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Title: Sermons on the Scriptural Principles of our Protestant Church

Author: Edward Hoare

Release date: August 3, 2016 [EBook #52714]

Language: English

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SERMONS ON THE SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES OF OUR PROTESTANT CHURCH.

BY THE
REV. EDWARD HOARE, M.A.
CURATE OF RICHMOND, SURREY.

LONDON:
J. HATCHARD AND SON, PICCADILLY;
RICHMOND, DARNILL AND SON; KINGSTON, SEELEY.
1845.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

THE following Sermons are committed to the press at the request of many beloved parishioners. They were originally preached, as they are now published, under a deep sense of their imperfection, only equalled by the perfect conviction of their truth. The consciousness of defect

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has strongly prompted me to keep them back from public criticism; the assurance of truth has emboldened me to hope that those who took an interest in their delivery, may derive some profit from their study. May God, the Holy Ghost, be pleased to make them useful! May he accompany each copy with his blessing! and, forgiving all defects, may He honour this little volume as an instrument in his own hand for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ!

In stating the doctrines of the Church of Rome, the appeal has been made either to the decrees or the catechism of the Council of Trent. These are both authoritative documents, and form the standards of Roman Catholic theology. Yet, strange to say, some Protestants are heard to argue, that by appealing to Trent, we misrepresent the Church of Rome. The decrees, it is maintained, are antiquated documents, and no longer express the real opinions of the church. The true Romanist would not thank his advocate for such an argument. A change in their fixed principles would destroy their claim to infallibility. Eternal truth changes not; and whoever changes must be wrong either before the change or after it.

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But such a change has never taken place. The decrees stand unrepealed. Romish priests are required to swear to them at their ordination; Romish disputants appeal to them in controversy; the Pope himself quotes them in his letters; and they are to this day in full force as the standard documents of Romanist theology.

Others, again, are often heard to argue that, although these may be the principles of the Church, they are not the opinions of individuals in union with Rome. It is much to be hoped that this charitable supposition is true of multitudes; that there are very many, who from circumstances are connected with her communion, but who, from conviction, disclaim many of her errors. But how fearful is the position of such an enlightened Roman Catholic! A layman may be a member of the Church of England, but yet differ from many of our principles, for the only declaration of faith required as an essential to church membership is an assent to the Apostles' Creed. This, and nothing more, is expected of every man before he can be received into the congregation of Christ's flock. Those who are admitted to the ministry, must add their subscription to the Articles. But no subscription is required of the layman; he may therefore be a faithful churchman, but yet differ from some of the Church's doctrines. What is impossible for the honest clergyman, is quite possible for him. But such modification of sentiment is altogether impossible with Rome. A layman must be either an entire Romanist, or reject Rome altogether. There is no middle course. A man cannot say "I am attached to the Church of Rome, but I do not go all lengths with her opinions. I believe it to be the true church, but I disapprove of her worship of the Virgin." For Rome has fenced in her opinions with her curses. Rome is a cursing church, and the curses attached to her decrees render modification impossible in her laity. Take, e.g., the decrees respecting saint and image worship, in the beginning of the 25th session. In those decrees, it is declared that images ought to be retained in churches, and that honour and veneration should be paid to them: and then is added the curse, "If any man either teach or think contrary to these decrees, let him be accursed." Now it is very plain, that at first sight the word of God appears in opposition to these decrees, for, if not, the second commandment would never have been expunged from Romish catechisms. But if any conscientious Roman Catholic happen to read the 20th chapter of the book of Exodus; if the thought flash across his mind that the word of God may possibly mean what it certainly appears to say; if he venture to think that God meant to forbid image worship when he said, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." For that one passing thought his own church curses him. She does not wait till the thought has found utterance in language; he may never breathe his difficulties to his dearest friend; it is enough if he ever dare to feel a difficulty; for that one secret doubt the church lays upon him the burden of her anathema. Modified popery is therefore an impossibility. If men believe the Church of Rome to be the true church, they must receive her whole system; they cannot pick and choose for themselves; they cannot retain communion, and yet differ from any of her doctrines. They must reject her altogether, or deliver themselves over, bound hand and foot, mind and conscience, judgment and will, to her decisions. Such are the terms of union which Rome imposes on her people. They leave no middle course between abject submission and fearless rejection; between unconditional surrender to her decrees, and unflinching defiance of her anathemas.

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Let us Protestants turn those curses into prayers! Let us plead with God to have compassion on our poor Roman Catholic brethren; to burst the bands which are now rivetted on their conscience and their judgment; and to lead them by his Spirit to the full enjoyment of the truth as it is in Jesus!

Richmond, May 1845.

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SERMON I. THE SCRIPTURES.

p. 1

2 TIM. iii. 15.

And that from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

“To everything there is a season.” There is “a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;” a time to be still, and a time to act; and it is the duty of the careful watchman of the Lord, to be ever on the alert in watching the rapid progress of God’s providence; to be silent when it is the time for stillness; to speak, and speak plainly, when he deems it to be the time for utterance. It is a conviction of this, which has led to the commencement of the present course of sermons. There has never been a period since the days of the Reformation, in which greater efforts have been made for the advancement of the influence, and power, of the Church of Rome; agents have been multiplied in every direction; the order of Jesuits has been revived; and a zeal has been shown in all branches of their efforts, which would reflect honour on a better cause. But there are two facts in our present position, which deserve our especial notice,—the one, that our own happy island is the great object of their exertions. Yes, England, our own dear England, is the prize at which Rome is aiming. The other, that at the very point of this remarkable crisis in the history of our nation, it is proposed in the parliament of this protestant country, to give a large and permanent endowment to the Roman Catholic college at Maynooth; that is, to strengthen and increase the priests of a system, which is declared by our constitution to be unscriptural and untrue.

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Surely, then, the time is come to speak. Surely the watchman is bound to sound the note of warning. Surely the whole company of God’s believing people should know well the reason of the hope that is in them, that they may be able to take their place with boldness in the armies of the Lord; and, in the last great fearful struggle against Antichrist, be found standing stedfast, amongst the fearless, faithful, followers of the Lamb.

It is my intention, therefore, to preach a short course of sermons on some of the leading principles of our protestant church. It will be my endeavour rather to set forth the truth than to occupy your time in exposing error. God’s people come here to be fed with the bread of life, and they must not be robbed of their daily food by the introduction of cold and cheerless controversy. Our constant desire and prayer to God for you all is, not that you should be subtle controversialists, but well instructed and practical believers in your Lord. This great end I now hope to keep steadily in view.

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Pray for me, dear brethren, that my intention may be carried into effect. Pray that the spirit of the living God may himself direct me in this effort for his glory! Pray for us, as we pray for you, “that speaking the truth in love, we may grow up unto him in all things.”

Now the controversy between the church of England, and that of Rome, hinges mainly upon one great turning point, namely this, they deny the Bible to be the only rule of faith, and appeal to other writings as a sufficient authority in their statements of sacred truth. To the Bible, then, as the rule of faith, we must direct our first attention, and will endeavour to point out,

- I. Its supreme authority.
- II. Its complete sufficiency.
- III. Its clear intelligibility.

I. First, then, for its supreme authority. There is no occasion now to enter into proofs of its inspiration. That all scripture is given by inspiration of God, we may regard as an admitted truth: we are not dealing with the infidel, but with those who profess to believe the Scriptures: we are to receive it “not as the word which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth:” to listen to it, “as it is in truth, the word of God.” All that we are concerned with now is the supreme authority, which, being inspired, it possesses over man. Our object is to point out, that as the word of God, it has absolute authority in all its statements of divine truth, and that just as the written law is the one rule for the nation’s government, so the written word is the one rule of

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the Church's faith. Who can reveal the truth of God but God himself? "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." And when God speaks, who shall dare to give an opposing judgment? "Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord!" Let us strive then to realize this fact, that the Bible comes direct from "God, who cannot lie;" that it is his own statement of his own divine purposes; that He has, as it were, put his seal and signature to it, to mark it as his own; that he has brought it forth amongst us with the solemn preface, "Thus saith the Lord;" and there can then be no doubt left as to its certain, its invariable, its unfailing, its authoritative truth. There it stands, unshaken in its supremacy: like the Sun in heaven, beyond the reach of man's attack: like the great mountains, immoveable by man's effort. "Thy word is truth," saith the Saviour, certain, unfailing, unerring truth; and though multitudes may deny, though thousands may resist, though the whole body of unconverted men may hate its message, it is still truth; the pure, unmixed, unadulterated truth of God. Nor can any amount of human evidence rival its authority. Multiplication does not make inspiration. Ten thousand butterflies do not make an eagle; nor can the human intellect, however multiplied, be measured for a moment with the mind of God. Thus, if it were to fall out, (which thanks be to his grace it never can), that all living men, of all ages and all ranks, were to agree in the denial of any one doctrine of the gospel; if all the great, all the learned, all philosophers, and all divines; all that now live, or ever have lived, were to concur in one united opinion, and that opinion were in opposition to the Bible; then all must be wrong, and the Bible must be right; for they are men, and the Holy Ghost is God; and "Let God be true, and every man a liar."

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Now, we fully admit that the Church of Rome does not openly deny the supreme authority of Scripture, but it virtually sets it aside by two principles: the one, that it is not complete; the other, that it cannot be understood without the interpretation of the Church. We must examine, therefore,

II. Its complete sufficiency.

The idea taught by the Church of Rome is, that there are two channels of divine truth, two streams conveying the same water, the written, and the unwritten word, the written found in the Bible, the unwritten, in the traditions and decrees of the Church. ^[5] Thus by attempting to blend the two, they throw the Bible virtually into the shade; and like the Jews of old, "make void the commandment of God by their traditions." The opposing principle of the Church of England, is, that the written word is itself sufficient; that it contains an ample and complete statement of the whole truth of God.

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"Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to Salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an Article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church." ^[6]

1. And is not this evident from the *direct statements* of the word of God itself?

Look only at the passage from which our text is taken, v. 15. The Holy Scriptures "are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." They are sufficient, then, for the heavenly wisdom of the people of God; nothing more is needed; they contain God's truth, and make men wise in his wisdom. But this is not all: follow on the passage: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." And what is the result? "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Who shall presume to say, then, that the written word is not sufficient? There is enough in it to form a perfect character, to leave nothing wanting in the furniture of the religious mind. When it says, "They are able to make thee wise unto salvation," it teaches that they reveal all that can be needful to make Christ's coming kingdom ours: when it adds, "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works;" it proves that they also supply us with the sum total of all that can be needed in our pilgrimage through life.

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2. But, even, if we had no such direct statement, we have ample proof of the completeness of the Bible in the simple fact, that there is *nothing else inspired*. If there be a void left, it must remain unfilled for ever. If there be a chasm, the whole world can never close it. For if there were deficiencies in the Bible, to whom should we go to supply the defect? To the Fathers? They were holy, devoted, fervent men, and multitudes amongst their number counted not their life dear unto them, if only they might fulfil the ministry, which they received of the Lord. But they were men after all, fallible, and often failing men; they never pretended to inspiration; they knew far too much both of themselves and God to presume to say of their own writings, "Thus saith the Lord." They never claimed either inspiration or infallibility. To whom then shall we go? To councils? But they were human too, they were assemblies of fallible men, so fallible, that in one instance the whole church was actually induced to decide against the divinity of our blessed Lord. This was the case, when the whole body of the Church, bishops, priests, deacons, and laymen, were all arrayed against Athanasius, and Athanasius alone stood forth as the champion for truth. Athanasius was against the world and the world against Athanasius. To whom then shall we go? To the Pope? But he too is a man, and as too many sad facts in the history of popedom prove, a fallible and often failing man. To whom then shall we go? Shall we seek for some united testimony of fathers, councils, and popes? It would be a hopeless task, it would be to attempt an impossibility, for they are perpetually differing, and when we had gained it, we should after all have only the testimony of man. To whom then shall we go? Peter must give the answer, "Thou

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hast the words of eternal life." We will not now stop to discuss the question whether it be possible for men to fill up the deficiencies of the word of God. He that cannot add a single inch to his own stature, he surely can add nothing to the volume of inspired truth. He that cannot add one single leaf to the flower, nor give one additional wing to the insect, he surely can contribute nothing to the most perfect of all the works of God, the revelation of his own hidden will. It was prophesied originally of the Roman Empire, that it should be part of iron, part of clay; a fit image of that false system, which would blend together in one whole, the word of God, and the word of man. As well might you expect to strengthen iron by the mixture of a little fragile clay: as well might you hold up the candle in the vain endeavour to add to the brightness of the noon-day sun: as well might you strive to perfect the beauty of the clear fountain of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb, by adding to it waters that have been stained and thickened in their passage along an earthly world, as hope to add anything to the word of God, by mixing up with it the word of man.

The fact, then, that there is nothing else inspired, is in itself a proof that the Bible is complete. Either the Bible is sufficient, or we are left without a sufficient guide. We may, therefore, rest satisfied as to the complete sufficiency, as well as the supreme authority of the word of God. But there yet remains another subject of scarcely less importance, which we cannot leave unnoticed. Namely,

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III. Its clear intelligibility.

It is not enough, that the Scriptures are sufficient and complete. For practical purposes they must be within the reach of common men.

Now the Church of Rome takes the Bible out of the hands of private Christians. They acknowledge the authority of Scripture, but add that the church alone has the power to interpret it: they say there are many difficulties, and that it requires the church's interpretation to unravel the path of life. ^[9] This principle places the people in absolute dependence on those who call themselves the church. It draws their attention to the church rather than to God. It teaches them to rely on man's comment, and to lose sight of God's decree. When looking through a painted window, your eye is fixed on the glass, and loses sight of the sun behind, which lightens it; so when we look at truth through the medium of human interpretation, the sight is caught by the human colouring, and the light of God's eternal truth is thrown into obscurity with the neglected word. Now true Protestants gain their light, not through the coloured glass, but from heaven itself, that is, they look to the word of God, and not to man's interpretation as the decision of christian truth.

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At the same time we must not deny that there are difficulties in the Scriptures. Its subject is infinity, its range eternity, its author God; and it would be folly to suppose that poor, frail, shortsighted, and shortlived man, should be able at a glance to measure the unfathomable depths of God's unexplored wisdom.

