

## ARTICLE VI.

### *Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation.*

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 necessary to salvation.

In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those Canonical Books of the old and new Testament of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.

#### *Of the Names and Number of the Canonical Books.*

Genesis.	The Second Book of Chronicles.
Exodus.	The First Book of Esdras.
Leviticus.	The Second Book of Esdras.
Numbers.	The Book of Esther.
Deuteronomy.	The Book of Job.
Joshua.	The Psalms.
Judges.	The Proverbs.
Ruth.	Ecclesiastes, or Preacher.
The First Book of Samuel.	Cantica, or Songs of Solomon.
The Second Book of Samuel.	Four Prophets the greater.
The First Book of Kings.	Twelve Prophets the less.
The Second Book of Kings.	
The First Book of Chronicles.	

And the other books (as Hierome saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine.

Such are these following:—

The Third Book of Esdras.	Baruch the Prophet.
The Fourth Book of Esdras.	The Song of the Three Children.
The Book of Tobias.	The Story of Susanna.
The Book of Judith.	Of Bel and the Dragon.
The rest of the Book of Esther.	The Prayer of Manasses.
The Book of Wisdom.	The First Book of Maccabees.
Jesus the Son of Sirach.	The Second Book of Maccabees.

All the books of the new Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive and account them Canonical.

### *De Divinis Scripturis, quod sufficiant ad Salutem.*

SCRIPTURA sacra continet omnia, quæ ad salutem sunt necessaria, ita, ut quicquid in ea nec legitur, neque inde probari potest, non sit a quoquam exigendum, ut tanquam articulus Fidei credatur, aut ad salutis necessitatem requiri putetur.

Sacræ Scripturæ nomine, eos Canonicos libros veteris, et novi Testamenti intelligimus, de quorum autoritate in Ecclesia nunquam dubitatum est.

#### *De Nominibus et Numero librorum sacræ Canonice Scripturæ Veteris Testamenti.*

Genesis.	Secundus Liber Paralipomen.
Exodus.	Primus Liber Esdræ.
Leviticus.	Secundus Liber Esdræ.
Numeri.	Liber Hester.
Deuteronom.	Liber Job.
Josua.	Psalmi.
Judicum.	Proverbia.
Ruth.	Ecclesiastes vel Concionator.
Prior Liber Samuelis.	Cantica Salomonis.
Secundus Liber Samuelis.	IV Prophetæ majores.
Prior Liber Regum.	XII Prophetæ minores.
Secundus Liber Regum.	
Prior Liber Paralipomen.	

Alios autem libros (ut ait Hieronymus) legit quidem Ecclesia, ad exempla vitæ, et formandos mores: illos tamen ad dogmata confirmanda non adhibet, ut sunt.

Tertius Liber Esdræ.	Baruch Propheta.
Quartus Liber Esdræ.	Canticum trium Puerorum.
Liber Tobia.	Historia Susannæ.
Liber Judith.	De Bel et Dracone.
Reliquum Libri Hester.	Oratio Manasses.
Liber Sapientia.	Prior Lib. Machabeorum.
Liber Jesu filii Sirach.	Secundus Liber Machabeorum.

Novi Testamenti omnes libros (ut vulgo recepti sunt) recipimus, et habemus pro Canonicis.

**T**HIS is the first Article of the Church which can be called controversial. In some respects, it might have seemed natural to have put it as the first Article; as in the Helvetic Confession the first Article is *De Scriptura Sancta, vero Dei Verbo*. But our reformers wisely put forth, in the beginning of their confession of faith, those doctrines on which the Church universal for fifteen centuries had agreed, and which are the foundations of the Christian faith. Accordingly the first five Articles treat of the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption of the world, the Sanctification of Christians, and the Judgment of all men. Unity on these points was of old times considered to constitute Catholic Christianity; and by declaring her orthodoxy on these Catholic doctrines, the Church of England, in the very front of her confessions, declares herself orthodox and Catholic.

This done in the first five Articles, she, in the next three, treats of the Rule of Faith, the Scriptures, and the Creeds deduced from them.

The present Article, as it stood in the forty-two Articles of 1552, lacked all the concluding part concerning the Canon of Scripture and the Apocrypha, and treated only of the Sufficiency of Scripture for Salvation. The latter part was added in 1562. The original Article also contained a clause which was omitted in 1562. After the words, "whatsoever is neither read therein, nor may be proved thereby," the words were added, "*although it be sometime received of the godly, and profitable for an order and comeliness, yet no man ought to be constrained to believe it as an article of faith,*" &c.

As the Article now stands, it treats of several distinct points, namely, Scripture and Tradition, the Canon of Scripture, the Apocrypha. On all these points demonstration and history are intimately connected; history in this case being a material part of demonstration. It will therefore be better not to separate them. In the following sections then I propose to consider, —

FIRST. The Sufficiency of Scripture for Salvation; SECONDLY. The Canon of Scripture; THIRDLY. The true value of Tradition, and the reading of the Apocrypha.

## SECTION I.—THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE FOR SALVATION.

THAT we may see the force of the words of the Article on this important subject, it will be necessary to consider what opinions were opposed by it. Those opinions were the doctrines of the Church of Rome concerning Scripture and Tradition. It will be well therefore to begin by setting the statements of the Church of Rome and those of the Church of England one against the other; and when we see wherein we differ, we may then proceed to show which is in the right.

Now the decrees of the Council of Trent sufficiently express the doctrines of the Church of Rome. In that Council certain Articles, professedly taken from the writings of the Lutheran divines on the subject of Scripture, were discussed in the third session. And first, the fathers of the Council agreed to condemn the opinion “that all articles of the Christian faith, necessary to be believed, are contained in the Holy Scriptures, and that it is sacrilege to hold the oral Tradition of the Church to be of equal authority with the old and new Testaments.”<sup>1</sup> The formal decree of the Council was drawn up in the fourth session, in the year 1546, shortly after the death of Luther, and six years before the putting forth of the forty-two Articles of our own Church in 1552. This decree declares that “the truth is contained *in the written books*, and in the *unwritten traditions*, which, having been received by the Apostles, either from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the dictates of the Holy Spirit, were handed down even to us;” and that the Council “receives and venerates with *equal feeling of piety and reverence* all the books of the old and new Testament, since one God was the Author of them both, *and also the traditions*, relating as well to *faith* as to *morals*, as having, either from the mouth of Christ Himself, or from the dictation of the Holy Ghost, been preserved by continuous succession in the Catholic Church.”<sup>2</sup>

Exactly corresponding with this decree of the Council are the

<sup>1</sup> Sarpi, *Hist. of the Council of Trent*, translated by Brent. London, 1676, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup> “Sacrosancta œcumenica et generalis Tridentina Synodus, in Spiritu Sancto legitime congregata, præsentibus in ea eisdem tribus Apostolicæ sedis legatis, hoc sibi perpetuo ante oculos proponens, ut sublatis erroribus, puritas ipsa Evan-

geli in Ecclesia conservetur: quod promissum ante per prophetas in Scripturis sanctis Dominus noster, Jesus Christus, Dei Filius, proprio ore primum promulgavit, deinde per suos Apostolos tanquam fontem omnis salutaris veritatis et morum disciplinæ, omni creaturæ prædicari jussit; perspicuens hanc veritatem et disciplinam contineri *in libris scriptis et*

statements of the great Roman Catholic divines. For example, Bellarmine says, "The controversy between us and the heretics consists in two things. The first is, that *we* assert that in Scripture is not expressly contained all necessary doctrine, whether concerning faith or morals, and therefore that, besides the written word of God, there is moreover needed the unwritten word, *i. e.* Divine and Apostolical Tradition. But *they* teach, that all things necessary for faith and morals are contained in the Scriptures, and that therefore there is no need of the unwritten word."<sup>1</sup>

Now these statements are not easily misunderstood. The Church of Rome, both in her Council, and by the mouth of her most eminent divines, asserts that Scripture does not contain all that is necessary for faith and morals; but that there is need of a traditional doctrine, an unwritten word, which is handed down by unbroken tradition in the Church, and which she, the Church of Rome, esteems with the same feelings of piety and reverence with which she receives the Holy Scriptures. It is not merely an Hermeneutical Tradition, *i. e.* certain doctrines handed down from early times, which are useful for clearing up and explaining obscurities in Holy Writ; nor is it an Ecclesiastical Tradition, *i. e.* Tradition concerning Church discipline, rites and ceremonies; but it is a traditional revelation concerning doctrine, in matters of faith and morals, which is not to be found in Scripture, and which is equally certain, equally Divine, and equally to be embraced and revered with Scripture itself. Scripture and tradition are parallel, equal, and equally venerable sources of doctrine; and one without the other is not sufficient for salvation.

Such being the statement of the Church of Rome, we may the better understand the statement of the Church of England. Her statement is, as expressed in the Article of 1552, that, however traditions may be "sometimes received by the faithful as godly, and profitable for order and comeliness," yet "Scripture

*sine scripto traditionibus, quæ ab ipsius Christi ore et Apostolis acceptæ, Spiritu Sancto dictantæ, quasi per manus traditæ ad nos usque pervenerunt; Orthodoxorum patrum exempla secuta, omnes libros tam veteris quam novi Testamenti, cum utriusque unus Deus sit auctor, nec non traditiones ipsas, tum ad fidem, tum ad mores pertinentes, tamquam vel ore tenus a Christo vel a Spiritu Sancto dictatas, et continua successione in Ecclesia Catholica conservatas, pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia suscipit ac veneratur.*" — Sess. IV. Can. I. Conc. xiv. 746.

<sup>1</sup> Bellarmin. *De Verbo Dei non Scripto*, Lib. IV. cap. III. "Controversia igitur inter nos et hereticos in duobus consistit. Primum est, quod nos asserimus, in Scripturis non contineri expresse totam doctrinam necessariam sive de fide sive de moribus; et proinde præter Verbum Dei scriptum, requiri etiam Verbum Dei non scriptum, id est, divinas et Apostolicas traditiones. At ipsi docent, in Scripturis omnia contineri ad fidei mores necessaria, et proinde non esse opus ullo Verbo non scripto."

containeth all things necessary to salvation ;” and no man ought “to be constrained to believe as an article of faith, or repute requisite to the necessity of salvation, whatever is neither read therein, nor may be proved thereby.”

The degree of value which the Church of England has assigned to Tradition, which, she said, in the forty-two Articles, was “sometimes received by the faithful as godly, and profitable for order,” we shall see in the third section. Here we have to show, that, as regards articles of faith, and as to necessity of salvation, nothing ought to be required of any man “which is not read in Scripture, nor may be proved thereby.”

Scripture, according to the Church of England, rightly interpreted, contains all that is necessary to save the soul. From it, by fair and logical inference, may be deduced everything which ought to be imposed as an article of faith. It will be seen, hereafter, that she does not despise nor underrate the light of learning, nor the light of antiquity, but that, as the ground of appeal, she maintains the supremacy, and the sole supremacy, of the written word of God.<sup>1</sup>

Now in proving the soundness of the Anglican, in opposition to the Romish position, we may proceed in the following order.

We may prove— I. That Scripture is in favour of it ;— II. That Reason is in favour of it ;— III. That the Primitive Fathers are in favour of it.

I. Scripture is in favour of the doctrine of the Anglican Church, namely, that the written word of God is sufficient for salvation, containing all necessary articles of faith, and rules of life.

On most questions this argument is the most conclusive that can be brought ; but on the Sufficiency of Scripture we are not so likely to find Scripture speaking plainly, as on many other points. It does indeed bear witness to itself, and yet its witness is true. But though both parties have appealed to it, yet neither party have been satisfied, that, on this particular point, its high authority will exhaust the subject.

1. To take, first of all, the arguments which have been alleged from Scripture, as *against* its own sufficiency : we read, that our

<sup>1</sup> “ Unto a Christian man there can be nothing either more necessary or profitable than the knowledge of Holy Scripture, forasmuch as in it is contained God’s true Word, setting forth His glory and also man’s duty, and there is no

truth nor doctrine necessary for our justification and everlasting salvation, but that is, or may be, drawn out of that fountain and well of truth.” — Beginning of the *Homily on Holy Scripture*.

Lord said to His disciples (John xvi. 12) : "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." Therefore it is inferred that there was need of further instruction, orally delivered to the Church, and handed down by tradition, beyond what our Lord revealed, whilst on earth. But the true meaning of the passage is explained by the next verse, which promises that, "when the Spirit of truth was come, He should guide them into all truth." It was to the teaching of the Spirit, by whom the Apostles were afterwards inspired, that our Lord bade them look forward, for the filling up of what His own personal teaching had left deficient. The substance of that teaching of the Spirit, we believe, is preserved to us in the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the Apocalypse ; not in unwritten tradition.

Again, it is said, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, even the world could not contain the books that should be written" (John xxi. 25). Therefore Jesus taught many things not set down in Scripture: we cannot believe that He taught anything superfluous: therefore there must be something necessary, besides what we read in Scripture. Where are we to seek for this? Of course, in unwritten tradition.

To this we reply, that doubtless every word spoken by our blessed Lord was most valuable. Many of those words indeed are not in Scripture; no! nor yet in tradition: for it never yet was pretended that oral tradition had preserved every word our Saviour uttered. So that, if this argument proves anything, it proves too much; for it proves, not only the insufficiency of Scripture, but the insufficiency of Scripture and tradition together. What we say is simply, that so much of Christ's divine teaching, and of the teaching of the Spirit to the Apostles, is set down in Scripture, as is necessary for salvation, and for the proving of all necessary articles of faith. It is no argument against this, to say that many things, which our Saviour said, are not in Scripture.

The same answer may be given to the argument drawn from the fact, that, during the forty days between His resurrection and His ascension, our Lord "spake of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God" (Acts i. 3). We know, indeed, that His speeches then are not set down in Scripture. But we equally know that they are not to be found in any other tradition. And we do not know that there was anything spoken by Him then, which it is necessary to our salvation that we should know, over and above what we have recorded in Scripture.

It is further urged, that St. Paul cuts short a controversy, not by reference to Scripture, but by appeal to the customs of the Church (1 Cor. xi. 16): "If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God." 'It was a matter of ceremony, namely, that a woman's head should be covered in the house of God; and assuredly the Church of England fully admits that "the Church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies" (Art. xx.), and that "whosoever, through his private judgment, breaks the traditions and ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the word of God, ought to be rebuked openly" (Art. xxxiv.) But this is no proof that doctrines of the faith rest on an authority not written. It should be sufficient to satisfy any caviller concerning *forms*, that the Churches of God have, or have not, a custom or a form. But it is not likely that the Apostle would *for doctrine* refer to the Church's customs, when he himself was infallibly guided by the Spirit of God.

But St. Paul, it is said, actually does refer to ordinances and traditions, and forms of words, and a *depositum* to be guarded; all which are evidently oral traditions of the Church. "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you," 1 Cor. xi. 2. "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust," 1 Tim. vi. 20. "Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing, which was committed unto thee, (*τὴν καλὴν παρακαταθήκην*) keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us," 2 Tim. i. 13, 14. "The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also," 2 Tim. ii. 2. From all this it is urged, that the Church and the bishops had ordinances intrusted to them, and doctrines committed to them, which they were to watch and guard, and hand down carefully to others. But all this we readily admit. Timothy was taught by St. Paul: and the doctrine which he had so learned was a sacred deposit which he had carefully to guard, and to teach to those committed to his care; especially to the clergy under him, and the bishops who were to succeed him. Before the Scriptures of the new Testament had been written, or at least collected, this must have been a most important principle; for so only could the torch of truth be kept alight. And even after the new Testament had been written, and was in the hands of all men, it was doubtless most important that bishops and Churches should be rightly and soundly instructed in the truth

and right meaning of the Scriptures, and should guard themselves and their flocks against perverting the truth and falling into error. But there is not therefore any reason to apprehend, that Timothy or the Church had learned any other doctrines besides those contained in the holy Scriptures, or that the sacred deposit committed to their charge was any other than the aggregate of Christian doctrine, which they had been taught catechetically, and which they were to keep from defilement and error by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. We well know that the possession of the Scriptures, as a source of truth and as a final appeal, does not supersede the necessity of Christian education, and sound oral instruction in the faith: and to every person, nowadays, instructed by Creeds and Catechisms in the true doctrine of Christ, it might be said, "Keep that good thing which was committed unto you;" "Hold fast the form of sound words." Yet all this instruction and this sacred deposit may be deducible from Scripture, and virtually contained in it.

