

# The Project Gutenberg eBook of An Essay on Papal Infallibility, by John Sinclair

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you'll have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: An Essay on Papal Infallibility

Author: John Sinclair

Release date: August 9, 2016 [EBook #52759]

Language: English

\*\*\* START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK AN ESSAY ON PAPAL INFALLIBILITY \*\*\*

Transcribed from the 1850 Francis & John Rivington edition by David Price, email [ccx074@pglaf.org](mailto:ccx074@pglaf.org)

LONDON:  
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,  
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

## AN ESSAY ON PAPAL INFALLIBILITY.

---

BY THE VENERABLE  
JOHN SINCLAIR M.A.  
ARCHDEACON OF MIDDLESEX,  
AND VICAR OF KENSINGTON.

LONDON:  
FRANCIS & JOHN RIVINGTON,  
ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE.

1850.

### ON PAPAL INFALLIBILITY.

p. 1

"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."—*Sixth Article of Religion*.

"As we deny not those things that are written, so we refuse those that are not written."—*Jerome*. <sup>[1]</sup>

"The Spirit of God, therefore, is the only infallible judge here; and has declared as plainly as any successive judges can, in those things that are necessary to life and

salvation, what is to be believed and to be done; which if we believe and practise in particular, and do also in general, and implicitly believe and stand in a readiness to obey the rest of the Scripture, when the sense thereof appears to us, we are in a safe condition, and need not doubt but it will go well with us in the other state.”—*Works of Henry More*, pp. 453, 454.

EVERY reflecting Christian, as soon almost as he is capable of reflection, must have continual occasion to observe with sorrow and anxiety the multiplied varieties of opinion that divide the Church of Christ, on every point or article of Christian faith; the confidence with which every sect lays claim exclusively to the possession of saving knowledge, and the unqualified severity with which each party reprobates the other, as being implicated in unpardonable heresy. On hearing (and who can escape hearing?) the fulmination of these mutual anathemas, we not only grieve for the state of dreadful peril in which, if we admit such principles, a large proportion of our neighbours, friends, and fellow Christians must be involved: but we grieve likewise on our own account. We are visited with doubts, misgivings, and apprehensions, lest we ourselves, through ignorance or prejudice, should have adopted unawares into our creed some article containing deadly error; or should have omitted something indispensable to salvation.

p. 2

In this state of intellectual and spiritual perplexity, if we want the Christian industry and moral courage to work out for ourselves, by the help of God, this greatest of all problems, we are in a state of passive readiness to receive counsel from the first adviser. Among the multitude of counsellors who present themselves, none is more importunately obtrusive, or more dictatorially confident than the Romanist; and I propose, for the subject of this essay, to examine successively the remedies and expedients he suggests for calming our disquietude, and restoring our religious peace.

He informs us that our state of mind is the necessary consequence of adhering to a Protestant communion; and that we never can obtain repose and satisfaction until we enter the Catholic Church—until, with the other wandering sheep dispersed over the forbidden pastures of the earth, we return with humble penitence to the fold which we have left; until, in short, we renounce all dependence on the conclusions of uncertain reason, and establish our Faith for ever upon the dictates of infallibility. “That there must,” he adds, “be some where upon earth an infallible living judge, an arbiter of religious controversy incapable of error, an authority from whose decision on points of faith there can be no appeal, is a plain and obvious principle, which, on proper reflection, you will find impossible to be rejected. Not to insist on arguments from Scripture, although sufficiently conclusive, and capable in themselves of proving that such an arbiter has been appointed, there are independent considerations in favour of infallibility which ought to satisfy every reasonable mind: for the wise Creator of man would never grant a revelation to his creatures, and then leave them to the direction of their own erring judgment in ascertaining the truths revealed. The benevolent Creator of man must know that man is fallible; that he needs indispensably a conductor; and that without some infallible conductor the benefits of revelation would be doubtful and precarious. But if infallibility exist at all in the Church, it must exist in the Papal communion, which alone makes the least pretension to the privilege. Therefore, only reconcile yourself to our infallibly directed Church, and you will no longer find occasion for uneasiness. You will be guided safely through all the mazes of theological disputation. Instead of being ‘tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine’ <sup>[3a]</sup> on a shoreless ocean of uncertainty and error, you will repose with comfort and unruffled calm in the quiet haven of infallibility.”

p. 3

On the promulgation of these assurances our disquietude would at once be tranquillized, if we could but persuade ourselves that the promise of infallible direction, would be as certainly fulfilled, as it is confidently made. But here lies the difficulty. The assertions of our Romish counsellor are bold, but the principle from which he argues is fallacious. The assumed principle, that the human mind is capable of prejudging what conduct the Creator must pursue towards his creatures, or of pre-determining what benefits he must bestow, is incompatible with our nature, and irreconcilable with experience. <sup>[3b]</sup> We may perhaps admit, that if infallibility be found at all in the Church, it must be found in that branch which alone pretends to the privilege: but are we warranted to conclude that God must have granted this extraordinary privilege, merely because we think it likely, or proper, or desirable, that He should grant it? Can we safely infer, in any case, that God *must* have done what we think it right that He should do; and make this inference independently of all proof, that He has actually done so? Is it not dictatorial, and hazardous in the last degree, to determine by abstract reasonings, what line of conduct it would be proper for an all-perfect, and all-wise Being to adopt, till evidence appear that He has really adopted it? We may indeed rest assured, in general, that God will do nothing arbitrary or irrational; but how often and how fatally should we be misled, did we venture to predict that a certain course of Divine action is alone rational, benevolent, and just—and, therefore, *must* have been the course actually followed by the Almighty! If we admit this mode of reasoning, and hazard speculations of this kind, we should certainly think it reasonable, that if God created sensitive beings, He would make infallible provision against every error or mistake, which might render them liable to fall from a state of holiness into a state of guilt and misery. We should think it further reasonable for Him to cause those most essential truths of religion, his own existence and perfections, to rest on evidence infallible and demonstrative; so as to preclude all doubt or hesitation in the most sceptical inquirer. Or, (to suppose another case,) in disputed questions of political importance among nations, since war and bloodshed cannot otherwise be prevented, we should think it reasonable for Him to appoint some great judge of international law, by whom all differences might infallibly be determined, and the blessings of tranquillity and peace secured to all the

p. 4

kingdoms of the earth.

But God has not fulfilled these expectations, though to all appearance highly reasonable. He has left both men and angels to the freedom of their own wills; and has created them not only capable of abusing that gift of freedom, but of involving themselves in sin and wickedness, and in everlasting ruin. He has afforded no infallible, no demonstrative evidence of his own existence and perfections; but has left mankind to ascertain these fundamental truths from principles of abstract reason, and by reflections on the works of nature and of Providence. He permits contending nations to decide their quarrels by an appeal to arms: and notwithstanding all the mischiefs consequent upon war, has not thought fit to make that effectual provision against this widely desolating source of evil, which our human wisdom, if appealed to, would probably have suggested; namely, the appointment of an unerring and authoritative arbiter. We are, therefore, not entitled to argue that God in his kingdom of grace must unquestionably have pursued a course, which, in his kingdom of Providence, He has not pursued; nor to maintain that to silence all religious controversies, He must indispensably have had recourse to an expedient which, in political disputes, He has neglected. We are not entitled to infer, that He must necessarily have determined, by the authority of an infallible judge, the less essential truths of religion; when He has left the fundamental truths of all, to be determined by our own erring reason. We are not entitled to infer, that the Creator of men must have made infallible provision against their falling into heresy or "believing a lie," and thus frustrating the means for their restoration to a state of holiness and happiness; when He made no provision of that kind against their fall. <sup>[5]</sup>

p. 5

But granting to our Romanist adviser that his representations were as sound as they are fallacious; still they could only lead us to a probable, and never to an infallible conclusion. The strength of the building must be proportionate to the solidity of its foundation. If our faith in the supposed infallible arbiter is to be founded on the validity and force of the arguments and conjectures which have been stated; our faith in the decisions of that arbiter cannot be greater than our faith in the arguments and conjectures which support his infallibility. Since these proofs, at the very utmost, are any thing but demonstrations, and are only probabilities, we cannot under any circumstances have more than probability to guide us: and we therefore end as we began, and our disquietude even on our admission of an unerring judge, remains exactly as before. Our Romish advocate, however, is not discomfited. He proceeds to affirm that the pretensions of his Church are supported by analogy. He reminds us that the Church of God, under the Jewish dispensation, was directed by an infallible human authority; and that the same high privilege, being equally wanted, might be equally expected in the Christian œconomy. He quotes for this purpose those magnificent assurances of God's peculiar favour and protection, to be found throughout the books of Moses and of the prophets; and relies especially on the remarkable rule established by the legislator of Israel to this effect: "If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, thou shalt come unto the Priests, the Levites, and unto the Judge that shall be in those days, and inquire, and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment. And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the Priest, or unto the Judge, even that man shall die." <sup>[6]</sup>

p. 6

To this argument from analogy we may reply, that the alleged fact on which the analogy depends, is unfounded. The Jewish Church was not infallible. The evidence adduced to prove it so is totally inadequate; and unanswerable evidence may be brought forward to prove it otherwise. With respect to the text in question, it has not the remotest connexion with matters of faith: it relates entirely to matters of civil government. The introductory words of the passage, if quoted fairly, and at full length, must satisfy every reader, that they apply only to secular litigation: that what is here enjoined by the Mosaic law is submission to the legal magistrate, not assent to any article of Faith: that the contumacy here forbidden under penalty of death, was not heresy but rebellion; not obstinate error, but obstinate disobedience. "If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, *between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, &c.*" <sup>[7a]</sup>—an evident reference this to civil litigation.