Nor are we to underrate the high importance of the sacred ministry. It was the gift of our blessed Lord after his ascension. ^[10a] It is carried on under the appointment and arrangement of the Holy Ghost. ^[10b] When Israel was without "a teaching priest," they were "without the true God," and "without the law." ^[10c] When men labour for Christ, "rightly dividing the word of truth," they are the great instruments in the hand of God for the ingathering of his elect, and the preservation of his children for eternal glory. We admit then freely and fully, 1st, the existence of difficulties in Scripture, and 2ndly, the importance and extreme value of a living and expounding ministry. At the same time, we are no less prepared to assert with the utmost earnestness, that the people of God are bound by, or dependent on, no interpretation of any man whatever. God has spoken in his word, and God has spoken plainly. Let us examine two or three of the many proofs.

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1. See the *use made of Scripture in the time of inspiration*. Look at the well known case of the Bereans, Acts xvii. 11: they brought Paul himself to the test of Scripture; a set of laymen went daily to their Bibles to see if the man of God himself were true, and for this, which would be mortal sin in the Church of Rome, they were actually commended by the Holy Ghost, for a "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so." The Berean laymen, therefore, were right, when they studied their Bible as the rule of faith. Take again the case of Timothy. Timothy, we know, was a remarkable man. St. Paul loved him as his own child, and always spoke of him as his son. He was to Paul what John was to Christ. The grace in his heart was of early growth; he was one of those chosen few, who were believers from their youth. But mark his early history. He lived at Lystra, a heathen city: his father was a heathen, yet Timothy knew his Bible well: he had learned it of his mother, as she too from hers. Here then we have a little band of Bible students in the midst of a heathen city: it consisted of two women and one little boy. And yet we are to be told that the bible does not speak plainly to common people, that it cannot be understood until the church interpret. Who interpreted to Timothy? Who to Eunice? Who to Lois?

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2. Or refer to the *purpose for which the book was written*. The Lord said to Habakkuk, ^[12a] "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it." It was his intention, therefore, that the prophecy should be understood. Of the whole Old Testament, St. Paul says, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we" (i.e. believers generally) "might have hope." Rom. xv. 4. They were intended therefore for the learning and comfort of the church. St. John's gospel was written "that ye might believe that

Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." John xx. 31. And his epistle was addressed to those that believe on the Son of God; "that ye might know that ye have eternal life, and that ye might believe on the name of the Son of God," John v. 13. What can be plainer than that God designed the Bible for the church at large, for the comfort and instruction of the whole body of his believing people?

And now add to this the declared purpose for which the Holy Ghost dwells amongst men. He is "the Spirit of truth," ^[12b] "to guide us into all truth," "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ." ^[12c] And of Him St. John writes: "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

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^[13a] Can any one read such passages and doubt for a moment that it is the purpose of the Holy Ghost to teach God's people by throwing light upon the pages of his inspired word? and would not that man set himself up above the God of heaven, who would dare to pronounce it inexpedient to give the Bible to every living soul within the church?

And now observe the following pastoral letter from the Romish bishops and archbishops in Ireland. Having received a letter from Pope Leo the 12th, dated May 1824, addressed to all Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, and Bishops, and they conveyed the substance of it to the Irish priests in the following words. "Our holy Father recommends to the observance of the faithful, a rule of the congregation of the Index, which prohibits the perusal of the Sacred scriptures in the vulgar tongue, without the sanction of the competent authorities. His holiness wisely remarks that more evil than good is found to result from the indiscriminate perusal of them on account of the malice or infirmity of men. ^[13b] In this sentiment of our head and chief we fully concur." So they do not hesitate boldly to declare, that the very words which the Holy Ghost inspired for our learning are productive of more harm than good. It is true that they ascribe the failure to the malice or infirmity of men: but did not God know what men were when he gave the Scriptures? Did he suppose men better than they are? or has the Pope a greater insight into human nature than God himself? The use of such language implies either that God was ignorant of man's nature, or knowing it, was unsuccessful in addressing it; in other words it amounts to the bold blasphemy of ascribing either ignorance or impotence to God.

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3. But again, look at the *practical experience* of daily life. We appeal to every Bible reading Christian, does not the word of God speak plainly? I know there are some to whom it may appear a sealed book, but God always opens it as they advance in their study. There are many flowers, which in the early morn, seem to possess little interest or beauty, for their bloom is closed; but when the sun gets up, and they feel its genial heat, the leaf expands, and the blossom opens, sweet in its fragrance, and lovely in its colouring and form. So it is with the Scriptures. The unopened Bible may seem dull and powerless to the beginner, but let the Holy Ghost beam his light upon its sacred pages, and it becomes more beautiful than the lily, more fragrant than the rose of Sharon. Did ever hungry soul go to the word, and not find in it the clear description of the bread of life? Is there any confusion in its language, when it addresses the broken-hearted penitent, and assures him, saying, "The blood of Jesus Christ the son cleanseth us from all sin?" Is there any indistinctness in that gentle whisper with which God, as a tender husband, soothes the sorrowing widow, and leading her into a solitary place, there speaks to her heart, saying, "Comfort, comfort ye my people?" Is there any want of lucid clearness in the lovely portraiture of our blessed Lord? Is it possible to mistake his holy character? Is there any lack of shrill distinctness in the sound of the warning trumpet, in the prophecies of coming judgment, in the curse passed on sin, in the promises of glory? Nay, beloved! man may tell us that the traveller cannot see to track his path, when the summer sun shines in its strength: man may tell us that there is no refreshment in the cool stream that gurgles up clear as crystal from beneath the shady rock: and we would believe them, even then, sooner than we would believe the Church of Rome, when she tells us, that the way of life is not pointed out plainly, in the word which God has written, to guide and cheer his people heavenwards.

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We have found, then, that the Bible is of supreme authority, complete sufficiency, and clear intelligibility. And now, dear brethren, what a deep sympathy should we feel for the laity of the Church of Rome! One fact may illustrate their position. When two members of the deputation of the Church of Scotland to the Jews arrived at Brody, on the borders of Austrian Poland, every book was taken from them, even their Hebrew and English Bibles. Being sealed up they were sent on to Cracow, and delivered to them when they quitted the Austrian dominions. On pleading for their English Bible, the only answer was, "It is not allowed in Austria." Thus are the bulk of the people kept at a distance from that clear and lucid stream. The church, like the painted window, stands between them and the pure light of heaven. Who can wonder, then, that there are errors and superstitions? Who can be surprised to see them bend before the Virgin, when they are thus kept back from Christ? We should not despise them, but pity them: we should weep for them, as our lord wept over Jerusalem: we should pray for them, as he prayed upon the cross, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." None can doubt that multitudes are truly desiring to walk with God; truly in earnest in their rounds of prayers and penance. You may oftentimes see them on the Continent sobbing and pleading in unremitting and earnest prayer, but alas! it is too often before the Virgin's picture. They know no better, they are kept from the word of life, and in many cases they sink to their grave, ignorant of the very existence of the Bible.

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And there is a lesson here for ourselves too, dear brethren. We must remember that it is not enough to belong to a church which puts the Bible into our hands, or to listen to a ministry which

appeals to it as the rule of faith. We must make it our own; we must take it to ourselves as our birth-right. It is not enough that we possess the printed book, it must be also written on the understanding by careful, diligent, persevering study; and on the heart by the pen of the Holy Ghost himself. He is but a poor Protestant that neglects his Bible. Nay, more, he is but a poor Christian, for he that knows little of his Bible can scarcely fail to know still less of God. Let us, then, be stedfast Bible Christians, devoted Bible students. Let us determine that, God giving us grace, we will know Christ as our God reveals him, know him as our own Redeemer, as our own Advocate, as our own Lord and King, and let us never rest content till we can say with the prophet "Thy word was found and I did eat it: and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart."

SERMON II. JUSTIFICATION.

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ACTS xiii. 39.

And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

If my object in the present course of sermons had been simply to produce a popular impression against the church of Rome, I doubt whether I should have selected the doctrine of justification as the subject for our thought this evening. The error, though quite as deadly, is not so glaring as in other portions of their system. But, as I said on Sunday last, my great design is to confirm you in the saving truths of Christ's gospel, "that speaking the truth in love, we may grow up unto him in all things." To this end there is no subject more important than the present; it touches our very life; it concerns our present peace and eternal joy; it involves the question, whether the door is closed or opened, by which the sinner can find access to God. Let us endeavour then to approach it with the seriousness due to so great a matter, and let us all lift up our hearts to the Father of lights, the giver of every good and perfect gift, that the Holy Ghost may be shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord!

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The point at issue between the Church of Rome and Church of England does not relate to the justification of the heathen man, when he first approaches Christ in baptism. This they term the first justification, and acknowledge with us that it is through faith. It is with reference to what is usually called the second justification that the great difference exists between us. This is the justification of baptized Christians, of persons like ourselves, who have sinned after baptism; and the question is, What is the instrument by which justification is applied to us?

The doctrine of our Protestant church is clearly laid down in the 11th Article, "We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our works, or deservings: Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification."

The doctrine of the church of Rome is that there is righteousness infused into the mind, as warmth into the heated iron, and that we are justified by the merit of this infused or inherent righteousness; or, in other words, that our own good thoughts, good works, alms, prayers, fastings, &c. so satisfy God's law, that in consequence of them we may claim eternal life as our own well deserved reward. The council of Trent has decreed as follows:—"If any man shall say, that men are justified either by the sole imputation of the righteousness of Christ, or the sole remission of our sins, and not by grace and charity, which is diffused in their hearts by the Holy Spirit, and is inherent in them, let him be accursed." ^[19]

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In other words the Church of England teaches that we are accepted before God through the righteousness of our blessed Lord, imputed freely to all that believe; the Church of Rome, that we are accepted before God through the righteousness wrought in us, and the merit of our own acts and doings. The Church of England that we are justified by faith; the Church of Rome that we are justified by works.

To those who know their Bibles, there can be little difficulty in the decision of this important question. That we are justified by faith stands forth as plainly as the summer sun in heaven.

Acts xiii. 39. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Romans iii. 24. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

26. "To declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness: that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

28. "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

iv. 2, 3. "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness."

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Gal. ii. 16. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

Here we might well leave the subject, but as this was the great battle-field of the Reformation, it may be well to examine rather more carefully into the question. In doing this we will endeavour to show—

- I. That all justifying righteousness must be perfect.
- II. That inherent righteousness can never justify even the regenerate.
- III. That the imputed righteousness of Christ is of itself perfect and sufficient.

I. All justifying righteousness must be perfect; for justification is a legal act, and justifying righteousness is that which satisfies the law. The law, or will of God, lays down a certain rule of life and conduct, as the law of a country lays down certain regulations for the citizen. As the sovereign for his subjects, so God appoints his law for man. Now if the law be satisfied by man, then man is justified by the law. The law lays nothing to his charge; he is really free, and he is accounted free; he is fully and completely justified by his perfect fulfilment of the will of God. Such a character would stand before God in the same position as we do before the earthly judge. We are justified by our country's laws; we enjoy our liberty, and walk through the length and breadth of our happy land, free as the winds of heaven, in our own right, and, as far as human law is concerned, our own righteousness. We have not broken our country's laws, so we can stand up boldly before our country's judge. Now, with reference to our country, or to the law of man, this innocence is a justifying righteousness. It secures to us a perfect freedom, it strips the law of all claim either on liberty or life. If there were a similar obedience to the law of God, that obedience would be a justifying righteousness before God. If the law were satisfied, the creature would be justified; the satisfied law would itself declare him free. The law would be disarmed of all power of threat, curse, or punishment; the righteous man would stand boldly before the judgment, and say, "I have fulfilled the law, and I now demand the crown."

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Now there is one thing self-evident respecting this justifying righteousness; namely this, It must be perfect, or it all falls to the ground. If one stone be removed from the self-supporting arch, the whole fabric falls into ruin. One leak is enough to sink the noblest ship in England's navy. So by the laws of our country, if there be one breach of one law, our liberty is lost, our right is gone, our justifying righteousness is no more. If there be one single act of transgression, one single violation of one single statute, the law is broken, and the offender is subject to its punishment. How many a poor culprit has lost his life for one solitary act! As with the law of England, so it is with the law of God. The righteousness that can justify must be a perfect righteousness. If there be one act of disobedience, the offender becomes a sinner, and must plead for mercy, if he would hope to shun the curse. His right and righteousness are gone together; he must cease for ever to urge any claim on glory. St. James states this plainly, ^[23a] "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law:" and St. Paul confirms it, when he quotes the words, ^[23b] "Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* things that are written in the book of the law to do them." He does not say *some* things, or *most* things, or a *great many* things, but *all* things.

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And this may point out the distinction between the righteousness which can justify, and the righteousness which may please. That which can justify must be perfect, for it must leave the law unbroken before the judge; that which can please may be defective, for it may be little more than the first risings of a filial love, than the first efforts to do the will of a loving Father. The prodigal pleased his father, when he first turned his thoughts towards his long forsaken home, but none would argue that he was then justified by his obedience. Mary pleased her Saviour, when she sat at his feet, and drank in his sacred teaching, but that one act could not justify her soul before the judgment-seat of God. David did well that it was in his heart to build the temple, but he could not appeal to that one secret, unfulfilled intention, as a justifying righteousness, which could clear his soul, or fulfil the law. To sing the song of thankful praise pleaseth the Lord "better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs," but though we sang that song throughout eternity, it would prove nothing before the judgment-seat, it could never constitute such a righteousness that the judge could say "Well done, you have fulfilled the law." ^[24]

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If we bear in mind this distinction, we shall easily establish our second point, namely,

- II. That inherent righteousness can never justify even the regenerate: and for this one simple reason, that the righteousness of the very best is altogether imperfect before God.