But further, it is said that the Thessalonians are actually bidden to "stand fast and hold the *traditions* which ye have been taught whether by word or our epistle," 2 Thess. ii. 15. Therefore the Apostle bids them attend, not only to Scripture, but to tradition also. But the word *tradition* means properly nothing more than *something delivered, the doctrine of our faith delivered to us*. And there being two ways of delivering doctrines to us, either by writing or by word of mouth, it signifies either of them indifferently. "‘*παράδοσις, tradition, is the same with δόγμα, doctrine, and παραδιδόναι is the same with διδάσκειν,*’ say the grammarians; and the *παραδοθείσα πίστις* in St. Jude, ‘the faith once delivered,’ is the same which St. Paul explicates by saying, *παραδόσεις ἃς ἐδίδαχθητε,* ‘the traditions,’ that is, ‘the doctrines ye were taught.’ And St. Irenæus (Lib. iii. ch. iv.) calls it a tradition apostolical, that ‘Christ took the cup,’ and said, ‘it was His Blood,’ and to believe in one God, and in Christ ‘who was born of a Virgin,’ was the old tradition; that is the thing which was delivered, and not at first written, ‘which was kept by the barbarians.’”<sup>1</sup> It may be added, that the very words of St. Paul, in the passage now alluded to, prove in themselves that tradition, according to him, was not necessarily oral tradition, or traditions floating in the Church; for he calls his own Epistles, or the doctrine contained in them, *tradition*, — “*traditions, which you have been taught either by word or by our Epistle.*” What therefore the Apostle here

<sup>1</sup> Jer. Taylor, *Dissuasive from Popery*, Part II. Bk. I. Sect. 3.



enjoins on the Thessalonians is simply, that, as he had taught them by preaching, and as he had enjoined them by letter, so they should believe and live. This instruction, thus received, was the tradition to which he alludes. But it by no means follows, because, before Scripture was completed, the Apostles gave oral and epistolary instruction, to which their hearers were to attend, that therefore, after the Scriptures were completed and collected, there must be left, floating about, a stream of traditional truth, which is not to be found in those Scriptures, thus completed and collected. Before the Scriptures of the new Testament were written, there must of course have been need of tradition, or instruction by word of mouth; and such instruction coming from inspired Apostles was, no doubt, of as much value as what they committed to writing. But the question is, whether they delivered anything essential to our salvation, which they, or some of them, did not subsequently put down in writing, so that it should be carefully preserved, and be a constant witness in the Church. Certainly neither this, nor any of the before-cited passages of Scripture, prove that they did.<sup>1</sup>

Once more, it is said that Christ promised to His Church, "The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it," Matt. xvi. 18; "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20; "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven," Matt. xviii. 18, &c.; and that these promises prove that a certain infallibility should reside in the Church, which both makes it a sure keeper of the truth, and renders all its traditions and decrees of sacred authority. But we may reply, that, even if we concede that the whole Church, fully represented, might so claim the promise of Christ to be present with it, and to guide it, that it should not fall into errors in matters of faith; yet it follows not, that it would be authorized to preserve or to decree any truth which cannot be proved from Scripture. Ancient councils settled many points of faith, and drew up creeds and confessions; but they professed them to be accordant with, and capable of proof from, Scripture. And though the Church is a keeper and a witness of Holy Writ, and may expound Scripture for the instruction of her children, and in such expositions may look for the promise

<sup>1</sup> The passages from Scripture which have been quoted in the text are all alleged by Bellarmine, *De Verbo Dei non Scripto*, Lib. iv.

On the proper meaning of the word *Tradition*, see Jer. Taylor as above,

Usher, *Answer to a Jesuit*, ch. ii.; Bp. Patrick's *Discourse about Tradition*, in the first volume of Gibson, *Preservative against Popery*, p. 190; Van Mildert *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon III.

of Christ and the guidance of His Spirit ; it by no means follows, that she has authority to add to “the faith once delivered to the saints,” or to set up any standard of doctrine besides that written word of God which is intrusted to her, and to which she is to look as the source of all heavenly wisdom and truth.

2. And here we may dismiss the arguments from Scripture, which have been brought to prove that Scripture does not contain all doctrine necessary for salvation and godliness. We proceed to consider those passages which appear to prove the direct contrary, namely, that all things, of necessity to be believed, are contained in, or may be deduced from, the written word.

The following are amongst the texts commonly alleged :---

“Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it.” Deut. iv. 2.

“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” Ps. xix. 7.

“Search the Scriptures ; for in them ye think ye have eternal life : and they are they which testify of Me.” John v. 39.

“From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation. . . . All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Tim. iii. 15-17.

These passages *appear* to prove the perfection and sufficiency of the Scriptures. But it is argued against this inference, that, with regard to the first two passages, they speak of God’s commandments and God’s law, whether written or unwritten.<sup>1</sup> The third passage may be, and very likely ought to be, translated, not “search,” but “ye search the Scriptures.” And all the passages relate to the old Testament, not to the new ; for neither could the Jews search the new Testament Scriptures, nor could Timothy have learned the new Testament from his childhood ; since none of the books of the new Testament were then written. If, therefore, these passages prove the sufficiency of Scripture, they prove that the old Testament was sufficient without the new, and therefore prove too much. The passages indeed prove, that all which comes from God is perfect, and very necessary for instruction ; but do not fully prove that nothing but Scripture is necessary.

<sup>1</sup> Bellarmine indeed argues that the passage from Deut. iv. 2 applies only to the *unwritten word* : “the word which I speak unto you.” The word however is

not “*speak*,” as he renders it, but מִצְוָה “*command*,” as our translators give it. — Bellarmin. *De Verbo Dei non Scripto*, Lib. iv.

Another argument is drawn from the following passages :—

“Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed amongst us . . . . it seemed good to me also . . . . to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.” Luke i. 1-4.

“These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His Name.” John x. 31.

These texts do certainly seem to show that the object of writing the Gospels was expressly that men might not be left to the uncertainty of tradition. Many had taken in hand to set forth an account of the Gospel history: St. Luke therefore was moved to commit it carefully to writing, that no vague accounts might mislead Theophilus, but that by the written word he might “know the *certainty* of those things wherein he had before been catechetically instructed.” Very similar to this is the language of St. Peter: “I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance,” 2 Pet. i. 15. It is true that these three passages only apply to the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John, and the Epistles of St. Peter, and perhaps with them to the Gospel of St. Mark; but they nevertheless give the reasons for writing Scripture, and are, as far as they go, a strong presumption against the vagueness and uncertainty of oral, and in favour of the certainty of written, tradition.

Again, ignorance and error in religion are traced to ignorance of Scripture: “Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God,” Matt. xxii. 29. The peculiar privilege of the Jews is said to be that “to them were committed the oracles of God,” Rom. iii. 1, 2. In matters of doubt, all appeals are made to Scripture. The Bereans are praised, because they “searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so,” Acts xvii. 11. So under the old Testament it was “to the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them,” Isai. viii. 20; where the law and the testimony must mean the Law of Moses, and the testimony of God given by the Prophets.

Lastly, there is special reprobation of all traditions which add to Scripture or take from it. The passage in the end of the Apocalypse (“If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book,” &c., Rev.

xxii. 18, 19) may indeed apply only to that book itself, and to the uncorrupted preservation of its text. But we cannot have read the Gospels, without seeing how much those who used Jewish traditions are censured and condemned: "Why do ye transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matt. xv. 3, 9, comp. Mark vii. 7-13. It is true, the traditions spoken of were Jewish, not Christian traditions. But the principle was much the same. The Pharisees claimed such traditions as divine. They professed, that they were the unwritten word of God, handed down from the time of Ezra, through the doctors of the Law, and the members of the Great Synagogue. They did not deny the value of the written word, but added the unwritten traditions to it. These they considered, not as corrupting, but as completing the truth. Yet our Lord declared that they "made the word of God of none effect by their tradition" (Mark vii. 13). And thus we may fairly infer that our Lord condemns the general principle of making any addition to the written word, by doctrines professedly handed down from father to son. We see, at least, no difference in principle between the oral traditions of the Jewish, and the oral traditions of the Christian Church.

II. We come next to show, that reason is in favour of the Anglican, in opposition to the Roman rule on this subject.

1. The English Church does not hold that unwritten truth is less true than written truth; and if we could be certain that any unwritten doctrine came from Christ and His Apostles, we should receive it with the same reverence that we pay to the written word. But the reason why we rest our faith upon the written word is this: We know that *it* came from God; but we have no certain knowledge that any unwritten tradition did. The former we *know* to be the mid-day light, the other *may be* but an *ignis fatuus*, and lead us into error.

And let it once more be clearly understood, that the question is not, what value there may be in the testimony of the Early Church to certain doctrines of the faith; not, how far early traditions may be useful for the interpreting of Scripture; not, how far we may be right to adhere to the primitive example, in matters of *discipline* and *ceremony*, even those for which we have no Scriptural authority; but it is, whether besides, parallel with, and independent of the Scripture, there is in the Church a *doctrina tradita*, a doctrine handed down from Christ or His Apos-

bles, of equal authority with Scripture, and demanding equal respect.

As has just now been said, when we search for authority in favour of any doctrine, we can tell at once where to go, if Scripture be our rule. But if we have to depend on something besides, where must we look? The former rule is contained in a small compass, is easily accessible, and with proper assistance may be understood. The latter is to be searched for through many folio volumes; is, at last, not certainly to be found; and is at least as difficult as Scripture itself to be understood and explained. Or, if it be said, that it is not in the writings of the fathers, but in the stream of Church tradition, a deposit which was intrusted to the Church and has never been lost by her; we can only reply, that this is even less certain than traditions which may be searched out from ancient writings, and from them proved to have anciently existed. Tradition by word of mouth is a thing proverbially uncertain. In peculiar conditions of society, or for a short time, it may be sufficient for the preservation of truth. But it is evidently unfitted for a body like the Catholic Church; which was to pervade all nations, extend throughout all ages, weather the storm of ignorance and barbarism at one time, and bear up against the scorching and withering glare of learned infidelity at another.

The very fact that the Scriptures were written, and the history of their writing, seem to prove their sufficiency and perfection. When first revelation was given to man, men's lives were so long that there was little danger lest the light of truth should be lost. Adam, Seth, Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, were in fact all but contemporaries. Seth the son of Adam lived to within fifteen years of the birth of Noah. Tradition therefore may have sufficed for them; and yet we have reason to believe, that, even then, the faith was much corrupted. Again, the sons of Noah must have been contemporary with Abraham, to whom another revelation was given; yet Abraham's fathers had become idolaters. And in the few generations from Abraham to Moses the faith again appears to have been corrupted, if not lost; although from the death of Joseph to the birth of Moses not seventy years had passed. Thus, when the world and the Church were under the most favourable circumstances for preserving tradition of the truth unimpaired, it pleased God to leave the world, with occasional revelations indeed, but mostly with only traditional knowledge of the truth. Yet, even so, such knowledge was soon corrupted, and easily lost. After that, God gave a fuller revelation to Moses, and enjoined that it should

be committed to writing; and the book of the Law was deposited in the most sacred place of the Sanctuary, and most carefully guarded and watched, as of inestimable value. Thenceforward, when any great prophet was sent to Israel, though, during his lifetime, he orally taught the people, yet his words were ever committed to writing, that they might be preserved after his death. Nor do we know anything now concerning the teaching of any of the prophets, save only what is handed down to us, not by oral, but by written, tradition, namely, the Scriptures of the old Testament.

Most similar was the case with the Christian Church. At first, whilst our Lord and His Apostles were on earth, their personal teaching, and that of those taught by them, might have sufficed. Yet, even then, errors and perversions were creeping in; and if they had not committed the substance of their teaching to writing, the false traditions of the Judaizers, the Cerinthians, or the Gnostics, might have come down through the Church, instead of the true traditions of the disciples of Christ. But we learn from ancient writers, that what the Apostles preached by word of mouth they committed, or caused to be committed to writing, lest the substance of their preaching should be lost.<sup>1</sup> If tradition committed to the Church had been sufficient to preserve the truth, then the writing of the four Gospels, and of the other parts of the new Testament, would have been superfluous. But from the known and well-proved insufficiency of the former, the Apostles, under the guidance of the Spirit, had recourse to the latter mode of insuring a source and a rule of faith.

“The Apostles at first owned these writings; the Churches received them; they transmitted them to their posterity; they grounded their faith upon them; they proved their propositions by them; by them they confuted heretics; and they made them the measure of right and wrong: all that collective body of doctrine,

<sup>1</sup> *E. g.* Μετὰ δὲ τὴν τούτων (i. e. τοῦ Πέτρου καὶ τοῦ Παύλου) ἔξοδον Μάρκος, ὁ μαθητὴς καὶ ἑρμηνευτὴς Πέτρου, καὶ αὐτὸς τὰ ὑπὸ Πέτρου κηρυσσόμενα ἐγγράφως ἡμῖν παραδέδωκε. — *Iren. Hæc.* III. 1.

So again: “Hanc fidem annuntians Joannes Domini discipulus, volens per Evangelii annuntiationem auferre eum qui inseminatus erat hominibus errorem, et multo prius ab his qui dicuntur Nicolaitæ . . . omnia igitur talia circumscribere vultens discipulus Domini, et regulam veritatis constituere in ecclesia . . . sic inchoavit in ea quæ erat secundum Evangelium doctrina: In principio erat Verbum. . . .” — *Hæres.* III. 11.

Τοσοῦτον ἐπέλαμψεν ταῖς τῶν ἡκροατῶν τοῦ Πετροῦ διανοίας εἰς ζεβείας φέγγος, ὡς μὴ τῇ εἰσπάξῃ ἰκανῶς ἔχειν ἀρκεῖσθαι ἀκοῇ, μηδὲ τῇ ἀγράφῳ τοῦ θεοῦ κηρύγματος διδασκαλίᾳ· παρακλήσει δὲ παντοίας Μάρκον, ὡς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον φέρεται, ἀκόλουθον ὄντα Πέτρου λιπαρῆσαι, ὡς ἂν καὶ διὰ γραφῆς ὑπόμνημα τῆς διὰ λόγον παραδοθείσης αὐτοῖς καταλείψει διδασκαλίας· μὴ πρότερόν τε ἕνεσθαι ἢ κατεργάσασθαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον, καὶ ταύτην αἰτίους γενέσθαι τῆς τοῦ λεγομένου κατὰ Μάρκον εὐαγγελίου γραφῆς. — *Euseb. H. E.* II. 15. He gives this account on the authority of Papias and Clemens Alexand.

of which all Christians collectively made public confessions, and on which all their hopes of salvation did rely, were all contained in them, and they agreed in no point of faith which is not plainly set down in Scripture.”<sup>1</sup>

Now Scripture having been thus evidently designed to correct the uncertainty and supply the deficiency of tradition, it is unreasonable to suppose that God would have suffered Scripture itself, the more certain guide, to be imperfect, and to need the less certain guide, tradition, to supply its defects. Yet, if Scripture itself does not contain the sum and substance of our religion, and all necessary articles of faith, this would be the case.

But as a matter of fact, Scripture has ever been adduced, by divines of all schools and all communions, as capable of proving all the great doctrines of the faith, and all the important rules of duty. We can either prove by it, or deduce from it, the great doctrines concerning the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Sanctification of the Spirit, Original Sin, Justification, the grace of the Sacraments, the privileges of the Church, the Communion of Saints, the Judgment of the great day, and other weighty and cardinal points of faith. And though different schools have differed as to how Scripture should be interpreted on some of these points, yet all have agreed that the true doctrine concerning them may be gathered from Scripture, if interpreted aright. Whatever value, therefore, we may attribute to a *Traditio Hermeneutica*, to traditional interpretations of Scripture; we ought to be satisfied that all things “to be required of any man as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation,” are so contained in Scripture that they may be either “read therein, or may be proved thereby.”