p. 7

Besides, however encouraging the language of the Jewish Scripture respecting God's "everlasting kindness" to his "chosen people," we know on the authority of their own historians, that they went continually wrong. Even in the days of undoubted divine interposition we read that "the people corrupted themselves, and turned aside quickly out of the way which God commanded them." <sup>[7b]</sup> "Aaron" (their supposed infallible guide) "made a golden calf, and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt:" again, we are informed concerning Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, that "he took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem, behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." <sup>[7c]</sup> Further, it is recorded of Elijah, that he complained of the Church of Israel, as if it had entirely apostatized and disappeared from the earth. He exclaims in his address to God, "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only am left." We read of Ahab that he gathered his prophets together, about four hundred men, and that there was only one individual, Micaiah, "a prophet of the Lord." <sup>[7d]</sup> Jeremiah laments over his corrupt times, exclaiming, "A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: the Prophets prophesy falsely, and the Priests bear rule through their means; and my people love to have it so." <sup>[7e]</sup> Isaiah complains of the Jewish priesthood in his time, under the figurative name of "watchmen," that they were "blind," that they were all "ignorant shepherds that could not understand." <sup>[7f]</sup> But finally, to omit many less remarkable instances of error and apostasy, our blessed Saviour Himself was condemned by the Jewish Church and crucified. Since therefore the Jewish Church was not infallible, the argument from analogy, whatever value our Romish friend may attach to it,

p. 8

is all distinctly on our side. If previous to the Christian æra no unerring director was appointed, none may be appointed now.

The next resource of our ingenious disputant is to affirm, that unless the Church possessed infallibility we could have no certain nor infallible belief of the Scriptures, for which his Church is our authority. To this sophism we can easily reply, by corresponding cases. The copyists and librarians who have preserved to us the Greek and Latin classics are not, on that account, infallible expositors of classical antiquity. Supposing, therefore, that we are exclusively indebted to Romanism for transmitting to us the sacred oracles, it does not follow that Romanists interpret them infallibly. It happens also, (unfortunately for Romanist pretensions,) that we are not indebted to any local tradition, such as that of the Church of Rome, for the preservation of the canonical books of Scripture; but to the universal tradition of Christendom. Perhaps we are more under obligation to the Greek than to the Latin Church; both because the writings of the New Testament were originally in Greek, and because the chief authorities to prove their genuineness and authenticity, as well as the earliest enumerations of them are not Romish, but oriental productions. <sup>[8]</sup>

It thus appears that infallibility is not demonstrable by abstract reasonings and analogies, but must be proved, if it be proved at all, by direct evidence. To evidence of this latter description we readily give attention, and request our Romanist to inform us what he has to offer in the shape of an explicit promise from God to support the claims of the Romish Church. At the same time we give him warning, that before he can satisfy our minds, he must lay before us full and categorical information on the following particulars: namely,

1. By what organ the infallible oracles of Rome are delivered.
2. By what evidence the claim to infallibility, as existing in that organ, is established; and
3. On what security we can rely, that our own fallible reason will not mistake nor misconceive the doctrine propounded for our belief.

p. 9

Our desire of satisfaction on these points is not expressed in any captious spirit, but is suggested by the necessity of the case. For if we cannot infallibly discover in what person or persons infallibility resides; if the Romanist cannot prove to us by infallible arguments, that infallibility belongs to the person or persons for whom he claims it; and if further, we cannot obtain from our instructor in Romanism some infallible security that we shall understand the doctrines proposed to us: it plainly follows that the infallibility he so pertinaciously insists upon, must be to us a matter of indifference, attended with no one practical result. Our doubts and perplexities will continue unresolved, and we shall be compelled to seek some other guide to the peace and certainty we so anxiously desiderate.

But unhappily in all these respects the promises of our Romish advocate, the more they are examined, appear the more unstable and unsafe. For first of all, when we inquire by what *organ* the infallible oracles are promulgated; he is obliged to acknowledge, that this important point has been for ages a subject of much dispute, and a question very far from being yet infallibly determined. Various are the conflicting authorities, the whole of which it would be needless, or perhaps impossible to enumerate. <sup>[9]</sup> Some learned Romanists are of opinion that infallibility is lodged in the Roman Pontiff, as successor to St. Peter: others of equal learning are inclined to place it in a general Council: a third party, not conceiving that a Pope or Council singly is infallible, ascribe infallibility to both in conjunction: and fourthly, there are not wanting numerous and learned authorities who insist that even the decrees of a general Council, ratified by the Pope, are not to be accounted infallible, until they have been received by the Church Universal.

p. 10

This explanation is very far from satisfactory: for we thus perceive, (according to the avowal of Romanists themselves,) our liability to continual mistakes and misapprehensions respecting the real quarter where infallible direction can be found. If we take a Pope or Council singly for our guide, we have no security for avoiding deadly heresy; for a Pope or Council singly may be heretical. On the other hand, if we study to avoid this danger by attaching our faith exclusively to a Pope and Council in conjunction, (that is, to the decree of a general Council ratified by Papal sanction,) we fall into another danger, and may reject or omit some necessary doctrine, to which a Pope or Council singly has affixed the seal of infallibility.

This admitted uncertainty as to the quarter of the earth towards which we are to look for infallible guidance, is a ground of fair presumption, perhaps even of demonstration, that infallibility is in no quarter to be found. For the very object of infallibility is the removal of all doubt; but doubt can never be removed while the question, who is the remover of it, remains unfixed, and impossible to be decided. To receive assurances the most positive and solemn, that all our doubts shall be resolved; and yet to be told that the authority for resolving them is doubtful, is to use a cruel mode of trifling with our simplicity. For it has been long and painfully remarked, as the reproach of Romanists, that, on their principles, the greatest controversy among Christians is, how to fix the organ by which, or by whom, controversies shall be unerringly determined. <sup>[10]</sup>

Finding ourselves disappointed that this great question, in what place the infallible oracle resides, remains still in agitation, we next entreat our Papal adviser to explain the grounds on which the several parties he has mentioned claim the lofty privilege ascribed to them. And since a living judge, sitting constantly in one spot, and therefore always ready to be consulted, is

p. 11

incomparably more desirable as the organ of unerring truth, than an assembly of divines, whom it is often difficult to call together; we are all attention, waiting eagerly to hear in the first place the claims of the Roman Pontiff, and to receive, if possible, such clear and convincing arguments for Pontifical infallibility, that henceforward we shall be able to rely upon it with infallible assurance.

In compliance with this request, our Papal guide adduces what he considers evidence from Scripture, and rests the Papal cause upon the following declarations of our Lord. First, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;" secondly, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven;" thirdly, "I have prayed that thy faith fail not;" and lastly, "Feed my sheep."<sup>[11]</sup>

When we learn that these quotations are brought forward as sufficient grounds for establishing an infallible assurance of Papal infallibility, our first impression is of surprise: and our surprise increases into amazement, the more we try to follow our guide, and to rest an infallible assurance upon reasons so uncertain and precarious. There is throughout the texts quoted, no mention of the Roman Pontiff whatever, nor any distinct allusion to the subject of infallibility. It therefore seems extremely difficult to comprehend how any reasoning man should thence infer that the Pontiff is infallible. But here we are next given to understand that his Holiness, as successor to St. Peter, inherits all the privileges of St. Peter; and that what our Saviour promised to that Apostle was not promised to him personally, but to his successors in all ages. Yet, on examining the authorities again, we find no warrant for the conclusion asserted. There is nothing to assure us infallibly, nothing which would even lead us to suspect that our Lord looked further than to the Apostle himself, or conferred upon him any privilege not shared in common with his brethren. Our Saviour's prayer that the faith of Peter might not fail, and his subsequent restoration of him to the Apostolic office by the thrice repeated charge of "Feed my sheep," have obvious reference to the character and conduct of that disciple—at one time an apostate, afterwards an accepted penitent. They can relate to no other person, and to no other circumstances. And "it is absurd," as Bishop Stillingfleet observes, "to infer an impossibility in the Pope of falling, from a promise to St. Peter of recovery" and restoration.<sup>[12a]</sup> Again, the promise, "whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,"<sup>[12b]</sup> conveys no peculiar advantage or pre-eminence to St. Peter; for the very same power is conveyed afterwards by our Lord Himself to the whole number of the Apostles. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."<sup>[12c]</sup> In respect to the privilege with which that promise is introduced, "I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," if these words really have any meaning distinct from the power already mentioned of binding and loosing, they refer prophetically to St. Peter, as the person by whose instrumentality the gates of the Church would be opened to mankind. And accordingly with one key the Apostle, on the day of Pentecost, opened the gate of the Church to the believing Jews and proselytes, when by the sermon which he preached at Jerusalem he converted about three thousand souls; and with the other key he afterwards opened the gate of the Church to Cornelius and his friends, who were the first Gentile converts.<sup>[13a]</sup>

