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John i. 14.) The *result* of this still brighter and fuller manifestation of God to man was only the manifestation of the wickedness of man to a more fearful extent than had ever before been witnessed. The Lord of Glory *Himself*, after many unsuccessful efforts had been made to destroy Him, was at length consigned both by priests and people to a most lingering and excruciating death, being crucified between two malefactors, as though He were the greatest of the three. Such was the *result* of this wondrous manifestation of God to man; and the unparalleled judgments inflicted by the God of Love upon the Jewish nation prove that such wickedness had never before been perpetrated on earth. Josephus, the Jewish historian, an eyewitness of the calamities which afterwards befell Jerusalem, says that "no other city ever suffered such things, as no other race of men has committed such wickedness since the world began." (lib. v. cap. x. sec. 5.)

We need not wonder then, that Christianity—which constitutes the *revelation* of Jesus Christ—should, in the hands of unrenewed men, give rise to Popery: the fullest manifestation of human wickedness which this world contains. It is merely another proof of the great principle—the brighter and fuller the

revelation, the more awful the wickedness which it calls forth. Christianity is the fullest manifestation of the Divine glory which has ever yet taken place. Popery, the *result* of that manifestation, is the most complete and awful development of the wickedness of man which the records of time contain. The one sets forth the immeasurable love and boundless compassion and perfect holiness and manifold wisdom of Jehovah, as they have never before, even to angelic beings, been displayed. The other shows in the most vivid colors the infernal cruelty, the matchless perfidy, the gross sensuality, and the awful impiety of which the human heart is capable. In fact, so incredible is the manifestation of human guilt which the Romish church exhibits, that, in the striking words of a living writer: "if the history of the Romish church were to descend to distant times, and the THEORY of the system be forgotten, then must it certainly be thought that, during the thousand years or more of its unbroken power, a license extraordinary had been granted to infernal malignants to invade earth with the practices of hell: or that the world, from the seventh to the seventeenth century, had suffered a dark millennium of diabolical oppression!" (Isaac Taylor's History of Fanaticism, sec. 65.)

This fearful development of impiety and wickedness has unquestionably proved the greatest curse which has yet befallen our unhappy race. Look where we will, no such curse has ever desolated earth or peopled hell. Paganism, Mahometanism, Buddhism, Infidelity, and every form in which human depravity has manifested itself—all must yield the first place to that horrid system into which man has changed "the gospel of the grace of God." For twelve hundred years at least, it has acted the part of man's deadliest foe—damming up every source of light and life, and scattering immortal poison on every side; and all this under the guise of being man's best and fondest friend. Whilst, not content with destroying the spiritual interests of its victims, it has also, to an incalculable extent, inflicted temporal misery upon mankind—both by the sanguinary wars which it has instigated and waged in Europe and Asia, and the bloody persecutions which it has occasioned throughout the world. In short, whether we look at the sources of spiritual good which it has closed, or the fountains of evil which it has opened—the temporal miseries which it has produced, or the impiety and licentiousness which it has occasioned—the length of time during which it has reigned, or the fair kingdoms of earth which it has desolated—what curse that has ever lighted upon our globe can be compared with Popery?

It is, however, a lamentable fact, that these fearful evils of Popery are but little considered in the present day. In this country, that system of wickedness puts on an aspect which beguiles superficial observers, and hides the more forbidding features which belong to it. The lifeless statues, which constitute the objects of worship abroad, are removed. Translations of the Mass-book and the Bible are, to some extent, allowed. The worship of dead men's bones and old rags does not disgust the spectator. And its priests constitute, for the most part, respectable members of society. The works published by Papists here, also, misrepresent their creed, their church, and their institutions. The more loathsome features of the whore of Babylon are kept out of sight—and she at first appears to resemble the woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and a crown of stars upon her head. The natural effect of all this, combined with the spurious liberality of the present age, has been just what might have been expected. The most erroneous and unscriptural notions are prevalent, not merely among the vulgar, but also amongst the educated and intelligent—not merely amongst the worldly, but also amongst the people of God. Popery is considered a harmless sort of thing, differing from other creeds only in certain

speculative points—clogged perhaps with too many useless ceremonies, but *substantially* the same religion as that of Luther or Calvin. Hence, that wicked system is cherished in the bosom of the nation, —it is supported by large grants of money voted by the British Commons. Like the man and the viper, England, in the present helpless condition of Romanism, forgets the envenomed sting which still remains.

Such then being the fearful evils of Popery, and such the apathy almost universally prevalent respecting them; how important to attempt, through the press, to awaken men, and especially Christian men, to the danger which threatens them! It is not as if the errors and superstitions of Romanism were gradually fleeing away before the light of the nineteenth century. The very contrary to this is the case. Knowledge and science and art are, it is true, making rapid progress; but alas! Popery and semi-popery are almost as rapidly spreading throughout Great Britain and America. The numerical increase of Papists in this kingdom is not such as to excite apprehension, but many facts of recent occurrence are well fitted to alarm even the most sober-minded Christian. The revival and extensive prevalence of many of the superstitions of the dark ages amongst many of the clergy of the establishment; the mighty efforts now being made by Papists to propagate Popery both here and in the new world; the influence possessed by prelates and priests over those in power on the continent; these and other facts in the present state of the civilized world lead us to fear that Popery, bad as it is, may ere long regain its lost ascendancy. It is the religion of depraved human nature, and no believer in the natural corruption of man can question that, under favorable circumstances, this Upas tree, with its poisonous fruit, may again spring up afresh in so congenial a soil. Let the Christian, however, comfort himself with the word of God: “The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof.” (Psalm xcvii. 1.)

And now what higher work can be attempted by the human mind than that of stripping the mask from off the “Man of Sin,” and showing him forth as the ANTICHRIST of Scripture, “whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth, and destroy with the brightness of His coming!” What more important object can be conceived than to set forth the fearful evils of Popery: to impress the minds of the ministers of religion and the people of this land with a deep and powerful conviction that Romanism is essentially and unalterably a system of deadly error, and that its track has everywhere, for more than a thousand years, been marked by the blood of souls!

The object of the present work then is, by the help of God, to show the character and crimes of that system of corruption, fraud, and wickedness, termed POPERY. It is not, however, our intention to consider ALL the evils which have flowed from Romanism. That were indeed a task too great. The object of the following pages is simply to sketch the *direct* and *palpable* results of Popery: to exhibit the awful effects of the doctrines and practices of Rome upon the spiritual interests of mankind. The more *remote* as well as the merely *temporal* evils of the system are altogether omitted. We do not point out, for instance, the enmity of Popery to knowledge and science—its opposition to civilization and liberty. Neither have we set forth the bloody wars which it has originated or carried on, nor the fires of persecution which it has kindled.* These *results* of Popery, fearful as they are, do not fall within the province of this work; they have, too, been fully and often set forth by far abler pens.

In attempting in the strength of the Lord to set forth the *immediate* and more palpable results of Romanism, such at least as are of a spiritual nature, the most natural division appears to be, *First*, the evils which that wicked superstition has inflicted upon mankind by withholding all spiritual good; and Secondly, the actual and necessary results of the doctrines and practices of Popery in occasioning impiety and wickedness. The one branch of the subject is *negative*, the other is *positive*. The one contemplates Popery as a FAMINE, or dearth of all that which constitutes the food of the undying soul. The other views it as a PESTILENCE spreading spiritual disease and death wherever it appears. Such are the two forms of evil which have for centuries combined to desolate Europe; and in the eye of Omnipotence, that vast continent even in the boasted nineteenth century, alas! resembles some vast city long and closely besieged by its foes, and under the joint influence of want and dire disease, gradually yielding itself a prey to the arch-destroyer—Death.

* On this subject we would direct our readers' attention to a beautiful and very instructive MAP OF THE MARIAN PERSECUTION, exhibiting topographically in bold copperplate etchings the various martyrdoms of Queen Mary's reign, by W. G. Rhind, price 5s. London: W. Foster. The groundwork of the Map is an outline of England, Scotland, and Wales. 3ft. 6in. by 2ft. 5in.

PART I. POPERY A SPIRITUAL FAMINE.
CHAPTER I. THE PROHIBITION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

That Christianity constitutes a vast and most efficient means for the spiritual renovation of our fallen race, no believer in revelation will ever deny. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself,” says the Apostle—i.e., God was in Christ doing those things which would bring back the obedience and love of every one who believed in His Son. And the means of grace—by which I mean simply certain appointed modes of bringing the great truths of Christianity in contact with the soul—constitute the most powerful *instrumentality* for the conversion of sinners and the edification of the people of God. If then we can show that the Church of Rome has almost wholly destroyed, or utterly perverted, these means of grace during at least a thousand years, it will be granted that that hierarchy stands convicted as the worst enemy to man that this earth has ever produced. This, then, is the charge which is now, with all seriousness, brought against that apostate church; and the following pages of the first part of this book will be devoted to the task of establishing it on such grounds as none will be able to gainsay.

The principal means employed by the Blessed God in renewing and sanctifying the mind of man are undoubtedly the Word of God, the preaching of the gospel, and Christian prayer. All of these, however, Popery has either to a considerable extent supplanted, or else so thoroughly perverted as to render them nugatory, where it has not changed them into vehicles of moral poison. Let us inquire into the treatment which each of these divinely appointed means of grace has met with from the Romish Church; and first, the Scriptures of truth.

It would scarcely be credited, were there not indubitable evidence of the fact, that a society calling itself the Church of Christ should be guilty of the fearful crime of absolutely prohibiting the Scriptures to the people. The Bible is so evidently addressed to mankind at large, and the blessings of reading and meditating on it are represented as so great, that the conduct of the Romish hierarchy in this particular alone is sufficient to stamp it with the mark of Antichrist. In fact, so palpable is the guilt of withholding the Scriptures from the laity that the Rev. Andrew Scott, a distinguished Popish priest in Glasgow, thus expressed himself in a letter to The Protestant about thirty years since:

> “I can publicly declare (without danger of being contradicted by my brethren or censured by my superiors) that it is not at present, that it never was, a principle of the Catholic Church that the Scriptures should be withheld from the laity; and there never was any law enacted by the supreme legislative authority in the Catholic Church by which the reading of the Scriptures was prohibited. If indeed a principle of the Roman Catholic Church was to deprive her members of the use of the Divine word by forbidding them to read and search the Scriptures, she would indeed BE CRUEL AND UNJUST.” (The Protestant, vol. i. p. 235.)

From a work entitled *De Cognitione Baptismi*, written in the seventh century, it is evident that the Scriptures were then in the hands of all Christians, and were perused by them without fear or molestation. Soon afterwards, the Latin tongue, into which Jerome had translated the Scriptures,

became a dead language with which only the learned were acquainted; and the church, in neglecting to furnish the people with translations of the Bible into the vernacular language of each nation, was virtually guilty of prohibiting the Bible to the common people. This state of things continued from the eighth to the thirteenth century. The Bible was not positively forbidden to the people, but it was of no more use than if it had been a scroll of Egyptian hieroglyphics.

The churchmen of the Middle Ages, however, had not yet "filled up the measure of their wrath." At the commencement of the thirteenth century, at a general council held at Toulouse, the Scriptures were absolutely forbidden to the laity, both in the Latin and in the vulgar tongue; and all books of religion were proscribed except three—the Psalter, the Breviary, and the Hours of the Virgin Mary, and these must be in the Latin tongue.[1] A few years afterwards, at another council (A.D. 1246), it was enacted that the Inquisitors should not suffer the people to possess any religious book whatever, either in the vulgar tongue or in Latin, and that the clergy should not have any translation of the Scriptures in their possession![2] Such were the principles and practices of Popery at a time when it reigned supreme over the whole Western world.

This grievous famine of the Word of God, and of all religious truth, which the churchmen of the thirteenth century had produced, continued for many centuries to desolate all Europe, so that in the language of Isaiah, "their honorable men were famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst; therefore hell enlarged itself and opened her mouth without measure." (Isa. v. 13, 14.) Every attempt made to provide the people with a translation of the Scriptures was steadily opposed by a corrupt and interested hierarchy. The mere possession of a Bible in the vulgar tongue was considered a sufficient proof of heresy, and many Christians were committed to the flames for no other crime.

Towards the close of the fourteenth century, the celebrated Wycliffe published an English Bible, which called forth the most furious opposition on the part of Rome. Pope Gregory issued a bull (A.D. 1378) addressed to the University of Oxford, where Wycliffe was Professor of Divinity, in which he was described as "having run into a kind of detestable wickedness, not only for openly publishing, but also vomiting out of the filthy dungeon of his breast, diverse professions, false and erroneous conclusions, and most wicked and damnable heresies." The object of Gregory in promulgating this bull was to excite a persecution against Wycliffe for having translated the Bible; and although the goodness of God preserved his life, yet a few years after, his very bones were dug up and burnt, and the ashes thrown into the river.

The same furious opposition was raised against Tyndale's and Coverdale's version of the New Testament. A proclamation was made by the King (A.D. 1546) "for abolishing all English books published under pretense of expounding and declaring the truth of God's Scripture," and it was ordered that henceforth "no man, woman, or person of what estate, condition, or degree soever he be, or they be, shall after the last day of August, next ensuing, receive or have, take or keep, in his possession, the text of the New Testament of Tyndale's or Coverdale's translation into English."

When Luther had commenced the glorious work of Reformation on the Continent, and printed the Scriptures in the German language, Pope Leo X. issued a bull against him, couched in the most violent

and opprobrious terms, and after having called upon “the Lord to rise up, and the Apostles Peter and Paul to rise up against the foxes which had risen up, seeking to destroy the vineyard, lest these heresies should further increase, and these foxes gather strength against us.” The Pope adds:

> “Finally, let the whole universal church of God’s saints and doctors rise up, whose true expounding of Holy Scripture being rejected, certain persons (whose hearts the father of lies hath blinded) wise in their own conceits (as the manner of heretics is) do expound the Scriptures otherwise than the Holy Ghost doth require, following only their own sense of ambition and vainglory; yea, rather do wrest and adulterate the Scriptures. So that, as Jerome saith, now they make it not the gospel of Christ, but of man; or which is worse, of the devil. Let all the holy church, I say, rise up, and with the blessed Apostles together make intercession to Almighty God that the errors of all schismatics being rooted and stocked up, his holy church may be continued in peace and unity.”

This bull further condemned all persons who did not surrender Luther’s books, and it was the forerunner of one of the bloodiest persecutions which ever fell upon the earth. The time would fail me to record the histories of those of whom the world was not worthy, who were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held; but I wish to produce two examples: In 1514, Richard Hunne of London, who was murdered in his prison, was charged with various religious offenses, one of which was that “he had in his keeping divers English books prohibited and damned by the law, as the Apocalypse in English, &c.”; and he was further charged that “he defendeth the translation of the Bible and Holy Scriptures into the English tongue, *which is prohibited by the laws of our holy mother church*.” (See Mr. Fox’s account of the proceedings of the Lancastrian School in Glasgow, p. 70.)

Such were the steps taken by The Man of Sin to withhold the Word of God from a dying world; and the success which attended them is too manifest to be denied. The learned and excellent Du Moulin, a French Protestant divine of the seventeenth century, thus writes on the subject:

> “That the people might be blinded and deceived without understanding so much, the Pope hath wasted the Scriptures out of their hands, and taken order that they should not be translated into a known tongue. Within these few years *the Scriptures were no more known to the people than the Alcoran* (Quran) *was*—there were only some Latin Bibles in monasteries and clergymen’s houses. And even in this very time in Spain, in Italy, Sicily, &c., to see an Italian or Spanish Bible would be deemed to be a prodigy, and thought a matter sufficient to fetch one under the Inquisition.” (Accomplishment of Prophecy, p. 126, London, 1656.)

The same writer, speaking of the opposition of the clergy to the translation of the Scriptures, says:

> “I have known some Friars so scrupulous that they would have thought themselves in the estate of damnation if they had read but *six lines of the Gospel of John translated into the vulgar tongue*.” (Capuchin)

The state of things, even in the present day, is not materially changed. The free use of the Holy Scriptures is still prohibited by the rulers of the church. The decrees of the Council of Trent, the highest

authority in the Church of Rome, are still in force. The canon concerning the use of the Scriptures is as follows:

> "Since it is manifest by experience that if the Holy Bibles in the vulgar language are permitted to be read everywhere without discrimination, more harm than good arises, let the judgment of the bishop or inquisitor be abided by in that particular. So that after consulting with the parish minister or the confessor, they may grant permission to read translations of the Scriptures made by Catholic authors to those whom they shall have understood to be able to receive no harm, but an increase of faith and piety from such reading, which penmen can let them have in writing. But whosoever shall presume to read these Bibles, or have them in possession without such permission, shall not be capable of receiving absolution of their sins, unless they have first given up their Bibles to the ordinary." (Regula IV., List of prohibited books.)

In the encyclical letter of Pope Leo XII., May 3, 1824, republished with "Pastoral instructions to all the faithful" by the Archbishops and Bishops of Ireland, occurs the following passage:

> "We also, venerable brethren, in conformity with our apostolic duty, exhort you to turn away your flock by all means from THESE POISONOUS PASTURES" (i.e., the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue). "Reprove, beseech, be instant in season and out of season, in all patience and doctrine, that the faithful entrusted to you—adhering strictly to the rules of our congregation" (this just quoted) "be persuaded that if the Sacred Scriptures be everywhere indiscriminately published, more evil than advantage will arise thence on account of the rashness of men."

The actual result of these and similar blasphemies has been to render the Scriptures almost as scarce even in the nineteenth century. "The Bible is," says a Protestant Missionary in Rio de Janeiro,

> "to an astonishing and almost incredible extent, a new book and a real curiosity in this country. An elderly lady, who in other respects appeared quite intelligent, said she had lived so many years in the world and never heard of it till lately. How many are thus totally ignorant of the Holy Scriptures is unknown. A gentleman, a Catholic and with no great faith in missionary operations, remarked to me that he did not suppose there were four hundred Bibles in the Brazils—among a population of at least five millions. What is this but an awful famine of the Word of God, and what an awful fact that this famine, which carries moral death and ruin wherever it goes, has continued from generation to generation." (Letter of Rev. J. Spalding, dated September 23, 1837, quoted in Elliott's Delineation of Roman Catholicism, p. 23.)

The actual estimation in which the Bible is held in Rome itself is plain from the following extract:

> "The Bible in Rome is a strange and rare book. The only edition of it authorized to be sold here is in fifteen large volumes, which are filled with Popes' commentaries; of course none but the rich can purchase a copy of the Sacred Scriptures. Indeed very few of the common people know what we mean by the Bible. The question was proposed the other day by one of my fellow-lodgers to the lady from whom our lodgings are obtained, and who may be considered as a fair representative, in point of intelligence and religious information, of the middle class of society in Rome, 'if the people generally had a copy of the Bible in their houses?' The reply was, 'Oh

> yes, all the religious people have.' She also added that she had a very fine copy of the Bible, and immediately went to fetch it. When produced, it proved to be a Mass-book, with here and there a passage of Scripture, accompanied with Romish glosses. When it was more fully explained what we meant by the Bible, she replied, 'Oh yes, I know what you mean; that book is in several of the libraries in Rome, and some persons who are very religious have also a copy of it.'" (Rev. J. Clark, of the Protestant Episcopal Church of St. Andrew's, Philadelphia, in a letter to his congregation, dated March 24, 1838, quoted in Elliott's Delineation, p. 23.)

It is thus abundantly manifest that the crime of withholding the Scriptures from the laity, for at least a thousand years, is chargeable upon the Papal Church—first by neglecting to furnish translations of the Sacred Volume when the Latin had become a dead language, and subsequently by positively prohibiting any translation to be made for the use of the unlearned. And when we consider the object for which the Word of God is given to man, and which stands prominent in every page, it is difficult to say whether our astonishment or indignation is greatest in contemplating the conduct of the Romish Church in this particular.

The true point of view in which the Bible should be regarded in reference to man is as "a light unto our feet, and a lamp unto our path." On entering this world, man journeys along in "the broad road which leadeth to destruction"; and heedless of his danger, hurries onward until at length he opens his eyes in the world of woe. But the Bible is the light given by the God of Love to dispel the darkness of nature, and discover to him the awful gulf towards which he is hastening, and the strait gate through which the only way of escape lies. And this lamp, this heavenly lamp—the Churchmen of the Middle Ages snatched away, and left him for the future to his fate, just because the same light which showed man his danger revealed at the same time the features of Antichrist in their own countenance. For this conduct, still persisted in to some extent in Great Britain, and more fully in Papal countries, the Church of Rome stands convicted as the worst enemy to the happiness and welfare of man which this earth has produced, and amply justifies the charge which it is the object of this part of the present work to prove, viz.: That Popery is a system of SPIRITUAL FAMINE, which deprives men of that light and life which is essential to their peace here, and their endless happiness in the world to come.

Footnotes

[1] Prohibemus etiam ne libros V. T. aut Novi laici permittantur habere, nisi forte psalterium vel breviarium pro divinis officiis aut horas B. Mariae aliquis ex devotione habere velit. Sed ne praemissos libros habeant in vulgari translatos arctissime inhibemus. (Concil. Tolosanum, ann. 1229, cap. 14.)

[2] Concilium Biterrense.

CHAPTER II.
THE PREACHING OF THE WORD.

ALTHOUGH the reading of the Scriptures be indeed most important, there is another *means* more generally instrumental in the conversion of sinners, viz., THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL. The first triumphs of Christianity were accomplished, not by the circulation of the Scriptures, but by the preaching of the Apostles; and from that period to the present, it has ever been found that the living voice of the minister of God proclaiming the truth as it is in Jesus is the means usually employed by the Spirit to destroy the works of the devil and extend the limits of the kingdom of Christ.

It is thus obvious that if the churchmen of the Middle Ages had continued to preach the Word of Life, the prohibition of the Scriptures to the laity would not have constituted so great an evil. Unhappily, however, at the same time that the perusal of God's word was made heresy, the sermon had either fallen into disuse or was of scarcely any service. A learned churchman of the twelfth century exclaims, "The Priests have altogether given up the preaching of God's word, and have become dumb dogs," and afterwards he rebukes them "that having left sound doctrine, they betook themselves to fables, and curious and idle speculations, and preached and taught these." (Petrus Cantor, in Verb. Abb. citante Wolfio.) This account of Petrus Cantor is confirmed by the unanimous testimony of contemporary writers. In the language of Spanheim, the ecclesiastical historian, "Sound doctrine was entirely displaced by the errors of the times. Purgatory, human satisfaction for sin, the merit of pilgrimages, crusades, and the monastic life, auricular confession, the corporeal presence in the sacrament, the denial of the cup to the laity, the celibacy of the clergy, the omnipotence of the Pope, were the main points of discipline and doctrine on which the religion of this age chiefly insisted." (Cent. xii. sec. 3.)

Some old engravings of this period afford an admirable satire on the gross selfishness and hypocrisy displayed in the preaching of the Middle Ages. An ancient copy of the fables of Æsop and others was extant, says the learned Wolfius, in the sixteenth century, containing numerous well-executed caricatures of the Popish prelates. Several of these represent wolves with copes on, in the act of preaching. Among others, one is a wolf dressed like a monk, with a shaven crown, addressing the sheep which surround him, and the interpretation added is, "The wolf with the cope is the hypocrite, of which we read in the gospel: 'Beware of false prophets.'" The first fable in the book represents a wolf preaching to geese, and saying, "God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all in my bowels." Of this, Wolfius gives an illustration in his Memorab. Lect., Tom. i. p. 585; and the annexed engraving is a facsimile of it. The date assigned by Wolfius for these caricatures is the close of the thirteenth century.

The following specimens from the works of two of the most celebrated preachers of the thirteenth century will give the reader some idea of the sermons of this period.

Saint Anthony of Padua was reputed in his day so great a preacher that the Pope on this account styled him "The Ark of the Covenant." His sermons, then, may surely be taken as a fair sample of the

preaching of that age. The first sermon in his works, which it may be presumed is not the worst, is as follows:

"*There shall be signs in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the stars; and on earth distress of nations*."—Luke xxi. 25.

"Here are four things observable," says the preacher, "according as there are four advents, viz.:—Into Flesh, into the Mind, to Death, and to the final Judgment. 1. The coming into flesh, and this is the assumption of human flesh in those words, 'There shall be signs in the *Sun*'; for the Sun is the Son of God. 2. Into the mind spiritually, and this is the purgation of our mind, or protection against sin, or bestowing virtues on us, in these words, 'There shall be signs in the *Moon*.' 3. To death, which is the division of the soul and body; in these words, 'And in the *stars*.' 4. The end of all things in these words, 'And on earth distress of nations.'



Caricature of the Preaching of the Middle Ages: from a MS. of the Thirteenth Century.

"'There shall be signs in the Sun.' The Sun is Christ who dwells in the light inaccessible. 'This sun is become black as sackcloth of hair.'—(Rev. vi. 12.) For with the sackcloth of our humanity He covered the light of His divinity. The Sun, therefore, became black as sackcloth of hair. Oh, the first! Oh, the last! Oh, the High One, and yet humble and vile!

Concerning whose humbled sublimity speaks Isaiah: 'I saw the Lord sitting upon His throne, high and lifted up.' The throne, so called from its solidity, is the humanity of Christ, which leaning upon seven

pillars remains every way constant and solid. Hence it is said: ‘In that day, seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread and wear our own apparel, only let Thy name be called on us, to take away our reproach.’ The seven women are the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost. They are called *women* because no man is begotten to God but by the Holy Spirit. The man is Christ; one man, i.e., one alone, without sin, whom the seven women shall take hold of, i.e., the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, that they may firmly hold Him and not let Him go. ‘*We will eat our own bread*,’ etc. There the gloss: ‘He that hath bread and clothing needs nothing.’ It signifies that the Holy Ghost possesses all things equally with the Father, and is not in want of anything, etc.

“‘There shall be signs in the Moon.’ Of which it is said, Rev. vi.: ‘The moon is become as blood.’ God made two luminaries, the greater and the lesser. The greater is the angelical spirit, the lesser is the soul of man. By reason of its too great nearness to the earth, it has contracted blackness and has lost its clearness; therefore it is necessary, if it recover its brightness, that it be first turned into blood; which blood is *contrition of heart*. Of which it is said, (Heb. ix. 19): ‘Moses took the blood of calves and goats with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled the book and the people,’ etc. Behold how all the moon becomes as blood. But what does Moses signify? What the blood? What the water? What the scarlet wool? etc.

“When the merciful and pitying Jesus Christ comes into the mind of sinners, then Moses takes the blood—Moses is a sinner, now converted from the waters of Egypt, who ought to take these five things, viz.:—

1. The blood of sorrowful contrition.
2. The water of weeping confession.
3. The wool of innocency and purity.
4. The scarlet of brotherly kindness.
5. The hyssop of true humility.

“With these he ought to sprinkle the book, i.e., the secrets of his heart, and all the people of his cogitations; and the tabernacle, i.e., his body and all its vessels, i.e., the true senses, etc. Hence it is that the Lord promises these four things to a penitent soul: ‘The glory of Lebanon shall come to thee, and the fir-tree, and the box-tree, and the pine-tree, etc.’ (Isaiah lx. 13.) The glory of Lebanon is the chastity of the body, of which the soul glories. (Ecclus. xxiv. 13.) ‘I am exalted as a cedar in Lebanon,’ which signifies by interpretation, whiteness, etc. The fir-tree, which grows higher than other trees, signifies humility. The box-tree, which is of a pale color, signifies abstinence in meat and drink, of which Isaiah xxx. 20: ‘The Lord shall give thee scant bread and short water,’ etc.”

Another instance is upon the following text: “*The souls of just men are in the hand of God*.” (Wisd. iii. 1.)

“Note here that noble persons are wont to carry seven things in their hands, viz.: a ring, gloves, a hawk, a looking-glass, a rod, a flower or apple to smell to, and a scepter. The souls of just men are in the hand of God, like to all these:

1. As a *ring*, by faith: Hosea ii.: ‘I will betroth thee to Me in faith.’ The ring of just men is hope of heavenly things founded in faith, etc.

2. The righteous ought to be in God’s hand as gloves, by works of mercy; for he covers the Lord’s hand who freely gives alms to the poor, and leaves it naked who is unmerciful. The five fingers of this glove are five things that are required in alms: 1. That it be speedy. 2. Large. 3. Of the best and choicest things. 4. Of goods lawfully gotten. 5. Discreet; to those that are indigent.

3. As *hawks*. God’s hawk is a heart full of charity. Note that a hawk ought not to be carried without gloves, because charity without the expression of good works, viz., works of mercy outwardly, is worth nothing.

4. As a *looking-glass*, by purity of conscience; that thy soul may be the daughter of Zion, which is by interpretation, a glass—a glass of God’s majesty, without spot, and the image of His goodness, etc.

5. As a *flower* or *apple* to smell to. For a sweet smell goes forth from the soul as from an apple, a flower, etc.

6. As a *rod* in the Lord’s hand, to correct others.

7. As a scepter to show their dignity,” etc.

James de Voragine was a contemporary of the foregoing saint. He was a learned Dominican and author of the celebrated Golden Legend, and also of a volume of sermons so excellent that they too were styled “Golden Sermons.” I will give the reader a specimen of this preacher by citing his discourse upon Rev. xxii. 18: “*He that is holy let him be holy still*.”

“Holy men, how holy soever they are in soul, desire also to be holy in their body. These two things St. Francis had, viz., a holy body and soul; that it might be truly said of him: *He that is holy*, viz., in soul, *let him be more holy*, viz., in body.

First. He had a holy body, for all things that were in him were holy.

1. His hair was holy. For when a man’s house was falling, he took a little of his hair and put it into the cracks and the house stood firm, being established by the brittle hair of the holy man.

2. His eyes were holy.

3. His ears were holy.

4. His mouth was holy; for such powerful words came from it, that whom he blessed were blessed, and whom he cursed were cursed. Witness the sow that died for eating a lamb when he cursed her, and the girl whose sight was restored by his spittle.

5. His hands were holy; for they were so consecrated with the wounds, that the things he touched were holy, etc.

6. His nails were holy; for a tempted brother by paring his nails and keeping them as relics was delivered and much comforted.

7. His writing was holy. This being preserved had the same effect.

8. His girdle was holy. Being dipped in water it cured all distempers.

9. His body was holy; for whipping himself against corrupt motions, he said, ‘Go to, brother ass, thus you must be served.’

10. His feet were holy, being consecrated with Christ’s wounds. Hence, by sprinkling the water in which they were washed, cattle were cured of the murrain,” etc.

In another sermon on “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hid in a field,” he says, “By the kingdom of heaven may be understood St. Catherine.”

Such was the absurd and wicked trash which the Church of Rome substituted for the “gospel of the grace of God”; and so little were the people of this age accustomed to anything like faithful discourses that when perchance such a preacher appeared, the success which attended him was truly wonderful. In the case of Fulco, a French priest, for instance, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, we read that immediately after he appeared in Paris as a preacher, both doctors of theology and their scholars hastened to hear his rude and simple sermons. One invited another, saying, “Come and hear Fulco the priest, who is indeed another Paul.” (Jacobi a Vitriaco hist. occid. Sect. 7.)

The grossest abuses of preaching, however, were those practiced during the great festivals of the year. “The Easter drolleries held an important place in the acts of the church. As the festival of the Resurrection required to be celebrated with joy, everything that could excite the laughter of the hearers was sought out and thrust into sermons. One preacher imitated the note of the cuckoo, while another hissed like a goose. One dragged forward to the altar a layman in a cassock; a second told the most indecent stories; a third relates the adventures of the Apostle Peter, among others, how, in a tavern, he cheated the host by not paying his score.”[1] The inferior clergy took advantage of the occasion to turn their superiors into ridicule. “The churches were thus turned into stages, and the priests into mountebanks.” (D’Aubigné’s History of the Reformation, vol. i. b. 1. c. 3.)

A yet greater degree of profanity was displayed on New Year’s Day, the Feast of Innocents, the Feast of Fools, the Feast of Asses, etc. Of the ceremonies connected with these festivals, a full and minute account may be seen in Du Cange (Glossarium, Parisiis, 1733). The following brief sketch of these, taken from Fosbroke’s Cyclopedia of Antiquities, will be sufficient for our purpose:

“On the day of the festival (which Cowell makes the caput anni, or New Year’s Day), all the petty canons elected an Abbot of Fools, who, after the ceremony and *Te Deum*, was chaired to a place where the others were assembled. At his entrance all arose, and even the Bishop, if present, was bound to pay him homage. Some fruit and spices were next served to him, singing, hissing, howling, shouting, etc., then followed, one party against another. A short dialogue succeeded, after which a porter made a mock sermon. They then went out into the town, cracking jokes upon everybody whom they met.

“On the Feast of Innocents, a fool bishop was elected in the same manner as the Abbot of Fools, and chaired with a little bell ringing before to the house of the bishop, where the gates were to be immediately thrown open, and the mock-prelate placed in a principal window, where he stood and gave

the benediction towards the town. The fool-bishop with his chaplain presided at matins, high mass, and vespers, for three days pontifically in the episcopal throne properly adorned. The chaplain sat at his feet holding a cross; the sub-deacon and deacon, about to sing the epistle and gospel, bent one knee to him and made supplication, and he marked him with his right hand, etc. The chaplain proclaimed silence and a service followed, after which he gave the blessing, indulgences, etc."

About 150 years ago a stone monument to one of these boy bishops was discovered in Salisbury Cathedral, under the seats near the pulpit, from whence it was removed to the north part of the nave. A facsimile of this curious remain of antiquity, taken from Hone's Every-Day Book, is annexed. Mr. Gregorie found the processional of the boy bishop. He notices, says Hone, the same custom at York.[2]



Fac simile of a Stone Monument to the memory of a Boy Bishop, recently discovered in Salisbury Cathedral.

“In the Feast of Fools they put on masks, took the dress, etc., of women, danced and sung in the choir, ate fat cakes upon the horns of the altar, where the celebrating priest played at dice, put stinking stuff from the leather of old shoes on the censer, jumped about the church, with the addition of obscene jests, songs, and unseemly attitudes.” (Fosbroke’s Encyclopaedia of Antiquity, vol. ii. p. 664.)

One more instance of the gross buffoonery which was substituted by the Romish Church for the ministration of Divine truth, and we have done. The celebrated “Feast of Asses” took place on Christmas Day, and the ceremonies connected with this wicked superstition are such as must disgust every reader. The following extract from the *office* of the “*Feast of Asses*” is translated from a manuscript “Ordinary” of the church of Rouen, given by Du Cange (Gloss. sub voc. Festum Asin.):

“Order of the procession of asses according to the use of Rouen. Tierce having been sung, prophets prepared each in his own order, and a furnace filled with rags and tow provided, let the procession start from the cloister, and two of the clergy of the second rank direct the procession, singing these verses: ‘Oh, glorious and famous,’ etc. Chorus: ‘Oh, glorious,’ etc. Vers.: ‘Whose rising.’ Chorus: ‘Oh, glorious.’ Vers.: ‘Him who was to be.’ Chorus: ‘Oh, glorious.’ Vers.: ‘Of the wicked Jews.’ Chorus: ‘Oh, glorious,’ etc. Then let the procession halt in the middle of the church, and six Jews be there in readiness, and Gentiles on the other side, and certain callers (vocatores) thus call all the nations: ‘Oh, all ye nations, the Lord is become man.’ (Here the callers shall turn to the Jews.) ‘Oh Jews, the word of God.’ Vers.: ‘The witnesses of your law.’ (The Jews shall answer.) ‘We have given a command to you.’ (The callers shall say to the Gentiles.) ‘And ye, oh Gentiles, have not believed.’ (The Gentiles shall answer.) ‘The true God, the King of kings.’ (The callers shall call Moses first, saying.) ‘Thou Moses, the lawgiver.’ (Then Moses, holding the tables of the law open, clothed in an alb and cope, with two horns on his head, a long beard, and a rod in his hand, shall say.) ‘A man shall arise and come after me.’ (Then the callers shall lead him beyond the furnace, etc.) After this Amos is called, and after him Isaiah, Aaron, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Habakkuk. (Then two messengers from King Balak call out.) ‘Balaam come and act.’ (Then Balaam sitting upon an ass—whence the name of the festival—and wearing spurs, shall pull the bridle and put spurs to the ass, and some young man holding a sword in his hand shall stand in the way of the ass. Some one under the ass shall say.) ‘Why do you hurt unhappy me with the spurs?’ (Then the angel shall say to him.) ‘Cease to perform the command of King Balak.’ Then follow, just as before, the calling of Samuel, David, Hosea, Joel, and all the other prophets, etc., of the Old and New Testament. When Nebuchadnezzar’s turn comes, the three children of Israel appear on the stage, and the whole scene of their refusing to bow down to the golden image and their being cast into the furnace is acted.”

Still more ridiculous, however, was the “Feast of Asses” formerly celebrated at Beauvais on the 14th of January. On this occasion they made choice of a very beautiful girl and placed her on a sumptuously adorned ass, with a baby in her arms, in order to represent the flight of Joseph and Mary into Egypt with the child Jesus. She was then conducted with great state from the cathedral church to the parish of St. Stephen, the whole clergy and people following. As soon as the pompous procession had reached the place, the girl entered the church and was placed *with the ass* near the altar where the gospel is read, and immediately the mass of the solemnity began; the various parts of which—the Introit, Kyrie,

Gloria, Credo, etc.—were concluded by imitating the braying of an ass! But what is more astounding, the manuscript rubric of this festival says: “At the end of the mass, the priest turning towards the people, instead of saying, ‘Ite missa est,’ shall bray three times, and the people instead of answering, ‘Gratias Deo,’ shall bray three times!” (Du Cange, Glossarium ubi sup.)

The state of preaching continued much the same during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. “Most of the clergy,” says Gieseler, “could not even preach, and those who did, for the most part mendicant monks, usually entertained their hearers with absurd fables, the object of which was to magnify the importance of their various relics, or made an exhibition of their barren scholastic learning, as may be seen in the sermons still extant of Meffreth, a priest in Meissen, A.D. 1443–1476; of Leonardus de Utino, a Dominican in Bologna (died 1470); and even in those of Gabriel Biel, otherwise so distinguished for their practical tendency.” (Vol. iii. p. 320.) The character of Popish preaching never materially altered, except where Protestantism exerted a correcting influence upon it. The sermons of the clergy always set forth the corrupt doctrines and superstitious practices of Romanism, rather than the great and life-giving truths of Christianity. They have abounded too in forced allegories, unnatural interpretations, and absurd legends, and have therefore totally failed in the great object for which Christian preaching was instituted—the conversion of the ungodly and the spiritual advancement of believers. In order to substantiate this charge, we shall now proceed to the citation of several sermons from books of homilies in use in England at the period of the Reformation.

In the book called Sermones Discip. de Sanctis, the 48th sermon, on the twelve fruits of the mass, is as follows:

“*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*.”

“This sermon,” says the preacher, “is the last about the saints!” After a short preface he begins the exposition of his subject by saying: “Then God will be with us when we diligently and devoutly hear mass. Wherefore it is said, ‘*Lo, I am with you always*,’ etc.” In this present sermon he goes on to say: “we must speak of the twelve benefits every one hath that devoutly and diligently hears mass:

1. If a man should give in alms as much ground as he could walk over whilst the mass is saying, it would not do him so much good as the hearing mass.

2. Angels will delightfully stay with that man and carefully keep him.

3. His venial sins are thereby forgiven.

4. He that in mortal sins hears the mass and is present in the church when Christ is sacrificed on the altar, all his mortal sins are pardoned.

5. He that is present at this mass may every day spiritually communicate.

6. He shall be a greater partaker that day of all the good things done in the church by all Christ’s faithful throughout the world. Ps. cxix. 63: “I am a companion of all them that fear Thee.”

7. Thy prayer is sooner heard in the church and in the presence of God.

8. The souls for whom the mass is said or for whom the standers-by do pray have special comfort thereby. Witness that soul that was to abide fifteen years in purgatory and was delivered by one mass.

9. One mass in one's lifetime devoutly heard is more worth than a thousand after death.

10. A woman with child devoutly present at mass, if she should fall in travail the same day, it is to be hoped that God will make her a joyful childbearer, and the angels will carefully keep mother and child. But let her devoutly pray at mass-time to the Virgin Mary to be a glad mother as she was on the birth of Christ.

11. Whatsoever a man eats that day, it agrees better with his nature after the mass than before. Moreover, he will be prospered that day in his labors, craft, buying, journeys.

12. If thou happen to die that day thou hearest mass, Christ will be present with thee in thy extremity and stand by thee, as thou didst by Him at hearing mass."

In the same book the 31st sermon, "Of St. Lawrence," is as follows: "*He hath tried me as gold that passeth through the fire*." (Job xxiii. 10.) St. Lawrence was gold for the perfection of his life, and he was tried by the examination of his punishment. Hence to the perfection of St. Lawrence three things are to be spoken of.

1. His privilege.
2. Some things for our instruction.
3. Some miracles.

I. We must know that St. Lawrence had seven privileges:

1. He began to serve Christ when he was a child.
2. Was archdeacon of Rome.
3. Was very merciful.
4. Was a very great martyr by reason of various torments and, at last, roasting on a gridiron, till he died.
5. The celebration of his feast throughout the world.
6. The fast on the eve of his holy day.
7. He is mentioned in all masses.

II. As to the second part: *For our information* we are to know that by his example we are to be merciful, etc., etc.

III. As to the third part: All men ought devoutly to pray unto St. Lawrence today. And first, they that are troubled with pain in their eyes. For one night, St. Lawrence finding one blind in a Christian's house, with the sign of the cross he gave him sight, etc., etc. So poor men that have not bread to eat should pray to St. Lawrence; because one day when an old church of St. Lawrence was repairing, and the priest who employed the workmen had prayed to St. Lawrence, he multiplied a little loaf of bread that was scarce enough for one meal for three men, so that it served all the workmen ten days. And St. Lawrence too can help men in extremities, etc., etc.

In the Sermones Parati de Sanctis, the twentieth sermon is “Of St. Agnes,” on the following text: “*My beloved is mine, and I am his*,” etc. (Cant. ii. 16.) “St. Agnes in these words doth glory of the mutual love that was betwixt her husband Christ and herself. We must know that there are many things for which God is wont to love men. First is charity. (Prov. viii.): ‘*I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me*.’ We find this in St. Agnes, that early, i.e., in her youth, she sought God, and therefore she found him.” Then follows the legend: “Coming from school, the city governor’s son meets and falls in love with her, and gives great gifts to her, but she scorns all, etc. The second thing for which God loves men is faith. St. Agnes had firm faith, for when it was told her, ‘either sacrifice to the gods with the other virgins, or go with the whores,’ and she was put naked into the bawdy house, God made her hair so thick that it covered her better than her garments, etc. Third is chastity. This St. Agnes had, and therefore her husband Christ loved her and preserved her pure. For the governor’s son attempting her chastity, died. But at her prayer, was raised again to life,” etc.

In a volume of homilies published in England the beginning of Henry the Eighth’s reign, occurs the following:

“It is written that sometime was a man that was called Pyers and was a rich man, but he was so hard that there was no beggar that might get any good of him. Than on a time it happened so that many beggars sate together in a place, and spake of this Pyers, how they might get no good of him. Then spake one of them as master and said, what will ye lay with me that I shall get some good of him. And so they made a wager. And then went this man forth and came to Pyer’s place and sate him down at the porche of the hall door and there abode till Pyers came, and anone as he saw Pyers he spake so horribly to him that for grete angre as his servants came by him with a basket of brede, he took a loaf and with all his might cast it at the beggar and smote him on the breast and said, ‘Stoppe thy mouth therewith that the devil stoppe it.’ And anone the beggar caught the loaf and ran his way to his fellows and showed his loaf and so he gate his wager. Then the next night after it happened so that this Pyers was shryven and brought to his bedde and so died, and anone fiends came to take his soul. But then was our lady ready and bad them bring the soul to her, and so they did. Then was there nothing to help the soul but only that loaf that he had kest to the beggar. Then said the fiends he gave it against his will, therefore by right it should not help him. Then our Lord bad to bear the soul again to the body. And when the soul was with the body, anone he sate up and gave a grete sigh and called to him all his servants and told them how hard a doom he was at, and had ben damned, had not that loaf been that he kest at the beggar. Therefore anone he made to sell his good and deled to poor people for God’s sake. And when he had so done he made himself an hermyte and after was a holy man. Hereby ye may well know how grete that is almes dede and prayers, that made a man so privy with God and so ayker against the doom, for all that have done almes for God’s sake shall be saved, yf they be out of deedly syne.”

In the same volume, p. 17, occurs the following homily on Lent:

“Good men and women, this is the seconde Sunday in clene Lent. Wherefore lyke as ye have all this yere before made you honest and well beseen in good array to your bodies now should you be as besy to make you a clene soul. Wherefore this holy time of Lent is ordeyned to clense your conscyences

from all manner of rust and fylth of synne; so that ye may on Easter-day, with a clene conseyence receyve the precyous bodie of our Lord. Wherefore St. Paule in the Epistle of this day sayth thus: (hac est voluntas Dei) this is Goddes wyll that ye shoulde be besy to keep your bodyes in clenness for to please God moche, and make his vessel clene agaynst the comygne of his blessyd mageste. Then shal ye understande that this vessel is man's conscyence that keepeth all good thynges that is put therein tyll the day of Dome. Than how that a man shall kepe his vessel clene, holy Churche teacheth by ensample of the holy putryarke Jacob, of whom is redde and songe all this weke long. Jacob had a father which was called Ysaac and his mother Rebecca, and she had twain Chyldren at one byrth, and he that was fyrst borne hyght [called] Esau; and that other Jacob; but because this story is longe we shal leave it, but ye shall understande that this story is redde in holy churche in ensample of all good servantes, that desire to get the blessynge of the father of heven; he must wrestle here on earth with the wicked aungel, that is to saye, the Fende, and with his fleshe strongely, and make it to tell his sinnes, and do penaunce after the counseyle of his ghostly father, taking the ensample of the woman of ferre countrees, that came to Chryste to gete helpe for her daughter that was troubled with a Fende, and sayd (Jesu fili David miserere mei) Jesu the son of David have mercy on me, than our Lord answered, (non est bonum sumere panem filiorum et dare canibus) it is not good to take brede of children and gyve it to the hounds, (nam et Catuli edent de mensa dominorum suorum)."

The following is the homily appointed to be read in Rogation Week, in the old English *Festivale*, p. 38:

"Good friends, these three days, that is to say Mondaye, Tuesdaye and Wednesdaye, ye shall fast and goin Processyon, man, woman and servant, for we be all sinners and none may excuse them from the Processyon that may lawfully be there. Than hee that withdraweth himself fro the Commaundement of holy Churche wilfully, he synneth full grievously. First he synneth in pryde, for hee is unboxom; also he synneth in sloth, that knoweth himself in synn and will not do his dylygence to come out thereof; and ryght as he withdraweth hymsef fro the holy Processyon, ryght so wyll God put hym from all the company of Heven, and from all the prayers that ben done in holy Chyrche, till he come to Amendement. Therefore all Chrysten people come togyder, and pray these thre dayes to all the saintes in heven, to pray to God for us, and put away all the power of the Fende and kepe us from all mychefe, perylles and drede, that fallen more this tym of the yee than ony other tyme. For in this tyme fall many grete Thondres and Lightenings. And as Lyncolnience says, 'There wer Fendes that fluttred in the ayre, for fere of the blast of thondor whan that Chryat came to hell gates, whan hee dispoiled hell.' So yet whan they here the Thonder in the ayre, they bee soe agast thereof, that they fall down, and than they go not upp agayn tyll they have done some cursed dede, and raise Tempest on the See and throw down Shyppes and make debate amyng folk, and make one to slee another, and kyndle fire to brenne houses and throw down steples and trees and cause women to over-lye their Chyldren, and hang and drown themselves in wan hope and dispayre. Now to put away all such mischeves and power of the Fende, holy Chyrche hath ordained that all Chrysten people shall go in Processyon and pray to God and our Lady and to all the Sayntes in Heven for succour. Wherefore in the Processyons belles be rongen, Banners bee displayed, and the Cross cometh after. For ryght as a kynge when hee goeth to a Batayle his Trompetis go before, than the Baners, and than cometh the kyng and his hoost; for the *Belles bee Goddes Trompeltes*; the Baners cometh after, than cometh the cross in Chrystes likeness, as King of

Chrysten People. And as a cursed Tyraunt will bee sore aferde and a dredde whan he hereth the Trumpettes of a king that is his Enemy, so the Fende, the tyraunt of Hell is aferd and dredeth him sore whan the Belles rynge and the Banners ben born, and the Cross with all the people come, then he fleeth and dare not abyde, and so the processyon putteth away his power."

The homily which we shall give next is the homily appointed to be read on the feast of Corpus Christi, p. 53:

"In Devonshire besyde Exbridge was a woman that lay sick and was nygh dede, and she sent after a holy person about midnyght to have her rights. Than this man in all haste hee might, arose and went to the chyrche and took Goddes body in a box of Ivory and put it in his bosome and went forth towards this woman. And as he went thro' the forest in a fayre mede that was his next waye, it happed that his box fell out of his bosome to the ground, and he went forth and wyst it not, and came to this woman and herde her confession. And then he asked her yf she wold be houseled, and shee syd 'Ye Syr.' Than he put his hande into his bosom and sought the box and whan he found it not he was sorry and sad, and said, 'Dame! I will go after Goddes body and come agayne anone to you; and so he went forth sore weepynge for his sympleness. And so as he came to a wylowe tree, he made thereof a rodde and stryped himself naked and bette himself so that the blode ranne down by his sydes and sayde thus to himself, 'O thou simple man why hast thou lost thy Lord God, thy maker, thy fourmer, thy creatour?' And when he had thus bette himself, he dydon his clothes and wente forth, and then he was ware of a pyller of fire that lasted from Erth to Heven, and he was all astonyed thereof. Yet he blessed him and went to it, and there lay the Sacrament fallen out of the box into the grass, and the pyller shone as bryght as the Sunne, and it lasted from Goddes body to heven and all the beastes of the Forest were comen about Goddes body and stood in compasse round about it and all kneeled on four knees, save one black horse that kneled but on one knee. Than sayed he, 'If thou be ony beest that may speke, I charge thee in Goddes name here present in fourme of brede, tell me why thou knelest but on one knee.' Than sayd he 'I am a Fende of hel and wyll not knele and I myght, but I am made agenst my wyll, for it is wryten, that every knelynge of heven and erth shall be to the worship of the Lord God.' 'Why art thou like a hors.' And he sayed, 'to make the people to stele me, and at such a town was one hanged for me and at such a town another.' Than sayed the holy person, 'I command thee by Goddes fleshe and his blode that thou go into wyldernesse, and be there as thou shalt never dysease Chrysten man more.' And than he went bys way, he myght no longer abyde. And than this man wente forth to the woman, and dyd her rights, *by the whyche she was savyd and wente to everlasting blyss.* To the whyche he bring us, &c." Amen.

The above extracts may be considered a fair sample of the usual style of preaching in England just before the Reformation by Henry VIII. They are all taken from the books of homilies published by authority in that monarch's reign. As to the sermons of the Romish priests since that period, much valuable and particular information is given in a work which I shall often have occasion to quote: Frauds of Romish Monks and Priests, by Gab. D'Emilliane, London, 1681. The following passages are full of interest and instruction:

“They have ordinarily no preaching in Italy save only during *Advent and Lent*. On all other Feasts and Sundays of the year they have no sermons at the parishes, and instead thereof, they only sing a high mass in music, but the Word of God is not at all preached in them. Yet in some convents of monks they have sermons in the afternoon, but these are sermons peculiar to the order to which the monks belong, and always on the same subject. The Dominicans preach eternally on the *Rosary.* The Carmelites on the *Scapulary.* The Franciscans on the Rope of St. Francis, and the *Saccolanti* have for their subject *St. Anthony of Padua*. True it is these matters are of themselves very dry and barren; and I am astonished how they can continually make them yield something to talk about. One greater help indeed they have, which is that the greatest part of their sermons is made up of a relation of miracles which a preacher of good invention may almost with as much ease coin as utter.” (p. 291)

As to the general character of the sermons in Italy our author states that “the Italians are extremely in love with sermons that make them laugh, which is the reason why the most part of their preachers apply themselves to a comical and droll style. As for the order observed as to partition of their sermon, it is the same through all Italy. They all begin their sermons with the *Angelical Salutation*, or Ave Maria, and not with the invocation of our Heavenly Father in praying ‘Our Father, etc.,’ or by calling upon the Holy Ghost, which yet are the most proper, or rather the only necessary for this purpose. But indeed the doctrine they preach is so extremely corrupt and wrested, that it is no wonder to find their introductions tainted with the same infection. God by this very thing manifesting to us that what they preach is not the pure word of God, by permitting them to preface their human inventions with the invocation of a creature. After the address to the virgin they pronounce their text, which commonly is a place of Scripture, or sometimes a part of a prayer of their church, or some sentence of the mass. They cite the text of Scripture only by halves and in an abstracted and interrupted sense, without declaring what goes before or follows after, which yet they ought to do, to render the sense perfect. After this they proceed to their proposition, and then continue their discourse of a piece without any division or subdivisions at all. They divide their sermon indeed into two parts, but the second is nothing else but a heap of examples, histories, and tales, made at pleasure to divert their auditors. In the interval between the first and second part, they gather alms in the church for the poor; there are men appointed for this purpose, who have bags fastened to the end of long staves with little bells at the bottom of them, and they pass by all the ranks and seats of the hearers to receive their charity. The preacher in the mean time whilst these bags or purses are marching about, doth with an incomparable zeal exhort them to give freely. I never in my lifetime saw people more inflamed with charity for their neighbours than they are in the pulpit. ‘You would say they are the very fathers of the poor.’ But if we cut this fair apple in two we shall find the worm there, which makes it all rotten and corrupt within. To make short, my meaning is that the motive that prompts them so seriously and zealously to recommend the poor to their auditors is a piece of self-interest; for the one-half of the alms that are gathered in the church, as well as at the church door during the sermon, belongs to the *father preacher.* Otherwise it were impossible to induce those hard-hearted and pitiless monks,[3] those hearts of brass and marble, who are so signally qualified [marked] with insensibility and cruelty. I say it would be impossible to induce them to any sentiments of mercy and compassion for the miseries of their neighbours, if laymen had not found out a way to join the interest of the preacher with that of the poor, and to make but one of them.”

“I went one day in Lent,” adds the author, “to hear one of the sermons at the church of St. Andrew of the valley, at Rome; it was a father Franciscan that then preached there; his sermon was concerning Predestination. At the close of the sermon, he put a question to himself whether there were not some visible mark upon earth by which one might distinguish the elect from the reprobate? He answered himself, ‘Yes that certainly there were such signs.’ Amongst other signs he reckoned up, I remember, this was one, ‘*To love music and the sound of instruments*.’ But that the principal sign of all was ‘*to give alms*.’ This was indeed the point he would be at, and very dexterously took occasion from this, to exhort all his hearers, to expose that day to the eyes of all men the undoubted tokens of their predestination, by their liberal putting into the purses; and that for his part he would take great notice, from his station on high, of all those who gave this evidence of their election; that so he might know who were reprobate and who were predestinate among them. Accordingly, he sets himself down in his pulpit and was silent: and staring with his eyes that way they carried the bag, having perceived all the past rank had shewed themselves very liberal: ‘This is well (said he) I find that there is one rank already of my hearers that are predestinate.’ And the second and third rank having followed the same example: ‘In very truth (said he) I believe that my whole auditory will prove to be of the number of the elect. This is an extraordinary comfort for me, that I have preached here this Lent, and I render thanks to God for it, because it is a sign that sinners are converted.’ By this means this father procured a very liberal collection. I observed all the while that he put many of his auditory to the blush, who probably had no money about them; and to avoid the conclusion of being accounted reprobates, they reached forth their hand to the bags as though they had put something in.” (p. 280)

The following extract relates to the Easter sermons:

“Forasmuch,” says the writer, “as I have now made mention of an *Easter-day*, I must give you some account of a pleasant, but yet truly detestable and abominable custom, which takes place on *Easter-day*, throughout all Italy. They tell us, that *Easter-day* is a day of merriment and rejoicing, applying to this use that text of the Psalmist: ‘This is the day which the Lord hath made; let us be glad and rejoice in it.’ The word *Hallelujah*, is a common text with all the preachers on that day, which signifies in its proper sense, ‘*Praise the Lord*.’ On Easter-day in Italy, however, it signifies, ‘Gentlemen and Ladies, prepare yourselves for a good laughter.’ After they have named their text, they enter upon matter, and vent all the most ridiculous stuff they can think of. These sermons, afterwards, serve all the Easter time for mirth and pastime in company; where every one delights in relating to others, what he has heard.”

“Being once on an Easter-day in Bologna, I went to hear the service in St. Peter’s Church, being the cathedral of that city, the Archbishop himself being then present. After that the preacher had turned several texts of Scripture into ridicule; he quoted Mark xvi. 2, where it is said, that the two Maries came to the sepulchre, after sunrising; and opposed this to John xx. 1, where it is said, they ‘came very early before it was light,’ and then put the question, ‘how it was possible to reconcile these two places which seemed to contradict one another.’ ‘For his part (he said) he believed, that the Maries did not rise till long after the sun was risen,’ and indeed till it was near noon; for see (said he,) that this goes for very early rising with our Italian ladies, who do not come to mass on Sunday, till half an hour after eleven or twelve.’ And hereupon he began in a comical manner to represent a woman’s awaking out of

her sleep; the time she takes to rub her eyes, to stretch her arms, and a hundred other impertinent follies, which put all the church into a loud laughter. Afterwards he recalls himself and said, ‘That indeed, the Maries were risen very early in the morning, but they needed so much time to dress and trick up themselves; that it was very late before they could get out of the doors; which was the reason they could not reach the sepulchre, till after the sun was risen.’ Here he represented women dressing themselves; how much time they spend in dressing their head, and laying on of paint, fixing their patches and making an hundred faces before their looking-glasses; and expressed all those particulars, admirably well, with his mimical gestures. ‘This curious thought he immediately backed with another. Very merry (said he) the Maries were not such vain women as I have just now been describing. But they were gossiping housewives; they rose and went abroad, indeed, betimes in the morning; but before they could take their leaves of their neighbours, much time was spent; so that they did not come to the sepulchre till it was late—the sun was risen.’ Here he enlarged on the tattling and gossiping discourse of women, and mentioned such ridiculous stuff amongst it, that the Cardinal Archbishop, who was there, burst out into a loud laughter. He continued his Easter sermon, at the same rate to the end of it; profaning, after a most heinous and unworthy manner, so holy a day and the venerable history of these holy women, who were judged worthy to be the first witnesses of the greatest mystery of our faith—the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus these wretched monks,” says our author, “instead of dispensing the word of truth, ordinarily feed them with nothing but lies.” (p. 310)

“On this subject I have only further to add, that there is yet another sort of preachers who only preach before the Nuns’ grates. These are finical preachers, of a sweet countenance, and commonly all of them handsome young monks. For except beauty and sweetness do meet in a preacher, the Nuns who have the choice of them, will have none of him. All the study of these men is to send out pretty words, and most tender and affectionate expressions, and frequently to enlarge themselves in praise of the Nuns, to whom they preach. I have heard many of these sort of preachers, and among the rest, a young monk at Milan, a preacher to the Benedictine Nuns of the monastery, called the Magiore. Scarcely could this monk speak three words together without some expression of the high value and love he had for them. ‘My most dear and lovely sisters, whom I love from the deepest bottom of my heart,’ said he, which was repeated at the end of almost every sentence he uttered.” (p. 312)

Such is the description given of modern Popish preaching by one whose writings carry on the very face of them the strongest evidence of sincerity and truth. In some countries, as France, where Protestantism has altered the state of things, the sermons of the clergy are to some extent free from the gross characteristics above referred to, and occasionally such men as Massillon and Bourdaloue appear amongst them. In England too, and other Protestant kingdoms, Popish preaching is chiefly objectionable on account of the deadly errors which it inculcates rather than for the gross ribaldry, absurd legends, and forced interpretations in which the sermons of foreign priests abound.

Enough has now been said to justify the charge brought against the Romish Church, of having for many centuries either altogether abandoned or awfully perverted the preaching of the Word of God. As declared by the apostles, the Gospel of Christ was “the power of God unto salvation.” Those holy men labored to convince the hearers of their guilt, by setting before them the holiness of the divine

character, and the righteous nature of the law which they were bound to obey, and by which they would hereafter be judged. And when men were thus convinced of sin and of judgment to come, the salvation which Christ had purchased by His blood was earnestly pressed upon them, and they were taught to exercise faith in Jesus, as the cause of pardon and of bliss. Such was the preaching which, under the divine blessing, produced the extraordinary results related in the Scriptures.

Far, very far different from apostolic preaching has been the preaching of the Romish clergy. In the first place, as already shown, this highest of all the means appointed by the Lord for the conversion of the world has been to a great extent wholly neglected. Surrounded by people as ignorant of the first principles of Christianity as the heathen themselves, and holding in their hands the word of salvation, they wickedly neglected to declare it; and thus, this great source of light and life was so far closed to a perishing world!

But again, when they did preach, whether we look at the Middle Ages or later times, they did so shamefully abuse that ordinance, as to render it altogether useless, or what is worse, constitute it a vehicle of poisonous error. The sermons of the clergy, as we have abundantly seen, were miserably deficient in the life-giving truths of Christianity, have been filled with such empty and ridiculous matter as to be wholly inefficient in awakening the conscience or reforming the life. Or else, where some measure of divine truth has been imparted, it has been so mixed up with deadly error as to be wholly neutralized. Thus, for about a thousand years, the preachers of the Church of Rome have fed their famishing people with chaff, instead of the bread of life, and holding in their exclusive possession the great remedy provided for man’s spiritual disease, they infused venom in the cup whenever they administered it, which wholly counteracted the healing virtues of this heavenly balm, and rendered it poison instead of a medicine to the millions who innocently received it. It is thus too obvious a truth to be questioned by any intelligent and impartial reader, that for neglecting and perverting the preaching of the Word, as much as in prohibiting the Scriptures, the Papacy is a system of FAMINE which deprives immortal souls of that spiritual nourishment which the love and grace of God Himself have provided.

Footnotes

[1] Oecolampadius de risu Paschali.

[2] “The ceremony of the Boy Bishop is supposed to have existed not only in collegiate churches, but in almost every parish in England. On Dec. 7, 1228, the day after St. Nicholas’ Day, a boy bishop, in the chapel at Heton, near Newcastle-upon-Tyne, said vespers before Edward I. on his way to Scotland. By a proclamation of Henry VIII., July 22, 1542, the show of the boy bishop was abrogated, but in the reign of Mary it was revived with other Romish ceremonials. A flattering song was sung before that queen by a boy bishop, and printed. The account of St. Mary at Hill, London, in 10 Henry VII. and for 1549 and 1550, contain charges for the boy bishops for three years. At that period his estimation in the church seems to have been undiminished.”

[3] Preaching in the Romish Church is confined to the monks of the Dominican and Franciscan orders.

CHAPTER III.
PRAYER, OR DIVINE WORSHIP.

The charge of prohibiting the Word of God, and that of neglecting or shamefully perverting all public preaching, have already been established against the Church of Rome. It now remains to show in what manner they have rendered nugatory the only other great means of grace under the Christian dispensation; viz., Prayer.

That prayer constitutes one of the most important means of growing in grace every Christian will readily admit. Consisting as it does in the communion of the soul with its reconciled God—it must in its very nature exert a most beneficial influence. It tends to assimilate the heart to God. It brings before the mind the holiness, the love, the mercy, and all the other perfections of Jehovah. It calls forth those gracious affections which the contemplation of the character and works of God and of Christ are fitted to produce. The Christian is thus “strengthened with might in the inner man”; and “beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, he is changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Similarly, the expression of our feelings and desires in reference to our own state, to our Father which seeth in secret—in which prayer so largely consists—is also a most important means of grace. If we confess our sins, we are humbled; if we set forth our own helplessness—when we are weak, then are we strong; if we “hunger and thirst after righteousness,” the mere aspiration after righteousness is in its very nature sanctifying; and hereafter the full import of the blessing shall be realized—“we shall be filled.”

The chief advantage, however, of prayer, undoubtedly is its power to bring down spiritual blessings from heaven. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much,” and our blessed Lord Himself assures us, “If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.” Here, then, is an unfailing and ever-available means of acquiring spiritual nourishment for the “inner man,” if we earnestly implore grace and strength from the Lord. If, in our supplications to the Most High, we “ask in faith, nothing doubting,” then whatsoever we ask of Him we receive, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. Hence the repeated exhortations of our Lord and His apostles “always to pray and not to faint”—to “pray without ceasing”—to “be instant in prayer”—and to “pray always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

Such is the nature, and such the beneficial tendency of Christian prayer—whether in the closet or in the public assemblies of believers for divine worship. If, therefore, in the midst of its corruptions of Christianity, the true character of prayer had been taught by the Church of Rome, it is difficult to say what benefit might have been exerted by this important means of grace. Had only this single opening been left, to admit the light and air of heaven into the charnel-house of Popery, how much of the darkness and corruption which reigned there might have been dispelled!

True, however, to the commission given to it by the enemy of souls, Popery has supplanted all true devotion wherever it prevails, and substituted in its place idolatry or mere formality—and thus closing another great source of life to the millions who are perishing in its fold. In order to substantiate this charge, let us now examine the devotions, so called, of the Church of Rome.

SECTION I.
THE INTELLECTUAL WORSHIP OF ROME.

Much of the worship of the Romish Church is so purely *mechanical* that no spiritual good can reasonably be expected from its performance. There is, however, a great deal which may be considered as *intellectual*. Let us first examine this intellectual worship of Rome in order to point out its lamentable inefficiency as to the great object of all worship, the edification of the worshippers.

The prayers, then, of the Romish Church are incapable of raising devotional feelings in the soul, for two principal reasons; the first of which is found in their matter; the second in their language.

I. THE MATTER OF POPISH PRAYERS IS SUCH AS TO RENDER THEM, ALMOST WHOLLY, INCAPABLE OF IMPARTING SPIRITUAL GOOD.

Every one acquainted with the service of the Church of Rome must be aware that there is little in that imposing ritual calculated to awaken holy affections and spiritual desires in the hearts of the worshippers. The glory of the Most High—the person and work of our Lord—the blessings both spiritual and temporal which His people are ever receiving at His hands—these and other kindred topics, which naturally call forth the liveliest and most hallowed feelings of love and gratitude towards a redeeming God, occupy none or scarcely any place in the service-books of Rome. On the contrary, the chief and never-failing subjects of Popish praise are the merits and virtues of creatures—the so-called mother of God—the archangels and angels of God, the martyrs, bishops, popes, confessors, and saints—their mighty and unfailing power to save and to bless, and the wondrous miracles they have performed. These have ever constituted the chief topics of Romish praise, and the eloquence and fervor with which they are dwelt upon show how truly Papists have been guilty of "worshipping the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forevermore."

The ecclesiastical historian Spanheim, speaking of the age before Luther, says:

> "Divine worship consisted in the adoration of the Host, in the feast of the Virgin Mary, in confession to the priest, *in seeking the protection of saints and angels and the crucifix*, in vain vows and oblations, in the recitation of hourly prayers in Latin, in counting beads, and in entering into a cloister." (Cent. xvi. §1.)

The actual extent to which this abuse proceeded in the Middle Ages may be judged from the following statement. The "Hours of the Virgin Mary" was the prayer book of the laity—the only religious book which a jealous hierarchy, for centuries, allowed them to possess. In these Hours, according to the use of Salisbury, which was almost universally adopted throughout England, about one-half of the prayers have reference, not to God, but to archangels, angels, saints, and mere dumb idols! The following is an exact list of the contents of the latter part of this idolatrous book:

Matins of our Lady, with prime and the hours, with the hours of the passion of our Lord and of the compassion of our Lady.

Salve Regina with the verses. Gaude Virgo Mater Christi. Gaude flore Virginali. (Hymns to the Virgin).
De profundis, for all christen soules.
A prayer to our Lady, and to St. John Evangelist.
O Intemerata. Sancte Maria Regina. Stella Coeli. (Hymns to the Virgin).
Prayers to the Sacrament at the elevation.
Ave verum corpus.
Another to the Trinity. Deus qui superbis. Deus qui liberasti.
Two little prayers which King Harry the sixth made.
Two prayers with two collects to the 3 Kings of Coleyn (Rex Jaspar, et trium regum, trium munus).
The XV hours of the passion of our Lord.
Adoro te domine, etc., with indulgences.
A devout prayer to our Lord crucified, and to his five wounds.
The prayer of St. Bernardine.
To the Cross.
To the proper Angel.
Commemoration to St. James the more.
— to St. Sebastian.
— to St. George.
— to St. Antony.
— to St. Anne.
— to the Six thousand Virgins.
— to all saints.
— to St. James the less.
— to St. Christopher.
— to St. Martin.
— to St. Francis.
— to St. Barbara.
— to St. Apollonia.
Several devout prayers.
A special prayer late showed to a monk.
God be propitious, with a Collect to St. Michael.
An anthem, with a collect to St. Gabriel.
Another to St. Raphael.
A devout blessing.
Two devout prayers in English.
The Seven Psalms.
Fifteen Psalms with the Litany and suffrages.
The 8 verses of St. Bernard.

Three short prayers taught by our Lady to St. Bridget.
A prayer against Thunder and Tempest showed by an angel to St. Edward.
Titulus triumphalis Jesus.
Placebo—Dirge—and commendation.
A devout prayer to the cross.
Psalms of the passion.
A devout prayer to the Trinity, made by St. Gregory.
An anthem with a collect of St. Jerome.
St. Jerome's Psalter.
The Rosary.[1]

Such was the character of Popish devotion in the sixteenth century, nor has it changed during subsequent ages. The Missal, the Breviary, and the other devotional books of Rome still abound with such prayers and praises. In fact, whole books of devotion are exclusively occupied with adorations and addresses to the Virgin, or some other saint. It must be plain then, that the worship of Popery can exercise little or no influence in sanctifying the heart and fitting it for "the inheritance of the saints in light," since it is occupied to so fearful an extent with the praises of saints and angels, the miracles they have performed, or the powers which they possess.

But the benefit of Christian prayer is not confined to its direct influence upon the heart. It likewise blesses by bringing down "all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." And here too, alas! the utter inefficiency of Popish prayer is obvious. First, because the all-important fact, that the merits of Christ constitute the sole ground of acceptance with God, is forgotten; and secondly, because the prayers of Papists are to a great extent addressed to creatures, who can neither hear nor answer them.

1. The Only Ground on Which the Prayers of the People of God are Heard is the Merits of Christ's Death and Sufferings. "If ye shall ask anything in my name," said the Lord, "I will do it." And the apostle speaks of "having boldness to enter into the holiest, *by the blood of Jesus*, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh." (Heb. x. 19, 20.)

The prayers of the Church of Rome proceed upon almost total forgetfulness of this fact. No one acquainted with their service books can ever suppose that the writers believed in Christ as the great mediator between God and man; through whose infinite merits, our worthless and imperfect supplications are heard and answered in heaven. Nothing is more common than to find the salvation of the soul, the blessedness of heaven, and deliverance from "the wrath to come" solicited through the merits of some saint, and if the merits of Christ the Lord are at all brought in, it is only as a sort of make-weight. This fearful charge we shall now establish by citing the authorized prayers of the Church of Rome, from its ancient and modern Missals and Breviaries.

Prayers offered up to God through the merits of the saints:

"God that with innumerable miracles hast glorified St. Nicholas the blessed bishop; we pray thee, grant to us, through his prayers and his *deservings*, we be delivered from the burnings of hell. By Christ." (Prymer of Salisbury, A.D. 1538.)

“God that [&c.] St. Katherine; grant us we pray thee that through her deservings and her mediation, we be worthy to come to the hill, that is Christ.” (Ibid. MS, published Rev. W. Maskell.)

“O God, who givest us leave to celebrate the translation of St. Thomas, thy martyr and bishop, we humbly beseech thee, that, by his merits and prayers, we may be translated from vice to virtues, and from the prison to the kingdom.” (Brev. Sar. 7 Julii.)

To St. Nicholas:

“O man in all things praise-worthy, *by whose merits*, they are delivered from all destruction *who seek him with their whole heart*.” (Brev. Sarum. Dec. 6.)

“Grant we beseech thee, Almighty and merciful God, that we who keep the memorial of St. Christopher, thy martyr, may *by his holy merits and intercession*, [&c.]” (Missal Sar. de St. Christ.)

The modern *reformed* missal is quite as full of this blasphemy as the ancient books. The following will suffice:

“O God, who by innumerable miracles hast honored blessed Nicholas the bishop, grant, we beseech thee, that by his merits and intercession we may be delivered from eternal flames. Through the Lord.”[2] (Dec. 6. St. Nicholas.)

“O God, who *for the salvation of souls* was pleased that blessed Francis, thy confessor and bishop, should become all to all, mercifully grant that being plentifully enriched with the sweetness of thy charity, by following his directions and *by the help of his merits* we may obtain life everlasting. Through the Lord.” (29 Jan. St. Francis de Sales.)

“O God, who hast translated the Bishop Dunstan thy high priest, to thy heavenly kingdom, grant that we, *by his glorious merits*, may pass from hence to never-ending joys. Through the Lord.”[2]

“Grant, oh Almighty God, that *the merits* of blessed Venantius may render this oblation acceptable to thee; that we being assisted by his prayers may become partakers of his glory. Through the Lord.” (Miss. Rom. in die. 18 Maii. Dublinii typ. Pat. Cogan. 1795.)

“We beseech thee, O Lord, by the *merits* of thy saints whose relics are here, and of all the saints, that thou wouldest vouchsafe to forgive me all my sins. Amen.” (Rom. Missal for use of the Laity, p. 18. London: Keating and Brown, 1813.)

“O Lord Jesus, who didst pour forth into the heart of blessed Bernardine thy confessor, a singular love of thy holy name, *by his merits and intercession*, we beseech thee, kindly pour into us the spirit of thy love.” (Miss. Rom. in die. XX Mai. In the English missal the words in italics are quite omitted.)

“O God, who exaltest the humble and who didst raise blessed Francis to the glory of the saints; grant we beseech thee, that *by his merits*, and by following his example we may happily obtain the rewards thou hast promised to the humble. Through our Lord.” (Ibid. Die II. Aprilis.)

“O God, who hast raised the blessed Lewis thy confessor, from an earthly kingdom to the heavenly kingdom; we pray thee to make us, *by his merits* and intercession, to be the companions of the King of kings, thy Son Jesus Christ. Who with thee liveth and reigneth.” (Die XXV August.)

Such is the trust and confidence reposed by Papists in mere creatures—in fact, in imaginary beings, for some of these saints never existed. And with these proofs before our eyes, we know what value to attach to other prayers which speak the language of faith in Christ. A church which authorizes its members, as the Romish Church does on the festivals of these saints, to ask for the greatest of all blessings through the merits of creatures—once fallen creatures like ourselves—can no more be called a Christian church than a traitor who recognizes the claim of a pretender to the crown can be called a loyal subject just because he styles himself so.

2. It is a Well-Known Fact That the Supplications of Papists are *addressed* to creatures more frequently than to the Creator.

On opening the service books and devotional works of Popery, we find prayers to all imaginable sorts of beings; some real, some fictitious, some intelligent, some mere inanimate objects, and that in greater number than to the Supreme Being.

In the “Litanies of Saints,” as they are still sung in the Romish Church on the three Rogation days, the Virgin is invoked with the form, “Pray for us.” Then St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael, and all angels are called upon to “pray for us.” Next, St. John Baptist, and the Apostles and Evangelists are severally invoked; then St. Stephen and other martyrs; then St. Sylvester, Gregory, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Martin, and Nicholas, with all other bishops and confessors; then all holy doctors, St. Anthony, Benedict, Bernard, Dominic, and Francis, all holy priests and levites, holy monks and hermits; then the female saints, Mary Magdalen, Agatha, Lucy, Agnes, Cecilia, Catherine, and Anastasia, with all holy widows and virgins. I have before me a litany taken from a Psalter printed in London, A.D. 1503, in which no less than two hundred and sixty-seven different angels or classes of angels and saints are invoked “for the help of the faithful!”

The *benediction* appointed to be pronounced by the priest over the dying, after extreme unction, affords also a lamentable proof of the extent to which creatures were allowed to supplant the Creator in the Church of Rome:

God the Father who created thee, bless thee. Amen.
The Son of God, who suffered for thee, bless thee. Amen.
The Holy Spirit poured out upon thee, bless thee. Amen.
The Virgin and Mother of the Eternal King, bless thee. Amen.
The Angels and Archangels, and Principalities and Powers, bless thee. Amen.
The nine orders of Angels of the Celestial Kingdom, bless thee. Amen.
The twenty-four Elders who are before the throne of God, bless thee. Amen.
The virtues and dominions, bless thee. Amen.
The thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim, bless thee. Amen.
The Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apostles of the Lord, bless thee. Amen.

The Martyrs and Confessors, bless thee. Amen.
The Monks and Virgins of God, bless thee. Amen.
The Heavens, and Earth, and Sea, and all therein, bless thee. Amen.
The Sun and Moon bless thee, and every blessing which is in Scripture come upon thee. Amen.

(Manuale secund. usum Eboracen. in Monument. Ritual. Eccles. Angl., by Rev. W. Maskell. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1846.)

This is the case with modern works of Popery, as well as the more ancient service-books. In the Missal and the Breviary, the Hours of the Virgin, the Horae Diurnae, as well as in such books as Jesus, Maria and Joseph, The Glories of Mary, The Scapular, The Office of the Sacred Heart, etc., L'Ange Conducteur, La Via del Paradiso, with a hundred others, addresses to the Virgin, to the saints, and to the guardian angel, without number, continually occur. And as may be readily supposed, in consequence of the immense number of the demi-gods thus set up for worship by the "Man of Sin," but little room is left for the Infinite Jehovah.