Several things, indeed, all men allow, are contained in Scripture, which are not absolutely necessary to salvation, although they may tend to edification; and if the lesser matters were inserted there, how can we suppose that the greater would be omitted? Nay, although the Church of Rome often appeals to tradition, as a necessary part of Divine Revelation, yet it may well be questioned, whether even she pretends that any very important truth is to be derived from tradition alone. And assuredly we may safely assert, that there is a total absence of all evidence to prove that there is even professedly any tradition extant to which we are indebted for the knowledge of any great doctrine of the faith, independently of the written word.

<sup>1</sup> Jer. Taylor, *Dissuasive from Popery*, Pt. II. Bk. 1. Sect. 8.

2. The principal arguments from reason in favour of the Romanist, and against the Anglican view of this subject, are as follow :—

(1) Tradition was the first rule. From Adam to Moses all was traditional ; and from the coming of Christ to the completion of the Canon of the new Testament, tradition must have been the principal guide of the Church. Scripture, therefore, which came in afterwards, cannot supersede that which was before it, and which, at first, was sufficient without it.

This argument has already been virtually answered by anticipation. The duration of men's lives before the time of Moses, and the presence and personal teaching of inspired Apostles before the writing of the new Testament, were great safeguards against error. The fact, that, as these safeguards were withdrawn, God's Providence ordered that the Scriptures should be written and preserved, shows of itself that tradition, which might have been sufficient then, would not be sufficient now. We do not say that Scripture supersedes tradition, but that it is itself the surest tradition, and the only one on which we can safely rely. It is in fact the Patriarchal, Levitical, and Apostolical tradition, preserved in its safest and only certain form.

(2) It is said that Scripture was not written systematically, but casually, as circumstances occurred, in casual memoirs and occasional letters ; and therefore cannot be looked on as a systematic collection of doctrine and morality.

This, however, is no proof that the whole sum of necessary truth may not be extracted from it. *How* holy men of old were moved to speak, or to write, seems of little consequence. God's wisdom saw fit that it should be in the way in which we have the Scriptures now. It is certainly in a more interesting, it is probably in a more profitable way, than if a systematic arrangement had been adopted. It is not probable that the Apostles' teaching, nor even that of our Lord, was always systematic ; and yet in that all men admit that all necessary truth was contained. It cannot, therefore, be necessary to our position to show that the Scriptures are formally or systematically designed.

(3) The genuineness and canonicity of Scripture itself rest on tradition, and on tradition alone ; and if tradition is necessary to prove this, it may equally prove other doctrines.

It is true that historical testimony, and the universal consent of all the early Christians, are the chief grounds on which we rely for proof that the various books of the new Testament were the works of those whose names they bear. This indeed is, in a great



measure, the way in which we prove the genuineness of every ancient book. We do not know that a book was written by Cæsar or Tacitus, but by testimony and historical evidence. In like manner, testimony and historical evidence are essential to prove that the works ascribed to St. Peter or St. Paul were really theirs. In this latter case, indeed, we have the most convincing and satisfactory proofs; for we have the testimony of early Christians, of early heretics, of ancient heathens, of friends, and of enemies; and besides this, the testimony of the Church catholic in general councils. These are things which we should never lightly value, under any circumstances; and when we have to deal with the question concerning the genuineness of certain books, such a kind of evidence is the most obvious, the most necessary, and the most satisfactory possible. But it does not follow that we should give the same deference to the same testimony, even if such could be found, on points of doctrine. For the opinions of Cæsar or Tacitus, we prefer the words of their own books to any testimony external to those books. And so for the doctrines of the Apostles, we look first and chiefly to what they have written. Besides, we have concerning the Canon of Scripture an universality of consent which it would be utterly in vain to search for concerning any doctrine of the faith which is not also to be found in Scripture. When the Roman Church can bring a like amount of consentient testimony to prove any doctrine on which Scripture is silent, we may then, and not till then, entertain the question of a *doctrina tradita*, parallel to, and of equal authority with, Scripture.

(4) It is farther said, that many necessary things are not set down in Scripture.

Bellarmino mentions the following:<sup>1</sup>—

- a. How women under the old Law might be delivered from Original Sin, circumcision being only for males; and how males under eight days old might be saved from it.
- b. The Perpetual Virginity of the blessed Virgin Mary, which has always been believed by the Church, and yet is not in Scripture.
- c. That Easter should be kept on a Sunday, which is necessary to be believed against the Quarto-decimans.
- d. Infant Baptism, which is necessary to be believed; but neither Romanists nor Protestants can prove it from Scripture.
- e. That there is a Purgatory, which Luther himself believed, and yet admitted that it could not be found in Scripture.

<sup>1</sup> *De Verbo Dei non Scripto*, Lib. 1v

If these are all the points that Scripture is silent upon; we need not be very solicitous about its deficiencies. None of them surely can be essential to our salvation. None, except the last two, materially concern our personal faith or practice. The last we not only admit is not in Scripture, but we positively deny that it is true. The last but one, Infant Baptism, we think may be fairly inferred from Scripture, when fully consulted on the subject; and we are very thankful to have the additional testimony of the primitive Church concerning it, which we never reject, as a help and guide to the truth and right understanding of the Scriptures, but only as a distinct and independent authority. The question concerning Easter is one of ceremony, not of faith, and we gladly follow the primitive Church in matters of this nature; although we do not hold, that ceremonies must be one and the same everywhere. The doctrine concerning the Perpetual Virginity is rather a pious opinion, than a necessary article of faith. Our own greatest divines have mostly adhered to the primitive opinion on this subject.<sup>1</sup> But we cannot think that any man's salvation is the surer for believing, or the less sure for disbelieving it.

The question concerning Original Sin, and how women under the Law were delivered from it, and still more, the question concerning infants under eight days old, is as much left in obscurity by tradition, as by Scripture. It is one of those things concerning which we have no revelation.

(5) But it is said, that some of the chief articles of faith, though deduced from Scripture, yet could not be proved from Scripture alone, without the help of tradition and the testimony of the Church. Among the rest are enumerated, the equality of the Divine Persons in the Trinity, the Procession of the Spirit from both the Father and the Son, the Descent into Hell, Original Sin, the change of the Sabbath to the Lord's Day.

The proof of most of these doctrines from Scripture has already been given under the preceding Articles. We maintain, that the equality of the Persons in the Godhead, and the other great doctrines concerning the Trinity, also the Descent into Hell, and Original Sin, are clearly deducible from Scripture alone. We do not indeed reject the testimony of antiquity, but view it, as a valuable guide to the true meaning of Holy Writ; but we maintain that these doctrines might be proved, even without its aid. As to

<sup>1</sup> Andrewes's *Devotions*: see Prayers for the Virgin Mary." Bp. Bull, *Works*, I. Monday. Jer. Taylor, *Life of Christ*, § p. 96  
<sup>2</sup> Pearson, *On the Creed*, Art. "Born of

the Procession of the Holy Ghost, if Scripture will not prove it, certainly tradition will not. In considering the last Article, we saw that the tradition of the Western was different, in some respects, from that of the Eastern Church. The Nicene Creed for some centuries lacked the *Filioque*. And from the evidence in favour of the doctrine, which we deduced from Scripture, it should appear that Scripture speaks more plainly upon it than tradition, or the Church. The change of the Sabbath to the Lord's Day is not an article of faith; but it is doubtless a matter of some moment. It is true, that without the aid of history we might find some difficulty in discovering, whether the early Christians did give up observing the Jewish Sabbath, and kept festival on the first day of the week. But even so, we think, Scripture alone would give us proof that the Lord's Day was to be observed, and that the Jewish Sabbath was not to be observed. Certainly, we read of the first day of the week, as the day on which Christians held their assemblies, administered the Lord's Supper (Acts xx. 7), and collected alms for the poor (1 Cor. xvi. 2). So the Apostle St. John "was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day" (Rev. i. 10). But "Sabbath-days" are enumerated as one of the "shadows of things to come," which belonged to the old dispensation, and so were not binding on Christians (Col. ii. 16, 17). Hence, the new Testament gives us good reason to believe that the obligation to keep the seventh day of the week had passed away, and that the weekly festival of the Christian Church was not Saturday, but Sunday. If it be not conceded that such Scriptural authority be sufficient to satisfy us, we may reply, that the keeping of the Lord's Day is not a question essential to our salvation, like the great doctrines of our faith; and that, therefore, even if we require historical or traditional evidence concerning it, in addition to Scripture, that will not be a case to interfere with this Article of our Church which speaks only of articles of faith, and things necessary to salvation.

(6) Lastly, it is said, Scripture is in many things so obscure, that tradition is necessary to explain its meaning.

To this we reply, that there is, at times, no doubt, some difficulty. The Church of England does not reject the use of all proper aids for the explanation of Scripture. She encourages recourse to human learning, in order to elucidate the language of Holy Writ. She does by no means reject any light, which may be derived from primitive antiquity, and she is anxious to cherish a learned clergy for the instruction of her poorer and more ignorant

members. Her rule too concerning Scripture is not, that every uneducated person ought to take the Scriptures in hand, and search out for himself a system of theology. She teaches her children by catechisms and other simple steps to knowledge of the truth. All that she maintains is, that, as a final court of appeal, Scripture is perfect and sufficient. Her children may, by intelligent and humble study of the Scriptures, find in them full authority for all she teaches, and do not require a second, independent authority.

The fathers acknowledge the Scripture to be sufficiently plain, if expounded by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Irenæus tells us to solve the more difficult parts of Scripture by having recourse to those which are easy.<sup>1</sup> And Chrysostom says, "Look for no other teacher; thou hast the oracles of God; none teaches thee like these."<sup>2</sup>

"There is no question, but there are many places in the Divine Scriptures, mysterious, intricate, and secret: but these are for the learned, not for the ignorant: for the curious and inquisitive, not for the busied and employed and simple: they are not repositories of salvation, but instances of labour, and occasions of humility, and arguments of forbearance and mutual toleration, and an endearment of reverence and adoration. But all that by which God brings us to Himself is easy and plain."<sup>3</sup>

III. We have, lastly, to prove, that the testimony of the primitive fathers is in favour of the Anglican rule, and not of the Roman.

1. Irenæus says: "We know that the Scriptures are perfect, as being spoken by the Word of God and His Spirit."<sup>4</sup> Again: "We have received the disposition of our salvation by no others but those by whom the Gospel came to us; which they then preached, and afterwards by God's will delivered to us in the Scriptures, to be the pillar and ground of our faith."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Omnis autem quæstio non per aliud quod quæritur habebit resolutionem, nec ambiguitas per aliam ambiguitatem solvetur apud eos qui sensum habent, aut ænigmata per aliud majus ænigma, sed ea quæ sunt talia ex manifestis et consonantibus et claris accipiunt solutionem.— Lib. II. 10. See Beaven's *Account of Irenæus*, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> *Homil.* ix. in *Ep. Coloss.*

<sup>3</sup> Jer. Taylor's *Dissuasive from Popery*, Part II. Bk. I. § 2.

<sup>4</sup> Cedere hæc talia debemus Deo qui et

nos fecit, rectissime scientes quia Scripturæ quidem perfectæ sunt, quippe a Verbo Dei et Spiritu ejus dictæ.— Lib. II. c. 47.

<sup>5</sup> Non enim per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cognovimus, quam per eos per quos Evangelium pervenit ad nos: quod quidem tunc præconiaverunt, postea vero per Dei voluntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt, fundamentum et columnam fidei nostræ futurum.— Lib. III. c. 1.

Tertullian says: "I adore the perfection of Scripture, which declares to me the Creator and His Works. . . . Whether all things were made of preëxistent matter, I have as yet nowhere read. Let the school of Hermogenes show that it is written. If it is not written, let them fear the woe which is destined for them who add to or take away."<sup>1</sup>

Origen says: "The two Testaments . . . in which every word that appertains to God may be sought out and discussed, and from them all knowledge of things may be understood. If anything remain, which Holy Scripture doth not determine, no third Scripture ought to be had recourse to . . . but that which remaineth we must commit to the fire, *i. e.*, reserve it unto God. For God would not have us know all things in this world."<sup>2</sup>

Hippolytus writes: "There is one God, whom we do not otherwise acknowledge, brethren, but out of the Sacred Scriptures. For as he who would profess the wisdom of this world cannot otherwise attain it, unless he read the doctrines of the philosophers, so whosoever will exercise piety towards God can learn it nowhere but from the Holy Scriptures."<sup>3</sup>

Athanasius: "The holy and divinely-inspired Scriptures are of themselves sufficient to the enunciation of truth."<sup>4</sup> Again: "These are the fountains of salvation, that he who thirsts may be satisfied with the oracles contained in them. In these alone the doctrine of salvation is contained. Let no man add to, or take from them."<sup>5</sup>

Cyril of Jerusalem says, that, "Concerning the divine and holy

<sup>1</sup> Adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem qua mihi et Factorem manifestat et facta. In Evangelio vero amplius et ministrum et arbitrum Rectoris invenio, Sermonem. An autem de aliqua subjacenti materia facta sint omnia, nusquam adhuc legi. Scriptum esse doceat Hermogenis officina. Si non est scriptum, timeat *væ* illud *adjicientibus aut detrahentibus* destinatum. — *Adv. Hermogenem*, c. 22. See also *Apolog.* c. 47. *De Præscript.* c. 6, &c.

<sup>2</sup> In hoc biduo puto duo Testamenta posse intelligi, in quibus liceat omne verbum quod ad Deum pertinet (hoc enim est sacrificium) requiri et discuti, atque ex ipsis omnem rerum scientiam capi. Si quid autem super fuerit, quod non divina Scriptura decernat, nullam aliam tertiam Scripturam debere ad auctoritatem scientiæ suscipi. . . . Sed igni tradamus quod superest, id est, Deo reservemus. Neque enim in præsent

via Deus scire nos omnia voluit. — Origen. *Homil. v. in Levit.*

<sup>3</sup> Εἰς Θεός, ὃν οὐκ ἄλλοθεν ἐπιγινώσκουμεν, ἀδελφοί, ἢ ἐκ τῶν ἁγίων γραφῶν. Ὅν γὰρ τρόπον ἔαν τις βουληθῆ τὴν σοφίαν τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἰσκέιν, οὐκ ἄλλως δυνήσεται τοῦτον τυχεῖν ἐν μὴ δόγμασι φιλοσόφων ἐντύχη, τὸν αὐτὸν δὴ τρόπον ὅσοι Θεοσεβείαν ἰσκέιν βουλόμεθα, οὐκ ἄλλοθεν ἰσκήσομεν ἢ ἐκ τῶν λογίων τοῦ Θεοῦ. — Hippolyt. *Contra Hæresim Noeti*, c. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Ἀδθαρκεῖς μὲν γὰρ εἰσιν αἱ ἁγία καὶ θεόπνευστοι γραφαὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἀπαγγελίαν. — Athanas. *Contra Gentes*, Tom. I. p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Ταῦτα πηγαὶ τοῦ σωτηρίου, ὥστε τὴν ἀπάντα ἐμφορεῖσθαι τῶν ἐν τούτοις λόγοι· ἐν τούτοις μόνον τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας διδασκαλεῖον εὐαγγελίζεται· μηδεὶς τούτους ἐπιβαλέτω, μὴ δὲ τούτων ὑφαίρεισθω. — *Ex Festali Epistola xxxix.* Tom II. p. 89. Edit. Colon.

mysteries of the faith, even the most casual remark ought not to be delivered without the sacred Scriptures.”<sup>1</sup>

Basil: “Believe those things which are written; the things which are not written seek not.”<sup>2</sup> “It is a manifest defection from the faith, and a proof of arrogance, either to reject anything of what is written, or to introduce anything that is not.”<sup>3</sup>

Ambrose: “How can we use those things, which we find not in the Scriptures!”<sup>4</sup>

Jerome: “We deny not those things which are written, so we refuse those which are not written. That God was born of a Virgin we believe, because we read; that Mary married after she gave birth to Him, we believe not, because we read not.”<sup>5</sup>

Augustine: “In those things which are plainly laid down in Scripture, all things are found which embrace faith and morals.”<sup>6</sup>

Vincentius Lirinensis begins with the admission, that, “The Canon of Scripture is perfect, and most abundantly sufficient for all things.”<sup>7</sup>

Theodoret: “Bring not human reasonings and syllogisms; I rely on Scripture.”<sup>8</sup>

John Damascene: “All things that are delivered to us by the Law, the Prophets, the Apostles, and the Evangelists, we receive, acknowledge, and reverence, seeking for nothing beyond these.”<sup>9</sup>

It can scarcely be necessary to bring more or stronger proofs that the fathers with one voice affirm the perfection and sufficiency

<sup>1</sup> Δεῖ γὰρ περὶ τῶν θείων καὶ ἁγίων τῆς πίστεως μυστηρίων μὴδὲ τὸ τίχον ἄνευ τῶν θείων παραδόσθαι γραφῶν. — Cyril. Hierosol. *Catech.* iv. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Τοῖς γεγραμμένοις πιστεῦε, τὰ μὴ γεγραμμένα μὴ ζητεῖ. — Basil. *Hom.* xxix. *adv. Calumniantes S. Trin.*

<sup>3</sup> Φανερὰ ἐκπτώσις πίστεως καὶ ὑπερφημίας κατηγορία ἢ ἄθετεῖν τι τῶν γεγραμμένων ἢ ἐπεισάγειν τῶν μὴ γεγραμμένων. — Basil. *De Fide*, c. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Quæ in Scripturis sanctis non reperimus, ea quemadmodum usurpare possumus. — Ambros. *Offic.* Lib. i. c. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Ut hæc quæ scripta sunt non negamus, ita ea quæ non scripta sunt renuimus. Natum Deum de Virgine credimus, quia legimus. Mariam nupsisse post partum non credimus, quia non legimus. — Hieron. *Adv. Helvidium juxta finem*, Tom. iv. part. ii. p. 141, edit. Benedict.