We all know what a vast change is wrought in a man when he is born again of the Holy Ghost, a change sometimes compared to a resurrection, sometimes to a new creation, and always ascribed to the arm of God's omnipotent sovereignty. In this change the heart of stone is taken away, and the heart of flesh is granted; the eagle is transformed into the dove; the lion becomes the lamb; the wild bramble is changed into the fruitful vine; the barren waste rejoices and blossoms like the rose. Let us none lower the character of this vast and most lovely change. It is more beautiful than that of the chrysalis to the butterfly; more wonderful than that of the buried corpse to the living man; more gladdening, than when the vast world sprang out of nothing at the command of God. There are only two occasions mentioned in the Bible, in which the company before the throne are described as finding increase to their already perfect joy; the one was the creation,

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when “all the sons of God shouted for joy:”^[25a]—the other, the gathering in of the new born penitent, for “there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.” ^[25b]

But yet the righteousness thus implanted cannot justify, for just look at

(1) *The works produced.*

There is a constant activity to be seen amongst the people of God; they delight to do his will; they labour, and labour diligently, to relieve distress, to comfort sorrow, to spread the glad tidings of the kingdom of our Lord. Such works are the fruits of the Spirit, and they are gladdening both to God and man. To witness them in the flock is the highest joy of the Christian minister, and never do we know such true pleasure, as when we see you, dear brethren, thus striving to labour stedfastly for Christ. Ay! and they are the joy of one higher far than we. They are the fruits of the Spirit, the delight of Christ himself, the sacrifice well pleasing, acceptable unto God. St. Paul desires such results as these, when he prays, ^[25c] “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.” And Christ himself has put his seal and stamp upon them, saying, ^[26a] “Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.” But how vain it is to suppose that they can justify! they may please the Father, but they cannot satisfy the law. They may seem fair before men, but who is bold enough to pronounce them perfect before God? For remember that motives must be considered as well as acts. See how St. Paul argues this, 1st Cor. xiii. 3, “And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.” What could be a nobler thing than martyrdom? What liberality equal to the consecration of all his goods to feed the poor? Yet if there be one secret, hidden defect of motive perceived by God alone, the Apostle becomes nothing, “it profiteth me nothing.” ^[26b] “Cut off then those things wherein we have regarded our own glory, those things which men do to please men, and to satisfy our own likings, those things we do for any by respect, not sincerely and purely for the love of God, and a small score will serve for the number of our righteous deeds.” It is with them as with the drop of water. To the naked eye it seems clear and sparkling, but when you see it under the searching light of the solar microscope, you find it full of all uncleanness. So it is with the best of human actions. To the naked eye they may appear pure and even brilliant, but let the light of divine truth beam on their inward character and motive, and there is so much defect, so much defilement, that we are filled with wonder, not because they fail to justify, but because God is so gracious as to condescend to say they please. Yea, verily! if the whole church of Christ were to select from all its multitudes the very holiest of all living men, and if that holiest of men were to select the holiest action that he ever wrought in the holiest period of his most holy life, that one act when referred to the heart searching, motive judging, law of God, would be found so tainted with defiling sin, that if his justification were to depend on its righteousness alone, he must abandon for ever all hope of life with God. “There is none that doeth good, no not one.” ^[27]

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(2) We have here referred to outward actions, let us now trace the stream up to its source, and look at the inward state of heart, or as it is sometimes called “habitual righteousness.” Can this justify? We all know what an inward change is wrought by the Holy Ghost in those who are truly born of God. Their whole heart and mind and will are changed. They love that they once despised, they long for that which they once scorned, they walk with Jesus, whereas before they were the slaves of sin. To recur to the simile employed before, as heat is diffused through iron, so a new love, a new righteousness is spread through the soul. But yet it cannot justify, for it is not perfect. It is sufficient to please, but it is defective still. There may be great heat spread through the iron, while still the metal retains its substance. The ice may be melted, and the water retain the winter’s chill. Just so it is with the righteousness planted in us by the Holy Ghost. There is a new warmth, but the nature retains too much of its iron hardness: there is a melting of the soul, but the winter’s chill is still found in the melted spirit. This is the meaning of our article when it says “The infection of nature doth remain yea in them that are regenerate,” and this remaining corruption destroys at once all hope of justification through the righteousness of the heart. Take one or two examples from the Scriptures. There can be no doubt of the inward righteousness of David. He was “the sweet psalmist of Israel,” “the man after God’s own heart.” If the Holy Ghost ever gave the new life to any man it was to David. But was David’s inward righteousness such that he was justified? Listen to his own prayer, Ps. cxliii. 2, “Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.” There can be no doubt of the change of heart in Peter. The ardour of his noble mind was nobly consecrated to Christ. But was Peter justified by his inward righteousness? See how it failed. One wave of strong temptation broke down his faith, and for the time chilled his love: so that on one evening even Peter was thrice guilty of the denial of his Lord. Could Peter then be justified by his inward love? There can be no doubt of the inward righteousness of Paul. He was God’s chosen vessel to bear his name among the Gentiles. His whole life bore witness to the constraining power of the love of Jesus. But was he justified by that inward love? Listen to his own affecting language, Rom. vii. 22–24, “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

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Or refer the matter to your own personal experience. It is a case that requires no farfetched arguments. There are multitudes amongst you, I am well persuaded, in whom the Holy Ghost has wrought this sanctifying change. It is your joy, your delight, your chief desire to walk with God. And now we would appeal to you. Are you walking with God so perfectly that by that

righteousness you can be justified? Has there been no neglect, no languor, no forgetfulness, no sloth in his service? Has the whole life been like the vigorous, active, cheerful, service of the angels around the throne? Or, to go farther: is there any one hour that you have passed from the moment of your new birth till now, upon the perfect holiness of which you would dare to stake your salvation throughout eternity? Select the time of greatest spiritual enjoyment, the happy season when your soul glowed most fervently with the love of Jesus; when Heaven seemed the nearest, and God rose before you as the loveliest of the lovely; and decide whether you can truly say "For that time at least I did fully, completely, and without defect, rise to the measure of the perfect will of God." How then can Rome declare that we are justified by the righteousness within us? How can she presume to curse those who differ from her sentence? How can she say "If any man say, that we are justified by the sole imputation of Christ's righteousness, or by the sole remission of our sins, and not by an inherent grace diffused in our hearts by the Holy Ghost; let him be anathema?" Who is there either in Rome or England that can have any hope, but in free, simple, unfettered mercy—that can have any plea before the throne of God but that of the poor publican, who said "Lord be merciful to me a sinner?" ^[30]

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And this leads us, thirdly, to remark

III. That the imputed righteousness of Christ is of itself perfect and sufficient. This is plainly the truth denied in the decree above quoted. Justification is there ascribed in part to the imputation of Christ's righteousness, but this alone is said to be insufficient. The article of our church and this decree have evident reference to each other. The article says "We are accounted righteous before God *only* for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The Council of Trent "If any man shall say that men are justified by the *sole* imputation of Christ's righteousness, let him be accursed." The turning point, therefore, of the whole question is the *complete* sufficiency of the work of Christ.

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1. Consider, then, his atonement. ^[31] "He died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." He was our substitute, he took our place, he endured the curse of our guilt, "he bare our sins in his own body on the tree." Was the price sufficient, or was it not? Was the substitute accepted, or was it not? Was the law satisfied, or was it not? If it was, the atonement was complete, the believer free, and no further justification through righteousness can be required. If not, of this one thing I am persuaded, that nothing we can do can supply the deficiency of the work of Jesus. No tears, no toils, no fastings, penances, or alms deeds can supply that which is lacking in the price paid for the sinner. If we were to weep till the ocean overflowed with the swelling tide of penitential tears, it would avail less than one single drop of the most precious blood of God's well beloved Son. If we were to lacerate the body with fastings and self-inflicted sufferings, till the very life sunk under the penance, it would procure no gift that is not already purchased, it could satisfy no law that is not already satisfied by the life of Jesus.

2. Consider also the imputed righteousness of Christ. He made himself one of us, and became our substitute on the cross. As our representative, He bore our sins in his own body, and as our representative He is now at the right hand of God. God punished our sins in Him upon the cross. God accepts us in Him as his ransomed people. Our sins were placed to his account, and his righteousness to ours. This explains 2 Cor. v. 21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." He was not made really sinful, but sin was imputed to him; he was reckoned as a sinner; he bore the sinner's curse. But we are made the righteousness of God in the same sense in which he was made sin; that is, righteousness is imputed to us, we are reckoned righteous, we are made heirs of the Redeemer's glory. Now this righteousness is indeed a justifying righteousness: it is the righteousness of Christ, the righteousness of God, perfect in every thought, perfect from eternity. For ever, and for ever, has he been one with God, and never for one single moment, has one single tainted thought dared to intrude on the heavenly holiness of his most holy soul. Now if this righteousness be imputed to us, what can ours add to it? If we be justified by Christ's merit, how is it possible that we should be any longer justified by our own? Can ours add to his? Can it supply any defects in his? Can we make up a patchwork righteousness, partly his, and partly ours? The very holiest act of the very holiest of men would be like a spot upon the sun, a stain and blemish to the perfect brilliancy of the holiness of Jesus.

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Now that is the justifying righteousness of the believer. In Christ we stand, in Christ we are accepted, in Christ the law is satisfied, in Christ we are free from the curse, in Christ we have peace with God—so in Christ, and in Christ alone, must the true believer look for life.

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Away, then, with all false thoughts of human merit; away with the deadly heresy that man by inherent excellence can recommend himself to God; away with the self-exalting notion that any man, at any time, can stand in any other attitude than that of a convicted sinner, freely pardoned through the blood of the Lamb. We will strive to please him, we will press on along the path of life, we will spare nothing that we may walk with God. We will long for the day when Christ's image shall be formed in perfection within the soul. But, meanwhile, we will rest on his atonement, on his righteousness alone: and though worldly men may count it folly, though self-righteous men may deem it frenzy, though Rome may hurl against us the thunder of her anathemas, we will believe, and believe to our everlasting peace and joy, that "God hath made him to be sin for us"; and that by that one act, without the smallest human merit, "We are made the righteousness of God in him."

PURGATORY.

LUKE xxiii. 43.

And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

HAVE you ever stood by the bedside of a dying believer? ever watched the decaying strength of some dear object of your fondest love? Then you know the deep emotions of that solemn moment, when, in the stillness of the chamber of death, the heavy breathing ceases, and the happy spirit wings its flight to God. What conflicting feelings then struggle for mastery in the heart! Faith, joy, doubt, and sorrow, seem in turn to take possession of the soul: nay, rather! they all reign there at once: we mourn in widowhood, but acquiesce in faith: we look on our own life as desolate through separation; but, thinking on the present glory of the departed, we cannot withhold a glad Amen from Cowper's lines upon his mother.

But oh! the thought that thou art safe and he!
That thought is joy, arise what may to me.

Yes it is a joy! a mournful joy, but a joy unutterable; a joy that draws from the same eye tears of rejoicing, and tears of grief; a joy which, strange to say, melts us into sadness, while it gives a calm, holy, peaceful satisfaction from the full and complete assurance that those we love most are for ever safe with Jesus. This joy is the birthright of God's faithful children; and this the balm with which in our funeral service, we strive to staunch the mourner's tears. Who that has ever wept beside the open grave can fail to remember those hallowed words: "I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, from henceforth, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours"?

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But the Church of Rome, at one fatal blow, robs us of all this; and in the Catechism of the Council of Trent, declares, ^[35a] "Besides (hell,) there is a fire of purgatory, in which the souls of the pious being tormented for a definite time, expiate their sin, that so an entrance may be opened to them, into the eternal country, into which nothing defiled can enter."

You will here observe four things.

1. That the souls in purgatory are under torture. "Cruciatae."
2. That this torture is by fire. ^[35b]
3. That the persons suffering it are not the wicked, but the pious, i.e. believers, God's dear children, those to whom Christ would say, "Depart in peace, thy faith hath saved thee."
4. That the purpose of it is to expiate sin, or make an atonement for transgression before they can be admitted to eternal glory.

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So that if we are to believe Rome, we must abandon all our bright hopes for our dear departed brethren. Our mothers, and fathers, and fond friends, who have stuck closer to us than a brother, holy believers, who full of faith, fell asleep in Jesus, are at this present moment, writhing and gnashing their teeth, in the fierce agony of scorching heat; yet glad even of the flame to hide them from the displeasure of that Saviour whom they once delighted to trust and love.

Having thus stated the doctrine, I am well persuaded I might here safely leave it. But it forms one of the bulwarks of the Romish system, and is one of the great sources of Roman wealth. ^[36a] The parish priests are ordered by their church frequently and diligently to discourse on it. ^[36b] Let us examine then how the matter stands in the word of God.

I. And 1st, we would remark that there is not a shadow of foundation for it in the Bible. We read of hell, and we read of heaven; we read plainly, "That where the tree falleth there shall it lie." But of purgatory not a word is to be found.

There are, however, two texts generally quoted to which it may be well briefly to refer.

The first is, 1 Cor. iii. 12-15. "Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

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One glance is enough to shew that these words have no connection with the subject. The apostle is speaking of the ministry, and compares the ministers who followed him at Corinth to builders raising a temple on the foundation he himself had laid. The temple then is the visible Church; the material, the professing members of it: some of whom, like gold, silver, and precious stones, are shining as true believers to the glory of their Saviour: others, like wood, hay, and stubble, are worthless professors, fit only to be burned. The day of revealing fire refers either to the day of judgment, or the great fearful conflict with the enemy, described by St. Peter as "the fiery trial which is to try you." ^[37] The effect will be to separate the tares from the wheat; the precious from

the vile; the false from the true; the gold, silver, and precious stones, from the wood, hay, and stubble; and so to reveal the character of the work. There is no allusion then to purgatory. The fire of purgatory is to make expiation for the sins of believers; the day of fire here described is to try the Church and reveal its character.

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If possible the other passage has still less bearing on the subject. It is, 1 Pet. iii. 18-20.

“Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened in the spirit: by the which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison: which sometimes were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.” This is said to prove that our blessed Lord preached to the spirits in purgatory at his burial. But it does nothing of the kind. Those that had sinned against Noah’s preaching were guilty of disobedience and unbelief. They, therefore, the Church of Rome itself being witness, were not in purgatory but in hell. The true meaning of the text is this: Christ was raised up by the divine power of the Holy Ghost, by which as the eternal God, he preached even in the time of Noah to those wicked persons, who having then rejected him, are now fast bound in the miseries of hell. He preached then, not at the time of the crucifixion, but, as the pre-existent God, at the time of Noah: and preached not to dead souls, but to living men. These two texts are the pillars on which Purgatory rests. They remind us of the two pillars on which stood the house of Dagon. God grant that they may not be equally destructive to the thousands of souls who rest on them!

There is therefore no support for the doctrine; let us now proceed to show,

II. That it is in direct contradiction to the word of God.

There are many passages to which we should feel great joy in now referring, where the present blessedness of departed spirits is painted in lively colours by the Holy Ghost; but you will at once see that those only concern our present argument, which describe an *immediate* entrance into joy and rest.