In addition to this, it is well known that many of the Popish gods and goddesses have each their particular province assigned them, so that in certain difficulties or wants, a Papist instead of going to God, betakes himself to the patron saint:

"St. Anthony the Abbot secures his votaries from fire, and St. Anthony of Padua delivers them from water; St. Barbara is the refuge of the timid in times of thunder and of war; St. Blaise cures the diseases of the throat; St. Lucia heals all diseases of the eyes; St. Nicholas is the patron of young women who desire to be married; St. Ramon is their powerful protector during pregnancy, and St. Lazaro assists them when in labor; St. Apollonia preserves the teeth; St. Dominic cures the fever; and St. Roch is the saint invoked under apprehension of the plague; and thus in all diseases, under every pressure of affliction, some saint is accessible by prayer, whose peculiar province it is to relieve the object of distress." (Townsend's Travels in Spain, vol. 3, p. 215.)

The old primers and breviaries contain special "offices" to these patron saints, which recognize the peculiar powers which they possess. The following are some examples:

To St. Apollonia for the Toothache:

"Blessed Apollonia sustained great torment, for the Lord; first of all, the tyrants drew out her teeth, with iron hammers; and when she was in that torment, she prayed devoutly to the Lord Jesus Christ, that every one who should devoutly invocate her name, might feel no pain in their teeth.

Vers.—Pray for us, O blessed Apollonia.
Ans.—That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ." (Horae B. Virg. sec. usum. Rom. Paris, 1570.)

"O Saint Apollonia, by thy passion obtain for us the remission of all the sins which with teeth and mouth, we have committed, through gluttony and speech; that we may be delivered from pain and gnashing of teeth, here and hereafter, and by loving cleanness of heart, through the grace of our lips, we may have the King of angels for our friend. Amen." (Apud. Bollandum, ad Feb. 9, p. 282.)

To St. Sebastian for Removing the Plague:

"O Sebastian, thou famous martyr of Christ, the prince and propagator of most holy precepts, behold thy name is written in the book of heavenly life, and thy memorial shall not be blotted out forever.

Vers.—O blessed martyr Sebastian, pray for us.
Ans.—That we may merit to pass through the plague unhurt." (Horae B. Virg. sec. usum. Rom.)

To St. Roch in Time of Plague:

"O blessed Roch how magnificent is thy name, who by thy intercession, knowest how to save a multitude of languishing people, and to show thyself propitious to all that commemorate thy glorious name; *come and save us from the plague*, and grant to us a good temperature of air."

In a book printed in the seventeenth century, a similar address occurs, in Latin verse, thus Englished:

All hail, St. Roch, to noble blood allied,
Marked with the sign of the cross on thy left side,
Plagues felt thy virtue in a foreign land,
The sick were cured, touch'd by thy saving hand:
Farewell, great saint, whom angels greet, we pray;
Whose power like God's, does drive all plagues away.

(Office of the Bl. Virg. Paris, 1617, quoted in Devotions of Ro. Ch.)

To SS. Cosmas and Damian in Taking Physic:

Great Cosmas and Blest Damian, all Hail!
Whose heads are graced with martyrs' glorious bays,
Receive the tribute of our joyful praise,
And bring your medicines healing every ail.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, look we beseech thee, upon our infirmities both of mind and body, and vouchsafe upon the intercession of thy holy martyrs, Cosmas and Damian, to heal our diseases. By our Lord, etc. (Horae sec. us. Rom. Paris, 1570.)

St. Blaise for Removing Bones That Stick in the Throat:

The Salisbury Breviary informs us that when this saint came to be beheaded, he prayed to God in this manner:

"O God, hear me, thy servant, that if any one remembering me, shall fall down and worship thee; if any fish-bone or any other bone shall stick in his throat; or if he fall into any infirmity, tribulation, or danger, receive O Lord, I beseech thee, his request." The Lord said "I will fulfill all thy petition."[3]

"The invocation of this saint is a present remedy in such cases, prescribed by a Greek physician," says the celebrated Ribadeneira, who also directs that taking such persons by the throat, these words should

be pronounced aloud: “Blaise, the martyr and servant of Christ, says, either come up or else go down.” (Devotions of Rom. Ch., p. 278.)

It is therefore manifest from the foregoing account that a very large proportion of the prayers of Papists, being addressed to creatures who neither hear nor possess any power to help their worshippers, must necessarily be altogether useless, whilst the insult thus offered to God in placing His creatures on a level with Himself must render nugatory even those prayers which are addressed to God Himself.

We have thus, then, established the important fact that the devotions of the Romish Church are most lamentably inefficient in promoting holiness of heart, or purity of life, on account of their *matter.* We now proceed to show that:

II. THE LANGUAGE OF THE ROMISH SERVICE RENDERS IT WHOLLY USELESS AS TO THE EDIFICATION OF THE WORSHIPPER.

Were the prayers of the Church of Rome ever so spiritual and edifying in their nature, the *language* in which they are uniformly uttered would of itself be sufficient to render them vain and worthless. For upwards of a thousand years, the Latin tongue, which was formerly understood throughout the Western Empire, has been a dead language, known only to the learned. Yet, incredible as it appears, the churchmen of the Middle Ages never suffered the public worship to be celebrated in any other tongue. Aware that an unknown language would impart an air of mystery to their religious services and increase the veneration and awe which belonged to the priestly character, the hierarchy of Rome have ever since steadily refused any innovation upon the ancient practice; and now, in the nineteenth century, the Mass-book and the Breviary are still in the same language as they were a thousand years ago.

“When the laity assist at divine service or hear mass,” says Mr. Gavin, “they only hear what the priest says in Latin, and answer Amen. Generally speaking, they do not understand Latin, and especially in towns of three hundred houses, and in villages, there scarcely can be found one latinist except the curate; and even he doth not understand perfectly well what he reads in Latin. By this universal ignorance we may say, that they do not know what they pray for; nay if a priest was so wicked in heart as to curse the people in church, and damn them all in Latin, the poor idiots must answer Amen, knowing not what the priest says.” (Gavin’s Master Key, vol. 1, p. 221.)

Such was the state of things described by a writer of the eighteenth century. It is true that in Protestant countries of late years, the people have been provided with translations of parts of the Mass. In papal kingdoms, however, they are still compelled to worship in entire ignorance of what is going on.

To say much on the gross absurdity of this practice, or to dwell upon its utter inconsistency with the spiritual edification of the people, would be a waste of time. The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:16, 17 has expressly condemned it. “Else,” says that inspired writer, “when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified.”

The performance of worship in an unknown tongue can only be defended on the principle that the prayers of the priest, like the incantations and charms of the fabled sorcerers, possess in themselves a

kind of magic efficacy. As well indeed might we invite the hungry to a feast at which the table was overspread with dishes, but the covers immovably fixed, as call together the people and carry on the service of God in a language of which they are ignorant. Cardinal Bellarmine himself, the great champion of Rome, distinctly admits that “the minds of the common people are not instructed by service in an unknown tongue.” It will require, therefore, no more words to convict the Romish Church of famine in celebrating the worship of God in the Latin language.[4]

Footnotes:

[1] Horae B. Virg. sec. usum. Rom. Paris. 8vo. 1507.

[2] Missal for the use of the laity. Keating and Brown. London.

[3] Brev. Sar. Lec. 8. S. Blasii ad Feb. 3.

[4] The learned Dr. White assures us on his knowledge and observation that many of the common people of his time thus pronounced the creed which they ignorantly thought was a prayer:

Creezum zuum Patrum Onitentum Creatorum ejus anicum Dominum nostrum qui cum sops, Virgina Maric; Crixus fixus Ponchi Pilati audubitiers monti by sonday, Father afernes sccler est un Judicarum, fivis 8 mortibus creezum spirituum sanctum ecli Catholi remissurum Peceaturum Communiorum obliviorum, bitam and aeturnam agen.

(White’s Safe Way, etc., in Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome.)

SECTION SECOND.
THE MECHANICAL WORSHIP OF ROME.

We have thus considered that part of the worship of Rome which claims to be *rational*; but, as already observed, the principal part of it is altogether *mechanical*, and addressed to the senses. It, therefore, now remains to notice—*the gross material nature of the Romish worship.*

One of the most striking features of Popery, as distinguished from Christianity, is its gross, earthly character. Rome has materialized the religion of Christ, and thus formed a religion suited to man in his natural condition. So that whilst Christianity is heavenly, spiritual, and divine; Popery is "*earthly, sensual, and devilish*." For the one universal, invisible, and spiritual church of Christ, for example, Popery substitutes the external church of Rome. For "godly sorrow that worketh repentance,"—the sacrament of penance. For feeding by faith on the body and blood of Christ,—Transubstantiation. For confession and humiliation before God,—auricular confession to the priest. For "the fervent effectual prayer" of faith,—the chattering of Ave Marias and Paternosters. For love to Christ,—the adoration of crucifixes and images. And for holiness of heart,—the external sanctity of fastings and flagellations. This tendency to materialize what is spiritual, is observable throughout the whole system of Popery. Nor has its worship escaped; which instead of being rational and spiritual, is for the most part material and sensual, full of external pomp and bodily movements.

In no part of the popish worship is this feature of antichrist so strikingly exemplified as in the Mass—that "prodigious monster of all impiety," as an old writer terms it, "the great Dagon or Diana of the Romanists." Originally, as is well known, this "mystery of iniquity" was the Supper of the Lord, at which Christians met together to break bread and drink wine, in remembrance of a crucified Savior. In the course of a few ages, however, the nature of this simple rite was altogether changed; and it has long constituted, in the Church of Rome, one of the most ridiculous ceremonials of mummery, error, and vice, which ever disgraced religion. "On beholding," says the late John Foster, "the pageants and tricks (of the Mass) some of them would appear a bad imitation of the opera; and others a humble rival of the puppet-show. The only wonder, being, how any human creatures could perform such ridiculous mummeries and antics, with such gravity of face. A vile and fantastical ceremonial of superstition must be founded on such notions as will infallibly coalesce with immoral principles, and issue in immoral results."

We shall attempt to show the material character of Popish Devotion, as displayed in

1. The Sacrifice of the Mass.

As though conscious that its ministers have no spiritual—no internal worth to recommend them, Popery clothes them, in the sacrifice of the Mass, with gaudy trappings and costly ornaments. The *Amice* covers the priest's head in the form of a hood, because "the priest's head denotes the divinity which kept itself hidden at the Lord's passion." (Gab. Biel on the Canon of the Mass, Less. XI.) Upon

this Amice, he puts the *Alb*, a white robe like a shirt; the reason of which is found in Eccles. ix. 8. “Let thy garments be always white”; and the red or green embroidery about it is derived from the xlv. Psalm, “At thy right hand is the queen with embroidered garments.” Upon this *Alb* is placed the *Girdle* which signifies chastity. Next comes the *Stole* which sets forth the yoke of Christ, (Matt. xi. 30.) Then the *Maniple*, something like a fetter, on the left hand, alluding to the cord with which Christ was bound to the pillar. Lastly, a rich vestment covers all the rest, containing, sometimes, various pictures worked upon it, sometimes merely the cross.

Thus pompously arrayed, the priest approaches the altar, which is covered with a white cloth and adorned with a lighted candle; ‘because Christ is the light of the world.’ He first makes a profound bow to the altar, crossing himself repeatedly from the head to the breast, and then commences the first part of the Mass.

A number of unconnected and incongruous passages of Scripture are first recited in *Latin*; as the whole of the Mass is. Then comes the *Confiteor,* as it is called—a confession of sins to God, to the Virgin Mary, to the archangel Michael, and to all the saints; in the midst of which the priest beats himself three times on the breast, to show his sense of guilt. Then he pronounces his own absolution, for all is in the singular number; and ascending to the altar makes a cross, reverently kisses it, and prays in a very low voice, for the pardon of his sins, *through the merits of the saints whose relics are there deposited.* After this the priest, if it is a solemn Mass, casts incense over the altar, recites sundry passages of Scripture, and repeats two Greek words, signifying Lord have mercy, *nine times following*. He then stretches out his hands, and afterwards joins them together and bows down his head. After this, on high days, comes the *Gloria in excelsis*, at the end of which, the priest turns round to the people and says to them in Latin, “The Lord be with you—and with thy spirit.” Then follow two or three prayers or collects, and lessons from Scripture, but all in Latin—interspersed with various crossings of things, and incensings. The priest then says “Through the evangelical sayings may our sins be blotted out.” The Nicene creed follows, concluding this part of the sacrifice of Mass.

The second part of the Mass is that in which “the bread and wine are prepared and sanctified for the use of the sacrifice.” The priest first takes the *paten* or plate in which the bread is placed, in the form of little wafers, stamped with a crucifix, and offers up the host to the Father, “*for his own offenses and negligences, and those of all faithful Christians present*, that it may avail them UNTO EVERLASTING LIFE.” He then puts the wine and water into the cup, and after a prayer, offers it up to God “*as a sweet odor for our salvation and for that of the whole world*.” He then bows himself, prays again and blesses the bread and wine, making a cross upon it, and washes his hands; saying in Latin, “I will wash my hands among the innocents, and will compass thy altar, O Lord.” (Psalm xxvi. 6, to end. Vulgate.) The deacon or boy, all this while, covers the priest with the smoke of the incense. After a prayer, the priest kisses the altar again, and making a turn with his body toward the people, stretches out and joins together his hands calling upon the people in Latin, “Pray, brethren, that this, mine, and your sacrifice may be made acceptable unto God—Father Almighty.” Then turning to the altar, he begins the secret prayers which none can hear; and at the close suddenly bursts out in a loud voice, “*per omnia saecula saeculorum,*” i. e., “*for ever and ever, Amen.*”

The *Canon of the Mass*, which is the principal part of it, being that in which the main action of the sacrifice occurs, follows next. The priest first stretches out his hands joined together, lifting up his eyes; and then looking down again, makes a low bow to the altar. He then commences several prayers, in the course of which occurs the first *Memento* for the living; when he names secretly those who have paid money to be remembered in the memento, and at whose instance the Mass is said. At the close he relates the fact of Christ having instituted the Eucharist, the day before he suffered, and in repeating our Lord's words "FOR THIS IS MY BODY," the consecration of the bread is performed. The priest then upon his knees adores the host—rises again—and with his back to the people, lifts the host over his head with both hands, to show it to them. At the ringing of a little bell every one prostrates himself and worships it. The priest then puts the host again upon the *corporal*, and worships it once more. The same consecration takes place with respect to the cup, which is also worshipped in a similar manner, both by priest and people. The priest then puts the cup upon the altar and covers it with the cloth, and kneeling down again to the bread and wine, with outspread arms, kisses the altar. All this is done with numerous crosses, "to drive away the evil spirit from the Lord and from the sacrifice." After this, the second *Memento* or prayer for the dead, begins; in which they petition for all their friends, in a low voice, and especially those for whom money is paid for their release from the fire of purgatory. Lastly the priest knocks his breast once or thrice, and raising his voice a little, goes on with another prayer, concluding with "*through whom, O Lord, thou always createst these good things, thou sanctifiest them, ✠vivifiest them, ✠blessest them, ✠and affordest them unto us.*" Here the priest uncovers the chalice, bows his knee, takes the host in his right hand, and the chalice in his left; and with the host makes three signs of the cross upon the chalice from one side to the other, adding the words "*per ipsum et cum ipso et in ipso,*" i.e., "through him, and with him, and in him." Then he makes two signs of the cross between himself and the chalice, and says "*is to thee God Father Almighty in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory.*" Upon which, he lifts up the chalice a little, with the host, sets up the host again, covers the chalice, and sings "*per omnia saecula saeculorum,*" i. e., "*for ever and ever,* Amen."

The next part of the Mass is called the *Communion*, or Sacramental part of the Canon. Here after the *Pater-noster* and another Latin prayer, the priest crosses himself with the *paten* from the forehead to the breast, uncovers the chalice, breaks the host into two pieces, and puts upon the *paten* the piece in his right hand, and breaks in two the remaining piece; he then puts one of these also on the *paten*, and with the third piece makes the sign of the cross thrice over the chalice, and naming the saints, touches the *paten* with the foot of the chalice, then the middle, then the brim, and lastly his eyes, singing "*per omnia saecula saeculorum*"—"for ever and ever, Amen." After this, he throws this third piece of the host into the chalice, asking a blessing upon it: covers the chalice, kneels down, rises again, bows himself over the sacrament, joins his hands, knocks his breast three times, and addresses the *Agnus* three times to the host, "Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world pity us." But in Masses for the dead, it runs "*give them rest,*" instead of "*pity us.*" A prayer follows, at the end of which, the *pax*—a kind of wooden crucifix—or sometimes a picture of the Virgin—is given to the people to kiss; other prayers are then recited; after which the priest kneels down, rises again, and says "I will receive the heavenly bread and call upon the name of the Lord." Then having bowed his body, he takes the two pieces of the host between his thumb and forefinger of the left hand, and the *paten* between the same

finger and the middle finger, and with the right hand smites his breast, crying out “Lord I am not worthy to come under thy roof, but speak in a word and my soul shall be healed.” He next crosses his body with the host and the *paten*:—says “The body of our Lord keep my soul unto everlasting life”—eats the two parts of the host in his hand, and remains silent awhile. Then uncovering the chalice, he kneels down, gathers the crumbs of the host, wipes the *paten*, and briefly returns thanks. He next crosses himself with the chalice, crying “The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep my soul unto eternal life. Amen.” Having thus asked the blessing of God, he drinks the contents of the chalice, swallowing down the piece of the host, and receives to the communion of the host those that desire to communicate, saying “what we have taken with our mouth O Lord, grant we may receive it with a pure mind and of a gift Temporal may it become to us a remedy ETERNAL.”[1] Upon this he holds out the empty chalice to him that serves, for more wine, with which he washes his mouth—this is called the wine of purification. After a brief prayer he washes his hands and wipes them, drinks some wine, wipes his mouth, holds up again the linen cloths; and after a few brief sentences, bowings, and crossings, the Mass is concluded with the words, *Ite, missa est*.

The above tedious, perhaps, but necessary description of the Romish Mass will convince every impartial reader, how much the worship of Rome is addressed to the senses. This pompous performance, it is well known, constitutes the sum and substance of the religion of Papists—yet how little does it tend to excite devotion or promote holiness! All the prayers of the Mass, as well as the lessons from Scripture which it contains, are in an unknown tongue, with which not one in five hundred is familiar. But were it otherwise the worshipper “would receive but little advantage”—as a celebrated Papist informs us, “For besides that, the greater part is said in so low a voice, that it is not possible he should hear it—the words do not belong to him, but to the priest’s office only.” [Gother’s Papist Misrepresented, &c.] The only benefits of the Mass then, according to their own writers, must be those which arise from the sacrifice offered up, and those produced by the mechanical character of the performance. The former, which are said to be the pacifying of the Divine wrath—the remission of sins—and the procuring of all blessings—wholly depend on Transubstantiation, or the actual presence of Christ, bodily and spiritually, in the bread and wine—a doctrine which has been too often convicted of gross absurdity and awful blasphemy to require any notice here. The only possible virtue of the Mass then, in the eyes of all but those who are under “a strong delusion that they should believe a lie” is its mechanical efficacy: the material representations of spiritual truths which it contains.

In the words of the Council of Trent, “The visible signs of religion and piety” in the Mass “excite the minds of the faithful to the contemplation of the great truths therein contained.” But how is it possible to meditate on spiritual truths, amid the endless pageants and tricks of the Popish Mass? The rapid succession of ceremonies, the constantly shifting movements, and the continued appeal to the senses which it presents, cannot but divert the attention, and render meditation or prayer quite impracticable.

In the Lord’s Supper, when celebrated according to Scripture, on the other hand, the material part of the ordinance is at once most simple and most expressive. It consists in merely partaking of bread and wine together, in memory of Christ. And whilst it strikingly sets forth the bruised body and shed blood of the Savior of sinners, and the oneness of his people with him and with each other; the attention is not

diverted by a multiplicity of actions; and full scope is allowed for spiritual communion with the Lord. —Here as in all things else, the contrast is most striking between the work of man and that of God.

The truth of the foregoing remarks is proved by actual facts. In the language of the Author of "Natural History of Enthusiasm," "Of what avail is all this sumptuous apparatus, in promoting either genuine piety, or purity of manners? History and existing facts leave no obscurity on the question; for the atrocity of crime and the foulness of licentiousness have ever kept pace with the perfection of the Romish service. Those nations upon whose manners it has worked its proper influence, with the fullest effect, have been the most irreligious and the most debauched. Splendid rites and odious vices have dwelt in peace under the same consecrated roof; and the actors and spectators of these sacred pantomimes have been wont to rush together to the chambers of filthy sin." (Enthusiasm. Sec. II.)

2. The Worship of Relics.

The worship of relics affords another melancholy instance of the tendency of Popery, to substitute the material for the spiritual. The emotions which every renewed heart experiences at the sight or thought of "the excellent of the earth," are transferred by the Papist to their mortal remains; and it forms a part of the creed of Popery, that miracles are wrought and blessings imparted, by the efficacy of the bones, the dust, and even the clothes of saints and martyrs!

The reverence for Relics may be traced back to the fourth century. It had not however reached anything like the height which it subsequently attained. The Epistles of Pope Gregory the Great, however, afford abundant evidence of the prevalence of this superstition in the 6th century. It appears that the Empress Constantia had applied to Gregory for the head of the Apostle Peter, or at least for some part of his body.

> "The Pope begins his answer by a very polite expression of his sorrow 'that he neither could nor dared to grant that favor; for the bodies of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul are so resplendent with miracles and terrific prodigies in their own churches, that no one can approach them without great awe, even for the purpose of adoring them. When my predecessor of happy memory, wished to change some silver ornament which was placed over the most holy body of St. Peter, though at the distance of almost fifteen feet, a warning of no small terror appeared to him. Even I myself wished to make some alteration near the holy body of Saint Paul, and it was necessary to dig rather deeply near his tomb. The Superior of the place found some bones which were not at all connected with that tomb; and having presumed to disturb and remove them to some other place, he was visited by certain fearful apparitions, and died suddenly. My predecessor of holy memory also undertook to make some repairs near the tomb of St. Lawrence; as they were digging, without knowing precisely where the venerable body was placed, they happened to open his sepulchre. The monks and guardians who were at the work, only because they had seen the body of that martyr, though they did not presume so much as to touch it, all died within ten days; to indicate that no man might remain in life, who had beheld the body of that just man. Be it then known to you, that it is the custom of the Romans, when they give any relic, not to venture to touch any portion of the body; only they put into a box a

> piece of linen called Brandium, which is placed near the holy bodies. Then it is withdrawn and shut up with due veneration, in the church which is to be dedicated; and as many prodigies are then wrought by it, as if the bodies themselves had been carried thither. Whence it happened that in the time of St. Leo, (as we learn from our ancestors) when some Greeks doubted the value of such relics, that the Pope called for a pair of scissors and cut the linen, and blood flowed from the incision. And not at Rome only, but throughout the whole of the West it is held sacrilegious to touch the bodies of the saints, nor does such temerity ever remain unpunished. For which reason we are much astonished at the custom of the Greeks, and we scarcely give credit to it. But what shall I say respecting the bodies of the Holy Apostles, when it is a known fact that at the same time of their martyrdom, a number of the faithful came from the east to claim them? But when they had carried them out of the city to the second milestone, to a place called 'The Catacombs,' the whole multitude was unable to move them further—such a tempest of thunder and lightning terrified and dispersed them. The napkin too which you wished to be sent at the same time, is with the body, and cannot be touched any more than the body can be approached. But that your religious desire may not be wholly frustrated, I will hasten to send you some part of those chains which St. Paul wore on his neck and hands; if indeed I shall succeed in getting off any from them. For since many continually solicit as a blessing, that they may carry off some small portion of their filings, a priest stands by with a file; and sometimes it happens that some portions fall off from the chains instantly and without delay; while at other times the file is long drawn over the chains, and yet nothing is at last scraped off" (Wadd. Hist. of the Ch.)

The lapse of time served only to render more general and more gross this disgusting and debasing superstition. In the ninth century, according to Mosheim,

> "It was not enough to reverence departed saints and to confide in their intercession and succors; it was not enough to clothe them with an imaginary power of healing diseases, working miracles, and delivering from all sorts of calamities and dangers; their bones, their clothes, the apparel and furniture they had possessed during life, the very ground which they had touched or in which their putrified carcasses were laid, were treated with a stupid veneration, and supposed to retain the marvelous virtue of healing all disorders both of body and mind, and of defending such as possessed them against all the assaults and devices of Satan. The consequence of this wretched notion was, that every one was eager to provide himself with these salutary remedies; for which purpose great numbers undertook fatiguing and perilous voyages and subjected themselves to all sorts of hardships. Whilst others made use of this delusion to accumulate riches, and to impose upon the miserable multitude by the most impious and shocking inventions. Many traveled into the Eastern provinces and frequented the places which Christ and his disciples had honored with their presence; that with the bones and other secret remains of the first heralds of the gospel they might comfort dejected minds, calm the trembling conscience, save sinking states and defend their inhabitants from all sorts of calamities. Nor did these pious travelers return home empty. The craft, dexterity, and knavery of the Greeks found a rich prey in the stupid credulity of the Latin relic-hunter, and made profitable commerce of this

new devotion. The latter paid large sums for legs and arms, skulls, and jaw-bones, (several of which were pagan and some not human,) and other things that were supposed to have belonged to the primitive worthies of the Christian church; and thus the Latin church came to the possession of those celebrated relics of St. Mark, St. James, St. Bartholomew, &c., which they show at this day with so much ostentation. But there were many who, unable to procure for themselves these spiritual treasures by voyages and prayers, had recourse to violence and theft; for all sorts of means and all sorts of attempts in a cause of this nature were considered, when successful, as pious and acceptable to the Supreme Being." (Mosheim. Cent. IX. chapt. 3. §6.)

The foregoing extract plainly shows how far the Church of Rome had at this early period outstripped the Eastern Church in the race of superstition—and ever since that time, the worship of Relics has continued a main article in the creed and practice of Papists. In the work of the learned Chemnitius occurs the following summary of this odious superstition, as it prevailed up to the sixteenth century.

1. It is taught that the bodies, ashes or bones of the saints are to be dug up or raised from their graves, and to be placed in a prominent place—for example, over the high altar, or on some other conspicuous place, and to be adorned with gold, silver, silk, &c.
2. That these relics are to be carried about in procession and public supplication, and that they are to be exhibited and held out to be touched and kissed or only looked at by Christian people.
3. That such relics are to be approved by the Pope of Rome, &c.
4. That it is a great and meritorious worship of God, if the people (for the sake of obtaining blessings) touch, kiss, look at, and fall down with the posture and feeling of adoration to these relics when exhibited, and also worship them with candles, silk, chaplets, and similar ornaments.
5. That divine grace and virtue is to be sought from those relics, and they who touch or behold them become partakers of it.
6. That it is a sacrifice grateful to God to present valuable gifts to these relics.
7. They promise many indulgences of sins, to those who touch, kiss, or only behold these relics.
8. That prayer is rendered better, more worthy, and more acceptable to God, when offered up near or before the relics of the saints; that by their merits we may obtain help. And that consequently vows are to be made in dangers, and pilgrimages made to those places in which the relics of saints are thought to be; in order that we may there invoke them for the sake of obtaining help.
9. The holiness of the sacrament of the Eucharist is greatly increased, if the relics of saints are thought to be enclosed in the altar.
10. The Canonists teach that the relics of saints may be placed upon any person. Thomas Aquinas adds that they may lawfully be carried round the neck, through devotion, and trust towards God and the saints, whose relics they are.
11. Oaths are made amongst Romanists by touching the relics of saints, so that the religious part of an oath is divided between God and the saints.
12. All things are full of supposititious and false relics, to which nevertheless the same veneration and the same honor are shown without any difference. (Chem. Exam. Conc. Trid. p. 661.)

Such notoriously was the worship paid at the time of the Reformation, and for many centuries previous, to the relics of the saints of Rome. Thus did besotted man rob God of his glory, and deify a bone, a bit of wood or cloth, in his place. The reader however will possess a very imperfect notion of the relic-worship of the middle ages, and the gross impostures practiced by the priests, without some account of the number and character of those Popish idols. We shall therefore add the following list of the relics, belonging to the Church of St. John of Lateran, in the city of Rome, as we find it recorded in a manuscript written by Papists themselves, in the fourteenth century, and printed by the celebrated W. Crawshay, the Puritan, early in the seventeenth century. The original may be seen in this curious and rare work; the title of which is given in the note.[2]

“THE RELICS OF ST. JOHN OF THE LATERAN.”

“In this church of the Lateran there is a certain chapel which is called the Sacristy or the Vestry; in it there is St. John’s Altar, even that very altar which he had in the wilderness; and there is also that very table upon which Christ supped with his disciples at his last supper.”

“In the same place is the Old Testament, to wit, Moses’ rod and the ark of the covenant, all these did Titus and Vespasian bring thither from Jerusalem, together with those four great brazen pillars which now stand about the high altar, within which are the heads of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul. And when these heads are shown to the people, there are as many indulgences at that church as at St. Peter’s Church when the ‘Veronica’ is shown.”

“Also there is the image or picture of our Lord, which was painted upon the wall, not with man’s hand, but by the divine work of God, before all the people of Rome. And this image thus appeared on the 5. day of the Ides of November, also there are the golden candlesticks that were in the first Tabernacle of the Old Testament. Also the Table wherein the Law was written with the finger of God.”

“Also some of the five barley loaves and two fishes with which five thousand were fed by Christ. Also the blood of St. Stephen, and of the oil of St. Catherine. The arm of St. Simeon. The image of the Blessed Virgin, drawn by St. Luke. The relics of St. Spes (or St. Hope). Some of the hair of the Blessed Virgin.” These and some others which I forbear to mention are yearly produced. But there are four relics besides, which they seem to account more sacred than the rest, being showed but once in seven years, viz. The *Shift* of the Blessed Virgin. The *swathes* of our Savior. The linen *cloth* upon which John the Baptist was beheaded, and the cloth with which our Savior was covered on the cross. When these are exhibited, there are these *solemn proclamations* made to the people (*thus translated out of the French*).

1. *Proclamation*. You shall have a sight of the *Shift*, that holy garment, which the Virgin Mary, the mother of God, had on upon the night of our Lord’s nativity; wherefore let us humbly pray to God to be able to behold such relics to his glory, to the end that we may partake of his grace for the attaining salvation.

2. *Proclamation*. You shall have a sight of the swathes, those holy clothes, in which our Savior Jesus Christ was wrapped on the night of his nativity; wherefore let us pray Almighty God to behold these relics to the increase of his honor, to the end that we may never be separated from Him.

3. *Proclamation*. You shall have a sight of the *Holy Linen Cloth* upon which St. John the Baptist was beheaded, with the marks of his blood spilt upon it; to whom God gave testimony that he was the most holy person that ever was born of a woman. Let us therefore pray our Lord Jesus Christ, that we may behold it to his honor, and that by his grace we may be saved.

4. *Proclamation*. You shall have a sight of that *Holy Cloth*, which was put before our Lord's body and veiled it upon the tree of the Holy Cross, when he suffered death for our sins on Good Friday. Pray we therefore our Lord Jesus Christ, that we may behold it with much devotion, that we may be partakers of his death and passion and may be delivered from all evils and sins."[3]

We need only refer to the Holy Coat at Treves, to prove that the worship of Relics still continues in the nineteenth century, to delude and destroy the adherents of the papacy were conducted on the continent, in the seventeenth century, will be found in "The Frauds of Romish Monks and Priests," p. 143—154, and "Observations on a Journey to Naples," by the same author, p. 118—132. The annual pilgrimages undertaken in the present day by the Irish Papists, will be more calculated to interest the English reader, and afford also an important idea of Popery.

St. Patrick's Purgatory is situated on an island of a lake lying in the southern part of the county of Donegal, nearly three miles in length, and four in breadth. The whole island is a rocky piece of ground, in some places bare, and in the rest having but a very thin covering of earth. It is in length one hundred and twenty-four yards, in the broadest place forty-five, and the narrowest twenty-five over. There are several modern buildings upon it, fitted up for the most part as places of public worship, and each one dedicated to some particular saint; in the vicinity of these are a number of circular stone walls, from one to two feet in height, enclosing broken stone or wooden crosses, which are called saints' beds; and around these, on the hard and pointed rocks, the penitents perform penance upon their bare knees, repeating a certain form of prayer at each.

They then visit the chapels, where they remain night and day, performing certain ceremonies, and saying a prescribed number of prayers, which are in proportion to the amount or degree of crime committed. The pilgrim while engaged in these rites, which generally occupy several days, is allowed to partake of but one meal of bread and water in the twenty-four hours; and while in the prison, in which the individual continues a day and night previous to quitting the island, food of every description is prohibited. Twenty-four priests are appointed, each officiating for one hour at a time. The pilgrims are kept awake at night by a man appointed for the purpose, who, with a small switch or rod, gently taps any one he may perceive disposed to slumber. On the spot upon which the little chapel dedicated to St. Patrick now stands, there is a rock in which was formerly a cave capable of holding six or eight persons, where it was believed the pains and torments which await the wicked in another world might be experienced by those who enter it. This was the last place visited by the penitents, and in this they

had to remain all night. St. Bridget's chair stands close to the water's edge, in which, it is said, whoever once sits is ever after preserved from accident or sudden death.

The following account of the pilgrimage is by an eye-witness, and Mr. Hardy, the author to whom we are indebted for the foregoing narration, pledges himself for the authenticity of the facts detailed.[4]

"This island is about half a mile from the shore; on approaching it, we found all the people walking round one of the buildings, in the direction of the sun. There are two chapels, one for confession and another for general worship. In the former, no strangers are admitted; but on entering the latter by one of the galleries, a mighty multitude of the most apparently devout worshippers I ever beheld presented themselves. All were kneeling except the choir, and every one busy for himself, without the smallest interruption from his neighbor. The only instruments they used were their beads, crucifix, and manual. Their food is a small quantity of bread, which they bring into the island with them, and water, which *by the priest's blessing is supposed to be made equally nutritive as wine*. They take this once a day, except when in the prison, where they remain twenty-four hours. During this period they are prohibited from tasting any food. Twenty-four priests are the regular number for officiating in this place, each one hour. The prison is a dungeon in which the light of day is not allowed to enter. A man with a switch is kept in regular exercise here, to keep the pilgrims in a wakeful state. Sleep is very dangerous, for a single nod may lose the soul forever, without the intervention of all the fathers and saints of the calendar, and a round sum of money."

"I have after much difficulty obtained access to a publication chiefly intended for the direction of the pilgrims of Lough Derg, but was unable to purchase it—they are so very cautious about the person into whose hands they will allow it to come. I shall therefore give a few extracts from it in the English language."

"THE PILGRIMAGE OF LOUGH DERGH."[5]

"I will give thee understanding, and instruct thee in this way, in which you are to go." — Ps. xxxi. 8

Approved and written by B. D.

"Blessed are they whose sins are forgiven." — Ps. xxxii. 1

> "Christian reader, observe that it is very proper and profitable for a man conversant in the turbulent world, who having the care of a house and family, is necessarily involved in the affairs of this wicked world, and surrounded with infinite occasions and snares of offending God, to withdraw himself from these unavoidable snares of sin, either perpetually and during his life, or at least for some time, and to retire to some solitary place to look to the salvation of his soul, following herein the example of the royal prophet, 'Behold I have retired and remained in the wilderness.'" (Ps. i.5.)
>
> "The pilgrims are directed on entering this holy ground to approach it with all due reverence and awe, bare-headed and bare-footed, "For if the place wherein the angel spoke to Moses, concerning the Israelites' delivery from the bondage of Pharaoh, was so holy, that he was commanded to tread upon it bare-footed, why should not this place be holy, where God

commissioned and deputed our Apostolic Moses, St. Patrick, to enlarge us out of the spiritual slavery and captivity of our spiritual Pharaoh, the devil? And if Joshua was commanded to loose his shoes from off his feet, when he spoke to the prince of the host of the Lord, because the place whereon he stood was holy; why should not this place be holy, where we speak to God, and St. Patrick, prince and chief of the saints of our nation, and go thither bare-footed? Finally, if the prophet Isaiah was commanded to walk naked for the sins of others, why should not we enter the place of penance bare-footed and bare-headed, to expiate our enormous crimes?"

"Moreover, we pass into the island by water: that that saying of the royal prophet (Ps. lxv.) may be applied to us, 'We have passed through fire and water, and thou leadest us into a place of refreshment'—that by the fire of devotion and waters of tribulation, God may lead us hence to the spiritual refreshment of our souls and consciences."

"Having humbly received the Superior's blessing, the pilgrims kneel before the altar of St. Patrick, signing themselves with the sign of the cross, saying 'in whose name we begin our pilgrimage,' and there they say one *Ave*, one *Pater,* and a *Creed*. The one Pater is to signify the unity of the divine nature, who, according to Isaiah and St. Paul, worketh all our works (Isaiah xxvi. 12; 1 Cor. xii. 11), especially our penance which we now begin. We say an Ave, that as we received our Savior and Redeemer by the Blessed Virgin Mary, so we would by her intercession obtain grace and remission of our sins from God, and perseverance in doing penance, and eternal bliss. We say a Creed, that by it we would make a profession of our faith toward God, for it is impossible to please God without faith (Heb. xi.). These same reasons may serve for all *Paters*, *Aves,* and *Creeds*, said hereafter. Rising from the altar we kiss its stone that we may be cleansed from our sins, like Isaiah, who was purged and cleansed when his lips were touched with a stone taken from the altar (Isaiah vi.). Afterwards, kneeling at the corner of the chapel, we repeat three *Paters*, three *Aves*, and one *Creed*, to obtain from the Holy Trinity three things necessary for penance, to wit—the fear of the Lord, whereby sin is banished away (Ecclus. xxi.)—humility, by which our prayers penetrate the clouds—and patience, by which we possess our souls (Luke xxi. 19). In our first going round the chapel we kiss the cross which standeth before the chapel door, to signify that we ought to embrace and lift up our cross and follow Christ, who spilt his precious blood seven times for us. And we touch it with our shoulders, by which we signify that we ought to persevere in it, in carrying our cross to the end."

"We begin at the corner of the chapel, going round it and the altar seven times, in which we repeat seven decades, according to that of the royal prophet (Ps. xxvi.), 'I have surrounded and sacrificed in his tabernacle,' either in satisfaction of our seven capital sins, which we commit in the seven days of the week; or because 'a just man falleth seven times a day and riseth again.'" (Prov. xxiv. 16.) p. 10.

"To avoid therefore the same doom with the wicked, we go round the stones standing in the water three times, to satisfy for the sins of our will, memory, and understanding: saying, in the meantime, five *Paters*, five *Aves*, and one *Creed*, to redeem the punishment due to the sins of our five outward senses; then humbly kneeling on the sharp stones, and fixing our confidence

> and hope in Jesus Christ the corner-stone, we say five other *Paters*, five *Aves*, and one *Creed*, that we may extract remedies from his five sacred wounds, against the transgression of our five sacred senses. From whence we advance to a round stone, at a distance out in the Lough, on which we stand, and say one Pater, one Ave, and one Creed, to signify that we beg one thing of God, to wit, life everlasting." (Ps. xxvi.) p. 14.
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> "Leaving the water, we proceed forward to the altar of St. Patrick, where we say one *Pater*, one *Ave*, and one *Creed*, that the Lord who moved us, by his divine grace, to begin our penance, would give us strength to bring the same to a successful and prosperous end. Afterwards, we enter the chapel and repeat the Psalter or Rosary of the Blessed Virgin, first thanking God who is magnified, exceedingly pleased with penance, by whose power and divine assistance we triumphed victoriously; having thrown the horse and the rider (the devil and sin) into the sea." (Exodus xv.) p. 16.
>
> "As soon as we leave the grave or vault we immediately plunge ourselves into the water, washing our heads and bodies, to signify that we are washed and cleansed from the filth of our sin and have broken the dragon's head in the water (Ps. lxxiv. 13). And as the children of Israel left their enemies drowned in the Red Sea, so should we leave our spiritual enemies drowned in this red lough, by which we are buried with Christ unto death, that with him we might rise again to eternal glory, which I earnestly beseech our most merciful God: Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to grant to both me and you. Amen."

In reference to another station, at Holy Island, the author adds,

> "there are many who visit this station, to make atonement for their sins, and among this class of the superstitious you generally find all the abandoned females of the country! When the penance is finished, the grossness of the language used is most disgusting. They tell you the demerit of sin cannot be more than the punishment—the penance will take away the guilt, and some whiskey will wash away the remembrance of it. When the work is finished, all repair to the tents, the drinking then commences, and in the evening the island is more like the ancient Cyprus when dedicated to Venus, than a place to which the frequenters of it ascribe holiness. It is polluted with drunken revels and the most gross debauchery." p. 53.

Many other *mechanical* kinds of devotion might be mentioned. In fact the substitutes for *spiritual* worship are endless in the Church of Rome. The use of the Agnus Dei deserves notice. "An *Agnus Dei*," says a modern Popish book, "so called from the image of the Lamb of God impressed on the face of it, is made of virgin wax, balsam, and chrism, blessed according to the form prescribed in the Roman ritual. The spiritual virtue or efficacy of it is gathered from the prayers that the church makes use of in the blessing of it, which is to preserve him who carries an *Agnus Dei* or any particle of it about him, from any attempts of his spiritual or temporal enemies; from the dangers of fire, of water, of storms and tempests, of thunder and lightning, and from a sudden and unprovided death. It puts the devils to flight, succors women in child-bed, *takes away the stains of past sins, and furnishes us with new grace for the future*, that we may be preserved from all adversities and perils, both in life and death, through the

cross and merits of the Lamb who redeemed and washed us in his blood. The Pope consecrates the *Agnus Deis* the first year of his pontificate, and afterwards on every seventh year, on Saturday before Low Sunday, with many solemn ceremonies and devout prayers." (Devotion and Office of the Sacred Heart, p. 323, Lon. 1837.)

The virtues and efficacy of the SCAPULAR are very extraordinary. This is a badge of peculiar veneration for the Virgin, and consists of a square piece of stuff, made out of the habit of a Carmelite Friar, marked with the initials I.H.S., and suspended from the neck by a ribbon. Simon Stock, a Carmelite Monk, is said to have invented this superstition in the thirteenth century: "The Virgin Mary appeared to him accompanied by a multitude of angels holding the Scapular in her hands, and said 'This shall be a privilege to thee and to all Carmelites. Whosoever dies in this habit shall escape eternal fire; whosoever dies in this, shall be saved.'" (Colganus in Chron. S. S. Deiparae, p. 256.) There is also another famous privilege granted to the Scapular: that "whosoever shall be buried in this habit shall not be held in purgatory pains beyond the Saturday next after the day of his death." (Colganus in notis ad vit. Maidoc ad num. 34.) The Roman Breviary sanctions the use of this garment of the Virgin, and the lessons on the 16th of July contain the substance of the legend which originated its use. In Ireland the Scapular is held in peculiar veneration among certain classes. (See O'Croly's Inquiry.)

A similar mechanical virtue attaches amongst Papists to Monks' Habits in general. "Such persons as were buried in their garments were thought to have wonderful advantages thereby. King John is said to have been buried at Worcester, in a monk's cowl, and Mr. Dugdale makes mention of some of the honorable family of the Hastings that lie buried in the Grey Friars at Coventry, in the habits of *Friars Minors*." (Rom. Horseleech, p. 187. Lond. 1769.) The same practice is still continued on the continent. "The Italians specify in their last wills, the religious habit in which they will be buried. One will be dressed up like a Benedictine, another like a Carmelite, and so for the rest. The monks tell us that it is an honor due to their habits, that nothing can interpose between them and heaven, because they have the virtue of immediately uniting to that state of bliss." (Frauds, &c., p. 270.)

The use of the Cross, and that of Holy Water, are equally illustrative of the mechanical devotion of Rome. In a book of Private Devotions of the sixteenth century occurs the following prayer: "Aqua benedicta, sit mihi salus et vita!" ("Holy Water be thou unto me SALVATION AND LIFE!")

Then, too, the use of the Rosary, and the daily recitation of the Breviary, come also under the head of mechanical devotion. The Rosary, it is well known, is a string of beads used to count prayers, recited in honor of the Virgin—one large bead, to denote the *Pater-Noster*, occurring between every ten smaller ones, denoting the *Ave-Marias*. "Everybody," says a converted Priest of Rome, "takes care to have always the beads or Rosary in his pocket, as the characteristic of a Christian. But this devotion of the Rosary is made so common amongst bigots, that they are always with the beads in their hands, and at night round their neck.

There is nothing more usual in Spain and Portugal than to see people in the markets and in the shops praying with their beads, and selling and buying at the same time. Nay, the procurers, in the great *Piazza*, are praying with their beads, and at the same time contriving and agreeing with a man for all

sorts of wicked intrigues. So all sorts of persons have it as a law to say the Rosary every day; some say it walking, others in company, (keeping silent for a while) but the rest talking or laughing. So great is their attention to this indispensable prayer of the Rosary." (Gavin. i. p. 222.)

Of the Breviary, the same writer says, "The divine service, or seven canonical *hours*, every priest, friar, and nun, is to say every day, or else they commit a mortal sin by the statutes of the Church and Popes. This service which is to be said in private, and with Christian devotion, *is as much profaned* among ecclesiastics and nuns as the Rosary; for I have seen many of them (and I have done it myself) play at cards, and have the Breviary on the table, to say the divine service at the same time. Others walking in company, and others doing still worse things, have the Breviary in their hands and read the divine service, when they, at the same time, are in occasione proxima peccati; and notwithstanding, they believe they have performed exactly that part of the ecclesiastical duty." (Gavin. i. p. 223.)

Lastly, the doctrine of *opus operatum* has caused the Sacraments of the Church to be regarded in the same *mechanical* light. The Council of Trent has decided that these—Baptism, the Lord's Supper, Extreme Unction, &c., confer grace by the mere operation itself (ex opere operato). Hence the elements or material substances employed in the sacraments are believed to be physical causes, which necessarily produce grace in the soul, whilst the mind has nothing to do with the work!

We have thus attempted to show in what way, and to what extent, Popery has inflicted upon Europe the fearful curse of Famine. Christianity, it will be allowed, contains the most abundant provision for the spiritual wants of man. Popery, on the other hand, wherever it prevails, robs a famishing world of the bread of life, and feeds it with husks and chaff.

This accusation, than which a heavier could hardly be brought against any system—has been fully substantiated in the foregoing pages. By the mouth of the apostle, God declares of the Scriptures "they are able to make us wise unto salvation;" and as constituting the revelation of Jesus Christ, they hold out to dying men, "the bread of life which came down from heaven; of which if a man eat, he shall never die." The Romish church, however, as the true Antichrist of Scripture, at two several councils, positively prohibited the Bible to the laity, both in the original and in the vulgar tongue (Conc. Tolos. et Biterrense): and in Papal countries that blessed volume is still a proscribed book.

Then, too, the Lord has instituted PREACHING, as a further, and still more efficacious means of feeding a perishing world. The last command of him "who hath loved us and given himself for us," when he left this earth was, "Go ye forth into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Accordingly, this has ever proved the most powerful means of awakening sinners from the day of Pentecost to the present period. Popery however, true to the commission given to it over the "fourth part of the earth, to kill by famine," has virtually nullified this important means of grace. For many centuries, most of the priests were by their gross ignorance utterly incapable of preaching! The sermons that were delivered were full of absurd fables and idle superstitions, and afforded little or no nourishment for the immortal soul. Whilst at the sacred festivals of the year, when, least of all, we should have expected such conduct from the church—gross buffoonery and blasphemy were added to

its other crimes; as in the case of the “Easter drolleries,” “The Feast of Asses,” &c. Since the Reformation, it is true, Papists have been compelled, by very shame, to revive preaching, especially in Protestant countries; but the life-giving truths of the gospel occupy no place in the sermons of priests; and what little truth is ever contained in Popish discourses, is either wholly neutralized by the presence of deadly error, or else swallowed up in the load of superstitious rubbish. Thus Romanism is guilty of famishing its votaries, by withholding the bread of life and feeding them with empty garbage.

Once more; the efficacy of PRAYER both public and private will be acknowledged by all believers. Not only does devotion exert a direct influence upon the heart, assimilating it to God; but it also brings down from God “all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” But here again Popery meets us, blasting all good, and infusing the elements of moral poison. The prayers of the Romish church are, to a great extent, addressed to creatures, once sinful creatures like ourselves; and are full of their praises, and of vain invocations for their help and blessing! Those, too, which are addressed to God are often offered up in the name, not of Christ, but of some he or she saint; and the greatest of all blessings, even deliverance from hell, and the enjoyment of heaven, are solicited *through their intercession and their merits.* It is therefore wholly impossible that the prayers of such worshippers can be acceptable to God; whilst the language of the Romish service serves still further to show the utter inefficacy of Popish prayer.

Thus has Romanism, again, proved a Spiritual Famine to man, by nullifying this great, this all-important means of grace. In order to delude them, however, with “the form of godliness,” whilst it deprives them of the “power,” Popery provides its votaries with a vast and splendid system of MECHANICAL DEVOTION. In the Mass for instance, the church sets before them a gorgeous spectacle, more suited for the play-house than the sanctuary; whilst the people gaze on as mere spectators of the show. In the worship of RELICS, the presence of a martyr’s bone, or the garment of some celebrated saint, is substituted for holiness and faith, and all manner of virtues are ascribed to the possession of so much mere matter. The same mechanical or material character attaches to a vast deal more of Popish devotion. The PROCESSIONS AND PILGRIMAGES of the church of Rome are wholly of this nature. What has Christianity to do with these relics of Judaism? What influence can a procession of wooden images or musty relics have in appeasing the wrath of God? And what connection has a pilgrimage to a distant place with our being “made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light?” Every enlightened mind will at once see, that these material forms of devotion have no more connection with the state of our hearts, or the favor of God, than the color of a man’s coat, or the height of his stature. Nor do the AGNUS DEIS, the SCAPULARS, the HOLY WATER, &c. &c. of Popery possess any better fitness to nourish the soul. They must, one and all, be considered as so many spiritual nostrums and juggling inventions of the man of sin; the object of which is to delude mankind, and bring money to the church!

Let Popery then ever be regarded as a SPIRITUAL FAMINE, a dearth of all that which constitutes the food of the immortal soul! This is its essential, its unalterable character; it has belonged to the system in every age and in every country of its sway. Were it to alter, it would be no longer Popery. Wherever it goes, immediate famine is the result, not merely “a famine of the word of God” as Amos says; but a

famine of all the means of grace. Every source of spiritual good to man is closed—every avenue through which the light of heaven would beam is at once shut up: and man is left to die, the victim of utter want!

How fearfully great a curse then is Popery to this sinful world! Famine! The very name strikes terror into the heart. We have had the subject, too, repeatedly forced upon our notice of late, and are all, alas! familiar with its fearful evils. Ireland is at present prostrate beneath the stroke of this terrible Destroyer. But how faint an image does that bleeding country present of the Spiritual Famine, which still rages in that and other Papal kingdoms! As the soul is greater than the body—as eternity outweighs time—as the bliss of heaven transcends the joys of this world, and the pains of hell exceed the fleeting sorrows of earth, so does the Famine with which the Papacy has cursed Europe, infinitely surpass in magnitude and importance, any mere temporal famine of “the bread which perisheth.”

It is not possible then, we think, to exaggerate the evils of that corrupt system of faith and practice which has ever proved to the world such a curse as this. And when we think during how many ages this awful Famine has raged; and how many fair kingdoms of earth it has desolated; and then on the other hand, view the abundant means of spiritual nourishment provided in the gospel, and reflect what with this ample provision, these kingdoms might have been, well may we ask, what evil that has ever befallen our sinful globe can for one moment, be compared with this?

Footnotes

1. “Et de munere temporali, fiat nobis remedium sempiternum.”

2. “Fiscus Papalis sive catalogus Indulg. et reliquiarum sept. princip. Eccles. urb. Romae, ex vetusto Manuscripto codice vere et fideliter descriptus.”

3. Reflections on the Devotions of the Romish Church, pref. London. 1686.

4. The Holy Wells of Ireland, by P. D. Hardy, M.R.I.A. Dublin. 1840.

5. In the address to the reader, the author says that ‘the honor of St. Patrick moved him to publish the little treatise.’

PART II.
POPERY A MORAL PESTILENCE.

CHAPTER I.
AURICULAR CONFESSION AND PRIESTLY ABSOLUTION.

Pestilence ever follows in the train of Famine. Deprived of that nourishment which is essential to life, man sinks beneath the stroke of a disease so virulent, that whatever touches the infected person, imparts the plague to those with whom it comes in contact. The natural world is a reflection of the spiritual. Hence the dearth, with which the Romish church afflicted Europe, speedily engendered a plague; and Popery demands to be considered not merely as a Famine of all spiritual good; but also as a MORAL PESTILENCE, spreading disease and death wherever it went!

It now becomes our task, therefore, to inquire what are the elements of that MORAL PESTILENCE termed Popery? And without attempting to specify every evil in that vast and complicated system of error; the following appear to be its principal sources of mischief: The Confessional—Purgatory—Indulgences—The Worship of the Virgin, the Saints and Idols—the corrupt lives of its Popes and Clergy—and the awful extent to which the priest usurps the place of God. Other elements of evil there doubtless are in that antichristian system, but these are the chief constituents of the ROMISH PESTILENCE. We shall therefore at once proceed to the consideration of these doctrines and practices; under the deliberate conviction, that the history of the church of Rome presents the full accomplishment of that terrible Apocalyptic vision—"I looked and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was death, (pestilence, θάνατος,) and hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, (pestilence,) and with the beasts of the earth." (Rev. vi. 8.)

Although the evils which flow from CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION are perfectly distinct in themselves, yet the intimate connection between these practices renders it difficult to treat them separately. We propose, therefore, in this chapter, to consider the vicious results, both of Auricular Confession and the Absolution from guilt which usually accompanies it.

Like most of the enormities of Popery, Auricular Confession arrived at maturity in the midst of the dark ages. "Until the twelfth century," says Gieseler, "the confession of private sins had not been considered *an indispensable condition of forgiveness*; but only a means of amendment; and no peculiar power of absolution being attributed to Priests, it was allowable also to confess to laymen. But after confession had been included among the sacraments, the opposite views began to prevail, at first only in opinion, but afterwards sanctioned by the ordinance of Innocent III., that every one should confess to a priest at least once in every year. From this time, the notion grew up that confession was the only means of

obtaining the forgiveness of deadly sins; and that *the Priest, as God's representative, could bestow such forgiveness, and the priest only*." (Text Book of Eccles. Hist. II. p. 353.) Up to this time the *form* of absolution was "THE LORD GRANT THEE absolution and remission." (Absolutionem et remissionem tribuat tibi Deus.) In the thirteenth century, however, the priest in the most open manner usurped the place of God, and instead of *imploring* forgiveness, *bestowed* it by the power of the keys. The form henceforth in use was: "I ABSOLVE THEE from thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis, in nomine Patris, etc.)

Such were the doctrines and practices of Rome, in connection with the confessional, up to the period of the Reformation. The Council of Trent, it is well known, confirmed these fearful blasphemies, and pronounced an *anathema* against those who denied either the absolute necessity of confession in order to the forgiveness of sin, or the authority of the priest to deliver sentence as a judge. "The universal church," says that council, "has always understood that a full confession of sins was instituted by the Lord, as a part of the sacrament of penance; and that it is necessary, by divine appointment, for all who sin after baptism: because our Lord Jesus Christ, when he was about to ascend from earth to heaven, left his priests in his place, *as presidents and judges*, to whom all mortal offenses into which the faithful might fall, should be submitted, that they might *pronounce sentence of remission or retention of sins, by the power of the keys*. For it is plain, that the priests cannot sustain the office of judge, if the cause be unknown to them; nor inflict equitable punishments, if sins are only confessed in general, and not minutely, and individually described." (Concil. Trid. Sess. 14. chap. 5.) And again, "If any one shall deny, that sacramental confession was instituted, or is necessary by divine right, to salvation; or shall say that the practice of private confession to a priest is foreign from the institution and command of Christ, and is only a human invention; let him be accursed." (Ibid c. 6.) "Although the absolution be the dispensation of a benefit belonging to another, yet it is not merely a naked ministerial act of either announcing the gospel, or declaring that sins are pardoned, but it is equivalent to a judicial act, wherein sentence is pronounced by himself as a judge." (Ibid c. 6.) "Whosoever shall affirm," it adds, "the Priest's sacramental absolution is not a judicial act, but only a ministry to pronounce and declare that the sins of the party confessing are forgiven, let him be accursed." (Ibid ch. 9. can. 9.)

The above quotations are sufficient to show what the doctrines of the church of Rome on these subjects are at the present time. Let us now look a little at the practice of the priesthood.

I. In receiving confessions.
II. In granting absolution.

I. Confession. The fullest account to be met with of the practice of the Romish church, in this particular, is given by Mr. Gavin, formerly a priest of Rome, in his Master Key to Popery. "I come now," says he, "to their Auricular Confession, and the ways and methods they observe, in the confessing of their sins. There are among them two ranks of people, learned and unlearned. The learned confess by these three general heads—Thought, Word, and Deed, reducing into them all sorts of sins. The unlearned confess by the ten commandments, discovering by them all the mortal sins, which they have committed, since their last confession. I say mortal sins, for as to the venial sins, or sins of a small

matter, the opinion of their casuistical authors is they are washed away by the sign of the cross, or by sprinkling the face with the Holy Water."

"When the penitent comes into the church, he takes Holy Water, and sprinkles his face, and making the sign of the cross, says, '*Per signum crucis*,' &c. 'By the sign of the cross deliver us O Lord our God from our enemies, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' Then the penitent goes on, and kneels down before the great altar, where the great host is kept in a neat and rich tabernacle, with a brass or silver lamp hanging before it, and burning continually night and day. There he makes a prayer, first to the holy sacrament of the altar (as they call it), after to the Virgin Mary and to the titular saints of the church. Then he turns about on his knees and visits five altars, or if there is but one altar, five times that altar, and says before each of them five times *Pater-noster*, &c., and five times Ave Maria, &c., with *Gloria Patri*, &c."

"Then he rises and goes to the *Confessionary*, i.e. the confessing place, where the confessor sits in a chair, like our Hackney chairs, which is most commonly placed in some of the chapels, and in the darkest place of the church. The chairs, generally speaking, have an iron grate at each side, but none before; and some days of devotion, or on a great Festival, there is such a crowd of people, that you may see three penitents at once about the chair, one at each grate, and the other at the door, though only one confesses at a time, whispering in the Confessor's ear that the other should not hear what he says; and when one has done the other begins, and so on. But most commonly they confess at the door of the chair, one after another, for thus the confessor has opportunity of knowing the penitent. And though many gentlewomen, either out of bashfulness, or shame, or modesty, do endeavor to hide their faces with a veil or fan, notwithstanding all this they are known by the confessor, who if curious, by crafty questions brings them to tell him their names, and houses, and this in the very act of confession; or else he examines their faces when the confession is over, whilst the penitents are kissing his hand or sleeve; and if he cannot know them that way, he goes himself to give the Sacrament, and then every one being obliged to show his face, is known by the curious confessor, who does not this without a private view and design."

The penitent then kneeling, bows himself to the ground before the confessor, and makes again the sign of the cross in the aforesaid form; and having in his hand the beads or rosary of the Virgin Mary, begins the general confession of sins, which some say in Latin and some in the vulgar tongue. The following is the:

FORM OF CONFESSION

"I do confess to God Almighty, to the blessed Mary always a Virgin, to the blessed Archangel Michael, to the blessed John Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to all the saints, and to thee O Father, that I have too much sinned by thought, word, and deed, by my fault, by my fault, by my greatest fault. Therefore I beseech the blessed Mary always a virgin, the blessed Archangel Michael, the blessed John Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, all the saints and thee O Father, to pray God our Lord for me, Amen."

“This done, the penitent raises himself from his prostration to his knees, and touching with his lips either the ear or the cheek of the spiritual father, begins to discover his sins.” (Master Key, Vol. i. p. 6—8.)

II. Absolution. *In granting absolution*, the priest always enjoins some penance, upon the strict performance of which its efficacy is said to depend. The doctrine of the Romish church is, that these works constitute the satisfaction which the sinner owes to Divine Justice. “It is agreeable to the Divine Goodness,” says the Council of Trent, “that our sins should not be forgiven without satisfaction, lest taking occasion therefrom, we should think lightly of them, &c.” (Sess. 14. c. 8.) “The punishment which the sinner endures,” says the catechism of the same council, “disarms the vengeance of God, and prevents the punishments decreed against us.” (p. 290.) Such is the miserable confusion of ideas, however, in the decrees of the council that it represents “this satisfaction which we make for our offenses” as “being through Christ Jesus; for we who of ourselves as of ourselves can do nothing, can do all things through his cooperation who strengtheneth us.” (Sess. 14. c. 8.)

The various kinds of penance may in general be included under three heads—PRAYER, FASTING, and ALMS-DEEDS. It should be known, however, that what is termed alms-money is always given to the priest, or placed in the church box—a custom which opens a door for the practice of the grossest frauds on the part of the Romish clergy. The following passage from Gabriel D’Emillian, a converted priest, removes the mask and shows the knavery of the priests in striking colors:

“Moreover the confessions are very gainful to the priests, by reason of the pecuniary penances they impose upon the people for their sins. There is always a trunk or box at the lower end of their churches, of which they are the turnkeys, and according as they know the person to be stocked with riches, they command him, for his penance, to go and put such a sum into the trunk. We gathered once five hundred crowns, on one of the Easter holy days in a parish at Venice, and the next day we divided the money among eight of us who had been the confessors. The custom among them is, when any covetous man comes to confession, to represent to him his sin in the blackest colors they can possibly; and afterwards to give him good words, to sweeten him, and incline him to liberality. If thereupon he testify great sorrow for his sin, they never give absolution till he have given some sound marks of his repentance, by dropping a very plentiful alms into the trunk. And if he show any hardness of heart, yet they absolve him nevertheless, for fear of distasting him altogether with confession; because they are in hopes to find him another time in a better humor, and better disposed for repentance. When Thieves and Robbers, Usurers, and those that use false weights and measures, come to confession, they oblige them, as they ought, to make restitution, as far as it lies in their power so to do. They enjoin those that are not able to make a personal restitution, to make restitution to the church; that is, to put an equivalent sum in the trunk.” (Observations on a Journey to Naples, p. 312. Lond. 1691.)

The author of the Master Key to Popery corroborates this testimony, and gives a lengthened account of the practice of the Spanish priests, which is full of interest to all who desire to know the actual working of Popery:

“By the account I have already given,” says this author, “of a few private confessions, everybody may easily know the wickedness of the Romish Priests; but, more particularly, their covetousness and thirst of money will be detected, by my following observations:

First of all, if a poor countryman goes to confess, the Father Confessor takes little pains with him, for as he expects little or nothing from him, he heareth him, and with bitter words corrects the poor man, and most commonly without any correction, imposing upon him a hard penance, sends him away with the same ignorance he went with to confess.

Second. If a soldier happens to go to make his peace with God, then the confessor showeth the power of a spiritual guide. He questions him about three sins only, viz. Thefts, Drunkenness, and Uncleanness. Perhaps the poor soldier is free from the two first, but if he is guilty of the last, the Confessor draws the consequence that he is guilty of all the three, and terrifying him with hell and all the devils, and the fire of it, he chargeth him with restitution, and that he is obliged to give so much money for the relief of the souls in purgatory, or else he cannot get absolution. So the poor man, out of a better conscience than his confessor, offers a month’s pay, which must be given on the spot, (for in the shop of confessors there is neither trust nor credit,) to appease the rough, bitter confessor and get absolution. And I believe, this hard way of using the poor soldiers, is the reason that they do not at all care for that act of devotion.

Third. If a collegian goes to confess, he finds a mild and sweet confessor, and without being questioned, and with a small penance, he generally gets absolution. The reason of this is, first because if a collegian is ill used by his confessor, he goes to a Deaf Friar, who absolves—*ad dextram et ad sinistram*—all sorts of penitents for a *real of plate*. And after, he inquireth and examineth into all the other confessor’s actions, visits, and intrigues, and when he has got matter enough, he will write a lampoon on him, which has often happened in my time. So that the Confessor dares not meddle with the Collegians, for fear that his tricks should be brought to light. I say if absolution is denied to a Collegian, he goes to a *deaf Confessor*; for some Confessors are called deaf, not because they are really deaf, but because they give small penance without correction; and never deny absolution, though the sins be reserved to the Pope. I knew two Dominican Friars, who were known by the name of *deaf Confessors*, because they never used to question the penitent. Only one of such Confessors has more business, in Lent, than twenty of the others, for he (like our couple-beggars, who for sixpence doth marry people) for the same sum gives absolution. And for this reason, all the great and habitual sinners do go to the *deaf Confessor*, who gives upon the bargain, a Certificate in which he says that such a one has fulfilled the commandments of the church.

Fourth. If a friar or a priest comes to confess, everybody ought to suppose, that the father confessor has nothing to do but to give the penance, and pronounce the words of absolution; for both penitent and confessor being of the same trade, and of the same corporation and brotherhood, the fashion of this cloak of absolution is not paid among them, and they work one for another, without any interest, in expectation of the same return. This must be understood between the friars only; not between a friar and a secular priest; for these do not like one another, and the reason is, because the friars in general are such officious and insinuating persons in families, that by their importunities and assiduity of visits, they become at last the masters of families and goods; so the secular priest hath nothing to busy himself

with. Therefore if it happens sometimes, on necessity, that a priest goes to confess to a friar, or a friar to a priest, they make use of such opportunity to exact as much as they can from one another.

Fifth. If a modest, serious, religious lady goes to confess, he useth her in another way; for he knows that such ladies never come to confess, without giving a good charity for Masses; so all the confessor's care is to get himself into the lady's favor, which he doth by hypocritical expressions of godliness and devotion, of humility and strictness of life. He speaks gravely, and conscientiously, and, if the lady has a family, gives her excellent advice, as to keep her children within the limits of sobriety and virtue, for the world is so deceitful, that we ought always to be on our guard, and to watch continually over our souls, &c. By that means and the like, (the good lady believing him to be a sincere and devout man) he becomes the guide of her soul, her house, and family, and most commonly the ruin of her children, and sometimes her own ruin too.

Sixth. If a *Beata* goes to confess, which they do every day, or at least every second day, then the confessor, with a great deal of patience hears her; (sure of his reward). I cannot pass by without giving a plain description of the women called *Beatas*, i.e. *Blessed women*. These are most commonly tradesmen's wives, (generally speaking ugly) and of a middle age. But this rule has some exception; for there are some *Beatas* young and handsome. They are dressed with modesty, and walk with a serious countenance. But since their designs in this outward modesty were discovered, they are less in number, and almost out of fashion, since King Philip came to the throne of Spain. For the French liberty and freedom being introduced among the ladies; they have no occasion of stratagems, to go abroad when they please. So as the design of a *Beata* was, to have an excuse, on pretense of confession, to go out, the cause being removed, the effect ceases. The confessor, I said, of a Beata was sure of his reward, for she, watching the living and the dead, useth to gather money for Masses from several people to satisfy her confessor for the trouble of hearing her impertinences every day. A *Beata* sometimes makes the confessor believe, that many things were revealed to her by the Holy Spirit. Sometimes she pretends to work miracles, and by such visions, fancies, and dreams, the confessors fall into horrible crimes, before God and the world." (Master Key to Popery, I. p. 45.)

We have thus given the reader some account of the practice of the Romish Priesthood, both in hearing confessions, and granting absolution, from writers whose authority can never be controverted. Let us now proceed to set forth the vicious results of these two practices upon, *First*, The priests themselves, and *Secondly*, The people.

1. *Upon the Priests*. This branch of the subject is so closely allied with another practice of the Church of Rome—the celibacy of the clergy—that it is necessary we should premise what we have to say here, with a brief reference to that institution. During the first three ages, the teachers of the church advocated the universal lawfulness of marriage, in opposition to the heresies of the Encratites, of Basilides, Saturninus, and the Montanists. In the early part of the fourth century, however, the Council of Ancyra enacted, that no deacon should marry, unless at the time of his ordination he declared his intention of doing so. Eleven years after, the Council of Nice attempted to prohibit the marriage of the clergy, but through the opposition of an Egyptian Bishop, Paphnutius, who had lost an eye in the recent persecution, it was only decreed that "all clerks who were already married at the time of their

ordination might retain their wives; but, that they should not marry a second time." This decree was confirmed by the Council of Trullo held in the year 692, and has ever since remained the rule of the Eastern church.

The Western Church, however, made repeated, but for a long time, ineffectual attempts to enforce perfect celibacy on the clergy, and thus fulfill the mark of Antichrist given by the Spirit of God, "forbidding to marry." Siricius, bishop of Rome, towards the close of the fourth century, labored hard to accomplish this object. Gregory the Great, at the end of the sixth age, distinguished himself by his efforts in the same cause. About the middle of the ninth century, we find Hulderic, Bishop of Augsburg, vigorously resisting the edicts of Pope Nicholas, for enforcing celibacy. And it was not till the time of the notorious Hildebrand (A.D. 1080) that the object, for which the Popes had labored hard for so many centuries, was fully accomplished, and left no alternative to such priests as were already married, but either to discard their wives, or to surrender their benefices.

It will be granted by every thinking person that an institution like this, which sets at defiance the unchangeable laws of nature, must be productive of the most mischievous results. The Scriptures, it is true, recommend celibacy, as a state in which greater privileges will be enjoyed by the believer, but this recommendation is specially restricted to such "as have the gift of God." (1 Cor. vii. 7.) The Romish Church on the contrary, in the face of the plainest declaration of the Apostle, that a bishop should be "the husband of one wife," (1 Tim. iii. 2.) assigns to perpetual celibacy a body of men, taken at random from the mass, without the slightest reference to their fitness for such a state; in fact mostly at such an age as renders it impossible to ascertain their fitness or unfitness. The consequences of so unnatural a law may easily be foreseen. A large proportion of the number will speedily be driven to a course of secret vice. Thousands of individuals, who might have been moral characters in the married state, will become licentious hypocrites. Whilst all this frightful amount of evil is perpetrated by Romanism, simply that the wealth of the Church might be thus augmented, and the devotion of the clergy to the Holy See at the same time rendered more secure.*

* The advocates for the revival of monastic institutions, or clerical celibacy, in the present day, would do well to ponder seriously the actual result of monachism in the ancient church. These are briefly stated by Taylor, in his History of Fanaticism, to be as follows:

First, "That the monastic vow and the life of celibacy FAILED TO SECURE THE PROFESSED OBJECT of the institution, in all but a very few instances, and that it did not promote that purity of the heart which was acknowledged to be its only good.

Second, That, beside the evil of cutting men off from the common enjoyments, duties, and sympathies of life, the work of maintaining and defending their chastity (exterior and interior) absorbed almost the whole energies of those who sincerely labored at it—so that to be chaste, in fact and in heart, was pretty nearly the sum of what the monk could do, even with aid of starvation, excessive bodily toils, and depletic medicine—to say nothing of his prayers, tears, and flagellations.

Third, That the monastic institution, even during its earlier era, entailed the most deplorable miseries, and generated the foulest and most abominable practices; so that for every veritable saint which the

monastery cherished, it made twenty wretches whose moral condition was in the last degree pitiable or loathsome.

Shall we leave these propositions unsupported by proof?—or will the Romanist—the pride and prop of whose church is monkery, challenge us to make good our allegations?" (Fanaticism, § vi. p. 163.)

The celibacy of the Romish Priesthood unquestionably ranks, then, amongst the crying evils of Popery. One too which has been in ceaseless operation *partially* for twelve hundred—*universally and fully* for about seven hundred years. It is, however, only in connection with the Confessional, that its mischiefs can be seen in their full malignity. "It might seem," says a philosophic writer, speaking of the Confessional, "as if circumstances so unfavorable to virtue and goodness, could scarcely admit of aggravation; but in fact they have a climax. The practice of Auricular confession would entail a thousand evils and dangers upon the parties concerned, even irrespectively of the unnatural condition to which one of those parties has been reduced. But what must be thought of Auricular confession, when he, into whose prurient ear it is poured, lives under the irritation of a life of virginity? The wretched being within whose bosom the distorting passions are rankling, is called daily to listen to tales of licentiousness from his own sex, and, infinitely worse, to the reluctant or shameless disclosures of the other!…… Each sinner makes but one confession in a given time, but each priest in the same space listens to a hundred! What then after a while must that receptacle have become, into which the continual droppings of all the debaucheries of a parish are falling, and through which the copious abomination filters? It is hard not to suppose that the Roman Church, in constituting her Hierarchy, had wittingly kept in view the purpose of rendering her clergy the fit instruments of whatever atrocity her occasions might demand them to perpetrate. Not content with depriving them of sanatory (healing) domestic influences, she has by the practice of confession, made the full stream of human crime to pass, foul and infectious, through their bosoms. Having to construct at discretion the polity of the nations, the Roman architects have so planned it, that the sacerdotal order shall constitute the cloaca of the social edifice; and thus they have secured for Rome the honor of being the great Stercorary (a place, properly secured from the weather, for containing dung) of the world!"……

"The Church rigorously enjoins the faithful, as they would escape perdition, to make the most intimate and *circumstantial* disclosures of their guilt, without which it says 'the sacred physician cannot be qualified to apply the remedy.' The sacrament of confession, when it came thus to be explained and enjoined, naturally drew in upon the church, in tenfold quantity, the impurities of licentious times. Heretofore, those had chiefly come to the priest, who possessed some conscience and virtue, and whose disclosures were of a less flagrant sort. But afterwards, that is to say, from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the custom of confession became universal; and the most abandoned of men and women retained superstition enough to desire absolution, and to seek it in this manner from the priest. Accordingly we find from this time abundant indications of the proficiency which the clergy made, in the knowledge of every horrible enormity. On this point it might be enough to refer to the writings of Albert, Bishop of Ratisbon—if a book which bears his name has not been unjustly attributed to him. But even long before the time when the sewers of the church were thus deepened and widened, it is clear from abundant evidence that the practice of receiving private confessions had had great influence

in depraving both the secular and regular clergy, and in spreading on all sides a shameless and boundless licentiousness." (Fanaticism, p. 164—7.)

To add any remarks to the above forcible sketch of the results of Auricular Confession upon the priest, would be wholly superfluous. We proceed, therefore, to show its evil effects:

2. *Upon the People*. The confessional, in depraving the priests, also *indirectly* injured the people. (See chap. 9. The depravity of the Clergy.) But its direct consequences are what we wish here to exhibit. We remark then, that:

(1.) *It imparts to the young and inexperienced the knowledge of sin.*

The practice of confession, it is well known, consists, in part, of questions addressed by the priest, and replied to by the penitent; hence the ground of the charge here brought against the confessional, that it communicates the knowledge of sin, and thus corrupts mankind. The evidence afforded by Mr. Gavin, in his "Master Key to Popery," is important in reference to this subject. "To the discovery of the mortal sins," says he, "the Father Confessor doth very much help the Penitent; for he sometimes, out of pure zeal, but most commonly out of curiosity, asks them many questions to know whether they do remember all their sins or not. By these and the like questions, the confessors do more mischief than good, especially to the ignorant people and young women…….. and then by the confessor's indiscreet questions, the Penitents do learn things, of which they never had dreamed before; and when they come to that tribunal with an ignorant sincere heart, to receive advice and instruction, they go home with light, knowledge, and an idea of sins unknown to them before." (Vol. 1. p. 5.)

Those who are acquainted with the manuals of confession in use among Papists, will at once feel the force of this argument against auricular confession. Dens' Theologia, for instance, and the questions for examination on the Commandments published in that popular book of Popish devotion, '*The Garden of the Soul*,' may be referred to, in proof of these assertions. The gross indecency of these pages positively forbids our quoting them. We can only say, that the knowledge of vice in its most loathsome forms, is by such means imparted to the pure and simple, and all but the vile and the debauched depart from the confessional with ideas of wickedness, to which they before were strangers.

Mr. Gordon, a Scotchman, who, against his will, was sent to a Popish college in Paris, in order to be educated for the priesthood, relates, that, being obliged to go to confession soon after his arrival, "there was not any part of his conscience but was pretty well sifted by the impertinent interrogations made by the priest, by which," he adds, "I learnt more sins than ever I had heard while conversant in the world." (Life of Alex. Gordon.)

(2.) *It familiarizes the mind with guilt.*

The familiarity with crime which is the inseparable attendant upon confession, especially where it is much resorted to, constitutes an evil of appalling magnitude, which no one acquainted with the natural depravity of man will be disposed to underrate. The priest, according to his instructions, enjoins upon the penitents, as we have already seen, the most minute and circumstantial disclosures of their guilt, "without which the Sacred Physician cannot be qualified to apply the remedy." Hence the

interrogations and answers which pass between the Confessor and his penitent are obviously such as gradually to banish all shame and familiarize the people with ideas of guilt. “Sometimes,” says a respectable writer, “the priests find it very troublesome at first to make them confess as they ought, that is, clearly and plainly, without any mincing of the matter, and with all the circumstances of some shameful sins, and especially those of the flesh. They are fain to take a great compass to bring them to the point they would have them at, but by little and little, and a great deal of pains-taking, they at last weather the point, and make them impudent enough. Then it is they assure them, that they are arrived at that simplicity, purity, and faithfulness, which are of such absolute necessity for the well discharging of the duty of confession. Hence it is, that those women who mostly frequent the confessionals, and who are arrived at that degree of perfection, I just now mentioned, that is, to be less shamed than the rest, become the most bold and shameless in all companies. They are got past blushing in anything, and with a great deal of freedom, make use of those terms their confessors have taught them at their confessions.

I, upon a time, expressed myself not over well satisfied with the discourse which some devout or bigoted young women had, in the presence of two young counts of the Empire, whose governor I was. I took the liberty to tell them that it did not become them; but they with a terrible impudence, which yet was accompanied with some smartness of wit, answered me, that they did not believe that they had spoken so unhandsomely, but that they were ready to repeat the same words in confession. Indeed they have made it a SCHOOL OF IMPUDENCE AND LASCIVIOUS DISCOURSE, where those that speak broadest, and call a spade a spade, receive the greatest praise. They are not afraid to tell them ‘courage madam, the more clearly and in the more proper terms you express yourself, by so much the more will you shew your sincerity to God who hears you.’” (Observations on a Journey to Naples, &c. p. 311.)