<sup>6</sup> In iis quæ aperte in Scriptura posita sunt, inveniuntur illa omnia quæ continent fidem moresque vivendi. — August.

*De Doctrina Christ.* Lib. ii. c. 9, Tom. iii. p. 24.

In like manner: — Proinde sive de Christo, sive de ejus Ecclesia, sive de quacumque alia re quæ pertinet ad fidem vitamque vestram, non dicam nos, nequam comparandi ei qui dixit, Licet si nos: sed omnino quod secutus adjecit, Si angelus de celo vobis annuntiaverit præterquam quod in Scripturis legalibus et evangelicis accepistis anathema sit. — Aug. *Cont. Petilium*, Lib. iii. c. 6, Tom. ix. p. 301.

<sup>7</sup> Cum sit perfectus Scripturarum Canon, sibi que ad omnia satis superque sufficiat. — Vincent. Lirin. *Commonitor.* c. 2.

<sup>8</sup> Μὴ μοι λογισμοὺς καὶ συλλογισμοὺς ἀνθρωπίνους προσενέγκης· ἐγὼ γὰρ μόνῃ πείθομαι τῇ θείᾳ γραφῇ. — Theodoret. *Dial.* i. Ἀτρεπτ.

<sup>9</sup> Πάντα τὰ παραδιδόμενα ἡμῖν διὰ τοῦ νόμου, καὶ προφητῶν καὶ ἀποστόλων καὶ εὐαγγελιστῶν δεχόμεθα καὶ γνώσκομεν καὶ σέβουμεν, οὐδὲν περαιτέρω τούτων ἐπιζητοῦντες. — Damascen. Lib. i. *De Orthodox. Fide*, c. 1.

of the written word, for the end for which it was written, *i. e.*, for a rule of faith, and for a rule of life.<sup>1</sup>

2. (1) But an objection will be urged to these arguments from the fathers, that some of them, and those of no mean importance, clearly speak of a rule of faith which is distinct from the Scriptures; it is therefore evident that they do not appeal to Scripture alone as supreme, perfect, and sufficient. Thus, without question, Irenæus spoke of a *κανὼν τῆς ἀληθείας*, “a rule of truth,” according to which he considered that the Scriptures ought to be interpreted.<sup>2</sup> In the same manner Tertullian appeals to a *Regula Fidei*, “a rule of faith,” by which he was guided in interpreting Scripture.<sup>3</sup> Here are two of the earliest fathers appealing to an authority which is certainly not Scripture; and therefore they must have held that something besides Scripture was necessary, and that all things needful for faith and practice were not contained in Scripture.

If, however, we consult the contexts, we shall find that the rule spoken of in both these fathers is the baptismal Creed. Irenæus expressly says that the Canon of Truth, which each one was to keep, was that which was received by him at his baptism;<sup>4</sup> and in the next chapter recites a form or profession of faith, which is very nearly the same as the Apostles' Creed, and which he speaks of as that “faith which the Church scattered throughout the world diligently keeps.”<sup>5</sup>

In the very same manner Tertullian writes, “Now we have a rule of faith, which teaches us what we are to defend and maintain, and by that very rule we believe, that there is One God,” &c.; he goes on reciting the various articles of the Creed.<sup>6</sup> Here then we see, that the rules of faith of Irenæus and Tertullian were not some independent tradition, teaching doctrines not to be found in Scripture, but the Creeds taught to the Christians, and confessed by them at their baptism, which were in fact epitomes of important Scriptural doctrine, founded on Scripture, and fully according with

<sup>1</sup> Divines of the English Church have collected many other passages to the same purpose. See *Laud against Fisher*, § 16; Usher's *Answer to a Jesuit*, ch. 2; Jer. Taylor, *Dissuasive from Popery*, Part II. Bk. I. ch. 2; *Rule of Conscience*, Book II. ch. II. Rule XIV. From some of which works I have taken the above passages, (with one or two exceptions,) merely verifying the quotations.

<sup>2</sup> Ὅπως δὲ καὶ ὁ τὸν κανὼνα τῆς ἀληθείας ἠκλανῆ ἐν ἑαυτῷ κατέχων, ὃν διὰ βαπτίσματος εἴληφε, τὰ μὲν ἐκ τῶν γραφῶν ὀνόματα

καὶ τὰς λέξεις καὶ τὰς παραβολὰς ἐπιγνώσεται. — Irenæ. I. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Hæc Regula a Christo, ut probabitur, instituta, nullas habet quæstiones, nisi quas hæreses inferunt, et quæ hæreticos faciunt. — Tertull. *De Præscript. Hæret.* c. 14.

Adversus Regulam nihil scire omnia scire. — *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> See the last note but one.

<sup>5</sup> Lib. I. 10.

<sup>6</sup> *De Præscript. Hæret.* c. 13.

it. This is a widely different thing from the *Doctrina tradita* of the Church of Rome. Reliance on the latter is opposed to the sufficiency of Scripture; but the rule of Irenæus and Tertullian was based upon Scripture, and in all respects accordant with it.

Clement of Alexandria also, who is almost as early a witness as Tertullian, speaks, like Irenæus, of a κανὼν τῆς ἀληθείας, "a rule of truth," which he also calls κανὼν ἐκκλησιαστικός. But this rule, so far from being something apart from, and of parallel authority with Scripture, is, according to Clement, founded on a harmony of the old Testament with the new. "The ecclesiastical rule," says he, "is the harmony of the Law and the Prophets with the Covenant delivered by the Lord during His presence on earth."<sup>1</sup>

A like sense we must attach to the language of the later fathers, when we find them speaking of a *Regula Fidei*. They considered the fundamental doctrines of the faith, those, that is, contained in the Creeds, to be the great guide for Christians in interpreting Scriptures. Whosoever erred from these erred from the truth; and, in explaining obscure passages, they held that it was very needful to keep in view the necessity of not deviating from the great lines of truth marked out in the baptismal Creeds. This was not to add to Scripture, but to guard it against being wrested to destruction.<sup>2</sup>

(2) But, it may be said, Irenæus, Tertullian, and others, not only appealed to tradition, but even preferred arguing from tradition to arguing from Scripture.

Tertullian especially says: "No appeal must be made to the Scriptures, no contest must be founded on them, in which victory is uncertain. . . . The grand question is, to whom the Faith itself belongs; in whose hands were the Scriptures deposited . . . to whom that doctrine was first committed, whereby we are made Christians? For wherever this true doctrine and discipline shall appear to be, there the truth of the Scripture and of the interpretation of it will be, and of Christian tradition."<sup>3</sup>

The meaning, however, of this appeal to tradition in preference to Scripture, both by Irenæus and Tertullian, is this: both were reasoning against heretics. Those heretics mutilated Scripture,

<sup>1</sup> Κανὼν δὲ ἐκκλησιαστικός ἡ συνῶδια καὶ ἡ συμφωνία νόμον τε καὶ προφητῶν τῆ κατὰ τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου παρουσίαν παραδιδόμενη διαθήκη. — *Strom.* Lib. vi. c. 15, ed. Potter, p. 803.

<sup>2</sup> See Bp. Marsh, *On the Interpretation*

*of the Bible*, Lect. xi.; Bp. Kaye's *Tertullian*, p. 290, &c.; Bp. Kaye's *Clement of Alexandria*, p. 366; Beaven's *Irenæus*, ch. VIII.

<sup>3</sup> *De Præscript. Heret.* c. 19.



and perverted it. When, therefore, the fathers found their appeal to Scripture of no effect, partly because the heretics were ready to deny that what they quoted was Scripture, and partly because they were ready to evade its force by false glosses and perverted interpretations; then the fathers saw that to reason from Scripture was not convincing to their opponents, and therefore they had recourse to the doctrine preserved by the Apostolical Churches, which, they maintained, were not likely to have lost or to have corrupted the truth first intrusted to them. It was not, that they themselves doubted the sufficiency of Scripture, but that they found other weapons useful against the gainsayers, and therefore brought tradition, not to add to, but to confirm Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

The same may be said concerning the famous work of Vincen-tius Lirinensis. He begins by admitting that "Scripture is perfect and abundantly of itself sufficient for all things." But because various heretics have misinterpreted it, Novatian expounding it one way, Photinus in another, Sabellius in another, and so on: "therefore," he says, "very necessary it is for the avoiding of such turn-ings and twinings of error, that the line of interpreting the Proph-ets and Apostles be directed according to the rule of Ecclesiastical and Catholic sense."<sup>2</sup> This is not to introduce a new rule inde-pendent of Scripture. It is at most a *Traditio Hermeneutica*, a rule for the interpreting of Scripture. It still leaves Scripture, as the fountain of truth; though it guards against using its streams for other than legitimate purposes.

Finally, we have seen the concurrent testimony of the fathers to be in favour of the sufficiency of Scripture. If, here and there, a single passage be apparently unfavourable to this testimony, we must hold it to be a private opinion of an individual father, and therefore not worthy of being esteemed in comparison with their general consent. For it is a rule of Vincentius himself, that "Whatsoever any, although a learned man, a bishop, a martyr, or a confessor holds, otherwise than all, or against all, this must be put aside from the authority of the general judgment, and be reputed merely his own private opinion."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Beaven's *Irenæus*, p. 186; Bp. Kaye's *Tertullian*, p. 297, note.

<sup>2</sup> *Commonitor.* c. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Commonitor.* c. 28. On the true sense of the perfection of Scripture, see Hooker, *E. P.* i. xiii. xiv. ii. viii. 5.

SECTION II.—ON THE CANON OF SCRIPTURE.<sup>1</sup>

AS Scripture is determined by our Church to be the final appeal and only infallible authority concerning matters of faith and practice, it becomes next a subject of the deepest importance to determine, what is Scripture, and what is not. And, as this subject is so important, we naturally look for an authority of the highest kind to settle and determine it. We value, indeed, the decisions of antiquity, we respect the judgment of the primitive Church. But on the question, What is the Word of God? we would, if possible, have an authority as infallible as the word of God; and, if we can have such authority, we can be satisfied with nothing less.

Now such an authority we believe that we possess; and that we possess it in this way: Christ Himself gave His own Divine sanction to the Jewish Canon of the old Testament; and He gave His own authority to His Apostles to write the new. If this statement be once admitted, we have only to investigate historically, what was the Jewish Canon, and what were the books written by the Apostles. We need search no farther; we shall greatly confirm our faith by the witness of fathers and councils; but, if Christ has spoken, we need no other, as we can have no higher warrant.

I. Now, first, we have to consider the question of the *old Testament*; and our inquiry is, Has our Lord Himself stamped with His authority certain books, and left others unauthorized? The answer is, He has. We must not, indeed, argue from the fact of His quoting a certain number of books and leaving a certain number unquoted; for there are six books which can be proved to be Canonical, which the writers of the new Testament never quote; namely, Judges, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Ecclesiastes, Solomon's Song. The fact that these books are not quoted will not destroy their authority; for we have no reason to say that our Lord or His Apostles quoted systematically from all the Ca-

<sup>1</sup> The word *κάνων* signifies a line, or rule, — a standard, therefore, by which other things are to be judged of. It is applied to the *tongue of a balance*, or that small part of the scales which by its perpendicular situation determines the even poise or weight, or by its inclination either way the uneven poise of the things that are weighed. It is applied to

the Scriptures, because they have ever been esteemed in the Church "the infallible rule of our faith, and the perfect square of our actions, in all things that are in any way needful for our eternal salvation." — Cosin's *Scholastical Hist. of the Canon*, ch. i.; Jones, *On the Canon*, ch. i.

nonical books, in order to establish their canonicity. But the way in which our Lord has given His own sanction to a certain definite number of books, is this: in speaking to the Jews, both He and His Apostles constantly address them as having the Scriptures, — Scriptures of Divine authority, and able to make them wise unto salvation. They never hint that the Jewish Canon is imperfect or excessive; and hence they plainly show that the Scriptures which the Jews possessed and acknowledged, were the truly Canonical Scriptures of the old Testament. Our Lord bids them “Search the Scriptures,” and adds, “they are they which testify of Me” (John v. 39). St. Paul says, that the greatest privilege of the Jews was that “unto them were committed the Oracles of God” (Rom. iii. 2); and tells Timothy, that “from a child he had known the Scriptures, which were able to make him wise unto salvation” (2 Tim. iii. 16). Accordingly, our Lord constantly appeals to those Scriptures as well-known and universally received books among the Jews, to whom He spoke, quoting them as, “It is written,” or asking concerning them, “How readest thou?” Though the Jews are charged with many errors, with corrupting the truth by tradition, and adding to it the commandments of men; yet nowhere are they charged with corrupting Scripture, with having rejected some, or added other books to the Canon. But it is ever plainly implied that the Canon which they then possessed, was the true Canon of the old Testament. Thus, then, by quoting, referring to, or arguing from the old Testament, as it was then received by the Jews, our Lord stamps with His own supreme authority the Jewish Canon of the old Testament Scriptures. We have only further to determine from history what the Jewish Canon, at the time of our Saviour’s teaching, was, and we have all that we can need. If history will satisfy us of this, we have no more to ask.

Now the only difficulty lies here. There appear to be two different books claiming to be the Jewish Scriptures; namely, the Hebrew Bible, now in the hands both of Jews and Christians, and the Septuagint. The latter contains all the books contained in the former, with the addition of the books commonly called the Apocrypha.

Let us first observe, that the modern Jews universally acknowledge no other Canon but the Hebrew; which corresponds accurately with the Canon of the English Church. Those who know the fidelity with which for centuries the Jews have guarded their text, will consider this alone to be a strong argument that the

Hebrew Canon is the same as that cited by our Lord. Every verse, every word, every letter, of Scripture is numbered by them. Every large and every small letter, every letter irregularly written, above the line or below the line, is taken notice of and scrupulously preserved.