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1. Let us begin then with the language of our blessed Saviour to the dying thief; which shows that they are gathered immediately to a joyful home; “To day thou shalt be with me in paradise.” There can be no question here as to his immediate happiness; there was no need of prayer for the repose of his soul. That very afternoon, when his poor exhausted frame hung lifeless on the cross, when he was carried off as an unclean thing to be buried out of the sight of man; that very afternoon, before the evening closed in, was the happy spirit in paradise with Jesus. And there is something very beautiful in the name here given to the home of Spirits. In 2 Cor. v. 1, it is described as “a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;” but there is no name given there; here the name is given, but no description; the name is “Paradise.” In paradise there was no pain, no sickness, no sorrow, no death, no sin. Tears were never witnessed there till Adam turned his back on it, and so it is with the home of believers. Neither sin nor sorrow can ever gain admission. The gate is too strait for them, they are left behind with us on earth. In that home holiness is the joy, praise the incense, love the atmosphere, and Christ the light.

2. In this home again there is immediate rest. “They rest not day and night,” it is true, “crying, ^[40a] Holy, holy, holy, &c.,” for to them nothing could be so fatiguing as a pause from praise. Their most toilsome toil is to be silent from giving thanks. But from all labour they rest at once. When the spirit once takes its flight, to that soul the warfare is accomplished, the struggle over, the battle won. Only look at the words of St. John, Revelation xiv. 13. See how they are ushered in. “I heard a voice from heaven.” See how God would have them preserved as the lasting joy of the Church of Christ; for he says, “Write.” Mark their confirmation by the Holy Ghost, “Yea, thus saith the Spirit.” And now see their plain, indisputable testimony to the immediate and complete blessedness of the saints. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, yea, thus saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.” There is no delay, no interval, no expiation. They are at once blessed; at once at rest; for they are fallen asleep in Jesus: they have died in the Lord.

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3. This immediate blessedness is taught us also from the case of Lazarus. ^[40b] “When the beggar died he was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom,” not to purgatory; and when there he was comforted in the enjoyment of a rest with God.

4. But above all, the dying spirit passes immediately into the presence of Christ the Saviour.

It is most important for us to observe this, for there can be no real joy to the Christian if he be separate from Christ. The pure river of the fountain of life would lose all its charm if it did not proceed out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. The sea of glass, clear as crystal, would have no beauty if the face of Jesus were not reflected in it. The new Jerusalem itself would be no object of desire, though its walls be of jasper, its gate of pearl, its streets of gold, if Christ himself were not the light of it: for the brightest diamond has no brightness in the dark. Yea, heaven itself would become a hell if the Son of God were not the reigning Lord of it.

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If we cannot prove, therefore, that the departed believer passes at once into the presence of his Lord, we in fact prove nothing. If for one moment we are to be separated from him, it little matters where. But thanks be to God we can prove it without the possibility of contradiction.

When Stephen died ^[41a] “he saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God;” saw, as it were, the arm of Christ reaching forth to draw him up to heaven; so he fell down and

prayed "Lord Jesus receive my spirit."

When St. Paul doubted between life and death, he ^[41b] "had a desire to depart and be with Christ, which was far better." Death then was a departure into the immediate presence of his Lord. But above all refer to 2 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8. "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord; (for we walk by faith not by sight;) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." The idea of this passage is that there are two homes for believers; two dwellings, one on earth, and one in heaven; one in the body, one in the presence of our Lord. While here we know him, but it is by faith alone. "We walk by faith, not by sight." When there we shall see him in the full brilliancy of his love and glory. And this change is immediate. The veil is very thin that separates the world of flesh from the world of spirits. Every prayer of faith pierces it. The stream is very narrow that separates earth and heaven, and no sooner do we quit the one than we enter on the other; no sooner is the earthly home dissolved, than Christ himself is seen and the heavenly home opens for his people. So long as "we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord;" and we are willing rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. The departed believer, therefore, is at once found with Christ.

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5. But there is another passage in which all these immediate blessings appear summed up in one short, but most expressive, word. "To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." ^[42]

We should have no fear in resting the question upon this text alone. It places the truth beyond the reach of all attack. "To die is gain," therefore to die is not to go to purgatory. "To die is gain," therefore to die is not to be tortured in fire for the expiation of our sin. Nor must we suppose that this refers to St. Paul alone. His acceptance rested on the same terms as ours. He was a sinner pardoned through the Lamb's blood, and accepted on the same terms as the weakest believer in our congregation. To die was gain; not because he was an Apostle, but because to live was Christ. And if to us to live is Christ, then to us to die is gain.

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Look then at the present happiness of believers, the present joy of the new born child of God. He does not see Christ, it is true, with the eye of sense; but he knows him, he loves him, he delights in him, he speaks to him, his soul is filled with joy at the assurance of his grace. "Whom having not seen we love, in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." In every care and trial he can find a sweet repose, for he knows that Christ is near, and he has the precious promise "The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long." So when his frame becomes enfeebled and the time of his departure seems at hand, he can lie down peacefully upon the bed of languishing, for he has the precious promise that the Lord shall strengthen him; the sweet assurance "*Thou wilt make all his bed in his sickness.*" Ay! and when the illness itself draws to a close, when all power to alleviate is gone, when the physician's skill is helpless, and the wife's affection fruitless; when the dying man is passing alone through the valley of the shadow of death, he is still supported, still happy, still at peace. For the same Lord is nigh. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." Oh! Blessed life! Oh! happy death of the child of God! "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" ^[44]

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But now suppose the valley crossed. The arm has upheld him through the struggle; the beloved of the Lord has been borne safely through. Is the first sight which meets his affrighted eye the lurid glare of the flashing flames of purgatorial fire?—the first sound that startles his ear the groaning of God's beloved children writhing under the torments of expiating torture? Is that calm repose on Jesus suddenly changed by one terrific plunge into the scorching agony of a purgatorial flame? Would it be gain thus to die? Would such a death be "far better" than the life of faith? It would be better surely to dwell safely as the beloved of the Lord, than to burn miserably in the expiation of unforgiven sin.

We may conclude then that the doctrine of purgatory is in direct opposition to the word of God, but we have a yet farther, and, if possible, graver charge to urge against it, viz.,

III. That it is in direct opposition to the doctrine of atonement as set forth in scripture.

You will remember the extract already quoted from the Catechism of the Council of Trent, in which it was stated that in the fire of purgatory the souls of the pious make expiation for their sin. Pause for a moment to observe these words. There are two things to be noticed in them, (1.) they assert directly that man's sufferings can make expiation for his sin, and (2.) they imply that the death of our Lord was not a complete expiation for our sin. Let us examine each part separately.

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(1.) First then we have a direct assertion that by enduring pain the believer makes expiation for his soul; that is, that our temporary sufferings satisfy God's broken law.

If this be true, what occasion was there for the blood of Jesus. Why the stupendous mystery of man's redemption? Why the agony in the garden? Why the burden of the cross? Why the hiding of God's countenance? Why the endurance of the curse in our stead? Such a work was surely needless, a mere mistake on the part of Jesus. The atonement is become a fable, if man's passing pain can make expiation for his sin.

But, again, if pain is expiation, how is it that hell-fire burns for ever? Was ever suffering so intense as that? Was there ever such a scene of woe and misery, of hatefulness and hopelessness, as that? But does it make expiation for the sinner's sin? Does it blot out the

curse? Does the fire burn out its fuel? "It is the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched." Yea, verily, if the curse of one single sin could be burned out by ten thousand centuries of pain, hell would be no longer hell, for there would be a faint gleam of far distant hope, shining even upon the miseries of the damned.

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There is no expiation then in pain. Believers are chastened, but chastening is not atonement. It is God's gentle discipline by which he prepares his jewels for his crown; and just as the finest gold is wrought most carefully, so the most precious of God's children are often chastened most heavily, for "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." There must be a melting of the gold, before it can be separated from the ore; there must be a rending of the root, before the tree can be taken from the wilderness and transplanted into the garden of the Lord. And so it is with believers. There must be a melting of the heart, a humbling of the earthly will, a weaning of soul, that they may cleave to Christ alone. And this is the purpose for which, beloved, we are chastened. He does it for our profit, that we may be partakers of his holiness. Affliction has the same effect that Nebuchadnezzar's furnace had on the three children in captivity. It could not touch their person, but it burnt the bands that bound them, and enabled them to walk more freely with their Lord. But expiation! That is Christ's work. "He is the propitiation for our sins," and if suffering in man could expiate for sin in man, then the suffering of Christ were a waste of blood, a waste of agony, a waste of life, a waste of love.

(2.) And this leads us to our second remark, that the doctrine of expiation through purgatorial fire implies an incompleteness in the atonement of our blessed Lord. If expiation be still needful, then in his atonement there must be something wanting. Nor is this the mere conclusion of a bigoted protestant, it is the bold assertion of the Church of Rome herself. Listen to her canon, "If any man shall say that after the gift of Justification has been received, sin is so remitted to any repentant sinner," (observe it speaks of justified believers and true penitents) "and the debt of eternal punishment so blotted out, that there remains no debt of temporary punishment to be endured either in this world or the world to come in purgatory, before a way can be opened into the kingdom of heaven, let him be Anathema."^[47]

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I feel utterly at a loss in attempting to speak on such an awful passage. Can they remember that they are speaking of the atonement wrought by the Son of God? He gave his own most precious life to satisfy the law, and can any portion of the debt remain? He purchased us with the price of his own most precious blood: is farther payment needed? The eternal Redeemer was our ransom: are we not free? The well beloved of the Father endured the curse as our substitute: was his work so ineffectual that the curse still hangs over the very men he came to save? Awful dishonour to the Son of God! Now Rome thou must indeed be Antichrist, for thou dost rob Christ of his glory; thou strivest to tarnish the beauty of his diadem. He says "Behold the Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world." But thou contradictest Christ and sayest that there is a remnant left to be punished in the believer still. He says "I, even I, am he, that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." But thou sayest that the blot is not effaced, that the sin is still remembered, still punished, even in the child of God. He says "I am the way," "I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." But thou sayest that the door cannot be opened, except it be through purgatorial pain. He says that he has loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and the Father. But thou sayest the washing was incomplete, for sin must after all be burned out by fire; that love is still defective, for the saints must yet be punished; the inheritance not fully purchased, for, after all that Christ has done, the justified believer has still to make an expiation for his sin.^[49]

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No! beloved! we will not for a moment admit the thought of any other expiation, than that wrought out for us by the Lamb of God. And as for our dear departed brethren, nothing that Rome can say shall ever rob us of our delightful hope. They have felt no pain since the day we parted; their sainted spirits have been basking in the sunshine of the countenance of God. I myself have parted with a mother, such a mother that I often wonder if the world can ever more behold her equal: so strong in faith; so ardent in her thirsting after God; so pure in spirit; so sensitive to sin; so beaming in her holy loveliness, that you might almost believe you saw the Father's name written legibly by the Holy Ghost upon her forehead. To this day do I hear the tones of her dying voice, when in answer to my questions respecting her soul's peace, she replied "I can reverently say with the deepest humility, 'Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.'" And I would rather have this arm torn from its socket, I would rather be scorched and scathed in Moloch's fire, than I would abandon my firm and fixed persuasion that such love has never been interrupted, that her Redeeming Lord has never left her for a moment; my perfect assurance, that while we were weeping in solemn stillness around her bed of death, she was taking her place amongst the company of palm bearers, and is now standing before the throne, having washed her robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

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So also for ourselves! dear brethren! for we too must die; our day is hastening on, our time drawing to its close. A few short years and multitudes amongst us must change their faith for sight, the world of flesh for the world of spirits: a few, short, rapid years, and every one, both you and I, shall find ourselves in heaven or in hell. But let us fear nothing. Only let us be found in Christ, justified through his blood, with our name written in his book of life, and the Father's name engraven by the Holy Ghost on our forehead, and then neither death or hell can ever prevail to hurt us. In Christ we are safe; washed in his blood we are completely pardoned; clad in his righteousness we are completely justified; and kept in his right hand we are completely and

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for ever safe.

Only let us be found in Christ. Then the outward man may decay; the poor frame may wax faint and feeble; the eye may become dim, even with the dim fixedness of death: and then, when all earthly power has sunk under exhaustion, the eye will open; a new world will spring up before us; attendant angels will hover around the new-born citizen of heaven; and without tears, or fears, or weakness, we shall behold Christ in the brightness of his glory, and cry aloud in the heartfelt thankfulness of unutterable joy, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb."

SERMON IV. TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

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HEBREWS X. 12.

But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.

THERE WAS NEVER a more tremendous judgment than that uttered by the voice of Malachi, ^[52] "I will curse your blessings." There can be no scourge more heavy than a blessing cursed. The more choice the gift, the more fatal is the misuse of it; the richer the blessing, the deadlier its corruption. So it was with Christ himself. He was the most precious gift that could be found even in the treasuries of heaven—the well beloved Son of God; but to those who rejected him he became a stone of stumbling and rock of offence. So it has been with that sacred feast, which he left as a parting legacy to his church. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is one of the richest blessings in the church's birthright. It is a sacred opportunity of feeding in faith upon the body and blood of the Lamb, a perpetual remembrance of his boundless grace, a bond of holy fellowship with our brethren in the faith, a sacred pledge of our union and communion with the Lord. Yet even this has been corrupted. As with the Jews of old, so with professing Christians "their table has become a snare before them, and that which should have been for their welfare has become a trap." ^[53a] We allude, of course, to the doctrine of transubstantiation, of which the Council of Trent decrees as follows:

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"By the consecration of the bread and wine there is effected a change in the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood." ^[53b] Here we have the bread and wine transformed into the actual substance of the person of our blessed Lord: so transformed that according to the Catechism ^[53c] there are "bones and nerves in it." Nay, more! so changed that there is actually his whole person, not excepting his soul and his divinity, for the Council declares ^[53d] "If any man shall say that the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, together with his soul and divinity, and, in short, that a whole Christ, is not contained truly, really, and substantially in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist, but shall say that he is in it only in sign, or figure, or power, let him be anathema."

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There is no misunderstanding such words as these. And if there were, the 6th canon shows how Rome herself interprets them, for she not only acknowledges the fact, but follows it consistently to its conclusion, and declares plainly that we are to worship it with the worship due to God. ^[54]

"If any shall say that in the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is not to be adored, and that outwardly with the worship of Latria (the worship paid to God), and that he ought not to be . . . carried solemnly about in processions, or that he ought not to be set before the people that he may be worshipped, and that the worshippers of him are idolaters, let him be anathema."