(3.) *It holds out the strongest temptations to crime.*

That the priest in the performance of a sacrament, in which “he represents the Father, and discharges the functions of Christ,” should propose, and commit with his female penitent, the sin of whoredom—involves such tremendous and complicated guilt that were it not an indisputable fact it might appear absolutely incredible. The fearful combination of temptations, however, which the confessional presents, fully accounts for the occurrence of the crime. The unnatural condition to which the clergy are reduced—the open and intimate disclosures of the penitent—the secret retirement of the confessional—and the super-human dignity and power with which the priesthood is invested [1]—all combine to urge onward the confessor and to allure the penitent to the commission of this horrid crime. Instead, therefore, of wondering that this fearful crime occurs in the Romish church, our only wonder should be that it is not oftener committed—nor is it easy to say how much of the guilt is chargeable on those who commit the sin, and how much on that cruel and wicked system which leads them into it.

Those readers who are conversant with the History of Popery need not be informed, that the crime *sollicitationis munere* has been and still continues very common in the church of Rome, and would be more so did not the fear of the inquisition check its progress. The repeated enactments of penal laws, and damnatory bulls, against it, for many centuries past, prove the continued occurrence of the crime.

And the many instances which are recorded in various works on Popery, are sufficient to fill the mind with detestation of a system which is chargeable with such crimes.

“The unmeasured immorality of the Spanish clergy, appears in the history of Sacerdotal and monkish *solicitation* in that kingdom. These *Solicitantes* were Spanish monks and priests, who, abusing the privacy of sacramental confession, tempted women, married and unmarried, to a violation of chastity, and in the language of Pope Gregory, administered poison instead of medicine (pro medecino venenum porrigunt). This kind of solicitation became so prevalent as to demand pontifical interposition. In Spain the Bull of Pope Paul III. against *solicitants* was promulgated (in the sixteenth century) in which the following language is used to describe the evil which rendered such interference necessary: ‘Whereas certain Ecclesiastics in the kingdom of Spain and in the cities and dioceses thereof, having the cure of souls or exercising such cure for others, or otherwise deputed to hear the confession of penitents, have broken out into such heinous acts of iniquity, as to abuse the sacrament of penance, in the very act of hearing the confessions; not fearing to injure the same sacrament, and him who instituted it, our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, by enticing and provoking, or trying to entice and provoke females to lewd actions at the very time when they were making their confessions.’”

“When this Bull was first introduced into Spain, the inquisitors published a solemn edict in all the churches belonging to the Archbishopric of Seville, that any person knowing or having heard of any friar or clergyman having committed the crime of abusing the sacrament of confession, or in any manner having improperly conducted himself during the confession of a female penitent, should make a confession of what he knew within thirty days to the holy tribunal, and very heavy censures were attached to those who should neglect or despise this injunction. When this edict was first published, such a considerable number of females went to the palace of the Inquisition, only in the city of Seville, to reveal the conduct of their infamous confessors, that twenty notaries and as many inquisitors were appointed to minute down their several informations against them; but these being found insufficient to receive the depositions of so many witnesses, and the inquisitors being thus overwhelmed, as it were, with the pressure of such affairs, thirty days more were allowed for making the accusations; and this lapse of time also proving inadequate to the intended purpose, a similar period was not only for a third, but a fourth time, etc.” (See Narrative of the Inquisitions by Joseph Hyppolyto de Mendonça, vol. i., pp. 117–119.)

Similar edicts were issued at various intervals by subsequent pontiffs. Gregory XV. published a bull against this accursed vice in 1622, bearing the title *Universi Dominini*. (Vide Dens’ Theolog., tom. vi., De Cas. Res., No. 216.) Benedict XIV. confirmed or explained the bull of Gregory by issuing another in June, 1741. Another bull was also published by Benedict in 1745, repeating and enforcing former enactments. (Bullarium Bened. XIV. Const. XX. anno 1741, “*Innovantur pœnæ adversus Confessarios*,” etc., and in 1745, “*Decretum sanctæ universalis inquisitionis*,” etc., Tom. i., p. 100; iii., p. 416.)

The testimony of contemporary writers affords abundant evidence of the same facts. The reformer Wycliffe, who lived in the fourteenth century, tells us: “So great was the license of sinning, that the priests and monks, besides violating married women and nuns, slew virgins who refused to consent to

their desires. They were in the habit of persuading women that it was a smaller crime to commit sin with priests than with laymen; boasting also that they could absolve them, and would be answerable to God for their sins," with more that is unfit for publication.[2] Alvarus Pelagius, a Papist who lived in the same period, says: "Against that holy chastity which they have vowed to God, the priests offend *constantly, even in public*. They often commit wickedness with the women that come to confession. In Spain, the bastards of the clergy are almost as numerous as the children of the laity."[3]

The crime still continues to be practiced, especially in countries where Popery has received no correcting influence from the prevalence of Protestantism. Ireland is by no means exempt from this offense, as the following extracts from the "Diocesan Statutes of the Roman Catholic Bishops of the Province of Leinster" abundantly prove: "It must be confessed how great is the burden and danger of those who undertake so formidable an office, since experience proves that this remedy so salutary to the fallen is sometimes so perverted by the ignorance and negligence of confessors, that this fountain of grace is turned into an occasion of perdition. We fear that there is no time in which the melancholy saying of St. Thomas of Villanova is not fulfilled in some confessors: 'That they send themselves and sinners down careless to hell.'" In the list of reserved cases we have the following:

> "The priest who shall attempt to absolve his accomplice in the foul sin against the sixth commandment incurs, *ipso facto*, the greater excommunication, reserved to the Pope, and such absolution is altogether null and void, except in the article of death, and even then, unless no other confessor can be had.
>
> "The priest who shall attempt to solicit or entice to the commission of dishonorable and base sins, either by words or signs, or nods or touch, or by writing then or afterwards to be read, any penitent, whatsoever person she be, either in the act of sacramental confession, or before or immediately after confession, or by the occasion or pretext of confession, or even without the occasion of confession, in the confessional or in any other place destined or chosen to hear confessions, with the pretense of hearing confessions there, or who shall have held with presumptuous audacity any unlawful or dishonorable conversation or intercourse with them, is ordered in the bull of Benedict XIV. entitled *Sacramentum Pœnitentiæ* to be suspended forever, and the same Benedict XIV. decrees that the priest so soliciting shall be forever incapable of celebrating mass." (chap. xvi.)

We have hitherto confined our attention to the evils which spring from the act of confession; it now remains to consider, lastly, the pernicious consequences of the absolution with which it is accompanied.

In the Church of Rome, as we have already seen, after the confession of sin, the priest absolves the penitent by the power of the keys and appoints some penance to be performed as a satisfaction to divine justice. The natural effect of such absolution upon unrenewed men is obviously most injurious—it relieves them from all apprehension of divine wrath without imparting any change of heart. Hence, Papists are encouraged to proceed in the practice of iniquity and "*treasure up wrath against the day of wrath.*"

This is no mere speculative theory. Those who have witnessed the working of the system in popish countries give the most fearful account of its effects upon the people. Sir Edward Sandys, who traveled over the continent of Europe at the close of the sixteenth century, thus writes in his *Europæ Speculum*:

> "But to return to the Church of Rome, and to come to the consideration of their penance and confession, out of which so great good is promised to the world, and the want whereof is so much upbraided to your opposites, I must confess, I brought with me this persuasion and expectation, that surely, in reason, and very course of nature, this must needs be a very great restraint to wickedness; a great means to bring men to integrity and perfection… This point of their religion, which in outward show carrieth a face of severity and outward discipline, is become of all others most remiss and pleasant, and of greatest content even to the most dissolute minds: the matter being grown, with the common sort, to this reckoning; what need we refrain so fearfully from sin, God having provided so ready a means to be rid of it, when we list again? Yea, and the worser sort will say, when we have sinned we must confess, and when we have confessed we must sin again that we may also confess again, and withal make work for new indulgences and jubilees; making account of confession as professed drunkards do of vomiting. Yea, I have known of those that carry a show of very devout persons, who by their own report, to excuse their acquaintance, in matters criminal, have wittingly perjured themselves in judgment; only presuming of this present and easy remedy of confession; and others of more than ordinary note, who when their time of confessing was at hand, would then venture on those actions which before they trembled at," etc. (pp. 11–12.)

We might fill many pages with evidence of the same kind, but it is unnecessary. In fact, ENCOURAGEMENT TO SIN as naturally and unavoidably comes of the Romish practice of absolution as water from a fountain. The vast majority of penitents who frequent the confessional are unconverted persons—the priest bestows upon them the full absolution of their sins without requiring any change of heart. Hence they are necessarily encouraged to repeat the same, and even to practice worse iniquities in future, assured of obtaining the same easy absolution again.

That the penitents who throng around the confessor's chair are, with *exceedingly rare* exceptions, unrenewed persons "afar off from God by wicked works" will be granted by the generality of readers. But should the fact be questioned by any, it may be proved by citing the highest authorities. The forms of confession met with in the old rituals of the Romish Church evidently proceed upon this supposition. Take for example the following extracts from a Prymer of Salisbury use—newly emprynted at Rouen, 1538:

> "First, I knowlege my self guilty unto Almighty God unto our lady saint Mary and to all the company of heven: and to you, my goostly father that syth the time of my last confession I have offended my Lord God grevously and specially in these seven deedly sins, viz. 'Pryde, Envy, Wrath, Sloth, Covetousness, Glottony, and Lechery.'"

Afterwards occurs a confession of having broken the Ten Commandments, of which the following will suffice:

> "I have synned in backbiting mine even cristen in appayringe of theyr good name and defylynge them with my words, I have harmed my neighbours taking their goods agaynst their will by wronge. I have synned flesshely with persons that ben wedded and other moo, and more wolde yf I myght have had tyme and place, etc., etc. Whereof I cry God mercy."

This order of confession which occurs in many editions of the above Prymer of Salisbury sufficiently proves what was the character of those who frequented the confessor's tribunal in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. For later times take the following passage from a Praxis Confessarii by one of the most eminent modern saints of Rome:

"At the end of confession the confessor should endeavor to impress the penitent with *the greatness and multitude of his sins and the miserable state of damnation* in which he is placed. 'My son, dost thou consider the damnable life thou hast led? Dost thou perceive the wickedness thou hast perpetrated? What evil has the Almighty ever done thee, that thou shouldest thus basely despise him? Ah, my son! hadst thou died last night, where wouldst thou now be? Thou wouldst be in the eternal fire of hell!'"[4]

Such is the general rule given for the guidance of confessors by this eminent Romish saint, and if we consult any of the manuals of Popery, we shall find that the interrogatories proposed by the priest are all formed on the supposition that the penitent is a great and habitual transgressor.[5]

Such are the individuals then who frequent the popish confessional—and it is upon these that the priest bestows the absolution of their sins without requiring any evidence of a change of heart. That such is the case, all who know anything about Popery must be aware. Mere *profession* of sorrow and *promise* of amendment is all that is ever required from the sinner. The Council of Trent declares that no hatred of sin, no love to God is necessary. Attrition *proceeding* either from consideration of the turpitude of sin or *from the fear of hell*, if it excludes the present will of sinning and be accompanied with the hope of pardon, is sufficient with the sacrament of penance. Before the Council of Trent, the attrition necessary to obtain the grace of God in the sacrament of penance was commonly described by divines as not altogether separated] from at least some slender, feeble initial love of God. The Dominicans, Vitoria and Soto, first taught that *servile attrition*—that which arises *solely from the fear of hell*, provided the penitent believes it to be contrition—is sufficient. This opinion was followed by Melchior Cano, who extended it even to servile attrition when known by the party to be such, that is, to be not true contrition. And Melchior Cano's judgment was no sooner made public than it spread through all the public schools and was eagerly adopted by a great majority of divines, and those of the highest reputation; some of the wiser and more learned among them subscribed to this opinion at first with great caution, but their successors, confident in the numbers of those who maintain it, have not only affirmed it without any doubt or limitation, but have not scrupled to brand the contrary opinion *with a formal censure as utterly improbable, dangerous, and implicitly and virtually proscribed by the Council of Trent*.[6]

In addition to the above testimony, a decree of Alexander VII. dated 5th May, 1667, declares "that the more common opinion is that which denies the necessity of any love of God in attrition to obtain the grace of God in the sacrament of penance," and forbids any one to speak in contemptuous or offensive

terms respecting it. In the celebrated bull Unigenitus, the Pope condemned sixteen propositions which were in favor of or affirmed the necessity of the love of God. Still more recently, a synod held in the early part of the present century at Dublin describes the qualifications for absolution in such terms as totally excluded the necessity of our love to God. Lastly, during the examination of popish bishops and clergy which took place in the House of Commons on the occasion of the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Bill in 1825, Mr. Phelan referred to attrition as a substitute for contrition, and described attrition as "a sorrow for sin, arising merely out of a consideration of the punishment which may be annexed to it, and this feeling," says he, "is at present admitted by the highest authority in the Church of Rome as ENTITLING TO ABSOLUTION."[7]

There can therefore be no question as to the fact—that absolution from the guilt and eternal punishment of sin is granted in the Church of Rome without requiring any change of heart in the (so-called) penitent. What then must be the effect of such absolution upon the persons who frequent the confessional? All, but those who are under "a strong delusion that they should believe a lie," will at once answer that its inevitable tendency is to encourage the unconverted to continue in sin. It removes the check to wickedness which consists in the fear of future woe. It pours oil upon the raging fire of man's depravity and ranks amongst the foremost of the causes to which the acknowledged corruption of society in papal countries must ever be traced.

As to the penances imposed upon the sinner—so far are these from "tending powerfully to preserve and restrain penitents from sin, and render them more cautious and watchful in future,"[8] that any one having the slightest acquaintance with their nature will ridicule such an idea. Were the system of canonical penance which prevailed in the Church during the fifth and some subsequent centuries still in use, such an assertion would carry with it some appearance of truth. But as Jeremy Taylor quaintly observes:

> "The penances are reduced from the ancient canonical penances to private and arbitrary, from years to hours, from great severity to gentleness and flattery, from fasting and public shame to the saying over their beads, from cordial to ritual, from smart to money, from heartiness and earnestness to pageantry and theatrical images of penance; and if some confessors happen to be severe, there are ways enough to be eased."[9]

Sir Ed. Sandys assures us too:

> "The priests will tell the penitents, that God is merciful; that what sin soever a man committeth, so long as he continueth in the Church, and is not a Lutheran, there is good remedy for him. And for penance it consisteth ordinarily but in *Ave-Marias* and *Pater-Nosters*; with some easy alms to them that are able, and some little fasting to such as are willing. Yea, I have known when the penance for horrible and often blasphemy, besides much other lewdness, hath been no other than the bare saying of your beads thrice over; a matter of some hours muttering, and which, in Italy, they dispatch also as they go in the streets, or rid business at home, making no other of it, than as it is two lips and one finger's work." (Europæ Speculum, p. 10.)

It is obvious then, that the trifling penances usually imposed upon sinners in the Church of Rome increase the evil instead of lessening it, since it necessarily extenuates the evil of guilt; whilst the *satisfactory* efficacy which is always attached to penance—by teaching man that he possesses himself the power of atoning for his sins—destroys the very foundation doctrine of Christianity and instills deadly poison into the soul.

It is however upon the final absolution with its accompanying ceremonies that the Papist chiefly rests his hopes of future safety. "This it is," says an intelligent writer, "that gives a wonderful presumption to sinners and encourageth them to spend the chief part of their lives in the ways of iniquity. For there is no man, be he never so profligately wicked, who will not be ready to promise for himself, that, when he is at the point of death, he shall be seized with the fear of falling into the hands of the living God, and yet have time enough to send for a confessor to whom he may declare his sins: which done, he is as sure of going to paradise as the good thief upon the cross." (Observations on a Journey, etc., p. 318.) The rites which are practiced at the bed of the dying tend in no small degree to strengthen the superstitious feeling to which we have referred.

In the first place, the *sacrament* of EXTREME UNCTION, which is administered to the dying in the Romish church, naturally fortifies the mind against all fear of future wrath. In this ceremony, the organs of the five senses are successively anointed with consecrated oil, and at each anointing the priest implores God's forgiveness of the sins of that organ which he anoints. He then pronounces the final absolution for spiritual comfort during the last agony. The effect of this *sacrament* is "*to impart grace to the soul*, and to wash out the remains of sin." (Council of Trent.) Thus are the dying deluded with the persuasion that all is right; and wicked men, whilst living a life of open impiety and vice, comfort themselves with the belief that when their end draws nigh, the priest, by means of this sacrament, will secure them from that punishment which conscience tells them is their due.

But this is not all; in order to make sure, another and final ceremony is performed upon the poor sinner. He receives the *viaticum*, or consecrated wafer, as a passport from earth to heaven. It is well known that this wafer, in the opinion of the Papist, contains "the body, soul, and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, under the form of bread"; and this opinion necessarily occasions the most extravagant notions of the efficacy of this final sacrament to be entertained. How, in fact, could an individual placed in such intimate contact with the Deity at the period of his departure be exposed to the undying worm and to the unquenchable fire? (See p. 36.)

The valuable testimony of the Rev. John Burnett, then a dissenting minister at Cork, shows the actual result of absolution upon the minds of Papists, especially the lower classes:

> "*The confidence of the people," says that gentleman, "in their absolution which follows confession, is such as completely to destroy in their minds, any fear of future punishment*. I have found this to be the case generally; and in cases where they are convicted in courts of justice, they very seldom show anything like a feeling sense of their situation, which I conceive, arises solely from the conviction that the absolution enjoyed at the hands of the priest will do everything for them. *I have seen, myself, thirty-five individuals in the dock together, sentenced*

to death, and I could not perceive the least degree of emotion, in consequence of the pronouncing of sentence, all of which I attributed to the confidence placed in the absolution of the clergy." (Evidence before the Lords' Committee, p. 470.)

It does not fall within the province of this work to dwell upon certain other evils of the confessional, such for instance as those arising from the fact of the priest's being thus put in possession of the secrets of families and kingdoms. These, however, are confessedly very serious.[10]

It has thus been shown, chiefly from Papists themselves, that the Romish confessional, and the doctrines and practices connected with it, are in many ways fearfully demoralizing, both to priests and people. We bring no accusation against Papists as individuals, but we do denounce that antichristian system which enjoins auricular confession, on pain of perdition, upon all its adherents, as a MORAL PESTILENCE, spreading disease and spiritual death wherever it prevails! And it should be remembered that the frequent occurrence of the act, especially in the palmy days of Popery, rendered it immeasurably more destructive of the morals of society than it otherwise would have been. It is true that the Council of Lateran only required that it should be attended to at least once a year, but, for obvious reasons, the priests were constantly urging the great importance of frequent confession; and their authorized books of devotion represented it as necessary every week, or at least every fortnight. [11]

When we consider, then, the many ways in which confession and absolution spread licentiousness abroad—the length of time during which this source of evil has been in operation—and the vast kingdoms over which it has exerted its demoralizing influence—we cannot fail to recognize in the confessional one of the elements of that moral pestilence which was to rage "over the fourth part of the earth!"

Footnotes:

[1] This is powerfully put by Michelet in his 'Priests, Women and Families.'

"But he who can punish can also pardon; the only one who can be severe, he alone has also what with a timid person is accounted supreme grace—clemency. One word of pardon gains for him instantly in that poor frightened heart more than the most worthy could obtain, after years of perseverance. Kindness acts just in proportion to the severities and terrors that have preceded it. No seduction is comparable to this. How can that man be resisted, who, to force one to love him, can entice by the offer of Paradise, or frighten by the terrors of Hell? This unexpected return of kindness is a very dangerous moment for her, who, conquered by fear, with her forehead in the dust, expects only the fury of the thunderbolt. What! that formidable judge, that angel of judgment, is suddenly melted. She who felt already the cold blade of the sword, feels now the warmth of a kind and friendly hand which raises her from the earth. The transition is too great for her, she had still held up against fear, but this kindness overcomes her. Worn out by her alternate hopes and fears, the feeble person becomes weakness itself." (p. 144)

And again, "Do you see that solemn figure, adorned with all the gold and purple of his pontifical dress, ascending with the thought, the prayer of a multitude of ten thousand men the triumphal steps in the

chair of St. Denis? Do you see him still above all that kneeling Mass, hovering as high as the vaulted roofs, his head reaching the capitals and lost among the winged heads of the angels, whence he hurls his thunder? Well, it is the same man, this terrible archangel himself, who presently descends for her, and now, mild and gentle, goes yonder into that dark chapel, to listen to her in the languid hours of the afternoon. Delightful hour of tumultuous but tender sensations! (Why does the heart palpitate so strongly here?) How dark the church becomes! Yet it is not late. The great rose-window over the portal glitters with the setting sun. But it is quite another thing in the chair; dark shadows envelop it, and beyond is obscurity. One thing astounds and almost frightens us, however far we may be, which is the mysterious old painted glass at the farther end of the church, on which the design is no longer distinguishable twinkling in the shade, like an illegible magic scroll of unknown characters. The chapel is not less dark on that account: you can no longer discern the ornaments and delicate moulding entwined in the vaulted roof; the shadow deepening blends and confounds the outlines. But as if this chapel were not dark enough, it contains in a retired corner a narrow recess of dark oak, where that man, all emotion, and that trembling woman so close to each other, are whispering together about the love of God." (p. 106)

[2] Joh. Wycl. de Hypocr. apud Wolf. Lect. Mem. Tom. i. p. 643.

[3] Wolf. l. c. p. 632.

[4] Praxis Confessarii, Auctore S. Alphonso Ligorio, p. 4, Parisiis, 1882.

[5] It is the doctrine of the Romish Church that open and notorious sinners as well as concealed infidels and heretics are true members of the church of Christ. "Moreover manifest sinners as well as concealed heretics pertain to the external and visible church of Christ." Liebermann, Instit. Theol. Tom. II. part I. De Ecclesia. "The church is constituted not of the perfect and the just, but it has mixed the wicked and sinners, even notable and wicked sinners." (Bailly, Theol. Tom. II. De Eccles.) The same opinion is given by Dens, Tom. II. De Eccles. No. 72, and Bellarmine, Tom. II. De Eccles. lib. iii. cap. 20.

[6] Benedict XIV. quoted by Delahogue, Pœn. p. 101.

[7] Commons, p. 491.

[8] Con. Trid. sess. xiv. c. 8.

[9] Dissuasive from Popery, part I. sec. 8.

[10] "A confessor," says Dens, the modern standard of Romanism in Ireland, "should assert his ignorance of the truths which he knows only by sacramental confession, and confirm his assertion, if necessary, by oath. Such facts he is to conceal, though the life or safety of a man or the destruction of a state depended on the disclosure"; and the reason assigned for such wickedness is "because the confessor is questioned and answers as a man. This truth, however, he knows not as a man, but as God, and therefore he is not guilty of falsehood or perjury!"—(Dens, vi. 219.)

[11] "Shryve you ever weke to your curate, except ye have grete lette? And be ware ye passe a fourtuyght, except veray grete lette." (Prymer pref. 1556, Rouen.)

CHAPTER II.
PURGATORY.

The first mention of Purgatory, or the doctrine of future expiatory suffering, in the writings of the Fathers of the church, occurs in a work of Ambrose, who flourished at the close of the fourth century. The earlier Fathers are not only totally silent on that topic, even when the nature of their subject would necessarily have led them to be explicit, had they really believed in a Purgatory, but they also abound in statements directly opposed to that doctrine.[1] Ambrose, a Latin Father, in one solitary passage expresses the opinion, that those whose sins have not been expiated in this life, will experience a purgatorial fire in the interval between the first resurrection of the saints, and the final one of the rest of the dead.[2] (Rev. xx. 4.)

Augustine, whose times immediately succeed those of Ambrose, is the next Father who mentions this superstition. He expresses himself more fully than the latter, but displays great hesitation and inconsistency. “By that transitory fire,” says he, “of which the Apostle says, He himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire; not doubt but only minute sins are purged. ….. Whatever of those sins, (viz. minute) are not thus redeemed; (by prayer, alms, &c.,) it must be purged in the Fire mentioned by the Apostle.” (*de Ign. Purg. Serm*. 4.) In another passage, he seems to think, the fire mentioned by Paul, may perhaps be purgatory: through which all must pass, whether they have built, upon the true foundation, gold and silver and precious stones, or merely wood, hay, and stubble; and adds “*It is not incredible*, that some such thing as this may take place after this life also; and it may be a subject of enquiry whether this be or not. It may be found or it may be concealed, that some men, through a certain purgatory fire, in proportion as they have, more or less, loved the perishing goods of this life, may be saved more slowly or quickly.” (*de Oct. Dulcit. quest. Op. Tom*. 6. p. 250.) It is thus obvious, from the manner in which this Father speaks of Purgatory, that it was no doctrine of the church at the commencement of the fifth century. Besides it is certain, that Augustine placed the purgatorial fire at the day of Judgment.[3] The Romish doctrine, therefore, which teaches that the souls of the faithful pass into a cleansing fire *immediately* after death, has obviously but small support from these early Fathers of the Church.

The first who directly taught the existence of a purgatorial state, into which men passed at once, was Gregory the Great, who occupied the Papal see, at the close of the sixth century. In the fourth book of his dialogues, he relates several revelations concerning the future state which had been made to men, now that the world was, as he thought, approaching to its end. Gregory does not speak however, of any common receptacle of spirits in or near hell, as Papists now maintain, but simply of certain souls being confined in *baths*, and such places here on earth.

Although the notion of Gregory differed so much from the subsequent doctrine, yet the credit of establishing Purgatory amongst the unquestionable truths of the church, is due to the superstition or guile of this Pope. During the following centuries it was taken up, especially by the monks; and ultimately became one of the most valued and necessary tenets of the Romish Church. In the tenth century, “the fears of Purgatory,” says Mosheim, “of that fire that was to destroy the remaining

impurities of departed souls, were carried to the greatest height, and exceeded, by far, the terrifying apprehension of infernal torments; for they hoped to avoid the latter easily, by dying enriched with the prayers of the clergy, or covered with the merits and mediation of the saints; while from the pains of Purgatory, they knew there was no exemption. The clergy therefore finding these superstitious terrors admirably adapted to increase their authority and promote their interest, used every method to augment them, and by the most pathetic discourses, accompanied with monstrous fables and fictitious miracles, they laboured to establish the doctrine of purgatory, and also to make it appear that they had a mighty influence in that formidable region." (Eccl. Hist. Cent. x. chap. 3.)

The fullest and most explicit account of this superstition, as it prevailed in the middle ages, occurs in the "Golden Legend," a production of the thirteenth century, a work of the highest authority, which was read in the churches for several centuries after the Bible had been altogether discarded. The following extracts from the English translation, printed by Caxton, will be read with interest, as affording a clear view of the notions entertained in the Romish church, on this subject, from the twelfth to the sixteenth century.

"THE COMMEMORACYON OF ALL SOVLES."

> "The memory of the departynge of all crysten sowlis is establyshed to be solempnysed in the chirche on this daye, to thende, that they may have generall ayde and comforte. And Peter Damyens saith, that in cecyle in the yle of Vulcan, St. Odylle herde the voys and the howlynge of devylles, which complayned strongly bycause that the soules of theym that were dede were taken away fro theyr hondes by almesse and by prayers. . . . . And thereof we may specially towche two thynges.
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> After treating "Fyrst who they that ben purged," follows "The seconde, to wete, by whom they ben purged, or by whom punycyon (punishment) is made. It is doon by the evyl angellis, and not by the good. For the good angels torment not the good soules, but the good angels tourment the evyle angels, and the evyll angels torment the evyll crysten soules. And it is well to byleve, that the good angels vysyte oft, and comforte theyr brethren and theyr fellowes, and warne theym to suffre in pacyence. And yet have they another remedie of comforte, of this that attende certaynly the glory to com.
>
> "As to the thyrde, it is to wete, where thei ben purged: in a place by helle, whych is callyd purgatory; after thopynnyon of dyverse wyse men. How be it, that it semeth to some other, that it is in thayr, in a place brennyng and rounde. But nevertheless there ben ordeyned diverse places to diverse soulis, and for many causes, and that is for lyght punicyon, or for hasty delyveraunce, or for the synne commysed in that place, or for the prayer of some saynt. Fyrst for the lyght punycyon as it is shewed to some, after that saynt Gregory sayth, that some soules ben purged in the shadow. Secondly for their hasty delyveraunce that they may shew unto other, how that they need to require ayde, and thereby myght hastely yssue out of payne, lyke as it is redde. That som fysshars of St. Thybault, that fysshed on a tyme in harvest, and took a grete pece of yce in stede of a fysshe. And they were gladder thereof than of a fysshe. By cause the

bishop had grete brenning of hete in hys legges; and they layed that yce thereto and it refreshed hym moche. And, on a tyme, the bysshop herde the voys of a man in the yce; and he conjured hym to telle hym what he was; and the voys sayd to him, I am a sowle whyche, for my synnes, am tormented in thys yce. And may be delyvered yf thou say for me thyrty masses, contynuelly togyder, in thyrty dayes. . . .

"*Thyrdly,* for our Infyrmyte, that is, that we know what grete payn is made redy to synnars, after theyr mortal lyf. Also dyverse places ben deputed, to dyverse soules, for our Instructyon as it happed at Parys. There was a mayster, wyche was chaunceler of Parys, named Sylo, whyche had a scoler seek, and he prayed hym that, after hys deth, he sholde come agayn to hym, and say to him of hys estate. And he promised hym soo to doo. And after deyde. And wythin a whyle after, he appered to hym, clade in a cope, wreten full of argumentes, fallacyons, and sophymmes, and was of perchemyn, and wythin forth all full of flambe of fyre. And the chaunceler demaunded him what he was; and he tolde to hym, I am suche one that am comen agayn to the; and the chaunceler demaunded hym of his estate and he sayd 'Thys cope weyeth on me, more than a mylstone or a towre. And it is gyven to me for to bere, for the glory that I had in my sophymmes, and sophysticall arguments; that is to saye deceyvable, and vainous. The skynnes ben lyghte, but the flamme of fyre wythyn forth tormenteth, and all to brenneth me.' And when the mayster juged the payne to be lyghte, the dede scoler sayd to hym, that he sholde put forth hys honde, and fele the lyghtness of his payn; and he put forth his honde. And that other lete falle one drop of his swete on it, and the drop percyd through his honde sooner than an arough cowde be shoten thrugh; whereby he felt a mervellous torment. And the dede man sayd, 'I am all in suche payne.' And thenne the chaunceler was aferde of the cruell and terrible payne that he had felt, concluded to forsake the worlde, and entred in to relygyon, with grete devocyon.

"*Fourthly,* for the synne that hath be commysed in the place as saynt Austyn.' 'Sometime soules be punysshed in the places where they have synned as apereth by an ensample that St. Gregory recyteth in the fourthe book of hys dyalogue, and sayth, That there was a preest whych used gladly a bayne, (bath) and whan he came into the bayne, he fonde a man whom he knew alway redy for to serve hym. It happed on a day, for hys diligent servyce, and hys rewarde, the preest gaaf to hym an holy loof, and he wepyng answerde, 'Fader, wherefore gyvest thou me this thynge? I may not ete it; for it is holy. I was sometyme lord of this place, but after my deth, I was deputed for to serve here, for my synnes; but I pray thee, that thou wylt offre thys brede to almighty god for my synnes, and know, that for certayn, that thy prayer shall be herde, and whan thenne thou shalt come to wasshe thee, thou shalt not fynde me.' And then this priest offred, all a week, entier, sacryfyce to god for hym, and whan he came agayn, he fonde him not. Fifthly, diverse places ere deputed to divers soulis, for the prayers of somme saynt; as it is rede of saynt patryke, that he impetred a place of purgatory in Irlonde, for some of whyche thystory is wreton to fore, in hys lyf.

"And as to the *Thyrde*, that is suffrages, thre things ought be consydered. Fyrste, the suffrages that ben doon. Secondly of theym for whom they be doon. Thyrdly of theym by whom they ben doon. Aboute the suffrages that ben done, it is to be noted, that there ben done four manner of suffrages, whyche prouffyte unto theym that ben dede. That is to wete, prayers of goode frendes —gyvyng of almesse—Syngyng of masses—and observancyon of fastynges."

The proofs brought forward in support of the efficacy of these *suffrages* are truly ridiculous. "There was a man that always, as he passed through the churchyerde, he sayd *De profundis* for all crysten souls. And on a tyme he was besette with enemyes, so that, for succour, he lepe (leaped) into the churchyerde; and they followed for to have slayen hym. Anone all the dede bodyes aroos, and eche held such an instrument, in his honde, that they defended hym that prayed for theym; and chaced away hys enemyes, puttyng theym in grete fere."

"As to the *Thyrde*, that is to saye for whom the suffrages ben done. *Fyrst*, who ben they to whom the suffrages may prouffytably be done. It is to be knowen, as Saynt Austyn saith, that all they that departe out of thys world, or (either) they ben ryght good, or ryght evyll, or betwene both. Thenne the suffrages that ben done for the good, ben for to yielde thankinges for them. And they that ben done for the evyll, ben some comforte to them that lyve. And they that ben done for theym that ben mydle and betwene both; they been clensynges to them. And they that ben ryght good, been they that anone flee to heven, and ben quyte of the fire of purgatory, and of helle also. And ther ben thre maner of people; they ben chyldren baptysed, Martyrs, and parfyght men. Thyse ben they that parfyghtely mayntenyd the love of god, the love of hys neighbour, and good werkes. And thoughte never to plese the world, but to God only. And yf they had done any venyall synne, it was put anone awaye, by the love of charyte; like a drope of water in a fornays. And therefore, they bere noo thyng wyth theym, that ought to be brent. The ryght evyll and wycked men, ben they that anone ben plunged in to the fyre of helle; for whom, yf theyr damnacyon be knowen, there ought no suffrages be done for theym. After that saynt Austyn saith, 'If I knewe my fader to be in helle I wolde no more praye for hym than for the devyll.' They that ben mydle good ben they that have with theym something to be brent and purged; that is to say wode, hey, and stubble. Or else they that ben surprysed wyth deth, before they myght have accomplished theyr penance in theyr lyf. Then they bee not so good, but that they nede have suffrages of theyr frendes; ne they be not so evylle, but that suffrages myght prouffyte, and ease theym."

(The text below is the modern English spelling of the previous text.)

"THE COMMEMORATION OF ALL SOULS."

"The memory of the departing of all Christian souls is established to be solemnized in the church on this day, to the end that they may have general aid and comfort. And Peter Damien says that in Sicily, in the isle of Vulcan, St. Odilo heard the voice and the howling of devils, which complained strongly because the souls of those that were dead were taken away from their hands by alms and by prayers. . . . . And thereof we may specially touch two things. After

treating ‘First who they that be purged,’ follows ‘The second, to wit, by whom they be purged, or by whom punishment is made. It is done by the evil angels, and not by the good. For the good angels torment not the good souls, but the good angels torment the evil angels, and the evil angels torment the evil Christian souls. And it is well to believe that the good angels visit often, and comfort their brethren and their fellows, and warn them to suffer in patience. And yet have they another remedy of comfort, of this that attend certainly the glory to come.’

“As to the third, it is to wit, where they be purged: in a place by hell, which is called purgatory; after the opinion of diverse wise men. Howbeit, that it seemeth to some other that it is in the air, in a place burning and round. But nevertheless there be ordained diverse places to diverse souls, and for many causes, and that is for light punishment, or for hasty deliverance, or for the sin committed in that place, or for the prayer of some saint. First, for the light punishment as it is showed to some, after that Saint Gregory says that some souls be purged in the shadow. Secondly, for their hasty deliverance that they may show unto others how that they need to require aid, and thereby might hastily issue out of pain, like as it is read: That some fishers of St. Thibault, that fished on a time in harvest, took a great piece of ice instead of a fish. And they were gladder thereof than of a fish, because the bishop had great burning of heat in his legs; and they laid that ice thereto and it refreshed him much. And, on a time, the bishop heard the voice of a man in the ice; and he conjured him to tell him what he was; and the voice said to him, “I am a soul which, for my sins, am tormented in this ice. And may be delivered if thou say for me thirty masses, continually together, in thirty days.” . . .

“*Thirdly,* for our infirmity, that is, that we know what great pain is made ready to sinners after their mortal life. Also diverse places be deputed to diverse souls for our instruction as it happened at Paris. There was a master, which was chancellor of Paris, named Silo, which had a scholar sick, and he prayed him that, after his death, he should come again to him, and say to him of his estate. And he promised him so to do. And after he died. And within a while after, he appeared to him, clad in a cope, written full of arguments, fallacies, and sophisms, and was of parchment, and within all full of flame of fire. And the chancellor demanded him what he was; and he told him, “I am such a one that am come again to thee”; and the chancellor demanded him of his estate and he said, ‘This cope weigheth on me more than a millstone or a tower. And it is given to me for to bear, for the glory that I had in my sophisms and sophistical arguments; that is to say, deceivable and vain. The skins be light, but the flame of fire within tormenteth and all to-burneth me.’ And when the master judged the pain to be light, the dead scholar said to him that he should put forth his hand, and feel the lightness of his pain; and he put forth his hand. And that other let fall one drop of his sweat on it, and the drop pierced through his hand sooner than an arrow could be shot through; whereby he felt a marvelous torment. And the dead man said, ‘I am all in such pain.’ And then the chancellor was afraid of the cruel and terrible pain that he had felt, concluded to forsake the world, and entered into religion with great devotion.

"*Fourthly,* for the sin that hath been committed in the place, as Saint Augustine says: 'Sometime souls be punished in the places where they have sinned,' as appeareth by an example that St. Gregory reciteth in the fourth book of his dialogues, and says that there was a priest which used gladly a bath, and when he came into the bath, he found a man whom he knew always ready for to serve him. It happened on a day, for his diligent service and his reward, the priest gave to him a holy loaf, and he weeping answered, 'Father, wherefore givest thou me this thing? I may not eat it, for it is holy. I was sometime lord of this place, but after my death, I was deputed for to serve here for my sins; but I pray thee that thou wilt offer this bread to Almighty God for my sins, and know for certain that thy prayer shall be heard, and when then thou shalt come to wash thee, thou shalt not find me.' And then this priest offered, all a week entire, sacrifice to God for him, and when he came again, he found him not. Fifthly, diverse places are deputed to diverse souls for the prayers of some saint, as it is read of Saint Patrick, that he impetrated a place of purgatory in Ireland, for some of which the history is written before in his life.

"And as to the third, that is suffrages, three things ought to be considered. First, the suffrages that be done. Secondly, of them for whom they be done. Thirdly, of them by whom they be done. About the suffrages that be done, it is to be noted that there be done four manners of suffrages, which profit unto them that be dead: That is to wit, prayers of good friends, giving of alms, singing of masses, and observation of fastings."

The proofs brought forward in support of the efficacy of these suffrages are truly ridiculous. "There was a man that always, as he passed through the churchyard, said De profundis for all Christian souls. And on a time he was beset with enemies, so that, for succor, he leaped into the churchyard; and they followed for to have slain him. Anon all the dead bodies arose, and each held such an instrument in his hand that they defended him that prayed for them, and chased away his enemies, putting them in great fear."

"As to the third, that is to say for whom the suffrages be done: First, who be they to whom the suffrages may profitably be done. It is to be known, as Saint Augustine says, that all they that depart out of this world either they be right good, or right evil, or between both. Then the suffrages that be done for the good be for to yield thanks for them. And they that be done for the evil be some comfort to them that live. And they that be done for them that be middle and between both, they be cleansings to them. And they that be right good be they that anon flee to heaven, and be quit of the fire of purgatory, and of hell also. And there be three manners of people; they be children baptized, martyrs, and perfect men. These be they that perfectly maintained the love of God, the love of his neighbor, and good works, and thought never to please the world, but to God only. And if they had done any venial sin, it was put anon away by the love of charity, like a drop of water in a furnace. And therefore, they bear nothing with them that ought to be burned. The right evil and wicked men be they that anon be plunged into the fire of hell; for whom, if their damnation be known, there ought no suffrages be done for them. After that Saint Augustine says, 'If I knew my father to be in hell, I would no more pray for him than for the devil.' They that be middle good be they that have with them something to be

> burned and purged; that is to say wood, hay, and stubble. Or else they that be surprised with death before they might have accomplished their penance in their life. Then they be not so good but that they need have suffrages of their friends; nor be they not so evil but that suffrages might profit and ease them."

Such was the belief under the deadly influence of which, one generation after another lived and died in the church of Rome. The Council of Trent in its decrees set its seal to this doctrine, and thus its mischievous delusions have been perpetuated to the present time. The following is the canon respecting Purgatory, passed at its twenty-fifth session. "Since the Catholic Church, instructed by Scripture and the ancient tradition of the fathers, hath taught in sacred councils and most recently in this general council, that there is a purgatory, and that the souls detained there are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, especially by the sacrifice of the altar, the holy council enjoins the bishops to take diligent care, that the sound doctrine on the subject of purgatory, taught by the Holy Fathers, and sacred councils, be believed by the faithful, be held, taught, and everywhere preached," &c. Such is all the very brief information which the decrees of the Council of Trent afford on the subject of Purgatory.

The learned Cardinal Bellarmine, however, who lived during the same age, and who is referred to by Charles Butler, Esq., one of the greatest modern champions of Rome, as authority for explaining the doctrines of the Romish Church respecting indulgences—has abundantly supplied the deficiency. From his writings we shall quote the following extracts, as shewing what was considered at Rome after the Council of Trent had passed its decree respecting Purgatory, to be the sound doctrine of the church on this important subject.[4]

At the commencement of his Treatise on Purgatory, the Cardinal defines it to be "a certain place where, as in a prison, those souls are purified after this life, which were not purified here, in order that they may be able to enter into heaven." "It is appointed" he says "for those who die with venial sins, and again for those with the temporary punishment of sin undischarged, though the sins themselves have been remitted." He describes the pains of Purgatory as most horrible (atrocissime), exceeding beyond all comparison any sufferings upon earth, according to the uniform doctrine of the Fathers. He says, also, that "the belief of Purgatory is an article of Faith, so that they who do not believe it, shall never arrive there, but must be tormented in the eternal fire of Hell." (de Purg. c. 15.)

"Since many persons" says Bellarmine "will not believe what they have never seen, it has pleased God sometimes to raise his servants from the dead, and to send them to announce to the living what they have really beheld." The Cardinal here refers to certain revelations, exhibited by him in another work: two or three of which we shall here give as strikingly illustrative of the actual belief of the church of Rome.

> "A pious father of a family in Northumberland died, after a long illness, in the early part of one night, but to the great terror of those who watched by his body, came to life again, at the dawn of the following day. All but his faithful and affectionate wife, fled at the sight of him; and to her he communicated, in the most soothing terms, the peculiar circumstances of his case; that he had indeed been dead, but was permitted to live again upon earth, though by no means in the

same manner as before. In short, he sold all his property, divided the produce equally between his wife, his children, and the poor, and then retired to the monastery of Melrose. He there lived in such a state of unexampled mortification, as made it quite evident, even if he had not said a word on the subject, that he had seen things, whatever was the nature of them, which no one else had been permitted to behold." But he disclosed it all. "One" said he "whose aspect was as light, and his garment glistening, conducted me to a valley of great depth and width, but of unmeasurable length; one side of which was dreadful beyond expression, for its burning heat, and the other for its no-less-intolerable cold. Both were filled with the souls of men, which seemed to be tossed as by the fury of a tempest from one side to the other: for being quite unable to endure the heat on the right hand, the miserable wretches kept throwing themselves to the opposite side, into the equal torment of cold, and thence back again into the raging flames. This, thought I, must be Hell, but my guide answered to my thought, that it was not so—'this valley' says he 'is the place of torment for the souls of those who, after delaying to confess and expiate their sins, have at length, in the article of death, had recourse to penance, and so have died. These at the day of judgment will all be admitted into the kingdom of Heaven by reason of their confession and penance, late as it was. But meanwhile many of them may be arrested and liberated before that day, by the prayers, alms, and fastings of the living, particularly by the sacrifice of the mass.'"

Another remarkable narrative of still higher pretensions, that of St. Christina, is given by the Cardinal from Thomas Cantipratensis, "an author" says Bellarmine "of the highest credit and contemporary with the Saint—confirmed too by the testimony of the pious and learned Cardinal James de Vitriaco." "The following are the words of Christina herself, spoken, in the presence of many witnesses, upon her return to life.

"Immediately as I departed from the body, my soul was received by ministers of light and angels of God, and conducted to a dark and horrid place, filled with the souls of men. The torments which I there witnessed are so dreadful, that to attempt to describe them would be utterly in vain; and there I beheld not a few, who had been known to me while they were alive. Greatly concerned for their hapless state, I asked what place it was, thinking it was Hell, but I was told, that it was Purgatory, where are kept those who in their life had repented indeed of their sins, but had not paid the punishment due for them.[5] I was next taken to see the torments of Hell; where also I recognized some of my former acquaintances upon earth."

"Afterwards I was translated to Paradise, even to the throne of the Divine Majesty, and when I saw the Lord congratulating me, I was beyond measure rejoiced, supposing that I should henceforth dwell with Him for evermore. But he presently said to me, 'In very deed my sweetest daughter you shall be with me; but for the present I offer you your choice. Will you stay for ever with me now? or will you return to the earth and there in your mortal body, but without any detriment to it, endure punishments, by which you may deliver out of Purgatory, all those souls whom you so much pitied?' I accepted, without hesitation, the return to life, on the condition proposed, and the Lord ordered my body to be restored to me."

> “These were her own words. The author of her life adds, that she walked into burning ovens, and though she was so tortured by the flames, that her anguish extorted from her the most horrible cries, yet when she came out, there was not a trace of any burning to be detected on her body. Again, during a hard frost she would go and place herself under the frozen surface of a river for six days and more at a time. Sometimes she would be carried round by the wheel of a water mill; and after having been whirled about in a horrible manner, she was as whole in body as if nothing had happened to her, not a limb was hurt. At other times she would make all the dogs in the town fall upon her, and would run before them, like a hunted beast, and yet in spite of being torn by thorns and brambles, and worried and lacerated by the dogs, to such a degree, that no part of her body escaped without wounds, there was not a weal nor a scar to be seen.”

Such is the exposition of the church’s doctrine of Purgatory, given by that great pillar of the Papacy, Cardinal Bellarmine. The same views still prevail in the Romish communion; and, as in every other branch of knowledge, great discoveries have been made by the priests in this department. The following is the testimony of Mr. Gavin, formerly a Spanish priest, as to the notions prevalent in Spain on this subject.

“I cannot give” says this author “a real account of Purgatory, but I will tell you all I know of the practices of the Romish Priests and Fryers, in relation to that imaginary place, which indeed must be of vast extent, and almost infinite capacity; if, as the Priests give out, there are as many apartments in it, as ranks and conditions of people in this world, among Roman Catholics. The intenseness of the fire in Purgatory is calculated by them, which they say is eight degrees, and that of Hell only four degrees. But there is a great difference in these two fires, in this—viz., that of Purgatory (though more intense, active, consuming and devouring), is but for a time, from which the souls may be freed by the suffrages of Masses, but that of Hell is for ever. . . . . The council of Trent has settled the doctrine of Purgatory, without alleging any one passage of Holy Scripture; and gave so much liberty to Priests and Friars by it, that they built in that fiery palace, apartments for Kings, Princes, Grandees, Noblemen, Merchants, and Tradesmen, for Ladies of quality, for Gentlemen, and Tradesmen’s wives, and for poor common people. These are the eight apartments which answer to the eight degrees of ‘intensus ignis,’ i.e. intense fire; and they make the people believe that the poor people only endure the least degree; the second, being greater, is for Gentlewomen and Tradesmen’s wives, and so on to the eighth degree, which being the greatest of all, is reserved for Kings. By this wicked doctrine, they get gradually masses from all sorts and conditions of people, in proportion to their greatness. But as the poor cannot give so many masses as the great, the lowest chamber of Purgatory is always crowded with the reduced souls of these unfortunately fortunate people; for they say the providence of God has ordered every thing to the ease of his creatures, and that, foreseeing that the poor could not afford the same number of masses that the rich could, his infinite goodness has placed them in the place of less suffering in Purgatory.”

“But it is a remarkable thing, that many poor silly Tradesmen’s wives do ask the Fryers, whether the souls of their Fathers, Mothers, or Sisters, can be removed from the second apartment to the third; thinking by it that though the third degree of fire is greater than the second, yet a soul would be better pleased in the company of ladies of quality; but the worst is that the Friars make such women believe

that he may do it very easily, if they give the same price for a mass, the Ladies of quality do give." (Gavin's Master Key to Popery. Vol. 1. Part 3.)

It will be easily seen what a golden mine this superstition must have proved to the priests of the middle ages. The author of the "Romish Horseleech," who wrote in the seventeenth century, has given us the following account of the various ways in which it filled the treasury of the church.

"The new doctrine and invention of Purgatory, bred by superstition and nursed by covetousness, as it was conceived, became a most forcible engine continually to drain the people's money. For when men were made to believe, that after death, their souls should enter into a region of fire, there to suffer hard and bitter torments, to be purged and fitted for the region of Bliss; but yet to be eased, and the sooner released, according to the measure and number of the masses, offices, and prayers, which should be made on their behalf here, while they lay broiling in that fearful state: people were put upon it to make the best provision they could in their life-time, or at least at their deaths, that such helps and means should be used on their behalf, as they might reasonably reckon upon a short and tolerable continuance there.

To this purpose, the founding and endowing of monasteries, abbeys, and nunneries, by the best and richer sort; and the colleges, free chapels, and chauntries, by the middle sort of people, according to their respective abilities, and the apprehensions they had of this future state, all pointed at the good of the founder's soul after death, and the souls of such others as he appointed. . . . . .

"But yet, not trusting to the uncertain charity of others, most persons strained to the utmost, and many most excessively, their fortunes considered, to leave some provision behind for that purpose, and most commonly by their last wills and testaments, which were accounted sacred; and thereby, or by acts executed in their life-time, it was not rare for many men, though they had many children to provide for, or many debts to pay, to postpone all relations and considerations to this concern of the soul; and to appoint, and to take order for *Masses satisfactory, Anniversaries, Obits, Requiems, Dirges, Placebos, Trentals, Lamps, Lights, and other Offices*, to be performed daily, weekly, monthly, or yearly, as far as the sums destined would afford, for the ease and comfort of the Testator's soul.

"*Masses satisfactory*, were the *Romish* service, appointed to be sung or said at a certain time or times, and at an appointed place, at such an altar, or in such a chapel, with special reference to or remembrance of such a soul or souls tormented in Purgatory.

"An *Anniversary* was the appointment and performance of prayers, at such or such a time, once a year, for the souls of deceased persons: commonly upon the day of the death of the party who appointed it, and this in imitation of the old days whereon the martyrdom or deaths of saints were celebrated.

"An *Obit* was a funeral office performed for the dead, and for his soul's health, at certain times and places appointed.

"A *Requiem* was an office or mass commonly sung for the dead, so called from those words in it, *Requiem eternam, dona eis, Domine*.

“A *Dirge, quasi Dirige*, was an office of the same nature for souls in Purgatory, so called from the first word of the first Antiphone in the office, ‘*Dirige, &c.*’

“A *Placebo* was another such like office, or service, performed for the health and good estate of some soul or souls, so called from the word *Placebo*, being the first word in the office.

“A *Trental*, from the French *Trente*, was a service of thirty masses said or sung for the dead; or a service performed thirty days after death.

“Lamps and lights were by many ordered to be continually burning before some certain altar, image, or place, or over some sepulchre, so hallowed, as conceived to afford some ease or benefit to souls in Purgatory.” (Rom. Horseleech. p. 20, Lond. 1769.)

According to Lyndwoode, the whole personal estate of the deceased was sometimes assigned by the ordinary for the benefit of his soul when there were neither parents, wife, nor children. Sometimes a half when there was a wife surviving, but no children. And when there were both wife and children, one third of the personal property was assigned for funeral expenses and masses.[6]

The importance attached to deliverance from Purgatorial fires, during the period when Popery was dominant in this Kingdom, may be judged from the following extract from the History of Whitby, where many such cases occur, which throw light on this subject.

“William Bone, to all who see or hear these letters, whether present or to come, greeting: Know ye, that I have given, granted, and by this my present charter, confirmed to God and St. Mary’s in Godeland, and to the fraternity serving God there, one toft in Locintun, which is between those of Thomas and Martin, for the souls of my father and mother, and for the Salvation of my own soul, for a free, pure, and perpetual alms.”

“To all the souls of holy mother Church, Thomas de Colville greeting: Know ye that I have granted, and by this my charter confirmed, for a perpetual alms, the donation which Alan de Percy made to the Church of St. Peter and St. Hilda at Whitby, and to the monks at that place serving God; namely two carucates of land, the one in Oxenham, and other in Heltune, for the redemption of my own soul, and for the salvation of my ancestors.” (Hist. of Whitby, quoted in Elliott’s Delin. p. 304.)

Other inventions to drain money from the people have been added in later times. Some of these are thus described by a writer of the seventeenth century.

“There is never a village in Italy, how small and inconsiderable soever, which has not a confraternity for the souls in Purgatory, and at the least a score of Priests who live upon it very plentifully. Besides the money they receive for their masses which never fail them, they have a sort of people who carry boxes through the streets from house to house, begging of all they meet with, with a great deal of importunity, some money for the souls in Purgatory; which money the Priests afterwards share among themselves. In many places in Italy, especially in the great cities, in order to have a fixed and settled income, they let to farm this purgatory-money to some Layman, or other as I have seen at Milan, in that famous confraternity of the souls in Purgatory, established in the church of St. John de casa rota. The farmer here pays 4000 crowns every year to the Priests of the church, and makes his profit of the rest.

He maintains for this purpose forty box carriers, who are clothed in white, and wear upon their short white cloaks the arms of the confraternity to distinguish them. They have each of them a shilling a day allowed them, and their business is to run through all the streets of the city, and beg money for the souls in Purgatory. These box carriers are picked men, very cunning and skilful at their trade of begging. Sometimes they are so importunate and impertinent, that they follow a man the length of two or three streets without quitting him, to force him by their importunity to give them something. Neither is it without danger to give them any rude or churlish answer, for in that case they have the malice to tell you to your face 'That they see well enough by you, you have no consideration for the souls in Purgatory.' And should you continue to revile them, might probably get you recommended to the inquisition to learn more manners. The farmer of the Souls in Purgatory has the keys of all these boxes, and they are bound once or twice a week to bring them in to him. When at any time they bring them full and well lined, he gives them something over and above their ordinary pay, to encourage them to perform their quest with so much the more application and dexterity. He takes care to place some of his boxes in all Inns, Ordinaries, Taverns, Victualling Houses, and other public places. Those that have travelled Italy, know that the Host doth, commonly at the end of every meal, bring in his box for the souls in Purgatory, and desire his guests to put in their charity. At the time of Harvest and Vintage, the farmer sends some of his emissaries into the field, to carry on the quest there for the said souls. They have great waggons with them, and beg some portion of what is gathered, in corn, wood, wine, rice, hemp, even to the very eggs and hens. Which done they either spend what they have got themselves, or else sell it and turn it to money." (Frauds of Rom. Priests, Lond. 1687. p. 260.)

The purgatorial associations which exist in Ireland and also in London, in some respects resemble the Confraternities thus described. The following account of one of these societies held in St. James's Chapel, Dublin, is quoted from a pamphlet, by the Rev. James Carlile, of Dublin.

"I request" says Mr. Carlile, "the reader's particular attention to the following document which is printed verbatim as it fell into my hands. He has doubtless heard of penny-a-week societies for various purposes: such as relieving the poor, educating their children, furnishing them with the Scriptures; but he perhaps does not know that this system has been adopted by devout and charitable members of the church of Rome, in this enlightened city of Dublin, for the purpose of raising money to relieve themselves and their friends from Purgatory when they shall go thither. Let him read then and be astonished."

"PURGATORIAN SOCIETY

Instituted July 1, 1813, and held in St. James's Chapel, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

"And then we find a text quoted from the Maccabees—'It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins.' Then follow the regulations. I copy only the second and the ninth: one shewing the method of raising funds, the other, the favors conferred.

"'Rule 2. That every well-disposed Catholic, wishing to contribute to the relief of suffering souls in Purgatory, shall pay one penny per week, which shall be appropriated to the procuring of Masses to be

offered up for the repose of the souls of the deceased parents, relations, and friends of all the subscribers to the institution in particular, and the faithful departed in general.

"'Rule 9. That the Superior shall on every All-soul's-day advance to the parish priest of St. James' Chapel, whatever sum is necessary for obtaining an insertion in the mortality list of the altar, names of the parents, relations, and friends of all the subscribers to this institution, to be recommended to the prayers of the congregation at every mass throughout the year!'

"I cannot however omit quoting a portion of another of these regulations which modifies the number of masses, according to the rank of the members, and fixes the dependence of all such benefits on the punctuality of payment made to the priest. 'The Superior of this Society, at his death shall be entitled to three masses for the repose of his soul; the Rector to two; and every member to one, provided he have been a subscriber for six months, and be clear of all dues at the time of his departure. Hence it must be a great thing, by liberal donation, to rise to the rank of Superior and have three masses, or of Rector and have two; and it must be a woful thing to the poor man not to pay his last weekly penny; for then, dying in debt, he shall have no claim to the one mass which should otherwise be offered for the repose of his soul.'"

In the "Catholic Directory" for 1842, it is announced that "monthly masses will be said for such benefactors as will aid in paying off the debt upon the chapels and schools," situated in Wade-street, Poplar; and in addition to this privilege, that "mass shall be said every quarter for those who are interred in the burial-ground." At Dukinfield, St. Mary's, near Manchester, there is a society attached to the chapel, termed St. Marie's Society which has for its object the liquidation of the heavy debt upon the building. The members participating in the advantages of two masses offered up on the first Monday and Tuesday of every month. The subscription to be paid by a member is but one penny per week.

It is thus evident that the doctrine of purgatory, or future expiatory suffering, has prevailed in the church of Rome for at least a thousand years, and the injury which Popery has by this means inflicted upon Society at large, can hardly be over-rated. It will be at once granted that the principal check to human depravity, in unrenewed men, consists in the dread of future punishment,—the oft-repeated declarations of the Scriptures that "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." It is equally certain that what gives to these awful denunciations of divine wrath all their terror, is the endless duration of the punishment threatened; the irreversible and everlasting character of 'the wrath to come.' It is "the worm that never dies"; and 'the fire that is never quenched.' Now the result of the dogma which we have been considering, was virtually to explode the doctrine of hell, and to substitute a state of temporary suffering for an endless and irreversible condition of woe. The effect of this was to remove, to a very considerable extent, that dread of Divine wrath which constitutes the chief barrier to human guilt, and thus cause impiety and wickedness to deluge the face of society!

But this is not all. Not only is the eternal fire of hell changed, by this wicked system, into the temporary flames of purgatory; but the modes of deliverance from this latter state of suffering are so numerous, and so easy, that it is a man's own fault, if either he himself, or any for whom he cares, remain there

long. The previous pages enumerate many of these means of deliverance. The following chapter on ‘Indulgences’ will also treat of this subject. Suffice it therefore to say, that not only the masses, offices, and prayers, offered up at the departure of the soul were considered effectual in releasing it from purgatory, but there exist also many forms of devotion in Popish books, the due performance of which is *infallibly* attended by the same result. Modern travellers too, assure us that it is a common thing to see a paper stuck upon the church doors in Popish countries, with this announcement, ‘This day a soul out of purgatory’; meaning, that all who enter the church, and attend to the form prescribed by the Pope, will certainly deliver any soul they think fit, from the purgatorial flame![7] Hence all fear of future woe is, generally speaking, destroyed amongst the members of the church of Rome, and the depraved passions of our nature are allowed to riot in unrestrained freedom.

On this subject, the evidence of the Rev. John Burnet, as given before the House of Lords, during the agitation of the Catholic Relief Bill, is most important. “There are Catholic books,” says that gentleman, “in general circulation in the country (meaning Ireland) that are subversive of every first principle of morality and religion. . . . . They prescribe certain forms to be gone through in their devotions, and they connect with these prayers and these forms speedy release from purgatory. The lower orders of the Roman Catholics, believe this, and feel and act upon the belief of it; the effect of which is that *no Roman Catholic of the lower orders has any dread of final perdition. I have spoken with them frequently on the subject, and never found one of them that supposed he could go to Hell.* If they die in mortal sin, their doctrine is that they must go to perdition; if however they apply to the priest for absolution, he must give it; and in the case of absolution which is administered on their professing a regret for their sins, they only go to Purgatory, and they depend on those Books of Orders for their release from it, and hence the punishments of futurity in their estimation are only temporary punishments, and this conviction has a very injurious effect upon the views and conduct of the people.” (Evidence before the Lords, p. 470.)

It is thus obvious, that the Romish doctrine of Purgatory is most demoralizing in its influence, and has produced the most disastrous results upon mankind at large. During a thousand years, it has diffused spiritual poison over all Europe. The rich, the noble, and the learned, as well as the poor and the rude, have been brought under its deadly power;* nor has any class or condition of mankind been placed beyond its reach. The records of antiquity supply the most incontestable evidence of the extent to which it operated in past ages. Monasteries, Abbeys, Colleges, &c., were erected; Chauntries were founded; Masses satisfactory, requiems, dirges, &c., &c. were performed, in order that the souls of the donors might be delivered from Purgatory. Whilst the previous pages shew to what a lamentable extent the doctrine still prevails, both on the continent, and at home. No human thought, however, can realize the amount of evil which this absurd and wicked superstition has inflicted, and still inflicts upon mankind. Eternity alone can fully disclose the depravity which it has fostered, the crimes which it has occasioned, or the souls which it has destroyed!

Footnotes

[1] Clem. Epist. ad Cor. II. § 8. Ignat. Epist. ad. Magn. § 10. Just. Dial. cum. Tryph. Opera p. 270.

[2] Ambr. Enarr. in Ps. I. Oper. col. 1286.

[3] Qualis tunc erit velut aurea per tribulationem, ita per judicium purgata novissimum, eis quoque igne mundatis, quibus talis mundatio necessaria est. De Civ. Dei. lib. 20. cap. 25.

[4] For these quotations we are indebted to Philpot's Letters to Butler. (p. 120—131.)

[5] The Papal doctrine that human punishment atones for sin, is as much a denial of Christ as if in so many words it were said—Jesus Christ is not the Messiah, hence the fulfilment of the passage "He is Antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son."

[6] See Johnson's Collection of Eccles. Laws, Vol. 2. Stratf. Const. 1348 Const. 7. Lond. 1720.

[7] Bourgoing's Modern State of Spain. Vol. IV. p. 272. London, 1808. Also, Doblado's Letters from Spain. pp. 150—4.

[8] "Philip V. ordered by his will all the priests of the place where he should die, to say mass the same day for the repose of his soul; besides which they were to celebrate, during three days, before privileged altars, as many masses as possible; and that he might not fail in his purpose, he further commanded an hundred masses to be said on his account, the surplus of as many as were necessary to conduct him to Heaven reversible to poor solitary souls, concerning whom no person bestowed a thought." (Bourgoing's Modern State of Spain. iv. p. 278.) A privileged altar is one to which the Pope has granted the privilege of instantly releasing from purgatory any soul for which a mass is said upon it.

CHAPTER III.
INDULGENCES.

The indulgences of the Romish church, as at first practised, were the natural result of that unscriptural system of penance which had prevailed for many centuries throughout the whole visible church. Originally, works of penance consisted in certain public signs of repentance, which the church required before she received back those individuals who had been excluded for gross offences.

John the Faster, Archbishop of Constantinople, wrote a book in the sixth century, instructing the clergy of the Eastern church to proportion the penances which they imposed according to the nature of the crime, and the age and circumstances of the offenders. For example, he rates crimes committed before the age of thirty, except murder and incest, at two or three years of penance; a murder committed after that age, at four or five years; and adultery, at five or six years.

In the fragments which remain of this work, he condemns a fornicator and adulterer to fast—the former during two years, and the latter during three years—until evening, and not to eat anything then except dried things, and to make every day two hundred and fifty penitences (that is to say, to prostrate himself to the earth so many times), etc. (Morin. de Sacr. Penit. apud Chais.)

The Roman penitential was more rigorous in its punishments. If a layman has committed murder, it says, let him have seven years of penance, two on bread and water. If a subdeacon, six years; and a deacon, seven; a priest and a bishop, twelve. If a clerk has committed adultery, and a child is the result, let him pass seven years of penance; if no result has ensued, three years upon bread and water.

A layman, in the first case, is to have three years with abstinence from all food of a very nourishing nature, separation from his wife, and recompense to the injured husband. In the second instance, one year. For perjury, in a clerk, seven years of penance, of which three are to be on bread and water. In a layman, three years; a subdeacon, six; a deacon, seven; a priest, ten; a bishop, twelve. For having been at the chase, a clerk will pass in penance one year; a deacon, two; a priest, three. For fornication with a number of weeks of fasting. For a woman who marries a third time, eight weeks, etc. (Morin. ut. sup.)

It is manifest that in ages so corrupt as those in which these penitentials were in force, a discipline of this severe kind could not possibly be enforced. Hence we find that, so early as the seventh century, a discretionary power was entrusted to the bishops to mitigate or commute the penances imposed.

The Penitential of Theodore enjoins that “if any one is unable to fast a whole day on bread and water, he shall be allowed to release himself by singing fifty psalms in the church on his knees, or, in place of genuflexion, feeding a poor person that day; or, if they do not know the psalms, let them give to the poor (if rich, three deniers; if poor, one denier).

This mode of commuting the penance incurred was no source of gain to the church. The only persons who derived any benefit were the poor. It was not long, however, before the clergy found out a way of

appropriating the money thus bestowed to their own use, and the most shameful abuse was made by the priests and monks of this source of wealth.

In those times, says Muratori, when a Christian wished to confess his sins to God and his ministers, he came to the tribunal of penitence. The priest produced his Penitential, then ink and paper, and set down by the side of every sin the punishment which, according to the rules of that book, ought to be inflicted. Then, adding up the whole, he saw how many days, months, or years the penances came to which the offender ought to endure.

One easily sees that when they brought to the priest a numerous list of sins and crimes—which must often happen in an age of greater corruption and less virtue than our own—one easily sees, I say, that the canonical punishment would amount to penances which would last a hundred, two hundred, three hundred years, or even more. What was to be done? Could they compel people of the world to pass the rest of their lives in fasting and other austerities which would be impracticable and insupportable even to the monks?

Men were made then as they are now. If any doubt is entertained, we have only to read what Peter Damian has written of his contemporaries of the eleventh century. The authority of the canons, which prescribe the penitential punishments, is entirely destroyed, says he, by the obstinacy with which almost all the penitents refuse to mortify the flesh. Where is the man of the world who will submit to a fast of even three days in a week?

But, pursues the learned writer, they had resources suited to the desires of the penitents. Country people and artisans they treated with much kindness, because they well knew that long and rigorous abstinence would be incompatible with their engagements. They had still greater regard for women, whom too frequent fasts would have laid open to suspicions of gallantry.

And as to persons either in wealthy or easy circumstances, these were able to redeem themselves. With twenty-six shillings or a little more, according to the laws, one might redeem oneself from a year of penance, so that by means of a sum of three hundred and ninety pounds, one might be freed from three hundred years of canonical penance. Three shillings for a year sufficed for those who possessed but little.

Those who had no money gave lands of which they retained the use and profit. And the ministers of the altar showed themselves not slow to procure by this means the greatest aid to the church, and to cause the pious liberality of the faithful to enrich their churches or their convents. You are not ignorant, writes Peter Damian to a bishop of his time, that when we receive lands from our penitents, we relax a portion of their penance according to the amount of their donation. (Muratori, apud Chais.)

The indulgences of the church of Rome, then, down to the end of the tenth century, were simple relaxations or commutations of the multiplied works of penance which the ecclesiastical canons imposed upon all offenders. About the close of this period, however, a new species of indulgence sprang up, which is thus described by the learned author of Letters on the Jubilees and Indulgences of the Romish Church.

The tenth century, says Mons. Chais, had seen the rise of a new kind of redemption from the penances of the church. This was the abridgment of the period of these punishments to such as contributed money to build churches, or even for the repair of bridges and roads, as being public works and for common advantage.[1] In proportion to the amount contributed, they granted the relaxation of the third or the fourth part of the satisfactory penances, or even the whole.

This last case was rare, but it was a common thing to hear announcements made, such as the following, in the name of the bishops: “Whoever will contribute money to build or repair this church or this oratory, we grant to them in the name of the Lord the third or the fourth part, etc., of the penitential punishments which would have been inflicted upon them.” In this manner, the penitents became, by their faults, the builders of the ecclesiastical edifices, and the church indemnified them by freeing them from the burden of the temporal punishments of their sins.

This is what they began to call by the name of *indulgence*, as well as relaxation or remission, towards the middle of the eleventh century. And as this commerce was all to the profit of the bishops, they possessed the liberty (in order to its promotion) even to give to offenders absolution, contrary to ancient usage, before they had fulfilled the conditions which they exacted from them.

They multiplied, without end and without ceasing, their indulgences for building churches, convents, hospitals, and other edifices for their own use. They granted them at the dedication of churches and altars; they bestowed them on many festival days to excite the devotion of the people; they gave them for a hundred years, for a thousand years, many thousand years and upwards;[2] in one word, they were so shamefully abused, both for the advantage of the bishops and for the benefit of the churches which they wished to gratify, that the Popes—at that time more moderate than they in this particular—thought themselves obliged to place limits to the exercise of their spiritual power.

This was under Innocent III., and by the mouth of the Council of Lateran, held in 1215. “Forasmuch as the keys of the church,” says the council, “are brought into contempt, and the satisfaction of penances weakened, by the excessive and indiscreet indulgences which certain prelates of the church do not scruple to bestow; we ordain that when a church is consecrated, the indulgences shall not exceed one year, and that at the anniversary of the dedication, they shall not remit more than forty days of the penances imposed. We will also that the same number of days should be adhered to in indulgences granted at other festivals, and on every other occasion; since the Roman Pontiff, who possesses the fulness of power, has ever preserved the same moderation at such times.” (Lett. Hist. et Dogm. etc. Lett. 22.)

The attempts thus made by Popes and councils to stop the growing evil were altogether ineffectual; the bishops and priests quickly devised ways of eluding the force of these decrees and continued long afterwards to carry on a most disgraceful traffic in indulgences with the deluded people. A striking proof of which is afforded by the following fact.

In the year 1196, Maurice, bishop of Paris, died after having filled the see about thirty-three years. Born of poor parents, his merit alone had elevated him to the episcopate of the capital of France. Nevertheless, without any possessions, he did what the monarch himself could not have done: he built

the vast church of Notre Dame in Paris and founded besides four rich abbeys. But how? It was by pardoning so much, and by his care to promise the remission of sins in proportion to the amount every one contributed to the success of his plans; his indulgences surpassed his most sanguine expectations.

One day, dazzled with so much success, and remarking to Peter the Chanter, a famous theologian of that time, the magnificence of his buildings, “What do you think of them?” said he. “I think,” answered the doctor, “that you would do much better by diligently exhorting people to do penance.” But the prelate had already attained his end. A number of other bishops imitated his example, and there is reason to think that many sacred edifices, which were built in the twelfth and two following centuries, owed their origin to these pecuniary indulgences, so shamefully substituted for canonical penances. (Chais ut sup.)

Although the effects of these early indulgences upon an ignorant and superstitious people must have been extremely pernicious, they were immeasurably surpassed by the papal indulgences of the following ages. It is accordingly to this latter form of this fearful evil that we wish more particularly to direct the attention of the reader.

In entering upon this wide field of inquiry, we are naturally reminded of the exclamation of the learned Chemnitius: “Who is able to reckon the infinite forms of all those Romish impostures?” Instead, therefore, of pretending to treat of every form of indulgence granted by the Popes, we have adopted the following division as being most fitted to bring before the reader all the most important of them:

1. The indulgences connected with the Crusades.
2. The indulgences of the Romish Jubilee.
3. Those connected with visiting churches.
4. Those granted to the various orders of monks, etc., to dispose of to laymen.
5. Those annexed to certain prayers, beads, medals, etc.
6. Those sold outright for money.

I. THE INDULGENCES CONNECTED WITH THE CRUSADES

While the bishops, says Gieseler, continued the old traffic in indulgences, the Popes began it on a much larger scale, it being not uncommon for them from the time of Gregory VII. to promise a full forgiveness of sins as a reward for services rendered to the church, especially in the case of the Crusades. The pontiff referred to by Gieseler was the first who issued indulgences as a reward for martial services.

In the year 1084, he promised *the entire remission of their sins* to all who had espoused the cause of Henry IV., Emperor of Germany, on condition that they should desert his side and enlist themselves under the Pope’s banner. A few years afterwards, Victor III. sent a numerous army against the Saracens, and whilst giving his blessing to the standard of St. Peter, assured the troops *that their sins should be all forgiven*. And so powerfully did this promise work upon them, that it is said they put to flight one hundred thousand of the enemy and took possession of the town in which they were encamped. (Muratori Diss. Med. Ævi lxviii. col. 672. et Baron. ad an. 1087.)

But it was in the case of the Crusades for the recovery of the Holy Land that this form of indulgences produced the most extensive and lasting results. These Holy Wars, as they were blasphemously termed, the horrors of which are so well known, continued at intervals for two hundred years to convulse the world, and afford the most striking proof of the pernicious effects of papal indulgences upon the deluded votaries of the Man of Sin.

The ill treatment which the pilgrims in Palestine received from the Saracens had long excited the indignation of all Europe, when Peter the Hermit, empowered by Urban II. (A.D. 1094), blew the slumbering spark into a flame.

The rewards held out by the Pope and his prelates to induce men to assume the cross were no less than the unconditional pardon of their sins and the certain enjoyment of heaven;[3] and so powerfully did these promises act upon a corrupt and superstitious people, that according to Gibbon, no less than six millions of human beings at once responded to the call.

The entire moral fabric of Europe seemed to be convulsed to the very core. Persons of every age, rank, and degree assumed the cross. Monks threw aside their narrow vows and forsook the cloisters, without waiting for the sanction of their superiors, in order to join the throng of soldier-pilgrims. Even women severed the most sacred ties, and all the best characteristics of their sex, to follow the enthusiastic host; and the most abandoned characters quitted their infamous pursuits, that they might wash out the foul sins of a life-time in the blood of the infidel.

Of the millions who had taken the vow, numbers were prevented by poverty or cowardice or other causes from proceeding to the Holy Land; but after making every necessary deduction from the original calculation, the numbers still remain so vast as to baffle all imagination, and the history of their march to Palestine, and the subsequent conduct of the pilgrims of the cross, afford the best proof of the effects of papal indulgences on unrenewed men.

One of the principal divisions of this enormous body was led on by Peter the Hermit, the author and fomenter of the war, who was girded with a rope and continued to appear with all the marks of an austere solitary.

This first division, in their march through Hungary and Thrace, *committed the most flagitious crimes*, (flagitious /flə-jĭshˈəs/ adjective Characterized by extremely brutal or cruel crimes; vicious.) which so incensed the inhabitants of the countries through which they passed—particularly those of Hungary and Turcomania—that they rose up in arms and massacred the greatest part of them. A like fate attended several other divisions of the same army, who, under the conduct of weak and unskilful chiefs, wandered about like an undisciplined band of robbers, plundering the cities that lay in their way and spreading misery and desolation wherever they came. (Cent. xi.)

During the same century, a second and a third expedition to the Holy Land took place: the one consisting of about nine hundred thousand, and the other of about six hundred thousand soldiers of the cross. Four other crusades on a smaller scale followed these, in the course of the next century, all marked by the same character and attended with the same results as the first. The limits of this work forbid that we should dwell upon these expeditions.

Contemporary historians agree in representing the immorality of the Crusaders as extreme, even in an age of great corruption. “Both the priests and the people, during their abode in the Holy Land,” says one, “were guilty of all excesses, and the whole country was polluted by reason of the crimes and enormities which they committed.” (Raumer apud Gieseler.)

Another historian remarks, in reference to the same period, “In that land whence other countries received religion, thence do they derive an example of every kind of wickedness.” (Gul. de Nangis, in Chron. ad annum 1187.) Even the Pope, in his instructions to the new Patriarch of Jerusalem, is compelled to make mention of the horrid wickedness which reigned in the Holy Land. “We have heard of the enormities,” says His Holiness, “which are perpetrated beyond the seas.”[4]

That the extreme corruption of morals prevailing among the Crusaders is to be traced chiefly to the natural effect of indulgences operating upon unregenerated individuals is too obvious to require proof. “That confidence in their own merits which the principle of such expeditions inspired must have aggravated,” says Hallam, “the ferocity and dissoluteness of their ancient habits.” (Mid. Ages III. 357.)

What a vast amount of moral evil then, and temporal misery, lies at the door of the churchmen of the Middle Ages! How incalculable the crimes and foul licentiousness chargeable upon the Popes of that period and all who abetted them! What human mind can realize the amount of iniquity committed by these deluded men and women under the conviction that the papal absolution would wash all away!

Nor were the effects of these indulgences confined to the period of the Crusades. On the contrary, it is acknowledged that extreme corruption characterized the states formed out of the conquered nations. “Several historians,” says Hallam, “attest the depravity of morals which existed both among the Crusaders and in the states formed out of their conquests.” (Hallam. ut supra.)

About the middle of the thirteenth century, an attempt was made to justify the scandalous proceedings of the Roman Pontiff in thus offering pardon and salvation to whomsoever they chose. Alexander Hales and Albertus Magnys invented the doctrine of a thesaurus supererogationis perfectorum (treasure of superfluous merits of the saints).

The principal points in this new doctrine may be summed up in the following terms: “That there actually existed an immense treasure of merit, composed of the pious deeds and virtuous actions which the saints had performed beyond what was necessary for their own salvation, and which were therefore applicable to the benefit of others; that the guardian and dispenser of this sacred treasure was the Roman Pontiff; and that of consequence he was empowered to assign to such as he thought proper a portion of this inexhaustible source of merit, suitable to their respective guilt, and sufficient to deliver them from the punishment due to their crimes.”[5] (Mosh.)

This blasphemous fable—which is still openly avowed in the Romish church—encouraged the Popes to practise the innumerable and still more fearful impositions upon human credulity which we shall now proceed to describe.

II. THE INDULGENCES OF THE ROMISH JUBILEE

The universal Jubilee of the Church of Rome is the periodical return of a religious solemnity which commences on New Year's Day and continues the whole year. During this period it is pretended that all the faithful in every part of the world may obtain at Rome the entire remission of their sins by performing certain acts of devotion at the tombs of the Apostles according to the prescribed form.[6]

The author of this celebrated institution was Boniface VIII., who occupied St. Peter's chair at the close of the thirteenth century. Having urgent necessity for money to carry on the wars which he had provoked with several potentates, he published a bull in 1299 promising a plenary indulgence to all the faithful who should visit, during the following year for purposes of devotion, the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul.