But we can go back to more ancient times, and show that the Canon of the Jews has always been the same. The Babylonian Talmud recounts the same books that we have now; namely, in the Law, the five books of Moses; among the Prophets, Joshua and Judges, Samuel and Kings, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Isaiah and the twelve minor prophets; in the Chethubim, Ruth, Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel, Esther, Chronicles. This was the Canon of the Jewish Church about A. D. 550.<sup>1</sup>

But one hundred and fifty years earlier than this, Jerome undertook the task of translating the Hebrew Scriptures into Latin. Theretofore all the Latin translations had been from the Septuagint, and therefore contained all the Apocryphal books. Jerome, the first of the Latin fathers who could read Hebrew, when undertaking this important labour, was naturally led to examine into the Canon of the Hebrew Scriptures. He informs us, that the Jews had two-and-twenty books in their Bible, corresponding with the two-and-twenty Hebrew letters. This number they made by classing two books together as one; thus, the two books of Samuel were one, the two books of Kings, Ezra and Nehemiah, Jeremiah and Lamentations, Judges and Ruth, respectively, were considered as one each. The books were divided into three classes, the Law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. The first contained the five books of Moses; the second contained Joshua, Judges and Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Lamentations, Ezekiel, and the twelve minor prophets; the third contained Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, Job, Daniel, Ezra and Nehemiah, Esther, Chronicles. The Law, therefore, contained five books, the Prophets eight, the Hagiographa nine.<sup>2</sup>

To go still farther back, Origen, who was born A. D. 184 and who died A. D. 255, and who, like Jerome, was learned in Hebrew and gave great attention to the Hebrew text, (as is well known from his famous work, the *Hexapla*,) enumerates the same books

<sup>1</sup> Baba Bathra, fol. 14, col. 2. The Chethubim, *i. e.* The Scriptures or Writings.  
The books of Moses are called תורה The  
Law; the prophetical books נביאים  
The Prophets; the other books כתובים

<sup>2</sup> Hieron. *Prologus Galeatus*, Op. Tom. 1. p. 818. Ed. Bened.

that Jerome does, except that he adds after all the rest, that there was the book Maccabees apart or distinct from the others.<sup>1</sup>

Still earlier, Melito, bishop of Sardis, made a journey into the East, for the sake of inquiring what were the books held canonical there, and, in a letter to Onesimus, gives a catalogue of these books, precisely corresponding with the present Canon of the Hebrew Scriptures, except that he classes Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, under the common name of Esdras.<sup>2</sup> This father lived about the year 160.

We next come to Josephus. He flourished at the time of the siege of Jerusalem, and was therefore contemporary with the Apostles. In the first place, we find in his writings the same threefold division which occurs in Jerome, and has ever since been common with the Jews; namely, the Law, the Prophets, and other books, which he characterizes as "Hymns and Instructions for Men's Lives." A similar division exists in Philo.<sup>3</sup> But Josephus, moreover, divides the Scriptures, as Jerome testifies that the Jews did in his time, into twenty-two books.<sup>4</sup> The only difference between the divisions of Josephus and Jerome is, that, whereas Jerome says there were eight in the Prophets and nine in the Hagiographa, Josephus assigns thirteen to the Prophets, and four to the Hagiographa. We know, however, that the Jews have gradually been augmenting the number of the books in the Hagiographa and diminishing the number in the Prophets, so that there is no great wonder, if between the first and the fourth century there was such a change in their mode of reckoning, that in the first they reckoned thirteen, in the fourth but eight among prophetical books.

Thus then, since we find that Josephus gives the same threefold division which we find afterwards given by Jerome, and also that he gives the same total number of books, namely, twenty-two, though somewhat differently distributed, we might at once naturally conclude that the Jewish Canon in the time of Josephus was the same with the Jewish Canon in the time of Jerome. That is to say, we might conclude that it embraced the books now in the Hebrew Bibles and in the Canon of the English Church, and that it excluded the Apocryphal books, which the English

<sup>1</sup> Ap. Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 25: Ἐξω δὲ τούτων ἐστὶ τὰ Μακκαβαϊκὰ. ἀπὲρ ἐπιγέγραπται Σαρβηθ Σαρβανὲλ. Bishop Cosin interprets this, as meaning that the Books of Maccabees were "out of the Canon."—*History of the Canon*, ch. v

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 26. See Bp. Cosin as above, ch. iv.

<sup>3</sup> *De Vita Contemplativa*, Tom. II. p. 475; Marsh, *On the Authority of the old Testament*, Lect. XXXII.

<sup>4</sup> *Contra Apion* i. § 8; Euseb. *H. E.* III. 10.

Church excludes. But, if we could doubt that this was the case, his own words might set us at rest, for he tells us that the books belonging to the second class (*i. e.* to the Prophets) were written previously to the reign (or to the death) of Artaxerxes Longimanus, and that, though books were written after that time, “they were not esteemed worthy of the same credit with those before them, because there was no longer the exact succession of the Prophets.”<sup>1</sup> It was during the reign of Artaxerxes Longimanus that the book of Esther was written, Artaxerxes being, according to Josephus, the Ahasuerus of that book.<sup>2</sup> This would therefore be the last book of his Canon. All the Apocryphal books must have been written long after that reign, and therefore cannot be included in his twenty-two books, compared with which they were not thought worthy of equal credit. It is plain, therefore, that the Canon of Josephus must be the same with that of Jerome.

Now, in the short time which elapsed between our Saviour’s earthly ministry and Josephus, no alteration can have taken place in the Canon. Josephus himself tells us, that a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures was preserved in the Temple.<sup>3</sup> And therefore, until the destruction of the Temple, when Josephus was thirty-three years old, that Temple copy existed, and was a protection against all change. He would have had easy access to that Temple copy, and hence is a fully competent witness to its contents. Nay, even without the existence of that copy, which was an invaluable security, we learn from Philo, that in his time the Jews had the same intense veneration for the words of Scripture which we know them to have had afterwards; so that nothing could induce them “to alter one word, and that they would rather die ten thousand deaths than suffer any alteration in their laws and statutes.”<sup>4</sup>

We now are arrived at the period when the books of the new Testament were written. Philo and Josephus were in fact contemporaries of Christ and His Apostles. We have already seen,

<sup>1</sup> Ἀπὸ δὲ Ἀρταξέρξου μέχρι τοῦ καθ’ ἡμῶν χρόνου, γέγραπται μὲν ἕκαστα πίστεως δὲ οὐχ ὁμοίως ἤξιώται τοῖς πρὸ αὐτῶν, διὰ τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι τὴν τῶν προφητῶν ἀκριβῆ διὰδοχὴν. — *Contra Apionem*, i. § 8; Euseb. *H. E.* III. 10.

<sup>2</sup> *Antiq. Lib.* xi. cap. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Δηλοῦται διὰ τῶν ἀνακειμένων ἐν τῷ ἑρῷ γραμμάτων. — *Antiq. Lib.* v. cap. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Philo-Judæus *Ap. Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. Lib.* VIII. § 6: Μὴ ῥῆμα γ’ αὐτοῦς

μόνον τῶν ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ γεγραμμένων κινῆσαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ μυριάκις αὐτοῦς ἀποθανεῖν ὅτι μείναι θάπτον τοῖς ἐκείνου νόμοις καὶ ἐθεσιν ἐναντία πεισθῆναι. — See Cosin, *On the Canon*, ch. II.

So Josephus: Δῆλον δ’ ἐστὶν ἔργῳ πῶς ἡμεῖς τοῖς ἰδίῳις γράμμασι πεπιστεύκαμεν τοσούτου γὰρ αἰῶνος ἤδη παρωχηκότος οὕτε προσθῆναι τι οὐδὲν, οὕτε ἀφελεῖν αὐτῶν, οὕτε μεταθεῖναι τετόλημκεν. — *Contra Apionem*, i. § 8; Euseb. *H. E.* III. 10.

that our Lord and the Apostles quote the Scriptures as well known and universally received, and never hint at their corruption. Our Lord indeed divides them (as we see they were divided by Jerome and the Jews ever since) into three distinct classes, which our Lord calls the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms,<sup>1</sup> in which "the Psalms" is put for the whole Hagiographa, either because the Psalms stood first among the books of the Hagiographa, or because the Hagiographa may be said to consist chiefly of hymns and poems, which might well be called Psalms.<sup>2</sup> We have to add to this, that in the new Testament every book of the Jewish Canon is distinctly quoted with the exception of six, and those perhaps the six least likely to have furnished passages for quotation; but not one quotation occurs from any one of those books which form a part of what is now called the Apocrypha.<sup>3</sup>

If we could carry the evidence no farther, we might rest satisfied here, that our Lord gave His sanction to the Hebrew, not to the Septuagint Canon. But we can go one step farther, and it is this: one hundred and thirty years before our Lord's birth, the Prologue of the Book of Ecclesiasticus was written, which classes the Hebrew Scriptures into the same three classes, "the Law, the Prophets, and the other books of the fathers." This is a ground for believing that the Jewish Scriptures were the same in number then that they were found to be afterwards. Again, what is not a little important, Targums,<sup>4</sup> some of which are as old as, or older than the Christian era, were made from all the books of the old Testament, but none are to be found of the Apocryphal books. We have Targums of the Law, Targums of the Prophets, Targums of the Chethubim, but no Targums of the Apocrypha.

Our evidence is now pretty nearly complete; we may recapitulate it thus.

We have the threefold division of the Scriptures mentioned—in the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus, by Philo, by our blessed Lord, by Josephus; and the same we find in the time of Jerome, and among all the Jews from that time to this.

<sup>1</sup> "That all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms."—Luke xxiv. 44.

<sup>2</sup> According to the division which existed in our Saviour's time, which probably was the same as that in the time of Josephus, there would have been but four books in the Chethubim or Hagiographa, namely, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Solomon's Song.

<sup>3</sup> See this proved, — Cosin, *Hist. of Canon*, ch. III.

<sup>4</sup> The Targums were translations or paraphrases of the Scriptures, made from the original Hebrew into Chaldee, when Hebrew had become a dead language, which was the case soon after the return from captivity. They were read in the synagogues, and formed the ordinary instruments for instruction of the Jews of Palestine in the Scriptures.

We know, that the number of books contained in these three classes was, in the time of Josephus, twenty-two. The same number we find recounted by Origen and Jerome, as belonging to the Jewish Canon, and Origen and Jerome give us their names, which are the names of the books in the present Jewish Canon.

The Canon in the time of Josephus, who was born A. D. 37, must have been the same as that in the time of Christ: as its security was guaranteed by the existence of the Temple copy, to say nothing of the scrupulous fidelity of the Jews, who, as Philo tells us, would have died ten thousand times rather than alter one word.

The Targums, which are paraphrases of the books in the present Hebrew Canon, confirm the same inference; and some of them are as old as the time of our Lord.

Now we know exactly how the threefold division embraced the books of the Hebrew Canon. We know how, in Origen's time and in Jerome's time, the twenty-two books (which was also the number in Josephus's time) embraced the books of the Hebrew Canon. We know, too, that Melito, less than one hundred years after Josephus, gave, as the books received in the East, a catalogue corresponding exactly with the same Hebrew Canon. But no imaginable ingenuity can ever make the books of the Apocrypha fit into any of these divisions, or agree with any of these lists.

When we add to this, that our Lord and His Apostles, when they gave the sanction of Divine authority to the Jewish Scriptures, quote perpetually nearly all the books of the Hebrew Canon, and quote none besides, no link in the chain seems wanting to prove, that the Jewish Canon is that to which Christ appealed, and which He has commended to us, as the Word of God.

The history of the Septuagint explains the only difficulty in the question. It is briefly as follows: —

In the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus this version was made at Alexandria. It is impossible, that it could have then contained the books of the Apocrypha, inasmuch as these books were not written till after the date when the Septuagint version was made; none of them probably having been in existence till about two centuries before the Christian era. At what exact time the Apocryphal books were written respectively, it is not easy to determine. None of them could have been written in Hebrew, which had then become a dead language; though some may have



been composed in Chaldee or Syriac, languages which in the new Testament and in other writings are frequently called Hebrew.<sup>1</sup> However, when these Apocryphal books were written, if in Greek, the originals, if in Chaldee, the Greek translations, were, in all probability, inserted into the Septuagint, along with the still more sacred books of Scripture, by the Alexandrian Jews, who, in their state of dispersion, were naturally zealous about all that concerned their religion and the history of their race. The places which they assigned to the various books, were dependent either on the subject or on the supposed author. Thus the Song of the three Children, the Story of Susanna, and the History of Bel and the Dragon, seemed connected with, and were therefore added to, the book of Daniel. The Greek Esdras seemed naturally to be connected with the Greek translation of the book of Ezra. The Book of Wisdom, being called the Wisdom of Solomon, was added to the Song of Solomon; and the book of Ecclesiasticus, called the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, was placed after the Wisdom of Solomon.

No doubt, the Alexandrian Jews ascribed great importance to the books which they thus inserted in the Septuagint version; but Philo, who was an Alexandrian Jew, and who was a contemporary of our Lord's, never quotes them for the purpose of establishing any doctrine; and it is certain that none of them ever got into the Hebrew Canon; nor were they ever received by the Jews of Palestine, amongst whom our blessed Saviour taught, and to whose Canon, therefore, He gave the sanction of His Divine authority.

Now the fathers of the Christian Church for the first three centuries were, with the exception of Origen, profoundly ignorant of Hebrew. It was natural, therefore, that they should have adopted the Greek version as their old Testament; and, accordingly, it formed the original of their Latin version. Hence the books of the old Testament current in the Church were, in Greek the Septuagint, in Latin a translation from the Greek Septuagint;

<sup>1</sup> The Book of Ecclesiasticus appears from ch. l. 27 to have been written by "Jesus the Son of Sirach of *Jerusalem*;" and in the Prologue of his grandson the words of the book are said to have been *Ἑβραϊστὶ λεγόμενα*, written in Hebrew. However, Hebrew was then a dead language, and the Jews spoke Syro-Chaldee, which was what St. Paul spoke when he addressed his countrymen "in the Hebrew dialect," *ἐν Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ*, Acts

xxii. 1. It is also said that the first book of Maccabees was written in Hebrew; but as some of the events recorded in it happened within one hundred and fifty years from the birth of Christ, it must have been the same Chaldee. Tobit also and Judith are said by Jerome, in his Prefaces to these books, to have been written *Chaldeo sermone*, though it has been thought the Chaldee was only a translation.

both therefore containing the Apocryphal books. It was not till the time of Jerome, that a translation was made from the Hebrew; and hence, in the eyes of many, the whole collection of books contained in the Septuagint and the old Latin translation was naturally viewed with the respect due to Scripture. Many indeed of the fathers, as we shall soon see, knew the difference between the books of the Hebrew Canon and those of the Apocrypha, and knew that the former were Divine, the latter of inferior authority. But still many quoted almost indiscriminately from both; and especially St. Augustine is appealed to, as having given a Catalogue of the old Testament Scriptures, which contained the books of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, and the two books of Maccabees.<sup>1</sup> In the Latin Church the name of Augustine stood deservedly high. Though Jerome's labours showed the fallacy of Augustine's opinion, though the Greek fathers never received the Apocryphal books so carelessly as the Latin fathers had done, and though even Augustine himself was aware of the difference between them and the books of the Hebrew Canon; yet the Apocryphal books still kept their place in the Latin Vulgate, and were ultimately adopted by the Council of Trent, as part of the Canon of Scripture. Yet as we can thus easily trace the origin of the mistake, and thereby see that it was a mistake, we need not be led away with it.

This, necessarily very brief, sketch of the grounds on which we believe the present Hebrew Canon to be that to which our Lord gave His sanction, may be sufficient to show on what we rest our belief concerning the sacred books of the old Testament. From such historical evidence we know, that the Scriptures which the Lord Jesus appealed to, authorized, and confirmed, were the books contained in our Hebrew Bibles.<sup>2</sup> We ask no more, and we can receive no more. On such a matter the appeal to such an authority must be final. Fathers and Councils, nay, "the holy Church throughout all the world," would be as nothing, if their voice could be against their Lord's.

We are not, however, in this or in any other question, insensible to the value of the opinions of the fathers, still less of the consent of the early Church. And though we can plainly see what, in this case, may have led some of the fathers into error, we rejoice in being able to show, that, in the main, their testimony

<sup>1</sup> Augustin. *De Doctrina Christiana*, Lib. ii. c. 8; *Opera*, Tom. III. pt. 1. p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Passages of the new Testament, where such authority is given to the old, are such as Matt. v. 18. Luke xvi. 29; xxiv. 27, 44. John v. 39. Rom. iii. 1, 2; ix. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.

is decisive for what we have already, on other grounds, shown to be the truth.