But even this is not all: for not merely do they claim the power of thus making the bread into the very person of the only begotten of the Father, they add yet this also, that they can put that Saviour to death, and by that sacrifice make a propitiation for the sins of the dead and living. The Council of Trent declares ^[55a] "In the sacrifice of the mass, that same Christ is sacrificed without blood who once with blood offered himself upon the cross." And in Canon iii. ^[55b] it adds that "If any man shall say that the sacrifice is not propitiatory and profits the receiver only, and ought not to be offered for the living and the dead, for sins, punishments, satisfaction, and other necessities, let him be anathema."

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Such is the doctrine of transubstantiation as taught by the Church of Rome. According to it by a few words of consecration a wafer of unleavened bread is transformed into the very person of the Son of God: a man may be worshipping with divine honour in the afternoon a morsel of that same wheaten flour on which he made his breakfast in the morning: the one half he may bake for the sustenance of his children, the other he may be bound to adore when the priest has transubstantiated it into God. On reading such a doctrine it is impossible altogether to forget God's cutting language against the sin of Israel.

"He burneth part of it in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha! I am warm, I have seen the fire: and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and prayeth

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unto it, and saith, deliver me for thou art my god.” ^[56]

Surely, then, it is reasonable to ask that the truth of such a principle should be tried by the word of God alone. It is opposed to the evidence of our senses, it is opposed to reason, and it is no less opposed to the general tenor of the sacred scriptures. It is a case, therefore, in which no human evidence can avail any thing; the best, the wisest, the holiest of men, are wholly insufficient witnesses to prove, that what is apparently a piece of bread, lifeless, motionless, and powerless, is the very person of Christ himself, the only begotten of the Father, reigning triumphantly at the right hand of the throne of God. Such a fact, if it be a fact, must be taught by God himself.

At the same time, if God has said it we are bound cheerfully to believe it. It is condemned by every faculty which God has given us; it is opposed to experience, and to every pre-existent principle of religion, yet so complete should be our submission to the Bible, so absolute and unquestioning our conviction of its certain truth, that if we clearly find even transubstantiation there, we must believe without a murmur, we must abandon all human thoughts in submission to his all perfect wisdom. Yea though our revered church declares it plainly both “a blasphemous fable and a dangerous deceit;” ^[57] though the martyred fathers of the Reformation chose rather to die in agony than admit its truth; yet if God says it we will joyfully believe it, “for God is in heaven and we upon earth, therefore must our words be few.”

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By the word of God, then, let us proceed to try the question, and we will examine the language of Scripture,

I. With reference to the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper;

II. With reference to the life and work of our blessed Lord.

May the Holy Ghost lead us calmly, seriously, and dispassionately to learn the truths of his own most holy word!

I. The language of Scripture with reference to the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

The doctrine is supposed to rest upon the words of our blessed Saviour, “This is my body,” or as they were revealed to St. Paul, “This is my body which is broken for you.”

This sentence is thought to contain a plain, literal, absolute, assertion that the bread was changed into his body; changed so completely that while the Saviour spoke the words, that bread which he held within his hand, was his real, natural, whole, and substantial person. The belief of the Church of England is that the words have no such literal meaning; but were employed to teach that the bread and wine were signs, figures, or emblems of his body broken, and his blood shed upon the cross. ^[58a] He says, “I am the vine, ye are the branches.” “I am the door:” but none suppose that he was a real vine, a real door, or his people real branches of a growing tree. St. Paul says “That rock was Christ:” but none believe that the flinty rock was in very fact a living man. ^[58b] In all these passages we never doubt for a single moment what was the meaning of the Holy Ghost. The vine and the rock represented Christ, and the door was a figure of him. Just so we believe it to be with the words of consecration; the bread was a figure of his body and the wine of his blood.

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That this is the true meaning of the passage seems to lie upon its very surface. Let us turn to 1st Corinthians xi. We shall there find that

1st. It is inconsistent to take the words literally; for they are quite as explicit and literal when spoken of the wine as of the bread. “This is my body which is broken for you.” “This cup is the New Testament in my blood.” But in this one passage there are no less than three figures. The cup stands as the emblem or figure of the wine contained in it; the new covenant is said to be the New Testament *in* his blood, because it was sealed and ratified by his blood; and the cup itself is declared positively to be the testament. This must be figurative, it must mean that the cup is a sign, emblem, or figure of the testament. Thus the warmest advocate of the doctrine of transubstantiation is compelled to allow the use of figure with reference to the cup. Is it consistent? is it defensible or any principle of scriptural interpretation to deny it with reference to the bread? ought they not to be interpreted on the same principles? Here are two sentences, spoken at the same time, by the same person, under the same circumstances, to the same company, and for the same purpose. But there must be a figure in the one, who shall deny it in the other? The cup must be an emblem of the testament, can we be wrong in believing also that the bread is an emblem of the body?

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2d. But this is not all. We have besides the direct testimony of the Holy Ghost that the bread remains bread, and the wine remains wine after consecration. Of the wine our Lord spoke in terms which it is quite impossible to mistake or misinterpret. In Matthew xxvi. 29, he expressly says, “I will drink no more of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” These words were spoken *after* the consecration, and they seem uttered with especial caution as if he had foreseen the error which was about to creep into his professing church. He does not rest content with the name of “wine,” but calls it “fruit of the vine,” as if to prove beyond the possibility of a doubt that it had gained no new substance, but remained as it was before, the natural produce of the vine, the simple unaltered juice of the grape. Nor is the evidence less positive with reference to the bread. Again and again do we read of the breaking of the bread, never once of the sacrifice of the body. Nor is this merely accidental, for in the 10th and 11th chapters of 1st Corinthians we have the bread called bread by the Holy Ghost, no less than four times after consecration. In 1 Cor. x. 17, the Christian communicant is said to partake

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of bread, not of flesh with bones and nerves; "We are all partakers of that one *bread*." In 1 Cor. xi. 26, "For as often as ye eat this *bread*, and drink this *cup*, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." In 27, "Whosoever shall eat this *bread*, and drink this *cup* of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord;" and 28, "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that *bread*, and drink of that *cup*." We do not, therefore, rest on human reason only when we deny the doctrine of transubstantiation. We boldly cast ourselves upon the teaching of the Bible, yea, upon the teaching of the Son of God himself, and believe the bread to be still bread, and the wine to remain as the fruit of the vine. We behold in them the signs and symbols of the passion of our Lord; and beholding the sign, we feed in faith on the reality. They are the figures of himself; the representations of his passion; the emblems and signs of his atoning death. As such we value, we receive, we honour them: but we live on Christ himself; we rest on the passion itself, on the atonement itself; and so by a strong, spiritual, realizing faith we are made partakers of his flesh and blood. "The words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life."

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3rd. But if the words were to be taken literally, they would not even then furnish the slightest proof of the doctrine taught by Rome: for you will remember the canon ^[61] already quoted, which says, "If any man shall say that the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, together with his soul and divinity, and in short that a whole Christ is not contained in the Sacrament, let him be accursed." The utmost that the words of Jesus can be understood as teaching is, that the bread is transubstantiated into the body. The narrative is given by three Evangelists and one Apostle; but in no single instance is there the least mention made of his soul or spirit. He did not say, "This is my body, soul, and divinity." He said simply, "This is my body." They refer to it exclusively, and this exclusiveness is marked in them with a peculiar and distinctive point. If he had simply said, "This is my body," it might have been possible for a lively imagination to clothe them with some reference to all the properties of his sacred person; but by adding the words "Which is broken for you," he has given a definite fixedness to their meaning; he has tied them down to a distinct and exclusive application; he has showed that they refer simply and solely to the real, human body; to that flesh through which the nails were driven, to that human frame which was seen hanging on the cross, which was embalmed by the women, and which lay buried in the tomb of Joseph.

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There is not, therefore, the faintest appearance of the least shade of scriptural evidence, in support of the canon that the bread is changed into the soul and divinity of our Lord. It is an addition made by the church of Rome on her own simple, unsupported, authority. ^[62] There is not one single passage, which, on any principle of interpretation, can be forced or twisted into the most distant reference to such a change. The Saviour said "This is my body." Rome adds, "it is his soul and divinity." And what an addition have we here! The soul shudders at the thought that men dare presume to make it! Had we the tongue of angels we should utterly fail to describe the unutterable glory of the majesty of God. As well might the insect swallow up the ocean as any finite creature exhibit truly the unbounded vastness of an infinite Jehovah. In Majesty incomprehensible he dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto: in power omnipotent he created all things without one single atom of material substance: in life eternal he dwelt alone from the beginning, filling with his own self the vast regions of unbounded space; and now that he has peopled a universe with the countless creatures of his skill, he is present everywhere, exhausted no where. "Do not I the Lord fill earth and heaven?" Yet does Rome venture on the unsupported authority of man to ascribe all this to the unleavened wafer, and fearlessly to hurl her curses against those who tremble at the thought of kneeling down to the bread and wine, and adoring them with the worship which belongs to the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. "If any man shall say that, he (i.e. the transubstantiated wafer) is not to be adored with the worship due to God, let him be accursed." ^[63]

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II. We may pass then to our second point, and compare the doctrine of transubstantiation with the teaching of Scripture concerning both the life and work of Jesus.

And first we may remark that, according to the Bible, he now lives and reigns in his complete and perfect manhood. This appears very plainly in the language of our text. "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God." The same that made the offering is now seated at the right hand of God. Yes! that same human person that was born of the Virgin, that grew in stature, that was wearied at the well, that slept in the ship, that thirsted on the cross, that was laid in the new tomb of Joseph; that same person is the triumphant King seated as a conqueror on the throne of God. "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell and death." ^[64a]

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And this explains the language of Scripture, which describes him in one defined and determined place, seated at the right hand of God. In his divine nature he is God himself, and fills earth and heaven. To the Son may we say as to the Father, "If I ascend up into heaven thou art there; if I make my bed in hell thou art there." But in his human nature he is perfect man, and as man limited. As Jehovah he is omnipotent and created all things, but yet as man he was dependent, and prayed for strength; so as Jehovah, he is omnipresent, watching everywhere over the most hidden of his scattered children, as man he has his one abiding place, and is seated at the right hand of God. He was always omnipresent, but when he went to Bethany he left Jerusalem. So too he is as God now omnipresent everywhere, but when he went to the Father, as man he left the presence of the church below. "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart I will send him unto you." ^[64b]

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Hence it is that he speaks of his ascension as a leaving of the world; in the body he went to God, though in divine power he never left his church on earth. Hence his second advent is described as a coming back to his people; "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so

come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” ^[65a] Hence, also, we are expressly taught that until the appointed day shall dawn his habitation will be heaven, and his seat the throne of God. ^[65b] “Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things.”

We dare not, therefore, admit the thought that before his advent his human person can be present with his church on earth. The language of sacred scripture is plain and oft repeated, that he has left the world, and is not to be seen in person here; it leaves no space for doubt or imagination, but teaches the believer to look on his risen Saviour in one place and one alone; “in heaven itself now to appear in the presence of God for us.” There he sits in triumphant peace, having fought the fight, having won the victory, having gained the crown. Thousand thousand saints attend him, ten thousand times ten thousand bow before him, and not a murmur, not a whisper, ever breaks for a moment the cheerful peace of his dominion. Nothing there prevails to ruffle the calm surface of that sea of glass, which, clear as crystal, reflects the countenance of its reigning Lord. And though the troubled passions of this lower world may be lashed into fury by the action of universal sin; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof, it cannot disturb the lowest pediment of his footstool; for “The Lord sitteth above the water-flood, the Lord sitteth king for ever.” And yet shall Rome tell us that we are to adore in that piece of bread the very person of our reigning Lord? that the wafer which can neither save itself from the insect, from the reptile, or from putrefaction; and which, to protect it, the Priest must shut carefully in the casket, is in very truth the reigning Jesus, with all his life and all his attributes? We might believe them possibly if they were to tell us that they had plucked up Vesuvius by the roots, and cast the huge mountain like a pebble into the deep. We might perhaps listen to the tale, if the priest were to tell us that he was about to stretch forth his bold hand, and tear down the sun from its high place amongst the stars of heaven; but we will never believe that any man, or set of men, on earth, can hold within their hand, can shut within their casket, can carry in their procession, or can kill at their pleasure, that living, reigning Saviour, whom the Holy Ghost declares to be seated triumphantly on the right hand of God. p. 66

(2) But the worst yet remains. Christ passed to glory through the grave; his kingdom was bought by blood. “After he had made one offering for sin, he for ever sat down at the right hand of God.” See how that one offering is affected by the doctrine of the mass. You will remember the canon already quoted which declared that when the mass was offered, a propitiatory sacrifice was made for the sins both of the dead and of the living. Now what does that imply? Nothing short of this, that the atonement made by Christ was neither complete, nor final: not complete, else where the need of further sacrifice? not final, else where the possibility of a repetition? But if there be any one point on which the Holy Ghost has spoken more explicitly than another, that one point is the final sufficiency of the work of Jesus. p. 67

It was complete.

By his one oblation of himself once offered, he made a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. He paid the whole price, he bore the whole curse. He left no room for further payment, for any sacrifice in application of the one offering to the sinner’s case. That one atonement itself reached to the lowest depths of the sinner’s fall; it broke down every barrier between the soul and God; it so completely blotted out the curse that the Gospel message is, “Believe and live.” “By one offering he hath perfected for them that are sanctified,” v. 14. When Christ died the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; not half-way only. The way into the holiest was then laid completely open. There was no second rending needed; no drawing aside the curtain. There stood the mercy seat in full view of the adoring multitude. So it is with “the new and living way which Christ has consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.” It lays the way of life completely open to the sinner; and we only honour God, when we believe, to our inexpressible joy, that a poor, guilty, broken-hearted penitent, may, without money, without price, and without sacrifice, enter in boldly, and through the simple look of faith find life and peace to his soul. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” p. 68

It was final.

The passage from which our text is taken seems written with prophetic reference to this very subject. It could not have spoken with more plainness if we Protestants had composed it for ourselves. No less than five times in these few verses does the Holy Ghost declare that the propitiation made by Christ was offered once, and once alone.

IX. 26. “But now *once* in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”

IX. 28. “So Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many.”

X. 10. “By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all*.”

X. 12. “But this man, after he had offered *one* sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.”

X. 14. “For by *one* offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

If there were any possibility of mistaking these plain and oft repeated words, even that would be removed by the slightest glance at the pointed argument in which we find them. The Apostle is drawing a contrast between the gospel and the law; between the priesthood of Christ and that of p. 69

the sons of Levi. Now mark the especial point of contrast; their sacrifices being imperfect require frequent repetition, his being perfect was made once, and for ever, upon the cross.