In order to disguise, however, the real motive which actuated him and impart the sanction of antiquity, it was pretended that it was merely the return of a solemnity which had been held from time immemorial at the close of every successive century. No evidence, however, of the previous existence of the Jubilee has ever been produced by the advocates of this superstition, and the sole foundation on which this important institute rests is, to use their own words, "a doubtful and almost incredible report" that such a privilege had always been granted to the faithful.[7]

The success which attended this project exceeded the most sanguine expectations of Boniface. The welcome sound, says Gibbon, was propagated throughout Christendom, and at first from the nearest provinces of Italy, and at length from the remote kingdoms of Hungary and Britain, the highways were thronged with a swarm of pilgrims who sought to expiate their sins in a journey, however costly and laborious, which was exempt from the perils of military service.

All exceptions of rank or sex, of age or infirmity, were forgotten in the common transport; and in the streets and churches many were trampled to death by the eagerness of devotion. The calculation of their numbers could not be easy or accurate, and they have probably been magnified by a dextrous clergy well apprised of the contagious effect of example; yet we are assured by a judicious historian who assisted at the ceremony that Rome was never replenished with less than two hundred thousand strangers, and another spectator has fixed at two millions the total concourse of the year.

A trifling oblation from each individual would accumulate a royal treasure, and two priests stood day and night, with rakes in their hands, to collect, without counting, the heaps of gold and silver that were poured on the altars of St. Paul. (Decl. and Fall. c. 69.)

Whoever reflects on the complicated guilt of Boniface throughout this whole transaction will be prepared for the character given of him, even by papal writers. There is no Pope, says Mons. Chais, whose memory has been branded with greater disgrace, nor who has more generally been considered a wicked man.

Without admitting all which has been laid to his charge, it is impossible to deny that he was capable of the most daring acts for his own interest or glory, and for the elevation of the papal authority to such a pitch of power as would bring to his feet the greatest potentates of the earth. A man of spirit and

understanding, but fierce, haughty, and despotic, he never showed himself scrupulous in the choice of means which he thought best calculated to attain the object of his ambition and his avarice.

The lofty insolence with which he dared to treat Philip the Fair and all orders in the kingdom of France has given occasion to bring against him the heaviest charges, of which authentic proofs are still extant. These proofs oblige the most zealous partisans of the papal see to acknowledge that Boniface placed no limits to his pride, and that there was nothing he would not do for the extension of his authority.

He sought rather to intimidate emperors, kings, princes, nations, and people, than to inculcate upon them the truths of religion. He attempted to give and to take away kingdoms, to drive away and to call back men, according to his own caprice, nor can anything express his avarice. This is what Platina says of him. Craconius, still less careful of his memory, represents him as “a man in whom dwelt a world of iniquity, of imposture, arrogance, and audacity, together with an ambition that knew no bounds, and a cruel avarice.” (Chais. pp. 73-5.)

The tragical end of Boniface can only be regarded as the judgment of that God whose anger, even in this life, often breaks forth against gross transgressors. Having been eventually taken captive in one of the contests which he had provoked with the civil powers, the indignation which he felt produced such a fit of anger that, though he was speedily released by the inhabitants of the town in which he had been confined, he never recovered the shock.

It is stated by some writers that he repeatedly attempted to break his head against the wood of his bedstead and that he devoured his own arms. But these facts are not sufficiently attested. It is, however, certain that he died in a violent paroxysm of madness, and this it was that led to the saying so often met with in the life of this Pope, that “he ascended the throne as a fox, reigned like a lion, and died like a dog.” (Baillet. p. 231.)

According to the original appointment of Boniface, the second Jubilee would have taken place in the year 1400. A hundred years, however, was a long period to wait for a solemnity which brought to Rome so much glory and so much wealth.

Accordingly, at the expiration of fifty years, a deputation of the nobles of Rome waited upon Clement VI. and requested the promulgation of an indulgence for the year 1350 of the same extent as that of the hundredth year. As the holy year was a still greater source of wealth to the Pope than it was to the Roman citizens, Clement quickly granted their request and fixed the Romish Jubilee at every fiftieth year, instead of every century.

A very different cause, however, is assigned for the abridgment of this period in the bull published by Clement for the celebration of the Jubilee. “Whilst hesitating,” says the pontiff, “whether I should abridge the period or not, a venerable person appeared to me in a dream, holding two keys, and saying, ‘Open the door, and it will kindle a fire which shall warm and enlighten the whole world.’ Astonished at this vision, I said mass to entreat God that if the vision was from him he would repeat it the next night, which grace he granted me; in consequence of which I was determined to abridge the period of the return of the indulgences, according to the desire of the Romans.” (Alberic a Rosate Dict. Leg. apud Chais.)

The second Jubilee accordingly took place in the year 1350. In the bull which summoned the pilgrims to Rome, Clement thus expressed himself: “If any of the faithful truly confessed should die on the road, we grant to him the full absolution and entire remission of his sins, commanding absolutely to the angels of paradise to introduce his soul into the glory of paradise, without once entering into purgatory.”[8]

Influenced by such ample promises, an incredible number of pilgrims from all parts of Europe flocked to Rome. The testimony of one of these assures us that nearly five thousand strangers entered and left the city every day.[9]

According to the evidence of the citizens themselves, it appears that there arrived from January to Easter ten or twelve hundred thousand; from Easter to Whitsuntide upwards of nine hundred thousand; [10] and that during the whole summer there had never been less than two hundred thousand foreigners in Rome. The immense sums contributed by the pilgrims we have no adequate means of estimating, but it is stated by Raynald[11] that the presents deposited upon the altar of St. Peter were of such value that it gave rise to an action at law between the prefect of the altar and the canons of the church as to the share of plunder, which was not decided till the time of Innocent VI.

The disorders and evils which accompanied the celebration of this Jubilee stand out in strange contrast to what we might have expected had this solemnity indeed been, as averred by Clement, the direct appointment of Heaven. It appears that the citizens of Rome had all become innkeepers, sold their provisions at the most exorbitant rate, and carried on the most abominable monopoly.

The wealth which they thus procured rendered them so insolent, that several seditions, during the Jubilee, broke out in the city. The writer, to whom we are indebted for this account, adds one fact which proves the extent to which the sedition arrived.

Annibal of Cecano, bishop of Tusculum, whom the Pope had sent to Rome as Legate in order to preserve the peace, observing that the people robbed the pilgrims, advised them to dispense with one part of the visits to the churches, that they might be able to return sooner. Some say that he made them pay well for this dispensation.

However this may be, no sooner were the Romans informed of the permission which Annibal had granted, than they attacked his mansion, his domestics, and his person, with sticks and stones. Annibal, taking flight, left Rome and retired into the country. When he arrived at Aquino, he was poisoned with some wine, along with most of his household.

“Thus,” adds Villani, “was celebrated in this year of Jubilee, the dispensation of the merits of Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Church, in the remission of the sins of faithful and good Christians.” (Villani, lib. 1. c. 54.) But the worst yet remains—not only were great numbers stifled or crushed to death in the churches on every great feast day, but the plague broke out in several parts of Italy [12] with so much violence that only *one-twelfth part of the myriads who had visited Rome returned to their native land*, the rest being carried off by that deadly scourge or else by the fatigue consequent upon so tedious a journey. (Villani ut supra.)

The immense wealth which this Jubilee poured into the papal coffers was a strong temptation to hasten its arrival. Accordingly, the period of its return was once more shortened by Urban VI., who ordained that it should be solemnized every 33 years, that being the period of the Saviour's earthly existence.

The death of this pontiff, however, prevented him from witnessing the Jubilee. He was poisoned, or he poisoned himself, as others say, the very year in which this change was made (A.D. 1389).

Boniface IX., his successor, soon after his accession to the papal throne, began to put into execution the plans of Urban by publishing a Jubilee for the year 1390. The papal schism, however, which then raged, prevented some nations from responding to the call of Boniface; but great multitudes of pilgrims from Germany, Hungary, Bohemia, Poland, and England visited Rome and brought immense riches into the papal treasury.

Not content with this, however, Boniface sent quaestors everywhere to sell the Jubilee indulgences to all who were willing to pay for them the same amount which the journey to Rome would have cost.

This pontiff, who seems to have inherited the crimes with the name of the first author of the Holy Year, not satisfied with having celebrated one Jubilee in 1390, did not scruple to proclaim another at the close of the century, in accordance with the original institution of Boniface VIII. The amazing audacity of this act, however, seems to have had no effect in lessening the number of pilgrims.

Rome was filled with strangers from all parts of Christendom, and though Charles VI. of France used every effort to keep his subjects at home, all was to no purpose—Frenchmen and women of all ranks hastened to Rome, eager to obtain the promised absolution of their sins.

Once more, however, did the Judge of all the earth testify his displeasure at the superstitions and impostures of papal Rome. The most frightful calamities and the foulest crimes were the result of this grand solemnity.

"*The chief part of the pilgrims*," says the historian of the Romish Jubilee, "*never returned to their homes*, being robbed or murdered, either by the soldiers of the Count of Fondi, who was at war with Boniface, or by the papal soldiers themselves, since they cared nothing for the Jubilee. They also violated the fairest of the females whom they succeeded in getting into their power. In the midst of these disorders, the plague carried off in Rome seven or eight hundred persons daily. Nor would the Pope open his coffers or touch any part of his immense treasures to assist the diseased pilgrims. So true is it that avarice renders cruel and insensible even to the common feelings of humanity the heart of which it has once taken possession." (Chais. p. 185.) This last fact is related by Boninseigne and de Niem, who speak from their own actual knowledge.

The fifth Universal Jubilee was celebrated by Martin V. in the year 1428. Boniface IX., as we have seen, had celebrated this grand solemnity, first in 1390 and afterwards in 1400.

But Martin, seeing the return of the period of 33 years fixed by Urban VI., could not allow so fair an opportunity of filling his coffers to pass by. He accordingly confirmed anew the constitution of Urban and celebrated the Jubilee in the year 1423.[13] Thus was the disgraceful spectacle exhibited to the world of a solemnity, the period of which had been fixed at one hundred years, occurring three times in

the short space of thirty-five years. The wars, however, which then desolated Italy frustrated the expectations of Martin, since few persons could be induced to hazard the dangers of such a pilgrimage.

The celebration of the sixth Jubilee affords another instance of the disgraceful manner in which the Popes shifted from one period to another, and from one *constitution* to another, in order to bring the occurrence of this grand solemnity within their own pontificate. Had the period last fixed—that of thirty-three years—been adhered to, the Jubilee would have returned in 1456.

But Nicholas V. found it would have been more to the glory of his pontificate had the old period of fifty years been adhered to. He accordingly resolved to return to this period, which—reckoning from some former celebration—expired in 1450. Thus the sixth Jubilee took place in 1450, and the personal character of that Pope, as well as the peculiar circumstances of his reign (the long-continued papal schism having just terminated by the resignation of the Anti-Pope Felix V.), rendered this Jubilee one of the most brilliant which had ever occurred.

Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II., states that a prodigious multitude of pilgrims resorted to Rome during this solemnity, and not less than forty thousand persons visited the churches every day. The sums of money which these multitudes poured into the papal treasury were almost incredible and served to beautify and multiply the palaces, churches, and monuments of Rome. Not satisfied, however, with this, Nicholas sent a cardinal the following year into Germany with power to grant the full remission of sins to whoever was willing to purchase it by contributing certain fixed sums according to their means.

We have already seen the Jubilee fixed, first at every hundred years, then at every fifty, and lastly at every thirty-three years, with different Popes adhering to whichever of these periods seemed likely to expire during his own pontificate. One more change, however, was yet to take place.

In the year 1470, Paul II., anxious that his reign should be adorned and his coffers enriched by the occurrence of this great spectacle, and probably fearing he might not live to see the period when it would have regularly happened, promulgated a bull in which he fixed the Jubilee at every twenty-five years! The hopes of this pontiff were, however, speedily destroyed by his death, which took place in 1471. The Jubilee, therefore—the seventh in order—was celebrated by his successor, Sixtus IV., at the period fixed by Paul, viz., 1475; nor has any further alteration taken place to the present period.

The eighth Jubilee, which is the last that deserves particular notice, was celebrated in the year 1500 by Alexander VI. This infamous pontiff neglected no means likely to draw to Rome the money of all Europe by promising pardons more ample and more easy of acquisition than ever. In the year 1499, he published two bulls on this subject.

In these he suspended all other indulgences and granted to all the faithful at a distance from Rome the privilege of obtaining the Jubilee indulgences without visiting Rome, on condition that they paid a certain sum toward, as he pretended, a crusade against the Turks. He prolonged the Jubilee to Twelfth-day for Rome and to Whitsuntide for Italy. As many of the pilgrims were anxious to expedite their devotions, he permitted the penitentiaries to reduce the number of days to five for foreigners and seven for the others, on directing them to give alms.

But where his character manifested itself most strikingly was in the power which he gave the faithful, by his bulls, to apply his indulgences, for a certain sum, to the souls in purgatory, and to deliver those of their parents, of their friends, or whatever other Christians they chose, from the torments of that terrible fire.

“The attraction was too strong to be resisted by an ignorant and superstitious people. They eagerly caught at the bait. An innumerable multitude of persons of every rank betook themselves to Rome from all parts of Christendom in order to gain indulgences so advantageous; and if you wish to know what was the result, whether in reference to their profit or to piety and manners, I will transcribe what the Jesuit Mariana states: “During this Jubilee,” says he, “licence and debauchery reigned at Rome more than at any other part of the world. Crime held there its throne, and there never perhaps was seen a more monstrous corruption of manners, especially among the ecclesiastics, who by the holiness of their character ought to have animated other Christians to the practice of virtue, and to have presented an example to them.”[14] (Chais. p. 212–15.)

The ninth Jubilee was celebrated in 1525 by Clement VII., but contained little worthy of notice. The dawn of the Reformation had opened men’s eyes to the folly and guilt of these papal impostures, and, besides this, the wars which then raged in France and Spain and the plague which had broken out in Rome deterred strangers from a journey attended with so much hazard.

Although, therefore, the Pope increased the pomp of this solemnity and imitated the recent example of Alexander VI. in opening and shutting with great ceremony the Holy Door—although he even offered his indulgences, for the first time, without requiring that alms should be deposited upon St. Peter’s altar[15]—yet the attempt proved a complete failure.

From this period the history of the Romish jubilees contains little to interest or instruct the reader. They succeeded one another with the greatest regularity from that time to the present; but though repeated and strenuous efforts were made by the Popes to restore this solemnity to its original importance, it rapidly sank into extreme insignificance.

The frequency of its occurrence—and the innumerable other indulgences which were to be gained without so costly and dangerous a pilgrimage—are among the causes which have contributed to this effect. But the Lutheran Reformation, which imposed a powerful check upon the traffic in indulgences generally, at the same time that it showed men the blasphemous impiety of those delusions, was doubtless the chief means of rendering the holy year, since the sixteenth century, the mere shadow of those in which Boniface and Urban were the chief actors.

III. INDULGENCES TO BE GAINED BY VISITING CERTAIN CHURCHES

Intimately connected with the pardons so profusely lavished upon the pilgrims during the celebration of the Jubilee were those to be gained by visiting the churches of Rome and of other great cities at *other periods*. The Crusades and the Romish Jubilees were of temporary duration and occasional occurrence. Here, however, was a source of indulgence always available to the faithful. Some of these permissions

were of very short duration, extending only to forty days, while others reached to many thousands of years.

Some of them, too, were restricted to special days and seasons, whilst others were obtainable on all days alike. The best idea of the injurious character of these indulgences will be gained from the following list of the pardons belonging to the seven principal churches of Rome in the fourteenth century. The first extract is from an ancient manuscript of the fourteenth century published by W. Crawshay.[16]

“Amongst all these churches (of Rome) there be seven that be privileged with more holiness and greater grace and dignity, and be more royal than all the rest; of which seven, the first and principal is called the church of St. John the Lateran, which is the head. Also, this church of St. John is dedicated to the honor of St. Saviour and of St. John the Baptist, and St. John the Evangelist. In this church of St. John Lateran, there be daily, and every day, eight and forty years of pardon, and as many quaranteens; together with the remission of the third part of all a man’s sins.”

“And farther, Pope Sylvester and Pope Gregory, who consecrated the same church, gave and granted thereunto so many indulgences as none can number but God alone, as witnesseth Pope Boniface, who saith that ‘if men knew the indulgences belonging to the church of St. John, and how many they were, they would never go so far beyond the sea as to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, where they are absolved from the punishment and the fault, (*a pena et culpa*) for so also are they absolved in the church of St. John aforesaid.’ Likewise the same St. Boniface saith that he, coming devoutly to the said church to pray, upon the day of the consecration of St. Saviour, our Saviour appeared visibly to all the people of Rome, and this day was the ninth day of November, and there is there upon that day REMISSION OF ALL SINS.” (et est ibi remissio omnium peccatorum.)

“Moreover, Pope Boniface once said, ‘The indulgences that are to be had in the Church of Lateran, no man can number; yet I confirm them every one.’ (*Fiscus Papalis*, fol. 4.)”

Then follow lists of the indulgences belonging to the other principal churches of Rome. The fullest account, however, of these papal pardons with which we are acquainted occurs in an old book called The Customs of London, printed in the year 1517. It is as follows:

> “The hoole Pardon of Rome graunted by divers Popes.”
>
> “In the city of Rome been four chirches, in which is masse daily don, but there been six of the same privileged, above all the oder, with great holinesse and pardon as is hereafter shewid.”
>
> “The furst is called St. Peter’s chirch th’ Apostell, and is set upon the foot of an hill, and men go upward thereto a stair of XXIX steppys high, and as often as a man goeth up and doun that steyer, he is relesed of the seventh part of penaunce, injoined and grauntyd by Pope Alysander.”
>
> “Item. As ye com before the chirch, ther the well ringeth; so ye may see above the dore an image of our Lord, and betwene his feete stondeth one of the Pence that God was sold for, and as oft as ye look on that Peny, ye have XIV hundred yeris of pardon.”

“Item. Upon our Lady Day in Lente, hangeth before the Qyer a cloth as our Lady made her-self, and it hangeth till our Lady Day Assumpcion, and as many times as one beholdith it he hath IV. hundred yere of pardon.”

“Also as many times as a man goothe throgh the Crowds of St. Peter’s Church, he hath IV. hundred yere of pardon.”

“And in the feste of St. Peter, a thousand yere of pardon, and a thousand Karyns, and the threddendell (third part) of penaunce enjoyned relesyd.”

“And upon the one syde of Seynt Peter’s Chirch, a churchyard lyeth, and that is called Goddy’s felde, and there be buryed pore pylgryms and none other; and it is the land that was bought with XXX pens that our Lord was sold for; as oft as one goeth upon that ground he hath XV. hundred yere of pardon.”

“Item. In the chirch of St. Poule, wythout the walls, ye have XLVII. thousand yere of pardon.”

“Allso, The Pope Pelagius graunted there (at St. Lawrence) at the four festes of the yere; at eche feste VII. hundred yere of pardon; and as many Karyns; and who that goethe thether every Wednesday, he delivereth a sole out of purgatory, and hymself quyt of all syns.”

“Item. Ther stondyth a cheir in which Pope Accensius was mastered, and too all theym as sit in that cheir, is grauntyd an 100 thousand yere of pardon, and as many karyns, and every Sonday a sole out of purgatory, and the treddendell of all syns relesyd.”

“Item. In the Chirch of St. Mary Major, ther stondyth on the hyh aulter the bed of St. Jheronimus, and ther ye have 14 thousand yere of pardon, and as many karyns.”

“At the hyh aulters granted XXVIII. hundred yeris of pardon and as many karyns: and whoso cometh to the furst aulter that stondith in the chirch, hath 14,000 yere of pardone. And there is a sellare, or a vaute, wherein lyeth beryed XLIX. Popes that deyed all martirs: whoso cometh furst into that place delyvereth VIII. soles out of purgatory, of soche as he most desyreth, and as moche pardon therto, that all the world cannot number ne reken, and every Sonday ye delyver a sole out of purgatory. And in that sellare stondyth a pytt; ther St. Peter and St. Paule wer hyd in 250 yere, and no man wyst were thei were becom, and whoo that puttyth hys hed into that pytt and taketh it oute agein, is clene of all synne.”

“Item. In the chirch of St. John Latryneus, the Pope Sylvester yaf therto, as many yeres pardon as there reyned drops of water the day that hallowyd the chirch; and that time it reyned so sore, that no man had seen a greter reyn before that day. And when he had grauntyd this, he thought in hymself: whedyr he had so mu: power or not. Then ther came a voice fro Hevyn, and said, ‘Sylvester, thou hast power enough to geve that pardon.’”

“At any time that a man cometh to St. John Latrynes, he is quytt of all synnes, and of all penaunce, with that, that he be penitent for his sinnes.”

“Blyssed is the moder that bereth the chylde that hereth masse on Saterdays, at St. John Latrynes, for he deliveryth all theim that he desyreth out of Purgatory, too the nombre of LXXVII soles.”

“Item. Upon the tour of the chirch stondyth a double crosse that was made of the swerde that St. John was beheded with; and at every time that a man beholdith that crosse he hath XIV thousand yere of pardon, and as many karyns of all penaunce.”

“And at the hyh aulter ye have remishyon of all synnes and of all penaunce, and innumerable pardon more than he needeth for hymself.”

“There is the grave that St. John layd himself in when he had said masse, and then came a grete light over the grave, and when that light was gone, then fund they nootyng ther but heavinly bred. In that grave cometh every good Friday in the night, the holy cream and oyl, and he that putteth therein his hed, hath one thousand one hundred yere of pardon, and as many karyns.”

“And behynd the hyh aulter stondith a cheyr that God sat in, and whoo sitteth therein has the thred part of all his syns relesyd.”

“And who that visiteth all the oder aulters hath at eche aulter forty-four hundred yere of pardon, and as many karyns, and on the one side of the chirch ther is a sacrifice that is at St. John Baptist’s aulter; and ther is the table that our Lord ete at, upon Maunday Thurresday. And also the Tables of Stone with the X Commandments, that our Lord gafe to Moyses, on the mount of Sinai. And ther is a IV square of the five barley lofes, and of the two fyshes; and allso ther is our Lady’s keverchef…”

“And thus may a man have at Rome (as he concludes) grete pardon and soul helth: Blessyd ben all thoose pepull, and in good tyme born, that resseveth all those graces, and well kepyth them. Of the which Pardone and grace, our Lord Jhesu Chrest mote graunt to all good men, Amen.” (The Customes of London. Lond. 1517.)

(The 16th English spelling in the text above in modern English spelling:)

“The whole Pardon of Rome granted by diverse Popes.”

“In the city of Rome are four churches in which mass is daily done, but there are six of the same privileged above all the others with great holiness and pardon, as is hereafter shown.”

“The first is called St. Peter’s church the Apostle, and is set upon the foot of a hill, and men go upward thereto a stair of 29 steps high; and as often as a man goeth up and down that stair, he is released of the seventh part of penance enjoined and granted by Pope Alexander.”

“Item. As you come before the church, where the bell ringeth, so you may see above the door an image of our Lord, and between his feet standeth one of the pence that God was sold for; and as oft as you look on that penny, you have 1,400 years of pardon.”

“Item. Upon Our Lady Day in Lent, there hangeth before the choir a cloth such as Our Lady made herself, and it hangeth until Our Lady Day Assumption; and as many times as one beholdeth it, he hath 400 years of pardon.”

“Also, as many times as a man goeth through the crypts (crowds) of St. Peter’s Church, he hath 400 years of pardon.”

“And on the feast of St. Peter, a thousand years of pardon, and a thousand carens (forty-day fasts), and the third part of penance enjoined released.”

“And upon the one side of Saint Peter’s Church, a churchyard lieth, and that is called God’s field, and there are buried poor pilgrims and none other; and it is the land that was bought with 30 pence that Our Lord was sold for; as oft as one goeth upon that ground, he hath 1,500 years of pardon.”

“Item. In the church of St. Paul, without the walls, you have 47,000 years of pardon.”

“Also, Pope Pelagius granted there (at St. Lawrence) at the four feasts of the year, at each feast, 700 years of pardon, and as many carens; and whoever goeth thither every Wednesday, he delivereth a soul out of purgatory, and himself quit of all sins.”

“Item. There standeth a chair in which Pope Anacletus (Accensius) was martyred, and to all those who sit in that chair, is granted 100,000 years of pardon, and as many carens, and every Sunday a soul out of purgatory, and the third part of all sins released.”

“Item. In the Church of St. Mary Major, there standeth on the high altar the bed of St. Jerome, and there you have 14,000 years of pardon, and as many carens.”

“At the high altars are granted 2,800 years of pardon and as many carens; and whoso cometh to the first altar that standeth in the church hath 14,000 years of pardon. And there is a cellar, or a vault, wherein lieth buried 49 Popes that died all martyrs: whoso cometh first into that place delivereth 8 souls out of purgatory, of such as he most desireth, and as much pardon thereto that all the world cannot number nor reckon; and every Sunday you deliver a soul out of purgatory. And in that cellar standeth a pit; there St. Peter and St. Paul were hidden for 250 years, and no man knew where they were become; and whoever putteth his head into that pit and taketh it out again is clean of all sin.”

“Item. In the church of St. John Lateran, Pope Sylvester gave thereto as many years’ pardon as there rained drops of water the day that hallowed the church; and that time it rained so sore that no man had seen a greater rain before that day. And when he had granted this, he thought in himself whether he had so much power or not. Then there came a voice from Heaven and said, ‘Sylvester, thou hast power enough to give that pardon.’”

“At any time that a man cometh to St. John Lateran, he is quit of all sins and of all penance, with that that he be penitent for his sins.”

> “Blessed is the mother that beareth the child that heareth mass on Saturdays at St. John Lateran, for he delivereth all those that he desireth out of Purgatory, to the number of 77 souls.”
>
> “Item. Upon the tower of the church standeth a double cross that was made of the sword that St. John was beheaded with; and at every time that a man beholdeth that cross, he hath 14,000 years of pardon, and as many carens of all penance.”
>
> “And at the high altar you have remission of all sins and of all penance, and innumerable pardon more than he needeth for himself.”
>
> “There is the grave that St. John laid himself in when he had said mass, and then came a great light over the grave; and when that light was gone, then found they nothing there but heavenly bread. Into that grave cometh every Good Friday in the night the holy chrism and oil; and he that putteth therein his head hath 1,100 years of pardon, and as many carens.”
>
> “And behind the high altar standeth a chair that God sat in, and whoever sitteth therein has the third part of all his sins released.”
>
> “And whoever visiteth all the other altars hath at each altar 4,400 years of pardon, and as many carens; and on the one side of the church there is a sanctuary that is at St. John the Baptist’s altar; and there is the table that Our Lord ate at upon Maundy Thursday. And also the Tables of Stone with the Ten Commandments that Our Lord gave to Moses on the mount of Sinai. And there is a four-square of the five barley loaves and of the two fishes; and also there is Our Lady’s kerchief…”
>
> “And thus may a man have at Rome (as he concludes) great pardon and soul health: Blessed are all those people, and in good time born, that receive all those graces, and well keep them. Of the which pardon and grace, our Lord Jesus Christ might grant to all good men, Amen.” (The Customs of London, London, 1517)

Such were the numerous and lengthened indulgences granted by the Popes from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century. The principal churches in other places were also well provided with indulgences. The various stations in Jerusalem, too, were not forgotten, along with the shrines of the saints, such as that of “Our Lady of Loretto,” St. James of Compostela in Spain, and a countless variety of others.

Many of these continued in force after the period of the Reformation. Sir Edwin Sandys, who visited the continent at the end of the sixteenth century, says that “at the church of the Augustines, at Padua, there was a plenary indulgence from the day of baptism to the last confession, with 28,000 years more for time to come.” “All the Roman Catholic countries are full of the same riches,” says Chais, “but with less profusion than Italy.”

A very remarkable monumental inscription is still to be seen on the east wall of an oratory formerly belonging to the Earls Rivers, standing on one side of the parochial chapel of Macclesfield. It consists of several plates of brass jointed together with great exactness upon one stone, which measures exactly twenty-three inches in height by twenty-two in breadth. A facsimile of this ancient remain of antiquity is annexed, being about one-sixth the size of the original.

The Latin inscription at the bottom of the monument is on a brass plate twenty-one inches long. The letters, almost an inch in height, are cut out in old church characters. The following is a literal translation:

> "Pray for the souls of Roger Legh, and Elizabeth his wife: which Roger indeed died the 4th day of November, in the year of our Lord 1506; but Elizabeth died the 5th day of October, in the year of our Lord 1489: to whose souls may God be propitious."

The Latin words on the plate near the mouth of the male figure are, when Englished, "In the day of judgment deliver us, O Lord." Those on the other side, near the female, denote "From perpetual damnation deliver us, O Lord."

All this, however, was in Latin, and it was probable that the greatest number of spectators would be such as understood only the English language. To engage, therefore, both learned and unlearned to pray for the souls of Roger and Elizabeth Legh, the most observed part of the monument was contrived to be an *English* inscription, raised a considerable height above the *Latin* one.

The words of this inscription are: "The pardon for saying of five *pater-nosters*, five *aves*, and a *crede*, is TWENTY-SIX THOUSAND YEARS AND TWENTY-SIX DAYS OF PARDON." (See Burrough's View of Popery, etc. 2nd Edit. Lond. 1737.)

But the most remarkable indulgence belonging to this head is the celebrated indulgence of the Portiuncula. The Cardinal Bonifacius de Vitaliniis relates in his Comment. in Clementinas (A.D. 1388) that "the Franciscans maintained, that on every 1st of August, as many souls could be released from purgatory as any one would go in and out of the church of the Portiuncula. They have no apostolic bull for their authority; they merely declare that they have had, from time immemorial, this privilege by divine revelation." (See Thiers, Traité des Sup. Tom. III. p. 259.)

IV. THOSE CONNECTED WITH THE VARIOUS MONKISH ORDERS AND CONFRATERNITIES

As a general rule, all the religious orders were amply provided by the liberality of the Popes with indulgences, which, in the form itself, generally if not universally included the privilege of *choosing a confessor* with almost unlimited powers, and particularly with that of conferring on the possessor remission of all his sins at the hour of death; and this he could demand on simple confession and declaration of his own contrition. An indulgence of this kind may be seen in the History of Pius V., by Rev. Jos. Mendham, A.M.

But it is with the indulgences granted to the people that we have chiefly to do in showing the demoralizing influence of popery upon mankind. As the monkish orders increased in numbers from time to time, and the monasteries were thus filled with inmates beyond the means of support, the superiors, among other plans for increasing their wealth and maintaining their dignity, adopted that of admitting lay persons into their fraternities, who were thus endowed with all the privileges possessed by themselves.

The right of choosing a confessor with the unlimited powers above alluded to was, of course, included. The form of adoption is shown in a manuscript given by the learned Weever in his Funeral Monuments (prelim. dis. p. 151). A very curious document is also to be seen in The Weekly Pacquet of Advice from Rome (Vol. II. p. 311). The extent to which this practice prevailed in former days may be inferred from a fact mentioned by Weever.

> "Upwards of two thousand persons," says he, "men, women, and children, lay persons of the nobility and gentry of this kingdom, were admitted thus into one monastery, that of St. Albans; all of whom gave either lands, goods, jewels, plate, copes, vestments, or some ornament or other to the church or convent." (Weever ubi sup.)

But it was upon the numerous *Confraternities* of the Romish church that the Popes lavished most profusely these spiritual treasures. According to the definition of the Romanists, "a *confraternity* is an association of many persons, who unite themselves together, and agree at certain times to render some religious worship to God, to the Virgin, or to some other saint, in such a way as is not common to all." Thus there was the *Confraternity of the Rosary*, that of the *Scapular*, that of the cord of St. Francis, the confraternity of Penitents, etc., etc.

These *Confraternities*, as we have already observed, were endowed by the Popes with certain peculiar privileges—some more ample and shameless than others, but all answering for the final salvation of the members. As an instance, we will simply furnish the reader with the account given in a very popular popish book of the seventeenth century of the indulgences belonging to the *Society of the Rosary* (Jesus, Maria, Joseph, Lond. 1657).

The Society of the Rosary was instituted by Father Jacob Spenger, Prior of the Dominican convent at Cologne, for the purpose of extending the use of the Rosary and enhancing its benefits to all who used it. The special advantage of belonging to this *Confraternity* is said to be "that whosoever is once admitted a member in any one place, is made partaker of the prayers and merits *of all them that are of this confraternity throughout the whole universe*."

What is still more remarkable, "not only the living, but also the faithful departed (to wit, the souls in purgatory) may be received and enrolled in this confraternity, and made partakers of these spiritual benefits and privileges, if any of the living brethren and sisters (performing for their deceased friends such pious duties and devotions) desire and procure it."

"And now let's produce the promised treasures of the indulgences themselves. In the discovery whereof, first, we shall mention none but such as are expressly avouched by approved and authentical authors, and directly drawn out of the Pope's bulls and indults.

Secondly, we shall purposely omit the multitude of less indulgences, which remit certain days, years, and quarantines of enjoined penances, and set down only the plenary indulgences which are abundantly numerous to satisfy the most covetous Christian's devotion."

V. INDULGENCES CONNECTED WITH THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE ROSARY

1. At Their First Admittance: Upon the day that any one is first received and enrolled into the sacred Confraternity of the Rosary, having confessed and communicated and recited a third part of the Rosary, and prayed for the peace and tranquillity of the church, he gains a plenary indulgence and remission of all his sins. (Pius V. in his Bull Consueverunt Rom. Pont.)
2. At Their Own Choice: Any member of the Rosary hath the liberty once in his life, and at the article of his death, to make use of any ghostly father, who is empowered to grant unto him a plenary indulgence. (Innocent VIII.)
3. At the Hour of Death: In the hour of agony and article of death:
   (1) Being confessed and communicated, a plenary indulgence. (Pius V. Consueverunt)
   (2) Or saying with mouth or heart, Jesus, Maria, a plenary.
   (3) Or calling thrice (either by mouth or heart) upon the holy name of Jesus, a plenary. (Pius V., Gregory XIII., Clement VIII.)
   (4) Or having a blessed candle of the Confraternity in their hand, in honor of the Virgin Mary, at the time of their departure, a plenary. (Adrian VI.)
4. Every First Sunday Within the Month:
   (1) Having confessed and communicated, a plenary. (Gregory XIII.)
   (2) Or visiting the altar of the Rosary, a plenary. (Gregory XIII.)
   (3) Or being present at the procession of the Rosary, a plenary. (Gregory XIII.)
5. Upon the Seven Feasts of Our Blessed Lady: Which are the Purification, Annunciation, Visitation, Assumption, Nativity, Presentation, and Conception.
   (1) Being confessed and communicated, or being contrite with a will to confess and communicate at fit time, a plenary.
   (2) Or visiting the altar of the Rosary, a plenary.
   (3) Or being present at the procession of the Rosary, a plenary.
6. For Saying or Hearing the Mass of the Rosary:
   (1) They who (by virtue of their privileges) shall say the mass of the Rosary gain a plenary indulgence.
   (2) Or shall cause it to be said, a plenary.
   (3) Or hear it, gain all the indulgences which are granted to them who recite once the whole Rosary, which is plenary.
7. For Saying the Rosary: They who shall recite the whole Rosary gain, toties quoties, a plenary. (Julius II. and Leo X.)
8. For the Days in Which the Fifteen Mysteries of the Rosary Are Celebrated: They who, being truly penitent, confessed and communicated, shall devoutly visit the chapel of the Rosary upon the days in which the fifteen mysteries are celebrated, gain a plenary indulgence. (Gregory XIII.)
9. For Praying for the Dead:
   (1) Every time they recite the whole Rosary for the departed, they gain the delivery of a soul out of purgatory. (Paul III.)

(2) As oft as they shall say, cause to be said, or are present at the mass of the Rosary celebrated for that intention, they free a soul out of purgatory.
(3) All the indulgences granted to the living may be applied to the dead, by communicating, saying mass of the Rosary, reciting the Rosary, etc., for them. (Paul III.)

10. For Them Who Cannot Be Present: Such brethren and sisters of the Rosary who, by reason of sickness or any other lawful impediment, cannot be present at the processions, nor visit the altar of the Rosary, may notwithstanding gain all the indulgences as if they were present:
(1) By confessing and communicating.
(2) Or by saying the Rosary.
(3) Or the seven penitential psalms, before some altar or devout picture. (Gregory XIII.)
11. All the indulgences of the stations of Rome are granted to the members of the Rosary by visiting upon these days five altars, or one only (if there be no more) and reciting before each altar five Paters and five Aves, or twenty-five before that one altar. (Leo X.) (pp. 94–103)

VI. INDULGENCES ATTACHED TO CERTAIN PRAYERS, BEADS, MEDALS, ETC.

We have not yet finished our account of Romish indulgences. Many prayers in the old popish books had prefixed to them the notice that such a Pope or Popes granted such and such indulgences to all who recited such a prayer.

In the Hours of the Blessed Virgin Mary, printed for the use of the church at Salisbury in the reign of Henry VII., occur the following passages, word for word:

> "To all them that be in the state of grace, that daily say devoutly this prayer (Obsecro te, *Domina Sancta Maria*, etc.) before our blessed Lady of Pity, she will show them her blessed visage, and warn them the day and hour of death, and in their last end, the angels of God shall yield their souls to heaven, and ye shall obtain 6 hundred years, and so many Lents of pardon, granted by 5 holy Fathers, Popes of Rome." (p. 38)
>
> "Our holy Father Sixtus IV., Pope, has granted to all them that devoutly say this prayer before the image of our Lady in the sun, eleven thousand years of pardon." (p. 42)
>
> "Our holy Father Pope Sixtus hath granted at the instance of the highmost and excellent Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of England, and wife to our sovereign liege Lord King Henry the 7th (God have mercy on her sweet soul, and all Christian souls!) that every day, in the morning, after 8 tollings of the Ave bell, say 3 times the whole salutation of our Lady, *Ave Maria gratia*, that is to say at 6 of the clock in the morning, 3 Ave Marias; at 12 of the clock at noon, 4 Ave Marias; and at 6 of the clock at even, for every time so doing, is granted, of the spiritual treasure of holy Church, 3 hundred days of pardon, totiens quotiens." (p. 45)
>
> "These be the 15 O.s, the which the holy Virgin St. Bridget was wont to say daily, before the holy rood in St. Paul's church at Rome; whoso says this a year, he shall deliver 15 souls out of purgatory of his next kindred; and convert other 15 sinners to good life; and other 15 righteous

men of his kin shall persevere in good life. And what ye desire of God, ye shall have it, if it be to the salvation of your soul." (p. 58) [This refers to fifteen prayers, each beginning with O.]

"To all them that before this image of pity, devoutly say 5 Paternosters and 5 Aves, and a Credo, piteously beholding these arms of Christ's Passion, are granted thirty-two thousand, seven hundred, and fifty years of pardon." (p. 64)

"Our holy Father Sixtus IV. granted to all them that, being in a state of grace, say this prayer following, penitently after the elevation of the body of our Saviour, clean remission of all their sins perpetually enduring."

"Also John the 22nd, Pope of Rome, at the request of the Queen of England, hath granted unto all them that devoutly say this prayer before the image of our Lord crucified, as many days of pardon as there were wounds in the body of our Lord, in the time of his bitter passion, the which were 5,365." (p. 61)

"These 3 prayers be written in the 1st Chapel of the Holy Crosse in Rome, otherwise called *Sacellum sancte Crucis 7 Romanorum*; whoso-that devoutly say them, shall obtain 90,000 years of pardon for deadly sins, granted by our holy Father John 22nd, Pope of Rome." (p. 66)

"This most devoutly prayer, said the holy Father St. Bernardine, daily kneeling, in the worship of the most holy name of Jesus… and it is well to believe, that through the invocation of that most excellent name of Jesu, St. Bernard obtained a singular reward of perpetual consolation of our Lord Jesu Christ. And this prayer is written in a table that hangeth at Rome, in St. Peter's Church, near in the high altar, there as our holy Father the Pope duly is wont to say the office of the mass. And he that devoutly with a contrite heart daily say this oryson, if he be that day in a state of eternal damnation, then this eternal pain shall be changed him in temporal pain of purgatory; then if he hath deserved the pain of purgatory, that shall be forgotten and forgiven through the infinite mercy of God." (p. 72)

The above instances are amply sufficient to exhibit the character of these indulgences. Lest, however, it should be said that these belong to *bygone* ages, we give two or three instances of modern date.

In the Hortulus Animae, under the head of Suffragia Virginum (pp. 340–1), occurs the following rubric: "Pope Alexander VI. granted ten thousand years of indulgences for mortal sins, and twenty for venial sins, to him who should say this prayer before the image of St. Anne, and of the Blessed Virgin, and of her son." Then follows the prayer.

Another example occurs in a Portuguese book of devotion, called Horas Portuguezas e Manuel de Oragoens, etc., printed with the King's royal license at Lisbon (A.D. 1675), where we are told that "whoever shall say the following prayer of the merits of the passion of Jesus Christ our Lord, composed by the glorious Father St. Augustine, taken from the original, which is in the chapel of St. John of Lateran, in Rome, shall (provided he obtain that year the bull De sancta cruce) gain, the day in which he recites that prayer, eighty thousand years of indulgence." (Burrough's View of Popery)

Sir Edwyn Sandys, who travelled on the continent at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth centuries, says: “The pardon of Alexander VI. for thirty thousand years, to whosoever, before the altar of our Lady, with Christ and her mother, shall say a peculiar Ave, importing that our Lady was conceived without sin, is printed anew in Italy, and pictured in fairest sort, but these are for short times.”

He adds: “At the sepulchre of Christ in Venice, a stately representation, whereon is written *Hic situm est Corpus Domini nostri Jesu Christi*, with verses annexed of *Conditur hoc tumulo*, there is hanging in a printed table of prayer of St. Augustine… with indulgence for eighty-two thousand years, extracted from Boniface VIII., and confirmed by Benedict XII. to whosoever shall say it, and that for every day toties quoties, which yet is somewhat worth, that in a few days a man may provide for a million of worlds, if they did last no longer than this hath done hitherto.” (Europæ Speculum, p. 15, Lond. 1673.)

The beads used by papists to count their prayers to God and the Virgin were also sometimes specially blessed by the Popes, in which case the Paternosters and Aves recited with their help possessed extraordinary powers. A very remarkable account of the indulgences connected with certain blessed beads is contained in the works of Dr. Geddes, which we here give entire:

“Indulgences granted by Pope Adrian VI. of holy memory, to beads or grains which be blessed at the hands of the most illustrious Cardinal *Laguinaves, Frigermano, Barbantino*, in the year 1528; and have been confirmed by our most holy Father Gregory XIII., on the 26th of May, 1576; and confirmed by Clement VIII. in the year 1603; and now confirmed by our most holy Father Urban, in the 4th year of his pontificate.”

“*First*. Whosoever has one of these beads and says one *Pater Noster* and one *Ave Mary*, shall on any day release three souls out of the punishments of purgatory, and reciting them twice on a Sunday, or on any holiday, shall release six.”

“*Also*. Reciting five *Pater Nosters* and five *Ave Marys* upon a Friday, to the honor of the five wounds of Christ our Lord, shall gain a pardon of seventy thousand years and a remission of all his sins.”

“*Also*. Reciting on a Saturday seven *Pater Nosters* and five *Ave Marys* before the image of a crucifix, if he is not able to go to the stations, he shall gain all the stations within and without the walls of Rome.”

“*Also*. Having confessed and communicated, he shall gain a plenary indulgence, and remission of all his sins.”

“*Also*. The priest that hears his confession, and gives him the sacrament, shall gain a plenary indulgence, and remission of all his sins, and shall moreover gain all the indulgences, within and without Rome and Jerusalem.”

“*Also*. Having communicated, so many *Pater Nosters* and *Ave Marys* as he shall say, he shall release so many souls out of purgatory.”

"*Also*. His Holiness grants that the beads which His Holiness has blessed may touch other beads; which being touched by them, shall have all the same graces, but with this salvo: they that are touched cannot touch others.

"Given in Rome, on the 15th day of the month of Jan. 1607.

We, *John Ambrozio*, the Apostolical Referendary. To gain these graces, people must have the Bull of the Santa Cruzada.

With all the licences necessary; in Lisbon, by Antonio Alvarez, printer to our Lord the King."[17]

A still more remarkable document was advertised for sale about twelve months since in the catalogue of a bookseller in Bristol. The following is a literal extract from the catalogue:

"Brigittine Beads. An explication of the indulgences granted to Brigittine Beads, faithfully translated, with permission, with extracts from the statutes of the ARCHCONFRATERNITY of the most Holy and Immaculate HEART of Mary. Manuscript written about 1841. Small 8vo., 28 pages, £3. 3s."

The following are extracts from the work, with the perusal of which we have been favoured:

"Out of what has been said, you may easily understand what a vast treasure is hidden in St. Brigit's beads, therefore every body should endeavour to have such beads, there being no indulgence easier to be gained, for you need not say all your beads at once, nor think of any mystery, but only say one *Ave Maria*, holding one of those beads between your fingers, and you gain five hundred years' indulgence." (p. 9)

"O great God! what a treasure of spiritual goods may one gain either for one's self or the souls in purgatory! And how easily may we satisfy for the punishment of sin, only saying ten upon such beads. What joy do you not cause to the souls, seeing you merit for them, by one ten, five thousand years' remission of the pain they had deserved. If you are in a state of grace, and do your best to say your beads well, be assured you gain the indulgence, and that upon each *Pater Noster* and *Ave Maria*, you gain five hundred years' indulgence, and get so much lessened of the pain you deserved by your sins." (p. 10)

At the end are translations of the Pope's plenary indulgences to the *Archconfraternity*, one of which is dated 31 March, 1841.

VII. INDULGENCES SOLD OUTRIGHT FOR MONEY

The last class of papal pardons which we shall have occasion to bring before the reader's notice consists of those which were granted on the payment of a specified sum of money. In the primitive age of the church, an individual who was still in nature's darkness sought to purchase the grace of God from the Apostle Peter, but the memorable answer of the man of God instantly repelled this attempt: "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money."

Such, however, was the fearful transformation which the visible church in the West had undergone that a writer of the fifteenth century, afterwards raised to the popedom under the name of Pius II., assures us that “the Court of Rome bestows nothing without payment. For the ordination of priests, etc., and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are sold! And even the pardon of sins can only be obtained by money!”[18]

From the very commencement of their history, papal indulgences were to a considerable extent venal in their character. Almost all the bulls of indulgences have attached to them the famous clause by which the Popes require the faithful “to render a helping hand”[19] in order to gain the promised indulgence. In some, certain sums are required, according as the papal officer may determine.

However, during the thirteenth and two following centuries, the Popes became more venal than ever in their indulgences, insomuch that the enormities which were committed were at length the principal occasion of the Reformation of the sixteenth century.

Gregory IX. was one of the earliest pontiffs who distinguished himself by gross venality in the practice of indulgences. In the year 1235, he published throughout England a crusade against the Saracens, with plenary indulgences, and engaged a countless number of individuals to take the vow of going to the Holy Land. Soon afterwards, however, he compelled them all to purchase from him a dispensation from their vow, at a certain sum fixed by himself.

Five years afterwards, he practised the same imposition upon the same people. (Rapin, vol. 2, Life of Hen. III., ad annum 1235 and 1240.) Boniface IX., in the middle of the fourteenth century, in extending the jubilee to all nations, attached this disgraceful condition: that those who obtained the indulgences should contribute so much money as the pilgrimage to Rome would have cost them.

This is acknowledged by a popish writer on the subject of indulgences. (Hist. des Indul. Paris 1702, apud Chais.) This gross act of venality, however, was far outdone by the same pontiff, at a later period of his pontificate.

“In the year 1361,” says the same author, “in the month of January, the indulgence being ended at Rome, and the people of Lombardy having been prevented from going thither, by reason of the war and the troubled state of the times; Pope Boniface IX., at the prayer of Count Jno. Galeazzo, granted to the city of Milan, this indulgence in the same form as at Rome; viz., that all the subjects of that Prince, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE NEITHER CONRITE NOR CONFESSED, should be absolved from all their sins in that city, provided they remained there ten successive days, and visited every day five churches; offering at the first of these churches, two thirds of the expense which the journey to Rome would have cost; of which donation two parts should go towards the fabric itself, and the other to the Pope.” (Thiers, Traité des Superst. Tom. iii. 215, apud Chais)

In the year 1500, the Romish jubilee was celebrated with more than usual éclat by Alexander VI. Not satisfied, however, with the immense sums derived from this solemnity, the Pope promulgated a bull to the effect that all Christians might gain the “heavenly grace” without coming to Rome, provided that they paid a certain sum for this favour.

He sent commissioners to all parts to receive the money, and the following account of the proceedings of Gaspar Pons, who visited England in that capacity, taken from an old roll, will enable us to judge what was done in other places.

> "This roll," says Weever, in his Funeral Monuments, "contains the articles of the Bull of the Holy Jubilee of full remission and great grace, granted to the Realm of England, Wales, Ireland, and Guernsey, according to the new meaning of our holy Fader." In it was declared "that the King with all his progeny, all Archebuschopps, Buschopps, Abbots, Duks, Erles, Barons, Knygtes, Sqyres, Gentilmen, Yeomen, Cetezins, and all oder Crysten peple, which truly confessyd and contryte shold vysit soche Ghorehes as should be assigned by Gaspar Pons, the Holi Fader's Imbassator, and ther put into the cheste soch sum of money as is here following taxed shall have the same indulgence, pardon, and grace, with remission of all Syn, as if they had gone personally to Rome in the year of Grace," etc. After a few preliminary articles about ordering the business comes the following:
>
> *The tax that every Man shall put into the Cheste that woll receyze the gret Grace of Jubeley.*
>
> *Furst*: Every man and woman what degree or condition or state soever they be, if he be Archebuschop, Duk, or oder Dignite, Spirituall or Temporal, having Londs to the yearly valour of 2,000l. or above, if thei will receive this gret Induljens and grase of this Jubiley for themselves and ther Wyfes and children not maryed, shall without Disseyt put into the cheste ordeined for that entent of trew and lawful moni, 3l. 7s. 8d.
>
> *Also*, every Man and Woman that hath londs and rents to the yerely Valour of 1,000l. must pay for themselfs and wyfes 40s.
>
> *Also*. All those that hath londs, etc. to the yerely value of 400l. must pay 26s. 8d.
>
> *Item*. All those that hath londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 200l. must pay 18s. 4d.
>
> *Item*. All those that hath londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 100l. must pay 6s. 8d.
>
> *Item*. All those that hath londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 40l. must pay 2s. 6d.
>
> *Item*. All those that hath londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 20l. must pay 16d.
>
> *Item*. All men of religion having londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 1,000l. must pay for themselfs and their Covent 10l.
>
> *Item*. Those that hath londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 500l. must pay for them and their Covent 5l. 4s.
>
> *Item*. Thos that hath londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 300l. must pay for them and their Covent 3l. 6s. 8d.
>
> *Item*. All thos that hath londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 250l. must pay for them and their Covent 20s.

Item. All thos that hath londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 40l. must pay for them and their Covent 10s.

Item. Secular Men and Women that hath londs, etc. to the yerely valour of 10l. whos movable goods extendeth to 1,000l. must pay for themselfs and wyfs 40s.

Item. Thos whos Goods movable extendyth to 400l. must pay for themselfs and Wyfs 6s. 8d.

Item. Thos whos Goods movable extendyth to 200l. must pay for themselfs and Wyfs 3s. 4d.

Item. Thos whos Goods movable be within 200l. and not undre 20l. must pay 12d.

Item. Thos whos Goods movable extendeth not to 20l. shall pay for themselfs their Wyfs and children as it shall please them of their devotion.

After this are certain articles of the Bull of dispensation, with simony, usury, and of goods to be wrongfully kept reserved to the commissary only. "Alway provyded that the seyd persons make a composycyon hereof with the seyd Comissary and seche moni as thei compound for effectnally to pay to the seyd Comissary."[20]

Incredible as these things may appear, worse yet remain behind. The further the rye [age] of the Middle Ages rolled away, the more absurd did the superstitions and impostures of popery become, thus demonstrating to all the radical and incurable wickedness of that antichristian system. If popery appears changed now, it is simply because the counteracting influence of Protestantism is at present brought to bear upon the doctrines and practices of the man of sin.

The scenes of papal wickedness to which we now allude took place, as most of our readers know, in the pontificate of Leo X., one of the boasted ornaments of St. Peter's See. Being greatly in want of money to provide for his immense expenditure, Leo published a bull in the year 1517 announcing a general indulgence, the proceeds of which were, he said, to be employed in the erection of the church of St. Peter, that monument of sacerdotal splendour.

The commissaries chosen by Leo for the collecting of the moneys were Tetzel for Germany; Archimbold for Denmark, Sweden, and the neighbouring states; and Samson for Switzerland. The course pursued by each of these indulgence-merchants was very similar; it will be sufficient here to follow the steps of one of these from the immortal work of D'Aubigné on the Reformation.

"The merchants," says the historian, "travelled the country in a fine carriage, accompanied by three mounted attendants, journeying in grand style, and living at great expense. One would have said it was some High Mightiness with his suite and officers, and not a vulgar dealer or mendicant monk. When the cortège approached a town, a messenger was despatched to the magistrate to say, 'The grace of God and of St. Peter is at your gates.'

Immediately the whole place was in motion. Clergy, priests, nuns, the council, schoolmasters and their scholars, the incorporations with their colours, men and women, old and young, went out to meet the merchant, with lighted tapers in their hands, amid the sound of music and the ringing of bells, 'insomuch,' says a historian, 'that God himself could not have been received with greater honour.'

After the formalities were over, the whole body proceeded to the church. The bull of grace, by the pontiff, was carried in front, on a velvet cushion or cloth of gold. Next came the chief of the indulgence merchants, carrying a large wooden cross painted red. The whole procession moved forward amid hymns, prayers, and the smoke of incense. The merchant monk and his attendants were received at the church by the pealing organ and thrilling music.

The cross was placed in front of the altar, and over it the Pope's arms were suspended. All the time it remained there, the clergy of the place, the penitentiaries and subcommissaries came each day after vespers, or before the salute, to do obeisance to it, with white wands in their hands. This grand affair produced a lively sensation in the quiet cities of Germany.

"At these sales one personage in particular drew the attention of the spectators. It was he who carried the red cross and played the principal character. He was clothed in the dress of a Dominican, and had an arrogant air. His voice was stentorian, and though in his sixty-third year, he seemed still in full vigour.

This man, the son of one Diez, a jeweller of Leipsic, was called John Diezel or Tetzel. He had studied in his native town—became bachelor in 1487, and two years after entered the Dominican order. Numerous honours had accumulated on his head: Bachelor in Theology, prior of the Dominicans, apostolic commissary, inquisitor; he had discharged the office of commissary of indulgences without intermission, from 1502.

The skill which he had acquired as subaltern soon raised him to the office of commissary-in-chief. He had eighty florins a month and all his expenses paid, together with a carriage and three horses; but his perquisites (it is easy to comprehend what they were) far exceeded his salary. In 1507, at Freiberg, he gained two thousand florins in two days. As he discharged the functions, he had also the manners of a quack. Convicted of adultery and shameful misconduct at Innsbruck, his vices had almost cost him his life. The Emperor Maximilian had ordered him to be put into a sack and thrown into the river; but the Elector Frederick, happening to arrive, obtained his pardon.

"After the cross was erected, and the arms of the Pope suspended over it, Tetzel ascended the pulpit, and with a tone of assurance began to extol the value of the indulgences in presence of the crowd, who had been attracted to the church by the ceremony. The people listened and stared, on hearing the wondrous virtues of which he told them. Let us listen to one of his harangues after setting up the cross.

> "'Indulgences are the most precious and sublime gift of God. This cross (pointing to the red cross) has the very same efficacy as the actual cross of Jesus Christ. Come and I will give you letters under seal, by which even the sins which you may have a desire to commit in future will all be forgiven. I would not exchange my privileges for that of St. Peter in heaven, for I have saved more souls by my indulgences than the apostle by his sermons.
>
> There is no sin too great for an indulgence to remit, and even should any one (the thing no doubt is impossible) have done violence to the Holy Virgin Mary, mother of God, let him only pay well, and it will be forgiven him. Think then that for each mortal sin you must, after confession and contrition, do penance for seven years, either in this life or in Purgatory. Now,

how many mortal sins are committed in one day, in one week? How many in a month, a year, a whole life? Ah! these sins are almost innumerable, and innumerable sufferings must be endured for them in Purgatory. And now by means of these letters of indulgence, you can at once for life, in all cases except four, which are reserved to the Apostolic See, and afterwards at the hour of death, obtain a full remission of all your pains, and all your sins.

"'But more than this,' said he, 'indulgences not only save the living, but the dead. For this, repentance even is not necessary. Priest! noble! merchant! wife! young girls! young men! hear your departed parents, and your other friends, crying to you from the bottom of the abyss, "We are enduring horrible torments! A little alms would deliver us; you can give it, and yet will not!"'

"These words, uttered by the formidable voice of the charlatan monk, made his hearers shudder.

"'O imbecile and brutish people! who perceive not the grace that is so richly offered to you. Now Heaven is everywhere open. Do you receive it this hour to enter? When then will you enter? Now you can ransom so many souls! Hard-hearted and thoughtless man, with twelve pence you can deliver your father out of purgatory, and you are ungrateful enough not to save him! It will be published in the day of judgment, but you will be punished the more severely for having neglected so great salvation. I declare to you, that though you had only a single coat, you would only be bound to take it off and sell it, in order to obtain this grace. The Lord our God is no longer God. He has committed all power to the Pope.'

"At the termination of the discourse, the indulgence was understood 'to have established its throne in the place, in due form.' Confessionals were set up, adorned with the Pope's arms. The sub-commissaries and the confessors whom they selected were considered to represent the apostolical penitentiaries of Rome at the Jubilee; and on each of these confessionals were pasted, in large characters, their names, surnames, and designations.

"Then a crowd pressed forward to the confessor, each coming with a piece of money in his hand. Men, women, and children, the poor, even those who lived on alms, all found means of procuring money. The penitentiaries, after having explained anew the greatness of the indulgence to each individual, asked, 'How much money can you afford to part with, in order to obtain so complete a forgiveness?' 'This question,' says the instruction of the Archbishop of Mentz to the commissaries, 'should be put at this moment, that the penitents may thereby be the better disposed to contribute.'

"Four valuable graces were promised to those who aided in building the basilica of St. Peter. 'The first grace which we announce to you,' said the commissaries, according to their Letter of Instruction, 'is the complete pardon of all sins.' After this came three other graces: first, the right of choosing a confessor who, whenever the hour of death should seem to be at hand, would give absolution from all sins, and even from the greatest crimes reserved for the Apostolic See; second, a participation in all the blessings, works, and merits of the Catholic

church, in prayers, fastings, alms, and pilgrimages; and third, the redemption of the souls which are in purgatory.

"When the confession was over, and it did not last long, the faithful hastened towards the seller. One only had charge of the sale, and kept his counter near the cross. He carefully eyed those who approached him, examining their air, bearing, or dress, and asked a sum proportioned to the appearance which each presented. Kings, queens, archbishops, and bishops were, according to the regulation, to pay twenty-five ducats for an ordinary indulgence; abbots, counts, and barons paid ten. Others of the nobility, rectors, and all who had an income of five hundred florins paid six. Those who had two hundred florins a year paid one; others, only a half.

For particular sins, Tetzel had a particular tax. Polygamy paid six ducats; theft in a church, and perjury, nine ducats; murder, eight ducats; magic, two ducats." (Hist. of Reform. Vol. 1. B. III. ch. 1.)

The above testimony is sufficient to prove the gross venality of Papal Rome. It still remains, however, to notice the "Tax-book of the Apostolic Chancery," a work in which indulgences from all imaginable crimes are rated at a fixed price.

The origin of this infamous work is ascribed to John XXII., who occupied the Papal throne A.D. 1316–1334 [or 1340]. Such is the horrible character of the book that Papists, ever since the Reformation, have uniformly denied its authenticity, and even inserted it in their *Index Expurgatorius* as a prohibited book, written by Protestants to calumniate the Romish church!

The labours of modern scholars, however, have completely set at rest this important question. From an admirable work on the subject[21] by the Rev. Joseph Mendham, A.M., lately published, it appears that no less than seventeen editions of this abominable Tax-book are known, which were published by the church of Rome itself before the Reformation, from the year 1471 to the year 1516.

Independently of this, the testimony of Claude d'Espence, a celebrated Popish theologian of the sixteenth century, is amply sufficient to establish the authenticity of this work. In his "Commentary on Titus," that writer says: "There is to be seen in Paris a printed book, which is sold in public, both now and for a long time past, called '*The Taxes of the Apostolic Chancery,*' in which more enormities and crimes may be learnt than in all the books of the Summists. Of these crimes some may be committed on buying the permission, but of all, absolution may be bought after they have been committed!"

He then goes on to say that the work contains "absolutions, licences, impunities for adulterers, fornicators, perjurers, simonists, forgers, ravishers, usurers, &c.; for manslayers and murderers; nor are murderers of clergy, parricides, matricides, fratricides, murderers of wives, or mothers who slay or smother their infants, sorcerers, magicians, poisoners, those who keep concubines, incestuous persons, sodomites, &c., &c., excluded from these privileges." (Cl. Espencæus ad. cap. 1. Epist. ad Tit. p. 67. Parisiis 1561/1698.) Such is the testimony of the celebrated Claude d'Espence, doctor of the Sorbonne and rector of the University of Paris, to the authenticity and horrible character of this work of Hell. In the present day, no intelligent Papist would venture to deny that it was a bona fide production of the church of Rome.

The following are some of the fees paid to the Pope for *Absolutions*, *Dispensations*, &c., as given in the celebrated Paris edition, in folio, published A.D. 1520:

ABSOLUTIONS

For him that reveals the confession of another — 10s. 6d.
For him who lies with a Woman in the Church and commits other enormities — 9s. 0d.
For him that has committed perjury — 9s. 0d.
For a Layman for the vice of Simony — 9s. 0d.
For a Priest for the vice of Simony — 10s. 6d.
For a Monk for the vice of Simony — 12s. 0d.
For a Layman for murdering a layman — 7s. 6d.
For him that has killed Father, Mother, or Wife — 10s. 6d.
For laying violent hands on a Clergyman or a religious man, if without effusion of blood — 10s. 6d.
For the crime of abortion — 7s. 6d.
For a Priest that keeps a concubine — 10s. 6d.
For a Layman that keeps a concubine — 10s. 6d.
For him that has defiled a virgin — 9s. 0d.
For the crime of Incest — 10s. 6d.
For him that possesses many benefices — 10s. 6d.

DISPENSATIONS

For a bastard to enter all Holy Orders — 18s. 0d.
To marry in the fourth degree of Consanguinity — 2l. 5s. 0d.
To marry in the third degree of Consanguinity — 3l. 10s. 0d.
To marry in the second degree of Consanguinity — 4l. 15s. 0d.
To marry in the first degree of Consanguinity — 1,000l. 0s. 0d.
For one that is found hanged, to have a Christian burial — 15s. 0d.
For one under age to enter holy orders — 7s. 6d.
To be ordained at any time of year — 1l. 1s. 0d.

LICENCES

For a man to change his vow — 15s. 0d.
To eat flesh and white meats in Lent, &c. — 10s. 6d.
For a king or queen to enjoy the same indulgences as if they went to Rome — 15l. 0s. 0d.
For a king or prince to exact contributions of the clergy — 3l. 0s. 0d.
If the contribution amount to 100,000 florins, then, for the first thousand — 4l. 0s. 0d.
And for every other — 1l. 10s. 0d.
For him that preaches before a king, to give indulgences to all who hear him — 15l. 0s. 0d.
To found a hospital or chapel — 15l. 0s. 0d.
For a city to coin money — 18l. 0s. 0d.

For a layman to choose his confessor — 10s. 6d.
To have a portable altar — 15s. 0d.
To go into a Nunnery alone — 10s. 6d.
For a town to take out of the church those who have taken sanctuary there — 15s. 0d.
For a bishop to take to himself a year's profit of every vacant benefice for three years — 15l. 0s. 0d.
To exact a subsidy of his clergy — 3l. 0s. 0d.

Such is the celebrated Tax-book of the Apostolic Chancery, the publication of which stamps the church of Rome with eternal infamy.

"But we may, and have been told, that these works have been formally and publicly condemned by Papal authority in the Indices Prohibitorii. This is a matter worth inquiring into: it is both a literary and a Papal curiosity. By the year 1564, when the Trent Index was compiled and published (to say nothing of preceding Indexes), twenty-seven of the editions of the Taxæ had appeared, and there were probably more, now unknown—and yet no notice was taken of them, not of a single instance.

The first notice which was taken of them, or rather of something like one of them, was in the year 1570, just a century after the appearance of the first edition, and that not in a Roman Index, but in an appendix to the Roman one, published by the authority of the King of Spain. And in what terms does it there appear? *Praxis et Taxa Officinæ Pœnitentiariæ*, a work which, if it ever existed under that title, was probably never, and is certainly now, not known. It is, however, generally admitted to refer to the copy in the Centum Gravamina, as if this were the only edition, or none had proceeded from Rome and elsewhere, or were not known!

But let us follow the progress of this singular condemnation. With apparent misgiving, and possibly with some fear that, in its simple form, it might involve what the Papacy knew to be its own offspring, the next Index published by Papal authority in Rome, that of 1596 by Clement VIII., adds: '*ab hæreticis depravata*.'

In the edition by Pius VI. in 1786, it is still further slightly, probably with some intention, altered: '*cum ab hæreticis sit depravata*.' It is the same in Pius VII.'s in 1806, and in 1819. By this specification the condemnation is limited, but it is a virtual admission that some copy or copies existed which were not so depraved. It would have been charitable to point out how they were depraved….

And this dilatory, ambiguous condemnation of a poor solitary nondescript is to be accepted as a proof of innocence or acquittal from the guilt of having issued or authorised the abominable works in question!

Further, how are we to account for the exemplary forbearance and deep silence of these organs of biblical condemnation respecting all the other editions of the Taxæ but the one which is noticed, that of Banck, by known heretics, by Du Pinet, by Wolfius, by S. du Mont, and other nameless editors at Paris and Amsterdam? The fact is, the Taxæ, admitted plainly to have been published, if not for the first time by a Pope, John XXII., stand very nearly upon the same ground as the Regulæ, Ordinationes, Constitutiones, &c., together with which they are often bound up, which have never been disputed as

Papal productions, and with which in all their divisions they bear every mark and proof of strict alliance or fraternity."[22]

The instances hitherto adduced may be called Venal Pardons granted by *wholesale*. But during this whole period it appears to have been the custom with the Popes to grant indulgences to individual persons on receiving a due consideration in money.

Numerous instances of this kind are to be found in various works on Popery. In digging up the foundations of St. Paul's in London, an indulgence was met with, granted to Sir Gerard Braybrooke and his wife, Elizabeth, by Pope Boniface IX. in the year 1390. (See Hist. of Popery, where the original Latin may be seen, Vol. 1, p. 182.)

In an old and curious work by John Gee, A.M., of Exeter College, Oxford, under the title of "New Shreds of the Old Snare," is a great deal about Popish Pardons. He mentions also several personal Indulgences similar to the above.

One was given to a Countess in 1607, enabling her to free a soul on a certain day out of Purgatory, and by virtue of masses obtain for her relatives the remission of the third part of their sins, and 'if confessed and communicated' the same day—a plenary indulgence; another to Sir John Markham, in 1608; another to the family of the Marfields, in 1668; another to Lord M., containing a plenary remission of all sins, both from the punishment and the guilt (a pœna et culpa) for a thousand Lents and sixty-five years, and power to free one of his friends out of Purgatory.

Another was granted by Paul V. in 1605 to a gentleman and his wife, containing the remission of all their sins, and freedom from Purgatory. A number of pardons of a general nature follow, which are *a pœna et culpa*, granted by Innocent VIII. and Clement VII.

But the most remarkable indulgence, perhaps, on record, is in a work which we have already often quoted, Lettres sur les Jubilés, &c., by Mons. Chais. This learned writer gives an account of an English Protestant gentleman who wished to obtain an Indulgence for himself and family. He succeeded in his desire, and procured from Benedict XIV. a plenary indulgence in the hour of death, for himself and his family *to the third degree*. The whole original document in Latin is given by Chais in a note (p. 806).

The principal forms in which Indulgences were granted by the Popes of Rome have thus been briefly considered; it now only remains to add a few observations on the GUILT and the EVIL RESULTS of these abominable impostures.

The subject we have been considering is one of those on which modern Papists feel very sore. In order to avoid the difficulties which press upon them, it is alleged that "nothing more is meant by Indulgences than the releasing, to such as are truly penitent, the debt of temporal punishment which remained due on account of those sins which, as to their eternal punishment, had already been remitted." (Gother's Papist Misrepresented, &c., Sect. 8.)

The most cursory glance, however, at the history of Indulgences is sufficient to show the falsehood of this statement. It is true, as we have already seen, that the early indulgences granted by the bishops in the tenth and eleventh centuries extended to the remission of canonical penances only.

But what has this to do with the indulgences so profusely scattered over all Europe by the Popes during the three centuries which preceded the Reformation? No honest mind, possessed of any acquaintance with the subject, can hesitate to admit that these impious productions *remitted the eternal punishment, as well as the guilt, of all sins, however enormous*!

Urban II., in his Bull of the first Crusade, promised an indulgence of all their sins to such as would go to the Holy Land, and expressly mentioned those which the Scripture says exclude from the kingdom of God, as murder, theft, etc.;[23] and assured them that an eternal reward should be their portion after death.[24]

The same indulgences were promised by Calixtus II. (1122), Eugenius III. (1145), and others after them. In reference to which, Morinus well observes, “these indulgences cannot be understood of mere canonical penances, because such a remission of all sins is granted upon which eternal life follows, and therefore respects God, and not the church.” (De Sacr. Pen. l. 10, c. 22.)

Many of the Jubilee Bulls, too, promise the remission of the guilt as well as the punishment, and offer to the people an entire remission of sins, without distinction; and although a charge that they are forged has been brought against them by Papists, it should be remembered that of many of these the authenticity has never been questioned.

Boniface VIII., the author of the Jubilee, promised in his Bull “not only full and larger, but also THE FULLEST PARDON OF ALL SINS.”[25] The meaning of which indulgence is said, by the gloss on the bull, to be, “that it effaces the guilt, as well as the punishment of sin.”[26] The same explanation is given by the gloss on the Jubilee Bull of Clement VI.

The plenary indulgences also which were so profusely distributed by the Popes, in various forms, during the 14th and 15th centuries, were unquestionably regarded by all as being full remissions both of the guilt and punishment.

The celebrated Antoninus confesses that “plenary indulgences are commonly termed Indulgences for the *guilt* as well as the punishment,” though he thinks it cannot be true “because God alone has the power to remit the guilt of sin.” [Apud Chais, p. 625.]

Pope Sylvester is quoted by Mons. Thiers, a modern Papist, as saying “that the plenary indulgence is commonly called *de pena et culpa*; that is, both from the guilt and punishment.”

And another eminent doctor is quoted by Foulis as saying, “when the Pope grants plenary absolution, it is understood that he absolves as well from the guilt as the punishment, as respects all sins however enormous.”[27]

And as to indulgences sold under the pontificate of Leo X. by Archimbold, Samson, and Tetzel, it is granted by all that the foulest iniquities were at once wiped away and the purchasers restored to the original purity possessed at baptism!

It is thus, we think, established upon indubitable evidence—the evidence of Papists themselves—that whatever indulgences mean in the present day, those which were issued from the 12th century to the Reformation remitted both the guilt and punishment of sins, however enormous.

Hence it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the awful blasphemy and impiety which it involved, as one of the evils of this wicked system. In the practice of indulgences the Popes of Rome usurped the very throne of God. They professed, and were believed, to blot out the sins of men and open the gate of heaven at their sovereign pleasure.

At one time connecting the certain and eternal salvation of the people with military service or a pilgrimage; at another, with the repetition of a prayer, or the payment of a trifling sum of money—and this, in many cases, without the slightest mention of repentance.

As the usurpation of the mercy of God—the darling attribute, so to speak, of the Most High—this was the most hateful and impious thing which had ever roused divine wrath. In the bulls of indulgence, beyond all other things, the Popes truly "sat in the temple of God, showing that they were God"; and in admitting their claim, the people of Christendom (to change the figure) were made "drunk with the wine of the fornication of Babylon the Great, Mother of Harlots and abominations of the earth."

But it is to the demoralizing effect of these indulgences upon mankind at large that we desire chiefly to direct the reader's attention. Human nature being what it is, we can easily suppose what the operation of these wondrous pardons must have been upon the deluded victims of papal avarice.

Of one and all it may be confidently asserted that, since they absolved the wicked from all the guilt and consequences of their sins while their nature continued unchanged, the direct and necessary tendency of indulgences was to encourage sin.

They took away the only motive to a moral life of which unconverted men are susceptible, viz., the dread of future punishment; and henceforward nothing could be looked for but an immense increase of immorality and crime.

The indulgences of the Romish Church, then, from the twelfth century to the sixteenth, can only be regarded by the Christian as a wide-spreading pestilence, infecting all Europe with disease and death.

During two centuries, with short intervals, the Popes' bulls were constantly inviting "the faithful" to join the crusades, and thus obtain the remission of all their sins, and we have already seen how many millions of human beings were brought under their soul-destroying influence.

Scarcely had these abominable wars ceased when the Jubilee was instituted, which offered, eventually every twenty-five years, plenary indulgence of their sins to the most notorious transgressors, provided they came to Rome to perform their devotions so many days.

Besides these, innumerable other opportunities were at all times presented, as the foregoing pages show, for the attainment of the same object. Eternal salvation was offered by him who held the place of God on earth to the vilest of the vile: at one time for visiting such a church, at another for reciting such a prayer, at another for joining such a society, at another for paying such a sum of money, etc., the

repentance of the individuals being a matter of no account whatever in these exercises of papal arrogance.

Surely the slightest knowledge of human nature will suffice to convince every reader that the effect of the indulgences so profusely distributed by the Popes during this lengthened period for the increase of their wealth must have been pernicious in the extreme.

The testimony of contemporary writers might be adduced in order to substantiate this heavy accusation. Polydore Vergil tells us “that when indulgences had become common, many men abstained less from wicked actions.” (Polyd. Virg. de invent. rerum apud Still.)

The author of the work called The Burden of the Church says “they take men off from the fruits of repentance, and are profitable only to the idle and the wicked.” (Onus Eccles. c. 14, s. 28.)

Platina, the celebrated Popish historian, speaking of the time of Boniface IX., says “the sale of indulgences brought the ecclesiastical authority into contempt, AND GAVE ENCOURAGEMENT TO MANY INIQUITIES.”

Urspergensis also in his Chronicles (p. 322) complains that plenary indulgences brought more wickedness into the world; for men said, “Let me do what wickedness I will, I shall be delivered by indulgences from punishment, and free the souls of others in purgatory.”

Such were the opinions entertained by Papists themselves who lived in the earlier periods of this practice. What, then, must have been the effects of the later forms of indulgences upon the morals of mankind?

The indulgences circulated by the papal commissaries a little before the Reformation were “nothing less,” says Waddington, “when fairly interpreted, than AN UNCONDITIONAL PERMISSION TO SIN FOR THE REST OF LIFE” (chap. 28, sect. 2); “and as such,” he adds, “they were assuredly received by those classes of the people for whom they were chiefly intended.”

The same statement is made by the celebrated D’Aubigné. “The learned,” says he, “were not too well informed on the subject, whilst the only thing seen by the multitude was the fact that indulgences GAVE THEM PERMISSION TO SIN.” (Hist. of Ref. b. 1, c. 2.)

Nor can these testimonies be set aside as being mere Protestant calumnies, since in the Centum Gravamina of the German princes, presented to the Diet of Nuremberg long before the Reformation took place, the same testimony is given:

“But especially, the burden and grievance of the Pope’s indulgences and pardons are most insupportable; since the bishops of Rome under pretence of building some church there, or to fight against the Turks, issue their indulgences by Bulls, persuading and promising to the simple people strange and wonderful benefits of remission from the guilt and punishment of sins (a pena et culpa), and that not only in this life, but also afterwards to such as are dead and now suffering in the fire of Purgatory. Through the hope and occasion of which, true piety is almost extinct in all Germany; while every evil-disposed person promises to himself, for a little money, license and impunity to do what he

pleases. Upon which ensue fornication, incest, adultery, perjury, murders, robbery, and spoiling, rapine, usury, with a whole flood of other evils." (Cent. Grav. in Fox.)

Such was the fearful pestilence which raged with increasing violence during the three centuries which preceded the Reformation. Nor is its course yet arrested. In all the Popish kingdoms of Europe it still destroys its tens of thousands.

The Council of Trent decreed that "the power of granting indulgences has been bestowed by Christ upon his church"; and enjoins "that the use of them, so salutary to Christian people, and approved by the authority of venerable councils, shall be retained by the church."

Accordingly, indulgences continue to the present day to form an important item in the papal revenue. The Jubilee bulls every 25 years invite the faithful to Rome by promising "a plenary indulgence, remission, and pardon of all their sins." (See Bull of Indiction for the jubilee of 1826, in Laity's Directory for that year.)

In Spain a lucrative traffic is driven in this article of papal merchandise. Four bulls containing special indulgences are annually sent there from Rome, which are bought by almost all the Spaniards at prices suited to the condition of the purchasers.

The first is the Bull of Cruzada, which contains several plenary indulgences, and enables the possessor to eat milk, eggs, and butter during Lent, which would otherwise constitute mortal sin. Another is termed the Flesh Bull, to enable them to eat meat on certain days.

The third is called the Compounding Bull, for the retention of property obtained by robbery or by fraud where it cannot be traced to the owner. The last is termed the Defunct Bull, and is purchased for the benefit of the deceased.

"The name of any dead person being entered on the bull, a plenary indulgence is, by this means, believed to be conveyed to his soul if suffering in purgatory. It is a common practice to bury these bulls with the corpses of those whom they are intended to benefit." (Blanco White, Practical and Internal Evidence against Catholicism, p. 85.)