p. 12

p. 13

The declaration, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock"<sup>[13b]</sup> "I will build my church," is a text of very ambiguous meaning, and cannot therefore be the ground of infallible assurance. We have no means of clearly ascertaining whether our Lord refers to the person of St. Peter as a foundation for the Church, or to the confession of St. Peter made in the preceding verse. "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God." A large proportion of the fathers, including Hilary, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, and Augustin,<sup>[13c]</sup> understood our Saviour's declaration as referring solely to the confession of Faith made so distinctly and so zealously by the Apostle. The text itself seems evidently to require the interpretation. To speak strictly, Christ Himself is the sole foundation of the Christian Church; and an Apostle could only be so in a secondary sense. In this secondary sense, however, the Church is not founded upon St. Peter only in particular, but on the Apostolic college in general; as St. Paul more than once affirmed. "Ye are built," he says to the Ephesians, "upon the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."<sup>[13d]</sup> "Other foundation," he says to the Corinthians, "can no man lay."<sup>[13e]</sup> And again, addressing the Church of Corinth, (when the same inspired writer reckons up the different gradations of Christian ministers,) he does not mention St. Peter first, as nearer the foundation than any other member of the Apostolic college; but speaks of the whole body in the following general terms; "God hath set some in his Church, first Apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers."<sup>[13f]</sup> The Revelations of St. John describe in like manner the wall of the holy city, as having "twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb."<sup>[14a]</sup>

p. 14

There is not a vestige therefore of scriptural evidence, much less an infallible demonstration, that the successors of St. Peter, whoever they may be, are possessed of infallibility. And supposing his successors to be infallible, there is not the slightest scriptural ground for believing that his successors are the Bishops of Rome. On this point, so vitally essential to the Papal cause, the sacred writings are wholly silent. They indeed inform us that this Apostle preached at Jerusalem, at Cæsarea, at Joppa, and at Antioch, but they no where even intimate that he ever was at Rome: still less therefore can we expect them to affirm that he was local Bishop of that See; and least of all, that the Roman Bishops (in preference to the Bishops in other churches of which he was the founder,) were heirs of his peculiar privileges; and along with other Apostolic privileges, inherited infallibility, while they lost the gifts of miracles and of tongues.<sup>[14b]</sup>

The absence of proofs from Scripture in favour of the Papal claims, is by no means compensated by a plenitude of evidence from antiquity. In ancient times the pretension to infallibility, instead

of being universally acknowledged, was not even alleged. It was never so much as mentioned. Churches and Fathers, in the primitive age, on occasions of their dissenting from the Roman Pontiff, so far from yielding reverently and implicitly to his opinions, openly contested them like those of any other bishop, metropolitan, or patriarch. Nay, they even sometimes excommunicated their infallible superior. <sup>[14c]</sup> The Roman Pontiff, on the other hand, so far from crushing opposition by the verdict of infallibility, endeavoured always to support his doctrine by the authority of Scripture, of reason, or of antiquity. When appeals were made to him by disputants in a later age, it was never stated or imagined to be their ground of selecting him as their arbiter, that his decision would be infallible; but only that he merited such a tribute of respect, either in consideration of his private character, as a wise, just, and holy individual, or by virtue of his official rank as bishop of the imperial city. <sup>[15a]</sup>

p. 15

When Byzantium was raised to the same imperial eminence, by the name of Constantinople, or New Rome, the Byzantine Patriarch was declared by the second general council held A.D. 381, to be of equal dignity with his Roman brother. Precedence only, or nominal priority, was reserved to the episcopate of the more ancient capital. This reservation was confirmed A.D. 451, by the fourth general council held at Chalcedon; in the decrees of which the reason given for this nominal priority of Old over New Rome is merely political, and has nothing to do with spiritual concerns. "The Fathers," say the members of this later council (referring to their predecessors), "have justly assigned the eldership to the seat of elder Rome—on account of the kingly or imperial authority of that city (*διὰ τὸ βασιλεύειν τὴν πόλιν ἐκείνην*), and they have assigned equal privileges (*τὰ ἴσα πρέσβεια*) to New Rome, rationally judging that the city which was honoured by the imperial power and by the residence of the Senate, and which enjoyed equal privileges with Royal Rome, its elder sister, should, like her, be exalted in ecclesiastical rank." (*πόλιν καὶ τῶν ἴσων ἀπολαύουσαν πρεσβείων τῇ πρεσβυτέρα βασιλίδι Ῥώμης.*) <sup>[15b]</sup>

That the Roman Bishops were never allowed to arrogate infallibility by the ancient Church is further evident from the fact, that they were not allowed even to claim supreme jurisdiction. The Patriarch of Rome had no ecclesiastical authority beyond certain provinces and churches termed suburbicary (*ecclesiæ suburbicariæ*), including, at the most, certain districts of Italy, together with the adjacent islands. <sup>[16a]</sup> The other four Patriarchs (of Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem,) were entirely independent of their Roman colleague, and of each other. When John, Patriarch of Constantinople, towards the close of the sixth century, put forth a claim to supreme and universal rule in the Church, encouraged in this insolent pretension by the residence of the emperor within the limits of his See—the Popes of that period, Pelagius and Gregory the Great, resisted with great energy his pretensions; not however as interfering with their own supremacy, but as being in themselves presumptuous and anti-Christian. "Pay no attention," says Pelagius, "to the power which he unlawfully usurps under the name of universality. Let no patriarch ever apply to himself so profane a title. You may foresee, my dearest brethren, the mischievous consequences from such beginnings of perverseness among the priesthood. For he (*antichrist*) is near, of whom it is written that he maketh himself king over all the sons of pride." <sup>[16b]</sup> "No one of my predecessors," says Gregory the successor of Pelagius, "ever thought of using so profane an appellation; for if one Patriarch assumes the title of universal, it is lost to all the others. But far, very far be it from the mind of a Christian, to grasp at any thing by which he may appear in any the slightest measure to derogate from the honour of his brethren." <sup>[17a]</sup> In another passage he thus energetically addresses his overbearing fellow patriarch; "What wilt thou say to Christ, the Head of the Universal Church, in the trial of the last judgment, who, by the appellation of Universal, dost endeavour to subject all his members to thyself? Whom, I pray, dost thou mean to imitate in so perverse a word, but Him, who, despising the legions of angels, constituted in fellowship with Him, endeavoured to break forth unto the height of singularity, that He might both be subject to none, and alone be over all? Who also said, 'I will ascend into heaven, and will exalt my throne above the stars.'—For what are thy brethren, all the Bishops of the Universal Church, but the stars of heaven, to whom, while by this haughty word thou desirest to prefer thyself, and to trample on their name in comparison with thyself; what dost thou say, but I will climb into heaven?" In other places he brands the titles which John had assumed, as "pompous," "foolish," "proud," "perverse," "wicked," and "profane:" as names of "singularity," "elation," "vanity," and "blasphemy." He insists that there was "one sole Head of the Church, viz. Christ," and sums up all with this strong prophetic denunciation: "I may confidently declare, that whenever any man styles himself, or desires to be styled, universal priest, such a man, by so exalting himself, becomes forerunner of antichrist, because by pride he sets himself above his brethren." <sup>[17b]</sup>

p. 16

p. 17

The attempts which have been made to reconcile the indignant language of Pelagius and Gregory, with the usurped prerogatives of their successors, by ingeniously exaggerating the pretensions of the Eastern Patriarch, are utterly ineffectual. Indeed, if evidence were required to prove that the assumptions of the Papacy in the present day are not inferior to those of the Patriarch of the East, we need not go farther in quest of such evidence than the Papal Brief of September last. For we do not read that John of Constantinople ever ventured of his own will and pleasure to extinguish two ancient archiepiscopal sees, together with the whole diocesan Episcopate of both provinces. We do not read that John ever had the hardihood to abolish all the Constitutions and Canons, however ancient, of an independent National Church, and to substitute for them the *jus commune*, or common law of Constantinople. We do not read that John ever presumed to grant territorial designations, and titles of honour, to his own nominees, contrary to the civil constitution of a powerful and independent kingdom, within which those titles and dignities were to be assumed. On the contrary, we know that John, so far from perpetrating aggressions on the prerogatives of foreign sovereigns, was entirely subordinate to the civil power

p. 18

of his own country, and depended solely on the favour and authority of the emperor for the support of his assumptions. And yet Pius the IXth ventures to do what John of Constantinople never even attempted; and has shut his eyes to the fact that he has thereby exposed himself to the anathemas of his infallible predecessors. Strong language has been used, (on some occasions too strong,) by a justly indignant people in reprobation of his presumption; but however strong that language may be, it has not as yet approached the acrimony of the expressions used by Pelagius and Gregory the Great on far inferior provocation.