IX. 25 and 26. "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the High Priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world, but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." The whole argument turns upon the impossibility of repetition in the sacrifice of our Lord. If that can be repeated the whole contrast falls to the ground.

There is, therefore, the most complete, clear, and explicit proof that Christ could be no more offered, and that propitiation could be no more made for sin. Yea, verily, so complete is that perfect work already finished by Christ as our substitute; so perfect is that satisfaction which he made upon the cross for the sins of man, that if the whole of that sad scene were once more enacted upon Calvary; if the crown of thorns were once more placed on his head; if his holy frame were once more broken and bowed down by death; neither his agony nor death could avail one jot, or one tittle, to the blotting out of one single sinner's sin. Who can whiten that which is already white as snow? What can cleanse the garment that is already washed in the Lamb's most precious blood? Who can take away the curse which is already blotted out for ever? What new atonement, what second sacrifice, what fresh victim, can avail anything to the perfect acceptance of that believer's soul who is already made the righteousness of God in Christ?

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No more then of the awful thought that, that piece of bread is the very person of our reigning Lord! No more of the tremendous principle that there can be a second sacrifice of the sacred life of Jesus; a second propitiation for the sins which the Son of God has borne! We will adore our blessed Saviour himself, as he is now seated at the right hand of God. We will adore him as our Advocate, adore him as our king, adore him as our accepted substitute. We will trust him for his grace, we will praise him for his glory; we will believe in the perfection of his perfect and all sufficient-work. He has taken the burden of every sin for which conscience ever can condemn us. He has endured the curse of every transgression of which Satan ever can accuse us. He has washed unto spotless whiteness the most sin-stained garment of his most sin-polluted child. So scorning the thought of any second sacrifice, we will go direct to Christ himself; and there in faith lie waiting before his footstool, feeding on his grace, rejoicing in his love, triumphing in his power, till he come again in glory and welcome to his kingdom the whole multitude of his ransomed saints. Even so, come Lord Jesus!! Come quickly.

SERMON V.

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THE CHURCH IN THE LATTER DAYS.

2 TIM. iii. 1.

This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come.

It is nearly 1800 years since our blessed Lord declared to his Apostle, "Behold I come quickly." It, therefore, well becomes his children to be watching the signs of his appearing, and to be studying with intense interest the records which he has given for the guidance and warning of his people. It is not presumption, but sober faith, thus to inquire into God's prophetic word. The Book of Revelations was written ^[71a] "to show unto God's servants things which must shortly come to pass;" and our Lord himself has directed us to observe the appointed signs, to compare and check them with advancing history, and when we shall see all these things come to pass, to know that the day is near, even at the doors. ^[71b]

We purpose, then, to close our present course by carefully examining into God's description of the state of the church in the latter days.

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We sometimes hear the expression of sanguine and happy hopes that the Gospel will so prevail throughout the world as to leave no place either for heresy in religion, or for viciousness in life; that there will arrive a time before the coming of our blessed Lord, when men will witness the fulfilment of the prophecy "that righteousness shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." Yet the smallest glance at the prophetic Scriptures is sufficient to show that there is no warrant for such bright anticipations there. Again and again does God declares that the days immediately proceeding Christ's coming shall be days of especial darkness both to the world and to the church. "Upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear; and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." ^[72]

With this description the language of our text is in close and complete accordance. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come."

Let us, then, endeavour to profit by the word of warning, and examine

- I. The perils of the latter days;
- II. The character and security of the saints of God.

I. The perils of the latter days.

(1.) There will be perils from the world without. We have already learned from the language of our blessed Lord that there will be “distress of nations with perplexity, men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth.” We are told in St. Mark ^[73] that there shall be “wars and rumours of wars,” that “nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in divers places; and there shall be famines and troubles; these are the beginning of sorrows.” It is of course impossible but that the people of God should be deeply affected by this awful convulsion of the moral atmosphere of the world. When there is a universal earthquake in society, all must feel the shock; when the storm bursts around us, all must be more or less affected by the crash.

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(2.) We must, therefore, reckon this coming convulsion of society as one of the leading causes of the peculiar perils of the latter days. But there are plain intimations in the Word of God that the chief source of peril is to be found within the visible church itself. An enemy within the citadel is always more dangerous than an enemy without; and such an enemy is plainly predicted in the Bible. Our text describes not the opposition of infidelity, but the corruption of Christianity; and draws our thoughts not to the conflicting powers of the world, but to the degenerate principles of the church. “For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitorous, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” There is nothing here of wars or rumours of wars, of the array of earthly monarchs against the cross; the danger here predicted is found within the body of professors, and consists in a wide spread, deep-rooted apostacy from the faith. Nor does this apostacy lead to the open and avowed rejection of the Gospel. Would that it did! The apostate body retains its visible profession, and parades its high-sounding name of Christianity, for (verse 5) it has “a form of godliness,” while it denies its power. Though ignorant of the truth, these false professors do not professedly reject it, for they are “ever learning and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.” Thus are they reprobate concerning the faith. To be reprobate implies appearance, pretension, profession. Tin is not reprobate unless it be passed as silver, nor the infidel reprobate unless he assume the name of Christianity. The reprobate persons, therefore, described in our text must retain their place amongst professors, they must have the form of godliness, the bright appearance of some precious metal, yet when tested and tried by the Word of God, must be found to be a base coinage, reprobate concerning the faith.

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From these remarks it must be plain to all that the peculiar peril of the latter day consists in the corruption of Christianity by a body of men who all the while retain its form; of men who, with a high-sounding profession, resist the truth as it is in Jesus. The same appears with no less distinctness in 1 Tim. iv. 1-3, “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times 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.” There can be no doubt that in both passages the Holy Spirit is warning us of the same danger; for in both the leading features are the same. The evil springs up not without the church to resist, but within the church to corrupt it. The deadly plant has its root in the garden of the Lord. “Some shall *depart* from the faith.” There is no rejection of the visible profession of the Gospel, for the description given applies not to infidelity but to degeneracy; it is a departure from the faith, not from the name of Christianity. “Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats.” So the influence exerted is on Christian brethren, for they seek to bind the yoke around the neck of those which “believe and know the truth.”

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These two passages are enough to show that the apostacy of professors, and not the assault of infidels, is the great source of peril in the latter days. But there is one further passage which we cannot pass unnoticed, namely, 2 Thess. ii. 3-11. ^[76a] In verse 3 we are plainly told that before the day of Christ shall come there must be a falling away, a revealing of the man of sin, the son of perdition. “Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.” The connexion of the passage with those just considered appears more distinctly in the Greek than in the English, where the sentence stands. “Except there come *the* ^[76b] falling away,” the expression “*the*” connecting it plainly with the other prophecies of the Bible, and the general expectation of the Church. The connexion also with the latter days of the world’s history is proved distinctly by the fact that the man of sin is to be destroyed by the brightness of our Lord’s return, “whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming.” We may, therefore, regard this chapter as giving an account of the same apostacy as that alluded to in the other texts. And now mark its character. It springs up in the church itself. Apostacy means departure or decline, and therefore, as we remarked in the text from Timothy, it is not an infidel power rising up against us to attack, but a degenerate power growing up in the midst of us to corrupt. As it springs up within the church so does it retain its place there. “It sits in the temple of God.” The church of God is often spoken of as a temple, as in 1 Cor. iii. 16, “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?” ^[77] And to sit in the temple of God implies that it occupies the seat, retains the name, and assumes the sanctity of the church of God. So again the words, “Sheweth himself that he is God,” point not to the infidel but to the professor, to one usurping, not attacking the sovereignty of Jehovah. The man of sin does not deny God’s existence, but usurps God’s authority. But when thus seated in the temple of God he is guilty of most awful sin.

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He sets himself above God; he displays himself as though he were God; he "shows himself that he is God;" he assumes God's attributes; he lays claim to the powers and even titles of Jehovah. The elements of this apostacy were at work even in the days of the apostle. The seed was even then sown, the deadly leaven was already fermenting in the church. "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." The time, however, was not yet come for the revealing or manifestation of his character and power. There was a certain restraining force which then kept him in. But this force was not to last for ever, for he "that letteth should be taken away, and then should that wicked be revealed." This restraining force has always been explained as that of the Roman empire. The early church never questioned it, and it is a fact stated on good authority, and worthy of the deepest consideration, that the primitive Christians used to pray in their public worship for the preservation of the empire of pagan Rome, because they were persuaded from this prophecy, that when it fell the man of sin should be established on its ruins. But there is one other feature in this man of sin to be most carefully noted by the church. It does not refer to any single individual, but to a long series of apostate professors. It has been thought by some that the man of sin will be some single individual; one glance, however, at the passage will suffice to show that it must refer to a long series of successors. The whole period between the date of the epistle and the final coming of our blessed Lord is divided in the prophecy between "him that letteth" ^[78] and "the man of sin." He that letteth then existed, and would continue till the man of sin took his place. The man of sin again would retain his place till the Lord Jesus appeared in glory. The two together, therefore, occupy a period of almost 1800 years. They cannot, therefore, both be individuals. One at least must represent a series of successors. But the two expressions are equally personal. "He that letteth" (ὁ κατέχων) is a form of expression quite as personal as "the man of sin." It would be inconsistent therefore to say that one represents a series, and the other an individual. They must be both successions or both individuals. The latter supposition we have already shown to be impossible, the former we firmly believe to be the truth.

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The apostacy, therefore, is not a sudden and passing outbreak of corruption just in advance of the advent of our Lord, but a deep-rooted, long-existing, departure from the faith, handed down from age to age, and spreading its baneful influence from the breaking up of the Roman empire to its final destruction at the coming of the Lord in glory. Now it is plain that the existence of such a body must render the latter days indeed perilous to the saints of God. It possesses every influence of every worldly kind; the influence of secular power, rising up as the successor to the empire of Rome; the authority of ecclesiastical position, sitting in the temple of God; the cunning of deep seductiveness, being itself the mystery of iniquity; the association of long-continued influence, spreading on from century to century; with the direct support of Satan himself, "for his coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." ^[80] Such is the apostacy against which the saints of God are called to take their stand, and with reference to which it is predicted by the Spirit that "in the last days perilous times shall come."

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But where are we to look for this apostacy? It is described in prophecy: can it be traced in history? It is predicted in the word: can it be found in fact? Is the man of sin yet seated in the temple of God? I should not be a faithful servant of my God, if I did not express my deep conviction that this most perilous apostacy is the Papal system of the Church of Rome. For mark the close correspondence between the words of the prophecy, and the facts of history. The man of sin, according to the prophecy, was to spring up in the bosom of the church itself. Who shall deny that this is the case with the Romish popedom? The man of sin was to sit in the temple of God. The Pope of Rome declares himself that he sits as Christ's vicar in the chair of Peter, and sways the sceptre of universal dominion in the church. The man of sin represents a long succession, maintaining the same principles, and heading the same apostacy from the truth: the exact counterpart of the popes of Rome.

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The history of the man of sin is marked by three important dates. His principles were working secretly in the days of the apostles. He would be revealed or made manifest at the breaking up of the Roman empire. He would be destroyed at the coming of our blessed Lord. The two first of these dates exactly tally with the history of the Romish popedom. From many passages in the Epistles it may be gathered that its principles were working secretly when the apostles wrote them. ^[81] As the empire declined the Bishop of Rome rose in power, till at length, when the Emperor was taken out of the way, the Bishop stepped into his place, asserted himself to be Christ's vicar, and pronounced himself Lord of all the authorities of the known world. The words therefore can allude to no later heresy at some future time to arise within the church, for the mystery was already working, and the public development was to take place when the Roman empire was destroyed. Of course the third date cannot yet be tried by history. It may serve, however, to fix the prophecy on the Church of Rome, for it proves that it can refer to none of the early heresies in the church; they have long since vanished, and cannot be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's appearing. The history of the Church of Rome then exactly tallies with the prophecy, and *nothing else can*. But what shall we say of the awful assumption predicted of the man of sin? Can that be charged on the Romish popedom? It saith, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped." With sorrow of heart we are compelled to acknowledge that we fear it is one of the marked features of his character. See how he has dared to tamper with the commands of God himself. I have myself seen a catechism, in which the second commandment is actually struck out of the decalogue of God. Why is it, again, that none of the laity in the Church of Rome receive the cup in the Sacrament of the Lord's supper? Our Lord himself plainly commanded it. He even made the command more expressive for the cup than for the bread, saying, "Drink ye *all* of this;" yet Rome says to all her laity, "Drink ye none of this." What is this but to exalt himself above the Saviour, and with a bold hand to set

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aside the plain command of God himself? And look again at the doctrine of transubstantiation. You will remember the passages quoted last Sunday from the Councils. They taught that the priest could make ^[83] Christ the Son of God, could shut him in a casket, could carry him in a procession, could sacrifice him for sin. What is this but to exalt himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped? But the prophecy adds, "Sitteth in the temple of God shewing himself that he is God." This may refer to the assumption either of God's attributes or titles. The claim of infallibility, universal dominion, and the power of absolute forgiveness is nothing less than a usurpation of the attributes of God. But he has dared also to assume the titles, yea the very title of God himself. When the Lateran Council was held at Rome, and Pope Leo sat enthroned in the Lateran church, which claimed to be the mother church of universal Christendom, when he thus sat in the temple of God surrounded by its assembled representatives, the public orator, Marcellus, had the daring boldness to give utterance to the words, "Thou art our shepherd, our physician, in short, a second God in the world." ^[84] "Sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Did ever portrait more completely represent the person? p. 84

We conclude then that the Church of Rome is the great apostacy, the peculiar danger which makes the latter days so pre-eminently perilous. But we have not yet done with the consideration of their danger, for we are taught,

(3) That there will be a peculiar power of seduction immediately preceding the advent of our Lord. All the prophecies to which we have to-day alluded agree in showing that the great apostacy would be marked throughout its course by a mysterious power of seducing souls. But there are plain intimations in the word of God, that this power will be put forth in the latter days with an energy both multiplied and quickened. Nor is this a point of trivial importance; for you often hear it urged that we are too enlightened in this nineteenth century to be again ensnared by the superstitious principles of Rome. The rapid progress of scientific knowledge is thought a sufficient antidote against the seductions of those who would pervert the truth. Now such opinions will not stand for a moment the test of Scripture; for the Holy Ghost declares expressly that at the very time when science shall have reached its height, and when human intelligence shall have gained the very climax of its perfection, (I mean at the time just preceding the advent of our Lord,) that at that very crisis there shall be an unparalleled spirit of delusion in vigorous activity throughout the Church. Our Lord himself has prepared us for such a fact. ^[85] "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect." And the Spirit of God has expressly revealed it in Rev. xvi. 13-15. "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." I cannot now attempt a comment on these remarkable words, but only just observe two things respecting them. p. 85

(1) They allude to a period closely preceding the winding up of the world's history: there are seven vials, and these spirits appear under the sixth; when the seventh is poured out, the words are uttered, "It is done." ^[86a] p. 86

(2) They represent this period as a time of peculiar delusion throughout the world. The other vials all speak of war, suffering, and bloodshed: under the sixth there is a hush, like the hush of peace; its leading feature is delusion; delusion varied in all its forms, for there are three spirits; devilish in its origin, for they are the spirits of devils; prevailing in its influence, for it will throw its seductive power over the rulers of the world, and so sway the minds of states, that they will be, as it were, spell-bound, and lend their influence to the direct support of the antagonist of God. "They go forth to the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, and gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." ^[86b] I am not now intending to occupy your time by comparing this prophecy with history; my object is to bring home to each of you the fact, the one simple and most startling fact, that a spirit of strong delusion will peculiarly mark the latter days. The church is not to sit still in calm security, as though her warfare were accomplished, and her crown won at the Reformation. The great struggle is to be at last, the unclean spirits are to come forth at last; the sifting and searching days are to be at last. The nearer we approach to the advent, the greater the need of watchfulness; the farther the world advances, the more cautious heed should we pay to the warning voice of our Saviour; "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." p. 87

There is, therefore, abundant reason to believe that in the last days perilous times shall occur, it behoves us then to look most carefully into the second division of our subject.