We have the testimony of a Papist himself to the demoralizing effects of indulgences in the present day. Speaking of the notoriously depraved state of morals in Italy, Mr. Eustace asks, "May it not be ascribed to the corruptions of the national religion, to the facility of absolution, and to the EASY PURCHASE OF INDULGENCES?"

On the evidence of one of the most enlightened of her sons, then, we do not hesitate to brand the Church of Rome as the subject of the prophecy of the fourth seal: "I looked, and behold a pale horse, and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth to kill with THE PESTILENCE."

Footnotes

[1] Morinus de Penitentia, Bruxellis, 1685.

[2] Hist. des Indulg. Liv. ii. c. 16.

[3] “Whoever through devotion only, and not for the attainment of honour or money, shall proceed to Jerusalem to liberate the church of God, *that journey shall be reckoned to him instead of all repentance*.” (Quicunque pro sola devotione, non pro honoris vel pecuniae adeptione, ad liberandam ecclesiam Dei, Jerusalem profectus fuerit iter illud pro omni penitentia reputetur.) Can. Claromontanus II. in Gieseler. Comp. Urban’s address at Clermont, from the *Chron. Cassauriense* written about A.D. 1182. “If any one,” said he, “dies on the road or in battle for Christ, he shall be reckoned among the martyrs, and be absolved from all his sins.” (Si quisquam in via, sive in pugna, pro Christo moreretur, in numero Martyrum, absolutus ab omnibus peccatis suis, computetur.) Vide Giesl.

[4] Nosti—enormia quae in transmarinis partibus committuntur, etc.

[5] See the orignal extracts in Gieseler. Vol.2.p.358.

[6] The materials of this section are chiefly derived from the valuable work of Mons. Chais, a French Protestant minister at the Hague entitled “Lettres Historiques et Dogmatiques sur les Jubiles et les Indulgences.” *la Haye*. 1751. 3 vols. 12mo.

[7] “Anceps et pene extra opinionis fidem rumor,” is the language of the Cardinal St. George; from whom our original information is derived. (See Chais’s note p. 65.)

[8] “Et nihilominus prorsus mandamus Angelis paradisi, quatenus animam illius prorsus a Purgatorio penitus absolutam in Paradisi gloriam introducant.” The authenticity of this remarkable Bull is triumphantly established by Mons. Chais. (Lettres Hist. et Dogm. Tom. I. 157–160.) Consult also a valuable note in Mendham’s Venal Indulgences, etc. p. 48. Lond. 1839.

[9] Magnum Chron. Belg. apud. Rer. Germ. Script. apud Chais, Vol. 1.

[10] Matt. Villani lib. 1. c. 4. Apud Chais.

[11] Raynald ad an. 1350. n. 1.

[12] Meier apud Spond. ad. an. 1350.

[13] Craconius and Bzovius pretend that it took place in 1425. See however Bonani, Numism. Pontif. Rom. Vol. I. p. 25.

[14] Mariana De reb. Hisp. apud. Contin. de Flenry.

[15] The testimony of the Jesuit Raynaldi shews that this was done to avoid exciting Luther’s indignant reproofs—“ ob publicam scilicet offensionem, quod ejusmodi largitione, Lutherus oblaterandi occasionem sumpsisset.” (Ad an, 1535, n. 1. apud Chais.)

[16] Fiscus Papalis sive Catalogus indulgentiarum, etc. Lond. 1621.

[17] A view of some Papal Indulgences, &. Dr. Geddes’ Tracts on Popery. 4 vols. 8vo. London.

[18] Nihil est quod absque argento, Romana Curia dedat. Nam et ipse manus impositiones, et Spiritus Sancti dona venduntur. Nec peccatorum venia nisi nummatis, impenditur. Zn. Sylvii, Ep. lxvi. p. 549. opp. Basil. 1571.

[19] Porrigendis manus adjutrices,

[20] Weever’s Funeral Monuments, p. 165.

[21] The Spiritual Venality of the Church of Rome. Lond. 1886.

[22] Mendham’s Spiritual Venality of Rome. pp. 73-76.

[23] Gulielm. Tyrius, lib. 1. hist. orient.

[24] Will. Malm. lib. 4, c. 2.

[25] Non solum plenam et largiorem, imo plenissimam veniam peccatorum. (Bullar. Cherubini, Pii T. p. 20.)

[26] L. V. Extrav. Com. tit. de Pœn. et Remis. L. III. d. consid. c. 4.

[27] Domin. Card. Tasch apud Foulis, Rom. Usurp. pref.

CHAPTER IV.
THE WORSHIP OF THE SAINTS.

The worship of any creature, however good or great, must of necessity be a sin of the deepest dye. From Revelation we know that the Most High is infinitely Great, and Good, and Glorious. That He alone, of all beings, owes his existence to none. That He, moreover, created and upholds all things in existence, and "worketh all things, after the counsel of his own will." These are the grounds on which God demands the adoration and service of all intelligent beings. And, since none, besides himself, possess any of these claims to our homage—all being placed at an infinite distance from their Creator—it must be an act of heinous iniquity to worship any but Him. Hence the frequent denunciations of creature-worship which meet us in the Word of God: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me; for I the Lord am a jealous God," etc. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

Accordingly, when Cornelius prostrated himself before Peter, the honour was instantly rejected. "Stand up, for I also am a man." When the people of Lystra, struck with amazement at the miracles they beheld, would have worshipped Paul and Barnabas, they too refused to receive it. And when the beloved Apostle, in the isle of Patmos, "fell down to worship before the feet of the angel," he was instantly rebuked by the celestial messenger: "See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant—worship God."

From these remarks, it is obvious that the worship of any creature is not only an act of gross injustice to the Almighty, but also a sin expressly forbidden by God. How melancholy is the fact then, that for about fifteen centuries the visible Church of Christ has, almost universally, sunk down into this idolatry! And how important to attempt, by exposing this tremendous evil, to warn all other professing Christians against this accursed sin!

It may be laid down as an indisputable fact, that the invocation of the saints was altogether unknown in the Church of God for upwards of three hundred years from the Christian era. It is true that the martyrs were, from an early period, the objects of high veneration. Christians were accustomed to celebrate annual festivals in commemoration of them, at their tombs, on the day of their martyrdom; on which occasion it was usual to deliver orations in their praise. But these festivals were, as to their nature and object, undoubtedly innocent, and even praiseworthy, as we learn from the following passage in an epistle from the church at Smyrna, written on the occasion of the martyrdom of their bishop, Polycarp. After mentioning that they had buried his body in the usual place, they add, "To us assembling in this place, so far as it lies in our power, with triumph and with joy, the Lord will grant to celebrate the birthday of his martyrdom." (Epist. Eccles. Smyr. § 18.)

This relates to the second century, but the practice of the Church continued the same during the third. "The honors paid to the martyrs," says the learned Gieseler, "were the same during this period (A.D. 193–324) as in the second century. The annual festivals held by the various churches, at the graves of

the martyrs, were only an expression of the same feeling which led them to assemble often in their burial places, which were not unfrequently caves, and therefore especially convenient in times of persecution." (Vol. I. p. 368.) Although in adopting this practice Christians were merely echoing the praises of which the martyrs are the objects in the Word of God—"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death," (Rev. xii. 11)—still, it is not improbable that, at times, immoderate honor was lavished upon the martyrs, and the true source of their faith and patience, '*the grace of God that was in them*,' forgotten. Thus the soil was prepared for the creature-worship and idolatry which, in the course of after ages, wholly supplanted the worship of the one true God.

It has been stated that the invocation of the saints did not spring up in the church until the fourth century. The first step, however, towards it, was taken by Origen and his followers about the middle of the third. This philosophizing teacher, the orthodoxy of whose writings was so long disputed in the church, was the first to start the doctrine on which the whole superstructure of saint-worship rests, viz., "that the blessed above are conscious of what transpires below, and help their brethren by their prayers."

At first, this was nothing more than a private speculation. Origen himself speaks of it, in some places, as a probable opinion, rather than a certain and indisputable doctrine. In process of time, however, this notion acquired fresh strength. The apocryphal books of the Maccabees were quoted in its favour: traditions—miracles wrought at the martyrs' tombs—and imaginary apparitions of the dead, were adduced in its support. Until, at length, that which was, in Origen's time, merely a disputed opinion, became, at the beginning of the fourth century, an article of faith.

Another step towards the invocation of the dead was taken by Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, about A.D. 250. It had already become the practice, in his days, for those who had denied their Lord in times of persecution to seek reconciliation with God and the church by means of the prayers and influence of the confessor; i.e., Christians who had undergone torture for their religion, but had escaped with their lives. Cyprian, however, set the example of entreating them, whilst still alive, to be mindful of their brethren after their death; and, when they reached the world of bliss, to offer up their prayers on the church's behalf, before the throne of God. (Lib. 1. Epist. 1. ad Cornelium.) The seeds thus sown by Origen and Cyprian, finding a fertile soil in the peculiar circumstances of the church, in process of time, sprang up. The church had still continued the commemorations of the martyrs to which we have alluded; they still met frequently at their burial places, too, for worship—perhaps as being safe retreats from the fury of their enemies. But a change now took place in the nature of these meetings. Christians thought that the graves of the martyrs should be frequented in order to obtain *an interest in their prayers* before the throne of God. Hence, gradually, sprang up the desire to invoke the saints by name. (Chem. de cult. Sanct.)

Such was the state of things in the Church of God when Constantine embraced Christianity in the early part of the fourth century—and the profession of the gospel became at length as honourable as it had before been disgraceful. This sudden and wondrous change in the outward condition of the church naturally tended to increase the admiration and love of which the martyrs were already the objects. It

was they who had achieved the victory over Satan and his associates. “There was war in Heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was place found any more in heaven”[1] … “*And they overcame him*, [i.e., the Christian did] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.” (Rev. xii. 7–11.)

Hence, when the Christians of the fourth century thought of the tremendous persecution through which they had just passed—and viewed with rapture the bright scene which had at length dawned upon them—the holy men whose faith and patience had wrought, under God, this blessed change, appeared invested with almost superhuman glory. Still, superstition for a time was checked by the Arian controversy, which had just commenced. One of the arguments commonly used by the orthodox party against those who denied the Deity of Christ was as follows:—“God alone is to be adored and invoked—but Christ is repeatedly the object of adoration and invocation in the Scriptures—therefore Christ is not a creature, but the true God.”

The natural effect of these truths being constantly brought before men’s minds was to prevent the growing desire to invoke the saints from breaking out. Hence the writings of those Fathers who lived in the middle of the fourth century—of course excepting the many spurious works attributed by Romanists to them—*contain no mention* of prayers to the saints. Eusebius, the ecclesiastical historian, says that “the souls of the blessed have a certain power by which, even after death, they help mankind.” But he nowhere teaches that they should be invoked. So far from this, he attributes to Christ alone the honour of presenting our prayers to the Father. Lactantius, a Latin father of this period, also teaches that God alone should be invoked. The works of Athanasius, the great champion of the Catholic Church, abound with sentiments totally opposed to all creature-worship. He often establishes the Deity of Christ from the fact that Christians have recourse to his help in time of need. “The saints,” says he, “do not ask any creature to assist them. Christ, therefore, whose help the saints do invoke is the true God.” (Orat. cont. Ar.) Hilary of Poitiers, who lived so late as the year 360, speaks about the intercession of angels, and the guardianship exercised by Apostles and Patriarchs, but he nowhere inculcates the invocation either of saints or angels. On the contrary, he defends the practice of calling upon the name of Christ *on the ground* of his essential Deity.

We have thus brought down our sketch of the state of the church, in reference to saint-worship, to the year 360, without finding any instance of Christians calling upon the martyrs by name to help them by their prayers. But the practice of invocation must have commenced soon after this period, since the writings of Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzen (A.D. 370) contain many apostrophes to the saints and martyrs, as well as supplications for their intercession. It has indeed been contended that the custom of addressing the saints was, at this period, *long established*.[2] The foregoing remarks, however, are sufficient to prove the contrary. If further evidence were necessary, it would be easy to show—from the absence of all proof of the previous existence of the practice—the recent prohibitory canon of the Council of Laodicea against worshipping angels—the hesitating, undecided manner in which these fathers express themselves, even in their highest flights,[3]—the character of the writings in which these exceptionable passages occur—and the use occasionally made by them of spurious

writings in order to promote saint-worship—from these and other considerations, it would be easy to show that the invocation of the saints in the time of Basil and the two Gregories was an innovation upon former usages, which the fathers had obtained from the monasteries in which they had been educated, and were doing their utmost to introduce into the church.

On the whole then, it appears highly probable that the invocation of saints arose in the church somewhere between the years 360 and 370; and having once crept in, the practice rapidly gained ground, so that in the time of Chrysostom (A.D. 400) we find the majority of professing Christians addicted to this superstition. “From the beginning of the 5th century,” says Gieseler, “prayer for the saints was discontinued, as unbefitting their glorified state. Christians were now, but seldom, called upon to address their prayers to God; the usual mode being, to pray only to some saint, for his intercession. With this worship of the saints were joined many of the customs of the heathen. Men chose their patron saints and dedicated churches to their worship. The heathen, whom the Christians used to reproach with worshipping dead men, found now ample opportunity of retort.” (Gieseler’s Hist. Vol. I. p. 282.)

At the commencement of the 5th century then, and not earlier, we may consider the worship of saints as pervading the visible church. The true church of God—*the woman clothed with the sun*—had already fled into the wilderness. (Rev. xii. 14.) And it is a fact worthy of remark, that the Christians in the extreme west of Europe continued to keep clear of these and other forms of idolatry, even so late as the 8th century.[4]

The Paulicians too, in the east, worshipped God alone. But although the worship of saints had thus early spread throughout the visible church, it must not be supposed that it was the same as the idolatry of Rome in the 12th century. The form in which it first prevailed was destitute of those malignant and gross features which attached to it in later ages. The monstrous blasphemies of Romish Mariolatry, for instance, were altogether unknown. “Throughout the fourth century there was no peculiar preference of the Virgin Mary above other saints, neither did the teaching of the fourth [century] scruple to attribute to her faults.” (Gieseler I. p. 283.) The worship of images and pictures too, was of later origin. “In the fourth century,” says Gieseler, “the worship of images was still abominated, as a heathen practice; but as early as the fifth century, various superstitions had become connected with them.” (Vol. I. p. 289.) Besides all this, the invocation of the saints did not, as yet, form any part of the public worship of the church.

The invocation of the dead acquired fresh strength in the schools of the poets. Prudentius and Fortunatus, who wrote in Latin in the fifth century, transferred the invocation of the muses and demi-gods of paganism to the Christian martyrs; and availing themselves of the license of poetry, offered them absolute adoration, and addressed them as mediators between God and man. At the close of the sixth century, Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome, did more than any one man, perhaps, to strengthen the growing superstition. From the chair of St. Peter, we hear him exclaim: “Our defenders are present, the holy martyrs; they desire to be invoked, they are solicitous to be sought after.” (Hom. 32 in Evang.) “Let the blessed Apostle Peter be the guardian of your empire. Let him be your protector on earth, and your intercessor in heaven.” (Lib. 12. Ep. 44.)

“We trust in the strength of the omnipotent God, and in the aid of the blessed Peter himself, the Prince of the apostles.” (Lib. 12. Ep. 22.) Previous to this time, the worship of the saints, though carried to a great excess, had been altogether of a private and voluntary character. Gregory, however, amongst other innovations, inserted litanies in the public services of the Romish church, in which each saint was in turn supplicated;—thus, “St. Mary pray for us,” “St. Peter pray for us,” etc. He also sanctioned the use of images in churches, which shortly after degenerated into their actual *worship*.

After the Gregorian form of invoking the saints was admitted into the public worship of the church (Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis!), it went on so far, that all things which are peculiar to God and to Christ were at length sought from the saints by name, and publicly. From the eighth century, all worship of God was merged in the worship of the saints. Festivals were appointed. Monasteries and churches were erected in honor of these Christian demi-gods. Not only were the saints able to heal all diseases, work miracles, and deliver from all dangers and evils; but their very bones, clothes, and in short everything which they had touched, was invested with the same powers, and regarded with the most absurd and impious veneration.

Although the whole church was thus, as it were, deluged with abominable superstition, it is a lamentable fact that idolatry reached a still more impious height during the following centuries; especially in the Romish church.[5] In the tenth century, creature-worship presented a most malignant form, and the Virgin Mary was the first idol who was absolutely exalted by the priests to a level with God. In the 12th and 13th centuries, the system of creature-worship may be considered as having at length reached its maturity; and assumed that form in which it has existed, with little modification, to the present period. It is, accordingly, to *this matured form* that we wish chiefly to direct the reader’s attention. The remaining portion of this chapter will therefore be occupied with an attempt to set forth the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome in reference to saint-worship generally.

The theory and grounds of creature-worship, as practised in the Church of Rome from the 12th century to the Reformation, cannot be better set forth than in the language of Alexander Hales, the first and most ancient of the schoolmen (A.D. 1230). He says that “Prayer should be addressed to the saints for three reasons:

I. On account of our deficiency of merit; that where our merits are not sufficient, the merits of others may plead for us. Or on account of our deficiency of CONTEMPLATION; as being unable to gaze at the Supreme Light itself; but only as it shines in the saints. Or on account of our deficiency of LOVE; because the efficacy of prayer depends upon the ardour of our devotion; and for the most part, feeble man finds himself more affected towards the saints than towards God.

II. That prayer ought to be addressed to the saints on account of THEIR OWN GLORY, in order that, whilst we obtain the assistance which we implore, we may magnify and highly extol them.

III. That prayer ought to be addressed to the saints on account of our REVERENCE TOWARDS GOD; because a sinner who has offended God, though he dare not approach him in his own person, may flee to the saints by imploring their intercession.”*

These impious doctrines are repeated, word for word, in the Golden Legend, first published about 1260, which was read in the churches for centuries in place of the Word of God. All the great doctors of the Papacy, too, express themselves in similar language. Peter Lombard says, “Therefore the saints intercede for us with God, both by MERIT, whilst their merits assist us; and by DESIRE, whilst they desire that our prayers should be granted. We pray, therefore, that they would intercede for us: that is, that their merits may assist us; and that they themselves may will our good; because when they will it, God wills and does it.” (Book 4. dist. 45.) And Gabriel Biel—to mention no more—pronounces, that “by the appointment of God, we ought to have recourse to the help of the saints, THAT WE MIGHT BE SAVED BY THEIR MERITS AND PRAYERS.” (Super Can. Mis.)

The whole religion of the people was in strict accordance with the theory of saint-worship thus laid down by the very highest authorities in the church. In their public and private devotions, professed Christians offered up actual adoration, not only to saints and martyrs, but to angels and archangels. They supplicated blessings, both spiritual and temporal, directly from them—and invoked them as their helpers, preservers, guardians, and deliverers in all dangers and evils, both bodily and mental: whilst the atonement of Christ was altogether set aside by the practice of imploring these saints “to interpose their merits between the justice of God and their demerit.” In order that the reader may judge for himself whether the above remarks are exaggerated or not, we shall now quote several prayers from the old service-books used in the church of Rome before the Reformation.

Ancient Devotions of the Church of Rome

A Prayer to St. Claude

“O thou comforter of the desolate, deliverer of the captive, resurrection of the dead, light of the blind, hearing of the deaf, speech of the dumb, keeper of the shipwrecked, healer of the impotent and languishing, the refuge of medicine, the way of the erring, and THE SALVATION OF ALL THAT HOPE IN THEE! O St. Claude! the bountiful confessor of Christ; pray to God for us, who made thee famous by so many and great miracles; for by reason of thy most holy life, which thou didst lead, so piously and devoutly, in this vale of misery, despising the vanities of this world, and following after celestial things, for thy merits, he hath placed thee in the joys of Heaven above, and graced thee with innumerable miracles.” (Horæ sec. us. Rom. 6 die Junii. Paris. 1570.)

A Prayer to the Holy Innocents

“O all ye holy Innocents, pray for us. O Blessed Boys, flowers of purity, celestial gems, and consorts of the immaculate Lamb, that taketh away the sins of the world, look upon the servant of your sanctity, and express towards me your most tender bowels of pity, that, upon your intercession being presented to the Lord with a pure conscience, I may merit to praise the Lord Jesus Christ, with you, for evermore. Amen.” (Horæ sec. us. Sarum, Parisiis. 1519.)

A Prayer to St. Etheldrede

“Placed amidst the dangers of this present life, and uncertain world, that threaten to wreck us, we fly to thy safe port, O most pious and famous Virgin Etheldrede! that we may feel the bowels of thy

compassions toward us, who always congratulate thy presence among us. Look therefore, thou compassionate Mother and Lady, with a pitiful eye, upon the poor but devout obsequiousness of our services; and let the venerable sublimity of thy virginity relieve and sustain those who are oppressed with the immensity of human frailty. For we believe, and are confident, that from that spouse of thine, who has desired thy beauty, thou canst obtain whatsoever thou shalt ask." (Brev. Sarum. folio 100, Paris. 1555.)

A Prayer to the Holy Angels

"O inflamed Seraphim, burning with love. O ennobled Cherubim, shining with knowledge. O highest Thrones, judging in the session of God. O Supreme Dominations, bearing rule by the divine gift. O famous principalities, set over others in government. O wondrous powers, driving away devils, by God's command. O admirable virtues, doing miracles for the illumination of the faithful. O holy Archangels, to the great, declaring things greater. O good Angels, exercising constant care over men. Attend to your ministry, for our preservation; directing our thoughts, words, and actions into the way of salvation and prosperity. That we, being willing worshippers of the commands of God, may be able happily to fill up the number of your orders (which was lessened by the fall of Lucifer), the divine mercy granting it." (Horæ secund. us. Sar. fol. 92.)

Of St. Gabriel

"Now let the faithful people rejoice, whilst declaring the praises and renown of Gabriel. Let every one, daily, ask blessings of Gabriel and Mary. From them flow the fountain of virtue, the sweetness of life, the hope of salvation, and diffused grace." (Missale Rom. Antiq. fol. 52.)

A Prayer

"Almighty and everlasting God! who, out of thy great clemency, hast wonderfully deputed the glorious PRINCE OF THY CHURCH, blessed Michael, the Archangel, for the salvation of human nature; mercifully grant, that, by his saving aid, we may merit to be most effectually defended, here from evil actions; and, when we shall die, to be freed from all temptation, and beatifically presented before thy high majesty. Through our Lord, etc." (Horæ sec. us. Rom.)

A Prayer to St. Erasmus

"O Saint Erasmus, the precious martyr of Christ, who wast offered to God on the Lord's day, which was an occasion of great joy to thee. Receive this prayer for the salvation of my body and my soul; that through thy prayer God may deign to give me food and raiment; in the hour of death true confession, contrition, and the saving sacrament, with the unction of holy oil, perseverance in good works, with a right faith and intention to die well, with those things that are pleasing TO GOD AND TO THEE: TO THY PRAISE AND HONOUR, and to my consolation. Now S. Erasmus, I commend my body and soul to thee, that God, by thy prayer, may be pleased to give me grace. I commend also to thee all my counsel, all my actions, and all things subject unto me; that thou mayest deliver me from all mine enemies, visible and invisible, which seek to oppose me. That they may not be able to hurt me, in anything, nor inflict any evil upon my soul, or body, basely, or craftily, secretly or openly. For God has promised thee, that, WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL UPON THY NAME, WHATSOEVER HE SHALL

ASK HE SHALL CERTAINLY OBTAIN. Receive me, Oh Erasmus! into thy holy faith and grace, and preserve me, etc." (Horæ sec. us. Sarum.)

To St. Agnes

"Agnes, the Lamb's wife, illumine us internally; eradicate the roots of sins. O Lady singularly great, after the troubles of this life, translate us to the assembly of the blest." (Missal. Rom. Antiq. f. 51.)

To St. Genevieve

"Now O Genevieve, Indulgent Virgin, look favourably towards those who intreat thee. Remove the weight of sin; defeat our foes that oppress us, and their designs. Grant us ever a healthy body, and a pure heart. And having finished our conflict here, unite us to the heavenly band." (Horæ sec. us. Rom. Paris, 1570.)

A Prayer

"Grant unto us most merciful Father, that like as blessed Mary Magdalene obtained pardon of her offences thorough the love that she bare to thy only begotten son above all things: even so thoroughe thy mercy let her purchase for us the blysse everlasting. By Christ our Lord. So be it." (Prymer. fol. 29. 1556.)

A Prayer

"We pray thee O Lord, look graciously upon thy family, *for the merits* and prayer' sake of St. Wilgelort, thy Virgin and Martyr, the King's daughter; and as in answer to her prayers, *thou madest the beard which she desired to have, miraculously, to grow,* so vouchsafe to augment the desires of our hearts, with the benefits of heavenly grace. Through Christ. Our Father. Hail Mary." (Hor. sec. usum. Sarum.)

Of the Three Kings of Colen

"O God who by the guidance of a star didst lead without hindrance, the three Eastern Magi, Jaspar, Melchior and Balthasar to thy cradle, to worship thee with mystical gifts; mercifully grant, that, by the pious intercession of these three kings[6] and by the merits of their commemorations, etc." (Ibid.)

To St. Michael, the Archangel

"Most glorious prince Michael, the captain of hosts, the receiver of souls, the vanquisher of evil spirits, the admirable general next to Christ, of God's church, and of great excellency and power, deliver all that cry unto thee from all adversity, and make them to advance in the worship of God, by thy precious office, and most worthy prayer." (Horæ sec. us. Rom. Sep. 29.)

A Prayer to the Martyrs

"All ye holy martyrs, pray for us; O ye most valiant soldiers of Christ, and princes and captains of the Lord's hosts, whose life was wonderful and death honourable, by that insuperable love with which ye are united to God, I entreat you not to suffer me to perish in my sins; but in every necessity and danger be you my advocates and defenders, that, BY THE INTERPOSING MERITS OF YOUR PASSION, I may partake of eternal felicity. Which may he be pleased to grant, who is your love, life, salvation, and reward, Jesus Christ. Amen." (Horæ sec. us. Sarum.)

To St. Christopher

"O St. Christopher the precious martyr of God, I entreat thee by the name of Christ, thy creator, and by that prerogative he bestowed on thee when he put his own name on thee alone, I beseech thee, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and by the grace thou didst receive, to MAKE GOD AND HIS HOLY MOTHER PROPITIOUS TO ME thy servant, a sinner, etc." (Horæ sec. us. Rom.)

A Prayer

"O God, who didst will that the blessed Anne should be the mother of thy mother; grant we pray thee, that BY THE MERITS both of the mother and daughter, we may attain unto the celestial kingdom."[7]

To St. Francis.

"O Francis! the solar light. Crucified in a remarkable manner, already thou rejoicest with Christ in the choir of celestials. BE THOU UNTO US THE WAY OF LIFE. Always kind to us; DISPLAY UNTO CHRIST THY WOUNDS. Pray for thy servants, that being delivered from our troubles, we may with thee, sweetly praise the Trinity without end."[7]

Of St. Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury.

"O Christ, through the blood of Thomas which he spilt for thee, cause us to mount up whither he has ascended.[8]

Vers.—With glory and honour hast thou crowned him.
Resp.—And hast set him over the works of thy hands.[9]

O Jesus Christ! *through the wounds of Thomas*, loose the sins which bind us; lest the enemy, the world, or the works of the flesh, bear us to hell. After the gifts of God's left hand, let his right hand, THROUGH THEM, O Thomas, embrace us." (Brev. Sarum. in 7. Juli.)

The saints having been thus honoured and worshipped in the public prayers of the church, we cannot wonder at any excess of impiety and blasphemy of which Papists have been guilty. They have raised St. Francis, for instance—the father of the Franciscan friars—not to a level with, but absolutely above the Son of God himself.

In proof of this we have only to refer to a work entitled "The Book of the Conformities of St. Francis with Jesus Christ," written originally in the fourteenth century and since repeatedly printed with approbation. The engraving at the commencement of this curious book represents Christ upon the cross, which, like a tree, sends forth several branches, from which hang altogether forty fruits, on each of which is inscribed one of the forty conformities of Francis with Christ! As follows:

1. Christ sends forth his apostles—Francis aids men.
2. Jesus transcends the angelic host—Francis is exalted to the highest place.
3. Jesus brings men forth—Francis gathers them together.
4. Jesus illumined the devout—Francis conversed with and instructed his disciples.
5. Jesus shone resplendently—Francis is the searcher of hearts.
6. Jesus was admirable in his life—Francis in action.

7. Jesus changed water into wine—So did Francis.
8. Jesus expelled devils—Francis made them flee.
9. Jesus was a shining prophet—Francis was encircled with rays of glory.
10. Jesus was submissive to all—Francis was to the least, etc.

Above this representation are placed the following lines: “O Francis, the typified Jesus, and leader of the friars minor, by thee, the acts and graces of Christ are wonderfully shadowed forth. O excellent father, defend our souls from all evil, and cause us to sit eternally in the kingdom of paradise.” At the foot of the page is: “O Francis, in following the doctrine of God the Creator, the stigmata of the Saviour Jesus Christ were imprinted on thee.”

The following extracts from the work itself will convey to the reader some faint idea of the horrid blasphemy with which it is stuffed:

“St. Francis was the pattern of every perfection, and human nature in him was dignified and adorned by the marks of the passion of Jesus Christ; so that they who follow his steps shall never be overcome by the devil. The day of his birth, the souls were delivered from Purgatory, and taken to glory. Francis is in the glory of God the Father. (Phil. ii. 4.) He is preeminent in the glory of the saints; to which may Jesus Christ bring us, through the merits of the said Francis.” (p. 5.)

“It is pious to believe that Francis was prefigured in the writings of the prophets and the figures of the saints. Francis was revealed to the saints in the same manner that Christ was, as is testified by the Abbot Joachim in his exposition of Jeremiah, and by Cyrillus, Hermit of Mount Carmel. Isaiah saw Francis when he heard the two seraphims saying ‘Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of hosts, the whole earth is filled with his glory.’ (Is. vi. 3.) Ezekiel too, when he heard a voice of a great rushing, saying ‘Blessed be the glory of the Lord.’ (Ezek. iii. 12.) Christ made St. Francis like to himself IN ALL THINGS, and a roll from heaven declared that he was THE GRACE OF GOD” (hic est gratia Dei). Elsewhere in the book, Francis is called “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.” (Lib. I. p. 268.)

“St. Francis strictly followed all the evangelical precepts, so that of him it may be truly said, that he did not transgress a single jot or tittle of them.” (p. 2 & 160.) The mother of Francis said, “What, think you, my son shall be? Know that, by the grace of his merits, he shall be the Son of God.” It was declared to the devil who St. Francis was, for it is written in an ancient legend that a demoniac being cured by him, the devil was interrogated concerning the sanctity of the blessed Francis, who, among other things, declared that at the time of his birth there was such a commotion in hell that they all believed the day of judgment was come. But finding that it did not arrive, they concluded for a certainty that some one was born in the world who should overturn and destroy hell. Being afterwards sent by the prince of darkness to traverse the whole earth, and finding that Francis was born at that precise hour, they were fully convinced that they were eventually to be destroyed by him.[10] (p. 14.)

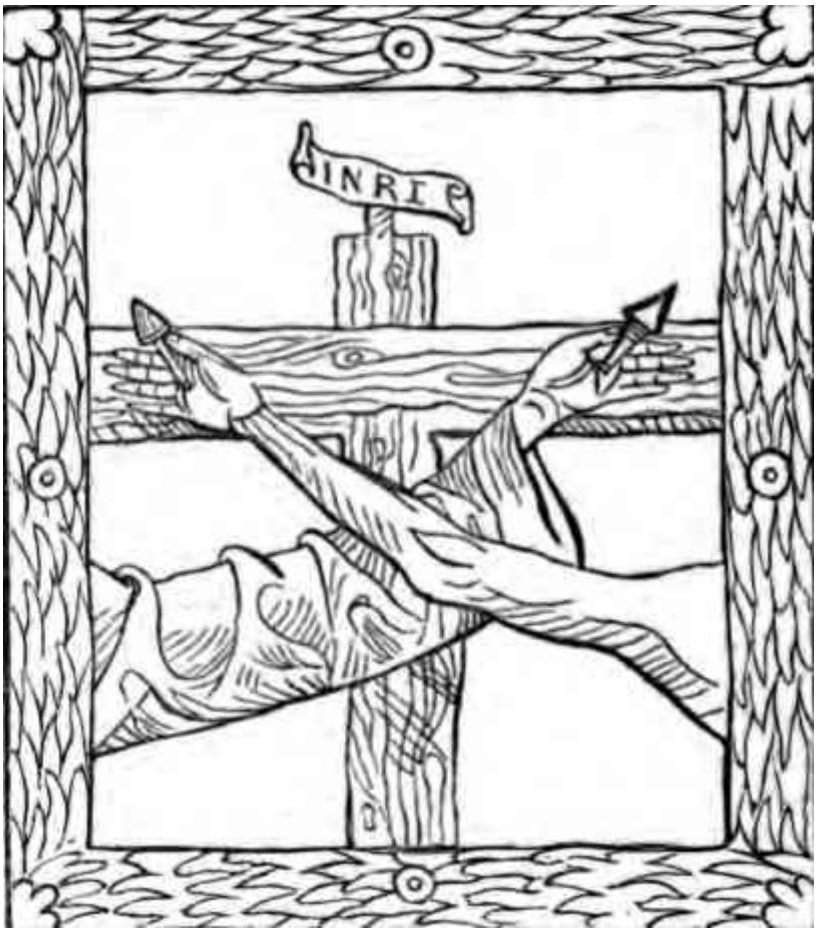
To us, however, the worst thing connected with this saint of Rome is the tendency to regard the stigmata of St. Francis as bearing the same relation to mankind as the sufferings of our blessed Lord.

In the history of his life we are informed that Jesus Christ appeared to him in the form of a seraphim on the cross, and imprinted on his hands, his feet, and his side the five wounds that were given him on the

cross. The same legend adds that he suffered even *till his death*—which happened two years after—the pains of Jesus Christ as sensibly as Christ himself felt them while hanging on the cross; and that his life was preserved, in the midst of a continual death, by a perpetual miracle. The annexed engraving of The Impression of the Stigmata is from an old Romish Breviary.[11]

A plate is given in the "Book of the Conformities of St. Francis" which represents the cross of Christ: but instead of the two arms of the Son of God, one of St. Francis's arms occupies the place of Christ's left arm; as though to intimate, that the salvation of man was equally divided between them. A book written by his followers, called "The Flowers of St. Francis," distinctly states that "those men only were redeemed by the blood of Christ who had lived up to the time of St. Francis; but all others who had lived since that time were redeemed WITH THE BLOOD OF FRANCIS HIMSELF."[12] (Wolf. Lect. Mem. I. p. 522.) An inscription too exists over the great gate of the convent of the Franciscans at Rheims, in France,[13] which, literally translated, is as follows: "TO THE MAN GOD, AND TO SAINT FRANCIS, BOTH THE ONE AND THE OTHER CRUCIFIED."

We give you below an exact facsimile of the plate, in "The book of the Conformities." Printed at Bononia. A.D. 1590.



A similar illustration to the one above, representing one arm of Christ and one of St. Francis nailed to the cross, is still, in the nineteenth century, published in the Breviaries printed for the use of the Franciscans. (See Horæ Diurnæ Breviarii Romani Seraphici A. SS. D. N. Pii VIII. Romæ, 1829.)

It is important to remember that the blasphemous legend of St. Francis, although at first the work of the order of Franciscans, belongs now to the Papacy itself. The Pope in his bulls commanded the doctrine of St. Francis's Stigmata to be *received by all the faithful*. (Leon. Coquæus, Antimorn. Tom. II. p. 245, quoted by Foulis.) Nicholas III. also, in the decretal *Exiit qui seminat*, recommends the poverty and perfection of St. Francis to all Christians, and declares that "he had no bag; and *he finds not those actions of infirmity which were in Jesus Christ, who had two actions of infirmity; viz., he had a bag and he fled.* In these two things Francis surmounted Jesus Christ."[14]

Besides, the numerous editions of the "Book of the Conformities" which Papists have published amply prove that they are chargeable with all the impieties and blasphemies with which that wicked work abounds. It was written, as we have already said, in the fourteenth century by Bartholomeus de Pisis, and published with the consent and entire approbation of a general chapter of the Franciscan order, held at Assisi in 1389, who entitled it "A Golden Book."

It was first printed at Venice, in folio, without printer's name or date;[15] the second edition was printed at Milan, 1510; the third in 1513, at the same place. Subsequent editions were published in 1590, 1620, and 1630. An apology for the book was also printed in 1607 by a Franciscan, with the approbation of the Antwerp censors, who pronounced it useful against heretics. It is not generally known, too, that in the middle of the seventeenth century a new treatise in folio, on the resemblances between Christ and Francis, was published in Spain, entitled "The Prodigy of Nature and Wonder of Grace." In this work the author gives a much greater loose to his imagination than Bartholomew of Pisa. Instead of forty conformities, this prolific writer has given four thousand. An interesting account of this book may be found in the "Critical Literary Journal of Europe."

Similar things are related of several of the other great saints of Rome to whom the prayers and vows of Europe are still presented. It is recorded of St. Dominic, for instance, that Christ raised only three dead men to life; but Dominic restored two men who had been quite crushed to pieces, and forty others who had been immersed for a long period in the water. Christ after his resurrection came to his disciples when the doors were shut; but Dominic, whilst in a mortal state, which is more wonderful, often entered the church by night when it was shut, lest he should awake his disciples. Christ, after he had left this world, drew innumerable multitudes to the way of truth; but Dominic, *many more*, etc.

Antoninus says "Christ was said to be the Lord, *absolutely and authoritatively*; but Dominic possessively."[16] A writer in the fourteenth century also says that in his days "the Dominicans made their Dominic *like unto Christ*." The above statements respecting this saint are taken from Wolf's Lection. Mem. Tom. I. p. 510, where all the authorities may be seen.

St. Clare stands in the same relation to her own sex that St. Francis does to men. "Those women only who lived previous to her time were saved by the merit of the virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary; but

those who have lived since are saved by the merit of the same blessed Mary, but renewed in the body of St. Clare."[17] (Flosculi Sancti Francisci, apud Wolf. Lect. Mem. I. 522.)

Many other instances of men and women being raised to an equality with Christ, and with God, might be enumerated. St. Katherine was taken up into heaven, and became THE WIFE OF JESUS CHRIST. The whole history of the transaction by a spectator is contained in the Golden Legend, published by Caxton, in the fifteenth century. We give the conclusion:

"Thus this glorious marriage was made, whereat all the celestial court joyed and sung this verse in heaven, '*Sponsas amat sponsam. Salvator visitat illam*.' This was a glorious and singular marriage, the which was never more like before in earth."

It is time, however, that we should consider the modern devotions of the Romish Church. The Council of Trent, which is the rule and standard of faith and practice amongst Papists to the present day, has virtually approved and confirmed the gross idolatry of previous ages.

The canons of that council decided that it was "good and useful, humbly to invoke the saints, and to have recourse to their prayers, their help, and assistance, in order to obtain blessings from God through Jesus Christ," and condemned "those who reject the invocation of the saints, in order that they may pray for us individually." It is true, the language of the council in the canons is so worded that they seem to attribute intercession only, not pity, favour, or the power of bestowing blessings, to the saints; yet since they distinguish between the prayers of the saints and their assistance, they plainly retain the very essence of saint-worship, as it was for centuries practised in their church.

The Catechism of the same council proves this far more clearly and fully, for Christians are there said to adore angels, though not with divine veneration. Concerning the saints, the catechism says: "The saints are to be invoked for this reason, that they constantly offer up prayers for the salvation of men; and God confers many blessings upon us, through their merit and grace. When invoked, *they obtain the pardon of our sins, and conciliate God's favour towards us*."

The *Synodus Petricoviensis*, held in Poland, attempted to modify the worship of the saints; for it says in its xviii. chap. "that we are not to implore mercy from the saints, but simply their intercession, as we do from those who are still living on earth." The Catechism of the Council of Trent, on the contrary, teaches that "It is lawful to have recourse to the *grace of the saints* (gratiam), and to use their help." (Chemnitii Examen Conc. Trid. p. 579.)

Thus the invocation and worship of saints is still retained and defended in the Romish Church, mainly, as it was practised previous to the Reformation. We now proceed to give as many instances of prayers to the saints as our space will admit, taken from the present Breviary, Missal, and other authorized books of devotion, all of them in use in the present day.

MODERN DEVOTIONS OF THE ROMISH CHURCH

To St. Peter and St. Paul

"O Peter, the Blessed Shepherd, graciously receive our prayers, and BY THY WORD *unloose the bonds of our sins,* to whom is given the power to open wide heaven to mortals. Illustrious Teacher Paul, instruct our manners, and snatch our hearts (to be) with thee." (Breviar. Rom. June 29)

To St. Clare

"Now O Maid, thou reignest in the kingdom of light, with the Father (i.e. St. Francis). Grant that the steps of all thy followers may be in a right course." (Officia Nova Sanctorum. 1672.)

A Hymn for Any Apostle

"Let the earth leap for joy, let the heavens resound with praise; let the earth and stars sing together the glory of the Apostles. O ye judges of the world, and true lights of the earth, we earnestly beg you to hear the prayers of our suppliant hearts. *Ye that close the temple of heaven, and* WITH A WORD *unloose its bolts*, we pray you, command us guilty ones to be freed from punishment. Ye whose commands, sickness and health at once obey, heal diseased minds and replenish us with virtues. That when Christ, the judge of the world, shall return, at the end, he may grant us to be partakers of eternal joy." (Brev. Romanum.)

To St. Peter of Alcantara

"Now hear our prayers and preserve our morals pure without a spot. Infuse thy healthful ways (sensus) into our minds. O Glory of the Franciscans, receive the prayers and praises of thy suppliants. O blessed Father, kindly look upon thy (children) from on high." (Officia Nova Sanct. Oct. 1672.)

To St. Venantius

"O most brave warrior, who didst give to thy perfidious tormentors water from the rock, water our souls with the dew of grace." (Ibid. May 18.)

At Lauds: "Now O joint-partaker with angels, be present to the wishes of thy suppliants. Expel our crimes and impart unto us thy light." (Ibid.)

A Prayer

"O God who, by innumerable miracles, hast honoured blessed Nicholas the bishop, grant, we beseech thee, that *by his merits and intercession*, we may be delivered from eternal flames. Through the Lord." (Missal. Rom. Dec. 6.)

A Prayer

"We beseech thee, O Lord, *by the merits* of thy saints whose relics are here, and of all the saints, that thou wouldest vouchsafe to *forgive me all my sins*. Amen." (Rom. Missal for the use of the laity, p. 18. Lond. 1813.)

To St. Francis Xavier, to obtain a generous heart

"Behold at your feet, O most generous Apostle! a soul that most shamefully neglects all things belonging to the service of God. I fear, I confess, the least thing that either seems difficult or any way terrible; and, by this my inordinate pusillanimity, I fly back and quit many a noble action that otherwise might very much increase the glory of God. O holy Apostle, GRANT ME but one spark of your great courage, wherewith you underwent such difficulties, ANIMATE and STRENGTHEN my pusillanimity; that, frightened by no opposition, I may most manfully and readily fulfil God's Holy Will. Amen." (Manner of performing the NOVENA, or nine days devotion to St. Francis Xavier, Dub. 1749. p. 67.)

Another prayer in the same work begins thus:—

To St. Francis Xavier

"Most Holy Father Francis Xavier, who receivedst thy praises from the mouths of innocent children; I most humbly implore thy bountiful charity, for the sake of the most precious Blood of Jesus, and of the immaculate conception of our blessed Lady, Mother of God; to the end, thou mayest obtain of God's infinite Goodness, that at the approach of my last hour, my heart may be separated and withdrawn from all worldly thoughts and distractions," etc.

To St. Joseph

"Great St. Joseph, I take you, this day, and for the whole of my life, for my especial patron, for my master, for the director of my soul, and my body, of my thoughts, of my words, of my actions, of my desires, of my inclinations, of my honour, and of my goods; of my life and of my death; and I purpose never to forget you, but to exalt your holy name, and to advance your glory, as far as I possibly can. I intreat you, therefore, O great saint, to accept me as your perpetual servant; assist me in all my actions, and do not abandon me at the hour of death. Amen." (L'Ange Conducteur, p. 272. Bruxellis. 1802.)

Devout and loving elevations to St. Joseph

"Admirable St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, nourisher of Jesus; who will confer on me the happiness of seeing myself under your protection? Who will place me under your faithful guidance? Terrestrial angel, divine lamp of high perfection, mirror animated by virtues the most heroic, ravishing lily of purity the most perfect! O man the most happy and the most glorious of all men, alone chosen amongst all others, to hide for a time the adorable mystery of the incarnation of the Word; hide me from the sight of his wrath, who am always in danger of allowing myself to be surprised.

Divine Joseph think on me; watch for me, amiable cherubim, who dost guard the paradise of the new Adam; labour for my sanctification, dear nourisher of the sacred victim of our salvation; provide for all my wants, faithful depository of the most precious of all treasures. I conjure you, lastly, to exercise over me a sovereign authority, and to bring all my powers under your laws, O illustrious head of the holiest family that ever existed; tutor and governor of the incarnate wisdom, who didst as a father command the man-God, being, by commission, lieutenant of the celestial Father over the Infant-God." (Ibid. p. 289.)

A Prayer to all the Saints

"Great saints, who have happily passed the dangers of this tempestuous sea, and who are in a safe port, enjoying a joy that is incomprehensible; I conjure you, for the love of Him, who has chosen you for his princes and for his favourites, to have the goodness to remember me, who am exposed to tempests, and subject to shipwrecks; so that stretching out your hand I may be sustained by you, so as not to fall under the conflicts and attacks of my enemies, who only seek my destruction. O fortunate bands, elevated by the great God, I recommend to you my body, my soul, my life, my death, my judgment, and all that relates to the eternal salvation of my soul; I recommend to you, equally, my parents, my friends, my benefactors, and the faithful deceased, especially my near relatives." (Ibid. p. 369.)

A Prayer to be said six Sundays following, after reciting six Paternosters, six Aves, the Gloria Patri, and the Litany of St. Aloysius.

To St. Aloysius

"Angelical youth, most loving protector and powerful advocate, Aloysius! as thy most unworthy servant and client, yet sensible of the favours thou enjoyest with God, the just reward of thy merit, I humbly prostrate myself before the throne of thy glory. I rejoice, from my soul, not only for the renown of thy name, illustrious upon earth, by frequent and glorious prodigies; but am also overjoyed for the sublime pre-eminence with which God has been pleased to crown thy virtues in heaven… Be thou ever present with me, protect and defend me, as well in life as in death, when my weakness will stand in need of, and call for thy powerful assistance. Let me also, my dear and indulgent patron, most earnestly beg the grace of (N.N.) which I confidently hope to obtain through thy holy intercession." (Devot. to the Sac. heart, &c., p. 307. Lon. 1831.)

In the same work (pages 301—303) occur *The Litany of St Aloysius; The Litany of St Francis Xavier,* &c. The following extract from the former is all we can find room for :—

From the concupiscence of the eyes, deliver us, O Lord.
From the concupiscence of the flesh, deliver us, O Lord.
From the pride of life, deliver us, O Lord.
By the merits and intercession of St Aloysius, deliver us, O Lord.
By his angelical purity, deliver us, O Lord.
By his sanctity and glory, deliver us, O Lord.

Such is the saint-worship of papal Rome, even in the nineteenth century. In the primitive church every Christian was a saint. The terms are synonymous; all real believers are holy, i.e., saints; they are sanctified by the Spirit; they are washed in the blood of the Lamb; they are "the temples of God." Amongst Papists, however, no one is a saint until canonized by the Pope; and the meaning of saint is—one to whom prayer may be lawfully addressed!

The very fact of invoking the saints in heaven implies that they are omnipresent and omniscient; that is, that they are gods. "They must be everywhere present, and they must know all that transpires on earth; or otherwise why are they worshipped in a thousand different parts of the world?" At the time when the saints were first invoked, about the middle of the fourth century, it was only at the places where their

remains were deposited, about which it was supposed their spirits hovered. But Papists at the hour of death make no scruple of calling upon the same saints in a thousand different places, at the same time, to conduct their souls to heaven! And the Council of Trent has decided that mental prayer may be lawfully addressed to the saints!

We are aware that many learned men amongst them speculate about the saints "seeing all things in God," and others about having "the prayers of the worshippers specially revealed to them by the Most High":—but all this is mere theory, and the people, who cannot philosophize, naturally imagine that the saints know all their wants, and hear all their prayers, *by their own power.* A sort of immensity is ascribed to them, and the knowledge of the secrets of hearts; and, thus, divine attributes are attributed to creatures, just as was done by the ancient idolaters of Greece and Rome.

Thus the mere act of *invocation*, in itself, is idolatry when a creature in heaven is the object. What shall we say, then, to the *prayers* presented by Papists, during the last thousand years, to the saints? The *praises* of which they were the unconscious objects were made up of the most fulsome flattery; and often, as we have seen, blasphemously ascribed divine perfections to glorified men and women; and, in many cases, mere fabulous saints who never existed were thus worshipped,[18] and in others they were worshipped on account of imaginary acts, as when St. Christopher was adored for having carried Christ across a river on his shoulder, or St. Wilgefort the Virgin for having a beard miraculously produced on her chin, etc.!

The petitions too, which are addressed to the saints, rob God of his glory, and attribute to creatures those perfections and those offices which exclusively belong to the Most High. We are aware that Gother, Bossuet, and other sweeteners of Popery direct us to the statement of the Council of Trent, in which they say, "We make use of two forms of prayer, widely different from each other; for whereas, in speaking to God, we say 'Have mercy on us; hear us;' in addressing ourselves to a saint we say no more than, 'Pray for us.'"[19] A more direct and barefaced falsehood was never penned, as the most cursory glance at the prayers we have quoted will abundantly satisfy any one.

In these devotions, as well ancient as modern, not merely temporal, but also the highest spiritual blessings are sought, *directly,* from the saints. They are invoked, not merely to "pray for" their worshippers, but also to "HAVE MERCY UPON THEM," to "IMPART LIGHT," to "UNLOOSE THE BONDS OF SIN," to "WATER THEIR SOULS WITH GRACE," to "HIDE THEM FROM THE ANGER OF CHRIST," to "OPEN HEAVEN" to their spirits. These are unquestionably the prerogatives of Deity, and in ascribing them to the saints, Papists are clearly guilty of giving divine honours to creatures and making them practically, true Gods.

In asking blessings too of the Most High, THROUGH THE MERITS OF THE SAINTS, as we have seen they still do in numberless instances (see also page 49), Christ is virtually denied, and his redeemed creatures constituted the actual Saviours of the world! If St. Nicholas the bishop is able "to deliver from the eternal flames of hell," as the church of Rome teaches every sixth day of December in its Reformed Missal, then is HE the real Saviour of sinners, and Christ is a mere cypher!

It will be now admitted then, by all but Papists themselves, that the Romish church *does* openly and authoritatively enjoin polytheism, or the worship of more Gods than one, upon the people. And the actual *result* of this teaching is stated by the tutor of Queen Mary: “Many Christians,” said he, “worship he and she saints (divos divasque) no otherwise than God himself.” (Ludovicus Viv. apud Hall, in Townshend’s Accus. of Hist., etc.)

What language, then, is strong enough to express the malignancy of a superstition like this, which calls away the praises and service of mankind from the only wise God, to hundreds of real or imaginary creatures! And where, if not in such a priesthood as that of Rome, shall we find the fulfilment of the language: “And he that sat on him, his name was the PESTILENCE.” (Thanatos.)

If there be one sin more hateful to God than another, if there be one evil more deadly than another—it is surely the crime of creature-worship:—the act of transferring to those whom His breath has produced out of nothing the homage and service which Jehovah claims as His exclusive right! This crime has been fully and unanswerably proved against the Man of Sin. In every prayer-book, in every missal, in every book of devotion, in every sermon, in every mass, in every religious service, that apostate church has for twelve hundred years diffused the poison of idolatry over all Europe—robbing God of his glory, and deifying men, women, and angels.

Nothing then can save Romanism from the fearful charge of being a system of polytheism. And in the idolatry of the church of Rome, we recognize another element of that MORAL PESTILENCE called Popery, of which the word of God declares: “and power was given unto him over the fourth part of the earth to kill… with THE PESTILENCE!”

Footnotes

[1] Heaven in the figurative language of prophecy often denotes the place of political power—just as the sun, moon, and stars denote various grades of authority in Gen. xxxvii. 9. The dragon being cast out of heaven would thus signify that the supreme power was no longer in the hands of “the god of this world,” as truly as ever. But simply that he no longer ermployed the powers that be, *as his tool to effect his designs against the church*. And it is a remarkable fact, that although fifteen hundred years have since elapsed, no instance of the persecution of Christians, as such, by the supreme power has since occurred, within the limits of the Roman world.

[2] Especially in Isaac Taylor’s “Ancient Christianity,” made the scape-goat to bear away the sins of the Papacy.

[3] “Hear, oh, thou soul of the great Constantine, *if thou hast any knowledge of this*.” (Greg. Naz. Invect. in Jul.) “If thou hast any care for the things we do, and if holy souls receive this honor from God.” (Greg. Naz. Orat. II. in Gorg.) And similar passages occur in other orations of these fathers.

[4] See an interesting and valuable tract of Dr. Geddes. Tract I. in Vol. III. Lond. 1780.

[5] Spanhemii Opera Vol. I. p. 1268, Lugdun. A.D. 1701.

[6] The Romish Church has made the wise men kings, and invented names for them and fixed their number at three, and all without the slightest evidence. Equally fanciful is the following authorized account of the offerings of the wise men, taken from one of her Books of Homilies: “kept of the gold as much as him needed, to pay his tribute to the emperor, and also to keep our Lady with, while she lay in child-bed; and the rest he dealed to the poor. The incense he brent (burnt) to put away the stench of the stable there, as she lay in: and with the myrrh, our Lady anointed her child, to keep him from worms and disease.” (Festivale in die Epiph.)

[7] Ex cursu Horarum B.V.M. secundum ordinarium Ecclesise Hildensheimensis, (In Chem.)

[8] Tu per Thome sanguinem quem pro te impendit. Fac nos Christe scandere quo Thomas asendit.

[9] Hore sec. usum. Sar.

[10] This is, if possible, exceeded by the following awful blasphemy: “If God were not God he would be other than S. Francis,” which I have read in the saint’s life and often heard from the pulpit; the original Portuguese is “Se Deos nao fosse Deos nao seria outra cousa, senao S. Francisco.” (Authentic Memoirs of the Portuguese Inquisition, &c., Lond. 1761.)

[11] Breviarium Monasticum, sec. ritum et morem Monach. ord. S. Benedicti de Obs. 1502.

[12] Extat liber a Franciscanis concinnatus cujus titulus est, Flosculi S. Francisci. Ubi scriptum est, eos viros, duntaxat fuisse redemptos sanguine Christi, qui vixerant usque ad tempora S. Francisci: reliquos vero qui consecuti sunt, fuisse redemptos ipsius Francisci sanguine.

[13] See “Dissertation sur l’inscription du grand Portail, &c. par le Sieur de St. Sauveur, à Bruxelles 1670.”

[14] Christus egit etiam infirma, sicut interdum ut in fuga patet et in loculis. Quoted in “The Capucin.”

[15] It is worthy of remark, that, in all the subsequent editions, several passages are omitted. For example, the account of St. Francis swallowing a spider which was in the chalice, out of respect to the sacrament, which a few days afterwards came out of his thigh. Also, *his killing a physician’s son, in order that he might have the pleasure of raising him to life*, etc. etc.

[16] Dominicum dictum quasi totum Domini; ut Christus Dominus sit absolute et auctoritative; Dominicus vere possessive. (Wolf. Lect. Mem. Tom. I. 510.)

[17] Eas mulieres duntaxat fuisse redemptas merito virginitatis B. Mariæ, quæ vixerant ad tempora usque S. Claræ: reliquas vero quæ postea natæ sunt redemptas esse merito virginitatis ejusdem quidem B. M. sed renovatæ in corpore S. Claræ.

[18] St. Longinus, who is said to have pierced our Lord’s side with a spear, plainly owes his existence to some ignorant Romish monk having mistaken the Greek word for spear, λόγχη (longke), for the name of the soldier of whom this act is recorded.

The eighty-three soldiers who are set down as martyred on the twenty-fourth of July arose out of a similar mistake. The old martyrologies have on this day, “At Amiternum, eighty-three miles [octoginta

tribus millibus] from the city of Rome, of *St. Victorinus*," that is, his martyrdom. But the Romish church has ignorantly canonized the eighty-three *miles* into so many Popish saints, by mistaking the contraction of *milliaria*, miles, for the word *milites*, soldiers!

On the first of January, the first saint of the Romish Reformed Martyrology is *St. Almachius*, who is said to have suffered martyrdom in Rome at the command of Alipius, prefect of the city, for having said, "This day is the Octaves of the Lord's day; cease from the superstition of idols, and from polluted sacrifices." This Almachius is not named in any of the ancient martyrologies, but in his place is mentioned St. Corona, to whom this very same speech is attributed, and whose martyrdom is described in the same words as that of St. Almachius. The explanation is obvious: some ignorant scribe took the word Almanack, at the beginning of the calendar, for the name of a man! And having put him in the place of St. Corona, naturally enough attributed his speech and the circumstances of his martyrdom to this new saint. See more on this subject in Middleton's "Letter from Rome," and in a valuable piece in Geddes' Tracts, Vol. II. pp. 187–244, "A discovery of some gross mistakes in the Roman Martyrology."

[19] Catech. Rom. p. iv. de cultu Sanct.

CHAPTER V.
THE WORSHIP OF THE VIRGIN

In the previous chapter we have seen the awful extent to which the worship of saints and angels in the Church of Rome has supplanted the worship of the only wise God. From their authorized books of devotion it has been proved that Papists have been taught to ask the highest blessings directly from the hands of creatures, once sinful creatures like ourselves; that saints and martyrs are invoked as their helpers, preservers, guardians, and deliverers in all dangers and evils, both temporal and spiritual; and that the *merits* of mere creatures constitute the ground on which pardon and eternal life are sought from a just and holy God!

Awful, however, as these practices indeed are in a professedly Christian community, the worst yet remains behind. The climax of creature-worship is reached in the adoration of the Virgin, who may justly be styled the great Goddess of Popery!

That the mother of our Lord, according to the flesh, was “highly favoured” and “blessed among women” is the testimony of the Word of God; and in such sentiments every devout mind will cordially unite. It must be remembered, however, that her blessedness did not arise so much from the fact of her being the mother of Jesus as from the eminent grace of which she was the subject. The gospels record very little about Mary; and when she is introduced, the little account made of her seems intended, purposely, to repress those feelings of veneration and idolatry of which she was afterwards so generally the object.

The worship of the Virgin was not so early in its origin as that of the martyrs. “Throughout the fourth century,” says Gieseler, “there was no peculiar preference of the Virgin Mary above other saints. The church went, as yet, no farther than to maintain the doctrine of her perpetual virginity, to which the monastic notions of the time naturally led. Neither did the teachers of the church scruple to attribute to her faults;[1] and Epiphanius includes certain women in his catalogue of heretics for their extravagant adoration of the Virgin.” (Gieseler, Vol. I, p. 287.)

In the year 431, a general council was held at Ephesus on the subject of the famous Nestorian controversy, at which it was unanimously decided that the Virgin was truly the Mother of God. This decision was, probably, the principal cause of the increased honour rendered to Mary in subsequent ages. Let it only be taught that the Virgin is the mother of Jesus as to his divine nature, and there is nothing too great to be affirmed of her—no honour to which she is not entitled. The mother of God, in the strict and full meaning of the words, clearly implies essential equality with God.

Accordingly, from this time, we find the Virgin becoming, increasingly, an object of adoration, both in the east and west. In the course of the sixth century, the fable of the Assumption, i.e., the ascension of the Virgin to heaven in a glorified state, like our Lord himself, was publicly taught.[2] This

blasphemous legend, no doubt, tended still further to augment those superstitious feelings of which she was already the object.

Several centuries, however, elapsed before the worship of the Virgin attained the height which it at present exhibits in the Church of Rome. In the tenth century, the custom of abstaining from flesh every Saturday in honour of the Virgin was introduced in the West. In the next century, this superstition acquired fresh vigour.

St. Fulbert, bishop of Chartres in France, composed many writings in praise of the Virgin, erected the Cathedral of Chartres to her honour, and introduced the celebration of "The Nativity of our Lady" into France. In the same age lived Peter Damian, bishop of Ostia and cardinal of Rome. He composed the "Office of the Virgin" and exceeded all who had gone before him in devotion to Mary. He taught that "all power was given to her, in heaven and in earth, and that nothing was impossible to her." (Sermones. Opera. Tom. ii.) In another place he says, "She comes before the golden altar of human reconciliation, not entreating but commanding, as a mistress, not as a maid."[3]

It was in this age that those blasphemous anthems the "Alma Redemptoris" and "Salve Regina," which are still so often repeated in the Romish Missal and Breviary, were composed by Hermannus Contractus, a monk of Germany.[4]

Our countryman Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, lived in this century, and zealously defended the new doctrine of the *immaculate* conception of the Virgin, and introduced the festival of that event into the English Church. The writings of Anselm abound with the grossest blasphemies in reference to Mary. He calls her "The Empress of Heaven and Earth, and of all that is therein!" He tells us that one reason why our Lord left her behind, when he ascended to heaven was, "lest, perhaps, the court of heaven might have been doubtful which they should rather go out to meet—their Lord or their Lady." (De excel. virg. ch. 7.) As a matter of experience he assures us, that "more present help is, sometimes, found by commemorating the name of Mary than by calling upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Ibid. cap. 6.) He also teaches, that "the Blessed Virgin has saved even the angels, many of whose seats would have been vacated, like Lucifer's, had it not been for her protection." (Andrade p. 493.)

Such being the doctrines inculcated by the highest authorities of the eleventh century, we need not wonder that in the next age, to use the language of Hallam, "the worship of the Virgin rose to an *almost exclusive idolatry!*"

The greatest doctor of this period was St. Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux, who possessed more influence, probably, than ever fell to the lot of any private individual. "What then must have been the effect of such divinity as the following?"

"You fear," says he, "to approach the Father—terrified merely by his voice—you hide yourself among the leaves, (referring to Gen. iii. 7–10.) He has given to you Jesus, as a Mediator. But, perhaps, even in him, you dread the Divine Majesty; for although he became man, yet he remains God. Do you seek an advocate with him? Flee to Mary, since the humanity in Mary is not only pure by its freedom from all contamination, but also pure by the oneness of its nature. Nor would I speak doubtfully—she will be

heard on account of the veneration in which she is held. The Son will hear the Mother—the Father will hear the Son," etc. (Serm. in Nativ. B.M. de aquaductu. ed. Mab. Tom. ii. p. 160.)

In another place, he extols the Virgin as "the subject of all Scripture, and the end for which it was given," and even "the end for which the world was made." (*Super Salve Regina*.)

In the thirteenth century was published the celebrated Golden Legend, which was, for centuries, read in the churches in place of the Bible. This impious production abounds with blasphemous legends respecting Mary. The following extract occurs under the feast of "The Conception of our Lady":

> "Balaam the prophet compared our lady to a star, for three causes. *First,* for she is adorned and giveth beauty to all human creatures, like as the star doth on the firmament. For she hath opened to us the gates of paradise, like as it is songen in the holy church: Paradysi porta per evam cunctis clausa est, et per beatam virginem mariam iterum patefacta est. The gate of paradise, which by Eve was closed from all men, is now opened by the blessed Virgin Mary.
>
> *Secondly,* like as the star enlumineth the night by his clereness, in like wise the glorious lady enlumineth by her life all holy church, whereof holy church singeth: Ipsius vita gloriosa lucem dedit seculo. The noble light of our lady giveth light to all churches. For as saith Hugo de Sancto Victore, 'Oh glorious lady, for as much as thou hast engendered a grace and glory to all manner of people: unto the dead life, to sinners grace, and to captives pardon,' may be said as is said, Judith ch. 15, 'Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel.'
>
> *Thirdly,* she is compared unto the star, for she hath dwelled all her life steadfastly in all works of virtue without doing ony sin; like as the star holdeth him on the firmament without descending to the earth."

The most inexhaustible, however, in the praises of the Virgin, was St. Bonaventure, a cardinal of Rome in the thirteenth century, whose works are, notwithstanding, characterized with the same fervour and unction which distinguish St. Bernard's. He wrote The Mirror of the Blessed Virgin Mary, The Crown of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Verses upon the Anthem Salve Regina, The Praise of the Blessed Virgin, The Lesser Psalter, and The Larger Psalter. We shall pass by all the other works of this celebrated writer to make the reader acquainted with the last-mentioned one, The Psalterium Majus.

This impious production is nothing less than a parody upon the book of Psalms—the same appellations, prayers, and praises being addressed to the Virgin Mary which David addresses to the everlasting God:

"Blessed is the man," says Bonaventure, "that loves thy name, Oh Virgin Mary; thy grace shall comfort his soul." (Ps. 1)

"Oh Lady, how are they multiplied that trouble me? With thy tempest thou will persecute and scatter them." (Ps. 3)

"Lady, suffer me not to be judged in the fury of God, neither to be judged in his wrath." (Ps. 6)

"Lady, in thee have I put my trust, deliver thou me from mine enemies, O Lady." (Ps. 7)

“In our Lady I put my trust, for the sweetness of the mercy of her name.” (Ps. 10)

“How long wilt thou forget me, O Lady, and not deliver me in the day of tribulation?” (Ps. 12)

“Preserve me, O Lady, for I have trusted in thee, and impart unto me the droppings of thy grace.” (Ps. 15)

“I will love thee, O Lady of heaven and of earth, and will call upon thy name among the nations.” (Ps. 17)

“In thee, O Lady, I have put my trust, let me never be confounded; in thy favour do thou receive me.” (Ps. 30)

“Blessed are whose hearts love thee, Virgin Mary; their sins shall be mercifully washed away by thee.” (Ps. 31)

“O my Lady, judge those that hurt me, and rise up against them, and plead my cause.” (Ps. 34)

“Incline the countenance of God upon us; compel him to have mercy upon sinners.” (Ps. 35)

“Have mercy upon me, O Lady, who art called the Mother of mercy, and according to the bowels of thy mercies, cleanse me from all mine iniquities.” (Ps. 50)

“Shall not my mind be subject to thee, O Lady, who didst beget the Saviour of the world? Pour forth grace out of thy treasuries; cleanse all our sins and heal all our infirmities.” (Ps. 61)

“The song becometh thee, our Lady, in Zion—praise and thanksgiving in Jerusalem,” etc. etc. (Ps. 64)

“Let Mary arise, and let her enemies be scattered, let all of them be trodden down beneath her feet.” (Ps. 67)

“O come, let us sing unto our Lady; let us make a joyful noise to Mary our queen, that bringeth salvation.” (Ps. 94)

“Oh come, let us sing unto our Lady a new song; for she has done wondrous things.” (Ps. 97)

“Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good—give thanks unto his mother, for her mercy endureth for ever.” (Ps. 106 and 117)

“The Lord said unto our Lady, sit thou, my mother, at my right hand.” (Ps. 109)

“Blessed are all they that fear our Lady, and blessed are they that know to do thy will and thy good pleasure.” (Ps. 127)

“Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for by his most sweet mother, the Virgin Mary, his mercy is given.” (Ps. 135)

“Blessed be thou, O Lady, who teachest thy servants to war, and dost strengthen them against the enemy.” (Ps. 144)

This mass of blasphemy thus concludes: “Praise our Lady in her saints—praise her in her virtues and miracles, etc. Let everything that hath breath praise our Lady.” (Ps. 150)

Such is the Psalter of the Blessed Virgin Mary,[5] and the reader will doubtless agree with us that to evade the charge of direct and most impious idolatry, which this production fastens upon the Romish Church, is wholly impossible.

No nice distinctions of *latria*, *dulia*, or *hyperdulia* will avail them here, since the identical language—the identical feelings, hopes, fears, affections, desires, etc., which constitute the religion of man—are here addressed to a creature. Nor will the plea that it is an ancient and obsolete production avail Papists in this case, since it has gone through fourteen editions since the year 1830. A copy of one of these, now in the possession of the Rev. Dr. Cumming of the Scotch Church, London, has the imprimatur and re-imprimatur of the present ecclesiastical authorities in the Vatican; it is published in the Italian or vulgar tongue, and sold for three *scudi*—about twopence.

It was not, however, till the fifteenth century that this pestilence reached its climax throughout the Romish Church. At this period lived Bernardine of Sienna, who thus discourses of her:

> “From the time when the Virgin mother conceived in her womb the Word of God, she hath obtained such a kind of jurisdiction, so to speak, or authority, in all the temporal procession of the Holy Ghost, that no creature has obtained any grace or virtue from God, but according to the dispensation of his holy mother.” “Because she is the mother of the Son of God, who doth produce the Holy Ghost, therefore all rights, virtues, and graces of the Holy Ghost are by her hands administered to whom she pleaseth, when she pleaseth, and as much as she pleaseth.” (Ussher, Answ. to a Jesuit.)

Another distinguished writer of that age, Bernardine de Bustis, is equally eloquent in the praises of the Virgin. The following extracts from his writings are all taken from Archbishop Ussher’s Answer to an Irish Jesuit (p. 433):

> “As many creatures do serve the glorious Virgin Mary as serve the Trinity, namely all creatures, whatsoever degree they hold among the things created—whether they be spiritual as angels, or rational as men, or corporeal as the heavenly bodies or elements… And as this proposition is true, ‘All things are subject to God’s command, even the Virgin herself,’ so this again is true: ‘All things are subject to the command of the Virgin, even God himself.’”
>
> “Considering the blessed Virgin is the mother of God, and God is her son, and every son is naturally inferior to his mother, and subject unto her, and the mother has pre-eminence, and is superior to her son; it therefore follows, that the blessed Virgin is superior to God; and God himself is subject to her, in respect of the manhood which he assumed from her.”
>
> “Howsoever she be subject unto God, inasmuch as she is a creature, yet is she said to be superior to him, and preferred before him, inasmuch as she is his mother.”
>
> “So great is her glory that she exceeds the nature of angels and men joined together, as far, in glory, as the circumference of the firmament exceeds its centre in magnitude.”

> "When Esther was offered the half of the kingdom (Esth. v. 3), we are taught that God bestowed the half of his kingdom upon the blessed Virgin—for when God possessed justice and mercy, he retained justice to be exercised by himself, and granted mercy unto her."
>
> "That therefore if any one feels himself aggrieved in God's court of justice, he may speak unto his mother's court of mercy."
>
> "She being that Throne of Grace of which the Apostle speaks, when he says, 'Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.'"[6]

About this time, the lying legend of the "House of Loretto" was invented. A chapel dedicated to the Virgin Mary near Recanati, in Italy, was, towards the fifteenth century, declared to be her house, which had been brought thither by angels from Palestine. This report, which was industriously circulated and as generally believed, speedily rendered this shrine of the Virgin the most famous in Europe. Pilgrimages to "Our Lady of Loretto" were for many centuries undertaken by kings and princes, as well as the common people, from all parts of the continent.[7]

Such were the doctrines respecting the Virgin inculcated previous to the Reformation; and it will not now be questioned by any impartial reader that the Church of Rome during this period exalted the Virgin to the very throne of the Godhead. Still it may be thought that these idolatrous doctrines of the dark ages have long since been abandoned, and that *modern* Papists reject such blasphemies as firmly as Protestants themselves. In opposition to such an idea, it may be stated—not only that many of the extracts in the preceding pages are constantly quoted in almost every modern Popish book of devotion—but what is worse, that many of the devotional works of the Romish Church printed since the Reformation contain, if possible, more blasphemous and idolatrous statements than any of the preceding.

The first work which we shall adduce in evidence of the truth of this charge is the modern Romish Breviary:

> "O thou, whosoever understandest that thou art rather floating on the ocean of this world, amongst storms and tempests, than walking on the earth; turn away thine eyes from the brightness of this star [alluding to the Virgin] if thou wishest not to be overwhelmed by this star. If the winds of temptation arise, if thou run upon the rocks of temptation, call on Mary… In dangers, in straits, in perplexities—think on Mary. Let her not depart from thy mouth, let her not depart from thy heart: and, that thou mayest obtain the suffrage of her prayers, desert not the example of her conversation. Following her, thou dost not go astray; asking of her, thou dost not despair… she being thy guide, thou dost not grow weary; she being propitious, thou reachest thy destination." (Brev. Rom. Winter part, p. 359.)

On the fifth day of the week of her Nativity, the following is of the lesson:

> "Truly a great miracle, my beloved brethren, was the ever blessed Virgin Mary. For what, in any past time, was ever found, or what, in time to come, will it be possible to find, greater or more

> illustrious than she? She alone has surpassed heaven and earth in her greatness. For what is more holy than she? Neither Prophets, nor Apostles, nor Martyrs, nor Patriarchs, nor Angels, nor Thrones, nor Powers, nor Seraphim, nor Cherubim, nor aught beside of created things, visible or invisible, can be found greater, or more excellent. She is at once the handmaid and the mother of God, a virgin and a mother."

Another lesson, taken from an exposition on 1 Sam. i. 1, is as follows:

"The most blessed ever Virgin Mary, mother of God, may be designated by the name of the mountain. For she was indeed a mountain, who, by the dignity of her elevation transcended every exaltation of every elect creature. Was not Mary a sublime mountain, who, that she might attain to the conception of the eternal Word, reared the summit of her merits, above all the choirs of angels, EVEN TO THE THRONE OF THE GODHEAD…" For this is the mountain, of whose surpassing dignity Isaiah prophesies, 'It shall come to pass in the last days, that the Mountain of the Lord's House shall be established, upon the top of the mountains.' For a mountain she was, upon the top of the mountains," &c……..[8]

To add no more—that passage of the Old Testament which points to Him who is styled in the gospel "The Wisdom of God," is, with shocking profanity, applied to the Virgin: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old… For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord." (Prov. viii. 22–35.) (Missal. Rom. in Nat. B.M.V. et in Con. B.M.V.)

In the Contemplations on the Life and Glory of Holy Mary, the Mother of Jesus, published *permissu Superiorum* A.D. 1685, we are told, in the prefatory epistle, that "The Blessed Virgin is not only the Empress of Seraphims… but that, by innumerable titles, she claims the utmost duty of every Christian, as a proper homage to her greatness." In the book itself, she is said to be the Queen of angels, patroness of the church, advocate of sinners, etc.; and that "the power of Mary in the kingdom of Jesus is suitable to her maternity," and "therefore she justly claims a servitude from all poor creatures."

In Jesus, Maria, Joseph,[9] the most popular book of the seventeenth century, the following passages occur. In the dedication of the work, "To the Sacred Virgin Mary," she is styled: "The worthy Empress of Heaven and Earth—The glorious Queen of men and angels—The mother of Power—The mother of mercy—The mother of mankind," etc.

And, such language as the following is addressed to her for the space of several pages:

> "You are united to a term of infinite perfection, whereby you are, in a certain manner, elevated to a divine order; and by a most necessary and undeniable consequence, do appear (in some sort) to enter into the possession of infinite perfection."
>
> "The mystical ark; the undrainable source of sweetness; the spiritual sea, whence the world's richest pearl was extracted; the radiant sphere, inclosing Him within your sacred folds, whom the Heavens cannot contain within their vast circumference; the celestial Throne of God, more glistening than that of the glorious Cherubims; the pure Temple, Tabernacle, and Seat of the Divinity"… etc.

> "Wherefore we humbly let fall our weak hand and wearied wings, and, convincedly, confess your miraculous greatnesses, (Oh incomprehensible Mother of God) to be inexplicable, incomprehensible, inaccessible to all created imagination, etc. … Yea, (O Sacred Queen Mother!) had we hearts larger than the Empyreal Heaven, we would most willingly employ their whole extent in loving you. Had we the crowns, kingdoms, riches of all earthly monarchs and princes, and as many lives as the seas have sands, we would most willingly leave all, lose all, forfeit all, for the defence of your honour, for the procuring of your affection, for the promoting of your service. Finally, had either of us as much collected capacity as all creatures have, dispersedly, it would come far short of our unlimited desires and affections, which are to love, honour and serve you, perfectly, entirely, eternally."

In the work itself occurs the following, amongst many pages of similar blasphemy:

> "She is appointed, by her all-powerful Son, to be the charitable dispensatrix of his Divine treasures, and the common Mother of all pious Christians. … Thus we are truly Holy Mary's children, since we are the fruits of the blessed fruit of her womb, JESUS. She indeed brought forth but one only Son, but, by that one, she begot all them, who by Him are regenerated; and whosoever derive from Jesus their spiritual life are surely debtors to Mary, who gave Him his nativity. Finally, if the dear blood of Christ Jesus is the divine seed of our baptismal regeneration; which precious blood issued, first, out of his mother's veins; who sees not that our best birth and being is, in some manner, borrowed from Blessed Mary, and hath from her blood its beginning, and origin."

To quote all the impious blasphemies of this favourite Popish production would be to write a volume. We cannot, however, pass by the "Adorations to the Holy Trinity, *in honour of the share given to the Virgin* in the mystery of the Incarnation" (p. 560):

> "You O adorable Trinity, peculiarly associated yourselves to *one* human nature and to *one* human person. To *one human nature*, by the incarnation of one of your persons. To *one human person*, by the operation of your three persons, who in the greatest of their works, would in a manner enter society with the Virgin. … Oh infinite condescendency! The three divine sons living and acting in perfect unity, eternally happy and completely content in their own mutual society, if I may so speak, would extend this *society* to a new person: in that being (for the full accomplishment of their own glory) to conjoin a created being, with the Being Increated, in one of their persons to give it a new nature, they would share the glory of this great work between the Virgin and themselves: they made her worthy and capable to give, together with themselves, this new nature, and to be mother of the Word incarnate, thus elevating a human person to such a pitch of Power… which makes the Son of God man's son, and which makes a Virgin God's mother…
>
> Contemplating therefore this work, (O sacred Trinity) and there finding this Virgin in Society with yourself, I look on her, love her, reverence her, as a person the most high, the most holy, and the most worthy of your love and greatness, that ever shall have a being; yea, I contemplate

> and respect her as the only She who surpasses in height, in dignity, even all human and angelical spirits, together and unitedly considered." (p. 566, § 7)

A little further on, under the head "*The Virgin constitutes an Order, Empire and Universe apart*," we meet with the following:

> "Moreover you (O Sacred Trinity) made her singly for yourself; you have made her, as a world, and a paradise apart. World of greatnesses, and Paradise of delights for the *New-man*, who was to come into the world, you have made her as a new Heaven and a new Earth. The Sacred Virgin, alone, makes a new *Order* amongst all the orders of God's power and wisdom. *Order* surpassing all the orders of grace and glory. Order, altogether singular, making and carrying a new Empire over God's works: order which is conjoined to the order, and state of Hypostatical union."