We have seen that Scripture and antiquity are utterly irreconcilable with the pretensions of the Papal chair. We may now adduce the moral character of the Pontiffs themselves, as a fair ground of presumption that they have not the privilege of infallibility. If indeed we could be satisfied from history that they had all, or most of them, in long succession, been pious and holy and exemplary men, in a degree beyond the ordinary standard of Christian excellence; that they had been rich in faith and in good works; that they had been exalted models of disinterested beneficence, of real purity, and almost ascetic moderation; men whose affections were fixed unquestionably upon the glory and felicity of the heavenly state, to the exclusion of all concern for mere earthly interests, and the little vanities of secular ambition:—we might have been disposed to scrutinize with less distrust the claims of such truly virtuous and estimable Christian pastors. But since the Papal character has been acknowledged even by the ablest advocates of the Papacy, to have been in general the very opposite of what we have been describing, we have a strong presumptive argument that such men were not infallible. <sup>[19]</sup>

p. 19

Other strong objections to Pontifical infallibility arise from the want of any certain rule for determining the validity of elections to the popedom, and for issuing the infallible decrees. Before these decrees can be infallibly relied upon, the following particulars must be infallibly ascertained: who are the persons divinely entitled to give a vote in the choice of a Pontiff? and how do those persons establish their Divine title? What proportion of the voters are required by Divine authority to be present, and what majority of numbers must decide? How far shall simony, or fraud, or force, vitiate the election? In case of two elections, how shall we infallibly distinguish between the claims of rival Pontiffs? between the real Pope, whom, under the penalty of condemnation, we are bound to obey, and the anti-pope, whom, under the same high penalty, we must abjure? When schisms rend the Church (and not less than twenty-six have rent the Church of Rome), how shall we discern the true communion from the schismatical? And since the Pope is supposed infallible only in his official, not in his personal capacity, how shall we decide infallibly when he speaks as an ordinary individual, and when as the successor of St. Peter? in other words, what solemnities exactly are requisite to be observed, for constituting a judgment *ex cathedrâ* from the Apostolic chair? what councillors must be summoned? what mode of promulgation must be adopted? <sup>[20a]</sup> Such are some of the questions which every candid Romanist must be desirous to hear definitely answered, and which consequently must present themselves with much greater force to every Protestant mind. When a privilege so important as infallibility is understood to be granted, all the circumstances necessary for our direction in receiving and submitting to it, require to be distinctly and indisputably revealed to us. Unless these circumstances are fixed by the same authority that is supposed to make the grant, namely, by Christ Himself, we are as far removed from infallibility as ever; and in deciding these essential and fundamental particulars, we are left to mere argument and conjecture. <sup>[20b]</sup>

p. 20

To disprove Papal infallibility much more will scarcely be expected by our readers; but we will add one concluding observation on the erroneousness and inconsistency of the supposed infallible decrees. If Popes really were infallible, their doctrine would never vary, but would remain, from age to age, unalterably the same: the judgment of one Pope would never differ, on the same subjects, from the judgment of another; and least of all would it be credible that any Pope should be convicted of heresy. We know, however, from unquestionable documents of history that this was not the case. Two Popes in the second century (Eleutherius and Victor) were encouragers of the heretical fanaticism of Montanus. <sup>[21a]</sup> Another Pope (Stephen) of the third century was heretical on the subject of baptism: <sup>[21b]</sup> Pope Liberius condemned Athanasius, and subscribed his name to the semi-Arian heresy: Pope Honorius was by a general council condemned as a Monothelite. <sup>[21c]</sup> And (not to multiply particular examples) we may remark, once for all, that a long line of Popes promulgated, *ex cathedrâ*, a doctrine which, in the present age, is abandoned by Rome itself, and is rejected universally as impious and extravagant; the doctrine, namely, that the Roman See is vested with the Divine right of temporal jurisdiction over all the kingdoms of the earth; and that the Pontiff, as Vicar of Jesus Christ, and delegate of Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords, may call civil magistrates to account, and may depose kings and emperors, on the charge of heretical depravity. <sup>[21d]</sup>

p. 21

To these various objections against the doctrine of Pontifical infallibility, our defender of the Roman Faith replies by a ready acknowledgment that the great majority of Romanists themselves are of our opinion: that much abler arguments have been urged by them than by Protestants against this pretension of the Pope: <sup>[22a]</sup> that by them infallibility is ascribed not to the Roman Pontiff, who “is liable to err, and who frequently has erred;” but to a general Council, representing the whole Church of Christ, and combining all its collective wisdom. On our inquiry by what Scriptural evidence infallibility is proved to lodge in a representative assembly thus constituted, we are desired to read the following texts:—

p. 22

“Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” <sup>[22b]</sup>

“If he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” <sup>[22c]</sup>

“Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” [22d]

“I will pray the Father; and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth.” [22e]

“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things.” [22f]

“These things write I unto thee; that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” [22g]

Our endeavours to extract out of these texts infallibility for the Romish Church are as much in vain as in the preceding inquiry for supporting the Papal claims. A general council seems to have as little warrant from Holy Scripture to assure us that it is infallible, as the Roman Pontiff himself. The first quotation refers to the perpetual *continuance* of the Christian society. Christ assures us that, to the end of time, the gates of hell shall not prevail against his Universal Church; or, in other words, that a community called by his name, and retaining the essentials of Christianity, will never cease to be. But this consolatory promise gives us no security that any one particular Church, or any meeting of Church officers, shall be infallible. On this subject we cannot forbear transcribing the judicious comment of a learned Romanist, Tostatus of Avila, who flourished in the fifteenth century: “The universal or Catholic Church never errs, because it never errs in all its branches. The Church of Rome (*ecclesia latinorum*) is not the Catholic Church, but only a certain branch of it; and, therefore, although the whole of that branch should have erred, the whole Church could not be said to err. Because the genuine Catholic Church remains in the unerring branches, whether they be more or fewer than the branches which err.” [23]

p. 23

Again, the injunction of our Lord to “tell the Church,” if taken apart from, and not in connexion with the preceding context, might seem to have some distant bearing upon this question. But on examining the whole passage, we perceive that our Saviour makes allusion to secular, not to spiritual concerns; and is speaking only of private differences among his followers. “If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone.” Three successive steps are next recommended for effecting an accommodation: first a private interview; then the influence of mutual friends; and lastly, the authority of the Church to which the parties belong. The contumacious wrong-doer who could not by these methods be brought to reason, was no longer to be regarded as a Christian brother, but as a heathen. He was liable to excommunication, or expulsion from the society; and reparation of the injury committed might now be sought for in a court of law. We do not find in these directions the remotest allusion to infallibility.

The encouraging promise; “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,” is not a grant of infallibility, but a promise of assistance, protection, and consolation; and was indispensably required, when our Lord delegated to his Apostles the perilous labour of propagating the Gospel in opposition to all the rulers of this world, sending them forth “as sheep among wolves.” [24a]

p. 24

His promise that the “Spirit of truth” should “guide them into all truth,” relates entirely to the extraordinary gifts with which they were endowed, and is immediately connected with another promise, confessedly peculiar to the Apostolic age. “He” (the Holy Ghost) “shall show you things to come.”

The words, “It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us,” in the decree of the first council at Jerusalem, have left no precedent for other councils to use the same language; unless on separate evidence it can be shown that those councils have the same authority of inspiration.

The position therefore, that general councils, as representing the Church of Christ, are infallible, labours under a total want of Scripture Evidence. There is not a single precept given for assembling them; not one solitary rule for determining their proceedings. As the learned Albert Pighius, an advocate of pontifical infallibility, very justly argues: “There is not a word about general councils in the canonical books of Scripture; nor did the primitive Church of Christ receive by Apostolical institution any special direction respecting them.” [24b] This able writer represents the practice of summoning a general council in cases of ecclesiastical emergency, to be an expedient piously introduced by the Emperor Constantine for the purpose of composing the dissensions of the Church. But the same author insinuates a charge of great ignorance against the Emperor and his council, who in adopting this course, appeared not to know that the privilege of infallibility belonged to the Papal chair, and that Rome was the proper Delphos where he might receive the infallible oracles. This imperial ignorance is a remarkable admission by the advocate of the Papacy in his zeal against general councils. He succeeds in demolishing the latter; but acknowledges at the same time a fact which is fatal to the former. For if Constantine and the Bishops of his court were ignorant of the papal pretensions, it must be obvious that such pretensions either could not have been put forth at all, or could not at that time have been generally recognized.

p. 25

But if the Scripture, instead of being totally silent on the subject, had plainly and categorically declared, that general councils are infallible, we should only be involved in fresh perplexities: for the question would immediately arise, *what is a general council?* How do we know a spurious from a genuine council? Councils have been assembled by opposite parties on purpose to give opposite decrees; and how shall we distinguish the fallible and heretical, from the orthodox and infallible assembly? This vital question cannot be determined by the numbers present, or the



portion of the Christian world represented by them. The orthodox Athanasius was condemned successively by councils representing the Eastern and the Western Church. Various councils condemned by the Church of Rome for heresy, were as numerous and respectably attended, as more orthodox conventions. The Council of Milan consisted of 300 Bishops. At Ariminum not less than 400 Bishops were assembled. The Council of Ephesus included 10 Metropolitans and 130 Bishops. The Council of Constantinople included 338 Bishops. And when the rival Councils of Sardica and Philippopolis fulminated mutual anathemas, the latter, which was heretical, consisted of 94 Bishops, while their orthodox opponents amounted only to 76. As most of these councils were convened by imperial authority; represented large portions of Christendom; and included men of the greatest learning and ability, there seems nothing to distinguish them from other synods, which are acknowledged to be general and infallible—nothing, if we except the sanction of the Roman Pontiff.

Here we are informed by our pertinacious disputant, that the papal sanction is commonly regarded in the Church of Rome, as the essential distinction between a mere provincial synod, and a general council; that the decrees of an alleged general council, not ratified by the Pope, are not infallible; while the decrees of any council, after that ratification, must be looked upon as infallibly determined.

p. 26

But our ingenuity must again be exercised in finding our way through this labyrinth: for, first of all, no Scriptural reason can be found, or is even pretended, for the limitation of infallibility to councils of the description mentioned. The authority, therefore, exists only in the well-stored imagination of our Romish friend. <sup>[26]</sup> And in addition, we are perplexed to ascertain how two authorities, separately fallible, should become infallible by their conjunction. The council is fallible. The Pope is fallible. But unite these two fallibles, and you give them infallibility. If it be asked, Is the council liable to err which passes the decree?—Certainly, is the answer: for otherwise the council would, without the Pope, be all-sufficient. If it be further demanded, Is the Pope, also liable to err who confirms the decree?—Certainly, is again the answer: for he would otherwise be all-sufficient without the council. This is a strange dilemma: we must believe the decree to be infallibly determined, and yet must neither ascribe infallibility to the council which passes it, nor to the Pope who confirms it.