II. The character and security of the people of God.

Nor is it enough for us to rest in any general description, as for example, in the fact that they are called, sealed, written in the book of life; we want such a description of their character as shall place them in contrast with the apostacy of the age in which they live. Such a description we may reasonably look for in the book of Revelation. The fullest account is there given of the apostacy; so there we should look for the clearest description of the contrasted saints. Now there is one sentence in that sacred book, which may supply us with the exact description we require, and which appears to point to two leading signs as distinguishing the character of the saints of God, viz. their submission to the word of God, and their simple faith in Christ himself. I p. 88

allude to the language of the Holy Ghost in Rev. xiv. 12. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Nor is this a single, solitary passage. It seems to form as it were the motto of the whole book of the Apocalypse.

"Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. i. 2.

"I, John, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. i. 9.

"I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." Rev. vi. 9.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." Rev. xii. 12.

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. xii. 17.

"And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God." Rev. xx. 4.

In these words we have the saints of God again and again placed in direct contrast with the apostacy; we may therefore boldly refer to them as marking distinctly their character.

(1) What then is this character? They are witnesses.

They are not carried away by the prevailing apostacy of the times, but are witnesses against surrounding error. The expression "witness" implies that they stand aloof as a protesting body. The witness for God is not one who floats down the broad tide of popular opinion, but who stands up in opposition to it, and boldly proclaims the truth of God. Athanasius was a witness for Christ, when he stood forth with all the world against him, and himself alone contending against the world. Our Saviour was a witness to the truth, when before Pontius Pilate he witnessed a good confession, and was bold to endure the cross in order to fulfil the Father's will. Thus the Greek word for "witnesses" is the same as that for "martyrs,"^[89a] and the witness for Christ must be one raising the voice of protest, and contending against opposition for the truth once delivered to the Saints.

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But for what are they witnesses? "For Jesus and the word of God."^[89b]

These two subjects form the great matter of their protest. "They keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." They are not occupied by secondary matters, nor debating on ecclesiastical distinctions. Such questions would not justify their separation. The word of God and the Son of God are the grand points for which they struggle.

Now this, let it be well observed, is the exact position of the faithful Protestant. As witnesses we are forced into separation from the great mass of professing Christendom. We were compelled at the Reformation either to abandon truth, or to quit the church which claims to itself the name of Catholic. And what is the subject matter of our protest? What are the points for which we struggle? If we were to search throughout the English language for any one short sentence, which should contain at once the sum and substance of our Protestant profession, I know of none that could be so exactly suitable as that with which the Holy Ghost has furnished us,—"the witness of Jesus and the Word of God." The whole of the Protestant controversy branches out from this one passage: it contains the germ of the whole argument.

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Now there is something very cheering in this conclusion. We are often taunted with our disunion from the (so called) Catholic church: we are often reproached because we are in a state of separation. But we give thanks for those reproaches. They are amongst the title-deeds of our inheritance; they help to prove us what we wish to be, the saints of God, and the witnesses for Christ. Had the Spirit of God described the saints in the latter days, as united under one vicar upon earth, as swaying the sceptre of unresisted power, as exercising lordship over kings and potentates, as reigning triumphantly through the known world, then indeed we should have trembled. But now it is the reverse. Our position is exactly that ascribed to the saints of God in prophecy; the position of Rome exactly that ascribed to the man of sin. The Scriptures tell us plainly that the saints in the latter days must stand aloof from the great apostacy, raising against it the voice of protest; and it fills our heart with gladness to find ourselves in that exact position. The saints of God are described in prophecy almost by the very name of "Protestant." We are not ashamed, therefore, of the blessed title, but following the guidance of the prophetic Scriptures, we had rather far be called "Protestant" than "Catholic." He that sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God, he is sure to claim for himself the name of Catholic, but he that is the servant of God must stand out boldly as the unflinching Protestant for Christ.

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(2) This also is the security of the saints.

To stand against the apostacy of the latter days, they must be drawing truth from God himself, and deriving life from Christ himself. They must listen to God himself, as speaking to them in his own inspired word, they must be kept by Christ himself while they believe on him as their only Lord. Their strength lies in this, that there is no curtain, no veil, no cloud between the soul and God—no second Mediator to convey the truth to them, or to convey them to Christ. They go

straight into the presence of the Father: they learn his own word from his own lips, and they are ushered into his presence by his own well-beloved Son. So it is that they “overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.”

This is their safety against error. In the doubts, and dangers, and delusions of the latter days, they rest on that which is infallible. Holy writers may mislead; human guides may fail; the most attractive ministers may become spellbound by the seductions of the day; but the Word of God remains unaltered and unalterable; and the saints of God must stand secure, being taught by the Spirit to depend on it alone for truth.

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This is their security against a fall. They bear their testimony to the glories of Christ’s grace, and meanwhile they rest secure in it. As witnesses for Christ, they are believers in Christ. The foundation on which they build is Christ himself. They lean on his atonement, his all-sufficient sacrifice, his perfect and complete redemption, nor can all the storms of hell prevail to shake their safety. The anchor of their soul entereth into that within the veil; and though they may here be tossed and troubled, no trouble, no turmoil, no distraction can tear them from the anchor that is fixed fast in the sanctuary of God. They derive their strength from Christ himself, as seated at the right hand of God; they live with him in the enjoyment of a direct and immediate union with himself; “Their life is hid with Christ in God:” and no man can rend the bond; no distractions can burst the union; nor can all the devils in hell combined prevail to pluck one single saint out of the faithful hand of his redeeming Lord. “I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

And now, dear brethren, to conclude. I have preached these sermons under the deep conviction that clouds are gathering around us, and that our great sifting time is near. Eighteen hundred years have nearly passed since the Saviour said, “I come quickly.” Nor are there signs wanting of his approach. There is to be seen throughout the world a breaking down of fixed principles of religious belief, a spirit of un-settlement brooding over the minds of men, and a loose indifference to the unscriptural claims of Rome. All this is predicted as a sign of his approach. Let us then stand fast in Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ alone. As pardoned sinners, let us cling to the cross; as justified believers, let us go boldly to the throne of grace; as God’s elect, let us rally round the banner of the Lamb. Then men of expediency may forsake the truth in the hour of its need; men ignorant of their bibles may be carried off by the seducing spirits of the latter days: men of unbelief may scoff alike at our fears and hopes; but Christ will hold us fast in his own right hand till the day of his coming. Clouds may gather, black as hell; storms may burst, terrific in their crash; but we shall be kept safe in the pavilion of our God, till we join the one, vast, harmonious hymn of praise, which will swell up from the whole company of God’s elect, to welcome Christ as he comes forth in his kingdom, the Redeemer, the Advocate, the Strength, the Salvation of his saints.

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APPENDIX.

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A.

THE 4th Rule of the Council of Trent respecting Prohibited Books:—

“Since it has been found by experience that if the Sacred Scriptures are allowed everywhere without distinction in the vulgar tongue, more harm than good arises in consequence of the rashness of man; let this be left to the judgment of the Bishop or Inquisitor; so that with the advice of the parish priest or confessor he may allow the use of the Bible in the vulgar tongue, when translated by Catholic authors, to such persons as they may consider capable of receiving not injury, but an increase of their faith and piety, from this kind of reading: which permission they must receive in writing. But any one who shall presume without such permission either to read or to possess them, shall be forbidden the absolution of his sins, unless he first restore the Bible to the ordinary. Booksellers also, who shall sell the Bible in the vulgar tongue to any one without the aforesaid permission, or shall in any other way provide it, shall forfeit the price of the books, to be employed in pious uses by the Bishop, and shall be subject to such other penalties as the Bishop may think it right to inflict, according to the character of the offence. Regulars may neither read nor purchase them without receiving permission from their prelates.”

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N.B.—It is very important to observe that this rule refers to Roman Catholic versions, i.e., to their own authorized translations, and forbids even the regulars to possess a copy without permission from the Bishop.

B.

The following extracts from the letter of the present Pope, dated 8th of May, 1844, show that the decree of the Council of Trent is still in full force with reference to the circulation of the Scriptures:—

“To return to Bibles translated into the vulgar tongue. It is long since pastors found themselves

necessitated to turn their attention particularly to the versions current at secret conventicles, and which heretics laboured, at great expense, to disseminate.

“Hence the warning and decrees of our predecessor, Innocent III., of happy memory, on the subject of lay societies and meetings of women, who had assembled themselves in the diocese of Metz, for objects of piety and the study of the Holy Scriptures. Hence the prohibition which subsequently appeared in France and Spain during the sixteenth century, with respect to the vulgar Bible. It became necessary, subsequently, to take even greater precautions, when the pretended Reformers, Luther and Calvin, daring by a multiplicity and incredible variety of errors, to attack the immutable doctrine of the faith, omitted nothing in order to seduce the faithful by their false interpretations, and translations into their vernacular tongues, which the then novel invention of printing contributed more rapidly to propagate and multiply. Whence it was generally laid down in the regulations dictated by the Fathers, adopted by the Council of Trent, and approved of by our predecessor, Pius VII., of happy memory, and which regulations are prefixed to the list of prohibited books, that the reading of the holy Bible translated into the vulgar tongue, should not be permitted except to those to whom it might be deemed necessary to confirm in the faith and piety. Subsequently, when heretics still persisted in their frauds, it became necessary for Benedict XIV. to superadd ^[96] the injunction that no versions whatever should be suffered to be read but those which should be approved of by the Holy See, accompanied by notes derived from the writings of the holy Fathers, or other learned and Catholic authors. Notwithstanding this, some new sectarians of the school of Jansenius, after the example of the Lutherans and Calvinists, feared not to blame these justifiable precautions of the Apostolical See, as if the reading of the holy books had been at all times, and for all the faithful, useful, and so indispensable that no authority could assail it.

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“But we find this audacious assertion of Jansenius, withered by the most rigorous censures in the solemn sentence, which was pronounced against their doctrine, with the assent of the whole Catholic universe, by the sovereign pontiffs of modern times, Clement XI. in his *unigenitus* constitution of the year 1713, and Pius VI. in his constitution *auctorem fidei* of the year 1794.

“Consequently, even before the establishment of Bible Societies was thought of, the decrees of the Church which we have quoted, were intended to guard the faithful against the frauds of heretics, who cloak themselves under the specious pretext that it is necessary to propagate and render common the study of the holy books. Since then, our predecessor, Pius VII. of glorious memory, observing the machinations of these societies to increase under his pontificate, did not cease to oppose their efforts, at one time through the medium of the apostolical nuncios, at another by letters and decrees, emanating from the several congregations of cardinals of the holy Church, and at another by the two pontifical letters addressed to the Bishops of Gnesen and the Archbishop of Mohilif. After him, another of our holy predecessors, Leo XII., reproved the operations of the Bible Societies, by his circulars addressed to all the Catholic pastors in the universe, under the date of May 5th, 1824.

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“Shortly afterwards, our immediate predecessor, Pius VIII. of happy memory, confirmed their condemnation by his circular letter of May 24, 1829. We, in short, who succeeded them, notwithstanding our great unworthiness, have not ceased to be solicitous on this subject, and have especially studied to bring to the recollection of the faithful, the several rules which have been successively laid down with regard to the vulgar versions of the holy books.”

And again.

“Let all know then the enormity of the sin against God and the church which they are guilty of, who dare to associate themselves with any of these (the bible) societies, or abet them in any way. Moreover, we confirm and renew the decrees recited above, delivered in former times by apostolic authority against the publication, distribution, reading, and possession of books of the Holy Scriptures translated into the vulgar tongue. With reference to the works of whatsoever writer we call to mind, the observance of the general rules and decrees of our predecessors, to be found prefixed to the *index* of prohibited books: and we invite the faithful to be upon their guard, not only against the books named in the *index*, but also against those prescribed in the general prescriptions.”

These extracts prove beyond the possibility of controversy

(1.) That the rule of the Index of the Council of Trent has never been permitted to fall into abeyance, and has never been repealed. From the time of its enactment it has always been, and now is, the binding law of the Church of Rome. It has been constantly enforced by Papal authority, and is especially commended to the careful attention of the faithful by the authoritative letter of the present Pope.

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(2.) That no Roman Catholic is permitted on any pretext to read, or to possess a copy of the Bible in his own language, without a written order from the Bishop or Inquisitor. It matters not who is the author of the translation, whether Protestant or Romanist, whether Luther or the Pope himself; if any man either possess or read it, for that offence he is cut off from absolution and thereby from church communion.

(3.) That since the days of Benedict XIV. it has always been, and now is, unlawful under any circumstances to read any version without notes. God’s word is not allowed to speak for itself; man’s gloss must accompany it; the truth is forbidden in its simplicity; they are afraid to allow the people to read even their own version, without superadding extracts from “other learned and

Catholic authors.”