The eighth section is:

"*The Virgin is a singular work of God's power. The holiest that ever shall be created. The Divine paternity is the Sampler of this Divine maternity.* The Eternal Father and the Son are tied by the person of the Holy Ghost, and the Eternal Father and the Virgin are tied by the person of the Son."

Such is a very small part of the blasphemy contained in this work. The copy from which we quote bears evident marks of having been well used. It is, in fact, the identical copy which belonged to Southey, of which he says in his Omniana, "The volume has more pious finger unction upon it, than any other in my library."

"THE GLORIES OF MARY," by a modern saint of Rome, is full of blasphemy nearly as gross as the work just quoted. We have before us a translation of this impious production by a Catholic clergyman, published in 1845, from which the following quotations are made:

> "To thee this belongs, O Blessed Virgin: 'to thee' says St. Bernard 'it belongs to dispense the merits of Christ's blood, to whom thou pleasest.' Hence St. Bernardine says 'that all gifts, all virtues, all graces are dispensed by Mary, to whom she wishes, when she wishes, and in the manner she wishes.'" (pp. 188, 211)
>
> "If I have thy favour, I do not even fear the wrath of an offended God! Thou canst obtain for me a general pardon… O Mary, O Mary, my light, my consolation, my refuge, my hope. Amen, Amen. Amen." (p. 229)
>
> "The glorious St. Cajetan said, that we may ask graces, but shall not obtain them, without the intercession of Mary. St. Antonine (Archbishop of Florence) says that 'he who asks without her, attempts to fly without wings.'"
>
> "The Eternal Father has constituted Jesus Christ king of justice, and has therefore made him universal judge of the world. Hence St. Bonaventure says 'O God, give thy judgment to the King, and thy mercy to his mother;' and Ernest says, 'the Father has given to the Son the office

> of judging and inflicting punishment, and to the mother the office of compassionating and relieving the miserable.’” (p. 70)
>
> “Oh that we had the happy lot of dying like Father Fulgentius, who breathed his last singing, O Mary, O Mary, how great is thy beauty, I long for thy society! Let us then, dear reader, pray, that God may grant to us the grace that the last word pronounced by our tongue at death, may be the name of Mary.” (p. 334)

The titles of Section 3, chapter vi., and Section 1, chapter vii., are:

“MARY IS THE PEACEMAKER OF SINNERS WITH GOD!”

“MARY SAVES HER CLIENTS FROM HELL!”

The foregoing extracts, which might be multiplied *ad infinitum*, are sufficient to show what were the doctrines of the Romish Church relative to the Mother of Jesus—as inculcated by the highest papal authorities from the twelfth to the present century. English Papists, when addressing Protestants, endeavour to hide this frightful feature of the Whore of Babylon. The celebrated Gother (in his Papist Misrep. and Repres.) says that the Papist, truly represented, “owns the Virgin Mary still as a creature, and that all she has of excellency is the gift of God.” (Sect. 3.)

It is, however, unquestionable that the doctors of the Church of Rome for the last eight hundred years represent her as *more than a creature*. Most of the quotations we have just given plainly imply the positive deity of Mary. The infinite perfections of Jehovah are constantly ascribed to her! The incommunicable offices and functions of the Blessed Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are said to be discharged by her. Jesus Christ was made a severe judge, ready to condemn all who had recourse to him; whilst Mary was the real Saviour whose love always disposed her to help the miserable!

And, to crown the whole, not only were all the types of our Lord applied to her, but actually the name of God was blotted out of the Book of Psalms and all the other songs of praise addressed to the Most High, and the name of a woman placed there instead! We can only regard it as a mere quibble, then, to contend, as some do, that Popery does not make the Virgin God, simply because she is not called God in so many words. In the belief of one generation after another, Mary possessed all that God did, and was all that God is to sinful man; the absence of the mere name was a circumstance too trifling to deserve our notice.

The blasphemous doctrines which exalted Mary to the throne of the universe and subjected the Lord of Glory to her command were not mere abstract propositions, like the speculations of the schoolmen, which exercised no influence upon the practice of the people. On the contrary, the religion of Europe was moulded in strict accordance with these views.

In the service-books of the Church of Rome, as well as its other devotional works, for some hundreds of years past, we find the Virgin adored and supplicated as if she were truly God. All the praises which Christians are accustomed to address to God and to Christ are addressed to her. And all blessings—even salvation from hell and the enjoyment of heaven—are repeatedly sought *directly* from her hands.

In addition to this, all those acts of worship which are peculiar to God—the erection of churches, the offering of sacrifices, vows, etc.—were paid to her; and in many particulars Mary the creature received more honour than God the Creator. These heavy accusations we shall now substantiate by citing the service-books of the Church of Rome.

ANCIENT DEVOTIONS TO THE VIRGIN MARY

"*A Prayer for the devout use of which, 500 years of pardon were granted, by five holy Fathers, Popes of Rome."*

> "I beseech thee, Lady St. Mary, Mother of God, and most full of piety, Daughter of the highest King, Mother most glorious, Consolation of the desolate, way of the wandering, the salvation and the hope of those that trust in thee. Virgin before, in, and after thy childbearing. Fountain of mercy. Fountain of salvation. Fountain of grace. Fountain of piety and gladness. Fountain of comfort and pardon, etc., etc… Hear and answer me, most sweet Mary, Mother of God and mercy. Amen."[10]
>
> "Holy Mary, perpetual Virgin of Virgins, Mother of Mercy, Mother of grace, the Hope of all that are desolate, the Comfort of all that are in despair. O thou pitier of the miserable, sweet Comfort of the afflicted and Mother of mercies, most pious Comforter of the desolate and ready Helper of Orphans. Hear my prayers. And because by reason of my sins I am cast into several miseries and straits, I know not to whom I should fly—but to thee my Lady the most sweet Virgin Mary, the Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, the fashioner of our humanity. Therefore lend bountifully the ears of thy piety to my prayers, for the bowels of thy most merciful son," etc. (Ex curs. Hor. Ec. Hild.)

"*A Prayer from Pope Innocent, to which he has annexed an indulgence of thirty days."*

> "Most Gracious Lady and most sweet Virgin St. Mary, the Mother of God, the Mother of Orphans, the comfort of the desolate, the way of those that go astray, the salvation and hope of them that trust in thee, the fountain of life and pardon, the fountain of salvation and grace, the fountain of piety and indulgence, the fountain of comfort and joy; give me true and worthy tears of mourning for my sins; grant me, by thy help, frequently to begin, perseveringly to continue, happily to accomplish, whatsoever thy Son hath required me sincerely to embrace.
>
> O Mary, Flower of Virgins, Queen of Heaven, I humbly and devoutly beg, that with all the saints and elect of God, thou wouldst come and hasten to my direction and assistance, in all my prayers, difficulties, and necessities, and in all my affairs. O Mary, the Star of the Sea, the Haven of Safety, the pious Guide of those that are shipwrecked, the most sweet Patron of the distressed, the most learned Advocate of the guilty, THE ONLY HOPE of those that despair, the ILLUSTRIOUS SAVIOUR OF SINNERS,[11] illumine me I beseech thee in my last day with thy most glorious face.
>
> Most holy nurse, and most pious one, tell me the day and the hour of my death. Grant a port to the mariner, bring defence to the guilty, give comfort to the wretched: be thou my hope lest I

yell to despair in the agony of death. Because at that time, there is no other Hope but thou O Virgin,[12] that didst bear a child, Mother and Daughter of the Father, to whom reconcile me, O inexhaustible fountain of mercies, and pardon; yea PARDON AND MERCY ITSELF, that deniest none; most gracious hearer, mercifully receive, and hear this humble supplication, and grant me life eternal. Hear and answer me, most benignant Virgin Mary, mother of God and mercy. Amen." (Ex curs. Hor. Eccles. Hild. in Chem. p. 585.)

"Oh happy mother, thou who dost atone for our sins. By the right of a mother, command the Redeemer."[13]

We have now before us a *Manual* for Priests, containing the mode of celebrating the sacraments, etc. This work contains a series of "Prayers to be read over the dying when troubled in mind"—in which the Virgin Mary and Christ are addressed, alternately, for many pages, as follows:[14]

"O Lord Jesus our God, rebuke him not in thine anger, neither reprove him in thy fury. Let thy servant, good Jesus, rejoice in thee, his salvation. O good Jesus, free him from the destruction of the devil; save thy servant, for his soul faileth, and thy truth are diminished from his soul. Behold the soul of thy servant, Lord Jesus, troubled at his departure from life, and deliver him from the hand of the wicked. Preserve the soul of thy servant, O Lord Jesus, and keep him from the evil generation for ever. Amen."

"Oh most Sacred Virgin Mary, be present with thy servant. Oh most blessed Mother, help him, lest he perish. O glorious Virgin Mary, listen, with thy ears, to our prayer for thy servant, lest the devil glory over his destruction. Be thou a refuge, most sweet Virgin Mary, to this poor dying one, and, in this horrible tribulation, be thou a helper to him. Rejoice the soul of thy servant, by the light of faith, O most glorious Virgin Mary; that his mind may not be moved from the fear of the Lord. O most sweet Virgin Mary, keep the soul of thy servant; and console it by thy presence. Amen."

"O Lord Jesus our God, preserve the soul of thy servant, for he trusts in thee, enlighten his heart, that he may joyfully come to thee. Let the soul of thy servant dying in thee, rejoice O Lord Jesus. Let him sing to, and praise thee his Lord God for ever. Under the shadow of thy wings, O Lord Jesus, protect thy servant, from the face of the wicked who afflict him. How long, good Jesus, wilt thou forget thy servant? How long wilt thou turn away thy face from him? Save the soul of thy servant, Lord Jesus, from the mouth of the lion; and from the horns of the unicorn, good Jesus, mercifully deliver it. Amen."

"O most blessed Virgin Mary, magnify thy mercies in thy dying servant. Save him that trusts in thee. O most glorious Virgin Mary, incline thine ears to thy servant, and grant the desire of his heart, for he is exercised with great affliction. Regard, Oh most sweet Virgin Mary, the trials of this thy dying servant, and set him free, and attend to our supplications, for him, in this terrible chastisement of thy servant, O most glorious Virgin Mary. We beseech thee to make him glad,

by thy sweet countenance. Draw the soul of thy servant unto thee, O most sweet Virgin Mary; he shall not be ashamed, because he trusts in thee. Amen."

To the Virgin

"Maide alone, meke among all other: make us unbound of synnes, and to be debonere and chaste."

"Give us clene life, greithe a sikir weie: (grant a safe journey) so that we seynge God be glad evermore." (Prym. of Salisbury, MS. pul. Maskell)

Vers.—Do awey blamys of wrecchidnesse: CLENSE THE FILTHE OF SYNNERIS: gyve to us thurg thi preieris liif of blessid men.

Resp.—O celi.

Vers.—Reiside above hevenes, crowned of thi child in this wrecchid vale, to giltie be lady of forgiveness. (Ibid.)

"An Orison to Our Lady"

"O Marie! al vertu makith thee fair: all seyntis honouren thee in the centre of ael ae alle. thei ort thee, and seyn preis to thee. Heil full of grace, for the woundes of jesu cist whiche thou weepynge saie, blodi for our wrecchidnesse, MAKE US WORTHI TO SE THEE, and in seynge thee to joien in everlasting glorie. Amen."

"Heil and joie thou Marie queen of hevene: lady of the world: empresse of helle: moder of chaste counceil: have mercie on us, and on al cristen peple, and lat us never synnen deedly, BUT GRAUNTE US TO FULFIL THI MOOST HOOLY WILE. Amen." (Ibid.)

To Our Lady

"O thou meke mother, have mercy, therefore, on wretches
For whom thou haddyst these peynes all.
Seyne thy sone, that vyne cluster pressyd sore,
And from the pestylence of death, eternall
Kepe us, by voydynge the fende infernal,
And joyne us with them which rewarded be,
With eternal lyfe seynge the deyte."

Vers.—We do prayse the: and do pray thee, mother of God most merciful.
Resp.—That thou intende us, to defende from death, that is most sorrowful. (Primer, in English and Latin, fol. 55. Rouen. 1556.) The same versicle and response are continually repeated for many successive pages.

But the most affecting proofs of the awful extent to which the Virgin was confided in, and invoked as the God and Saviour of men, are met with in the remains of ancient monumental

inscriptions during the reign of popery in this land. The learned antiquary Weever has preserved the following, amongst many others:

> "Mary Moder Mayden clere,
> Pray for me, William Goldwyre:
> And for me Isabel his wyf.
> Have mercy on Christian his second wyf,
> Sweet Jesus for thy woundys fyf:"
>
> "Jesu Mercy Lady help." (p. 302)
>
> "Desyring you that this sall see, unto the mayden pray for me,
> That bare both God and man:
> Like as ye wold, that oder for ye shold,
> When ye ne may, ne can." (p. 342)
>
> "Blessed Lady, Moder, and Virgin, have mercy and pity on the soul of your powere mayd Elizabeth West, yat here lieth beryed."
>
> "O Mater Dei miserere mei. Amen." (p. 437)

Such were the authentic devotions of the Romish Church up to the middle of the sixteenth century. It may, however, be thought that these are obsolete prayers which cannot be adduced as giving a true character of modern popery. We shall now bring forward, therefore, specimens of the prayers addressed in the present day to the same "strange god" by the Man of Sin.

MODERN DEVOTIONS TO THE VIRGIN MARY

From the Romish Breviary

"Oh Blessed Mary! who can worthily pay to thee the meed of thanks and the declaring of praises, who, by thy singular assent, hast succoured a lost world? What prai[se] can the frailty of the human race pay unto thee, who, by thy alone commerce, hast found a way for our recovery? … Receive what we offer; give what we ask; excuse what we fear; *for thou art the only hope for sinners*.[15] Through thee, we hope for the pardon of our sins, and in thee, most blessed, is expectation of our reward. Holy Mary, Succour the wretched, assist the weak, comfort the mourners, pray for the people, mediate for the clergy, intercede for the devout females. Let all feel thy help, who celebrate thy Holy Conception."[16]

The following prayers to the Virgin are now in daily use, amongst Papists, in our own country. They are taken from an English book of devotion published in the nineteenth century—accompanied with the Indult of his Holiness Pope Pius VII. in favour of it, for the use of the midland district. The work is entitled "Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; including the Devotion to the Sacred Heart of the Blessed V. Mary," 12th edit., Keating and Brown, 1821.

> "I reverence you, O Sacred Virgin Mary, the Holy Ark of the Covenant; and together with all the good thoughts of all good men upon earth, and all the blessed spirits in

heaven, do bless and praise you infinitely for that you are the great Mediatrix between God and man, obtaining for sinners all they can ask and demand of the blessed Trinity. Hail Mary." (p. 293)

Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Mary

"O Holy Mother of God, glorious Queen of Heaven and earth! I choose thee, this day, for my Mother, my Queen, and my Advocate at the throne of thy divine Son. Accept the offering, may it be irrevocable, I here make of my heart. It can never be out of danger whilst at my own disposal, never secure but in thy hands. Ye choirs of angels, witnesses of this my oblation, bear me up in the day of judgment and, next to Jesus and Mary, be ye propitious to me, should the enemy of my salvation have any claim upon me, etc."

The Thirty Days Prayer

"Ever glorious and blessed Mary, Queen of Virgins, mother of mercy, hope and comfort of dejected souls, etc… Thou art the mother of mercy, the sweet consolatrix, and only refuge of the needy and the orphans, of the desolate and the afflicted. Cast therefore an eye of pity on a miserable forlorn child of Eve, and hear my prayer; *whither can I fly for more secure shelter,* O amiable mother of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *than under the wings of thy protection*?"

"And as I am persuaded my divine Saviour doth honour thee as his beloved mother, to whom HE CAN REFUSE NOTHING, so let me speedily experience the efficacy of thy powerful intercession, etc." (pp. 305–311)

"O Holy Mary, *our Sovereign Queen!* As God the Father, by his omnipotence has made thee MOST POWERFUL: O assist us at the hour of our death, by defending us against all power that is contrary to thine. Hail Mary."

"O Holy Mary, our Sovereign Queen! As God the Son has endowed thee with so much knowledge and charity, that it enlightens all heaven; so, in the hour of our death, illustrate and strengthen our souls with the knowledge of the true faith, that they may not be perverted by error or pernicious ignorance. Hail Mary."

"O Holy Virgin, our Sovereign Queen! As the Holy Ghost has plentifully poured forth into thee the love of God; so instil into us, at the hour of our death, the sweetness of divine love; that all bitterness, at that time, may become acceptable and pleasant to us. Hail Mary."

"Our blessed Lady herself taught St. Mechtildis the above-mentioned triple salutation, promising her certain assistance for it at the hour of death." (pp. 212, 213)

"An Angelical Exercise"

"O my dear Mother! I love you more than my tongue can express, and more than my very soul can conceive. And I reverence you, O sacred Virgin Mary! and *together with the Holy Trinity, bless and praise you infinitely,* for that you are worthy of so many praises, as none can, no, not yourself, conceive. I praise and magnify you a thousand

> thousand times, and ten thousand times; I bless that sacred womb of yours, which bore the Son of the Eternal Father. Hail Mary." (p. 194)
>
> "Hail Mary, Lady and Mistress of the world, to whom all power has been given, both in Heaven and Earth." (p. 206)
>
> The following prayer is from a tract published in Ireland in 1832, permissu superiorum, entitled "The Little Testament of the Holy Virgin."
>
> "Oh ever blessed Virgin Mary! The avenue of God's tender mercies to man! Thou wert promised, from the beginning of the world, to crush the serpent's head." (Gen. iii. 15)

At the last page of the tract we read:

> "My child, I bequeath you my strength; it will uphold you in your temptations and labours, if you be but willing to be sacrificed for God—from conviction that, as *without Mary you can do nothing, so with her you can do all*.—All-powerful Virgin! pray for Ireland!"

Thus—from the twelfth to the nineteenth century—Mary has been *practically*, to Romanists, all that God, that Christ is to fallen man, and the same adoration and supplications have been addressed to her as to the Supreme Jehovah himself. In the various service-books and devotional works of the Romish Church, the very highest, yea, infinite adoration is paid to her. The glory of the great work of man's redemption, in all its parts, is constantly ascribed to her. She is magnified for the performance of those acts which are peculiar to the Deity. Men are taught to consecrate themselves to her service, as though religion consisted in nothing more! They protest that they love Mary more than language can express—and even desire heaven because she will be there—and they can love her without end!

Then, too, her worshippers implore blessings—the very highest—*directly* from her as the source of all good. Modern Papists, who knew better, have not scrupled to say that "when they invoke the Virgin Mary, they do not consider that she can grant favours of herself, but that she may, through her powerful intercession, obtain favours of God for us."[17] But although Mary is frequently invoked to help her worshippers by her intercession, yet this intercession is held to be so *efficacious as to secure the acceptance of all her prayers*;[18] and thus the result is precisely the same as if she granted everything by her own power.

Besides, in innumerable instances, blessings are solicited from Mary as the actual source of all good! The same language that is addressed to God and to Christ is employed. The very highest of all blessings are sought directly from her hands! In many cases, Jesus and Mary are joined together in the same prayers. In others, the Lord of Glory and a woman are alternately addressed in the same language. In short—one of the most popular Popish works of the present day distinctly affirms "this form and method of worship to be the doctrine and very spirit of God's church: it is what she teaches us in the unanimous voice and practice of the faithful, who

will by no means allow that Jesus and Mary should be separated from each other in our prayers, praises, and affections."[19]

But not only is the Virgin the object of the same praise and the same petitions as the Infinite Jehovah—she receives far more honour in the Church of Rome than the Deity himself. From an early age, the various religious acts which are usually paid to God were also offered to Mary. Men erected churches to her honour, made vows unto her, for her honour offered up sacrifices to her, etc. As her worship increased, however, these things were more frequently performed in her honour than that of the Supreme Being.

A laborious antiquary of the 16th century, who writes from his actual knowledge of the facts, speaking of the state of religion in England previous to the Reformation, says: "Many were the altars herein England consecrated to the blessed Virgin Mary, MORE THAN TO CHRIST; many the pictures and statues, many the churches built and dedicated to her holiness, and many were the exorbitant honours, due only to our blessed Saviour, which were ATTRIBUTED TO HER HEAVENLY DEITY; as did appear by numberless inscriptions about her altars." (Funeral Mon. introduction p. cxvi) [20]

As to the prayers and praises of the people, every one knows that those addressed to the Virgin outnumber those of which God or his blessed Son is the object. "In the fifteenth century," says Gieseler (Text-book of Eccles. Hist.), "the Ave-Maria became the FAVOURITE PRAYER. After the example of the Dominican Vincent Ferrerius, who lived at the end of the fourteenth, it was used at the commencement of the sermon."[21]

The use of the Rosary, however, presents the most striking proof of the extent to which Mary is worshipped *more than God*. The Rosary was a form of worship paid to the Virgin, of which she was said to be highly enamoured. It consisted in the repetition of the *Ave-Maria* ten times, and the *Pater-Noster* once, for every year of the Virgin's life. The difficulty, or rather impossibility, of keeping an account of so many prayers led to the use of a string of beads, consisting alternately of ten small beads, or Aves, and one large bead, or *Pater.* This implement of devotion was itself also termed a *Rosary,* as well as the series of prayers recited by its assistance.

The author of the *Rosary,* according to a popular Popish work, was the celebrated St. Dominic Loricatus, who, by the Virgin's personal command, "propagated it as the most powerful antidote to the Albigensian Heresy, in the eleventh century, throughout Spain, France, and Italy; fitting it to each one's capacity, reducing it into a fraternal unity, and confirming his doctrine with such evident miracles, that Christians became not only converted from the Albigensian Heresy, but also devout servants of God, and diligent honourers of the Virgin Mary." (Jesus, Maria, Joseph)

Although introduced by wondrous miracles, however, the Rosary had ceased to be in use, when, in the fifteenth century, "The Virgin appeared to the Blessed Alain de la Roche, a Dominican Friar: she regarded him with a sweet and dove-like expression, and asked of him if he were not aware that the form of devotion which the Patriarchs and the brethren of his order had instituted and propagated, so greatly to her pleasure and so profitably for Christendom, had fallen into

neglect? By the Ave-Maria, it was, she said, that this world had been renovated, hell emptied, and heaven replenished; and, by the Rosary, which was composed of Ave-Marias, it was that in these latter times the world must be reformed.

She had chosen him as her dearest and most beloved servant to proclaim this, and exhort his brethren to proclaim it. With that, in proof of her favour, she hung round his neck a rosary,[22] the string whereof was composed of her own heavenly hair; and with a ring made of that same blessed hair she espoused him; and she blessed him with her virgin lips, and she fed him at her holy bosom!!" (South. Vindic. Eccles. Angl. p. 484)

Thus miraculously commissioned, Alain de la Roche, accompanied by other Dominicans, preached the efficacy of the Rosary far and wide; and the success of their mission surpassed their most sanguine expectations. The Emperor Frederick III. set the example, and he was followed by kings, dukes, lords, prelates, doctors in theology, gentry, citizens, artizans, etc., as well as by queens, duchesses, princesses, baronesses, abbesses, nuns, and females of all classes. [23]

But the most effectual plan for extending the use of the Rosary was the constitution of Societies of the Rosary a few years afterwards. This association, aptly designated by Southey 'a Joint-Stock Prayer Company,' united the members of the Papacy together for the purpose of reciting the Rosary at stated seasons, and joining in certain processions in honour of the Virgin.

The advantages of it were, not only that every member becomes a partaker in all the merits of the other members of the Society, in every part of the world,[24] but "a vast treasure of indulgences conferred upon it by the prime pastors of the Church, there being no Pope, since Sixtus the fourth, who hath not liberally laid out the church's storehouse to enrich the sacred Rosary, and added new benefits to his predecessors' bounty."—(Jes. Mar. Jos. p. 86)

Under the influence of these inducements, the practice of the Rosary was extended throughout the Romish Church; nor is it less in vogue in the present day, after the lapse of so many centuries. "There are scarcely any Italians," says a writer of the seventeenth century, "but have these Rosaries about them, either in their pockets, or hanging about their necks, between their shirts and doublets. The ladies carry them on their arms, and they have now-a-days made an ornamental bravery of it, not inferior to their necklaces and bracelets of pearls and diamonds. They sometimes go abroad without either fan or mask, but never without their beads."—(Frauds of Romish Monks and Priests, p. 239, London, 1681)

It is acknowledged that the Rosary[25] is performed in honour of the Virgin; how manifest then is it that Papists have greater devotion for the 'Mother of God' than for the Supreme Jehovah himself! There is no act of religion half so frequently performed by them in honour of God or of Christ as this service in honour of the Virgin. Even the daily prayers, too, in Popish countries, are in honour of the same Goddess.

"The solemnest divine honour," says Sir Edward Sandys, "which I see in those parts, and which, being well used, were to be highly renowned, and recommended to the imitation of all worthy

christians; namely, that thrice a day, at sun-rise, at noon, and sun-set, upon the ringing of a bell, all men, in what place soever they be, whether field, street, or market, kneel down and send up their united devotion to the High court of the world. *This honour is by them intended chiefly to our Lady,* and the devotion advised is the Ave Mary; and the bell which rings it hath also that name."—(*Europæ Speculum*, Lond. 1673)

The late Rev. Blanco White also may be cited on this subject: "It is an established custom in our country towns," says he, "to awake the labouring population before the break of day, that they may be early in readiness to begin their work, especially in the corn fields, which are often at the distance of six or eight miles from the labourers' dwellings.

Nothing but religion, however, could give permanency to this practice. Consequently a rosary procession, to sing praises to the Virgin Mary before dawn, has been established among us from time immemorial. A man with a good voice, active, sober, and fond of early rising, is either paid, or volunteers his services, to perambulate the streets an hour before day-break, knocking at the doors of such as wish to attend the procession, and inviting all to quit their beds, and join in the worship of the mother of God."—(Doblado's Letters from Spain, p. 210)

The images of the Romish Church afford us additional evidence of the extent to which Mary is worshipped instead of Christ. Not only are her statues and pictures far more numerous and more honoured than those of Christ, but, what appears the most fearful blasphemy, in these images the Lord of Heaven and Earth is represented as a babe at the breast, whilst Mary stands forth in all the dignity of the Empress of Heaven and Earth!

The natural effect of this constant association of ideas is, at once, to lower the infinite greatness and glory of the Redeemer to the condition of a mere infant, and to exalt his redeemed creature, the Virgin, at his expense. The Scriptures, whilst they do, as a necessary thing, relate the fact of the temporary humiliation of the Son of God as a means of purchasing the salvation of his people, never represent him, subsequently to his ascension, as any other than the 'Lord of Glory,' 'exalted to the right hand of God,' as 'having all things placed in subjection to Him,' etc.

When he appeared to the Apostle John also, in Patmos, instead of wearing the form of an infant at the breast, "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, and his voice as the sound of many waters. And he had in his right hand seven stars, and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." (Rev. i. 14–16)

How fearfully blasphemous, then, is it in Popery always to obtrude the infant state of this great and glorious Being upon its worshippers; and, on the other hand—with wondrous perversity—to represent the mere creature Mary as a glorious Queen, adorned with a crown, and radiant with gems!—or, as is frequently done, as "the woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars!"

Who can question, then, the fact that the Romish Church pays far greater devotion to Mary than to Christ—and that whilst the term MARIOLATRES or COLLYRIDIANS, well applies to them as expressive of the religion which they hold and practise, they have no right to the name of Christians?

A miserable attempt has been made by the doctors of the Romish Church to defend themselves from the charge of idolatry by inventing the term *hyperdulia* to designate the worship paid to the Virgin, and using the term *latria* to denote that which is rendered to God alone. But it requires no great sagacity to see that the name by which the enormities of mariolatry are called cannot at all alter their guilt. If, as we have seen in the foregoing pages, the Virgin is the object of divine worship and is actually honoured in many respects more than God, of what imaginable consequence can it be which Greek word the doctors of the Papacy choose to term this idolatry —*dulia, hyperdulia,* or *latria*? As well might they attempt to change a man's character by calling a rogue an honest man—or to render the Jesuits who were hung as traitors in the days of Queen Elizabeth saints by putting St. before their names!

The fearful idolatry of which the Blessed Virgin has so long been the object in the Romish Church is calculated to raise feelings at once of indignation and of pity in every devout mind. The awful impiety and blasphemy involved in her worship is too apparent to require any remarks of ours. On the one hand, there was the Ever Blessed God, possessing the most powerful claims upon the love and service of his people—as well by the infinite perfections which belong to him as by his works of nature and of grace—this Glorious Being practically displaced from his rightful throne in the heart—and on the other hand a mere creature, once sinful like ourselves, exalted to the vacant seat!

The idolatry of Greece and Rome, as a whole, was certainly less hateful than the mariolatry of Rome. The deities of paganism were never worshipped with such fervour and reality by pagan as the Queen of Heaven was by papal Rome. Jupiter and Vesta, Apollo and Ceres, never excited those feelings of devotion of which the Queen of Heaven has been so long the object. Paganism was always a cold and lifeless system. Founded on the mere fancies of the imagination, it possessed no hold on the heart.

The worship which was addressed to the so-called Mother of God, on the contrary, had for its basis the truths of the everlasting gospel; and thus possessed much of the reality and fervour of Christ itself. The perfections of Jehovah, of which pagan philosophers never dreamed, belonged to her! The unfathomable glory of the Redeemer encompassed her! And there she sat, the unwilling usurper of the throne of God—with the 'many crowns' of the King of kings upon her brow—and all Christendom prostrate at her feet!

Such was the spectacle exhibited for ages throughout all Europe—and in the present century in all papal kingdoms. Are we not justified then in styling such idolatrous worship of a once sinful woman a Spiritual Pestilence—as loathsome to the eye of God and all holy beings as the corporeal disease to which it is compared is to the eye of man? The only difference being that

the one destroyed the body—the other ruined the soul—the one issued in that death which is the common lot of humanity; the other, in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the SECOND DEATH!

"THE CORONATION OF THE GLORIOUS VIRGIN MARY, IN HEAVEN."



Facsimile taken from a Popish work of the XV. century: "Our Lord Jesus Christ joyfully translated her—both soul and body—to heaven: and PLACED HER ON THE THRONE WITH HIMSELF!" "Dominus Jesus Christus, cum

gaudio, eam in anima et corpore in cœlum asumpsit: secumque in throno collocavit."—(*Ex Nuremb. Chron*. fol. cit. A.D. 1498)

But there is another light in which the worship of the Virgin should be viewed—viz., its demoralizing influence. The Queen of Heaven, as she was impiously termed, was made the patroness of all wickedness. They who were careful never to pass her image without saluting it, and who recited the rosary every day in her honour, might safely spend their lives in the practice of every iniquity, and in the hour of death defy heaven and hell to touch them!

This fearful charge is not brought against the Romish Church without having the most abundant evidence at hand. To pass by the impious legends in the monkish historians, the Golden Legend, and other works of the middle ages, we furnish the reader in a note with several stories which inculcate this lesson, taken from a book only just printed, and circulated by thousands in England and Ireland, at the low charge of one shilling.[26]

It is impossible to read these idle stories without being shocked with their disgusting profaneness and their mischievous influence upon the morals of those who believe them. Nothing more abominable in the whole compass of heathenism can be pointed out. We cannot hesitate then, with this fresh proof of the demoralizing effects of popery upon mankind, again to hold it up to the execration and scorn of every friend of humanity as a MORAL PESTILENCE spreading death and destruction wherever it goes.

Footnotes:

[1] After the example of Irenæus, II. 18; Tertull. de carne Christi 7; Origenes in Luc. hom. 17; Basilius Ep. 260 ad Optim.; Chrysost. Hom. 45 in Matt. and Hom. 21 in Joh.; August. de nat. et grat. c. 36.

[2] The first mention of this fable occurs in Greg. Turon.: "When the blessed Virgin Mary had finished her earthly career, and was about to be called away from this world, all the apostles came together from their respective localities to her abode. And having heard that she was to be *assumpted* from this world, they continued watching with her, when lo! the Lord Jesus with his angels appeared; and receiving her soul, delivered it to the angel Michael and departed. At break of day, the apostles raised her body with the couch, and placing it in a sepulchre, kept watch over it, expecting the coming of Christ. When lo! the Lord again appeared, and taking the body, commanded it to be carried in a cloud to paradise." (De glor. Mart. l. c. 4.) Such was the fable current in the sixth century, but many embellishments were added in after ages. See for instance, the account in Legenda Aurea, fol. 135–141, A.D. 1498 (first published A.D. 1260).

[3] Non solum rogans sed imperans, etc.

[4] The following is a literal translation of the first of these hymns: "Indulgent Mother of the Saviour, who art still the gate of Heaven, of easy access, and Star of the Sea, help the falling people who wish to rise. Thou who didst beget, while nature wondered, thine own author. A

Virgin before and after. Taking up the Ave from Gabriel's lips. Have pity upon sinners." The *Salve Regina* is "Hail! oh Queen, Mother of mercy, our Life, our sweetness, and our hope, hail. We exiles, the sons of Eve, cry unto thee. To thee we sigh, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Lo, then, our advocate, turn unto us those merciful eyes of thine, and manifest unto us, after this exile, the blessed Jesus, the fruit of thy womb. Oh merciful! oh pious! Oh sweet Virgin Mary!" Such are two of the most favourite, and constantly repeated hymns of the Romish Church, in which, for eight hundred years, she has given utterance to her blasphemies—and fulfilled the prediction: "And a strange God, whom his fathers knew not shall he worship," etc. (Dan. xi. 38.)

[5] All the songs of praise addressed to God in the Old Testament are similarly paraphrased by this saint at the end of the Psalter. For instance: Miriam's Song at the Red Sea, Deborah's Song, Hezekiah's Song at his recovery. (S. Bonav. Opp. Vol. 7. Vide p. 517. Rome. Ex Typ. Vaticano. A.D. L.XXXVIII.)

[6] Almost all these passages are also quoted in a modern Popish work by S. Liguori called The Glories of Mary (Dublin, 1848).

[7] For a fuller account of the House of Loretto, see the next chapter on "The Worship of Images."

[8] Breviar. Rom. Off. B.M. Mense Augusti.

[9] Jesus, Maria, Joseph, or the devout pilgrim of the Ever Blessed Virgin Mary; in his holy exercises, affections, and elevations, published for the benefit of the pious Romanists, by A.C. and T.V., religious monks of the Holy Order of St. Bennet, 1657.

[10] Horæ B.V. ad Sarum. Paris. 1534. Also in Manual of Godly Prayers, reprinted often in the seventeenth century.

[11] Desperatorum spes unica: peccatorum salvatrix magnifica.

[12] Cum tunc non sit spes altera, nisi tu Virgo.

[13] O felix puerpera nostra pians scelera. Jure Matris impera Redemptori. (Missal. ad us. Eccles. Tullens. apud Chamier.)

[14] Catechumenorum Liber, juxta ritum sanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ: cum multis aliis Orationibus super morientes dicendis, &c. Venetiis. 1556.

[15] Tu es spes unica peccatorum.

[16] Winter Part, p. 498.

[17] Dr. Kelly, Archbishop of Tuam's evidence before the House of Commons, p. 240.

[18] "Great and singular is Mary's privilege of obtaining from her son whatsoever she asks," p. 247. "I fear not thy son, justly enraged against me; for by one word from thee he will be

appeased," p. 136. "St. Bernard asks why the Church calls Mary the Queen of Mercy. We answer, because we believe that, by her prayers, she opens the abyss of divine mercy to whom she wills, when she wills, and as she wills." (*The Glories of Mary*, Dub. 1845)

[19] Devotion to the Sacred Heart, &c., p. 198, Keating and Brown, Lond. 1821.

[20] In connection with this we give the following extract from "Jes. Mar. Jos.":

The second Appendix: *Maria*, or the devotion called the "*Bondage of the Blessed Virgin Mary,*" with elevations suitable thereunto.

THE RULES OF THIS DEVOTION.

1. In sign of the invisible and spiritual chain which links our sincere affection to the sacred Virgin, and moves us to become her servants and bondslaves, we must wear some little material chain or manacle of iron about our middle, neck, or arms.
2. We are to have the chain we intend to wear blessed by some priest in this following manner. (Here follows "the blessing of the chains.")
3. We may do well to make choice of some day dedicated to the Virgin's honour for the entering into this *bondage* and putting on of this *chain*, to make our profession more memorable and solemn.
4. We should prepare ourselves beforehand by some particular devotion, as fasting, mortification, meditation, alms-deeds, confession, communion, to render the profession of our bondage more efficacious and meritorious.
5. Then, at the time appointed, we are to kneel down reverently before some altar or image of our Blessed Lady, and make an oblation of ourselves unto her in the manner following.

   The prayer and oblation of ourselves, in bondage to the Blessed Virgin:

   "O Blessed Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven, and Empress of the whole Universe! Behold I, N. N., a most unworthy wretch, humbly prostrate before the throne of your mercy and goodness, heartily adoring your glory and greatness, and faithfully acknowledging your sovereign power and dominion (next after God) over all creatures, do here make a voluntary, absolute, and irrevocable oblation, donation, and consecration of myself unto your majesty, desiring, intending, and resolving to be hereafter not only your loyal subject and servant, but even your real vassal and bond-slave. In confirmation whereof I will continually wear this material chain about my body, both as a badge of my now professed bondage, and also as a token of my perpetual affection towards you.

   Vouchsafe, therefore, O Sovereign Queen! to receive, admit, and own me henceforth as a thing peculiarly yours; and as such a one to defend and protect me during this life from the snares of sin; to dissipate and break asunder, at the hour of my death, the shackles of Satan, and to draw my departing soul, by this happy chain, to your Son's heavenly kingdom, there to praise, admire, and enjoy both him and you, to all eternity. Amen."

6. After recital of this oblation of yourself in bondage to the Blessed Virgin, put the chain about some part of your body, and endeavour, thenceforward, to walk worthy of so noble a profession.

   Then follow “the practices and exercises of this devotion of the bondage,” p. 588, Jes. Mar. Jos., Lond. 1657.

[21] The *Ave-Maria* is as follows—“Hail Mary, full of grace: the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is Jesus, the fruit of thy womb. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and in the hour of our death. Amen.”

[22] Rosario della gloriosa Vergine M. ff. 11, Venice, 1597.

[23] Rosario, p. 12, quoted by Southey.

[24] See Jesus, Maria, Joseph, p. 82–86.

[25] The Rosary is a certain peculiar manner of offering up our prayers to the Divine Majesty, IN HONOUR OF HIS HOLY MOTHER. (Jesus, Mary, Joseph, p. 70)

[26] “Our advocate has shown her great mercy towards sinners, in favour of a religious called Beatrix, in the monastery of Fonte Kraldo.—Cæsarius l. 7. c. 35. P. Rho. in Ex.—This unhappy religious devised a plan of flying off from the convent. She went one day before an image of Mary, and, at its feet, deposited the keys of the monastery, for she was portress, and left the convent. Having reached a certain town, she there lived in the miserable state of sin for a considerable time. She happened one day to meet the agent of the monastery, and believing that, in consequence of her change of dress, he would not recognize her, she asked him if he knew sister Beatrix? I know her well, replied the agent, she is a holy nun, and is, at present, mistress of novices. At this answer, she was confounded and stunned, not knowing how she could be mistress of novices. To ascertain the truth, she put on another dress, and went to the monastery. She sent for her sister Beatrix; and behold the most holy Virgin appears, in the form of the image, before which sister Beatrix left the keys, and her habit, at her departure from the monastery. The divine mother then said: Know, that, to prevent your disgrace, I have taken your form, and have performed, for you, the duties of your office since your flight from the monastery. My child, return, do penance, my Son still waits for you; and endeavour, by a holy life, to preserve the good name which I have here acquired for you. After these words the Virgin disappeared. Beatrix entered again into the monastery, resumed the religious habit, and, grateful for Mary’s grace, she lived a saint, and at death disclosed all, to the glory of this great Queen.” (p. 253)

“In the year 1604, there were, in a city of Flanders, two young students who, instead of attending to the acquisition of learning, sought only the indulgence of the appetite, and the gratification of their unchaste passions. One night they went to a house of ill-fame; after some time, one of them, called Richard, returned home, the other remained. After having reached his house, Richard, while undressing in order to go to bed, remembered that he had not said the

“Hail Maries,” which he was accustomed to recite every day in honour of the Virgin. Being oppressed with sleep, he felt a great repugnance to say them; however, he did violence to himself, and recited the usual Hail Maries, without devotion, and half asleep. He went to bed, and during his first sleep, he heard a loud knock at the door, and instantly saw before him his companion presenting a deformed and hideous appearance. ‘Who are you?’ said Richard. ‘Do you not know me?’ replied the other. ‘How,’ rejoined Richard, ‘have you undergone such a change? You look like a demon.’ ‘Ah! unhappy me,’ exclaimed the other, ‘I am damned. In leaving that infamous house, a devil came and strangled me. My body lies in the middle of the street, and my soul is in hell. Know that the same chastisement also awaited you, but the Blessed Virgin, on account of the little devotion of reciting the ‘Hail Maries,’ has saved you from it. Happy you, if you know how to avail yourself of this warning which the mother of God sends you through me!’ After these words he opened his cloak, and showed Richard the flames and serpents by which he was tormented, and then disappeared.” (The Glories of Mary, by St. Liguori, p. 288, Dub. 1845). Other instances of the same kind are quoted towards the close of the ensuing chapter, “The Worship of Images.”

CHAPTER VI.
The Worship of Images

The worship of the saints and of the Virgin has thus been fully established against the Church of Rome. Another and still heavier charge is now brought against it—that of worshipping dumb idols. Had Papists been guilty of nothing worse than what the two previous chapters have proved against them, the charge of idolatry—i.e., of worshipping false gods—in the fullest sense, lies against them. In bowing down to graven images, however, a still more gross and criminal idolatry is committed by that apostate church—the worship of "*stocks and stones*."

We have already seen that saint-worship began to be practised among Christians soon after the middle of the fourth century. The church, however, kept clear from idol-worship—which is confessedly a much grosser form of idolatry—for about two centuries longer.[1] An attempt has been made by a living writer, in an elaborate work upon Ancient Christianity, to convict the church of this crime "during and throughout the whole of the fourth century." He has made the assertion, however, without advancing the slightest proof. That there were pictures representing the combats of the martyrs, and certain scriptural subjects in some churches, towards the close of the fourth century, is unquestionable, but they held the same place that the pictures in our parish churches now do. And the argument from this fact—in the utter absence of all other testimony—will also prove, some ages hence, that the Church of England worships pictures because it sanctions the use of altar-pieces!

At the close of the fifth century, pictures were still rare in the churches[2]—but during the sixth, they appear to have become very general—and also statues of Christ and the saints. Still they were not worshipped; at least, there is no evidence of the fact; and a circumstance which occurred at the commencement of the seventh century proves that the bishops were opposed to this.

"Serenus, bishop of Marseilles, having caused some images to be removed from the churches, a complaint was made to Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome. That Pope, at once, and very explicitly, declared that images should, on no account, be approached as objects of worship, and strongly exhorted the bishop to press that consideration upon all who might, possibly, mistake their use; which was, when truly understood, to impart knowledge to the ignorant and illiterate. At the same time, such being their professed end and purpose, he strenuously opposed their removal." (Wad. Hist. Ch. part II. ch. X.)

There is, therefore, no evidence to prove that images were generally worshipped earlier than the seventh century in the visible church. From this time, the Church of Rome steadily maintained the growing superstition. In the Eastern Church, however, the cause of idolatry received several powerful checks.

The first who opposed the worship of images was the Emperor Leo. In the year 726 he published an edict ordering all images to be removed from the churches and broken to pieces. He himself caused all that were found in Constantinople to be brought into the midst of the city and there burnt; and all who

opposed his decree were beheaded or otherwise mutilated. Pope Gregory III., hearing of this decree, convoked a synod in which the worship of images was enjoined, and *deprived Leo of the rest of his empire in Italy, forbidding the people to pay tribute to him any longer.*[3]

This emperor shortly after died, and was succeeded by his son Constantine, who immediately called another synod at Constantinople in opposition to that held by the pope; at which, not only the worship of images, but the images themselves were condemned on the following grounds:

> "Since the two natures of Christ could not be separated, and the divine nature could not be painted, therefore, his human likeness ought not to be painted, lest it should be thought that the human person, which was painted, wore a different being from the divine person, which could not be painted. And, moreover, since his body was now arrayed in inexpressible glory, it was not possible to paint even that. That the souls, too, and virtues of the saints, which constituted the real representation of them, could not be expressed by colours, therefore the images of the saints ought not to be made." (Ex act. Concil. Nicen. Secund. apud Chemnit. ubi sup.)

This emperor reigned about thirty-four years afterwards; and the whole of his life was employed in enforcing the decrees of the synod at which he had presided, in opposition to the monks and the influence of the Romish see. Idolatry soon received, however, another triumph.

The Empress Irene, who obtained the government a few years after Constantine's death, exerted herself most strenuously to restore the worship of images in her dominions. A general council assembled at Nice in the year 787, by which images were again reinstated in their former honours—and the sentiments of the Pope and the Church of Rome declared orthodox.

"We receive," says the council, "besides the figure of the cross, the relics of the saints, and their images; we embrace them, according to the ancient tradition of our Fathers, who have placed them in all the churches of God, and all the places where he is served: we honour and adore them, viz. that of Jesus Christ, of his holy mother, of the angels, for though they are incorporeal, they have revealed themselves in a human form." (Fleury, Liv. xliv. sect. 34)

The decrees of this council, however, did not secure immediate obedience. The Emperor Leo the Armenian, who reigned from A.D. 814 to 820, relapsed into the heresy of the Isaurians (i.e. of the Iconoclasts or Image-breakers). He fell an early victim to conspiracy; but his successor Michael fearlessly proceeded in the same difficult endeavour; and the earnestness of his wishes and the perplexities of his situation are naturally displayed in an epistle addressed by him to the son of Charlemagne, Louis, Emperor of the West. As this document throws great general light on the ecclesiastical history of that age, we shall transcribe it here:

"Many of our clergy and laity, departing from the apostolical traditions, have introduced pernicious novelties. They took down the crosses in the churches, and put images in their room, before which they lighted up lamps and burned incense, honouring them as the cross. They sang before them, worshipped them, and implored their succour. Many dressed the female images with robes, and made them stand godmothers to their children. They offered up hair to them when they cut it off for the first time. Some presbyters scratched off the paint from the images, and mixed it with the holy Eucharist, and gave it to

the communicants. Others put the body of the Lord into the hands of the images, and made the communicants take it out thence. Others used boards, with pictures painted on them, instead of an altar, on which they consecrated the elements; and many such-like abuses were committed.

Therefore, the orthodox emperors, and the most learned bishops, assembled in council, have forbidden these enormities; and have removed the images to higher places, in the church, where they stood formerly, and when they were not worshipped, as they have been of late, by ignorant people. Some of the complainers are gone to Rome, to calumniate us there; but we are orthodox; we believe the Trinity, one God in three persons; the incarnation of the Word; his two wills, and two operations; we implore the intercession of the Holy Virgin, the Mother of God, and of all the saints; we reverence their relics; we receive all the apostolical traditions, and the decrees of the Six Councils."

"The spirit of appeal and justification in which the above epistle is conceived indicates the weakness of a falling cause, and so indeed it proved; for in the year 842, the Empress Theodora re-established the authority of the seventh council and replaced the images, with so firm a hand, that they have never since been shaken."

"The bishops," adds the historian, "and, in general, the secular clergy of the East, appear to have taken no violent part in the contest. Indeed, we are persuaded that that numerous body contained many pious and rational individuals who were shocked by the degradation of Christianity and human nature, and who watched, with an anxious eye, the endeavours which were made to remove it. But such characters are seldom busy or ambitious, and the anxiety of these excellent men may have been often confined to their own bosoms, or at least to the narrow limits of their diocese. On the other hand, the monastic orders have, too generally, attested the spuriousness of their origin, by their alliance with impurity and imposture. And thus, in the present instance, they were furious advocates for a system so necessary to their influence and their avarice; and it is chiefly, no doubt, to their entrance, that we are to attribute the evil result of the conflict." (Wad. Hist. of Ch. Part 2. ch. xi.)

We have thus beheld the gradual establishment of image-worship throughout the visible church. Let us now investigate the doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, in reference to this subject, from the twelfth century to the present time. This is the more necessary, in consequence of the awfully false statements of modern English Papists.

"A Papist *misrepresented*," says a book which is now circulated by thousands in this country, "worships stocks and stones for gods, he takes no notice of the second commandment, but setting up pictures and images of Christ, the Virgin Mary and his other saints, he prays to them and puts his trust in them; much like as the heathens did in their wooden gods Jupiter, Mars, Venus, &c.; and for this reason he erects stately monuments to them in his churches, adorns them sumptuously, burns candles, offers incense, and frequently falls down prostrate before them, and, with his eyes fixed upon them, cries out, 'Help me Mary.' 'Assist me Antony.' 'Remember me Ignatius.'

A Papist *truly represented* believes it damnable to worship stocks and stones for gods, to pray to pictures or images of Christ, of the Virgin Mary, or of any other saints, to believe any virtue or divinity in them, or to put any trust or confidence in them."

Such is the statement of the celebrated Gother in his popular work, styled *A Papist Misrepresented and Represented*. Let us now see whether the practices here pronounced damnable have not belonged to the Romish Church for at least a thousand years!

It is beyond all question, then, that the doctrines inculcated by the doctors of the Romish Church for many centuries previous to the Reformation were, in the very highest degree, idolatrous; and the practice of the people was in full accordance with such teaching.

In the first place, the second Council of Nice, at which the worship of images was authoritatively enjoined, has always been held for a general council by the Church of Rome; and its decrees were appealed to, as still in force, by the Council of Trent (Sess. xxv.). Hence the doctrines inculcated by that idolatrous synod must be regarded as representing the opinions of the Romish Church, viz.:

> "That the holy and venerable images may be exposed to the sight, as well as the cross: both those which are made in color upon cloth, and those of another kind; that they may be placed in churches, placed upon sacred vessels, upon sacerdotal vestments, upon the walls and tables in houses and the highways, viz. the image of Jesus Christ and the Virgin, of the angels and saints, that they may be kissed and reverenced; but not adored with the true adoration due to God alone; that incense and wax-candles may be burnt before them, as they are before the cross, because the reverence paid to them passes to their object." (Definition of the second Nicene Council, in the 7th action or session in Du Pin.)

This, however, was not enough for "the man of sin and son of perdition." The Romish Church went far beyond the Eastern in this, as well as in every other corruption. The latter, even in this, its most idolatrous council, expressly states, that "images are not to be worshipped with the *true adoration* due to God alone" (*Latria*) and that the reverence paid to images passes to the object represented by them. The Romish doctors, on the contrary, distinctly state, that *Latria*, or supreme worship, is to be given to images, and that the worship paid to them terminates in the images themselves.

St. Thomas Aquinas, surnamed "the Angelical Doctor," whose Summa exercised much the same authority in the Church of Rome that the Bible does amongst Protestants, declares, that "the worship of *Latria* (i.e. the worship paid to God) must be given to images of Christ." After stating the several grounds of this opinion, he proceeds:

> "Hence, it follows, that the same reverence should be shown to the image of Christ, as to Christ himself; and, since Christ is worshipped with supreme worship (*Latria*), therefore, his image must be worshipped with supreme worship." (See Bossuet. Œuvres 1, 448.)

Ever since the time of St. Aquinas (A.D. 1268), this has been the commonly received opinion of the Church of Rome. It would be impossible to quote a twentieth part of the testimonies which exist:

Cardinal Bonaventure: "As Christ himself, from his union to the Divinity, is worshipped with *Latria*; so is the image of Christ, as it represents him; therefore, the worship of *Latria* should be given to the image of Christ." (Bonav. in Sent. 3, dist. 9, q. 2.)

Marsilius ab Ingen: “The cross, as a sign representing the object of worship, and as a medium of it, is to be adored with *Latria*,” and, for this, he appeals to the office of the church, where the cross is thus addressed: “O cross, hail! our only hope; increase the righteousness of the just, and give pardon to sinners”; “which three things,” he says, “properly belong to God; therefore it is properly the worship of *Latria*, which the church renders to the cross, as a sign.” (Marsil. b. 3, part 2, q. 8, cond. 1 et 3.)

James Almain: Declares that images are to be worshipped *with the same kind of worship* as that with which the things represented are. (l. 3. dist. 9, con. 5.)

Angelus de Clavasio: “The image of Christ is to be worshipped with *Latria*, both on account of the representation and the contact. Therefore,” he adds, “we speak and pray to the cross, as to Christ himself.” (Summa Angel. vv. ador. n. 5. 6.) The same is said by Bartholomeus Fumus, Dionysius the Carthusian, Antoninus the Dominican, and many others.

Another extremely gross feature in the Romish doctrine of image-worship is, that the worship of images terminates in the images themselves. That this is the opinion of the doctors of the Church of Rome is unquestionable:

Bellarmine: In his treatise concerning images, distinctly says, “That the images of Christ and the saints are to be worshipped, not only by accident and improperly, *but themselves and properly, so that they terminate the worship, as they are considered in themselves*, and not barely as they represent the exemplar.”

Bernardus Pujol: “The image truly and properly is the matter of adoration and the worship *truly and properly is terminated upon it*… and, not only,” he adds, “the external, but the *internal worship is to be terminated on the image*.” (De sac. ador. cultu disp. 3. sect. 7.)

Dominicus Soto: Determines, also, “that images are not intended by the church only for helps to memory; for we do not worship the scriptures or names of saints, which call them to our minds; but, as to images, we ought to think otherwise, for they do not only raise our minds to worship those who are represented by them, but *we ought to adore the images themselves* (sed easdem ipsas debemus adorare); for the church does not say, ‘we worship thee, O Christ,’ but ‘thy cross,’ and ‘O cross, hail! our only hope.’” (De Inst. et jure, l. 2. q. 3. art. 2. in fin.)

Sylvius: “This is the Catholic truth… that images are, truly and properly, to be worshipped; so that the honour is given, not only to the exemplar, but, for the sake of that, to the image.” (Fr. Sylvius in 3 p. Th. q. 25. art. 3. q. 5.)

It need scarcely be said, that the practice of the Church of Rome, down to the period of the Reformation, was what might have been expected under such teaching. At the second Nicene Council, it was universally agreed that no image of God could be made. “If we cannot paint the soul,” says St. John Damascene, “how much less can we represent God by an image! What image can we make of him, who is invisible, incorporeal, without quantity, magnitude, or form?” And Leontius, John of Thessalonica, and other fathers in that council express themselves similarly.

The Romish Church, on the contrary, has set up images of God the Father, and of the Trinity, for worship. (See Stillf. Def. of a discourse, &c.) Molanus, a popish writer, and Thyreus also, mention four kinds of images which are most used in the Church of Rome:

That of an old man—to represent God the Father; of Christ, in his human nature; and of a dove—for the Holy Spirit.

That of three persons, of equal age and stature—to denote the Trinity.

That of an image of the Blessed Virgin, in the belly of which was represented the Holy Trinity. The celebrated doctor, John Gerson of Paris, says he saw this in the Carmelites' church (Gers. Serm. in nativ. Dom. Opera Tom. 4. p. 620), and that there were others like it. Molanus also met with one among the Carthusian monks.

That of one head, with three faces; or one body, with three heads: which the last author describes, and says it is usually set up before the office of the Trinity is said.

The *Processionale* printed for the use of the church at Salisbury (A.D. 1555) contains a rubrick for the *incensing the image of the Holy Trinity* (fol. 16). And Cardinal Bellarmine contends for the lawfulness of representing God by images (De Imag. l. 2. c. 8).

The practice of the church, in the worship of images, is well set forth in the homily on peril of idolatry, written at the time of the Reformation:

"Our churches stand full of such great puppets, wondrously decked and adorned; garlands and coronets be set on their heads; precious pearls hanging about their necks; their fingers shine with rings set with precious stones; their dead and stiff bodies are clothed with garments, stuffed with gold. You would believe that our men saints were some princes of Persia land, with their proud apparel; and the idols of our women saints were nice and well-trimmed harlots, tempting their paramours to wantonness, whereby the saints of God are not honoured, but most dishonoured; and their godliness, soberness, chastity, contempt of riches and the vanity of the world, defaced and brought in doubt, by such monstrous decking; most differing from their sober and godly lives.

And because the whole pageant must thoroughly be played, it is not enough thus to deck idols, but at last come in the priests themselves, likewise decked with gold and pearl, that they may be meet servants for such lords and ladies, and fit worshippers of such gods and goddesses. And with a solemn face they pass forth before these golden puppets, and fall down to the ground on their marrow-bones, before these honourable idols; and then rising up again, offer up odours and incense to them, to give the people an example of double idolatry, by worshipping not only the idol, but the gold also and riches, wherewith it is garnished." (p. 219)

And again:

"True religion then, and pleasing of God, standeth not in making, setting up, painting, gilding, clothing and decking of dumb and dead images, (which be but great puppets and babies for old fools in dotage and wicked idolatry, to dally and play with) nor in kissing of them, capping, kneeling, offering to them,

incensing of them, setting up of candles, hanging up legs, arms, and whole bodies of wax before them, or praying or asking of them, or of saints things belonging only to God to give. But all these be vain and abominable, and most damnable before God." (p. 223)

Such was the practice of the *baptized heathens* who constituted the Church of Rome for many centuries previous to the Reformation; and our knowledge of human nature would have led us to expect what a celebrated popish historian of the sixteenth century has recorded as a matter of fact: that there "were many persons who worshipped the very wood or stone, brass or marble, or pictures painted on the walls, *not as figures, but as if they had verily sense; and did put more trust in them, than they did in Christ, or in the saints to whom they were dedicated*." (Polyd. Virg. de invent. rer. lib. 6. cap. 13.)

The Council of Trent, which was held in the sixteenth century, gave its deliberate approval to the worship of images, and thus all the idolatries of the dark ages have been perpetuated even to the present day. The solemn decree of that authoritative body on this subject is as follows:

> "That the images of Christ and of the Blessed Virgin Mother of God, and other saints, are to be kept and reserved, especially in churches, and due honour and veneration to be given to them; not, for that any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them, for which they are to be worshipped; or that any thing is to be asked of them, or any confidence to be placed in them, as was anciently done by the heathens, who put their trust in idols, but because the honour which is exhibited to images, is referred to the prototype, or thing represented by them; so that by the image which we kiss, and before which we kneel, or put off our hats, we adore Christ and reverence his saints whom the said images represent." (Session xxv.)

Upon this important canon, we would remark, first, that there is nothing here stated to prevent men from giving *Latria* or supreme worship to the images of Christ. The wary council uses the word due veneration, which is of course susceptible of any interpretation which may be put upon it; and whilst one person may consider a slight salutation all that is due, another may deem the highest honour and veneration of which they are capable due to images.

Accordingly, as a matter of fact, many of the most eminent doctors present at the Council of Trent have declared that both the images and cross of Christ are to be worshipped with the *supreme worship of Latria*. Among which are Dominicus Soto, Turrianus, Naclantus. Of the same opinion was Cardinal Paleotus, Gregory de Valentia, Peter Thyreus, Ludovicus de Paramo, Paulus Maria, Gregory Valentinianus, Paul Layman, Eligius Basseus, and also Phil. Gamacheus and Ysambertus, both doctors of the Sorbonne; whilst Azorius informs us, that this was the common opinion of divines. Many doctors have included the sponge and the nails in the catalogue of material objects to which supreme worship is to be paid, as Cornelius Curtius, an Augustine, and Eligius Basseus. Extracts from all the above great divines of the Romish Church, since the Reformation, may be found in Stillingfleet's "Defence of a Discourse on Idolatry," Lond. 1676, pp. 615–620.

Another important fact is, that all the external acts of adoration are permitted by the council to be given to images; so that a door is thus opened for all the vile idolatry of the dark ages. And there can be no question that the practice of the Romish Church since the Reformation has been altogether as gross as it

ever was. Mr. Gother, as we have already seen, pronounces it “damnable to pray to pictures or images”; but the Romish Church itself prays to the cross in the most express and formal terms. The Roman Pontifical at present used determines that *Latria*, or supreme worship, is due to the cross of Christ. In appointing the mode of procession at the reception of the emperor, it says, “The cross of the legate ought to have the right hand, because *Latria* is due to it” (quia debetur ei *Latria*. Pontificale Rom. Ordo ad recep. Imperat. Rubr.).

The Romish Breviary of the present day addresses the cross in prose in the following terms:

“O cross, brighter than all the stars, famous in the world, much beloved by mortals, more holy than all things, who alone wast worthy to support the weight of the world, sweet wood, bearing sweet nails, sweet burdens; save this present assembly congregated for thy praise to-day.” (Brev. Rom. Fest. Maii 30. Invent. S. Cruc.)

On Good Friday, the Romish Missal commands the following service to be performed:

> “The priest takes the cross from the deacon, and turning towards the people, uncovers a part of it from the top, beginning alone, ‘Behold the wood of the Cross’—the choir sing, ‘come let us adore,’ and while this is singing, the whole congregation falls prostrate before it. The priest then uncovers more of the cross, raising it, by slow degrees, higher than at first. The people are then addressed, ‘Behold the wood of the Cross, on which the salvation of the world was hung, come let us adore.’ This is repeated three times. Then the priest, uncovering the whole cross, and laying it on its place before the altar, *takes off his shoes and draws near to adore it, kneeling down three times before kissing the cross.* The ministers of the altar afterwards adore the cross in the same manner and sing, *‘We adore thy Cross, Oh Lord,’ &c.*” (Feria 6, in Parasceve Domini, in Rom. Miss.)

Again, the Council of Trent expressly rejects the belief, “That any divinity or virtue resides in images for which they are to be worshipped, trusted in,” etc. But it is notorious:

First. That the forms of consecration used by that church do profess to impart *virtue* to images.

Secondly. That the allowed practice of Papists in foreign countries proves that divinity and virtue are believed to reside in them.

First. The Second Nicene Council considered no consecration necessary, but merely set up the images for worship. Not so, however, the Church of Rome. When a new cross is to be set up for worship, the following prayer is offered up by the pontiff:

> “We beseech thee, holy Lord, Almighty Father, everlasting God, to vouchsafe to bless this wood of thy cross, that it may be a saving remedy to mankind—*that it may be to them the strengthening of faith, the increase of good works, and the redemption of their souls—that it may be their comfort, protection, and defence against the cruel darts of their enemies*, through our Lord Jesus Christ,” etc.

After sprinkling the cross with holy water and censing it, he stands uncovered and says:

> "Blessed be this wood, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, and may the blessing of that wood on which the holy members of our Saviour were suspended, be in this wood, *that they who pray and bow themselves on account of God (propter Deum) before this cross, may find sanctification, both of body and soul*, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord."

In case the Cross is of metal instead of wood, a different prayer is offered, in which occurs the following: "Accept this Cross, with those hands, with which thou didst embrace that on which thou sufferedst, and out of the sanctity of that Cross, sanctify this; and as by that the world was delivered from all guilt, so let the very devout souls of thy servants who now offer, b*e delivered from every sin committed by them, through the merit of this Cross*," etc. (Rom. Pontif., De bened. nov. Cruc., Venet. 1582.)

In the same *Pontificale*, the next form is that of blessing an image of the Virgin, in which the Pontiff offers the following prayer of consecration: "Almighty, Everlasting God, by whose merciful providence all things are created out of nothing, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify this image, prepared with veneration, to the honour of the most pious mother of thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ, and grant O most merciful Father, by the invocation of thy name, and of the name of the same thy only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to thy will was incarnate for the salvation of mankind, tuâ ever Virgin Mary, quatenus precibus ejusdem sacratissimæ virginis,[4] that, whosoever shall strive suppliantly to honour the same Queen of mercy, and our most gracious Lady, before this image, may both be rescued from impending dangers, and in the sight of thy divine majesty, may obtain pardon of all their sins, and may likewise acquire in the present life that grace which they long for, and in the world to come, may rejoice with thy elect, in everlasting salvation, through the same our Lord."

Prayers for consecrating other images follow; but the above are sufficient to prove that the *practice* of the Church of Rome is directly at variance with the *profession* of the Council of Trent, viz., that they do not believe "that any divinity or virtue resides in images, for which they are to be worshipped, confided in," etc.

Second. The allowed practice of Papists ever since the Council of Trent has been so gross and idolatrous, in papal countries, that no one acquainted with the worship which is paid to images on the continent can for a moment question that the priests inculcate, and the people believe, the actual divinity of all the principal images of their church. Take the following authentic account of the worship of "Our Lady of the Pillar," which was the name of a celebrated image of Spain in the 18th century:

"This image," says Mr. Gavin, a converted Spanish priest, "has her own chaplain besides a chapter of prebends and priests. The Virgin's chaplain has more privileges and power than any king, archbishop, or any ecclesiastical person, except the Pope; for his business is only to dress the image every morning, which he doth in private and without any help; I say in private, that is drawing the four curtains of the Virgin's canopy, that nobody may see the image naked. No body has liberty but this chaplain to approach so near the image; for as the author of the book called 'The History of our Lady of the Pillar' says—an archbishop (who had so great assurance as to attempt to say mass on the altar table of the

Virgin) died upon the spot before he began mass. I saw King Philip and King Charles, when they went to visit the image, stand at a distance from it. With these cautions it is very easy to give out that nobody can know of what matter the image is made, that being a thing referred to the angels only. So all the favour the Christians can obtain from the Virgin, is only to kiss her Pillar; for it is contrived that by having broke the wall backwards, a piece of the pillar as big as two crown pieces is shewn, which is set in gold round about, and there kings and other people kneel down to adore and kiss that part of the stone. The stones and lime, that were taken when the wall was broken, are kept for relics, and it is a singular favour if any can get some small stone, paying a great sum of money.

"There is always so great a crowd of people that many times they cannot kiss the Pillar, but touch it with one of their fingers, and afterwards kiss the part of the finger that touched the pillar. The large chapel of the lamp is always night and day crowded with people: for, as they say, that chapel was never empty of Christians since St. James built it, so the people of the city, that work all day, go out at night to visit the image: and this blind devotion is not only among pious people, but among the most profligate and debauched; insomuch that a lewd woman will not go to bed without visiting the image; for they certainly believe, that nobody can be saved, if they do not pay this tribute of devotion to the sacred image.

"As to the miracles wrought by this image," adds the author, "I could begin to give an account, but never make an end: and this subject requiring a whole book to itself, I will not trouble the reader with it, hoping in God, that if he is pleased to spare my life some years, I shall print a book of their miracles and revelations, that the world by it may know the inconsistent grounds and reasons of the Romish Communion." (Master Key to Popery, vol. i. p. 238)

In the same work is contained the following account of a crucifix, which "is worshipped as if the very image of wood was the very Christ of flesh and bones":

"In the Cathedral Church of St. Salvator," says Mr. Gavin, "there was an old image of Jesus Christ crucified, behind the choir, in a small unminded chapel, nobody took notice of that crucifix except a devout prebend or canon of the church, who did use every day to kneel down before that image and to pray heartily to it. The prebend (though a religious man in the outward appearance) was ambitious in his heart of advancement in the church; so one day as he was on his knees before the old image, he was begging, that, by its power and influence, he might be made a bishop, and after a cardinal, and lastly a Pope. To which earnest request the image gave him this answer, '*And thou seest me here, what dost thou do for me*?' To which the prebend answered, '*Lord I have sinned and done evil before thee*.' To this humble request the image said, '*Thou shalt be a bishop*,' and accordingly he was made a bishop very soon after.

These words spoken by the crucifix of the Cathedral Church, made such a noise, that crowds of well-disposed credulous persons used to come every day, to offer their gifts to the miraculous image of our Saviour: and the image, which was not minded at all before, after it spoke, was, and has been ever since so much reverenced, that the offerings of the first six years were reckoned worth near a million of crowns. The history of the miracle reports that the chapter did intend to build a chapel in one corner of

the church to put the crucifix in with more veneration and decency; but the image spoke again to the prebend, and said, *'My pleasure is to continue where I am till the end of the world.'* So the crucifix is kept in the same chapel but richly adorned: and nobody, ever since, dare touch any thing belonging to the image, for fear of disobliging the crucifix. It has an old wig on its head, the very sight of which is enough to make every one laugh; its face looks so black and disfigured, that nobody can guess whether it is the face of a man or a woman, but every one believes it is a crucifix, by the other circumstances of the cross, and crown of thorns." (p. 232)

As it appears important to fasten this charge of idolatry upon the Romish Church, we will bring before the reader one or two other proofs that "divinity is believed to reside in images, and actual trust and confidence placed in them." The following account refers to the practice of veiling certain images for a time, and then, on a fixed day, removing the veil with great ceremony:

"I wanted no diversion," says an intelligent writer, "all the way till I came to *Sienna*, whither all these processions were going. Only I found great inconvenience when I came to my inn; because that wherever these processions pass they cause great scarcity, by reason of the great numbers that compose them. Being come to Sienna, I enquired what church it was to which all these devotions were designed, and was told that they all went to a church of our Lady where they had lately uncovered a miraculous image of the Virgin, which was only done at the end of every forty years. My curiosity invited me to take a view of it, but the throng of the people was so great, that I had much ado to crowd into the church. They told me that this thronging concourse had already continued for eight days, (for so long the image had been unveiled,) and that after eight days more it was to be veiled again, with a great deal of solemnity.

I took an exact view of this image, which was about a foot broad and a foot and a half high, the countenance of it representing that of a very young girl; neither could I find any thing extraordinary in it, for which it might seem to deserve the adorations they gave it. I enquired of the priests that served this church, What might be the reason that this image was only unveiled once in forty years? But they could give me no better than this, 'That it had been a custom observed time out of mind; and that they believed the first rise of it, was an order given by the Virgin herself for so doing.'

"I have in Italy seen a vast number of these sorts of veiled images; not only of the Virgin but also of the crucifix, and all other saints; and I can say with truth, that there is scarcely a church to be met with, which has not two or three of them. Sometimes we meet with great pictures in their churches, where several saints are represented and amongst them one only having his or her face veiled, that being the mysterious saint. The secret of which intrigue as far as I could pierce into by the use the monks and priests make of it, is plainly this; They find this way admirably adapted to advance their temporal profit. The things we see are every day become too common with us! The images and statues of the Church of Rome would make no great impression on the minds of the people, or be powerful enough to open their purse-strings if the priest had not found out this ingenious invention of making them more rare, and therefore the more desired. Yea, it seems also that the long time of their veiling, begets something of a greater veneration for them, and that the Roman Catholics imagine, that when after so

long a time they are uncovered, they meet with something in those *Pictures, Images, and Statues*, more august and divine than usual." (Frauds, etc. p. 320)

Such was the worship paid to images and pictures by Papists in the 17th and 18th centuries. Annexed we give *facsimiles* of four of the miraculous images of the Virgin Mary, taken from a work of the highest authority published in the seventeenth century, entitled "The Marian Atlas, or the Miraculous Images of the Mother of God, throughout the Christian World."[5] The likeness between these several portraits, the reader will naturally think, might have been somewhat stronger, considering that they all represent the same individual goddess.

The worship of the wooden image called Our Lady of Loretto is far greater than that usually given to the images of the Virgin. It is important therefore that some account of it be given to the reader:

"The Chapel of Loretto, in Italy, is by the Italians called *La Santa Casa*, that is 'The Holy House.' They believe this to be the very same house wherein Jesus Christ dwelt, at Nazareth, with the Blessed Virgin, his mother, and his reputed father St. Joseph, for the space of thirty years… They pretend it was transported by angels from Nazareth, where it stood at first, to the place where it is at present… I proceed now to the description of this chapel, or *Santa Casa*. The whole building is of brick, about twenty-five feet long; the length not being proportionable to the breadth of it. The wood with which it is ceiled, being consumed and rotten by age, it has been vaulted with brick. It has two windows and two doors in the two sides of it, and another beneath, by which, they say, the Angel Gabriel entered, to announce to the Blessed Virgin the mystery of the incarnation.

They have erected an altar in the very place, where, they say, the Virgin was on her knees, when the Angel entered; and upon the altar is an image of the Virgin, of wood, about four feet and a half high, which is the miraculous statue on which they bestow their adorations. She has changes of clothes for all working days, and for all holy-days and Sundays. She has them of all sorts of colours, and mourning clothes for the Passion week. They shift or change her clothes with abundance of ceremonies. I was there one Saturday, in the evening, when the priests undressed her. They took away from her the suit of purple she had on, in order to dress her in a green gown; which they performed in the following manner. They first took off her veil; then her great robe or mantle royal. Afterwards her gown, and upper and under petticoats. Last of all, with a great deal of reverence, they pulled off her smock, to put on a clean one. I leave you, Sir, to guess, what thoughts this may probably impress on the imagination, as well of those who perform the ceremony, as of the assistants and spectators.

The people that are present upon their knees, all the time the ceremony is performing, beat their breasts; and nothing is heard, throughout the chapel, but sighings and groans, with interrupted words and ejaculations: *'Holy Virgin of Loretto: Help me! Mother of God: hear me*:' and other such like. As soon as the image is quite naked or undressed, these sighings and groanings are doubled; but decrease again, by degrees, as they dress it. I cannot imagine what should be the cause of this change in their tone, except it should be this: that when the statue is quite undressed, it more strongly affects their imagination, and makes them believe that they see the very Virgin in person; and that this therefore is the nick of time for them to pray with the greatest fervour of devotion. They dress her in a green suit of

apparel, extremely rich, being a flower-work upon a crown of gold. The veil they put upon her head is much more costly; for besides that, it was of the same cloth of gold, it was all powdered with great fine pearls.

After this they put upon her head a crown of gold, thick beset with precious stones of inestimable price. Next, they put on her neck-jewel, her pendants, and her bracelets of diamonds; and many great chains of gold about her neck; to which were fastened abundance of hearts and medals of gold, which are the presents which queens and Catholic princesses have bestowed on the image, out of devotion, in testimony that they have resolved to be its slaves. The whole adorning and furniture of the altar, was equally sumptuous and magnificent. Nothing could be seen but great pots or vessels, basins, lamps and candlesticks, all of gold and silver, and beset with precious stones. All which, by the light of a vast quantity of wax-candles, that burn there night and day, afford a lustre, whose beauty ravished the soul through the eyes. It is no wonder to me, that many do aver themselves to be sensible of an extraordinary devotion in this place… This natural effect being, by some ignorant people, supposed to be a particular grace of God, appropriated to that place, makes them take it for no less than a continual miracle. But the extravagancies continually committed here, are a sufficient argument against this weak and ungrounded opinion.

"They kiss the walls all round about the chapel, they lick the bricks with their tongues, they rub their beads against them, they take thread, and having compassed the chapel with it, as if they intended to take the measure or compass of it, they afterwards make a girdle of it, which they say is very efficacious against witchcraft, and all manner of ills. Priests, in the mean time are not unmindful of their gain; they have persons placed every where in the chapel, and great church, who press the people to give alms and to have masses said for them to our Lady. They pay a crown apiece for every mass; and the Priests promise to say them at our Lady's Altar, that is in the chapel. 'Tis certain that the Priests receive money for the saying of about 50,000 masses every year; and yet it is as sure that it is impossible for them to say above 10,000 in a year at that altar; so that all the rest who have given their money for that purpose, must needs be frustrated of their intentions, and choused of their money.

Those that are rich and wealthy bestow great presents upon the wooden statue of the Virgin that is in the chapel, which without any addition or modification, they call 'The Holy Virgin of Loretto.' They present her with necklaces and bracelets of pearls and diamonds, hearts of gold, medals, candlesticks, lamps embossed, pictures of gold and silver of prodigious weight, and bigness. Many present her with rings, and most precious jewels, as a token of their espousing of her. She has above fifty gowns, all of them of inestimable price, insomuch as she is, this day, the richest puppet that is in the universe; and the piece of wood the most sumptuously drest, that is to be found in the whole world. 'Tis to this image, that those famous Litanies which are so much in vogue with the Church of Rome, have been addressed, which are called 'The Litanies of the Virgin,' or 'The Litanies of our Lady of Loretto,' wherein she is termed '*The Queen of Angels,' 'The mother of Divine Grace,' 'The Gate of Heaven,' 'The help of Christians,' 'The refuge of sinners,'* etc. (Frauds, etc. pp. 155–163)

Whether the Romish Church inculcates the belief that actual virtue and divinity are inherent in images in the present day, the reader can judge from the following statements:

> "At the time of the irruption of the French into Italy (1796,) the most wondrous miracles were said to be wrought by certain images in Rome. *Many of them opened and shut their eyes; and one shed torrents of tears*. A full and particular account of these miracles, was published in the year 1801, entitled 'Official Memoirs of the Juridical examination, into the authenticity of the miraculous events, which happened at Rome in the year 1796–7, including the decree of approbation.' London, Keating and Brown. (See extracts in Philpott's Sup. Let. to Butler, p. 414.)"

In a work already quoted, The Glories of Mary, by St. Alphonsus Liguori, printed in Dublin, 1845, occur the following legends:

"While St. Gertrude was one day fervently saying the words 'turn thy eyes of mercy towards us,' she saw the holy Virgin pointing to the eyes of the Son whom she held in her arms. The Virgin then said: 'These are my most merciful eyes, which I can incline in favour of all who invoke me.'—Rev. i. 4. cap. 53. These are the most compassionate eyes which I can incline to save all who ask my prayers. A certain sinner who wept before an image of Mary, beseeching her to obtain from God the pardon of his sins, was given to understand that the Blessed Virgin turned to the infant whom she held in her arms and said to him: 'Son, shall these tears be lost?' Jesus Christ answered that he pardoned the sinner." (p. 274)

"Blessed John Errold, who, through humility, called himself the *disciple*, relates (in Promptuar.) that there was a married man, who lived in enmity with God. His wife, a virtuous woman, being unable to induce him to renounce sin, entreated him at least to practise, in honour of the mother of God, the devotion of saluting her with a Hail Mary, every time he passed by an image of the Virgin. He began to practise this devotion. One night, on his way to commit sin, he saw a light: he looked, and perceived that it was a lamp that burned before an image of Mary, holding in her arms the infant Jesus. He said the Hail Mary, as usual: but what did he see? HE SAW AN INFANT COVERED WITH WOUNDS STREAMING BLOOD. Filled at once with terror and compunction, at the thought of having, by his sins, inflicted these wounds on his Redeemer, he began to weep: but he saw the infant turning away from him.