Another consideration is the uncertainty and arbitrariness of this papal act of confirmation. The Protestant must not take for granted that the eighteen Councils, acknowledged by the Church of Rome to be general, have the seal of St. Peter affixed to all their canons and decrees. In some cases a general council is partly confirmed and partly rejected (*partim confirmatum, partim reprobatum*); <sup>[27a]</sup> in some cases neither confirmed nor rejected (*neque approbatum neque reprobatum*): in some it is pronounced uncertain whether the decrees are confirmed or rejected; and in others they are confirmed by one Pope, and rejected by another. Sometimes the general council did not proceed with due form (*conciliariter*), or did not proceed with due deliberation (*re diligenter examinata*); sometimes the questions to be determined were not stated with sufficient clearness (*satis aperte*), and sometimes there is a want of evidence whether the council was general or provincial. "All this," exclaims Bishop Taylor, "is the greatest folly and most prodigious vanity." <sup>[27b]</sup>

p. 27

Again, we might observe, that if infallibility be granted to the Church through its representatives in a general council, the privilege has been for many centuries in abeyance, and (considering the aspect of Christendom) is never likely to be renewed. And further, with respect to the reception of these infallible decrees by provincial Churches, we might bring forward the doubts which have prevailed among Romanists, whether the decrees are binding immediately on being passed, or only after they have been received. <sup>[27c]</sup> Next with reference to the doctrines which they inculcate, these are often grievously contradictory to reason and Scripture. Transubstantiation, for example, is contrary to reason. If therefore we believe the infallibility of general councils on grounds of reason, the reasons against transubstantiation must be fairly balanced in our minds with the reasons in favour of infallibility. And as examples of contradiction to Scripture, we might instance the adoration of the Blessed Virgin, the worshipping of images and relics, the invocation of saints and angels, purgatory, and the sacrifice of the mass. We might then go on to show that if the infallibility of general councils be Scripturally maintained, the texts adduced in support of infallibility are to be weighed against the numerous and explicit texts which oppose these corrupt doctrines and idolatrous practices. Lastly, we might contend that, in the primitive ages, when councils were continually assembled, neither those councils themselves, nor any one writer who defended their decrees, ever spoke of them as infallible. We need scarcely add that councils could not be infallible without knowing it; nor would hear their infallible decrees disputed without asserting their infallibility.

p. 28

3. Having now vainly endeavoured to procure conclusive and satisfactory information on two of the essential points indispensable for our conversion to Romanism; namely, first, by what *organ* the infallible oracles are delivered, and, secondly, by what *evidence* the claim to infallibility is established; we proceed to the third and last topic of investigation, and inquire on what *security* we can rely, that we shall not misunderstand the doctrine propounded to our belief?

We have already seen that the Romanist is unable to decide with certainty in what person or persons infallibility resides; and that he cannot prove the person or the persons for whom he claims it, namely, a Pope or Council, jointly or severally, to be infallible. Let us next consider, in conclusion, (and the consideration need not occupy us long,) whether he is more successful in establishing the third particular, which we began by laying down as necessary to the tranquillization of our minds; whether, in short, it can be proved to us incontestably, that we shall

comprehend with clearness and practical certainty the bulls and canons promulgated for our guidance to the truth.

Security on this point is obviously indispensable. The inspired volume is allowed by all Christians to contain unerring rules of faith and practice. But our erring reason, we are told, is liable to misconceive them. Hence the supposed necessity for another guide. But the very same liability to error which exposes us to mistake in interpreting the Scriptures, exposes us to mistake also in interpreting the bulls of a Pope, or the canons of a general council. God Himself inspired his chosen servants to write the Scriptures “for our learning.” God nevertheless is misunderstood. Neither Pope nor Council, therefore, is secure from being so. Their decisions, jointly or separately, may be misinterpreted through our weakness of apprehension. We consequently need a new interpreter for expounding their interpretation. But the expositions of this new interpreter may, like those of his unerring predecessors, be erroneously understood; and thus we should require an infinite series of infallible guides, and at the end of this elaborate process we should not be nearer to infallibility than we found ourselves at the beginning. <sup>[29a]</sup>

p. 29

Accordingly, we read, without surprise, that there are disputes among Romanists in regard to the right construction of their infallible decrees and canons; disputes as constant and as vehement as those unhappily subsisting among Protestants, in regard to the meaning of our inspired Scriptures. <sup>[29b]</sup> In the celebrated Council of Trent, the last, and by the Romanists regarded as the greatest ever held, many points of doctrine which had called forth the most violent and argumentative disputation were purposely expressed with ambiguity in the canons, that the consent of all parties might be obtained. Even on that all-important article of faith, respecting the proper object of religious adoration, the Tridentine Fathers were satisfied with a vague declaration, that “due worship should be given to images,” without informing the conscientious worshipper, (in a strait betwixt the danger of profaneness on one hand and of idolatry on the other,) what kind of worship that doubtful phrase was intended to imply. <sup>[29c]</sup> It may be also noticed that there are several controverted points in religion, (the very points, in fact, most frequently contested among Protestants,) on which no unerring oracle has yet pronounced a decision, and on which variations of opinion may be discovered in the papal Church analogous to those prevailing throughout Protestant communions. I allude to the numerous questions connected with election, foreknowledge, predestination, grace, free-will, and the perseverance of the Saints.

p. 30

Nor will the force of our objections be evaded by the reply that *actual* conformity of faith to the decisions of Popes and Councils is not required; that *intentional* conformity will suffice; and that every man, whatever be his errors and misconceptions, is capable of salvation who is willing and inclined *to believe as the Church believes*. For if the Romanist is willing to believe as his Church believes, the Protestant is willing to believe as the Apostles and Evangelists believed. If then this willingness will suffice for the Romanist, why should it not be sufficient for the Protestant? If the one, when he falls into error, is held excused by intentional conformity to the Romish creed, why should not intentional conformity to the creed of the Apostles and Evangelists excuse the errors of the other? Let this be granted, and both parties are equally safe, equally infallible. <sup>[30]</sup>

Thus we find that in all respects the Romish system fails to afford the religious comfort and security we are endeavouring to acquire. Our Romanist adviser has promised what he proves himself incompetent to perform. He has held out to us the enjoyment of an infallible assurance that we have attained to sound doctrine, if we will only profit by the unerring oracles of his Church; but he cannot point with certainty to the proper organ of infallibility, nor establish on credible evidence the claim of that organ to be infallible; nor give any positive security that we shall understand infallibly the oracular truths proposed to our assent. On the contrary, we have seen abundant reasons for being morally certain, that the incapability of error which he speaks of has no existence.

p. 31

We have now sufficiently considered all the topics proposed for discussion at the commencement of this essay; but before concluding we must advert to one further point, too important to be overlooked, which could not before be conveniently introduced, viz., the newly-devised Theory of Development. We request our Romish counsellor to inform us, whether in his judgment the doctrines of modern Rome have the sanction of primitive antiquity, and can be proved by the writings of the early Fathers? He replies, that up to a very recent period he would at once have answered in the affirmative; but that he is now obliged to hesitate. “From time immemorial,” he says, “the doctors of our Church unanimously insisted, and the Council of Trent infallibly declared, that every article of our Creed was sanctioned by the concurrent testimony of the Fathers, as many as were of the true Church of Christ.” “But,” he proceeds, “within the last few years a party has arisen among us who take a different view. Treatises have been widely circulated and favourably received, in which it is maintained, that the position of which we always boasted as our stronghold is, after all, untenable; that antiquity must be abandoned; that, in primitive times, our present doctrines were absolutely unknown or imperfectly discovered; that Christianity, in the days of the Apostles and for several centuries afterwards, was merely in an embryo, rudimental state; that it has since been infallibly developed; that St. Cyprian, St. Chrysostom, and St. Athanasius, were only partially acquainted with many truths which have since been canonically evolved and explained; and that, consequently, the sanction of antiquity to any doctrine of modern Rome may be as easily dispensed with as the authority of Holy Scripture.” As an example of development, our Romish guide refers to the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin—“a doctrine,” he observes, “in primitive times utterly unheard of; in the middle ages vehemently opposed; in later times gradually matured; and now at last, in

p. 32

the nineteenth century, fully and pontifically established under penalty of everlasting condemnation.”

This inability of the Romanist to determine whether Romanism is or is not supported by antiquity, and whether it is a new or an old religion, may be regarded as a climax to the difficulties and perplexities in which, as we have already seen, his whole system is involved. <sup>[32a]</sup>

Besides the Romanist there are many other counsellors who, with undoubting confidence, offer to relieve our minds from all anxiety as to the soundness of our belief. Among these parties I may now particularly mention the Sceptic and the Mystic; because their systems, and that of the Romanist, however opposite in other respects, have one essential point of agreement. They all have a decided tendency to supersede our own exertions for the discovery of religious truth—the Sceptic by affirming that religious truth is unimportant; the Mystic by alleging that religious truth is passively received by the mind from divine illumination; and the Romanist by inculcating an unconditional acquiescence in the dictates of infallible authority. <sup>[32b]</sup> This remarkable coincidence suggests to us, that in respect to our employment of means and opportunities, the way of truth is the very opposite to the way of error; that the right path to saving knowledge does not consist in the *disuse*, but in the *strenuous exertion* of our intellectual and moral faculties; that the inclination to improve our advantages for attaining spiritual information is designed to try our moral character; and that we have a full security from deadly heresy in the co-operation of Divine Providence, and of Divine grace with our own sincere endeavours after truth.

p. 33

This principle, which pervades the whole of Scripture, <sup>[33]</sup> is not to be confounded with the fallacies above adverted to. We do not call it infallibility, because we readily admit that rectitude of opinion may exist, in various degrees, among persons, all of whom are in the path of salvation. It differs from infallibility as maintained by Romanists, because we do not consider any individual, nor any number of individuals, to be incapable of error. It differs from the infallibility of the enthusiast, because we lay no claim to exemption from mistake: we insist only that, using faithfully the means at our disposal, we shall escape unpardonable heresy. It differs, thirdly, from the infallibility of the sceptic, because he conceives all doctrines equally excellent, provided their operation in society adapts itself to his confined notions of moral duty. Whereas our method implies that one doctrine differs materially, as to truth and excellence from another, and that we are therefore bound to select the best.