Now in the second century, A. D. 147, Justin Martyr, himself a native of Palestine, in his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, though he reproves him for many other things, never reproaches him for rejecting any of the Canonical Scriptures.<sup>1</sup> Melito, A. D. 160, we have already seen, went to Palestine to be satisfied concerning the Canon of the old Testament, and reports that it contained, according to the Christians of that country, the books of our Hebrew Bible.<sup>2</sup> Origen, A. D. 220, the most learned of the early fathers, the famous compiler of the Hexapla, himself a native of and resident at Alexandria, where the Septuagint version was made and received, gives us the same account as Melito.<sup>3</sup>

Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, A. D. 340, gives a perfect catalogue of the books of Scripture, enumerating the books of the old Testament just as the English Church receives them now, and mentioning as *not canonical*<sup>4</sup> the Wisdom of Solomon, the Wisdom of Sirach, Esther (*i. e.* the Apocryphal book of Esther), Judith, and Tobit.<sup>5</sup>

Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, in France, A. D. 350, numbers the books of the old Testament as twenty-two, and gives the names of the very books of the Hebrew Bible used in the English Church, saying that some persons had added to this number Tobit and Judith, to make up twenty-four, the number of the Greek letters, instead of twenty-two, the number of the Hebrew.<sup>6</sup>

Cyril of Jerusalem, A. D. 360, in his Catechetical Lectures, exhorts the catechumens to abstain from the Apocryphal, and to read only the Canonical books of Scripture, giving as the reason, "Why shouldest thou, who knowest not those which are acknowledged by all, take needless trouble about those which are questioned?" He makes the number of the books twenty-two, and

<sup>1</sup> Cosin, *On the Canon*, ch. iv.

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 25.

<sup>4</sup> Ἄτερα βιβλία τούτων ἐξῶθεν· οὐ καυνοῦμενα μὲν, τετυπωμένα δὲ παρὰ τῶν πατέρων.

<sup>5</sup> *F-stal. Epist. xxxix. Op. Tom. II. p. 961, edit. Bened. Tom. II. p. 38. Col. 1686.*

The only thing to be observed in the catalogue of Athanasius is, that he joins Baruch and the Epistle with Jeremiah; into which mistake many of the fathers fell, from the connection which was made between those books in the LXX. and Latin; though some think, that nothing

more is meant than what is inserted in the book of Jeremiah concerning Baruch, and the Epistle contained in the twenty-ninth chapter of the prophecy of Jeremiah, — not the apocryphal books of these names. See Cosin, ch. vi.

<sup>6</sup> Hilar. *Proleg. in Librum Psalmorum*, § 15, edit. Benedict. p. 9. His Catalogue is Five books of Moses, 5. Joshua, 1. Judges and Ruth, 1. Samuel, 1. Kings, 1. Chronicles, 1. Ezra (including Nehemiah), 1. Psalms, 1. Proverbs, 1. Ecclesiastes, 1. Song of Songs, 1. Minor Prophets, 1. Isaiah, 1. Jeremiah (with Lamentations and Epistle), 1. Daniel, 1. Ezekiel, 1. Job, 1. Esther, 1. In all, 22

gives the same list as Athanasius, *i. e.* the same as the English Canon, with the addition of Baruch and the Epistle to the book of Jeremiah.<sup>1</sup>

The Council of Laodicea, held about A. D. 364, in its fifty-ninth Canon, gives exactly the same list as Athanasius and Cyril. The Canons of this Council were approved by name in the Council of Constantinople in Trullo.<sup>2</sup>

Epiphanius, Bishop of Constance, in Cyprus, A. D. 375, three times numbers the books of the old Testament as we do, and mentions the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus as “doubtful writings,” and not counted as among the sacred books “because they were never laid up in the Ark of the covenant.”<sup>3</sup>

Gregory Nazianzen, A. D. 376, gives a catalogue, which is the same as the Canon of the English Church, except that he does not mention Esther, which he probably includes in Ezra.<sup>4</sup>

Rufinus, presbyter of Aquileia, A. D. 398, numbers the books of the old Testament as the English Church does at present.<sup>5</sup>

Jerome, the contemporary and friend of Rufinus, gives us, as we have seen, the same catalogue as the Church of England now receives, and enumerates Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Judith, Tobit, and the Maccabees, as Apocryphal books.<sup>6</sup>

We have now arrived at the close of the fourth century, and have found that the whole chain of evidence up to that period is in favour, and most decidedly in favour, of the Canon of the English Church. It will be no argument against such testimony, that many of the fathers quote the Apocryphal books, or even quote them as of authority. We have already seen what circumstances led the early Christians, and especially those of the Latin Church, into a somewhat excessive respect for the Apocryphal writings contained in the Septuagint and the ancient Latin Versions.

At the end of the fourth century, and contemporary with Jerome, lived Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. In his book *De Doctrina Christiana*,<sup>7</sup> he enumerates the books of the “whole Canon of Scripture.” He reckons in this Canon the books of Tobit, Judith, two books of Maccabees, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus. The authority of Augustine is very great. Yet is it not for a moment to be weighed against the testimony of the four preceding centuries, even if his testimony was undoubted and uniform. Yet

<sup>1</sup> Cyril. Hieros. *Catech.* iv. § 35.

<sup>2</sup> Concil. Laodiceen. Can. LIX. Concil. Quinisext. Can. II.

<sup>3</sup> *Adv. Hæres.* v. LXXVI. *De Mensuris et Ponderibus*, Tom. II. pp. 162, 180.

<sup>4</sup> Greg. Nazianz. *Carm.* XXXIII.

<sup>5</sup> *Expositio in Symbolum Apostolorum*, § 36, *ad calcem Oper. Cyprian.*

<sup>6</sup> *In Prologo Galeata*, Tom. I. p. 322. Ed. Bened

<sup>7</sup> Lib. II c. 8, edit. Benedict Tom III. p. 23.

this is by no means the case. In the very passage above referred to, he speaks of a diversity of opinion concerning the sacred books, and advises, that those should be preferred which were received by all the Churches; that, of those not always received, those which the greater number and more important Churches received should be preferred before those which were sanctioned by fewer and less authoritative Churches.<sup>1</sup> But moreover, passages from his other writings tell strongly against the canonicity of the books commonly called the Apocrypha. Thus he speaks of the Jews being without prophets from the captivity, and after the death of Malachi, Haggai, Zechariah, and Ezra, until Christ.<sup>2</sup> He tells us, that "the Jews did not receive the book of Maccabees as they did the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, to which the Lord gives testimony, as to His own witnesses."<sup>3</sup> He tells us, that the book of Judith was never in the Canon of the Jews.<sup>4</sup> He distinguishes between the books which are certainly Solomon's, and the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, to which custom has given the sanction of his name, but which learned men agreed were not his.<sup>5</sup> And many other proofs have been brought from his works, to show that he was at least doubtful concerning the authority of these books, notwithstanding his catalogue, which included them.<sup>6</sup>

We now come to the Council of Carthage at which it is said that Augustine was present. The date of this Council is disputed. It is usually considered as the third Council of Carthage, held A. D. 397. It enumerates the books of Scripture as we have them now, together with Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, and the two books of Maccabees.<sup>7</sup> If Augustine was present, it is probable that we ought to interpret the decree of the Council with the same restrictions with which we plainly ought to interpret the words of St. Augustine, who, if he be not altogether inconsistent with him-

<sup>1</sup> In canonicis autem Scripturis, Ecclesiarum Catholicarum quam plurimum auctoritatem sequatur; inter quas sane illæ sint quæ Apostolicas sedes habere et epistolas accipere meruerunt. Tenebit igitur hunc modum in Scripturis canonicis, ut eas, quæ ab omnibus accipiuntur Ecclesiis Catholicis, præponat eis quas quædam non accipiunt: in eis vero quæ non accipiuntur ab omnibus, præponat eas quas plures graviioresque accipiunt, eis quas pauciores minorisque auctoritatis Ecclesiæ tenent. — Lib. II. c. 8, edit. Benedict. Tom. III. p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. XVII. cap. 24. Tom. VII. p. 487. Toto illo tempore ex quo redierunt de Babylonia, post Malachiam, Aggæum, et Zachariam, qui tunc

prophetaverunt, et Esdras, non habuerunt prophetas usque ad Salvatoris adventum, &c.

<sup>3</sup> *Contra Gaud.* Lib. I. c. 31, § 38. Tom. IX. p. 655.

<sup>4</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. XVIII. c. 26. Tom. VII. p. 508. In libro Judith: quem sane in Canone Scripturarum Judæi non receperisse dicuntur.

<sup>5</sup> *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. XVII. c. 20. Tom. VII. p. 483. Propter eloquii nonnullam similitudinem, ut Salomonis dicantur, obtinuit consuetudo: non autem esse ipsius, non dubitant doctores.

<sup>6</sup> The whole question is fully sifted by Bp. Cosin, *Scholastical History of the Canon*, ch. VII.

<sup>7</sup> *Conc. Carthag.* III. Can. XLVII.

self, must assign a lower degree of authority to the doubtful books than to those which all received. But if it be not so, we must still remember that the Council of Carthage was a provincial, not a general Synod; that it was liable to err; and that in matter of history, if not in matter of doctrine, it actually did err; for by numbering five books of Solomon, it assigned to his authorship Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, which could not have been written for centuries after his death. We cannot therefore bow to the authority of the Council of Carthage, even if that of St. Augustine be joined to it, against the testimony of all preceding ages, and, above all, against what has been shown to be the witness of our Lord Himself.

The Council of Trent, however, in its fourth session, stamped with its authority all the books which had been enumerated by the Council of Carthage, with the addition of the book of Baruch; and added an anathema against every one who should not receive the whole Canon so put forth, and all the traditions of the Church besides.<sup>1</sup> Thus did the Churches of the Roman communion set themselves against the Churches of God in the times of old, and against all the rest of Christendom in this present time. They, by implication, condemned those ancient fathers, who, as we have seen, almost with one voice preferred the Jewish Scriptures to the Apocryphal writings of the Septuagint. They anathematized, not only the Anglican, and all other reformed Churches, but as well the ancient Churches of the East, who with us reject the Apocrypha, and adhere to the Scriptures which were sanctioned by the Lord.<sup>2</sup> We might speak more strongly of the danger of "cursing whom God hath not cursed;" but we may rest satisfied with the assurance that "the curse causeless shall not come."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Concil. Trid. Sess. iv. Decret. i. Sacrorum vero librorum indicem huic decreto adscribendum censuit, ne cui dubitatio suboriri possit, quinam sint, qui ab ipso Synodo suscipiuntur. Sunt vero infra scripti:

Test. V. Quinque Mosis, Jos., Judic., Ruth, 4 Reg., 2 Paralip., Esdræ 1 et 2 (qui dicitur Nehem.), Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, Psalterium David, cl. Psal., Parab., Ecclesiastes, Cantic. Canticorum, Sapientia, Ecclesiasticus, Esaias, Hieremias cum Baruch, Ezech., Daniel., 12 Proph. Minores, Duo Machabæorum 1 et 2.

Test. N. Quattuor Evangelia, &c. &c. Si quis autem libros ipsos integros cum omnibus suis partibus, prout in Ecclesia Catholica legi convenerunt et in

veteri vulgata Latina editione habentur, pro sacris et canonicis non susceperit, et traditiones prædictas sciens et prudens contempserit, anathema sit.

<sup>2</sup> See Suicer, s. v. γραφή. See also Dr. Wordsworth's *Lectures on the Canon*, Appendix B. No. iv., where documents are given, showing the agreement of the Eastern with the Anglican Church on the Canon of Scripture.

<sup>3</sup> On the Canon of the old Testament, see Suicer's *Thesaurus*, s. v. γραφή; Bp. Cosin's *Scholastic History of the Canon*; Bp. Marsh, *Lectures*, Part vi. *On the Authority of the old Testament*; Bp. Marsh's *Comparative View*, chap. v. Dr. Wordsworth, in his *Hulsean Lectures on the Canon of Scripture*, has thrown into the Appendix the most important passages

II. The Canon of the new Testament rests on the same authority as the Canon of the old.

As regards the number of books which are to be admitted as Canonical in the New Testament, there is no difference between the Anglican and any other branch of the Church of Christ. Yet on the mode of settling the Canon there is some difference. The Roman Church holds, that we receive the Scriptures, both of the old and new Testament, simply on the *authority* of the Church. It is said, that the Canon was not fixed till the end of the fourth century; and it is inferred, that the Church then, by its plenary authority, determined which books were Scripture, and which were not. Thus virtually the Church has been made to hold a position superior to the Scriptures, as not only "a witness and keeper," but also a judge "of Holy Writ." And though, in the first instance, such authority is conceded to the Church of the fourth century; yet, by implication and consequence, the same authority is claimed for the Church of this day; that is, not for the Church Universal, but for that portion of it which has claimed, as its exclusive title, the name of Catholic, *i. e.* the Church of Rome.

On the other hand, some Protestants have been satisfied to rest the authority of the books of the new Testament on internal evidence, especially on the witness which the Spirit bears with our own spirits that they are the Word of God. The framers of the Belgic Confession, for instance, distinctly assert, that they receive the Scriptures "not so much because the Church receives and sanctions them as Canonical, as because the Spirit witnesses with our consciences that they proceeded from God; and especially because they, of themselves, attest their own authority and sanctity."<sup>1</sup>

Now the Church of England rejects altogether neither the authority of the Church, nor the internal testimony of the Scriptures. Yet she is not satisfied to rest her faith solely on the authoritative decree of any council in the fourth or fifth, still less in any later century; neither can she consent to forego all external testimony, and trust to an internal witness alone, knowing that, as Satan can transform himself into an angel of light, so it

on the subject from the Jewish and early Christian writers, in a form more convenient than they may be seen in Bp. Cosin's most valuable work, as in the latter they are scattered through the notes, whilst in Dr. Wordsworth's book they are given in a compact form at the end.

<sup>1</sup> Idque non tam quod Ecclesia illos

pro canonicis recipiat et comprobet: quam quod Spiritus Sanctus nostris conscientiis testetur illos a Deo emanasse: et eo maxime quod ipsi etiam per se sacram hanc suam autoritatem et sanctitatem testentur atque comprobent.—*Confess. Belgica*, Art. v.; *Sylloge Confessionum*, p. 328; Jones, *On the Canon*, Part I. ch. vi.

is possible, that what seems the guidance of God's Spirit may, if not proved, be really the suggestion of evil spirits. Hence we think that there is need of the external word, and of the Church, to teach; lest what seems a light within be but darkness counterfeiting light: and we know, that the fertile source of almost every fanatical error, recorded in history, has been a reliance on inward illumination, to the neglect of outward testimony.<sup>1</sup>

The principle, then, which we assert, is this, that Christ gave authority to His Apostles to teach and to write, that He promised them infallible guidance, and that therefore all Apostolical writings are divinely inspired. We have only to inquire what writings were Apostolical; and for this purpose we have recourse to testimony, or, if the word be preferred, to tradition. The testimony or tradition of the primitive Church is the ground on which the fathers themselves received the books of the new Testament as Apostolical; and, on the same ground, we receive them. We gladly add to this every weight which can be derived from internal evidence, or from the authority of early councils; for we know, that no argument should be neglected, which may fairly confirm our faith. But the first ground on which we receive the new Testament is, that it can be proved to have come from the pens or the dictation of the Apostles of Christ, and that to those Apostles Christ promised infallibility in matters of faith.

1. The promise of inspiration and infallibility appears in such passages as the following:—

“The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My Name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John xiv. 25, 26.

“When He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth, and He will show you things to come.” John xvi. 13.

“It is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.” Mark xiii. 11.

And what Christ promised, His Apostles claimed. They speak of having the deep things of God revealed to them by His Spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 10. They declare their own Gospel to be the truth, and

<sup>1</sup> There is a passage much to the purpose, quoted by Jones (*On the Canon*, Part I. ch. vi.) from the Preface to Baxter's *Saints' Rest*. “For my part, I confess, I could never boast of any such testimony or light of the Spirit nor reason neither, which, without human testimony, would have made me believe

that the book of Canticles is canonical and written by Solomon, and the book of Wisdom apocryphal, and written by Philo, &c. Nor could I have known all or any historical books, such as Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, &c., to be written by divine inspiration, but by tradition, &c.”



anathematize all who preach any other Gospel, Gal. i. 8. They speak of "the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men," as being now revealed to the "Apostles and prophets by the Spirit," Ephes. iii. 4, 5; and treat the Gospel as a faith "once delivered to the saints," Jude 3.