Hence, full of confusion, he had recourse to the most holy Virgin, saying: 'Mother of Mercy, thy Son rejects me: I can find no advocate more merciful and more powerful than thee, who art his mother. My queen, assist me, pray to him for me.' The divine mother answered: 'You sinners, call me Mother of Mercy, but you do not cease to make me a mother of misery, by renewing the passion of my Son, and my dolours.' But because Mary knows not how to send away disconsolate a soul that has recourse to her, she turned to her Son to ask pardon for that miserable sinner. Jesus still appeared unwilling to forgive him; but the holy Virgin, PLACING THE INFANT IN THE NICHE, PROSTRATED HERSELF BEFORE HIM, saying: 'Son, I will not depart from thy feet until thou dost pardon this sinner.' Jesus then said: 'Mother I can refuse thee nothing: thou dost wish me to pardon him, for thy sake I pardon him: make him come and kiss my wounds.' The sinner came weeping bitterly, and as he kissed the wounds of the infant, they were healed. In the end, JESUS EMBRACED HIM in token of

his pardon: the sinner changed his conduct, and afterwards led a holy life, enamoured of the most holy Virgin, who had obtained for him so great a grace." (p. 174)

"Father Charles Bovio relates (Ex. 8. Virg. t. 5. ex. 32), that in Domans, in France, there was a married man, who, though his wife was living, kept up a criminal intimacy with another woman. The wife, being unable to bear such maltreatment, continually besought the Lord to punish the crimes of her husband: she went one day before an altar of the Blessed Virgin in a certain church, to implore just vengeance against the woman who lived with him.

The other woman went every day before the same image to recite a *Hail Mary.* The Divine Mother appeared one night in a dream to the person who had been maltreated by her husband; the woman instantly began to exclaim, as usual, '*Justice, O Mother of God, justice*.' The Blessed Virgin replied: 'Do you ask justice from me? Go and find some one else to execute justice. For my part, I will not do it. Know that the sinner against whom you demand justice, recites a salutation every day in my honour. And I will endeavour to save from the vengeance due to their sins, those who recite that salutation.' In the morning, the woman went to hear mass in the church of the Virgin. As she was leaving the church, she met her enemy, and began to reproach her, calling her a sorceress, who, by her magic, had enchanted even the Blessed Virgin." (p. 321)

We must not omit to notice another object of idolatry amongst Papists, a representation of which is given in the annexed engraving. The Romish Church worships the wafer in the sacrament with the same honour (*latria*) which they render to Almighty God. The Council of Trent, after asserting that, at their consecration, the bread and wine are changed into our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man, says: "There is, therefore, no room to doubt that all the faithful in Christ are bound to venerate this most holy sacrament; and to render thereto the worship of latria, which is due to the true God, according to the constant usage in the Catholic Church." (Sess. xiii. cap. 5)

And again: "If any one say that this holy sacrament should not be adored, nor solemnly carried about in procession, nor held up publicly for the people to adore it, or that its worshippers are idolaters; let him be accursed." (can. 6)

Such is the doctrine of the Romish Church in reference to the adoration of the host; and their practice is in strict accordance with their teaching. The following is a translation of the language used in the present Missal: "Having uttered the words of consecration, the priest immediately falling on his knees, adores the consecrated host: he rises, shows it to the people, places it on the corporal, and again adores it." When the wine is consecrated, the priest in the same manner "falling on his knees, adores it, rises, shows it to the people, puts the cup in its place, covers it over, and again adores it."

This worship is not only paid to the host during the communion, but at other times also: in the church, whenever it is placed on the altar, with the candles burning and the incense smoking before, or hung up in its shrine or tabernacle, with a canopy of state over it. They say the church is sanctified with it, as with the presence of God himself. They also worship the wafer when it is carried through the streets on solemn occasions, such as the pompous procession of Corpus Christi, or for the purpose of being

administered to the sick. A bell announces its approach, and it is expected that all who meet it, whilst passing along the streets, should instantly fall down on their knees and adore it as God!

A striking account of the practice of the Spaniards is given by the late Rev. Blanco White. “In the more populous towns,” says he, “these unpleasant meetings are frequent. Nor are you free from being disturbed by the holy bell in the most retired part of your house. Its sound operates like magic upon the Spaniards. In the midst of a gay, noisy party, the word, ‘*His Majesty*,’ will bring every one on his knees, until the tinkling dies in the distance. Are you at dinner? you must leave the table; in bed? you must at least sit up. But the most preposterous effect of the custom is to be seen at the theatres. On the approach of the host to any military guard, the drum beats, the men are drawn out, and as soon as the priest can be seen, they bend the right knee, and invert the firelocks, placing the point of the bayonet upon the ground. As an officer’s guard is always stationed at the door of every Spanish theatre, I have often laughed in my sleeve at the effect of the chamade upon the actors and company. ‘*Dios! Dios*!’ (God! God!) resounds from all parts of the house, and every one falls that moment upon his knees.” (Doblado’s Letters from Spain, p. 12)

In further illustration of the blasphemous idolatry of the consecrated wafer, it may be mentioned that the Romish Church has a “Litany of the Blessed Sacrament”—which occurs in almost every devotional book—in which the consecrated wafer is addressed in the same language *as Christ himself is*! The following are some extracts:

> “O Saviour of Israel, who art truly a hidden God, have mercy upon us!”
> “Lamb without blemish, have mercy upon us!”
> “Word made flesh, and dwelling among us, have mercy upon us!”
> “Holy Victim, have mercy upon us!”
> “Most holy sacrifice, truly propitiatory of the living and the dead, have mercy upon us!”
> “Heavenly antidote, by which we are preserved from sin, have mercy upon us!”
> “Most stupendous of all miracles, have mercy upon us!”
> “Bread by the omnipotence of the word changed into flesh, have mercy upon us!”
> “Bond of union, have mercy upon us!”
> “Spiritual sweetness tasted in its very source, have mercy upon us!”
> “Pledge of the glory to come, have mercy on us!”

The Papists have thus set up, to use the language of an old writer, “the most contemptible, detestable, and abominable idol that ever was in the world: viz. a pitiful wafer or piece of bread, not only as a true and perfect man, but as the true and living God, who made heaven and earth… So that here is a God made by a creature, a paltry priest; made of a creature, a morsel of bread; and made by a magical muttering over of five words, viz. Hoc enim est corpus meum.”

“This God made of bread and rising out of the womb of *transubstantiation*, is the idol set up in the mass; and, I say, it is the most absurd, horrible, abominable, and monstrous idol that ever was in the world. An idol that makes the Christian name and profession contemptible, yea, a very ridicule and scorn; and a matter of greatest distaste and execration, both to Jews, Mahometans, and heathens; and

confirms them in an invincible enmity against it: as well it may, when they take Christianity to be such a religion as this idol makes it. Can men possibly (if they set their invention upon the rack) excogitate or conceive of a more gross and palpable error, than to set up such a God as this breaden boy is? A God that neither sees, nor hears, nor speaks, nor breathes, nor moves; a God that cannot save himself from thieves and enemies; no, nor from dogs, rats, mice, or worms; in a word, a God that is made a thousand times over, in a thousand places every day, and as often fairly devoured, and eaten up by his makers?"[6] (A Treatise of the Mass, by Rev. H. Pendlebury)



We have thus considered, at some length, the actual character of the worship of images, and also of the host, in the Church of Rome. In all the papal kingdoms of Europe, images and pictures, especially of the Virgin, are universally adored. In their churches and public places, in their streets and their highways, as well as elsewhere, Papists set up these senseless idols. Lamps, too, are usually burning before them during the night, and no devout Papist ever passes by without paying them some act of adoration.

The annexed engraving, to every devout mind inexpressibly affecting, represents an Italian female worshipping at one of these shrines, placed at the corner of a street, taken from Hone's Every-Day Book. That English priests do not set up images and pictures for the worship of the faithful in their chapels, can only be called a *most gross inconsistency* of which they might well be ashamed. Nay, more: by this omission, they are guilty of direct disobedience to the decree of the Council of Trent, which commands:

> "That the images of Christ, and of the blessed Virgin, Mother of God, and other saints, are to be kept and reserved, ESPECIALLY IN CHURCHES."

Yet the English and Scotch priests, after having solemnly sworn to obey ALL the decrees of the Council of Trent, deliberately and constantly disobey this most important one. Nothing but the lax

morality of the Church of Rome could allow of this, or enable a priest of Rome to go one single day longer without exposing the images of Christ and the blessed to the view of the people, as well for their oath's sake, as for the spiritual profit of "the faithful."

There is little need of any remarks of ours to impress the reader with the absurdity, the debasing character, and the wickedness of such idolatry. The simple statement of the facts themselves, as above detailed, would be quite enough. And were any other argument necessary, the circumstance of its constituting one of the sins against which the ten commandments of the moral law are directed is sufficient to show the heinousness of the crime and the evil consequences of its commission.

The foregoing pages have aimed at establishing the fact, not only that Papists set up images and bow down to them—for this they themselves have always acknowledged—but also that they truly adore them; that they believe that divinity resides in these wooden idols; and that they put their trust and confidence in them. The command of the Almighty, however, reaches much further than this, and forbids men to "*make any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth, to bow down to them, or serve them*."

It thus appears that in the mere act of placing images in churches and in public places, the prelates and priests of the Romish Church of past days have incurred the fierce wrath of the Most High God, but faintly symbolized by the lightnings and thunders with which Mount Sinai was enveloped. Nor need we wonder that the craft and wickedness of those abandoned individuals actually led them to blot this command of the Almighty out of the Decalogue, and to divide the tenth commandment into two for the purpose of keeping up the number ten! We might mention many popish catechisms, prayer books, and other devotional works in which what we term the second commandment is totally omitted.[7]

But if the sin of *setting up and bowing down to* images be so explicitly denounced in the Word of God as to lead the papal church to expunge the second commandment, as we term it, from the Decalogue so generally, what shall be said of the idolatries described in the foregoing pages? What language is strong enough to express the criminality involved in the facts there proved against the Romish Church?

The doctrine taught by their greatest doctors as to the propriety of worshipping certain images with *latria*, i.e., supreme honour. The same worship of *latria* still offered to the cross—the prayers addressed to it to "save the present assembly"; and to God, "that the wood of the cross may be to men the increase of good works, the redemption of souls," etc. The horrid idolatry connected with the worship of images on the continent, where these idols, as we have seen, are prayed to, trusted in, and, in short, constituted the actual cops [gods] of the people!

The wickedness of such idolatry is so obvious to all classes except Romanists in the present day, that the only possible way left to English priests of evading the charge is flatly to deny the truth of the facts there alleged. Just as the celebrated Gother had the audacity, in his list of anathemas, to say "Cursed is he who commits idolatry; who prays to images or relics"; when, all the while, he knew that he was thus cursing the whole Romish Church previous to the Reformation, at least; for in the old "Prymers" we find forms of prayer to be addressed unto the image of Christ![8]

How overwhelming, then, is the idea of guilt with which the Church of Rome is chargeable in thus sanctioning the worship of graven images! How fearful is the amount of wickedness which she has thus diffused over Europe for a thousand years! And are we using any other than “the words of truth and soberness” in styling that apostate priesthood a pestilence, more terrible than the plague, spreading, not natural, but *spiritual* disease and death in every country where it is found?

Footnotes

[1] See the able work of Chemnitius, Exam. Conc. Trid. pp. 689–693.

[2] Raro more dumos pingere sanctas.—Paulinus, Epist. XII.

[3] See the authorities cited by Stillingfleet, in “Defence of a Discourse on Idolatry,” p. 538.

[4] We have thought it best to leave this somewhat obscure clause.

[5] Atlas Marianus, sive De Imaginibus Deiparæ per Orbem Christianum, miraculosis, Auctore Gul. Gumppenberg. Monachii. MDCLVII.

[6] The shocking profanity of the following extracts, from the modern Missal, must be obvious to every reader:

“If any poisonous matter touch the consecrated host, then let the priest consecrate another and receive it in the proper manner, and let the poisoned one be preserved in a box in a place, until the species be corrupted, and let the corrupted species be thrown into a sacred place.”

“If any of the blood of Christ fall on the table by negligence, it must be licked up with the tongue, the place must be thoroughly scraped, and the scrapings burned; but the ashes must be buried in holy ground.”

“If the priest vomit the eucharist, and the species appear entire, they must be reverently swallowed, unless nausea prevent, and in that case the consecrated species (alias God) must be cautiously separated from the vomit, and laid by in some sacred place, until they be corrupted and afterward they are to be thrown into a sacred place; but if the species do not appear, the vomit must be burned, and the ashes thrown into a sacred place.”—(Romish Missal, “*Of the defects of the Mass*”)

[7] In a book of prayers for the laity, entitled “Horæ Diurnæ,” extending to 368 pages, published in the year 1686, we read the following:

“THE TEN PRECEPTS OF GOD WHICH ARE CONTAINED IN THE DECALOGUE.”

“I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of servitude.

1. Thou shalt not have other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that shall take the name of his God in vain.
3. Remember that thou sanctify the Sabbath day,” &c., &c. Then the 10th is divided into two, as follows:

9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house.
10. Thou shalt not desire his wife, nor servant, nor handmaid," &c., &c. (p. 2 of the introduction)

This is the general form too in which the ten commandments occur in popish works previous to the sixteenth century.

Similarly in "*A Catechism or Summary of Christian Doctrine*, printed for T. D., 1673"—a book most extensively circulated in the 17th century, the second lesson begins thus:

Q. How shall we make it appear that we love God?
A. By obeying His commandments.
Q. How many are these commands, and what are they?
A. 1. You shall adore One God, and love him perfectly.
2. You shall not take his name in vain.
3. You shall keep holy the Sabbath day," &c.

* * * * * *

9. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife nor any thing that is against chastity.
10. You shall not covet your neighbour's goods of any kind. (p. 23)

The version of the "*Douay Catechism*" used in Ireland also has not mentioned the second commandment. The same is the case with the catechism used in the Highlands of Scotland.—(Protest, vol. i. p. 180)

In foreign countries, and in Ireland, this practice is still continued, and it is plain that the only reason that it is not done in England is because the superior knowledge of the people would instantly lead to its detection. In Italy, catechisms omit our fourth commandment and substitute for it the first of what are termed the precepts of the church: 'Remember to keep holy the festivals!'—(See also "La via del Paradiso," pp. 81–83, A.D. 1831)

[8] See for instance Prymer in English and Latin, Rouen 1556.

"A PRAYER UNTO THE IMAGE OF THE BODY OF CHRIST"
"O thou maker of heaven and earth, King of Kings, Lord of Lords," etc., fol. 129.

CHAPTER VII.
THE PRIEST IN THE PLACE OF GOD

We have already considered those doctrines and practices which constitute the chief elements in the Romish pestilence. There still remains, however, another feature of Popery equally destructive, which runs through the whole system, viz., *the awful extent to which the priest usurps the place of God!* or in the figurative language of prophecy, “sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” (2 Thess. ii. 4.)

In the great work of man’s salvation, human agency, of itself, is altogether useless, *and God is all in all*. It is true, that the Almighty is pleased to use means, in renewing and sanctifying the heart; but He is wholly independent of them. He can, and often does, work without them; nor do they possess the smallest inherent efficacy, to produce the desired end, apart from the divine blessing. “Who is Paul and who is Apollos, but ministers (lit. servants) by whom ye believed; even as the Lord gave to every man.” “So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.”

Man, however, is the creature of sense. He is ever disposed to “look at the things which are seen,” and to lose sight of “the things which are not seen.” This tendency remains with us, after we have become “new creatures in Christ Jesus”: and it is to the ceaseless operation of this principle of our nature, age after age, that we ascribe the introduction of that figurative person, who is styled, in the Scripture, “The Man of Sin and Son of perdition.”

Jesus Christ has instituted certain external rites, in his Church, as symbolical of spiritual truths:—baptism and the Lord’s Supper. These are, doubtless, *channels* of divine grace, when administered to believers. But, under the influence of the principle just mentioned, the invisible God and his work were gradually lost sight of, in the visible and material emblems, which he had appointed—and which the clergy had represented as in themselves of supreme importance.

“Those consolatory truths,” as a living writer has observed, “on which all stress was laid by Paul, John, Peter, and James; truths of rational import, and of elevating influence, though not denied or forgotten, had sunk into a secondary place, in favour of notions which attributed unutterable value, and a mysterious efficacy to the Christian ceremonies. Here we trace the first footmarks of clerical encroachment; nor is it easy to acquit the early promoters of these superstitions, of a conscious intention, thereby, to magnify their office. The administration of the sacraments, or at least the Eucharist, was the inviolable prerogative of priests; and these symbols, rather than the great principles they held forth, were insisted upon as of vital energy; it was upon touching, tasting, handling the material elements, or upon being duly touched, and handled by the dispensers of the ‘awful mysteries,’ that eternal life depended. Not to have been washed in the laver of regeneration, not to eat of the divine flesh, not to drink the blood, not to be anointed with the oil of remission, was to perish everlastingly. Salvation and perdition turned, not on the condition of the heart in God’s sight, but upon having a share

of the consecrated fluid, or solid matter, which the priest might bestow or refuse." (Spiritual Despotism, p. 195)

So early as the third century, these superstitious notions concerning the rites of Christianity were very prevalent. During the fourth, however, when the whole visible church sunk down into a state of mere lifeless formality, they became general; and, under their influence, the priestly office soon came to be regarded with the highest veneration. This, in fact, was the natural result of such mischievous errors. If eternal life does depend on being washed in the laver of regeneration—or partaking of the flesh and the blood of the Son of God—then are the authorised dispensers of those mysteries as much above monarchs, as the soul is above the body.

And this very comparison is used in a work, called *The Apostolic Constitutions*, compiled about the middle of the fourth century. Chrysostom, at the close of that age, in one of his homilies, speaks of the priesthood as above the crown. But the most striking instance of priestly arrogance found in the fourth century is that of Martin, Bishop of Tours, when at the court of Maximus. The emperor, it is related, offered him the cup first, but instead of returning it to him after drinking, he handed it to the presbyter. At another time, the empress waited upon him while he dined. (Sulp. Sev. de Vita Mart. c. 20)

Such was the effect of this transition of sentiment in the visible church, under the favorable influence of external prosperity. And when the priesthood had thus far occupied "the place of God," by assuming the power to renew and sanctify the soul; it was only natural that they should treat the other prerogatives of the Deity, which have to do with man's salvation, in the same manner. In the East, the constant interference of the emperor with theological matters, and the dependence of the priesthood upon the crown, prevented spiritual despotism from making any remarkable advances there. But in the West—the civil power, "he which letteth," was "taken out of the way," and a free course thus set open for the rise of the Man of Sin. So early as the fourth century, the Latin Fathers give indications of the ascendency of the Church, which are nowhere found in those of the East.

It is to the Romish priesthood, then, that we are to look for the accomplishment of that important prediction of the Man of Sin, "He shall sit in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." And as a matter of fact we find, that the Romish priesthood have usurped the place of God in his temple, which is the church. (1 Cor. iii. 16.) In his holy Word, the Lord reveals himself as—The Author of Forgiveness—The Source of Grace—The Judge of all the Earth—The Sacrifice by which alone we can be saved—and lastly, The Arbiter of man's eternal destiny. In each, and all of these infinite prerogatives, the priest of Rome has usurped the place of God. On this ground, therefore, we hurl the charge against that apostate hierarchy of being "The Antichrist" of Scripture—represented in the epistle to the Thessalonians, as "The Man of Sin and Son of perdition, who exalteth and opposeth himself against all that is called God, or is worshipped, sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God"; and in the 17th chap. of Revelation, as a "Great Whore, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the earth, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication; and the inhabitants thereof have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication."

All that God is to fallen man, in relation to eternity, that did priests make themselves, in the Western Church; and henceforth, man had nothing to do with the blessed Jehovah—the priest was God in his place. In the estimation of the people, the priest of Rome possessed the power:

I. TO ABSOLVE FROM THE GUILT AND PUNISHMENT OF SIN.

The Scriptures every where describe the forgiveness of transgressions against the Law of God, to be the sole prerogative of the great Lawgiver himself; and the Jews themselves justly inferred the assumption of divine power by Christ, when he exclaimed to the sick of the palsy, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." It is true, that the language of Christ to his ministers, "whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained," etc., *appears* to contain this doctrine; but precisely similar language is found in other parts of the Scriptures, which no one would attempt to interpret literally; and the blasphemy involved in ascribing the power of absolution to any order of men, one would think would deter any from doing so, but those, who are "under a strong delusion that they should believe a lie."

"The Ministers of the New Testament," says the pious Ussher, "have received this ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, 'to testify the gospel of the grace of God'; and so by their function being appointed *witnesses* rather than *conferrers* of that grace. Though it be the Lord that *speaketh concerning a nation, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy,* or on the other side, to build and to plant. Yet he, in whose mouth God put those words of his, is said to be set by Him *over the nations, and over the kingdoms, to root out, to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down;'* as if he himself were a doer of those great matters, who was only ordered to be a prophet unto the nations, to speak the things unto them, which God had commanded him.

Thus likewise in Leviticus 13, where the laws are set down that concern the leprosy, which was a type of the pollution of sin, we often meet with these speeches, 'The Priest shall cleanse him, and the Priest shall pollute him; and the Priest with pollution shall pollute him,' (ver. 44.) 'Not,' saith St. Jerome, 'that he is the author of the pollution, but that he declareth him to be polluted, who before did seem to many to be clean.' Upon which, the Master of the Sentences, in remitting or retaining sins, the Priests of the Gospel have that right and office, which the legal Priests had, of old, under the law, in healing the lepers. These, therefore, (says he) forgive sins, or retain them, while they shew and declare that they are retained by God." (Pet. Lomb. lib. 4. dist. 14)

It was not until a late period, that the Romish hierarchy invaded the prerogative of Deity, by claiming, and exercising the power to absolve from sin. In the time of Innocent the Third, however, (A.D. 1215), it was enacted by a general council, "that every one should confess to the Priest, at least once a year," and "from this time," says Gieseler, "the notion grew up that confession was the only means for obtaining forgiveness of deadly sins; and that the *Priest, as God's representative, could bestow it, and only the Priest*."—(Vol. II, p. 352.)

The form of absolution now imposed upon the clergy was, "I absolve thee from all thy sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," just as it now stands in the Romish ritual. This form plainly ascribes to the priest himself the forgiveness of sins, and it was accordingly objected by some, at the time of its introduction, "That the Priest ought not to say 'I absolve thee from,' etc.,

since THIS BELONGS ONLY TO THE POWER OF GOD; and also, because the priest could not be certain, that the sinner was really absolved: adding that scarce thirty years had passed, since the form 'Absolutionem et remissionem tribuat tibi Deus,' etc., i.e. 'May the Lord grant thee absolution and remission,' etc., was used." Such language however did not suit the papal doctors, because, by these words, the priest did not declare that absolution *had taken place*; but merely prayed that it might. (Gieseler, ubi supra)

The doctrine of priestly absolution may be considered as the doctrine of the papal church, from this period to the present. The Council of Trent formally set their seal to this monstrous dogma; and thus entailed it upon ages yet unborn.

> "From the institution of the sacrament of Penance," says the Council, "the whole Church has always understood, that the entire confession of sin was also instituted by our Lord, and that this confession, by divine right, is necessary for all who fall after baptism, because our Lord Jesus Christ, about to ascend into heaven, left the Priests his Vicars, with the authority of judges, to whom all grievous crimes into which men may fall, must be referred; in order that they *may pronounce sentence on them*, by the power of the keys, that is the power of binding and loosing. For it is plain, if the cause be unknown, such sentence cannot be pronounced, nor equity, in the enjoining of punishment, be enforced, if sins generally, and not each one particularly be declared." (Con. Tri. Ses. XIV. c. 5)

In the Catechism of the Council of Trent also, we are told, "The voice of the Priest who is legitimately constituted a minister for the remission of sins, is to be heard as *that of Christ himself*, who said to the paralytic, 'Son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.'" (p. 255)

Such is the doctrine inculcated by the Council of Trent; and accordingly there is no doctrine more generally received by Papists, than that of priestly absolution. Even in Protestant countries, the members of the Church of Rome universally believe that the power of absolving from the guilt and punishment of sin belongs to the priest.

As already observed, this is only one of several grounds, on which we rest the charge, that the Romish priesthood, in usurping the high prerogatives of Deity, fulfils, in the plainest manner, the inspired prediction, "He sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." But were this the only particular that could be brought against them, it would be amply sufficient to establish the charge. The power to forgive sin is, every where, in Scripture, described as the peculiar prerogative of God.

Besides, this power is one of such infinite importance to fallen beings, that the acknowledged possession of so great a right by the minister of heaven, must render him to the people of his charge, that which God himself is to the Christian, the object of all those hopes and fears, which have reference to the future state. When David had fallen into gross sin, on awakening to a consciousness of his crime, he immediately approaches God, confesses his sin, and implores forgiveness. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions… Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," etc.

But the Papist, when conscious of sin, and alarmed by the terrors of an evil conscience, does not think of imitating the conduct of the Psalmist. Influenced by that conviction which, ever since the twelfth century, has led the Romish Church, viz., that auricular confession "was the only means of obtaining forgiveness of deadly sins; and that the Priest, as God's representative, could bestow such forgiveness, and only the Priest" (Gieseler, ubi sup.)—the Papist, instead of drawing near to God, will have recourse to the priest, to ease him of the burden of sin. Nor will the voice of praise and thanksgiving ascend unto the Father, who seeth in secret, "I confessed my fault unto thee, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin!"

There is the strongest possible ground then here afforded, for convicting "The Man of Sin, of sitting in the Temple of God and shewing himself that he is God." If the members of the Romish Church, as we have just seen, when burdened with the consciousness of guilt, go to the priest, what need have such persons of God—provided they obtain forgiveness from the priest; and perform the penance prescribed, as the condition of the validity of the absolution?

If this assumption of the power to absolve from sin, be not to sit in the spiritual Temple of God.—If the Romish clergy, in declaring that "no one is admitted into Heaven until the doors be opened by the Priests, to whose care God has committed the keys," (Cat. Con. Trid. Pt. 2. c. 5. § 25) are not thereby proved to be the "Great Whore, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants thereof been made drunk with the wine of her fornication;"—we confess we know not, how such a prediction could be more fully accomplished. Throughout the Old Testament, Jehovah being the husband of the Jewish Church; to attribute divine power, or to place any confidence in any other God was uniformly denounced as "adultery." And in entire harmony with this; if the Man of Sin sits in the Temple of God and shews that he is God, the recognition of this assumption of divine power by kings and people, the full acknowledgment of his claim, which is involved in seeking pardon and absolution, at his hands, instead of from God, is plainly—to "*commit fornication with the Whore of Babylon and to be made drunk with the wine of her fornication*!"

II. TO IMPART RENEWING AND SANCTIFYING GRACE.

We have already had occasion to notice the superstitious notions relative to the Lord's Supper, which prevailed, in the fourth age, in the whole visible church, both in the East and West; and the effect which these mischievous errors had, in elevating the priesthood. It was reserved for the Romish hierarchy, however, expressly to claim the power to regenerate and purify man's nature, by the sacraments of baptism, the Eucharist, and Extreme Unction. Nor do we think it possible, that any impartial reader, who calmly considers the subject can doubt, that the popish dogmas of opus operatum and "priestly intention" do, in reality, attribute to the priests of Rome, divine power, so far as it is possible to be ascribed to mortal men.

The acknowledged doctrine of this apostate church, as contained in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, is, that the sacraments of the church are *essential* to salvation; and that they confer grace by the *mere operation itself*. "If any one shall say that grace is not conferred by the sacraments of the New Testament, by the very act performed, *ex opere operato*, let him be accursed." (Concil. Trid. Sess. VII.

can. 8) And their necessity to salvation is declared in the 4th canon: “The sacraments are necessary to salvation.” Hence, obviously, the common belief entertained by the people must be, that the priest is the *source of all spiritual blessing*; God must be virtually excluded from the thoughts of Papists—and a mere mortal constituted ALL IN ALL.

But as though this were insufficient to stamp that priesthood with the mark of Antichrist, it is further declared by the doctors of the papacy, and believed by the people, that the whole efficacy of the sacraments depends entirely on the intention of the priest; so that if his will and purpose go not along with the external act, baptism and the Lord’s Supper and extreme unction are mere forms, destitute of all saving power. In the Council of Florence (held A.D. 1438), this doctrine was set forth in the following words: “All these sacraments are made up of three parts, that is to say, of things as the matter, of words as the form, and of the *person of the minister,* who confers the sacrament, with the intention of doing that which the church does: of which if any one be wanting, the sacrament is not perfected.” (Crabbe. Conc. Tom. XIII. p. 535) The Council of Trent devotes to perdition all who deny this doctrine: “If any say, that the intention to do, what the Church does, is not necessary, in the Priest, when they make, or confer the sacrament, let him be accursed.”

Here then, at least, is unequivocal proof, that Rome is the “Great Whore,” that was to “intoxicate all nations with the wine of her fornication.” The charge, that she makes herself God, by declaring, that the priests confer grace, in the sacraments, may possibly be evaded, on the ground, that they are simply the channels, through which the Most High communicates blessing. But by obliging all, on pain of perdition, also to believe, that the will of the priest is necessary, to render baptism, the Eucharist, etc., of any saving power—places the question beyond dispute. The blessing of the Most High is virtually declared *unnecessary* by the doctrine that the sacraments confer grace by the mere operation itself (ex opere operato);—whilst the will of the priest is expressly declared necessary to give efficacy to the work.

With one hand—with reverence be it spoken—God is dethroned; and, with the other, man is exalted to the vacant seat. Who then can doubt that the Romish priesthood *do* “sit in the Temple of God, shewing themselves, that they are God?”

III. TO CONTROL AND JUDGE THE THOUGHTS AND CONSCIENCES OF MEN.

“Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord,” is the language in which the blessed God claims the sole prerogative to punish the guilty. It is true he has instituted civil magistrates, to be a terror unto evil doers; but it is only crimes against the welfare of society, that are cognizable before earthly tribunals. Thought, conscience, and private conduct, are beyond their control and are reserved for the judgment of Him who “will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts.”

Here again, however, “the Man of Sin” meets us, “sitting in the temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God.” The churchmen of the middle ages snatched this prerogative out of the hand of the Most High—anticipated future retribution, and punished mankind for such sins as ought only to be accounted for, at the judgment of the last day.

“The Christian Church,” says a philosophic writer, “did, or wished to do, exactly the reverse of what other governments did. Human thought, human liberty, private manners, and individual opinions were what it endeavoured to rule over. It did not make a code, like other powers, and define the actions at once morally culpable, and socially dangerous; and so, award them punishment, according as they had this double character; but it set out a catalogue of *all actions morally culpable*, under the name of sins, and punished and acted on the design of repressing them all. In a word, the government was not applied, like modern governments, to the outward man, and to the purely civil relations of men amongst themselves; it was applied to the inward man, to the thought and conscience.” (Guizot, Hist. of Civilization, ch. V)

The author of Spiritual Despotism also has well illustrated the practice of the Romish Church in this particular:

“The Church took care… to make her members feel that her power was of an intimate and refined sort,—as well as public and judicial: and that it was spiritual more than carnal. The magistrate could enquire concerning overt acts only, and could punish nothing but crimes. The Church, on the contrary, penetrated the bosoms of men, dived into motives, put secret dispositions to the question, and dealt with men *on the ground of a divine discernment of hearts*. She professed to treat the subjects of her discipline not according to evidence, but according to truth. Auricular confession, therefore, was not an accident of this system of despotism, but one of its indispensable elements, and a chief means of its efficacy. The inferences by which this engine of power was compacted were very close;—pardon is lodged with the church; the means of remission by e [the eucharist] are also under direction; but the priest, who in each instance administers this authority, can do so only when he knows the full extent of guilt, and all its circumstances, as well of aggravation as extenuation. To expose the bosom to the priest is, therefore, the only way in which remission of sin can be obtained; whoever, therefore, would escape punishment, must lay open, to the dispenser of mercy, his entire consciousness.” (p. 319)

In thus usurping the right of the Almighty, to rule the thoughts and consciences of men—the Romish priesthood, for many centuries, has “sat in the Temple of God—shewing himself that he is God.” Those who are acquainted with the ecclesiastical history of the middle ages, need not be reminded, that the punishments inflicted by the church were of the severest kind.

“The punishments, or penances, enjoined by the church (wherever she was actually in position to give effect to her rules of discipline) were by no means of a sort to be contemned. The conscience-stricken culprit, who sought a restoration to hope, and the consolations of religion, submitted himself often to five, ten, or twenty years of public humiliation and private torture, bodily and mental. As much of misery as human nature can sustain, was, as a common thing, inflicted by the church, upon her guilty sons and daughters. The penalties of modern law are trivial, compared with those of the church: she was indeed ‘a terror to evil doers.’” (p. 320)

IV. TO MAKE ATONEMENT FOR THE SINS OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

Christianity teaches that the only sacrifice for human guilt is that which the Lord Jesus Christ offered up upon the cross. When no other atonement could be accepted by divine justice, but the blood of the

Son of God himself, the Lord of Glory came down from heaven, and, in the form of man, endured the sentence which we had incurred. “Christ has redeemed us from the law, being made a curse for us.” “He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”

But Popery virtually rejects the sacrifice of Christ and puts forth as the great propitiation for human guilt, the daily sacrifice of the mass. It thus snatches the work of salvation out of the hands of Christ, and puts it into the hands of priests.

The Mass, as every one knows, was originally the celebration of the death of Jesus by his people; the bread being broken, to signify his wounded body; and the wine poured out, to signify the shedding of his blood. So early as the fourth century, much absurd ceremony, and many superstitious notions, had become mixed with this simple rite. But Gregory the Great, who lived at the end of the sixth century, must certainly be styled the author of the Romish Mass.

“He prescribed,” says Mosheim, “a new method of administering the Lord’s Supper, with a magnificent assemblage of pompous ceremonies. This institution of his was called ‘The canon of the Mass;’ and if any are unwilling to give it the name of a new appointment, they must, at least, acknowledge, that it was a considerable augmentation of the ancient canon for celebrating the Eucharist, and occasioned a remarkable change in the administration of that ordinance.”

Still, the Mass, though nothing better than a splendid piece of mummery, did not contain those deadly elements which were afterwards infused into it. It was not then considered “a sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead.” But after the doctrine of transubstantiation was openly declared and defended, in the tenth century—a doctrine which affirms “the actual conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of Christ’s body, and the conversion of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of Christ’s blood”—the Mass assumed quite a new character, and various alterations were made in its form.

Pope Innocent III., who presided at the Lateran Council, which formally established transubstantiation as the doctrine of the church (A.D. 1215), says, “The sacrifice of the Mass is offered, for original, venial, and mortal sins”; (*de Missa*) and from his time to the present, the sacrifice of the Mass has effectually obscured the sacrifice of the cross. The language of the Council of Trent is a faithful exposition of the doctrine held on this subject by the Romish church for centuries previous. In the Catechism of that celebrated Council, we read:

> “The most holy sacrifice of the Mass is not a mere sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; nor a simple commemoration of the sacrifice offered upon the cross: but it is also A TRUE PROPITIATORY SACRIFICE, BY WHICH GOD IS APPEASED, AND RENDERED PROPITIOUS TO US.” (Pars. II. § LXXXIV.)

The canon of the Mass itself gives the same view of its nature. When the priest offers the host upon the altar, he prays, “Receive, Holy Father, this immaculate sacrifice, which I offer unto thee, for my own sins, and for the sins of all the faithful, both living and dead; THAT IT MAY PROFIT ME AND THEM TO SALVATION AND ETERNAL LIFE.”

Similar language is used in the present text-books of the Romish Church. “The sacrifice of the Mass,” says Peter Dens, “is propitiatory; because, according to the Apostle (Heb. v.), the principal office of priests is to offer up sacrifices for sins. But the church certainly has its priests, therefore they are appointed that they might offer sacrifices for sins. Now, for a sacrifice to be offered for sins, and for it to be propitiatory, is the same thing. Hence, therefore, the sacrifice of the Mass is offered up, for obtaining the remission of sins, and appeasing an offended God.”

It is, therefore, an unquestionable fact, that the Mass is held by the Romish Church to be *a true propitiation for human guilt*; and thus the priest does away with the sacrifice of the cross, and assumes to himself the power of satisfying the offended justice of God! It is true that, in order to save appearances, Papists allege, that “this sacrifice is the same as that offered up on the cross.” Instead of mending the matter, however, it appears to us that this declaration only fixes the charge more firmly upon the Church of Rome of “sitting in the Temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God.” Since for a man to “reiterate the sacrifice of the cross”—to offer up “the same sacrifice” as that which the Son of God offered up on Mount Calvary—and thus to assert that “the value of the sacrifice of the Mass is infinite,” and that “there are *no blessings too great for it to procure*,” (Dens. Tom. v. p. 382) is plainly to claim for the priest the power to do all which the Scriptures teach us the Lord has already and perfectly done, and to put man in the place of *Christ*.

We suppose it will now be granted by all that in the popish sacrifice of the Mass, the deadly character of Antichrist is more revealed than in anything else. Were the Mass a trifling ceremony only among Papists, or were it but occasionally performed, it would be unfair to dwell upon its destructive character as we have done. The fact is, however, that the mass-sacrifice is *everything* in the religion of Rome. It is the Papist’s *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the end, the sum and substance of all their religion. In short, what the cross of Christ is to the Christian, that is the Mass to the Papist.

“They contend more warmly for the mass,” says an old writer, “than for all the other articles of their faith. In a word, this they make the mark of the papal religion. Going to Mass, hearing Mass, is a symbol by which the Papists and Protestants are distinguished. They place the sum of their religion in it. Indeed the mass is the chief part of the service and worship which they pay to God in the church: and the whole practice of their religion stands principally in hearing and saying mass.” (Pendlebury on the Mass, Lond. 1768)

Finally, in the hour of death, when, if ever, a man shows on what his hopes of salvation are founded, instead of looking at that great sacrifice which has been offered once for all for the sins of the world, the Papist is taught to trust first in the saving power of the viaticum and extreme unction, and then in the efficacy of the masses which are to be said hereafter for his soul!

V. TO DISPOSE OF DESTINIES IN THE INVISIBLE WORLD

It is generally granted that the control of the invisible world belongs exclusively to God. Indeed, if there be any prerogative which more than another stamps its possessor with deity, it is that claimed by the Lord Jesus himself at the opening of the Apocalypse, when he appeared to the beloved disciple: “I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen: *and have the keys of hell*

and of death." If then we find that the Pope and his clergy, in addition to the usurped prerogatives of deity which have been already noticed, do also claim jurisdiction over heaven and hell, we shall have further undeniable proof that the Church of Rome is "the Man of Sin and Son of perdition, sitting in the Temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God."

The following extract from a living author shows that we are not exaggerating the matter in order to *make out a case*:

"The church, not only claimed and exercised all power on earth, but stretched her tremendous hand over Hades, and disposed of destinies in the future world. She was Sovereign of souls; and without this awful prerogative her authority would have been at once incomplete and insecure. The wretched objects of her vengeance might have sought to hide themselves in the grave; or might have sighed and comforted themselves in expectation of that clemency, which the Divine tribunal admits. But there could be no escape from the arm of the Church; the fires of purgatory were blown and quenched at her beck; her hand even delved into the cold sepulchre, and wreaked vengeance upon the guilty dust of her foes…

The torments of eternity were heaped upon her enemies, and the thrones of glory were bestowed upon her friends. Nothing which the human mind can imagine or rest in, as an ideal solace, was free to be hoped for without the leave of the church; nor was there any thing terrible which she might not inflict. Instead of its being said to the faithful at large, as it had been by an Apostle: 'All things are yours;' the church, that is to say, the rulers turned to the laity, and proclaimed their own universal lordship. 'All things are ours,' said they, 'whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, ALL ARE OURS.'

"That complicated system of observances and superstitious notions, which had reference to the condition of souls in the unseen world, was an integral part of the great scheme of despotism, and was employed to sustain and extend it, in every way, which the idle or well-founded fears of the people made practicable, or which their corrupt inclinations invited—the viaticum and extreme unction,—the prayers for the dead, and masses for the delivery of the souls—the intercession of saints—the practice of canonization, and the pronouncing of anathemas, were all so many expressions, or practical exhibitions of the invisible jurisdiction of the church. From whatever source these opinions and usages had at first sprung up; and most of them are of very high antiquity; the church of a later time wrought them into her frame work, and they became indispensable to her security." (Spiritual Despotism, pp. 320–2)

It must be evident to every reader that the priests of the Romish Church do claim the power to dispose of destinies in the world to come. And in thus doing, they clearly fulfil the prophecy of the Man of Sin and Son of perdition, who was to "sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." (See *Frontispiece*.)

We have thus laid before the reader the principal forms in which the priest discharges the offices of deity in the Church of Rome. And as a matter of fact, it is notorious that, by virtue of these claims, they were considered gods by the people of the Middle Ages. From an early period, according to Mosheim,

“the clergy were held in the highest veneration, and were honoured as a sort of deities by the submissive multitude.”

The doctrine of transubstantiation, more than any other, tended to augment these superstitious notions. It was employed by the Romish clergy to exalt themselves to a level with the Deity himself.[1]

In the eleventh century, for example, Pope Urban II. convoked a council at Rome (A.D. 1097) against the Emperor Henry IV. and all other princes who should claim a right to the investiture of bishops, abbots, etc., and declared “that it was an abominable thing that those hands which create God, should be obliged to so much ignominy, as to do honour to those hands, which night and day are defiled with filthy and dishonourable touches.” (Simeon Dunelm, lib. 2. Chr. Vigner in his Eccles. hist. p. 300)

Biel says, “The priest has great power over both the bodies of Christ,” that is, the church of Christ and his corporeal body. (Lesson 1st, of the Canon of the Mass) And in the 4th lesson he says, “Whoever saw such a thing? He that created me (if I may so speak) has given me power to create him; and he that created me without my help, is created by my means.”[2]

In an old satirical book called The Romish Beehive (Lond. 1686), we read:

“It is also a great reason, they should be called Gods, because they themselves can make God, and are (as we have taught before) creators of their Creator. And now there is a perpetual and infallible rule, among the doctors of Louvain, which cannot fail, for that it is fetched out of their master Aristotle, and it is this, ‘Whensoever any thing doth get any virtue out of the power or gift of another; the same by whom he doth receive that virtue, must needs have very much more like virtue in himself.’[3] Seeing, then, that by the power and knowledge of the priests, a piece of bread may be made God, *how much rather are the priests themselves Gods*.” (Beehive, fol. 185)

Nothing is more frequent in Spanish and Portuguese books of devotion than the expression “*Creating the Creator*” in reference to the Mass. Mr. Beste, a famous preacher of the seventeenth century, in his book of the priestly office, says, “The priesthood and the deity have, I know not what in common, and are *almost of an equal grandeur*, FOR THEY HAVE THE SAME POWER.” And again, “Seeing that the priesthood IS EQUAL TO THE DEITY, AND THAT ALL PRIESTS ARE GODS, therefore *it far exceeds the kingly office*.”

Petrus Aurelius too, a doctor of the Sorbonne, about the same period, wrote a work with the approbation of the Sorbonne called Spongia. In the 75th page, he says: “A power is given to priests to produce Christ, that is God himself (Christum, id est Deum ipsum producendi).” He adds that “the power of the priests has in it a certain emulation of the eternal operations, by which the divine persons are produced.” (Both quoted in the Capucin, by Du Moulin. Lond. 1675)

Further testimonies of this kind are quite needless, and it surely will not now be questioned that the Romish priesthood, from the Pope down to the parish priest, constitutes “the Man of Sin and Son of perdition, exalting himself, and opposing himself against all that is called God, or is worshipped, and shewing himself that he is God.”

Such were the claims made by the priests and admitted by the laity of the Church of Rome. But it should be remembered that, as the Church of God has one supreme head—the Lord Jesus Christ—so has the visible Church of Rome one head—the Roman Pontiff. If the priests of Rome, therefore, sit "in the Temple of God showing themselves that they are God," much more might we expect such conduct on the part of their rulers.

Accordingly we find that the most blasphemous assumptions have been made by them, and by their *creatures*, on their behalf. So early as the eighth century, we hear Pope Gregory II. declaring that "all the nations of the West reverenced him AS A GOD UPON EARTH!"

Gregory VII., the notorious Hildebrand, gave out that he was THE REPRESENTATIVE OF GOD in the administration of the affairs of this world, "and from that time," says Gieseler, "the idea became generally prevalent" (A.D. 1080); and kings and emperors were hurled from the throne at the pleasure of the Pope. In the twelfth century, "the canonists or expounders of the canon law, made the Pope a deity on earth. The language in which they taught his supremacy, is truly astonishing. In respect of his names, attributes, omnipotence, and infallibility, of his divine worship, of his prophetical office, and sacerdotal and regal power, he is represented to be an equal with God, instead of a weak and sinful mortal." (Spanheim Eccl. Hist. Cent. XII. § 3)

The idea of the papal power continued to grow, and was carried out in its most revolting absurdity in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. "The king did according to his will, and exalted himself and magnified himself above every god, and spake marvellous things against the God of gods" (Dan. xi. 36). Almost every attribute of the Most High was ascribed to him; he performed the offices of deity, and divine honours were considered his due.

It is impossible, within our own limits, to repeat half the monstrous blasphemies taught by the doctors of the papacy during this period; none of which have ever been contradicted by papal authority. It was then held for truth:

That "All power in heaven and earth, was given to the Pope."[4]
That he was "omnipotent; and in him dwelt the plenitude of power."[5]
That "the Pope could do all things, sin excepted."[6]

And in short, that "his power was of the same extent as that of God himself." They taught, too, that the Pope "was the judge, both of the living and the dead."[7] That "he could make justice, injustice; by correcting or changing laws."[8] And "dispense, contrary both to the Old and New Testament."[9]

They maintained "that the sentence of the Pope and of God were both one," and that his "indulgences remitted even the punishment of hell."[10] That "he was above all laws.[11] And that "no appeal could be made from the Pope to God; because he is the Christ of God." (Christus Domini, in Wolf.

Such being the high prerogatives of the papal power, we can not wonder that divine honours should be paid to the Romish pontiffs. In the fourteenth century it was determined by a high authority that:

"The same honor which is due to Christ as God, *is also due to the Pope*, because the honor is paid to the power: and the power of Christ and that of the Pope are one."[12] And "*Latria* also, which is that

service due to God, must be rendered to the Pope, because all service is due to the Pope; therefore, *Latria* is due to him."[13]

Only one higher step could be taken, viz., to style the Pope God. This was accordingly done in numerous instances. The Canon Law says that "Constantine the Great called the Pope God, and therefore God cannot be judged by man" (Dist. 96. c. Satis evidenter).

Some of the papal doctors distinctly said "the Pope is God."[14] Others said, "All the princes of the earth adore and worship him, as the highest God,"[15] And that "a dispensation from sin, granted by the Pope must be valid, because HE IS GOD UPON EARTH," And "the Pope lawfully elected, is called God upon earth."[16]

Lastly, the Gloss to the Extravagants of John XXII. (Tit. xiv. c. 4. in fine) distinctly calls him "OUR LORD GOD THE POPE!" All the editions since that at Paris, 1612, omit the word God. But Gieseler states that it is found in the Lyons editions of 1504 and 1606, as also in the Paris editions of 1585, 1601, and 1612 (Vol. III. p. 47). Foulis mentions ten editions in which it occurs in his History of Romish Usurpations (Book I. ch. 4).

We have thus attempted to exhibit one of the most horrible evils of Popery—the fearful extent to which the priest occupies the place of God in the visible church, himself discharging the high and incommunicable offices of the Deity:

- Absolving the sinner from the guilt and punishment of sin;
- Renewing and sanctifying the heart by the instrumentality of the sacraments of the church;
- Sitting in judgment on the thoughts and consciences of men;
- Claiming the power, by the sacrifice of the Mass, to propitiate divine justice and atone for human guilt; and lastly,
- Fixing irrevocably the eternal destinies of men.

All of these charges have been by an overwhelming variety of evidence proved against that apostate hierarchy—yet any one of them is sufficient to convict the Church of Rome of the crime of making herself God. There is then no refuge, no escape from the charge—the most awful which any being or community can incur—that the Romish hierarchy have usurped the high prerogatives of deity, "sitting in the Temple of God, and showing themselves that they are God!"

To men of the world, this assumption of the offices of deity may appear a light matter. By every devout mind, however, it will be regarded as the highest crime which man could possibly commit. And the higher our ideas of the supreme excellence and glory of that Infinite Being whose place priests usurped, and the deeper our sense of the obligations under which we are laid by His creating and redeeming love, the higher will be our ideas of the surpassing guilt—the unparalleled wickedness—of the Man of Sin and Son of Perdition.

Nothing to equal this can be found in the whole history of pagan worship. It is true, the ministers of paganism were, to some extent, the objects of worship by the people. But how absurd, how despicable, and degraded was the religion of which they were the gods! The priests of Rome, on the contrary, stood

forth as the representatives of the one true God. They presented themselves to the view of the whole visible church, arrayed in the incommunicable perfections of Deity—discharging the high offices and functions of the Father, Son, and Spirit! In a word, it was the glory of the God of redemption—the God of grace—that priests had stolen: and from their usurped seat in the Temple of God, they called upon all Christendom to come and transact with them all the affairs of the soul and of eternity!

But there yet wants one consideration in order to place this frightful feature of Popery in its true light. It should be remembered that the very class of men who thus arrayed themselves in the attributes of the Most High and his throne in the Western Church were, as a whole, the most abandoned and licentious class of men that ever lived. For many centuries—as the next chapters will too clearly establish—the popes, cardinals, prelates, and priests were profligates of depravity whose wickedness was only equalled by their monstrous claims. How awful then is the bare idea of the guilt involved in such individuals as these assuming the attributes and discharging the functions of God and of Christ! And does not this pre-eminent guilt of the Church of Rome explain the circumstance of that apostate body being *specially* designated in the oracles of God—THE MAN OF SIN!

To form any adequate idea of the amount of spiritual evil thus inflicted upon the nations of Europe by the Romish Church is wholly impossible. It is not merely that she has stood between man and his God, and thus hidden the great source of light and life from a benighted world—but she has actually, as we have seen, held up herself as God, assumed divine prerogatives, discharged the functions of deity, and thus caused kings and people to commit spiritual fornication with herself—"Babylon the great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the earth!" And thus for many centuries the whole continent, as well as our own land, was defiled with the filth of the fornication of the Great Whore, and all Europe stank in the eyes of a holy and a jealous God!

Away then for ever with the absurd idea that Popery and Protestantism are fundamentally the same, and the difference between them merely speculative. So far as light differs from darkness—and sin from holiness—so far as Christ is removed from Belial—so far is Popery, as to all its essential doctrines, at variance with Christianity!

Footnotes

[1] The following extract is strikingly to the point: "And, on a tyme, as this holy man, as a legate, came in that provynce for to reconcile the Duke of Guyan to the chirche, and he refused to be reconciled in all manners. The holy man went to the aulter for to singe masse, and the duke abode without the chirche as excomyned. And whan he had sayd, Pax domini, he laide the body of our Lorde upon the patene, and bare it without the chirche, and went out, with a face flammynge, and brennynge, and assaylled the duke by ferdfull wordes, sayenge, 'We have prayed the, and thou hast despysest us. Loo, here is the sone of the virgyne, whiche is comen to the, and is lorde of the chirche whom thou persecutest; this ia thy Juge, in the name of whom all knees bowen; in the hondes of whom thy soule shall come; despise hym not, as thou hast his servauntes; treat hym yf thou moyst!' And thane, anon, the duke wered all and was impotent in his membres. And then he fell downe. And the holy man put his

foot at hym, and commanded hym to aryse, and to here the sentence of God." (Lyf of St. Bernard, in Golden Legend)

[2] Qui creavit me dedit mihi creare se: et qui creavit me sine me, creatur mediante me.

[3] Propter quod unumquodque tale est, illud ipsum magis est tale. (Stella clericorum ch. x. par. 1)

[4] Papa tradita est omnis potestas in cælo et terra. (Wolf. I. p. 995.)

[5] Papa est omnipotens, et in eo est plenitudo potestatis. (Andr. Gambat, in Wolf, I. p. 1002.)

[6] Jur. de Griffis, decisiones. Aur. pars. I. c. 81. Jo. Ruber Bonif. 8. p. 216.

[7] Papa est judex vivorum et mortuorum. (in Wolf. I. 1002.)

[8] De inJustitia potest facere justitiam, corrigendo jura et mutando.j (Decret. Greg. lib. I. Tit. 7. in Wolf.)

[9] Corneus I. 2. const. Jno. Neuz. apud Wolf. ubi sup.

[10] Angelus de Clav. in Sum. Ang. Wolf. I. p. 991.

[11] Gond. de Vill. in Wolf.

[12] Utrum Papæ debetur honor qui debetur Christo secundum quod Deus? Videtur quia, &c. (Augustini Triumphi. Qu. IX. Art. 1. apud Giesel.)

[13] Idem. Art 3.

[14] Papa est Deus. Felinus et Joan de Capistro apud Wolfium.

[15] Blondus Apud Wolfium. Lect. Mem. I. 994.

[16] Papa legitime electus dicitur Deus in terris. (Apud Wolf. Vol. I. 999)

CHAPTER VIII.
CORRUPTION OF THE PAPAL COURT

Horrible as our analysis of Popery has proved, we have not yet done. One more constituent in that moral pestilence remains to be noticed, viz., the corrupt lives of the papal court and priesthood. The conduct of men placed in elevated positions must be so much the more influential either for good or for evil. Hence the inspired exhortation to Titus, "In all things shewing thyself *a pattern of good works*." What then must have been the amount of evil inflicted upon mankind by Popery, when its dignitaries and its priests, for a period of a thousand years, have constituted, for the most part, patterns of wickedness—surpassing other classes of men only in their daring impiety and desperate flagitiousness!

In attempting to give some account of the corruption of the Romish Hierarchy, it will be proper to commence with the Popes and Cardinals. *First*, because they seem to have been foremost in the career of crime. *Secondly*, because it is the unanimous testimony, even of Popish writers who were contemporaries, that the example of the heads of the church was the principal cause of that notorious depravity of the clerical order which disgraced the whole of the Middle Ages.

From the time of Gregory the Great, who lived at the close of the sixth century, the Bishops of Rome appear to have been altogether ungodly men, destitute of the grace of God, devoted to the interests of the present world, and employing the wealth and power which belonged to their See only to gratify "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." As the principles of the papacy, however, developed themselves, the Popes became utterly abandoned, and the influence of their example, especially upon those nearest to them, was pernicious in the extreme.

The latter part of the ninth century produced several instances of wicked and violent pontiffs—the vice-deity of whom stands in strange contrast with their crimes. But it was not till the tenth century that the conduct of these pretended representatives of Christ became, at length, so desperately flagitious as to render them the common *pests* of society. The strong expressions employed by Mosheim are in no degree exaggerations when he says that "the history of the Roman Pontiffs, who lived in this century, is the history of 50 many monsters and not of men, and exhibits a horrible series of the most flagitious, tremendous, and complicated crimes." The celebrated popish historian Cardinal Baronius, in his *Annals*, is compelled to acknowledge the monstrous wickedness of the Papal See. He describes the Popes of these times as men who were "*monstrous and infamous in their lives, dissolute in their manners, and wicked and villainous in all things*."

From the year 914 to the year 963, the Papedom was in the hands of Theodora and Marozia, two abandoned women, who, rivaling each other in lewd licentiousness, deposed and installed the pretended Vicars of Christ at their pleasure.

> "The influence of two sister prostitutes, Theodora and Marozia," says Gibbon, "was founded on their wealth and beauty, their political and amorous intrigues: the most strenuous of their lovers

were rewarded with the Roman Mitre, and their reign may have suggested to the darker ages, the fable of a Female Pope. The bastard son, the grandson, and the great-grandson of Marozia, a rare genealogy, were seated in the chair of St. Peter; and it was at the age of nineteen years, that the second of these became the head of the Latin Church. His youth and manhood were of a suitable complexion, and the nations of pilgrims could bear testimony to the charges that were urged against him in a Roman Synod, and before Otho the Great. His open simony might be the consequence of distress—his blasphemous invocation of Jupiter and Venus, if true, could not possibly be serious; but we read with some surprise that the worthy grandson of Marozia lived in public adultery with the matrons of Rome—that the Lateran palace was turned into a school for prostitution—and that his rapes of virgins and widows had deterred the female pilgrims from visiting the tomb of St. Peter, lest in the devout act they should be violated by his successor."[1] (Gibb. p. 853)

This monster of iniquity was succeeded A.D. 963 by Leo VIII., upon whose death, three years afterwards, John XIV. was elevated to the papedom, but soon after deposed and placed in custody by the citizens of Rome. His successor, Benedict VI., was also imprisoned by Cardinal Boniface, and there strangled or starved to death. "I fear however," says the popish historian Platina, "that Benedict's deserts were equal to his reward."

The murderer of Benedict—after one intervening Pope—himself obtained the triple crown, and of him even Platina is compelled to make this acknowledgment: "Boniface the VII., whose surname and country are unknown, by wicked arts (malis artibus) obtained the popedom, and lost it in a similar manner." Many of the honest citizens of Rome having conspired against him, he was glad to escape from the city, after having first robbed the church of St. Peter of all the precious jewels, rich utensils, and ornaments, which he carried to Constantinople, and there sold. Subsequently he returned to Rome, seized upon John XV., who had been created Pope during his absence, put out his eyes, and at length starved him to death in prison. "He lived but a short time after his return, and the citizens of Rome," says Pineda, "dragged his dead body tyed by the feet through the streets to St. John Lateran, and there left it a prey to the dogs." (Part 3. lib. 19. c. 15)

John XVI., the next Pope but one, made himself detestable by his gross selfishness and avarice. "He hated the clergy," says Platina, "but was so prodigal to his kindred and friends, of all things both human and divine, without any respect to the service of God, or the honor and dignity of the Papal See."

Gregory the Fifth, his successor, was obliged to flee soon after his election, upon which another Pope, named John, was elected in his place. John subsequently falling into the hands of his rival, his eyes were plucked out, and Gregory the Fifth resumed the triple crown.

Sylvester the Second, who succeeded—"by wicked means, usurped the Papal chair," says Platina, and the opinion entertained of him by that historian may be inferred from what he afterwards says, "that he had wholly given himself to the Devil." Baronius, too, calls him "a most perverse man, a traitor, a horrid blasphemer," etc., and Cardinal Benno says, "that he ascended out of the bottomless pit, and

having usurped the chair by the permission of God, was surprised by the divine judgment with sudden death."

Such, according to the statements of their own historians, were the Popes of the tenth century; and we may well ask—How is it possible that the stupendous prerogatives of the papedom could have coexisted, in so many instances, with the foulest licentiousness and the most monstrous crimes?

The first half of the eleventh century beheld men of the same stamp still in possession of St. Peter's chair. The papedom was in the hands of the Counts of Tuscany, who either bestowed it on their friends or *sold it to strangers!* Terrible schisms resulted. At length a boy of twelve years of age was exalted to the Papal See under the name of Benedict IX., and proved one of the vilest monsters the world had seen. "So base, so foul, so execrable was his life," says a bishop and a pope, "that I shudder to relate it"; whilst another accuses him of "many adulteries, and of many murders perpetrated with his own hand." (Bonizo, Bishop of Sutri)

It is true that some of the succeeding pontiffs presented some contrast to the above monsters of iniquity who have just passed under review, but for this change Europe was indebted to the interposition of the civil power. In the striking language of D'Aubigné:

> "The Emperors of Germany, indignant at so many disorders, cleansed Rome with the sword. The Empire, exercising its rights of superiority, drew the triple crown out of the mire into which it had fallen, and saved the degraded papedom by giving it decent men for heads. Henry III. in 1046 deposed three Popes, and with his finger, adorned with the ring of the Roman Patricians, pointed out the bishop to whom the keys of the confession of St. Peter were to be remitted."

"FAC SIMILE OF AN ENGRAVING OF THE 16th CENTURY."



Platina, the popish historian, relates, that Pope Benedict IX. "appeared to one after his death, in the form of a Bear, and with the tail of an Ass; saying, because I lived like a Beast, without either law or reason, therefore at the command of God and St. Peter, whose seat I have defiled, I resemble now a Beast rather than a man."

The Popes of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries are marked by their boundless ambition, their grasping avarice, the tremendous wars which they instigated, and the bloody persecutions which they

carried on—much more than by the gross immoralities and desperate flagitiousness of their predecessors. Speaking of the twelfth century, the learned Spanheim remarks:

> "The Popes ought to have been ensamples to the flock; but they were men of Belial; and often, several rival Popes claimed obedience at one time. Schisms, violent agitations in the public mind, attended with assassinations, murders, poisonings, imprisonments, were very frequent at Rome. These competitors for the Apostolical See endeavoured to crush each other, like prize fighters, gladiators, or ancient chieftains, under the influence of deadly feud, and he who succeeded by trampling upon the neck of his adversary, always carried himself with pride, haughtiness, and tyranny… Other signs of an antichristian spirit are shewn in their establishing idolatry, in promoting, by example and practice, superstition, simony, exorcising of devils, and lastly, in exciting dreadful wars between sovereign princes, and spilling human blood." (Spanheim, cent. XII.)

The ecclesiastical records of the fourteenth century exhibit the depravity of Popes and prelates in far darker colours than those of any previous age. The papal court at Avignon was distinguished by the most insatiable covetousness and the most foul licentiousness. We shall confine ourselves to the evidence of two contemporary writers who fully bear us out in these heavy accusations: St. Bridget and the celebrated Petrarch.

The former lived towards the close of this century, and was held for a prophetess by the church and canonized by the Pope. In her book of Celestial Revelations, she calls the Pope "the destroyer of souls, who scatters and tears the sheep of Christ." She says he is "more abominable than the Jews, more cruel than Judas, more unjust than Pilate, more wicked and evil than Lucifer himself—that his throne shall be hurled into the abyss as a great millstone. That his Cardinals shall be cast into everlasting fire, and sulphur," etc. She rebukes the bishops, prelates, and other clergy in similar language, and charges them with "having turned the commands of God into one, viz., Give us money," i.e., that they had altogether subverted all true piety for the sake of gain. (Liber. I. cap. 41. apud Wolf. Tom. I.)

"Of the Pope," says the prophetess, "Christ demands—'What means that excessive pride, insatiable cupidity and luxury, which I abhor, and even a horrid whirlpool of the basest simony?'… The Pope who ought to cry 'Come and ye shall find rest for your souls,' exclaims, 'Come and see me in pomp and grandeur above Solomon's; Come to my Court and empty your purses, and *ye shall find damnation for your souls!*' for thus he does speak by his example and conduct… Behold Rome is now a vortex of infernal Mammon, where the demon of all avarice dwells, selling the patrimony of Christ which he purchased with his Passion, who has told us that we should freely give because we have freely received. So that it is now put into a proverb, 'the Roman Court seeks not the sheep without the wool.' She regards those who give, she shuts the door against those who give nothing." Afterwards speaking of the Pope, she says, "This is true justice, that the Pope who sits in the chair of Peter, and *does the works of the devil*, should resign the seat which he has *dared to usurp and be a partaker of the punishment of the Devil*." (In Wolf. Lect. Mem. I. p. 670)

The most valuable testimony to the corruption of the Popes and Cardinals at this period is given by the celebrated Petrarch. In his twentieth Epistle, he styles the papal court “Babylon,” and “the Babylonish Whore, seated upon the waters, the Mother of all idolatries and fornications, with whom the princes and kings of the earth have committed fornication”; “the asylum of heresies and errors, etc., of whom the Holy Spirit prophesied in the Apocalypse”; and amply proves the truth of that proverb, “No greater evil can ever befall a man than being elected Pope.”

In another place he thus writes of Rome, the Holy City:

“Whatever anywhere you have read or heard of perfidy and fraud, whatever of cruelty and pride, whatever of uncleanness and unbridled lust; lastly, whatever of impiety and abandoned manners exists, or has existed in the whole world, from pole to pole, ALL THIS *you may see here, collected into one mass and heaped up together!*… I speak not,” says he, “of simony and selling the gifts of the Holy Spirit for money; I speak not of covetousness, the mother of that crime, and which is styled by the Apostle—Idolatry. I speak not of the contrivers of every lust, nor of the procurers who haunt the papal chambers. I speak not of that cruelty which is regardless of humanity… I hasten to things which are at once ridiculous and detestable, for who cannot be indignant, and yet amused, at those aged youths, with grey hair and flowing gowns, yet with lascivious minds, who prove the falsehood of the poet’s words:

‘Frigidus in Venerem Senior.’
(An old man is cold toward love.)

The aged cardinals are as ardent and eager for carnal enjoyment, so great is that forgetfulness of their dignity and their strength, which has seized them; so great is their burning lust, and so madly do they rush into every kind of abomination—as if they gloried, not in the cross of Christ, but in gluttony and drunkenness, and that which follows—fornication and uncleanness. Thus do they bring back the flying female whom they have seized, and this seems the only advantage belonging to extreme old age, that they may commit those acts which young men dare not,” etc.

“I pass by the defilements, and rapes, and incests, and adulteries, which at present are mere *games of papal lusts*. I pass by the banishment of the husbands, not merely from their houses, but from their country, lest they should dare to complain; and what is the foulest of all disgraces—husbands compelled to receive back again their wives, after they have been violated and gotten with child by strangers, and after child-birth, again to restore them for the alternate lusts of the adulterers! All which things are known not to me only, *but to every one else*.”

Once more, in his tenth Epistle, being then at the Pope’s court at Avignon, he says:

> “Whoever would truly behold it, let him come hither *and view that hell*, which poets of old did but fancy. For here is wanting no horror of imprisonment, no error of palpable darkness, no fatal urns shuffling together the lots and destinies of men: and to conclude, no imperious Minos, no tearing Minotaurus, nor lascivious portraits of damned Venus, are here rare and scarce. All hope of safety lies in gold, the cruel king of the imperial regions is appeased with gold. The prodigious monsters that attend him are subdued with gold. For gold, the web of human salvation is woven, only for gold are the hard thresholds of this gate shewn; for gold the bars are

broken; with gold the grizzly Porter's mouth is stopt; for gold, Heaven is opened—and what needs many words, Christ himself is sold for gold!…

There the hope of a future state is some empty fable, and all that is revealed of hell, mere fabulous reports. The resurrection of the body, and the end of the world, and Christ coming to judgment, all old women's tales. Truth is there madness, and abstinence clownishness, chastity a disgrace… *and the more foul one's life is, the more illustrious is it considered—the more wicked, the more glorious!*"

Further testimonies to the monstrous wickedness of the Papal See at this period, though many are at hand, would be altogether needless. We proceed to remark, therefore, that the lapse of another century did nothing towards cleansing this Augean stable of its accumulated filth. On the contrary, the degree of papal depravity exhibited in the fifteenth century far exceeds anything that had been previously witnessed. So notorious, in fact, were the excesses and crimes of the court of Rome at this time that all our ecclesiastical historians, popish and Protestant, agree in representing papal guilt as having then *attained its utmost limits*.

One of our most temperate writers thus speaks of the cardinals and the popes of the century which preceded the Reformation:

"Another circumstance that strikes us in the consideration of this period is—*the utter debasement* to which the Sacred College (i.e., of Cardinals) finally descended. The influence which the most wicked Pope invariably acquired in consistory, may be ascribed to the less direct operation of his power and patronage. But the secrets of the conclave, which have been transmitted by the contemporary writers, *abound with particulars of intrigue and undisguised perfidy, and unblushing venality.* Such was the mutual consciousness with which the Pope and his senate assembled to govern the Church of Christ! such the councils from which edicts were issued for the suppression of simony and the correction of the morals of the clergy! Again, it was now become almost the practice of the conclave to bind the future Pope by a solemn obligation, intended to influence the nature of his government. The Cardinal while on the point of being elected, voluntarily took this oath in common with his colleagues, and immediately after his election, he confirmed it. In a similar manner restrictions were at that time, not uncommonly imposed, by the elective body, or the Emperor of Germany, and the king of Poland, and they were found effectual. But at Rome, the result was so far otherwise, that among the many who undertook such engagements, *there seems not to have been one* which faithfully observed what he had sworn—first as Cardinal, next as Pope. This distinction so shameful to the Court of Rome, *confirms the charges of* SUPER-EMINENT IMMORALITY *which have been brought against it*; it proceeds, however, from the singular principles of the papal hierarchy.

In the first place, the Pope who enjoyed power unlimited, over the obligations of others, might reasonably claim the right to dispense with his own. In the next, he had the means of influencing those who might release him from his engagements or connive at his contempt of them, such as the crown did not possess, either in Germany or Poland. The immense extent of his patronage, his authority, even the property and persons of the Cardinals, and his prerogative of creating others, gave him irresistible

instruments both of seduction and terror. He exercised them unsparingly: and the result was, that among the various crimes of the Vatican, that which became as it were PECULIARLY PONTIFICAL, WAS PERJURY!"

"While the crimes of the Vatican," proceeds our author, "were indeed so various, as to *embrace almost every denomination of ungodliness*; there was not one among the Popes of this period, who made even the slightest pretension to piety: scarcely one by whom decency, as well as morality, was not grossly outraged. Indeed, when we consider the enormity of the scandals permitted, and perpetrated by Popes and Cardinals, during the latter years, *it seems a matter of wonder, that the whole Christian world did not rouse itself as by an earthquake and destroy them*." (Waddington, Hist. of Ch. ch. xxvii.)

The allusion of the learned author, when speaking of the crimes of the Popes and Cardinals of the latter years of the fifteenth century, is doubtless to the times of Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., and Alexander VI., who occupied the papal chair from A.D. 1471 to 1503. The following brief sketch of their lives, in the worst particulars of which both Popish and Protestant historians agree, is taken from that writer and Ranke:

"Sixtus IV. (a Franciscan monk) commenced an unusually long pontificate of thirteen years by professing the policy and affecting the designs of Pius II…. but his boiling zeal presently evaporated; his clamours were silenced by the first repulse; he appeared to resign his darling prospects, and subside into the ordinary channel of papal misgovernment, without a sigh or struggle…

"The nepotism of no former pontiff had been indulged with so scandalous a sacrifice of the interests of the church as that of Sixtus IV. One of his nephews, Leonardo della Novena, he married to a natural daughter of Ferdinand of Naples; and on this occasion he abandoned to that monarch some estates and fiefs which his predecessor had spared no toil to acquire and retain. Another, named Julian, the same who was afterwards Julius II., was enriched with several ecclesiastical benefices. For a third, named Jerome Riario, the principality of Imola was purchased from the resources of the apostolical treasury. But it was on Pietro Riario, the youngest, that the profusion of his fondness was principally lavished. Without talents, without virtues, from a simple Franciscan monk, Pietro was immediately elevated to the dignity of Cardinal. He was made titular Patriarch of Constantinople. He was raised to the archiepiscopal see of Florence. He received besides, two other archbishoprics, and a multitude of inferior benefices. In the meantime his splendid prodigality, the pride of his attendants, his equipage, and his sumptuousness, kept pace with the abundance of his resources, and he expended on the pomp of a single ceremony, or the festivities of a single night, sums which exceeded the revenues of kings."

"No one descended more deeply into superstition than Sixtus IV. At present, we shall only mention the singular venality introduced into his government by the creation of certain new offices which he publicly sold, and *which he created for the purpose of selling*. This was a new scandal in the history of the Vatican; and when the same pontiff raised to the dignity of Cardinal a youth named Jacopo di Parma, his own valet, he may seem to have offered the last insult to his court and his church. The deeper outrage which was now continually cast upon the religion of Christ has almost ceased to be a matter of mention with us, because the name of Christ was now seldom appealed to, except in support

of some monstrous ecclesiastical pretension; and the rulers of the apostolical church had for some time learned to dispense, both in their morals and their administrations, *even with the semblance of holiness*, even with a decorous affectation of religious motives."

Sixtus IV. was not deficient as a political character in quickness and sagacity, and even grandeur of conception. But his character (as Sismondi has well observed) corrupted his talents, and stained his noblest projects with perfidy and falsehood. As he could discern no distinction between virtue and crime, he employed the basest means to attain the best ends, and dishonoured his own designs by the instruments with which he chose to accomplish them. His private life *has not escaped the suspicion of the foulest enormities*—it cannot, at least, pretend to the praise of piety or innocence.

"Sixtus IV. died in 1484, and the election of his successor was attended by some circumstances more scandalous than any which had yet polluted the recesses of the conclave. Julian della Rovera, Cardinal of St. Peter ad Vincula, had undertaken the negotiations requisite, and the price of every vote was already arranged, when the college proceeded to invoke the Holy Spirit. The terms are expressly specified by a contemporary writer;[2] they were faithfully observed by the successful candidate, and they might be ascertained from the various castles and benefices which he immediately bestowed on his supporters. John Baptist Cybo, a native of Genoa, was the individual thus elevated to the throne of the church, and he assumed the name of Innocent VIII."

"If Sixtus IV. had wasted the resources of the church upon his profligate nephews, Innocent introduced a still more revolting race of dependents in the persons of his illegitimate offspring. Seven children, the fruit of various amours, were publicly recognized by the Vicar of Christ, and became for the most part pensioners on the ecclesiastical treasury. This was yet a new scandal for the apostolical church! Again, if Sixtus IV. was bold and unprincipled, Innocent was at least destitute of any positive virtue; and the extreme weakness which distinguished him was, in his circumstances, little less pernicious than wickedness. With power so vast and arbitrary in a court so utterly depraved, the personal excesses of a vigorous character might have been less hurtful to the church than the unrestrained license of so many masters. Fewer crimes would, perhaps, have been perpetrated had the pontiff resolved to be the only criminal. But with all his weakness, Innocent was animated by a spirit of avarice, which attracted observation *even in that age of the Popedom*. And he performed at least one memorable exploit, as it were, in the design to surpass his predecessor, by a still bolder insult on the Sacred College; he placed among its members a boy, thirteen years old, the brother-in-law of his own bastard. But the court of Rome did not present the dignity, it was sunk even below the sense of its own infamy."

"In the downward progress of pontifical impurity, from Paul II. we descend to Sixtus IV.; from Sixtus to Innocent VIII.; from Innocent to Alexander VI.; and here at length we are arrested by the utmost limits which have been assigned to papal and to human depravity. The ecclesiastical records of fifteen centuries contain no name so loathsome, no crimes so foul as his; and while the voice of every impartial writer is loud in execration, he is, in one respect, singularly consigned to infamy, since not one among the zealous annalists of the Roman church has breathed a whisper in his praise." (Wad. Hist. of Ch. ubi sup.)

The following sketch of this monster is from Ranke:—

“Alexander had, all his days, known no other principle of conduct than to enjoy the world, to live in luxury, and to satisfy his lust and ambition. It seemed to him arriving at the summit of bliss when he was at last invested with the highest spiritual dignity. Old as he was, this feeling seemed daily to impart to him fresh youth. No irksome thought was allowed, for one night, to trouble his repose. His only thought was how to compass his own advantages, and heap pomp and honours on his sons: never did he seriously devote himself to any other purpose.”

“This was the sole principle at the bottom of all his political alliances which had so great an influence on the affairs of the world: how a pope was disposed to marry his children, endow and enrich them, was a weighty consideration in determining all the political relations of Europe.”

“Caesar Borgia, Alexander’s son, trod in the footsteps of Riario. He began at the self-same point, and his very first movement was to drive Riario’s widow from Imola and Forli. He held on his course with daring contempt of consequences, and what the other had but attempted or but begun, he carried out to the end…”

“And thus Alexander saw his warmest wish fulfilled, the barons of the land annihilated, and his house in train to found a great hereditary principality in Italy. But he soon had to feel practically of what the aroused passions are capable. Caesar would not brook the participation of his power with any relation or favourite. He had caused his brother, who stood in his way, to be murdered and thrown into the river. He had his brother-in-law assailed on the very steps of the palace. His wife and his sister nursed the wounded man; the latter dressed his food with her own hands for fear of poison: the pope had a guard set on his house to protect his son-in-law from his son. Caesar mocked at all these precautions, saying, ‘What has failed at noon may easily be done in the evening.’ When the prince was now convalescent, he burst into his chamber, turned out the wife and the sister, called in his bravo, and had his unfortunate brother-in-law strangled. For as to his father, on whose life and station he only looked as means towards his own aggrandisement, he had not a thought of treating him in other respects with the least consideration. He slew Alexander’s favourite Peroto beneath the pontifical mantle, as the victim clung close to his patron: the blood spurted in the pope’s face.”

“For a time Caesar had Rome and the ecclesiastical states in his power. He was a man of surpassing beauty; so strong, that in the bull-fight he would strike off the bull’s head at a single blow; liberal-handed, not without traits of magnanimity; voluptuous, bloody: how did Rome tremble at his name! Caesar needed gold and had enemies—every night the corpses of the murdered men were found in the streets. Every man held his breath; for there was none who might not fear that his own turn would come next. Those whom violence could not reach, were taken off by poison.”

“There was but one spot on the earth where such deeds were possible: that spot alone, where unlimited temporal power and the highest spiritual authority were united in the same individual. This spot Caesar occupied. Even monstrosity has its perfection. Many sons and nephews of the popes have attempted similar things, but none ever carried them to such a pitch. Caesar was a virtuoso in crime.”

“Was it not, from the very first, one of the most essential tendencies of Christianity to render such violence impossible? And Christianity itself, and the position of the supreme head of the Church were to serve to call it forth.”

“In truth it needed not then that a Luther should by and by arise to denounce in such deeds the direct opposite of Christianity. The cry arose at the very time that the pope was preparing the way of antichrist, that his care was devoted to the fulfilment of the satanic, not of the heavenly kingdom.”