To make this selection of what is best, must be the paramount desire of every rightly-disposed mind: and it now only remains for us, before concluding this essay, to give some rules, as briefly as we can, for determining our choice. Error and misconception on this subject are so lamentably common, that even our few imperfect suggestions may not be useless nor unacceptable. We shall only premise that the spiritual exercises which we recommend are arranged in the order here given them, with a view to convenience and clearness; and not from an impression that any of our readers can have occasion to begin from the commencement of the series.

1. Our first rule is: to employ all the strength of our faculties in the study and investigation of natural religion: till we become impressed sincerely and practically with our awful responsibility, as reasonable beings, to our Creator, Benefactor, and Judge eternal.

2. To establish clearly in our minds the evidences and principles of Revelation; and to ascertain, by diligent inquiry, that the Scriptures “given for our learning,” are “given by inspiration of God; and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness.” <sup>[34a]</sup>

p. 34

3. To acquire a persuasion (according to the principle asserted in the Scriptures, maintained by all antiquity, and revived at the Reformation,) that the pages of Revelation are not “a sealed book” to us; but that we are bound to “search the Scriptures,” <sup>[34b]</sup> to “prove all things,” <sup>[34c]</sup> and “to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us.” <sup>[34d]</sup>

4. To satisfy ourselves that, on points of Christian doctrine, our only real standard of faith is the Bible; and that tradition (however useful as its interpreter and guardian) is not, as Romanists contend, a co-ordinate authority with the sacred text. <sup>[34e]</sup>

5. To use in our interpretation of the inspired volume all the helps within our reach; whether spiritual or temporal; whether derivable from the living or from the dead. Among these helps, the most important and indispensable are prayer and a holy life. With respect to prayer, the promises in Holy Scripture, that guidance to the truth shall be given to him that asks it, are, as we have seen, numerous and indisputable. <sup>[34f]</sup> And as regards a holy life, or the labours of the humble and diligent individual, who, from desire to do the will of God, conscientiously exerts himself to know it, our Lord Himself expressly declares, “If any man will do (θέλει ποιεῖν, or is desirous to do) his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.” <sup>[34g]</sup> To these helps may be added others equally obvious, so far as they are consistent with the opportunities, station, or profession of the individual—such as familiarity with Scripture in the original, knowledge of history, and particularly of the manners, laws, customs, and opinions of antiquity, Jewish as well as Christian; joined to acquaintance with sound principles of Biblical interpretation, criticism, and translation.

p. 35

But a point which more particularly seems, under this rule, to require illustration, is the *degree of value* at which the conscientious inquirer after sound religious knowledge ought to estimate ecclesiastical antiquity. Many pious individuals (in their well-meant zeal against Romish errors)

have thought themselves obliged to discard ecclesiastical antiquity, under a persuasion that by attaching any value to ancient writers, they would violate the great Protestant axiom of resting on the sole authority of God's written word.

But it should be considered, that to use ecclesiastical antiquity for interpreting the word of God, no more violates this axiom than to use any of the other universally admitted aids to interpretation already mentioned. Whatever means the Divine promulgator of Revelation has given to his Church for ascertaining the truths revealed, ought diligently and conscientiously to be improved. Among those means, the place of highest authority belongs unquestionably to the three primitive formularies of belief, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds; and to the Canons of the first four general councils, which received the sanction of universal Christendom: and in which to his entire satisfaction the conscientious inquirer will find the leading truths of Christianity embodied. The same remark applies to the Episcopal constitution of the Church; for "it is evident unto all men diligently reading the Holy Scriptures and ancient authors, that from the Apostles there have been these orders of ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."<sup>[35]</sup> But we cannot better explain how far ancient literature is to be rendered available to sacred purposes, than by a transcription of a canon set forth by the Church of England in the same year with its articles. "Preachers shall not presume to deliver any thing from the pulpit as of moment, to be religiously observed and believed by the people, but that which is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old or New Testament, and collected out of the same doctrine by the Catholic Fathers and the Bishops of the ancient Church."<sup>[36a]</sup> "A wise regulation," observes the judicious and able Dr. Waterland, "formed with exquisite judgment, and worded with the exactest caution. The canon does not order that they shall teach whatever had been taught by the Fathers: no; that would have been setting up a new rule of faith; neither does it say that they shall teach *whatsoever* the Fathers had *collected from Scripture*: no; that would have been making them *infallible* interpreters, or *infallible reasoners*: the doctrine must be found first in Scripture, only to be the more secure that we have found it there: the *Fathers* are to be called in, to be, as it were, constant checks upon the presumption or wantonness of private interpretation. But then again, as to *private* interpretation, there is liberty enough allowed to it. Preachers are not forbidden to interpret this or that text, or hundreds of texts, differently from what the Fathers have done; provided still they keep within the *analogy of faith*, and presume not to raise any *new* doctrine: neither are they altogether restrained from teaching any thing *new*, provided it be offered as opinion only, or as an *inferior* truth, and not pressed as necessary upon the people. For it was thought that there could be no *necessary* article of faith or doctrine now drawn from Scripture, but what the ancients had drawn out before from the same Scripture: to say otherwise would imply that the ancients had failed universally in *necessaries*, which is morally absurd."<sup>[36b]</sup> The canon thus explained may be thought appropriate to preachers and ministers alone, exclusively of their people; but though the latter cannot, it is true, directly apply this regulation to themselves, they nevertheless may indirectly derive advantage from it. They will be prepared to perceive at once when any minister proposes to their acceptance some doctrine or exposition of Scripture, for which he can produce no ancient authority—and which he declares to be *new*, yet at the same time *important*—he declares himself, by this dangerous and un-canonical proceeding, unworthy of their confidence.

p. 36

p. 37

But perhaps the greatest and most alarming mistake to be avoided by all inquirers, ecclesiastical or laical, is the application of their minds to religious researches rather for the sake of curious information and philosophical entertainment, than for purposes of saving knowledge, and of sure, efficacious, practical direction. The Holy Scriptures, no doubt, are written for our learning, not however merely for such learning as consists in literary, critical, and speculative exercises of our ingenuity; but for our advancement in the school of Christian wisdom, of that wisdom from above which unites and perfects all the higher capacities of our nature, moral, intellectual, or spiritual—that wisdom which, (far removed from the jealousies and the wranglings and the violences of factious controversy,) is anxious only for the interests of truth and virtue—that wisdom which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."<sup>[37a]</sup>

In this course of wise and holy discipline, according to our diligence, will be our progress; and proportioned to our progress, will be our reward. Our anxieties, discouragements, and despondencies will be left behind us. We shall go on our way rejoicing. We shall feel a personal interest in the glorious system of Christian redemption. We shall enter daily more and more with satisfaction upon the duty of examining ourselves, "whether we be in the faith:"<sup>[37b]</sup> and the result of that examination will more and more enable us to see distinctly within our hearts the lineaments of the Christian character. All the tests from Scripture of such a progress will have a clearer application to our spiritual state. Love to God, charity to mankind, preference of divine to merely human objects, fervency in prayer, frequency in meditation, attachment to religious ordinances, self-control in the subjugation of our appetites and passions; and in one word, likeness to Christ, increasing from day to day—will assure us that to reach the gate of salvation we have only to preserve the path which we have chosen. And although, in this advanced state, enjoying "a full assurance of faith and hope,"<sup>[38a]</sup> we relax nothing of our efforts, and, like St. Paul, "count not ourselves to have apprehended the price of our high calling,"<sup>[38b]</sup> yet we exclaim triumphantly with the same Apostle: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For 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."<sup>[38c]</sup>

p. 38

**ADVERTISEMENT.***By the same Author.*

I.

DISSERTATIONS vindicating the CHURCH of ENGLAND in respect to some Essential Points of Polity and Doctrine.

II.

VINDICATION of the EPISCOPAL or APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

III.

MEMOIR of the LIFE and TIMES of the RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN SINCLAIR, Bart.

IV.

QUESTIONS ILLUSTRATING the CATECHISM of the CHURCH of ENGLAND.

V.

QUESTIONS on the ORDERS for MORNING and EVENING PRAYER.

VI.

An ESSAY on CHURCH PATRONAGE.

VII.

A CHARGE delivered to the CLERGY of the ARCHDEACONRY of Middlesex, in 1843.

VIII.

A CHARGE delivered in 1844.

IX.

A CHARGE delivered in 1849.

**SIDE NOTES.**

In the printed book Rev. Sinclair printed side notes in the margins to explain the points he was trying to make. As these made the text itself difficult to read, and added little value to the narrative, in this transcription they are placed here, together with the pages on which they occur, so that the development of the points can be seen in overview.