(4.) That these versions with their notes may not be possessed or read unless they are first approved of by the Holy See. Query. How many versions approved by the Pope exist in the whole world? Is there one in England? It is of course difficult to prove a negative; but those who are best acquainted with the subject assert that they have never been able to discover one. See Venn’s Letter to Waterworth, Jan. 15, 1845.

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(5.) That the Church of Rome attacks the broad principle of the general usefulness of the Bible. The Pope does not merely discuss the comparative merits of this or that version, but goes boldly to the great question, whether the reading of the Bible is really useful for the people. The Jansenists, according to his own account, asserted that the reading of the holy books “had been at all times, and for all the faithful, useful, and so indispensable that no authority could assail it.” This he declares to be an audacious assertion, and pronounces it withered by the unanimous condemnation of the whole Catholic universe.

THE END.

LONDON:

G. J. PALMER, PRINTER, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

FOOTNOTES.

[5] The use of this double rule may be seen in any Roman Catholic writing. Take e.g. the 1st decree of the 25th Session of the Council of Trent. “Since the Catholic Church, taught by the Holy Spirit, has learned from the Sacred Scriptures, and from the ancient tradition of the Fathers, that there is a purgatory, &c.” Here is an appeal to two sources of divine truth, Scripture and Tradition.

[6] Art. VI.

[9] This appears very plainly from a letter of the present Pope, dated, 8th of May, 1844, and addressed to the Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, and Bishops. He complains of Bible Societies, as “Pretending to popularize the holy pages, and render them intelligible without the aid of any interpreter.”

[10a] Eph. iv. 11,12.

[10b] Acts xx. 28.

[10c] 2 Chron. xv. 3.

[12a] Hab. ii. 2.

[12b] John xvi. 13.

[12c] Eph. i. 17.

[13a] 1 John ii. 27.

[13b] In the letter itself, Leo says, “Reprove . . . that the faithful entrusted to you, (adhering strictly to the rules of our congregation of the Index,) 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 congregation of the Index, is a congregation appointed by the Church of Rome to draw up a list of prohibited books. In the 4th rule they condemn the free circulation of the Bible. See Appendix A.

It should be observed that these extracts refer not to Protestant, but to their own Roman Catholic versions. See Mr. Venn’s letter to Mr. Waterworth, January 15th, 1845.

The present Pope agrees with his predecessors. In the letter above referred to, dated May the 8th, 1844, he says, “We confirm and renew the decrees recited above, delivered in former times, by apostolic authority, against the publication, distribution, reading, and possession of books of the Holy Scripture translated into the vulgar tongue.” The motive for these restrictions appears very plainly from another passage in the same letter. “Watch attentively over those who are appointed to expound the Holy Scriptures, and see that they acquit themselves faithfully according to the capacity of their hearers, and that they dare not under any pretext whatever, interpret or explain the holy pages contrary to the tradition of the holy fathers, and to the service of the Catholic church.” Here are two standards of interpretation laid down, tradition, and self-interest. The Romish Preacher must not preach even God’s truth, if it does not happen to serve the purposes of Rome. It seems very strange that an infallible church should be so afraid of the infallible word. Appendix B.

[19] Sess. VI. Can. 11. “Si quis dixerit, homines justificari vel solâ imputatione justitiæ Christi, vel solâ peccatorum remissione, exclusâ gratia et charitate, quæ in cordibus eorum per Spiritum

Sanctum diffundatur, atque illis inhæreat; aut etiam gratiam, quâ justificamur, esse tantum favorum Dei, anathema sit.”

[23a] James ii. 10, 11.

[23b] Gal. iii. 10.

[24] Article xii. “Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God’s judgment, yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; inasmuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by the fruit.”

[25a] Job xxvii. 7.

[25b] Luke xv. 7.

[25c] Coloss. i. 10.

[26a] John xv. 8.

[26b] Hooker on Justification.

[27] Psalm xix. 3.

[30] The doctrine of supererogation is worse still. According to it some men do more than is required, and not only satisfy God’s law themselves, but gain a superfluous merit which may be made over to their less perfect brethren. Catechism of the Council of Trent, Part II., De Pœnitentia, 109, 110, “The extreme goodness and clemency of God must be chiefly praised for this, that he has granted to human weakness that one shall be allowed to make satisfaction for another, which indeed belongs especially to this part of penitence, for as with reference to contrition and confession no man can mourn or confess for another, so those who are indued with divine grace can perform in the name of another that which is due to God. Whence it happens that in one sense one man is found to bear another’s burden.”

[31] 1 Pet iii. 18.

[35a] “Præterea est purgatorius ignis, quo piorum animæ ad definitum tempus cruciatæ expiantur, ut eis in æternam patriam ingressus patere possit, in quam nihil coinquinatum ingreditur.” Part I. Art. v. §§ 5.

[35b] This is sometimes denied, when men wish to recommend the doctrine to Protestants, but it stands written in the book. “Purgatorius ignis.”

[36a] Large sums are left in legacy, and paid by surviving friends, in order that masses may be said for souls in purgatory.

[36b] Catm. part I, Art. v. § 5.

[37] 1 Pet. iv. 12.

[40a] Rev. iv. 8.

[40b] Luke xvi. 22.

[41a] Acts vii. 55.

[41b] Phil. i. 23.

[42] Phil. i. 21.

[44] Psalm xxiii. 4.

[47] “Si quis post acceptam justificationis gratiam, cuilibet peccatori pœnitenti ita culpam remitti, ut reatum æternæ pœnæ deleri dixerit, ut nullus remaneat reatus pœnæ temporalis exsolvendæ vel in hoc Sæculo, vel in futuro in Purgatorio, antequam ad regna cælorum aditus patere possit; anathema sit.”—Trent Sess. vi. Can. 30.

I never could understand how the Church of Rome reconciles this decree with its doctrine of extreme unction. The Council of Trent decrees, Sess. xiv., Extreme Unction, Chap. 2, “The matter of the Sacrament is the grace of the Holy Spirit, whose unction blots out all such offences, and remains of sin, as still require expiation.” “Cujus unctio delicta, si quæ sint adhuc expianda, ac peccati reliquias abstergit.” If this be true, what sins remain for expiation in purgatory? What can be the use of masses for the dead? Surely the priests of the Church of Rome cannot believe their own decree; for if they did, it would be nothing short of robbery to receive fees for extricating souls from purgatory. They are already free through extreme unction.

[49] How miserable is the confidence of a poor dying Roman Catholic! He trembles at the thought of purgatorial fire, and leaves money to the priest that masses may be said for his release. If the priest happen to forget him, in purgatory he must remain. Nay, more! If the masses are offered they may be worthless, for the Church of Rome declares the intention of the priest to be necessary to a sacrament. Trent, Sess. vii., Can. 11. “If any man shall say that the intention of doing that which the church does is not required in ministers while they perform and confer the sacrament, let him be accursed.” The priest, therefore, may perform all the masses, and get all the money, and yet if his intention happen to be wanting the poor soul would profit

nothing. This places the soul in purgatory at the absolute mercy of the priest on earth. The Rev. James Page, in his "Letters to a Priest of the Church of Rome," gives the following passage from the "Master Key of Popery," written by D. Antonio Gavin, in which he, who was himself a priest, gives an extract from the private confession of a priest, being at the point of death, in 1710. "The necessary intention of a priest, in the administration of baptism and consecration, without which the sacraments are of none effect, I confess I had it not several times, as you shall see in the parish books; and observe there, that all those marked with a star, the baptism was not valid, for I had no intention; and for this I can give no other reason than my malice and wickedness; many of them are dead, for which I am heartily sorry. As for the times I have consecrated without intention, we must leave it to God Almighty's mercy for the wrong done by it to the souls of my parishioners, and those in purgatory cannot be helped." Oh! that we could persuade our poor Roman Catholic brethren to trust at once to the great High Priest, who blotteth out all sin by his own most precious blood!

[52] Mal. ii. 2.

[53a] Psalm lxxix. 22.

[53b] Sess. xiii. De Eucharistia, Section 4, "Sancta hæc synodus declarat per consecrationem panis et vini conversionem fieri totius substantiæ panis in substantiam corporis Christi Domini nostri, et totius substantiæ vini in substantiam sanguinis ejus."

[53c] Catm. Part ii. De Eucharistia, Sec. 32, "A pastoribus explicandum est non solum verum Christi corpus, et quidquid ad veram corporis rationem pertinet, velut ossa et nervos, sed etiam totum Christum in hoc sacramento contineri."

[53d] Sess. xiii. Canon 1, "Si quis negaverit, in sanctissimæ eucharistiæ sacramento contineri verè, realiter et substantialiter corpus et sanguinem unà cum anima et divinitate Domini nostri Jesu Christi, ac proinde totum Christum; sed dixerit tantummodò esse in eo, ut in signo, vel figura, aut virtute; anathema sit."

[54] Sees. xiii. Can. 6, "Si quis dixerit, in Sancto Eucharistiæ Sacramento Christum unigenitum Dei Filium non esse cultu Latriæ etiam externo, adorandum: atque ideò nec festivâ peculiari celebritate venerandum, neque in processionibus, secundùm laudabilem et universalem Ecclesia Sancta ritum et consuetudinem, solemniter circumgestandum, vel non publicè, ut adoretur, populo proponendum, et ejus adoratores esse idololâtres; anathema sit."

[55a] Sess. xxii. 2, "In divino hoc sacrificio, quod in missa peragitur, idem ille Christus continetur, et incruentè immolatur, qui in ara crucis simul seipsum cruentè obtulit."

[55b] Sess. xxii. Can. 3, "Si quis dixerit, missa sacrificium tantum esse laudis, et gratiarum actionis, aut nudam commemorationem sacrificii in cruce peracti, non autem propitiatorium, vel soli prodesse sumenti; neque pro vivis et defunctis, pro peccatis, pœnis, satisfactionibus et aliis necessitatibus, offerri debere; anathema sit."

[56] Isa. xlv. 16, 17.

[57] Art. 31.

[58a] Art. 28. "The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper is faith."

[58b] Dr. Cumming states that there are no less than 37 passages in the Bible in which there is a similar form of expression. Lectures, p. 147.

[61] The words would not prove the doctrine of the Church of Rome, even if the soul and divinity were not added as they are. The utmost that could possibly be proved from them is, that the bread was his body, and the wine his blood. There is not a hint at the doctrine that the wafer *alone* is a whole Christ, including both body and blood. Indeed the addition of the words "This is my blood," distinctly proves the contrary, it shows that both were not united in one. To avoid this obvious conclusion is, I suspect, the reason why the cup is withheld from the laity.

[62] The Council of Trent appears conscious of this absence of all scriptural authority, for in its decree respecting the adoration of the wafer it appeals to tradition only. "Pro more in Catholica ecclesia semper recepto." Sess. xiii. 5.

[63] If the intention of the Priest be wanting, then, according to the principles of the Church of Rome, all the worshippers of the Host must be idolaters, for according to their own Canon, (See page 49,) without his secret intention no change takes place. In such cases, therefore, the bread remains bread, according to their own doctrine; and to worship it with latria (the honour due to God) is manifest idolatry.

[64a] Rev. i. 18.

[64b] John xvi. 7.

[65a] Acts i. 11.

[65b] Acts iii. 21.

[71a] Rev. i. 1.

[71b] Matt. xxiv. 33.

[72] Luke xxi. 25-27.

[73] Mark xiii. 7.

[76a] 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;

4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time.

7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way.

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.

[76b] ἡ ἀποστασία.

[77] See also Eph. ii. 20-22.

[78] Tertullian, who lived in the second century, says of the letting power, "Who can this be but the Roman state? the division of which into ten kingdoms will bring on Antichrist, and then the wicked one shall be revealed." De resurrect. carnis, c. 24. And in his Apology, "There is especial necessity that we should pray for the emperors, the empire, and the general prosperity of Rome, for we know that a mighty power threatening the whole world and the end of the world itself, is kept back by the intervention of the Roman empire."—Apol. c. 32. Cyril says, "This the predicted Antichrist will come when the times of the Roman empire shall be fulfilled, and the consummation of the world shall approach. Ten kings of the Romans shall arise together, in different places indeed, but they shall reign at the same time; among these the eleventh is Antichrist who by magical and wicked artifice shall seize the Roman power." Catech. 15, c. 5. See Newton on the Prophecies.

[80] Verse 9.

[81] E.G. The exaltation of human tradition, Coloss. ii. 8, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." The doctrine of justification by works, to overthrow which is the single object of the Epistle to the Galatians. Worshipping angels and professing to be wise above that which is written. Coloss. ii. 18, "Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, Making religion consist in forms that can never satisfy." Coloss. ii. 20-23. Exaltation of the priesthood, 1 Pet. v. 3, "Neither as being lords of God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."

[83] Remember especially the doctrine of intention (page 49.) If in the consecration the priest think proper to withhold his intention, then the wafer remains a wafer, and no change takes place. If the priest think fit to will it, then the wafer is the very person, body, nerves, soul, and divinity, of our living and reigning Lord. The creation of the Saviour is therefore made dependent upon the uncontrolled will of the priest. What is this but to exalt himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped?

[84] These blasphemous titles were not only given to the Pope by the flattery of orators, but with the acts of the Council were afterwards published by papal authority. At the inauguration of the Pope he sits upon the high altar in St. Peter's church, making the table of the Lord his footstool, and in that position receives adoration from the people. The following language was addressed to him in 4th Session of the Lateran Council: "Our Lord God the Pope; another God upon earth; king of kings, and lord of lords. The same is the dominion of God and the Pope. To believe that our Lord God the Pope might not decree, as he has decreed, were a matter of heresy. The power of the Pope is greater than all created power, and extends itself to things celestial, terrestrial, and infernal. The Pope doeth whatsoever things he listeth, even things unlawful, and is more than God (et est plus quam Deus)." See Newton on the Prophecies.

[85] Matt. xxiv. 24.

[86a] Verse 17.

[86b] It is remarkable that these unclean spirits appear to aim at political influence more than at personal persuasion. "They go forth to the kings." The prophecy therefore prepares us for a

time when governments shall support popery in opposition to the feelings of the people.

[89a] μάρτυρες.

[89b] Rev. xx. 4.

[96] In his controversy with Mr. Venn, Mr. Waterworth alluded to this injunction as a repeal of the 4th Rule. In this he was at variance with the Pope, for his Holiness says it was an addition to it.

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