“We will not follow in detail the particulars of Alexander’s history. He once purposed, as is but too notorious, to take off one of the richest cardinals by poison: but the latter succeeded by bribes, promises, and entreaties in gaining over the pope’s chief cook; the confection which had been prepared for the cardinal was set before the pope, and he died himself of the poison he had intended for another. After his death a far different result arose out of his schemes from that he had contemplated.” (Hist. of the Popes)

Such was the character of the popes and court of Rome up to the period of the Reformation. The next century presented little change, except in outward appearance. In the language of an intelligent writer:

> “It may well perplex a moralist to discuss whether Rome was better towards the close of the sixteenth, than at the end of the fifteenth century. Red-handed crime, and bold-faced libertinism were driven out of the priestly order, at the latter period. Decorum of conduct was requisite even for a cardinal or a pope; none were too high to feel public opinion. Dignity and seriousness were universal; and wickedness paid to virtue the tribute of hypocrisy. But ambition and avarice were as active as ever; dissimulation had changed its form, not its nature, nor its ends; cruelty might find its vent under the garb of religious zeal; all freedom of inquiry was stopped by the inquisition, and the Romish kingdom appeared to be banded for ever in implacable hatred, and war against the Protestant powers.”

We have thus attempted to exhibit the character of the papal court from the ninth to the seventeenth century, and it will probably be admitted, by all who are open to conviction, that during the greater part of this period, of nearly a thousand years, the Vicars of Christ—the heads of the visible Church—have constituted a moral pestilence, spreading wickedness and vice over the whole Western world.

In the foregoing account of papal corruption, we have not exhibited all the enormities of the court of Rome. We have chiefly confined ourselves to such as were of a palpable character—openly visible to the eyes of the world. Our object has been to set forth the *pestilential character of the papal court*. We have not dwelt, as we might have done, upon the gross extortion, the insatiable avarice, the boundless ambition which for many centuries characterized the popes of Rome, and still less have we said of the fearful persecutions, the relentless and unparalleled cruelty of the papacy, and the bloody wars and rebellions which it instigated in the kingdoms of Europe during the noonday of its power. These have been sufficiently treated by abler pens. There is, however, no question that the description given by a celebrated living writer is to the letter true:

> “A court the most sumptuous, and the most voluptuous in Europe, avarice, arrogance, and the lust of power reaching a pitch of which the world had before seen no examples, a tyranny less

> amenable to humanity, and more terrible than that of the Caesars, and a settled course of policy, shameless, perfidious, and horridly sanguinary—such in its best age, and when it could do all its pleasure, was the Romish Court and power." (Ancient Christ. i. 426)

The modern apologists of Rome have not scrupled to affirm that "Among 250 Popes that have now borne the charge, there are not above ten or twelve against which the most malicious adversaries can find occasion of spitting their venom." (Gother's Papist Misrepresented, &c. p. 73) In the previous pages of this work, if we mistake not, the popes of Rome have—not ten or twelve of them, but for whole centuries—been convicted of the most daring impiety, flagitious immorality, and gross licentiousness; and that upon the testimony of their own accredited historians.

The language of a still later and more accomplished champion of the papacy—Charles Butler, Esq.—is yet more mild: "It is not denied," says this writer, "that a few in the long list, were stained with vice." But in the words of his renowned opponent, we may well ask this gentleman:

> "A *few* Sir, and *stained* only, in what part of their characters is the white spot to be found? Were you thinking when this delicate phraseology was penned, of those who flourished under favour of Theodora and Marozia? Of those who contended for the chair of St. Peter, during the long schism, when their actions were noted by each other? Or of their successors who lived in the broader daylight of the fifteenth century? Sir, there have been so many of them so bad, that the boldest and best armed advocates of your cause, conscious of what Muratori calls the brutte conteguenza, have been fain to deduce an argument from their very crimes that the Papacy is of divine appointment." (Southey's Vind. Eccles. Angl. p. 387)

Dr. Milner, it is true, affirms that even the popes "who disgraced their holy station, by their *personal vices, always fulfilled their public duties to the church*, by maintaining the *apostolical doctrine*, moral as well as speculative, the apostolical orders, and the apostolical mission." (End of Controversy, p. 154) But how a pope who "*disgraced his holy station, by personal vices*, could yet always fulfil his public duties to the church," simple people who think that one important part of that public duty which a bishop owes to his church is to "be an example to the flock, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. iv. 12) will be at a loss to imagine! This mystery—it appears to us—none but the learned doctor himself can explain.

And how indelible and foul is the disgrace with which the Romish Church is covered by the awful wickedness of its acknowledged heads! Were they mere private persons who had thus disgraced the Christian name, it would be an eternal reproach to any church that recognized them as members. But for men who assumed the prerogatives of Deity—who styled themselves the Vicars of Christ and vicegerents of Heaven, and thus "sat in the Temple of God, shewing themselves that they were God"—for such persons as these to wallow in the filth of impurity, to constitute the most complete patterns of depravity which our world has witnessed, and to darken whole centuries of history by their vices and their crimes—surely this is a disgrace so foul that no worse ever could befall the papal or any other body, and in the revelation of this wickedness we see the accomplishment of the prophecy: "I WILL CAST ABOMINABLE FILTH UPON THEE."

The Consequences of Papal Depravity

But there is another light in which papal depravity requires to be viewed. It is not merely the foul infamy, the everlasting reproach, which is thus heaped upon the Church of Rome—but *the tremendous consequences of their crimes upon all around*. And here, again, it is the lofty station which they filled that immensely aggravates the pernicious influence of their example. Had they been mere private individuals, their wickedness would have been immeasurably less contagious. But the daring impiety, the flagitious immorality of the Johns, the Innocents, and the Borgias, were recommended to mankind by all the weight of their vice-deity; and the results of such examples were proportionately injurious.

> "*The scandalous examples and crimes of the court of Rome*," says Machiavelli, "are the cause why Italy has lost every principle of piety and all religious sentiment. We Italians are chiefly indebted to the church and the priests for our having become a set of profane scoundrels." (D'Aub. Vol. I.)

Who can estimate then the amount of evil produced throughout Europe and through Europe over the whole world by the crimes of the court of Rome? What human mind can conceive the results of such exalted wickedness, first upon bishops and priests, then, by means of them, upon the people; and that during whole centuries in which, with some exceptions, they made the name of pope to stink throughout Christendom? and especially at that era, when, as we have seen, they reached *the limits, the utmost limits of papal and of human depravity.* (Waddington quoted above)

Surely, here, if anywhere, is the prophecy of the Revelation accomplished—"And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth to slay with THE PESTILENCE!

Footnotes

[1] Lateranense palatium… prostibulum meretricum. Testis omnium gentium præterquam Romanorum, absentia mulierum, quæ sanctorum apostolorum limina orandi gratiâ timent visere cum nonnullas ante dies paucos hunc audirent conjugatas virgines vi oppressisse. (The Lateran Palace… is a brothel for harlots. All nations—save for the Romans themselves—can bear witness to this, as evidenced by the absence of women, who now fear to visit the thresholds of the holy apostles for the sake of prayer, having heard that, only a few days ago, this man used force to violate married women and virgins.) (Luitprand Hist. l. vi. ch. 6. p. 471)

[2] The letter of Guid. Vespucci to Lorenzo de Medici on this subject is given entire by Roscoe, App. 44.

CHAPTER IX.
THE CORRUPTION OF THE PRIESTHOOD

The wickedness to which the previous chapter has directed our attention was not confined to the Popes and Cardinals; on the contrary, it inundated the whole Romish Church. The clergy of Rome, like King Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 18), had impiously usurped the office of priest, which under the Christian dispensation belongs to Christ alone—and they, too, like that monarch, smitten with the leprosy of sin, as a just retribution for their crime, present for many centuries a spectacle so foul and loathsome as to convince every unbiased person that it was the result of judicial blindness. This assertion we shall now proceed to establish by citing the evidence of the Popes, Saints, and Doctors of the Romish Church themselves; on the principle of that passage of the Word of God, "*Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee!*"

The state of impiety and immorality to which we now allude must be dated from the commencement of the tenth century. For whilst the clergy of the universal church, both in the East and West, had for some centuries sunk down to the level of the world around them, it was reserved for the priests of Rome in this century to take the lead in wickedness and surpass all other classes of men in the enormity of their crimes. "In the tenth century," says Waddington, "the open immorality of the clergy first became notorious." (Hist. of Ch. p. 277) And Cardinal Baronius, the great popish historian, not only deplores the corruptions of the priesthood, but furnishes us at the same time with the cause. "Both Cardinals, Bishops, Priests, and Secular Clergy, EMULATED THE CRIMES OF THE PONTIFFS; since," says he, "it is a fixed law of nature for every thing to produce that which resembles itself." (Baron. ad annum 912)

In the previous pages the awful crimes of the Popes at this period have been already set forth; from these the reader may imagine what were the enormities practised by the lower clergy *in emulation* of these papal excesses. There is extant a letter from Pope Leo VII. (A.D. 938) in which *even he* inveighs against them for their "adulation and their time-serving: for conniving at iniquity, for destroying religion, and for defiling all piety." "To the bishops it is owing," says he, "that Christians mutually oppress each other, and the rich defraud, deceive, and overreach the poor," etc. (Apud Wolf. Lect. Mem. I. 257) Baronius's testimony also is important. "The houses of the clergy," says the Cardinal, "were schools for harlots and assemblies of stage-players, where dice, dancing, and singing were to be witnessed, and where the patrimony of kings and the alms given by princes were lavishly squandered away." (Ad an. 912)

Even our own remote country was, in this century, inundated by the tide of priestly corruption. An affecting address of King Edgar, surnamed 'the Peaceful,' is quoted by Weever in his 'Funeral Monuments.' In the year 969, the monarch called together the bishops and clergy, and in the course of his speech thus addressed them:

> "I will speak that which good men lament, and evil men laugh at. I will speak with sorrow (if so be it may be spoken) how they flow in *banquetings, in chambering and wantonness: that now clerks' houses may be thought to be brothel-houses of harlots, and an assembly of players*. There is dice, there is dancing and singing, there is watching till midnight, with crying and shouting. Thus the patrimony of kings, the alms of princes, yea (and that more is) the price of that precious blood is overthrown. Hath our fathers, therefore, for this purpose emptied their treasures? Hath the king's bountifulness given lands and possessions to Christian churches, for this end? that clerks' harlots should be pampered with delicious dainties, that riotous guests should be prepared for, that hounds and hawks, and such like toys should be gotten? Of this, *the soldiers cry out, the common people murmur, the jesters and scoffers sing, and dance*, and you regard it not. Where is the sword of Levi, and the zeal of Phinehas?" (Weever. Introd. p. lxvii.)

Such was the state of the Holy Catholic Church—as Papists dare to call it—even in the tenth century; and the subsequent progress of the ecclesiastical orders in crime attests the truth of that passage of the word of God, "Evil men will wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."

We need call no other witnesses of the corruption of the clergy in the following ages than the Doctors, Saints, and Bishops who were their contemporaries. In the twelfth century, we hear Bernard, a saint of theirs, thus giving vent to his indignation:

> "O Lord! they now fleece the flock; the sheep are turned into wolves; the defenders of the church dissipate its substance; those who ought to be sober are daily intoxicated; the Prelates are Pilates; those who ought to be chaste, are guilty of incest; the shepherds are seducers. The putrid contagion creeps through the church; and the wider it spreads, the more lenient is its nature; the more deeply it reaches, the more dangerous is the disease. For if an open heretic were to stand up, he would be cast out, and destroyed. If a violent enemy—we might hide from his rage. But as it is, whom can we cast out?—from whom can we hide? All are friends, and all are enemies; all are needful to us, and all are adversaries… They are ministers of Christ, BUT THEY ARE SERVANTS OF ANTICHRIST." (De Consid. Book 3)

St. Elizabeth the Virgin, of Germany, also exposed the wickedness of the churchmen of this age. Her writings were published at Paris by Faber, and a prophetical spirit is attributed to her. She says:

> "These things saith the Lord to the prelates. The iniquity of the land, which ye have hidden for the sake of silver and gold, ascends up before me like the smoke of a furnace. Are not the souls whom ye suffocate in eternal fire through your avarice more precious than silver and gold? Their religion accuses you before me. For, behold, you have caused your holiness to stink in the sight of the people, and it is turned into an abomination to me," etc. (Apud Wolf. Lec. Mem.)

The fearful licentiousness of the priesthood during this century is declared by the popish historian Maimbourg: "The lives of the clergy themselves," says he, "are so horribly debauched, that I cannot without trembling relate the hideous description." (Hist. des Croisades, liv. 1) And their violent and bloodthirsty character may be judged from the fact that "during the first nine years only of the reign of Henry II., upwards of one hundred murders were perpetrated by priests in this country." (Roger Hoved.,

quoted in Weever, p. 70) Indeed, it is impossible to read the records of this age without being deeply impressed with the fact that the clergy had become MONSTERS OF WICKEDNESS; and to use the language of a writer of this period, “Every enormity flowed from them” to the laity—whilst the occurrence of an ecclesiastic who possessed any title to esteem was a matter of actual astonishment. “You are a good fellow,” says one to Gui d’Uisel, a canonicus of the age, “*although you are a clerk*, you are an estimable and amiable man.” (Millot hist. des Troubadours, in Giesel.)

The state of the monasteries and nunneries in this century was probably as corrupt as at any subsequent period. Even Cardinal Baronius admits that they were “deformed with the foulest practices,” and that “there was no crime of which their inmates were not guilty.” (Quoted in Magd. Cent. cent. XII.) But the fullest evidence of the actual state of these holy houses is that of Ecbert, a monk, and Honorius Augustodunensis, both contemporary writers.

> “I have inspected the churches of the clergy,” says the former, “and have found in them turpitudes and endless enormities. I have seen the cloisters of Nuns, which I can call by no fitter name than a snare of the devil (aucupium Satanæ), and lo, an alien has laid waste all; the lilies of chastity are burnt up; and a woeful destruction is everywhere conspicuous throughout the whole world of souls.” (Ecbertus in Catal. test. verit. apud Cent. Magdeb. cent. XII.)

Honorius Augustodunensis says:

> “Look also at the Nunneries, and you will see, in them, a chamber made ready for the beast. These [the nuns] from a tender age learn lewdness, and associate very many (plurimas) companions with themselves, to heap up greater damnation: or else endeavour to keep out of sight, that they might be able yet more, to let loose the reins of licentiousness. They are worse than common prostitutes, and, like an insatiable whirlpool, can never be satisfied with the filth of their uncleanness (et, ut insatiabilis charybdis, nunquam stercore immunditiæ replebuntur). They ensnare the souls of young men, and rejoice if they ensnare many; and *she expects the palm of victory, who surpasses the rest in crime*.” (Honorius August. apud Magd. Cent.)

The testimony of Peter, Abbot of Cluny (Epist. Secunda, lib. IV.) and Nigellus Wirecker, of Canterbury, might also be quoted. Walter Mapes, Archdeacon of Oxford also, who, from having travelled on the continent, was better qualified to form an opinion on the subject, gives the following as the result of his observations: “There is no demon worse than a monk”; “all the Abbots I have ever seen, by their manners and conduct, LEAD MEN TO HELL!” (Apud Wolf. Lect. Mem. I. p. 428)

We now enter upon the thirteenth century, of the increasing wickedness of which there is, alas! no room to doubt. In this age lived William of Paris, a monkish historian of great repute. He severely inveighs against the clergy of his age and the prelates who ordain them and load them with benefices. He says of the clergy:

> “They have neither piety, nor learning, but rather THE FOUL VICES OF DEVILS, AND THE MOST MONSTROUS UNCLEANNESS AND CRIMES. Their sins are not mere sins, but rather THE MOST PRODIGIOUS AND DREADFUL CRIMES. They are no Church; but rather

> Babylon, Egypt, and Sodom. The Prelates instead of building the faith destroy it, and make a mock of God." (Apud Magd. Cent. Sec. XIII. cap. 7)

Saint Bridget too, in her Book of Revelations, which were recognized by the Councils of Constance and Basel, says:

> "But truly the words which I spake (Filius Dei loquitur) and the deeds which I wrought in the world, are altogether, as it were, neglected; which is owing to none so much as the rulers of the Church, who are filled with pride and covetousness, and with the putridity of sensual enjoyment… These bad prelates of the Churches, filled with malignity of the evil spirit, have left men examples injurious to their souls: and it therefore behoves me to exact plenary justice from them, by inflicting judgments upon them, by blotting them out of the book of life, *and by placing them in hell, near my enemy Lucifer, to be eternally tortured in the infernal regions*." (Revel. S. Brig. Lib. 7)

The most striking proof, however, afforded of the gross and abominable debauchery of the bishops and clergy in this century occurs in the sermon delivered by Cardinal Hugo at the close of the Council of Lyons, held in the year 1245. Matthew of Paris states that the Cardinal Hugo preached to the Council at its breaking up, and in the course of his sermon thus addressed the citizens of Lyons:

> "My friends," says the Cardinal, "since we came to this city, we have been great benefactors to you, and brought you much gain. For, on our arrival here, we found three or four houses of ill fame; but at our departure we have left but one; it is true that it extends through the whole city, and reaches from the east to the west gate."

So general, indeed, was whoredom amongst all the clergy at this period that we read in the Canon Law that "No priest is to be deposed for simple fornication, because *there are few to be found innocent of that vice!*" (Gloss. dist. LXXXI. c. 6)

It is a painful thing thus to follow the tracks of so much wickedness from century to century; but the immense importance of placing the papal church in its true light reconciles us to the task. We proceed to say then that the records of the fourteenth century show, beyond all question, that the pestilence which had for so many ages spread death and destruction over the whole continent of Europe continued to increase in violence. To omit the valuable testimony of the Reformer Wickliffe (in his work, *De Hypoc*.), Alvarus Pelagius, a Papist, in a work entitled Planctus Ecclesiæ, 'The Lament of the Church,' says of the clergy:

> "Many of them enter taverns without cause; they are addicted to magical arts, augury, and divination. They carry weapons of offence; many carry on wars. They have to do with unlawful gains; they often practise usury. They manage the affairs of the church badly. They bring up their children and relatives with the property of the church, etc… They are addicted to feasting, and drunkenness, and whoredom, *which is a common vice with them*; and MOST OF THEM ALSO—THE SIN WHICH IS AGAINST NATURE. They give money to players, etc.; they play at dice. They mix themselves up with secular affairs. Not an example of good to the laity, as they ought to be, but rather the contrary; for in the present day, commonly, the clergy ARE

> MORE WICKED THAN THE LAITY… Against that holy chastity which they have vowed to God, *they offend constantly*, EVEN IN PUBLIC; *besides those most horrid crimes which they practise* IN SECRET, which neither my paper will receive, nor my pen write. The bishops ordain priests for lucre—they think, especially in Spain, that out of a hundred bishops, there is one who is not a Simonist… The priests often commit wickedness with the women who come to confession… in Spain, the bastards of the clergy are almost as numerous as the children of laymen," etc. (Wolf. Lect. Mem. Tom. I. 632)

We will conclude the review of this century with the important testimony of Catherine of Siena, a canonized saint of the Romish Church (A.D. 1378):

> "In former times," says St. Catherine of Siena, "the clergy were moral and faithful; but in the present day, *they are wicked*. And as formerly, the bad were rare, so now the good are seldom seen… Wherever you turn, you behold *all the clergy*, both secular and religious, prelates and those subject to them, small and great, old and young, infected with crime, pursuing riches and delights, neglecting the support of the poor and the care of souls, applying themselves to secular affairs, simoniacally selling the grace of the Holy Spirit, and mismanaging the affairs of the church. Woe to their wretched and unhappy life. That which Christ purchased with his sufferings on the cross, *they waste with harlots*; they corrupt souls redeemed with the blood of Christ. They nourish bastards with the patrimony of Christ."

She then, in the person of Christ, addresses the clergy:

> "Oh, infernal (diabolicum) tabernacle! I chose you to be the angels of the earth, but *ye are incarnate devils*, whose works ye do. Oh, wretched animal of uncleanness! Thou showest thy flesh, anointed with sacred oil, and consecrated to me, unto harlots; yea, thou doest still fouler iniquity. Sheep—washed in the blood of Christ, thou defilest with thy filthy lasciviousness," etc. (In Wolf.)

We are now entering upon the last century of the unlimited reign of clerical depravity throughout the countries of Europe. And lamentable to think, this closing period, instead of exhibiting any improvement, *was still worse than the preceding!* In fact, it was the extreme wickedness and the abominable filthiness of the Romish priests and prelates that occasioned the Reformation, which commenced early in the next age. Had not the crimes and vices of the clergy prepared the way, Luther would in all probability have shared the fate of Jerome and of Huss.

"The Reformation of the clergy," says Gieseler, "was the *main point* in the Reformation which was so loudly called for throughout this whole period (A.D. 1409–1517). But here too, all measures failed, and the complaints of their rudeness and ignorance, as well as their unclerical lives, *continue to the end*. Their chief offence, their incontinence, *seemed to grow worse the more there was done to restrain it*. In no century had there been so many decrees passed against the concubinage of the clergy as in the fifteenth, yet in none were *complaints so common of their incontinence (which in Italy degenerated even into unnatural vices)*[1] *as well as derision and lamentation over the inefficiency of all the means used to restrain them*. The number of the offenders made it difficult or impossible to carry into effect

the more severe punishments, whilst *the avarice of the bishops substituted a pecuniary mulct, afterwards changed into an annual tax*. The commonness of the offence made it seem to the clergy a light thing; of course, the laity could not be expected to view it in any other light, and in consequence, *the vice increased to a fearful degree*, so as, at the end of the fifteenth century, *to give birth to a new and disgusting disease*." (Giesl. Text Book, Vol. 3)

The above brief sketch of the awful state of the priesthood—in the age immediately preceding the Lutheran Reformation—admits of the most ample proof from the testimony of Papists themselves. The following is but a small part of the evidence from this source that might be adduced.

John Rokycana, Archbishop of Prague, astonished at the state of the papal church, exclaims: "I openly declare that the Church of Rome is WESTERN BABYLON, and that THE POPE IS ANTICHRIST, who has overwhelmed the worship of God with a heap of superstitions." He then says: "There are few priests followers of Christ; and almost all of them are avaricious, proud, ambitious, hypocritical, and idle," etc. "They preach lies for the truth, and SURPASS THEIR PEOPLE IN WICKEDNESS, instead of being their guides, in every kind of piety." "Come out of Babylon, my people," says he, "that ye be not partakers in her sins; that ye receive not of her plagues." (Wolf. I. p. 822) This was about the year 1435.

About the middle of this century lived Vincent Ferrer, a Doctor of Theology in Italy and present at the Council of Constance: "The priests," says he, "fish for honors, but they seek not morals. For they are ignorant, scoffers, illiterate, hypocrites, and simoniacs: *they grow worse every day.* They are voluptuous, envious, lascivious, CORRUPTING THE WHOLE WORLD. They are eager in the pursuit of money, but tardy in the course of virtue. They are cruel and destitute of pity, carrying many weapons of war, but few Breviaries. They are obstinate and loquacious, but they never declare God's truth. Christianity would rejoice if out of a thousand she found one devout person." (Wolf. Lect. Mem. I. 140)

Another witness of the state of the church at this period is Episcopus Civitatensis, A.D. 1460. This writer alleges and deplores the utterly abandoned condition of the clergy and the *extreme foulness of their lives*. He says: "What shall I state, or add further, respecting the condition of the priesthood. Were I to presume to treat fully of the lasciviousness, avarice, pride, simony, and other vices of the clergy, I should utter a discourse to which none would listen." In another place he says: "As for simony, it has become so awful a sin in the church, that all sins in comparison with this are as nothing; for through the greediness of this vice, and by covetousness, the whole church of God is in a state of confusion, disgrace, and plunder, and is committed to the government of robbers, plunderers, ignorant and uneducated persons, ruffians, and fornicators." (Wolf. Lect. Mem. Tom. I. p. 863)

The testimony of Theodoric, an Augustine Friar (1409); Nicolaus de Clemangis, an Archdeacon and Doctor of Theology at Paris (1416); Rodericus Castellinus, Bishop of Zamora (1470); and many others might be added to the above, if necessary (See Wolf. Lect. Mem. Tom. I. Cent. xv.), but the above evidence is quite sufficient to establish the fact of the continued and increased corruption of the priests throughout this closing century.

What in fact must have been the morals of the clergy, when the Council of Constance—reputed in France the most sacred and important of all the councils (the same which sentenced Huss and Jerome to the flames)—"was attended to the place of meeting by six hundred barbers, four hundred and fifty women of pleasure, and three hundred and twenty jugglers and stage players."

In England the Houses of Parliament were obliged to pass an act at this period to bridle the incontinence of the clergy,[2] and the celebrated document drawn up by the princes of Germany at the Diet of Nuremberg A.D. 1522—termed the '*Centum Gravamina*,' or 'The hundred grievances of the Germans'—amongst innumerable other evils, complains of the following:

> "Whosoever he be that hath received any ecclesiastical orders, great or small, thereby he doth contend to be freed from all punishment of the secular magistrate, how great offence never he do. Neither doth he unadvisedly presume thereupon, but is maintained in that liberty to sin by the principal estates of the clergy. For it hath often been seen that whereas by the canonical laws priests are forbidden to marry, after they diligently labour and go about night and day to attempt and try the chastity of matrons, virgins, and of the wives, daughters, and sisters of the laymen; and through their continual instance and labour, partly with gifts and rewards, and flattering words, partly by their secret confessions as they call them, they bring to pass that many virgins and matrons, which otherwise would be honest, have been overcome and moved to sin and wickedness; and it happeneth oftentimes that they do detain and keep away the wives and daughters from their husbands and fathers, threatening them with fire and sword that do require them again… Thus through their raging lusts they heap and gather together innumerable mischiefs and offences."
>
> "Also in many places the bishops and their officials do not only suffer priests to have concubines, so that they pay certain sums of money, but also compel continent and chaste priests, who live without concubines, to pay for concubines, affirming the bishop hath need of money, which being paid it be lawful either to live chaste, or to keep concubines." (Fox, Vol. 2. p. 64, 67)

The state of the monasteries and nunneries at this closing period of the unlimited reign of Popery must not be passed by. In the early part of the fifteenth century we find the celebrated Archdeacon Clemangis thus speaking of the monks:

> "Are they not ravenous wolves, lurking under the appearance of sheep, who like the ancient priests of Bel, devour in secret the offerings presented, greedily satiating their appetites with wines and splendid banquets, not in company with their own wives, but often with their harlots, and polluting all things with their lusts, with the ardor of which they are on fire?" (Wolf. Lect. Mem. I. p. 775)

The same unexceptionable evidence of the horrible state of the nunneries during this century may be adduced:

> "The nuns only remain for me to carry my description, according to promise, from the head down to the very feet, without omitting any order. But of these, modesty forbids me to say more

(although more is at hand), lest we should make a long and disgusting discourse, not concerning virgins dedicated to God, but rather of houses of ill-fame—of the acts and lasciviousness of harlots—of defilements and incests."

"For what else, I ask you, are the nunneries, in the present day, but execrable brothels of Venus, rather than sanctuaries of God; and houses of resort for lascivious and filthy gallants, to satiate their lusts? So that now for a nun to take the veil, is to expose herself to public prostitution."

In the "Advice given to Paul III. by four Cardinals and five other Prelates, in order to the amendment of the State of the Church," translated by Dr. Clagett (in Gibson's Preservative, Vol. 1. Tit. 1), we find the following:

"In the orders of the religious, there is another abuse to be corrected, that many are so degenerate, that *they are grown scandalous*, and their examples pernicious to the secular. We think the conventual orders *are to be abolished*, not by doing any man that injury of dispossessing him, but by forbidding them to admit any more," etc. "Christian people are disturbed by another abuse which concerns Nuns, that are under the care of the Conventual Friars; where in most Monasteries, public sacrileges (i.e. unlawful intercourse between the monks and nuns) are committed, to the intolerable scandal of the citizens."

But the most conclusive evidence of the actual state of the monasteries is afforded by the report published by the commissioners sent by authority in the time of Henry VIII. to examine those of idleness and vice. "These Visitors," says Bale (Baleus in Act. Pont. Ro. ad lect.), "found so great a number of whoremongers and Sodomites, that you would think in every Monastery were a new Gomorrah." The book published by them was called *Breviarium compertorum in Monasteriis, Conventibus, Collegiis*, etc., and from this report we give the following extracts as a specimen of the whole.

In Battle Abbey, in the diocese of Chichester, were fifteen Sodomites; the Abbot himself, and fourteen others, *whose names are all given*, and several whoremongers. At Canterbury, amongst the Benedictine Monks, nine Sodomites, two whoremongers; among the Augustines, the Abbot and eleven other whoremongers, and one Sodomite. At Bath, one of the Monks had seven harlots. Another had eleven harlots, etc. At Monk Farleigh, the Prior had nine whores, etc. At Maiden Bradley, the Prior had five whores and several bastards. At Bristol, the Abbot had four whores. At Abingdon, the Abbot three whores, and two children begotten by his own sister. At Shalbread, the Prior had seven whores: one of his Monks also seven whores, another five, another two, besides others. At Bermondsey, the Prior had twenty whores. In the college at Windsor, the sub-chanter many whores; three other ecclesiastics had five a piece; several had one, others many, and one six. In Chichester Cathedral, the Prebendary of Waltham had two whores, another thirteen, many others had one or more, and two were Sodomites. "All these out of the aforesaid book," says Bale, "and besides that, in all the other Colleges and Convents, like wickedness was committed and discovered, *too long, and a very shame to make rehearsal of*. Yet there were four hundred Monasteries of Monks and Nuns, besides about two hundred nests of Mendicants."

This report of the Visitors is found, not only in Bale and Speed, but in other contemporary writers. The testimonies previously adduced amply prove the possibility, and even the probability, of such facts. They are moreover considered authentic by the most competent modern critics. The learned Hallam, in his History of the Middle Ages, says, “I know not by what right we should disbelieve the report of this visitation, entering, as they do, into a multitude of specific charges, both probable in their nature and consonant to the unanimous testimony of the world.” (Vol. iii. p. 853) The author of the Letters relating to the Suppression of the Monasteries, &c., one of the works recently published by the London Camden Society, also declares his belief in all the charges brought against the monks. (Pref. p. 1)

It will now be granted, we suppose by all but those who are judicially blinded, that the priests and monks of the Church of Rome, during this lengthened period, constituted a MORAL PESTILENCE to the whole of Europe—spreading death and destruction on every side! When Romanists are reminded of the awful depravity of their church during the Middle Ages, their common reply is that these instances of depravity were exceptions to the general rule—and that there will always be a Judas amongst the true servants of God. Nothing, however, can be plainer, from the foregoing testimonies of the Romish saints and doctors themselves, that it was not a *few*, merely, in the various orders of the Romish clergy, who have been grossly wicked, but that this was the *general*, the all but universal character of bishops, priests, monks, and nuns. The language of the witnesses that we have called against that apostate church is of the most *unqualified* nature during the whole of these six hundred years. We are even told that “whereas formerly the bad were rare, so now the good are seldom seen”; that “Christianity would rejoice, *if, out of a thousand priests, only one devout one could be found*”; and even in the presence of the prelates who constituted “The Holy Council of Lateran,” Christopher Marcellus publicly said:

> “We are placed in such a license of sinning, that, with a few exceptions, there is no one who does not oppose all virtue, or observes even the most trivial laws. *Wickedness and intemperance fill and occupy all things*. All things wander and deviate from the straight path of equity and righteousness, there is no one who looks to himself, to his heart, or his understanding.” (Labbé, tom. xiv. p. 107. A.D. 1512)

It is thus obvious that the pretence that the wicked priests of the Romish Church were exceptions to the general rule is altogether false. For the same reason, the excuse—that every other denomination of professed Christians exhibits similar delinquencies—equally fails to help the Romanist, because, as they would themselves allow, these latter are only occasional occurrences, whilst in the case of the Romish clergy, “out of a thousand not one devout one could be found.”

It is important to bear in mind, also, that the wickedness of the Romish priesthood during this lengthened period was not common wickedness, but extreme impiety and *the most horrid depravity.* A very slight glance only at the foregoing impartial testimony—given from one century to another—is sufficient to convince every one of this. The most enormous crimes, the foulest licentiousness, are imputed to the whole body with few exceptions. The clergy are described repeatedly as “incarnate demons,” their sins are said to be “not mere sins, but rather the foul vices of devils.” They are said to be “more wicked than the laity,” and to “surpass their hearers in wickedness,” that “they corrupted the whole world” and “lead men to hell,” etc. Nor is this language employed in reference to a portion of the

priesthood—it is used to describe their general condition. We are clearly justified then, on the testimony of the very highest possible human authorities—that of their most celebrated bishops, doctors, and saints—in styling the great body of the clergy during the whole Middle Ages a SPIRITUAL PESTILENCE, spreading death and destruction all around them!

Who can estimate then the amount of evil and misery—temporal and eternal—thus inflicted on mankind. It is not merely that the clergy ceased to be the lights in the world—examples of piety and virtue to mankind. This in itself would form a most serious evil—the salt of the earth having lost its savour—the mass of society is left to putrefy. But the charge resting against the body of the clergy of the six centuries which preceded the Council of Trent is that, by the influence of their horrid licentiousness and other wickedness, they made men far more wicked than they would otherwise have been—and diffused on every side a boundless and shameless licentiousness. That which the Roman rhetorician ascribes to kings may be also asserted of the clergy: That their condition is such that what they practise they are considered to enjoin; and it is remarkable that by the tenth century the veneration for the priesthood had reached such a height as rendered their example ten times as pernicious as it would have been at an earlier period, or even since the Reformation. Hence we find even Pope Innocent III. declaring in the Council of Lateran held in the thirteenth century:

> "All the corruption which is in the people chiefly proceeds from the clergy, since if the priest who is anointed sins, he causes the people to sin; for when the laity behold them living vilely and outrageously, through their example, they fall into iniquity and wickedness. And when they are reproved by any one they immediately excuse themselves saying, the son must do what he sees his father do, and it is enough if the disciple resembles his master." (Labbé, Tom. p. 134. Parisiis)

How impossible then for man to estimate the amount of injury inflicted by the Romish Church upon the generations of men who lived during this lengthened period—as well as society itself, and the world at large—by this moral plague. It is easy for us to put down in so many words that so many hundreds of thousands of priests and monks did inflict all this spiritual injury upon so many millions of individuals who peopled Europe during a period of more than six hundred years. But to grasp with any degree of truth the *amount of mischief*, to form anything like an adequate idea of the actual evil involved in the temporal and eternal misery of the countless millions brought under the influence of this moral pestilence in every country of Europe during a period in which upwards of twenty generations of mankind succeeded one another on this probationary stage—mocks every effort of the human mind, and can only be grasped by beings whose intelligence is of a far higher order than that of man, "*whose breath is in his nostrils, and who knows nothing!*"

It still remains to inquire how far the charge of priestly corruption lies against the Romish clergy in the present day. We fear there is too much reason to believe, so far as papal countries are concerned, the character of that influential class of men continues substantially the same. But instead of making any remarks of our own on this subject, we prefer allowing the following witnesses to speak for themselves.

One of the most important witnesses of the modern depravity of the clergy, because he was himself a violent papist, is the author of The History of the Cardinals of the Romish Church, published originally in Italian about the middle of the seventeenth century, and translated into English (Folio, London, 1669). In this very valuable and interesting work, we have the following testimony to the general state of the prelates and clergy of Rome in the seventeenth century:

"I remember," says this writer, "a certain sermon I heard in a convent in Rome, and in the presence of two Cardinals, one of them *Sacchetti*, but the other's name I have forgot. The sermon, and the whole design of it, made such an impression on me, I think of it a hundred times a day, and shall in this place insert the most memorable part of it. The preacher was a bare-footed Franciscan, he seemed a poor pitiful creature to look on, but he was the more experienced in morality, and declaimed with that zeal and vigour against vice, that he raised devotion in the hearts of his whole auditory. The first Sunday in Lent, this Holy Father, being got into the Pulpit, in the presence of two Cardinals, and a very great auditory besides, after an Ave Maria, and two or three cringes with his knee, as is usual, rising up again upon his feet, he put his Cappuce or Cowl, upon his head, pulling it down so low that we could scarce see his eyes; and in that posture, having paused awhile without speaking a word, fixed his eyes upon the Cardinals that stood before him, and without naming any text, broke out at once into these words, 'St. Peter was a fool, St. Paul was a fool, all the Apostles were fools, the Martyrs were fools, and all the primitive saints of the Church of Jesus Christ were fools.'

"The Cardinals at these words, grew as insensible as Statues; the people on the other hand, stood gaping in expectation of what would follow, most of us imagining there was some mystery in the business, and I among the rest, wondering what this freak would be, was well contented to attend, when the Father after some moments of silence, began his discourse as follows, 'You that are Prelates, do you not believe you shall be saved? Yes, good Father we do, I know your answer. And you, of the common sort of people, you are certain of Paradise? Without question, you will answer yes. Yes say I? By turning night into day? By feasting, sporting and luxury? With travelling all day in your coaches, and seeing comedies at night? With wearing of Purple and Scarlet, Silver and Gold, and having your silken trains carried after you in the street? Yes, by spoiling the walls of the Church, to adorn the walls of your chambers, and by taking from Christ to bestow upon the world? Is it in this manner, O Romans, you would be saved?

"The Apostles, certainly, and all the saints of the Primitive Church, might have been saved in the same way, and then as certainly they were madmen and fools, to wander up and down in solitude and misery, begging their bread for the love of God. You are mistaken, Oh Romans, the Apostles and primitive saints were full of sanctity and prudence. It is you are the fools to propose a new way of salvation to yourselves, invented by your own intemperance and vanity.'" (Part I. Lib. 2. p. 46)

A few pages onward, we find the following important testimony to the depravity of the clergy:

"I have already declared that the greatest schism, that *at this time reigns in the Church, and insensibly tears the bowels of it out,* is the observation which all good Christians make of the *great scandals and impieties of the Clergy,* and if any should be so far overseen, as to undertake their defence, I would ask

them but these questions. To pass from the embraces of a wicked and meretricious woman, to the sacred duties of the altar, is not that schism? To see the Priests of God celebrate mass with daggers at their girdles, and pistols under their vests, is it not Schism? To see (I speak it with horror)," says the Author, "that boy serving and attending the priest as his disciple, in the holiest part of his office, with whom he lay the night before and must again the next, is not that Schism? To hear HOURLY of murders and other execrable villanies committed in the very Cloisters, is not that Schism? To sell benefices at a dear rate—to keep open shop to negotiate for simony—to take the rings off the Virgin Mary's fingers, and to put them upon a harlot's, is not that Schism? To fatten up the Pope's Nephews, with the wealth of the Church, is not that Schism? &c. And, indeed, things may be as they will, in other parts of Christendom, if we restrain them no better at Rome, in which place there are thousands of these Schisms, that will ruin the Church infallibly without some speedy remedy be applied: *their corruptions being at that height*, IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO LOOK UPON A PRIEST WITH PATIENCE."

"If the zeal of any good Christian carries him on so far as to correct or reprehend any of them, for their exorbitancies, they will answer in their excuse, that even among the Apostles, there was a Judas, a Traitor, and therefore as they would have them believe, they ought not be scandalized at the ill example, the Clergy give to them. These kind of excuses may seem good to those that use them; but not to those that hear them. I would to God, amongst twelve Ecclesiastics, there was but one Judas to be found, but I am afraid, amongst a hundred of them that imitate Judas in their lives; there will scarce be found one that lives like the rest of the Apostles." (p. 56)

The most important passage, however, which we have marked for quotation in the work, is the following, which refers to a cause that would be sufficient—were no other in operation—to render the Church of Rome *a sink of iniquity*:

"The method of Italians in this age," says the Author, "is good, indeed, for the advancement of their arms, but not at all for the benefit of the Church. For example, an Italian that has three sons, picks out the wisest and most gentle, and marries him to keep up his family; him that is most sprightly and vigorous, he sends to the wars; and if any be more foolish or extravagant than another, he is sent to the Convent. In short, those Fathers *whose sons are given to Theft, to Drunkenness, to Lust, Dissoluteness or Prodigality; if they be Liars, Swearers, Cheats, Blasphemers, &c., do presently devote them to the Cloister,* where, putting on the habit of a Friar, they put them out of their sight, indeed, but put them into a religious house, where they become devils; because wickedness, or rather a heap of wickedness, cannot be taken away by fifteen yards of cloth." (p. 61)

"A certain Protestant of Bearne, that had been long in Italy, and was my particular friend, would often tell me, he would sooner choose to be a devil in Hell, than a Catholick in Rome; and his reason was, Because the Devils believe and tremble, but the Catholicks did but laugh at it, committing greater faults in the Church than they. For my better satisfaction, I entreated him one day to give me a clearer prospect of his judgment, which willingly he granted, and delivered it in this manner. 'Sir, homicide in the old law by God's express command, and by Christ's particular order in the new; in short, God as God, Christ as God and Christ, all laws Divine and Human, both Natural and Celestial, have forbidden Murder. Non Occides. Yet in Italy, nay in Rome itself, thousands of murders are committed, and which

is worse the Murderer has no more to do, than to betake himself to their Churches. I have seen myself, some of those Homicides walking in state for their recreation, in those very Churches, where but a while before, the dead body of him they had murdered was buried, and can any thing be found more diabolical than this? No, and without doubt I have good reason for my resolution, for being a devil rather than a Catholic.' And truly, a good conscience cannot be without some trouble, as often as he thinks upon God's express command, 'Thou shalt not kill,' and on the other side, observes the Violators of that law protected and sheltered in his house as if the presence of Christ served only, chiefly, to secure murderers." (p. 59)

The above quotations, it should be remembered, are from one who was himself a violent papist. After mentioning that 70 millions of double ducats, out of the treasury of the church, had been spent upon Pope's nephews since A.D. 1500, he asks, "Now if these 70 millions of double ducats had been spent IN PERSECUTING HERETICS, where would any heretics be?" (p. 134)

A few years later, a valuable work was published by a converted Romish priest named Gabriel d'Emiliane, entitled The Frauds of Romish Priests and Monks, in eight letters (London, 1681). In this very important and interesting publication a similar, but very much fuller account is given of the horrid corruption of prelates, priests, etc., of the Church of Rome (see especially the eighth letter, 'Of the corruption of the Italian Priests and Monks in their devotion and morals,' etc., pp. 371–416). As the description is far too long to quote, we shall confine ourselves to the following short extracts relative to the monks of Italy:

> "Italy without contradiction is accounted by all a very corrupt and debauched country, and it is sure that the Priests and Monks, a sort of people who have vowed eternal chastity, are the main occasion of her being branded with this just reproach. The immense treasures they possess are a scandal and a stumbling stone unto them, and loose women who are not ignorant of this, account themselves happy to be taken into their favour; it being a proverb in Italy, That the wench of a Priest or a Monk can never want anything. The Monks besides the vow of *chastity* have also taken upon them that of *poverty,* and accordingly ought never to possess any money of their own; but the avarice of the Popes of Rome have made them—in direct opposition to their vow—*Proprietors*… Let any one go and search as long as he likes in the Cloisters for that spirit of chastity, poverty, and obedience which is expressly professed in them, and, after all, it is certain, he will find less than in some secular families." (p. 393)

"Can any thing be conceived more infamous and licentious than the lives of the Monks? He that doubts it need only go to Rome, Venice, or the other principal cities of Italy at Shrovetide, where he will meet with nothing in the streets but Monks in masquerade with their whores. All the theatres of comedies, and operas, and all other places of public shew and pastime are thronged with them, yea, and they glory in these excesses, I have been acquainted with a vast number of Monks, who at Shrovetide, seeing me would draw near to me and take off their vizards on purpose that I might take notice of them. They had each a wench by the hand, and the next morning in the Sextry, before they went to the altar to say mass, all their discourse was about the debauches and licentious pranks they had played the day before, and of what they intended to play the same day, after their drudgery of saying mass was over." (p. 398)

Respecting the present state of the clergy, both regular and religious, of the Church of Rome, the works of the late Rev. Blanco White, formerly a popish priest and chaplain to the King of Spain, afford us much valuable and interesting information.

“Of Monks and Friars,” says he, “I know comparatively little, because *the vague suspicions*—of which *even the most pious Spanish parents cannot divest themselves*—prevented my frequenting the interior of monasteries during my boyhood: my own judgment, and the general disgust which their prevailing grossness and vulgarity create in those who see them, kept me subsequently away from all friendly intercourse with the cowled tribes: but of the secular clergy and the amiable life prisoners of the Church of Rome, few if any can possess a more intimate knowledge than myself. Devoted to the ecclesiastical profession from the age of fifteen, when I received the minor orders, I lived in constant friendship with the most distinguished youths, who in my town, were preparing for the priesthood. Men of the first eminence in the Church, were the old friends of my family—my parents’ and my own spiritual directors. Thus I grew up, thus I continued in manhood, till at the age of five and thirty, religious oppression and that alone forced me away from kindred and country. The intimacy of friendship and undisguised converse of sacramental confession opened to me the hearts of many whose exterior conduct might have deceived a common observer. The coarse frankness of associated dissoluteness, left indeed no secrets among the spiritual slaves, who, unable to separate the laws of God, from those of their tyrannical Church, trampled both under foot in riotous despair. Such are the sources of the knowledge I possess; God, sorrow, and remorse, are my witnesses.”

“What need I say of the vulgar crowd of priests who, coming, as the Spanish phrase has it, from *coarse swaddling clothes*, and raised by ordination to a rank of life for which they have not been prepared, mingle vice and superstition, grossness of feeling and pride of office, in their character? I have known the best among them; I have heard the confessions of young persons of both sexes, who fell under the influence of their suggestion and example, and I do declare that NOTHING *can be more dangerous to youthful virtue than their company.* How many souls would be saved from crime but for the vain display of superior virtue which Rome demands from her clergy!”

“The picture of female convents requires a more delicate pencil yet *I cannot find tints sufficiently dark and gloomy* to portray the miseries which I have witnessed in their inmates. Crime indeed makes its way into those recesses, in spite of the spiked walls and prison-gates which protect the inhabitants. This I know with all the certainty, which the self-accusation of the guilty can give. It is besides a notorious fact that the *nunneries in Extremadura and Portugal are frequently infected with vice of the grossest kind*. But I will not dwell on this revolting part of the picture.”

The intelligent author has added in a note some account of the moral state of monks and nuns in the diocese of Pistoia and Prato, contained in the life of Bishop Ricci, which will amply repay a perusal (Pract. and Inter. Evid. pp. 289–293). We give the following brief extract:

> “The character of the Monks is described in general in a passage copied from De Potters’ French translation. The writer Flavia Peruccini, Prioress of the Convent of St. Catherine of

Pistoia, in her report to the rector of the Episcopal Seminary, having given the names of the most profligate Monks who frequented the nunnery, thus continues.

‘Mais à quoi bon en nommer d’avantage? Excepte trois ou quatre religieux, parmi tant de moines, actuellement vivans ou deja morts, que j’ai connus, il n’en etoit pas un seul qui ne fut du meme calibre. Tous ils professent les memes maximes et tiennent la meme conduite. Ils vivent avec les religieuses, plus familierement que ne vivent entre elles les personnes mariees.’” (Translation from French: But what is the point of naming any more? Apart from three or four religious men—out of the many monks, whether still living or already dead, whom I have known—there was not a single one who was not of the same stamp. They all profess the same principles and follow the same course of conduct. They live with the nuns with a greater degree of familiarity than even married couples show toward one another.)

“The details which follow this general charge we will not transfer to our pages, nor will we give even an abridged account of the horrible state to which the tyrannical laws of the Church of Rome brought the two nuns Spighi and Buoramici. I only refer to their cases in order to assure my readers that though such shocking instances are *seldom allowed to transpire,* THEY ARE NOT UNFREQUENT IN THE NUNNERIES ON THE CONTINENT. The reason why they do not more frequently *appear,* may be learned from the conduct of the Pope and his court in the present instance. It is an undeniable fact, that the exertions of Bishop Ricci to put a stop to the abominable practices of the Dominicans and their nuns, *gave the greatest offence at Rome*. Pius VI. in a brief addressed to Ricci, in consequence of the steps he had taken against the offenders, calls him ‘an insincere fanatic, a liar, calumniator, seditious and usurper of other men’s rights.’ The Pope could not forgive the exposure which the Bishop’s zeal had produced by declining the method usual in such cases of accusing the guilty to the Inquisition for that secret tribunal not only supports the Church of Rome by its terrors, but hides the profligacy arising from its institutions by the secrecy of its trials.”

The Romish clergy in our own country present a very different appearance. This fact, however, does in no degree affect the argument. In the words of the author of Fanaticism:

“The Romanist can have no more right to boast of the purity of the Catholic clergy of England, or to appeal to the manners (confessedly respectable) of English priests, as a fair specimen of the sacerdotal body, than modern deists have to take a parallel advantage of the mild temper and irreproachable character of some who now reject Christianity. To judge equitably of Deism, we must look at it where it has received no correcting influence from Christianity; and Popery must be judged on the same principle. We do not ask what Romish priests are when surrounded by Protestantism; but what, where the system develops itself without restraint. Most readily and cheerfully is it granted that, notwithstanding the cruel disadvantages of his condition, the English priest is ordinarily correct in his behaviour, and estimable as a member of society.” (Fanaticism, p. 161)

That an immense body of individuals—whose only office was to teach men the pure religion of Jesus, and by their holy lives and precepts to fit them for “the inheritance of the saints in light”—should at length become the chief promoters of iniquity, and spread on every side the most shameful licentiousness, during such a lengthened period, is as marvellous as it is true. The absence of all piety, and even of outward morality, in the clergy of a merely nominal church—as that of Rome confessedly was—we can easily account for on the principle of the general depravity of mankind. But the enormous crimes—the shameful impiety—the insatiable avarice—and boundless licentiousness of the Romish priesthood during this lengthened period is what, at first sight, no one would anticipate, and can only be accounted for by ascribing it to *the influence of that system of wickedness* of which they were at once the victims and the priests!

In addition to the general influence of a system of imposture and superstition like that of Rome, there can be no question that the extreme wickedness of the Romish priests was mainly attributable to the natural operation of the following doctrines and practices: The celibacy of the secular and regular clergy, the practice of auricular confession, the external sanctity believed to belong to the priesthood, and the almost divine veneration in which they were held by the people. If we add to the pernicious influence of these things on the character and life the judicial blindness to which they were given up, the corruption of the papal priesthood is no longer a difficulty. Human nature being what it is, it is as natural—in the absence of all correcting influence—that the priests of Rome should have surpassed every other class of men in guilt as that fire should be increased by the addition of fresh fuel. Instead of its being any wonder, therefore, that the popish clergy before the Reformation should have proved a moral pestilence to Europe, the only wonder would be if they had been *anything else*. Since that period, the same causes still produce similar results—in papal countries—though not to such a frightful extent. [3] Awful then must the evils of that wicked system be, if its *necessary tendency* is to constitute its ministers the corrupters instead of the benefactors of mankind—and manifest is it that Popery constitutes a MORAL PESTILENCE, spreading death and destruction on every side!

Footnotes

[1] Jo. Franc. Pici Mirandulæ Domini, ad Leonem, A.D. 1517 (in the Fascic. rer. expet. et fug. ed. E. Brown, p. 419): Ab iis (sacerdotibus) etiam (proh pudor!) formosæ ambiuntur ad eorum libidines et meritorii pueri à parentibus commodantur et condonantur his, qui ab omni corporis etiam concessa voluptate sese immaculatos custodire deberent; hi postea ad sacerdotiorum gradus promoventur statis flore transacto jam exoleti.

(English translation from Latin: Giovanni Francesco Pico, Lord of Mirandola, writing to Pope Leo, A.D. 1517: “By these priests—shameful to say!—beautiful women are pursued to satisfy their lusts, and boys are offered up or even handed over by their parents to men who ought to keep themselves unstained by any bodily pleasure—even those pleasures that are otherwise permitted. Later, these same men are promoted to the ranks of the priesthood, once their prime has passed and they are already worn out.”)

[2] To overpass the short time during the protectorship and reign of King Richard III… let us come, says Weever, unto Henry VII, in whose days religious persons *did wallow in all kinds of voluptuousness*. To bridle whose incontinent lives, he caused an act to be made, bearing as title… Extracts from this may be found in Weever's Funeral Mon. (Introd. p. lxxvii.) See also 'Supplicat. of Beggars' in Fox's Acts and Mon.

[3] The notorious condition of those countries, where nothing has forbidden the natural expansion of the Romish system, would warrant our affirming that two-thirds of its clergy come under this description. Nay, perhaps our English credulity would be ridiculed at Madrid, Granada, Lisbon, Florence, Lima, or Rio Janeiro, if we supposed, that any more than a *very few* of the sacerdotal class were not debauched. Now, if men of this sort are to be placed by the side of the licentious, out of orders, then the difference against them will consist in that aggravation of crime, which his sacrilege and blasphemy heap upon the head of the churchman. As violator and corrupter of every family about him, he makes his way, as if it were, through the presence chamber of the Eternal Majesty, and as he goes he invites the Omniscient Purity to look upon his deeds of shame. (Fanaticism, p. 162)

CHAPTER X.
THE EVIDENCE FROM PROPHECY

We have thus convicted the Church of Rome of two of the greatest crimes that any body of men was ever charged with. *First*, of inflicting SPIRITUAL FAMINE for upwards of a thousand years upon the people entrusted to its charge—by withholding or perverting all means of grace—and *secondly,* of establishing such wicked and antichristian doctrines and practices everywhere within its pale as rendered it nothing less than a MORAL PESTILENCE, spreading disease and death throughout the world. It is most important to remember that *there is not one of the doctrines or practices* which constitute the elements of this fearful PLAGUE *that has been abandoned by the Romish Church in the present day*!—although in some cases they are less gross and palpable than in the dark ages. Amid all the light of the nineteenth century, Rome still keeps to the darkness, the idolatries, and the superstitions of the twelfth!

It is common for men in the present day to allege that Popery is changed. Such persons, however, are ignorant of the fact that Popery is in its very nature unchangeable. In the words of one of its most distinguished English champions, “It is most true that the Roman Catholics believe the doctrines of their Church to be unchangeable; and that it is a tenet of their creed, that what their faith ever has been, that it now is, and such it ever will be.” (Chas. Butler, Esq., Book of Rom. Cath. Ch.) Let it never be supposed, then, that Popery is anything else in the present day than the same mass of absurdity—fraud—blasphemy—idolatry, and crime that it was in the age of Luther.

But whilst we state that the doctrines and practices of Romanism are in all important points the *same* as ever, we must also declare our firm conviction that the guilt of the prelates and priests of Rome is immensely greater now than it once was. “It is a pretty generally received opinion,” says Mr. McGavin, “that the Church of Rome is not so wicked now, as she was in former ages. I confess I am of a very different opinion. I believe that her wickedness is greater now than it ever was, and that it will continue to increase to the end. It is true, she does not now exhibit, in general, such gross immoralities as we read of in her history. We do not hear for instance, that the present Pope farms out indulgences, as a provision for his own, or his predecessor’s natural children. The knowledge that is now diffused over Europe, *will not permit things* to be done, which were openly practised in the days of darkness. But the existence of this knowledge aggravates the wickedness of those who shut their eyes against it: and what are apparently less enormities committed in the present day, may be greater *sins* than greater enormities were in former days; for sins committed against knowledge, are greater than sins of ignorance.” (Prot. I. 47)

The evidence of the wickedness and antichristian character of papal Rome afforded by the prophetic page is very full and conclusive.

In the 7th chapter of Daniel, we have the papal power predicted—just as the Mahometan power is in the 9th chapter of the book of Revelation—under the figure of a horn. After describing the four great

monarchies of the world under the image of four wild beasts, the modern states of Europe are mentioned under the symbol of ten horns[1] on the head of the last beast—the Roman Empire—because these kingdoms arose from the ruins of that vast kingdom. Among these horns the prophet sees *a little horn* rise up, the symbol of the Popedom. It is said to be '*a little horn*,' because the temporal kingdom of the popes has always been small. It rises up '*among* the ten horns' to show that it should be *contemporary* and situated *amongst* the modern kingdoms of Europe. 'It plucked up by the roots three of the first horns,' and historians relate the destruction of so many powers by the Popedom. 'It had eyes like the eyes of a man'—and what government was ever so distinguished by sagacity and policy as the papacy? Though a little horn, it had 'a mouth speaking great things'—and who does not know that the principal means by which the popes obtained the dominion which belonged to them in the middle ages was by papal bulls, interdicts, and excommunications? 'It had a *look more stout* than his fellows,' and how striking is the contrast between the insignificant kingdom called the States of the Church and the mighty aspect of the papal power, especially in its palmy days! It was also to 'make war with the saints, and prevail against them'; and it is a fact that by means of the persecutions of the papal church, FIFTY MILLIONS of martyrs have been slain!

In the 11th chapter of Daniel, we have another prediction, the striking accomplishment of which is found in the same wicked potentate: 'And the king shall do according to his will'—what kings have ever equalled the popes in the absolute despotism with which they have ruled? 'He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god.' The popes have placed themselves, by their untiring efforts, far above every earthly object of worship in the estimation of mankind. 'And shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods; neither shall he regard the God of his fathers'—and what power has ever uttered such impious blasphemy as the popes, or who will suspect them, as a body, of possessing any real devotion to the Most High? His not regarding 'the desire of women' is clearly identical with Paul's 'forbidding to marry.' And his 'honouring gods protectors, and a god whom his fathers knew not,' appears to point out the worship of tutelary deities and the 'Queen of Heaven.'[2]

The same wicked potentate is set forth in the prophecies of Isaiah under the type of 'the king of Babylon' in that sublime ode describing his entrance into Hades (chap. xiv.): "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth… How art thou fallen from heaven, Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God (comp. 'the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches,' Rev. i. 20), I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." Let the reader refer to the description given (p. 289) of the arrogance and blasphemy of the popes, and then say whether any fuller accomplishment of this prediction can possibly occur. Jeremiah also has a long prophecy of the destruction of the papacy under the figure of Babylon (ch. 1. and li.) in which the very identical expressions occur that the apostle John afterwards uses in Rev. xviii. when describing the overthrow of Babylon the Great, Mother of Harlots, etc.

Ezekiel, too, speaks of this potentate under the type of the king of Tyre: ‘Thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, *I am a God*, I sit in the *seat of God*,’ etc. ‘Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering.’ ‘Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire [i.e., glistening jewels]. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the first day that thou wast created,’ etc. (Ezek. xxviii.) Surely none but the papacy ever accomplished a prediction like this.

In the prophet Nahum, too, the papal power is depicted under the type of Nineveh: “Woe to the bloody city! it is all full of lies and robbery; the prey departeth not.” “Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the well-favoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts. Behold, I am against thee, saith the Lord of hosts; and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will show the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame. And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazing-stock.” (Nah. iii. 1–7)

The New Testament, as we might expect, is still more full and explicit in predicting the rise and progress of this antichristian power. Our limits only allow us briefly to glance at the most important prophecies. “In the latter times,” says the apostle Paul, “some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.” (1 Tim. iv. 1–3) Here the leading characteristics of Popery—especially the celibacy of the clergy, as well as of monks and nuns, and the abstinence from meat at certain seasons—are strikingly depicted. In fact, so obvious is the application of this famous prophecy to the Church of Rome that a translation of the New Testament was published at Bordeaux in the year 1686—when great efforts were making to convert the Protestants in France—with the authority of the archbishop, in which the passage was thus translated: “Some will separate themselves from the Roman faith… condemning the sacrament of marriage, the abstinence from meats which God hath created,” etc. (Cramp’s Text-Book of Popery, p. 55)

The celebrated prophecy in the Thessalonians is very similar to that in Daniel xi. 36: “That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.” This, too, we have already in the course of the work illustrated.

But the most full and minute predictions of Popery are contained in the Revelation. In the thirteenth chapter, the fourth wild beast of Daniel is, we think, first described as having ‘seven heads and ten horns.’ Then (ver. 11) a second wild beast ‘rises out of the earth, having two horns like a lamb.’ This is clearly a spiritual power—since it has ‘*horns like a lamb*’—and coexists with ‘the first beast’—the civil power. ‘It exercised all the power of the first beast before him’—rather, *in his presence*. It denotes, we think, the antichristian church, branching out into two parts, the Eastern and the Western, under two independent and supreme heads, the Pope of Rome and the Patriarch of Constantinople.

At the period of the rise of the spiritual ‘wild beast,’ the Eastern and Western branches differed but little from each other in guilt. But in after years, such was the amazing progress of the papacy in tyranny and crime that the Holy Spirit has exhibited this branch of the apostate church in a separate vision: “I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast… and the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour,[3] and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.” Here is papal Rome obviously set forth, and in the following chapter—to prevent all mistake as to the meaning—the angel expressly says that the whore denotes Rome: “The woman that thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.” There was but one city at that time that ruled over the kings of the earth—Rome! The overthrow of that great city is also set forth under the name of “Babylon the great, the habitation of devils, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird.” (Chap. xviii.)

Again, the Romish Church is described in chapter ix. v. 20, 21. After describing the second woe—which was the overthrow of the Eastern Empire, comprising the Greek Church—the Western Church is thus referred to: “And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.”

Such are the interpretations of prophecy in which good men have for the most part agreed for the last seven hundred years.

The fearful denunciations of divine wrath which shall at length overtake ‘the false prophet’ are to be met with throughout the prophetical parts of Scripture. The *period* of the destruction of the papacy is also stated. In many passages of Scripture, a time, times, and half a time, that is, three years and a half, are given. If then we reckon a year for a day, according to the example given to us in Scripture, this will amount to one thousand two hundred and sixty years. The commencement of this period is generally considered to be the assumption of the title of Universal Bishop by Gregory the First—the father of popery—in 606. Hence the year 1866 will, according to this view, terminate at once the long reign of popish tyranny and the depression of the true Church of God.

ATTEMPTS OF PAPISTS TO WHITEWASH THE SYSTEM

Preparatory to the awful judgments which will about this period be poured out upon the papacy, God will fully reveal to the world the horrid wickedness of that apostate church. “I will cast abominable filth upon thee,” is the declaration of Him who cannot lie. “I will show the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame.”

For the last two hundred years, the most vigorous and repeated efforts have been made by popish writers to *whitewash* their system, and thus hide the ‘FILTH’ which God has cast upon it from the world. From a work of Bishop Hall, entitled Censure of Travel, it appears that even in his day the art of

sweetening the more offensive doctrines of the Church of Rome was extensively employed in conversation. “Popery spoken and written,” says the bishop, “is two things; nothing is more ordinary, in discourse, than to disclaim some of their received positions, and to blanch others, and to allege that it is the malice of an enemy that misreports them… Resolved to outface all evidence, they make fair weather of their foulest opinions, and inveigh against nothing so much as the spitefulness of our slanders. It is not possible that any wise stranger should be in love with the face of the church, if they might see her own likeness, and, therefore, they have cunningly masked one part of it, and painted another.” (In preface to Dr. Cunningham’s Stillingfleet, p. 31)

Since that period the same arts have been employed by papists in their writings. One of the most celebrated attempts of this kind was the Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church by Bossuet. This work was published in France in 1671, when great efforts were making to convert the Protestants of that kingdom. It accordingly contains the most insidious and fraudulent statements. All the offensive doctrines of Popery are misrepresented—many of its practices denied—its evils concealed—its wickedness glossed over. In fact, so glaring were the misrepresentations contained in it that the Pope actually refused to sanction its publication, though importuned to do so, for a period of five years. Nor was it until three years more of unceasing application that his successor, Pope Innocent XI., at last consented to recommend it, “as eminently fitted to promote the Catholic faith, on account of its doctrine, method, and prudence.”

These facts connected with a work pronounced by modern champions of the papacy “a full and faultless exposition of the doctrines of their Church,” as is well remarked by Dr. Cunningham, “afford a striking illustration of the fraud of the Church of Rome, in accommodating the representation of her doctrines to her interests at the time; and should convince all men of the hopelessness of getting an honest and correct account of the doctrine of papists from themselves, except, indeed, by the actual perusal of the standards to which they have sworn to adhere.”

Another work of a very similar nature published in England was Gother’s Papist misrepresented and represented, or a twofold character of Popery. This crafty work appeared in 1685, the very year in which a papist ascended the throne of these realms; a period the most favourable for attempting to proselyte the nation. Repeated attempts of a similar nature have ever since been making in England—all the controversial books, in fact, published by English papists for the last century and a half have this object and the same character: The Book of the Roman Catholic Church, The Faith of Catholics, The End of Controversy, etc., etc.—although none of these have ever been such favourites with romanists in this country as those of Bossuet and Gother, which have been repeatedly republished, and are now extensively circulated by THE CATHOLIC INSTITUTE at a very low price.

Such are the efforts made by her adherents to hide the nakedness of the GREAT WHORE, but all is of no avail! The word of God has gone forth: “I WILL CAST ABOMINABLE FILTH UPON THEE!” and nothing can prevent its accomplishment. He has done so in part; he will do so still further. The Most High will render the Man of Sin odious and execrable in the sight of the world as well as the church! All the wickedness of that hoary-headed sinner will be brought to light. All the fearful evils which Popery has inflicted upon mankind—all the good which it has obstructed and the guilt which it has

caused—the blasphemies and lies—the frauds and perjuries—the satanic craft and fiend-like policy—the fearful simony and haughty pride—the horrid licentiousness of its clergy—and lastly, the bloodthirsty spirit which it breathes, and the blood of the martyrs it has slain, ALL—ALL shall be revealed to the light of day—and then at length will that Man of Sin and Son of Perdition stand forth to the view of the world—loaded with the crimes of twice six hundred years!

And men will recognize in him the most determined and powerful and successful foe of God which this earth has ever produced—the most relentless and subtle and treacherous enemy of man that has ever appeared below—and lastly, the most perfect incarnation of human depravity which the records of the world contain.

CONCLUSION

Throughout this work we have purposely kept back the still grosser doctrines and practices of Jesuitism—because we wished to confine ourselves to *pure Popery.* We had intended at the close of this work to add an appendix on Jesuitism—but our space is exhausted. We can only say, then, that Jesuitism is to Popery what the flower is to the bud. All the evils of the latter system are expanded and aggravated to a frightful degree in the former. We have gone into the original works published during the first century of its existence, as well as more modern publications on the subject, and we can solemnly assure our readers—that Jesuitism consists in nothing less than the complete transformation of Christianity into a system of unbridled licentiousness and blasphemous impiety! In all the most celebrated works of the Fathers of 'The Society of Jesus'—the doctrines of the gospel are wholly accommodated to the corrupt passions of human nature—and heaven set open for the most abandoned characters to enter—without the slightest change of heart or life!

In the prophecy of the fourth seal to which we have often adverted—the rulers of the papal church are symbolized by the rider on the pale (livid-green) horse—his name that sat on him was Death. But it is afterwards added, 'and Hell followed with him'—referring, we have no question, to this infernal Society. Professor Stuart agrees with us in understanding the term 'hell' as meaning 'Satan and his coadjutors,' and no one who has studied Jesuitism can fail to admit that it was precisely that system of teaching which Satan and his associates would have chosen, had they been permitted to appear in the form of the ministers of Christianity—as the most effective of all plans for the utter subversion of the gospel, and the eternal destruction of mankind! In that horrid system the doctrines inculcated—as those of Christianity—allow the unlimited and constant indulgence of every vice and every crime—the grossest hypocrisy and impiety:—and formally release from the practice of every duty and every virtue![4] If Christianity be the perfect manifestation of God, then equally true is it that Jesuitism is the most perfect incarnation of Hell that has ever appeared! Even the Pope who suppressed the order declared that, 'if practised,' the doctrines of Jesuits 'would insensibly produce, in the lives of Christians, THE VERY EXTREME OF CORRUPTION!'[5]

And now we would briefly remark that it is the plain duty of every Christian to oppose that system of wickedness termed Popery. If we have a clear perception of the evils of Romanism, then the depth and fervour of our love to God, and our compassion for the souls of men, will be the measure of our hatred

to that system, which is the great enemy of all good! We would therefore earnestly exhort all Christians to cherish, and on all suitable occasions give utterance to, a deep hatred to this system. Oh that in the vivid perception of its tremendous evils, every section of the true Church would lay aside for awhile all minor differences and face the common foe! When a foreign enemy appears at the gates of a city, the internal dissensions which would weaken its strength are immediately hushed, and all classes agree to resist the invader. The situation of God's church is very similar in the present crisis. A mighty and experienced, a subtle and a treacherous enemy is approaching, and we are busy in contending with one another, and insensible of our danger.

Are there no common principles on which churchmen, dissenters, and all other good men can oppose this monstrous system of idolatry, superstition, and crime? To those who can "discern the signs of the times," it is plain that a mighty conflict is at hand between the powers of light and of darkness—truth and error—Christ and antichrist. The people of God are too weak—too few to be able to part with any of the 'soldiers of Christ' at this important crisis. All their united strength will be required for the fight. May the Lord give his people to lay aside for the present all minor differences, or at least to hold them *subordinate* to the 'one thing needful.' We would be the last to wish any man to compromise in the slightest degree his principles. All we ask is to lose sight of the smaller evils (so considered) for awhile in the greater and more urgent one, and unite one and all in withstanding the enemy of God and man!

Let us all be of one mind, then, in reference to this important subject. Let us all oppose Popery in every way in which error can be successfully opposed; not by force in any form or degree, but by instruction, by reasoning, by manifesting its evils, by employing all the weapons with which the armoury of God is furnished, and above all, by constant, earnest prayer.

Finally, we would earnestly press upon all who bear the name of Christ to avoid all alliance with papists as such. The language of Scripture is plain—"What communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?" etc. To associate with them as individuals may be attended with benefit to their souls—but for the people of God to associate themselves with papists as such, in obtaining civil rights, or in any other common object, we believe to be a sin against God.

But we must not forget that Popery exists in a somewhat milder form, in the shape of what is commonly termed Puseyism. Against this, therefore, our efforts and prayers should be equally directed. It is well known that a large number of our clergy in the establishment hold these doctrines, and the number we fear is still increasing. There is scarcely a doctrine or practice of Popery to which the notice of the reader has been directed in this work but what is embraced by what is called Tractarianism, whilst in some respects it is still more dangerous and criminal than Popery, since it appears in a Protestant church! The following article taken from a periodical is important as exhibiting the actual character of this Jesuitical system in the words of its original founders.

Footnotes

[1] We differ from all the expositors of prophecy in regarding the ten horns as denoting an indefinite sum rather than precisely so many. The term ten is common in Scripture to signify many, several, etc., as the reader will see by a concordance.

[2] The paradoxical assertion, '*neither shall he regard any god*,' must be understood, we suppose, of real religious veneration towards any deity, false or true. Though he *honours* gods 'with silver and gold,' etc., he has no real veneration for them, such for instance as the ancient idolaters had for their deities.

[3] A scarlet robe and cap are the insignia of the cardinals.

[4] These statements it would be easy to prove by quoting the works of all the leading doctors of the society belonging to the first two centuries, who are still cited as authorities.

[5] It is well known that a large proportion of English priests are Jesuits!

CONCLUSION. WHAT IS PUSEYISM?

THE QUESTION ANSWERED BY PUSEYITES.

It is to "say anathema to the principle of Protestantism" (1); to "depart more and more from the principles of the English Reformation" (2); to "sigh to think that we should be separate from Rome" (3); to "desire the restoration of unity with the Church of Rome" (4); to regard "Rome as our mother, through whom we were born to Christ" (5).

It is to denounce the Church of England as being "in bondage, as working in chains, and as teaching with the stammering lips of ambiguous formularies" (6); it is to eulogize the Church of Rome as giving "free scope to the feelings of awe, mystery, tenderness, reverence, and devotedness" (7), and as having "high gifts and strong claims on our admiration, love, and gratitude" (8).

It is to declare that "our articles are the offspring of an uncatholic age" (9), and that the communion service is "a judgment upon the church" (10); it is to teach that "the Romish ritual was a precious possession" (11), and that the mass-book is "a sacred and most precious monument of the Apostles" (12).

It is to assert that "Scripture is not the rule of faith" (13); that "the oral tradition of the church is a fuller exposition of God's revealed truth" (14); that the Bible, "placed without note or comment in the hands of uninstructed persons, is not calculated, in ordinary cases, to make them wise unto salvation" (15); and that only persons "disclaiming the right of private judgment in things pertaining to God" are members of the church of Christ (16).

It is to teach "that baptism, and not faith, is the primary instrument of justification" (17); that we are not to "neglect the doctrine of justification by works" (18); and that "the prevailing notion of bringing forward the doctrine of the atonement, explicitly and prominently on all occasions, is evidently quite opposed to the teaching of Scripture" (19).

It is to assert that, in the Lord's Supper, Christ is "present under the form of bread and wine" (20); that "he is then personally and bodily with us" (21); and that the clergy are "intrusted with the awful and mysterious gift of making the bread and wine Christ's body and blood" (22).

It is to maintain the lawfulness of prayers for the dead (23); to make "a distinction between venial and mortal sins" (24); and to assert that a person may believe that there is a purgatory; that relics may be venerated; that saints may be invoked; that there are seven sacraments; that the mass is an offering for the quick and dead, for the remission of sins; and that he may yet, with a good conscience, subscribe to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (25).

It is to put the visible church in the place of Christ by teaching that "she alone is that true hiding place into which the servants of God may flee for refuge, and be safe" (26); it is to put the sacraments in the place of God by declaring that they are "the sources of Divine grace"[1] (27).

Finally, we would say one word on ‘Catholic Emancipation.’ The notion is very common that the civil disabilities which still attach to Papists are *persecution* on account of their religion. Nothing, however, can be more erroneous. “Persecution, on account of religion, is to prevent men from worshipping God according to the light of their own consciences, or to punish them for so doing; *it being understood that such worship is harmless in the sight of men*; for if it were in any manner hurtful to their fellow creatures, the restraining of it would not be *persecution*, but a *lawful exercise of magisterial authority*.” “I venture to affirm, that no person is capable of judging of the merits of this question, until he has studied the character of Popery as exhibited in the writings, and in the practice of Papists.”

“It is not persecution to prevent aliens from sitting in Parliament, or in our courts of justice, because every state requires, for its own security, that those who legislate, or administer its laws, be in a condition to maintain undivided allegiance to the sovereign. This an alien cannot do, for he is under a previous obligation of allegiance to a foreign power, which may levy war against the state under which he enjoys protection. A Papist is precisely in this state. Let him declare allegiance to the crown of Great Britain and Ireland, in terms as strong as words can make them, they cannot set aside a previous allegiance which he owes to the Pope, in virtue of a grant which he believes Jesus Christ to have given to him through the medium of St. Peter. This is an allegiance to which every other must of necessity give place.

They say it is only spiritual allegiance, but it is impossible to render spiritual allegiance to a creature, without being liable to render temporal allegiance also, whenever the spiritual power shall require it. To suppose the contrary, would be to suppose that a man’s spiritual interests have no influence over his temporal ones, or that religion is not the rule of his conduct. When, therefore, a dispute should arise between the King of Britain and the Pope, a thing which has happened oftener than once, and may happen again, a Papist would be under a spiritual obligation to the Pope, from which nothing of a temporal nature could relieve him; and to exclude such a person from power in a Protestant state is not persecution, but a necessary measure of self-defence.”

“Besides, a genuine Papist is not a free agent. He is not at liberty to act according to his own convictions, farther than it may be agreeable to his priest and confessor. His confessor is lord of his conscience, to whom he is obliged, under pain of being held guilty of mortal sin, to reveal his most secret thoughts. Depending upon his ghostly father for the forgiveness of his sins, and what are called the consolations of his religion, without which he must live without comfort, and die without hope, he must of necessity conduct himself, in every respect, so as to stand upon good terms with his priest. If intrusted with power in a Protestant country, he must exert himself to promote the interest of the holy church; that is, the interest of the court and see of Rome. Every priest is under a solemn oath to do this, to the utmost of his power: and how could he do it better, than by using the influence which he might possess over the consciences of men in power, if any of his penitents were in that situation? I say, then, it is not persecution to exclude such persons from places of power and trust; because they have not power over their own actions; they have resigned themselves to the will of others; and are, therefore, not in a situation to legislate and administer justice. There are three parties; themselves, their priests, and the public at large: they are the slaves of the second, and cannot safely be entrusted with the

interests of the third. Those who legislate and administer the laws of men, ought to be independent of men, and free from all human influence. This a Papist cannot be: he wants an indispensable qualification for a public trust; and it is not persecution to exclude him from it, any more than it is persecution to exclude the deaf and dumb from Parliament." (Protestant, Vol. iii. p. 415)

Such are the sentiments of the above distinguished writer. The rage of the day—for every period has its particular rage—is 'Conciliation,' and hence, we suppose, some of our readers will denominate such opinions as these—bigotry. They are, however, the opinions which we have been compelled to embrace, since we began to study the subject, and which we think all Christians would adopt, were they thoroughly to investigate the mass of Fraud, Impiety, and Wickedness—termed Popery!

Unanswerable proofs that 'Faith is not to be kept with heretics' (i.e., Protestants) and a list of the bloody laws still in force against them, may be seen in the same work (Vol. iv. pp. 112–121). In reference to the liberal professions of modern Papists, the author very justly observes, "The Wolf might tell a flock of sheep, that he had laid aside his claws and teeth, but they would be silly sheep that would believe him!"

And now, in concluding, we have one request to make to the reader: that if he considers the above exhibition of the evils of Popery to be according to truth, he would unite his earnest prayers with ours, to the God of all grace—that this feeble attempt to advance His Glory, and confound the Man of Sin, may, through the Divine Blessing, accomplish the desired results.

Footnotes

1. Palmer's Letter to Golightly. 2. British Critic for July, 1841. 3. Tracts for the Times. 4. Palmer's Letter. 5. Tracts for the Times. 6. Id. 7. Newman's Letter to Jelf. 8. Tracts for the Times. 9. Id. 10. Id. 11. Tracts for the Times. 12. Id. 13. Id. 14. Id. 15. Id. 16. Id. 17. Newman on Justification. 18. Linwood's Sermons. 19. Tracts for the Times. 20. Linwood's Sermons. 21. Tracts for the Times. 22. Id. 23. Id. 24. Id. 25. Tracts for the Times, No. 90, Linwood's Sermon. 27. Tracts for the Times.

THE END

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