Side note	Page
Diversity of religious opinions a source of anxiety	<a href="#">1</a>
On account of others and on our own	<a href="#">1</a>
Confusion from the number of guides	<a href="#">2</a>
Motives of credibility for an infallible living arbiter	<a href="#">2</a>
Fallacy and presumption of these <i>à priori</i> arguments	<a href="#">3</a>
Probable arguments at best are no ground of infallible assurance	<a href="#">5</a>
Argument for infallibility from the analogy of the Jewish Church	<a href="#">6</a>
. . . answered	<a href="#">6</a>
Transmission of the Scripture no proof of infallible interpretation	<a href="#">8</a>
Three requisites to afford us infallible assurance	<a href="#">8</a>
First requisite wanting. Organ of infallibility uncertain	<a href="#">9</a>

Second requisite wanting in the Three Organs of infallibility. The Pope singly	<a href="#">11</a>
Pretensions of the Pontiff scripturally considered	<a href="#">11</a>
Pretensions of the Pontiff traditionally considered	<a href="#">14</a>
Pretensions of the Pontiff morally considered	<a href="#">18</a>
Difficulties of ascertaining infallibly when the Pope speaks <i>ex cathedrâ</i>	<a href="#">19</a>
Papal inconsistencies and heresies	<a href="#">20</a>
Second alleged Organ of Infallibility	<a href="#">21</a>
A general council singly	<a href="#">22</a>
Pretensions of a general council Scripturally considered	<a href="#">22</a>
Difficulties of knowing what is a general council	<a href="#">25</a>
Third organ of infallibility	<a href="#">25</a>
Pope and general council in conjunction	<a href="#">26</a>
Uncertainty of the Papal sanction to a council	<a href="#">26</a>
Additional argument against Popes and Councils jointly	<a href="#">27</a>
Third requisite to afford infallible assurance. This requisite wanting	<a href="#">28</a>
Theory of Development	<a href="#">31</a>
Right path to saving knowledge	<a href="#">32</a>
Difference of this Scriptural principle from the three preceding	<a href="#">33</a>
Rules for acquiring sound Christian knowledge	<a href="#">33</a>
Concluding exhortation	<a href="#">37</a>

## FOOTNOTES.

[1] *Ut hæc quæ scripta sunt non negamus, ita ea quæ non sunt scripta renuimus.*—Hieron adv. Helvid. oper. t. iv. pars ii. p. 141. ed. Ben.

[3a] Eph. iv. 14.

[3b] The theologian will here observe, that the argument from “motives of credibility,” as they are termed, is in this view more presumptuous and objectionable than the claim so loudly and so vehemently objected against Protestants. Surely there is more presumption in claiming a right to prejudge what God *must* have done, than in claiming the right of private judgment to ascertain what God *has* actually revealed.

[5] “But it is more useful and fit (you say) for deciding of controversies, to have, besides an infallible rule to go by, a living infallible judge to determine them: and from hence you conclude, that certainly there is such a judge. But why then may not another say, that it is yet more useful, for many excellent purposes, that all the Patriarchs should be infallible, than that the Pope only should? Another, that it would be yet more useful, that all the Archbishops of every province should be so, than that the Patriarchs only should be so. Another, that it would be yet more useful, if all the Bishops of every diocese were so? Another, that it would be yet more available that all the parsons of every parish should be so? Another, that it would be yet more excellent, if all the fathers of families were so? And lastly, another, that it were much more to be desired, that every man and every woman were so? just as much as the prevention of controversies is better than the decision of them; and the prevention of heresies better than the condemnation of them; and upon this ground conclude, by your own very consequence, that not only a general Council, not only the Pope, but all the Patriarchs, Archbishops, Bishops, Pastors, Fathers—nay, all the men in the world, are infallible? If you say now, as I am sure you will, that this conclusion is most gross, and absurd, against sense and experience, then must also the ground be false from which it evidently and undeniably follows, viz., That that course of dealing with men seems always more fit to Divine Providence, which seems most fit to human reason.”—Works of Chillingworth, vol. i. p. 296.

[6] Deut. xvii. 8-14.

[7a] Deut. xvii. 8.

[7b] Exod. xxxii. 4-7.

[7c] 1 Kings xii. 28.

[7d] 1 Kings xxii. 6.

[7e] Jerem. v. 30, 31.

[7f] Isa. lvi. 10.

[8] See Tracts published by Bishop Gibson. Title iv. chap. i. vol. i. p. 18.

[9] “For many of you hold the Pope’s proposal *ex cathedrâ*, to be sufficient and obliging” (obligatory); “some a Council without a Pope; some neither of them severally, but only both together; some not this neither in matter of manners, which Bellarmine acknowledges, and tells us it is all one in effect, as if they denied it” (to be) “sufficient in matter of faith; some not in matter of faith neither think this proposal infallible, without the acceptation of the Church universal; some deny the infallibility of the present Church, and only make the tradition of all ages the infallible propounder: yet if you were agreed what and what only is the infallible propounder, this would not satisfy us; nor yet to say, that all is fundamental which is propounded sufficiently by him: for though agreeing in this, yet you might still disagree whether such or such a doctrine were propounded or not; or if propounded, whether sufficiently, or only insufficiently. And it is so known a thing, that in many points you do so, that I assure myself you will not deny it.”—Chillingworth, vol. i. p. 118.

[10] See Evidence against Catholicism, by Rev. J. Blanco White, p. 94.

[11] Matt. xvi. 18, 19. Luke xxii. 32. John xxi. 17.

[12a] See Stillingfleet’s “Vindication,” p. 418.

[12b] The phrases “to bind and loose” were Jewish, and most frequent in their writings. It belonged only to the teachers among the Jews to bind and loose. When the Jews set any apart to be a preacher, they used these words: “Take thou liberty to teach what is bound and what is loose.”—*Strype’s Preface to the Posthumous Remains of Dr. Lightfoot*, p. 38. See Dr. A. Clarke’s commentary in loco.

[12c] Compare Matt. xvii. 18, with John xx. 22, 23.

[13a] See manuscript volume by the Honourable Archibald Campbell, a Nonjuring Bishop, first in Scotland, and afterwards in London. Also Bishop Horsley’s Sermons, vol. i. p. 293.

[13b] For a full exposition of this text, see Remarks by Granville Sharp, Esq., cited by Dr. Adam Clarke in his commentary.

[13c] See Dr. Isaac Barrow’s Treatise on the Pope’s Supremacy, and Rev. J. Fletcher’s Lectures on the Roman Catholic Religion, p. 94.

[13d] Eph. ii. 20.

[13e] 1 Cor. iii. 11.

[13f] 1 Cor. xii. 28.

[14a] Rev. xxi. 14.

[14b] “Seeing the Romanists themselves acknowledge, that he was Bishop of Antioch, before he was Bishop of Rome; we require them to show, why so great an inheritance as this, should descend to the younger rather than the elder, according to the ordinary manner of descents? Especially, seeing Rome hath little else to allege for this preferment, but only that St. Peter was crucified in it: which was a very slender reason to move the Apostle so to respect it.”—Extract from Archbishop Usher’s Speech in the Castle Chamber, Dublin, Nov. 22, 1622. See Dr. Parr’s Life of Usher, p. 23.

[14c] “What say you to the expunging the name of Felix, Bishop of Rome, out of the Diptychs of the Church by Acacius, the Patriarch of Constantinople? What say you to Hilary’s Anathema against Pope Liberius!”—Stillingfleet’s “Vindication,” p. 408.

[15a] St. Jerome affirms, that a Bishop, in whatever diocese, whether of Rome, of Eugabium, &c., is of the same power (*ejusdem meriti*) and of the same rank in the priesthood (*ejusdem sacerdotii*) with his Episcopal brethren. “For,” he adds, “they are all alike successors of the Apostles.” This admission from the Secretary of Pope Damasus is very remarkable.—Epist. ad Evag.

[15b] Vid. Lab. tom. iv. p. 817.—Grier’s Epitome of the General Councils, pp. 61. 94.

[16a] Ruffinus, in his translation and abstract of the Nicene Canons, gives the sixth of them in these words: “The ancient custom of Alexandria and of Rome shall still be observed, that the one shall have the care or government of the Egyptian, and the other that of the suburbicary churches.”—*Ut apud Alexandriam et in urbe Româ vetusta consuetudo servetur, ut vel ille Ægypti vel hic suburbicariarum ecclesiarum sollicitudinem gerat*. Ruffin. Hist. lib. i. c. 6.—See also Bingham’s Antiquities, Book ix. chap. 1, sec. 9.

[16b] *Universalitatis nomen quod sibi illicitè usurpavit nolite attendere:—nullus enim Patriarcharum hoc tam profano vocabulo unquam utatur.—Perpenditis, fratres carissimi, quid e vicino subsequatur cum et in sacerdotibus erumpunt tam perversa primordia. Quia enim juxta est ille de quo scriptum est; Ipse est rex super universos filios superbiæ.*—Pap. Pelag. ii. epist. 8.

[17a] *Nullus unquam decessorum meorum hoc tam profano vocabulo uti consensit: quia videlicet si unus patriarcha universalis dicitur, patriarcharum nomen cæteris derogatur. Sed absit, hoc*

*absit à Christianá mente id sibi velle quenquam arripere unde fratrum suorum honorem imminuere ex quantulâcunque parte videatur!*—Pap. Gregor. i. lib. iv. epist. 36.

[17b] *Ego vero fidenter dico, quia quisquis se universalem sacerdotem vocat, vel vocari deciderat, in elatione suâ Anti-christum præcurrit; quia superbiendo, cæteris præponit.*—Pap. Gregor. i. lib. vi. epist. 30. Attempts have been made to reconcile the language of Pelagius and Gregory, with the assumption, by their immediate successors, of the very supremacy which those two Popes so strongly reprobate. The utter futility of such attempts, the reader will see thoroughly established by Stillingfleet in his “Vindication,” part ii. chap. vi.