If therefore we believe the new Testament at all, we believe that Jesus Christ gave a promise of inspiration to the Apostles; and that the Apostles claimed the promise, professed to have received the inspiration, and accordingly assumed to be the only infallible depositaries of the doctrines of the Gospel.

2. We have therefore, in the next place, simply to determine the genuineness of the writings which profess to be Apostolical, and our labour will be finished. If we know that any book was written by an Apostle, we know that, as regards doctrine and faith, it is inspired and infallible, and therefore we receive it into the Canon of Scripture. The primitive Church acted on this principle; and we act upon the same.

More or less, all ancient writings must be subjected to a test like this. If we wish to know whether certain books were written by Cicero, or Cæsar, or Tacitus, we examine the evidence, and decide according to it. The simple fact that they have ever been received as theirs, is a strong presumption that they proceeded from them. But still we mostly require farther proof.

Now, it is infinitely more important to be assured that a book was written by St. John or St. Paul, than to know that one was written by Cæsar or Cicero. And accordingly God, in His Providence, has afforded us far more abundant evidence concerning the genuineness of the different books of the new Testament, than can be found concerning any other writings of antiquity. That evidence is principally dependent on *testimony*, but is not resolvable into mere *authority*. It is the *witness* of the Church, not merely its *sanction*, to which we appeal.

Now the position of the Church in its earliest ages was such, that its witness on this subject is singularly unexceptionable. During the very lifetimes of the Apostles, it had spread through the civilized world. Europe, Asia, Africa, had all heard the voice of the Apostles, and all had flourishing Churches long before the death of the last of that sacred body. The books which the Apostles had written were therefore not merely to be found in one or two obscure corners of the world, but they were treasured up, and read and revered in Rome and Alexandria, in Antioch and Ephesus, in Corinth and Thessalonica, very probably in Spain and Gaul and

Arabia, perhaps even in the remote region of Britain itself. There were therefore witnesses in every corner of the globe. Even where the arms of Rome had not carried conquest, the feet of Apostles had carried good tidings of peace. In many of these Churches, the writers of the sacred books were well known and constant visitors; so that Epistles as from them, or Gospels with their names, could not have been palmed off upon their converts, who could continually have rectified errors of this kind by direct appeal to the living sources of Divine instruction. The writers of the new Testament themselves took care that what they wrote should be widely circulated, and extensively known, when first they wrote it. St. Paul bids the Colossians send his epistle to them to be read as well in the Church of Laodicea (Col. iv. 16). He charges the Thessalonians that they should suffer his epistle to be "read to all the holy brethren" (1 Thess. v. 27). We are informed concerning the Gospels, that they were written, the first by an Apostle, for the use of the Church of Judea;<sup>1</sup> the second, by St. Mark, under the dictation of St. Peter,<sup>2</sup> for the use of those Christians amongst whom St. Peter had been preaching, and who wished to have the substance of it preserved in writing;<sup>3</sup> that St. Luke, the companion of St. Paul, wrote his Gospel at St. Paul's dictation;<sup>4</sup> and that St. John wrote his in his last days at Ephesus, having first seen and approved the other Gospels, writing his own as supplementary to them.<sup>5</sup>

These and similar considerations show that the writings of the new Testament must have had a great degree of publicity, and therefore great protection against forgery and fraud, from their earliest publication. Every separate Church, and every separate city, to which they spread, was a guard against corruption, and a check upon its neighbours. But at the same time, wide as the empire of Christ had spread, it was not then, as now, a collection of disunited communities, but one living, intercommunicating whole. The early records with one voice proclaim that all Christendom was as one man. There was a circulation of life-blood through the whole. A Christian could not go from Rome to Alexandria, or from Alexandria to Ephesus, but he bore a talisman with him, which made him welcomed as a brother. And the degree of intercourse which took place in the very earliest times between far distant Churches, is apparent by the letter of

<sup>1</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* III. 24; Iren. III. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Iren. III. 1; III. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Euseb. I. 15; VI. 14, on the authority

<sup>4</sup> Iren. III. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Euseb. III. 24; Hieron. *De Viris Illustribus*, s. v. Joannes.

of Clemens Alexandrinus.

Clement of Rome to the Church of Corinth, by the solicitude of Ignatius for the different cities, to which he wrote on the eve of his martyrdom, by the journey of Polycarp from Smyrna to Rome to discuss the Paschal controversy, by the appointment of Irenæus, a native of Asia, to the chief bishopric in Gaul, and by numerous similar facts.

We have therefore the following securities that the Churches from the first would preserve the writings of the Apostles safe and in their integrity.

(1) The presence of the Apostles with them, and frequent intercourse among them, whilst the sacred books were in writing.

(2) The publicity given to these books from the first.

(3) The wide diffusion of the Church throughout the world, so that copies would be multiplied everywhere, and one part of the Church would be a check against forgeries in another.

(4) The intimate communion of every part of Christendom with the rest, so that every facility was afforded to every portion of the Church, of knowing what were the Apostles' writings, and of guarding against mistake.

(5) To these we may add, that there were divisions in many Churches even from the Apostles' days, (see 1 Cor. iii. 3, 4; Gal. ii. 4, &c.) which necessarily created independent witnesses, even in individual Churches, each party being a check on the other.

(6) And lastly, that in God's Providence the Apostle St. John lived at the great city of Ephesus for thirty years after the works of the other Apostles had been written; and was thus living in the midst of the civilized world, as a final and authoritative court of appeal, if there could be any doubt as to which were Apostolical, and which Apocryphal writings.

Can we doubt then, that the primitive Church was a body so remarkably constituted that its testimony united, on this particular subject, the singularly opposite merits of unanimity and yet of mutual independence; that it enjoyed the most extraordinary powers for knowing the truth, with no interest in corrupting it, and without the power to corrupt it, even if it had the will?

We conclude therefore, that the Scriptures which the primitive Church held as Apostolical, must have been so. And we may add, that, owing to the wide diffusion of the Church throughout the world, it would have been impossible for a forger in after-times to pass off his forgery on the Church; for, if it was received in one place, it would speedily be rejected in another, and convicted of falsehood, on the sure ground of novelty. The primitive

Church, therefore, was singularly fitted by Providence to be a witness and keeper of Holy Writ; even a witness and a keeper of it against future as well as present corruptions.

It is impossible to give more than a very brief sketch of the evidence which we derive from the early Church, thus qualified to bear testimony. We may classify it in the following order:—

- (1) Manuscripts of the original.
- (2) Versions in numerous languages.
- (3) Catalogues.
- (4) Quotations and references, and commentaries.

(1) We have manuscripts of the new Testament Scriptures in very great numbers, preserved to us in different quarters of the globe. The testimony which these MSS. bear, all tends to the same point; namely, the general integrity of the text of the new Testament, as we have it now. These MSS. indeed are so far different from each other as to be independent witnesses; for, though they agree in preserving the same general text, they differ in verbal minutiae, and have various readings, like MSS. of all ancient authors; and it is found that these MSS. can be classed into different families; so that each family bears a line of testimony distinct from the others. Thus Griesbach distinguished the Greek MSS. into three distinct texts: the Alexandrine, which he found to correspond with the reading of the famous Codex Alexandrinus and with the quotations of Origen, the great Alexandrian critic; the Byzantine, including those MSS. which in their peculiarities agree with the MSS. which have been brought to us direct from Constantinople; the Western, to which belong the MSS. which have been chiefly found in Europe, and which in their peculiarities resemble the Latin version. Other critics (as Matthäi, Scholz, &c.) have made different arrangements and classifications; but all agree in the observation, that we have distinct streams of MSS. coming down to us from the most remote antiquity, and preserving in the main the same text of the new Testament, though differing in minute particulars, sufficient to constitute them in some degree independent witnesses, and existing in the different quarters of the globe. It is true, the most ancient of these MSS. is probably not older than the fourth century; but it is well known to all scholars, how very ancient a MS. of the fourth century is considered, and how very few MSS. in the world have anything approaching to such antiquity; and it must be borne in mind, that a MS. of the fourth century represents a text of much earlier date, from which it must have been copied; and when we

have many independent MSS., and some of them of nearly the same great antiquity, we know that they respectively and independently bear witness to the existence of an older text or texts, to which they owe their original.

Now here is one evidence of the genuineness of our new Testament writings. They are preserved to us in innumerable MSS. in all parts of the world; MSS. whose authority is of the highest possible character. The books which are thus preserved are not the Apocryphal, but the generally received Canonical books of the new Testament.

(2) We have a great number of ancient versions of the new Testament Scriptures, in the various languages which were vernacular in the early ages of the Church. Thus we have versions in Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Sahidic, Arabic, Ethiopic, Armenian, and other languages. The Versions which are supposed to have the greatest claim to antiquity, are the Latin and the Syriac. That there was a very ancient Latin version, there can be no manner of doubt; for the rapid diffusion of the Gospel in Europe and Africa made it a matter of great consequence that the new Testament Scriptures should speedily be translated into the Latin tongue. The ancient Italic may, therefore, very probably have been made in the days of the Apostles. The only difficulty of importance is the many alterations which the Latin Versions subsequently underwent, which make it hard to ascertain what MS. fairly represents the most ancient text. Yet all the Latin Versions of any authority, at present in existence, give their testimony, in the main, to the integrity of the text of the new Testament as we have it now. The Peschito Syriac is by most scholars considered to be the oldest of all the versions; and it has the advantage of being a Version from the Greek into the vernacular tongue of our Lord and His Apostles. It is by many thought to be a work of the first century, and may have been seen by the Apostle St. John. The Syrians themselves held the tradition that it was made by St. Mark. The testimony which it bears concerning the Canon of the new Testament is most satisfactory, so far as it goes. It contains, in literal translation, the four Gospels, the Acts, thirteen Epistles of St. Paul, and the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of St. James, the first Epistle of St. Peter, and the first of St. John,—that is to say, all our present Canon, except the Apocalypse, the Epistle of St. Jude, the second of St. Peter, and the second and third of St. John. There are many reasons why so ancient a Version should not have contained these last-named

books. If it were made so early as has been supposed, some of the excluded books may not have been written. At all events, it is highly probable that they were not all at once collected into one volume, and some shorter and later pieces are especially likely to have been at first omitted.<sup>1</sup>

(3) We have among very early fathers, regular catalogues of the books of the new Testament, as received and read in the Church.

Origen, the most learned of the Greek fathers, who was born A. D. 185, *i. e.* less than ninety years from the death of St. John, gives a catalogue exactly corresponding with our present Canon.<sup>2</sup>

Eusebius, another most learned and accurate inquirer, born at Cæsarea, in Palestine, A. D. 270, gives a catalogue exactly corresponding with our own, except that he speaks of the Epistles of St. James, St. Jude, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, as generally received, yet doubted of by some; and says of the Apocalypse, that, though some doubted, yet others received it; and he himself received it, and considered it as canonical.<sup>3</sup>

Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, A. D. 326, and who therefore must have been born in the third century, gives a catalogue exactly corresponding with ours.<sup>4</sup>

Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, A. D. 349, gives the same list, with the exception of the Apocalypse.<sup>5</sup>

The Council of Laodicea, A. D. 364, gives the same list as St. Cyril.<sup>6</sup>

Epiphanius, A. D. 370, gives the same list as ours.<sup>7</sup>

Gregory Nazianzen, A. D. 375, who was born about the time of the Council of Nice, gives the same list as ours, omitting the Apocalypse.<sup>8</sup>

Jerome, who was born A. D. 329, was educated at Rome, and was ordained presbyter at Antioch, A. D. 378, gives the same list as ours; except that he observes that most persons in the Latin

<sup>1</sup> On the importance of the Syriac version, see Jones, *On the Canon*, Pt. I. ch. XIV.-XIX.

<sup>2</sup> Comment. in Matt. ap. Euseb. *H. F.* VI. 25. In this catalogue he omits St. James and St. Jude. But in his thirteenth Homily on Genesis he speaks of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, James, and Jude, as the authors of the books of the new Testament. In his seventh Homily on the book of Joshua, if we may trust the Latin translation of Rufinus, in which alone it exists, he enumerates all the books which we now have. See Jones, *On the Canon*, Pt. I.

ch. VIII.; Bp. Marsh's *Lectures*, Pt. V. *On Authority of the New Testament*, Lect XXIV.; Lardner, II. ch. XXXVIII.

<sup>3</sup> *H. E.* III. 25.

<sup>4</sup> *Ex Festali Epist.* XXXIX. Tom. II. p. 961; Edit. Benedict. Tom. II. p. 38, Colon. 1686.

<sup>5</sup> *Cateches.* IV. § 36. He makes mention of certain forged Gospels, *ψευδὲς γράφα*, and ascribes to the Manicheans a Gospel according to St. Thomas.

<sup>6</sup> Concil. Laodicen. Can. IX.

<sup>7</sup> *Hæres.* 76, c. 5.

<sup>8</sup> Gregor. Nazianz. *Carm.* XXXIII.

Church did not consider the Epistle to the Hebrews as St. Paul's, though he himself held that it was so.<sup>1</sup>

Rufinus, presbyter of Aquileia, contemporary and friend of Jerome, gives the same catalogue as we now possess.<sup>2</sup>

Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, A. D. 394, (born A. D. 355,) gives the same catalogue as ours.<sup>3</sup>

The Council of Carthage (A. D. 397?) gives the same catalogue.<sup>4</sup>

(4) But, besides these formal catalogues, we have from the very first ages a series of quotations, references, and allusions to our sacred books, and in some cases regular harmonies and commentaries upon them.

This is a wide subject. It occupies the first five volumes in the octavo edition of Lardner's most valuable work on *The Credibility of the Gospel History*. An account of it here must necessarily be brief.

The writings of the Apostolical fathers are few in number, and there are many reasons why they should not quote so frequently and fully from the books of the new Testament, as those who succeeded them. Yet there are, nevertheless, a considerable number of references and quotations from the books which we possess as the new Testament Scriptures, even in them.

Clement, who probably died before St. John, especially ascribes the first Epistle to the Corinthians to St. Paul. Words of our blessed Lord, found in the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, are recommended with a high degree of respect, but without the names of the Evangelists; and there is reason to think that he alludes to the Acts, the Epistle to the Romans, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and divers other of the Epistles of the new Testament.<sup>5</sup>

Ignatius, who suffered martyrdom very soon after the death of St. John, in writing to the Ephesians, ascribes the Epistle to that Church to St. Paul, and cites several passages from it. He alludes to St. Matthew's, St. Luke's, and probably to St. John's Gospel; also, probably, to the Acts, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Timothy, 1 Peter, 1 and 3 John. He appears also to have expressions denoting collections of the Gospels and Epistles of the Apostles.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Epist. l. ad Paulinum. Opp. Tom. iv. p. 574*; Ed. Bened. On the Epistle to the Hebrews, see *De Viris Illustribus, s. v. Paulus*.