[19] “I would fain know whether there be any certainty that every Pope is a good Christian, or whether he may not be (in the sense of the Scripture) of the world? If not, how was it that Bellarmine should have cause to think that such a rank of them went successively together to perdition?”—Chillingworth’s Works, vol. iii. p. 359.

The same learned Cardinal whom Chillingworth here refers to, is very zealous throughout his works in defending Papal infallibility, and even ventures to affirm (Bellarm. de Pontifice Rom. lib. iv. cap. 5, in fine), “If the Pope could or should so far err, as to command the practice of vice, and to forbid virtuous actions, the Church were bound to believe vices to be good, and virtues to be bad.” The Pontiffs, whatever they may have thought of this extraordinary theory, seem in *practice*, by the Cardinal’s own account, to have availed themselves, in a considerable degree, of the privilege which he claims in their behalf.—See also Works of Henry More, p. 450.

[20a] “It were heartily to be wished, if he” (the Pope) “should once happen to be *in cathedrâ*, he would infallibly determine what is to be *in cathedrâ* ever after; for it would ease men’s minds of a great many troublesome scruples, which they cannot, without some infallible determination, get themselves quit of.”—Stillingfleet’s “Vindication,” p. 114.

[20b] For Bishop Stillingfleet’s argument to prove that no Pontiff has been canonically elected since the times of Sextus the Fifth, see his Vindication, part i. p. 116.

[21a] *Romanus Pontifex per literas Montanistis communionem impertiit, quas, errore cognito, revocare coactus est.*—Dupin de Antiq. Eccl. Dis. 5. p. 346. La Pape les Montanistes reçu dans sa communion, ce qui montre que le Pape *n’étoit pas infallible.*—Basnage, Hist. tom. i. p. 360.

[21b] He maintained against Cyprian, of Carthage, that baptism, though performed by heretics, ought not to be repeated: but the heretics of that period baptized only in the name of the Father, and sometimes not even in his name: a kind of Baptism which no Roman Catholic would now admit to be valid.—See Grier’s History of the Councils, p. 17.

[21c] See this case argued by Bishop Stillingfleet in part iii. chap. 2, pp. 512, 513, of the Vindication; and for others equally opposite, see Grier’s History passim. See also Burnet on the Nineteenth Article.

[21d] See Evidence against Catholicism by the Rev. Blanco White, p. 33: and the Bishop of Exeter’s Letters to Charles Butler, Esq. Letter xiv. p. 271.

[22a] The writers of the Gallican Church are here alluded to, all of whom oppose the Papal claims.

[22b] Matt. xvi. 18.

[22c] Matt. xviii. 17.

[22d] Matt. xxviii. 20.

[22e] John xiv. 16.

[22f] Acts xv. 28.

[22g] 1 Tim. iii. 15.

[23] *Ecclesia universalis nunquam errat quia nunquam tota errat.*—Tostat. Abulens. præfat. in Matt, quæst. xiii.

*Ecclesia latinorum non est Ecclesia universalis sed quædam pars ejus: ideo, etiamsi tota ipsa errasset, non errabat ecclesia universalis: quia manet Ecclesia universalis in partibus illis quæ non errant, sive illæ sint numero plures quam errantes, sive non.*—Ibid. quæst. iv. in Matt. ad proleg. 2.

[24a] “For my part, I should think it did more concern our Lord Jesus, by virtue of this promise, to make his Church *impeccable*, than *infallible*. My meaning is, that it is a much more desirable thing to secure his ministers and people from the danger of *sin*, than from the danger of *error*. But the former He hath not done, and therefore I much doubt of the latter.”—Archbishop Sharpens Sermons, vol. viii.

[24b] *In Scripturis canonicis nullum de iis verbum est: nec ex Apostolorum institutione speciale quicquam de illis accepit illa primitiva Christi Ecclesia.*—Albert. Pigh. Hierarch. Eccles. lib. vi. cap. 1, quoted in that masterly work, “The Difficulties of Romanism,” by the Rev. G. S. Faber, book 1, chap. ii. p. 36.

[26] “The low Romanists who are distinguished by the name of Cisalpines, (for serious



differences exist, it appears, even in the very bosom of privileged inerrancy,) not only deny the personal infallibility of the Pope, but hold also that for heresy or schism (to both of which, we find, the alleged fallible head of an infallible body is actually liable,) he may be lawfully deposed by a general council. Such being the case, they must, on their own principles, inevitably hold the infallibility of a general council even when *not* sanctioned by the papal confirmation: for it is quite clear, on the one hand, that no *prudent* Pope, at least, would ratify the sentence of his own deposition, or confirm the decree which pronounced him to be a schismatic or a heretic; and it is equally clear, on the other hand, that no general council could infallibly pronounce the Pope to be a heretic or schismatic, himself all the while stiffly denying, as of course he *would* deny, the offensive allegation, unless such general council, *independently* of any papal ratification, were *itself* constitutionally infallible.”—*Faber’s Difficulties of Romanism*, p. 247, 248.

[27a] Bellarm. de Cone. lib. i. cap. 8.

[27b] See Bishop Taylor’s Liberty of Prophecy, sect. 6. vol. viii. of his works, p. 41.

[27c] “That the authority of general councils was never esteemed absolute, infallible, and unlimited, appears in this, that before they were obliging (obligatory) it was necessary that each particular Church respectively should accept them, *Concurrenti universali totius ecclesie consensu, &c., in declaratione veritatum quæ credendæ sunt, &c.* In this way, as observed by Gerson, the decrees of councils became authentic, and turned into a law: and till they became so their decrees were but a dead letter.”—See Heber’s Bishop Taylor, vol. viii. p. 50, 51, remarking on St. Augustin, b. 1. cap. 18. de Bapt. contra Donat.

[29a] See Works of Leslie, vol. i. p. 497.

[29b] For an example, see Blanco White’s Evidence, p. 39.

[29c] See Bishop Burnet on the Twenty-second Article.

[30] It may here be not inapposite to introduce the well-known example of implicit faith, recorded by various writers, and which has met with different degrees of Roman Catholic praise and of Protestant censure. An ignorant collier of the Romish persuasion was asked, what it was that he believed, and answered, “I believe what the Church believes.” The questioner rejoined: “What then does the Church believe?” He replied: “The Church believes what I believe.” The other, anxious for particulars, resumed his interrogatories: “Tell me, then, I pray you, what is it that you and the Church both believe?” To which the collier could only give this answer: “Why, truly, sir, the Church and I both believe the same thing.”—Campbell’s Lectures, vol. ii. p. 259.

[32a] The true theory of development is ably stated by Bishop Butler in his Analogy, part ii. chap. 3, and may be usefully contrasted with the newly-devised dogma of Popery.

[32b] “Certainly every man considering that his eternal salvation lies upon it, will be enforced to apply sincerity and care in his own behalf; whereas if others interpret for him, they may do it more remissly, or more fraudulently.”—*Works of Hen. More*, p. 454.

“As the case stands in religion, according to the Roman Catholic doctrine, reason, and thinking, and studying, and examination, and industry, and search, though they be necessary tools to be made use of for the putting a man into good hands, yet after he is in those hands, he is to throw all these things away, and never after to make use of them. Doth this look like a doctrine of God? No, certainly.”—Archbishop Sharpens Sermons, vol. vii. p. 29.

[33] Psalm xxv. 14; xxxii. 8; xxv. 8, 9; xv. 12, 13. Prov. li. 1-5; iii. 5, 6; x. 30, 31. James i. 5. Matt. vii. 12. John vii. 17.

[34a] 2 Tim. iii. 16.

[34b] John v. 39.

[34c] 1 Thess. v. 21.

[34d] 1 Pet. iii. 15.

[34e] For proofs and illustrations of this point, drawn from Irenæus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Cyprian, Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius, Jerome, Basil, and Augustin, see Faber’s “Difficulties of Romanism.”

[34f] See note p. 33.

[34g] John vii. 17. Sermons of Bishop Taylor, vol. vi. p. 402.

[35] Book of Common Prayer.

[36a] *Imprimis vero, videbunt (Concionatores) ne quid unquam doceant pro concione, quod a populo religiosè teneri et credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrinæ veteris aut novi testamenti: quodque ex illâ ipsâ doctrinâ Catholici Patres et veteres Episcopi collegerint.*—Sparrow, Collect, p. 238. It is scarcely necessary to observe that this canon is not included among those of 1603.

[36b] See chap. vii. of Dr. Waterland’s Treatise on the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity; where the use of ecclesiastical antiquity is discussed with his usual masterly erudition and ability. Similar observations in an abridged form may be found in his introduction to a review of

the Doctrine of the Eucharist. See vol. vii. of his Works, edited by Bishop Van Mildert.

[37a] James iii. 17.

[37b] 2 Cor. xiii. 5.

[38a] Heb. vi. 11; x. 22.

[38b] Phil. iii. 13.

[38c] Rom. viii. 35-39.

\*\*\* END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK AN ESSAY ON PAPAL INFALLIBILITY \*\*\*

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE  
THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE  
PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at [www.gutenberg.org/license](http://www.gutenberg.org/license).

**Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this

agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org). If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website ([www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work

or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you ‘AS-IS’, WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

## **Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™**

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™’s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project

Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

### **Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at [www.gutenberg.org/contact](http://www.gutenberg.org/contact)

### **Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation**

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate).

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: [www.gutenberg.org/donate](http://www.gutenberg.org/donate)

### **Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works**

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org).

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.