<sup>2</sup> *Exposit. in Symb. Apostol. § 86, ad calc. Oper. Cyprian.*

<sup>3</sup> *De Doctrina Christiana, Lib. II. c. 8. Tom. III. p. 23.*

<sup>4</sup> *Concil. Carthag. III. Can. XLVII.*

<sup>5</sup> *Lardner, II. ch. II.*

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid. II. ch. v.*

Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, a disciple of St. John, quotes Philippians, and speaks of St. Paul as having written to that Church. He quotes also expressions from St. Matthew and St. Luke, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians; and there are manifest references to Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, 1 Peter, 1 John, and probably to the Hebrews.<sup>1</sup>

If Barnabas and Hermas are to be reckoned Apostolical, although there are manifest references to the new Testament in their works, yet the nature of their writings makes it most improbable that they should have quoted much from it, and accounts for their comparative silence.<sup>2</sup>

Papias, who was well acquainted with Polycarp, and, as some think, even with St. John, and was an anxious inquirer about all that had come from the Apostles and followers of Christ, bears testimony to the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, quotes the first Epistle of St. Peter and the first of St. John, appears to have a reference to the book of Acts, and there is every reason to suppose he received the Apocalypse. There are no works of his remaining, except a fragment preserved by Eusebius.<sup>3</sup>

Justin Martyr, the first of the fathers of whom we have any considerable remains, was converted to Christianity about A. D. 133, flourished chiefly about A. D. 140, *i. e.* 40 years after the death of St. John, and died a martyr about A. D. 164 or 167. He has many quotations from the four Gospels, which he refers to under the name of the *Memoirs of the Apostles*.<sup>4</sup> He has, moreover, referred to the Acts, many of the Epistles, and expressly assigns the Book of Revelation to St. John. In his first Apology, he tells us that the memoirs of the Apostles and the writings of the Prophets were read in the assemblies for public worship, and discourses made upon them by the presiding presbyter.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lardner. II. ch. vi.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. II. ch. i. iv.

<sup>3</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* Lib. III. cap. 39; Lardner, II. ch. ix.

<sup>4</sup> Ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν Ἀποστόλων, which he explains by ἡ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια. — *Apol.* I. p. 98, b.

Bishop Marsh in his dissertation *On the Origin of the Four Gospels*, ch. xv., supposes that Justin does not allude to our present Gospels, but to a certain original document, which the Bishop supposes to have existed, which was early composed by the Apostles, and from which the Evangelists compiled their several Gospels. The words ἡ καλεῖται

εὐαγγέλια he considers an interpolation. He argues, that *Memoirs of the Apostles* more probably mean a single work than a collection of works, and that Justin's quotations are not exact from our present Gospels. His arguments are considered by Bishop Kaye, *Writings of Justin Martyr*, ch. VIII. The last-named prelate seems to have clearly proved that there is no reason for doubting that our present Gospels are those cited by Justin, though, at times, he rather quotes the purport than the very words of a passage.

<sup>5</sup> *Apol.* I. p. 98; Lardner, II. ch. x.



Tatian, the disciple of Justin Martyr, composed a harmony of the Gospels, called *Diatessaron*.<sup>1</sup>

The circular Epistle of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons, concerning the sufferings of their martyrs in the reign of Marcus Antoninus, uses language from the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John, Acts, Romans, Philippians, 1 Peter, 1 John, and the Revelation.<sup>2</sup>

Irenæus, who was a hearer of Polycarp, the disciple of St John,<sup>3</sup> and became Bishop of Lyons, A. D. 177, assures us that there were four Gospels, and no more,<sup>4</sup> all of which he has largely quoted, with the names of their writers, and has given an account of their composition.<sup>5</sup> He refers the Acts to St. Luke. He quotes all St. Paul's Epistles, except Philemon and the Hebrews, also 1 Peter, 1 and 2 John, and the Apocalypse, which he expressly assigns to St. John the Apostle,<sup>6</sup> and *probably* the Epistle of St. James. "His quotations from the Gospels are so numerous that they occupy more than twelve folio columns in the index of Scripture passages annexed to the Benedictine edition."<sup>7</sup>

Theophilus of Antioch (circ. A. D. 170) quotes St. Matthew, St. Luke, several of St. Paul's Epistles, and we are assured by Eusebius that in his work against Hermogenes he quoted the Apocalypse.<sup>8</sup>

Clement of Alexandria, who lived at the end of the second century, about 100 years after the completion of the Canon of Scripture, quotes all the four Gospels, and especially tells us the origin of St. Mark's.<sup>9</sup> He ascribes the Acts to St. Luke; quotes all St. Paul's Epistles, except the short Epistle to Philemon, and ascribes the Epistle to the Hebrews to St. Paul, though he thinks it was written in Hebrew by St. Paul, and translated into Greek by St. Luke.<sup>9</sup> He quotes three of the Catholic Epistles, namely, 1 John, 1 Peter, Jude; for it is doubtful whether he refers expressly to St. James, or the second Epistle of St. Peter, and the second and third of St. John. The Apocalypse he expressly ascribes to St. John.<sup>10</sup>

Tertullian, presbyter of Carthage, of the same date with Clement, quotes all the books of the new Testament, except perhaps

<sup>1</sup> Lardner, II. ch. XIII.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ch. XVI.

<sup>3</sup> Hieronym. *De V. I. s. v.* Irenæus.

<sup>4</sup> *Adv. Hæres.* III. 11.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. III. 1.

<sup>6</sup> *Adv. Hæres.* IV. 20; V. 26. The time of seeing the Apocalypse is mentioned V. 30; namely, towards the end of the reign of Domitian, if the word *εωπάθη*

is used of the seeing of the Apocalypse, not, as some think, of the duration of St. John's own life.

<sup>7</sup> Bp. Marsh's *Lectures*, Pt. V. Lect. XXIV.; Lardner, II. ch. XVII.

<sup>8</sup> Lardner, II. ch. XX.

<sup>9</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* VI. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Lardner, II. ch. XXII.; Bp. Kaye's *Clement of Alex.* ch. VIII.

St. James's Epistle, the second of St. Peter, and the third of St. John. The Epistle to the Hebrews he assigns to Barnabas.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Lardner has observed, that "There are perhaps more and larger quotations of the new Testament in this one Christian author than of all the works of Cicero, though of so uncommon excellence for thought and style, in the writers of all characters for several ages."<sup>2</sup>

We are now arrived at Origen, who, as we have seen, gives a complete catalogue of the new Testament, as we have it now.<sup>3</sup>

Dionysius of Alexandria, A. D. 247, quotes the Gospels, Acts, St. Paul's Epistles, especially ascribing the Hebrews to St. Paul, the three Epistles of St. John. On the Apocalypse he has a long dissertation, from which it appears that it was very generally received by Christians as written by St. John, though he himself inclines to attribute it to another John, whom he considered a holy and divinely inspired man.<sup>4</sup>

Cyprian, A. D. 250, quotes all the new Testament except the Epistles to Philemon and the Hebrews, the third of St. John, the second of St. Peter, and St. James. The Apocalypse he often quotes as St. John's.<sup>5</sup>

Methodius, Bishop of Olympus in Lycia, circ. A. D. 260, constantly quotes or refers to the Gospels and Acts, most of St. Paul's Epistles, especially the Hebrews, also 1 Peter, 1 John, and the Apocalypse.<sup>6</sup>

Eusebius has already been adduced as a witness, having given a catalogue of the new Testament Scriptures, as we have them now.

It is unnecessary to continue the list farther. We have already seen that from this time we may find in the works of the fathers full catalogues of the books of the new Testament; and the number of quotations from them in their writings grows fuller and more abundant.

We must add, that heretics quoted and admitted the same Scriptures, with the exception of those outrageous heretics, such as the Gnostics and the Manichees, who were rather heathen philosophers, with a tinge of Christianity, than Christians with a defilement of philosophy. Thus the Montanists, the Donatists,<sup>7</sup> Arius,<sup>8</sup> Photinus,<sup>9</sup> Lucifer,<sup>10</sup> and other schismatics and heretics of the first

<sup>1</sup> *De Pudicitia*, c. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Lardner, II. ch. xxviii. See also Bp. Kaye's *Tertullian*, ch. v. p. 307.

<sup>3</sup> Lardner, ch. xxxviii.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* III. ch. xliii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* III. ch. xliiv.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* III. ch. lvii.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* ch. lxvii.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* ch. lxix.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* ch. lxxxix.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* ch. xci.

four centuries, received the same sacred books with the Catholic Christians.

Not only heretics, moreover, but heathens and persecutors knew the sacred books and sought to destroy them. Thus in the persecution of Diocletian, there was an edict A. D. 303, that the Christian Churches should be destroyed, and their Scriptures burned. Accordingly, great search was made for the books of the new Testament, and those Christians who, to save themselves, gave up their books to the persecutors, acquired the opprobrious name of Traditores.<sup>1</sup>

When Constantine the Great embraced Christianity, finding that the persecution under Diocletian had diminished the number of copies of the new Testament, he authorized Eusebius Bishop of Cæsarea to get fifty copies of the new Testament written out for him, desiring that they should be skilfully and carefully written on fine parchment.<sup>2</sup>

We have seen then, that numerous MSS., the most ancient Versions, the catalogues given us by the fathers, quotations and references from the time of the earliest Apostolical father, gradually increasing in number, yet numerous from the beginning, the consent of heretics, the enmity of persecutors, — all witness to the existence, from the earliest times, of the new Testament Scriptures; and all this testimony is uniform in favour of the very books which we now possess.

It may be added, that, although it is quite clear that there were certain early writers, such as Clement, Barnabas, and Hermas, highly esteemed, and whose writings were read in some Churches; and though there were some Apocryphal books professing to be the works of the Apostles and Evangelists: yet there is good reason to assert that these books are not quoted by the fathers as authority, and were not received by the Church as Canonical Scripture.<sup>3</sup>

To the external evidence, the internal proofs of genuineness might be added, if time and space would allow. Books which are forgeries generally show, when carefully scrutinized, plain proofs that they are not his whose name they bear. The language, the ideas, the statements of facts, some little circumstance of date or place, some circumstance connected with the character, knowledge, or condition of the author, are found inconsistent and

<sup>1</sup> Lardner, ch. LXVI.

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. Lib. iv. c. 36; Lardner, ch. LXXX.

<sup>3</sup> See Jones, *On the Canon*, Part II. ch. I. Observ. III.; Lardner, ch. x. XIV XVII. XXII. XXXVIII. LVII. &c.

incapable of being explained. Or if this be not the case, there is a markedly studied effort to avoid all this, and to make the forgery appear a genuine work. But the different books of the new Testament, though written by eight different hands, under vastly different conditions, have yet defied the efforts of critics to disprove their genuineness. They only come out the brighter from every fiery trial. Their style and language is just what we should expect from the writers to whom they are ascribed. They abound in minute particulars, most naturally and simply introduced, which correspond accurately with the state of things existing at the time and in the place in which the authors wrote. Coincidences have been pointed out, which the cleverest forger could never have designed, and which only patient searching could have detected; whereas, if such coincidences had been designed, they would have been put prominently forward to meet the view.<sup>1</sup> In this, and in similar manners, we may confirm by internal examination the results deduced from external testimony.

But before we conclude this sketch we must observe, that, in the accounts of the catalogues and quotations given by the different early fathers, we could not but remark that some books were less universally quoted, and classed in the catalogues, than others. We learn, as early as Origen, and more clearly afterwards from Eusebius, that, though the Church generally received the Canon of the new Testament as we receive it now, yet some few books were by some persons considered as doubtful.

Eusebius makes three distinct classes of books,<sup>2</sup> namely:—

*ὁμολογούμενοι*, those universally received;

*ἀντιλεγόμενοι*, those generally received, but doubted of by some;

*νόθοι*, *i. e.* Apocryphal books rejected by all but heretics.

In like manner, Cyril of Jerusalem distinguishes between those *παρὰ πᾶσιν ὁμολογούμενα*, owned by all, and *ἀμφιβαλλόμενα*, doubted of by some.<sup>3</sup>

Now the undoubted books according to Eusebius, which all received, were the four Gospels, the Acts, thirteen Epistles of St. Paul, one of St. Peter, one of St. John. He adds, that Christians generally received the Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, Jude, Revelation. These he esteemed canonical, but tells us that some doubted concerning their genuineness. He also mentions the Epistles of Clement and Barnabas, and the Pastor of Hermas,

<sup>1</sup> See Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ*, *passim*;  
Marsh's *Lect.* Pt. v. *Lect.* xxvi.

<sup>2</sup> *H. E.* III. 3, 25.

<sup>3</sup> Cyril. *Cateches.* IV. 36

as esteemed useful by many, but not to be considered a part of Canonical Scripture.<sup>1</sup> Now the principal reasons for doubting the genuineness and Canonicity of the books which Eusebius speaks of as ἀντιλεγόμενα, were of this nature. The Hebrews has not St. Paul's name, and is thought to be different in style from his other writings.<sup>2</sup> St. James might not have been an Apostle, and therefore his Epistle might have no claim to be in the Canon. The Apocalypse introduces the name of St. John, contrary to that Apostle's custom elsewhere; and some supposed it was written by John the elder, a person whom Papias mentions, and not by St. John the Apostle.<sup>3</sup>

To take first the Epistle of St. James; there is strong reason to believe, that, whether the writer was James the son of Zebedee, or James the Lord's brother, he was in any case an Apostle; for James the Lord's brother is in Scripture called an Apostle,<sup>4</sup> and was in all probability the same as James the son of Alphæus, or Cleopas, (the two names being very probably identical,) his mother being Mary the sister of the Virgin Mary.<sup>5</sup> So that there is no reason to exclude his Epistle from the Canon, because he was not an Apostle. But farther, his Epistle is in the Syriac version, and the authority of the Syrian Church is very important on this head; for the Church of Syria bordered on Palestine, where St. James, the Lord's brother, was bishop, and spoke the same language as the natives of Palestine itself. We must remember, too, that Eusebius tells us that this Epistle was received by the great majority of Christians; and that it is by no means wonderful that an Epistle, written by the Bishop of Jerusalem to the Jews, should not have become known to the Grecian Churches so soon as others; and hence more doubt might arise about it than about other Epistles.<sup>6</sup>

Of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the Apocalypse, we learn that the former was not fully admitted by the Latin, nor the latter by the Greek Church among Canonical Scriptures.<sup>7</sup>

Of the Epistle to the Hebrews, we may observe that the absence of the Apostle's name may be fully accounted for by the fact that he was the Apostle of the Gentiles, not of the circumcision; and therefore, when he writes to the Jews, he does not put his name and claim his Apostleship, as not wishing to put for-

<sup>1</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* as above; Lardner, LXXII.

<sup>2</sup> Hieronym. *De V. I. in Paul.*

<sup>3</sup> Euseb. *H. E.* III. 39.

<sup>4</sup> Gal. i. 19.

<sup>5</sup> See Lardner, vi. ch. xvi.

<sup>6</sup> See Marsh's *Lect. Pt. v. Lect. xxv.*

<sup>7</sup> Hieronym. *Dardan. Epist. cxxix De V. I. s. v. Paul.* 1602.

ward the same claim to authority over the Jews which he asserts over the Gentile Churches.<sup>1</sup> But the Epistle is probably referred to by Clement of Rome,<sup>2</sup> and perhaps by Polycarp.<sup>3</sup> We have in its favour the testimony of Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Dionysius of Jerusalem, the Council of Laodicea, Epiphanius, Gregory Nazianzen, Jerome.<sup>4</sup> It is in the Syriac Canon. And, as regards the supposed difference of style from the general writings of St. Paul, the opinion of Clement of Alexandria, that St. Paul wrote the Epistle in Hebrew or Syriac, and that it was translated by St. Luke into Greek, would explain all the difficulty.<sup>5</sup> Yet Mr. Forster appears to have proved, by most careful and accurate comparison, that the style of the Epistle to the Hebrews, notwithstanding the apparent dissimilarity, has all the peculiarity of the writings of St. Paul, a peculiarity so great that the genuineness of the Epistle can hardly be questioned.<sup>6</sup>

The Apocalypse, which is the only other book of any considerable length which is doubted, is ascribed by Papias to John, probably the Apostle. It is the only book which Justin Martyr mentions by name, and he expressly assigns it to St. John. Irenæus constantly quotes it and refers it to St. John. Tertullian and Theophilus of Antioch quote it. Clement of Alexandria assigns it to St. John. So do Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria, Cyprian, Eusebius, Athanasius, Epiphanius, Jerome, the Council of Carthage.<sup>7</sup> All these are witnesses of great importance, and a large number of them living within a century of the date when the book in question was composed. Especially Papias, Justin Martyr, and Irenæus, the very earliest fathers after those called Apostolical, speak much concerning it, and quote frequently from it. Melito, a contemporary of Justin Martyr and Irenæus, is also, according to Eusebius, a witness to the Apocalypse of St. John.<sup>8</sup>

We may now close our brief view of the evidence concerning the Canon of the new Testament; and whilst we rejoice that councils in the fourth century, weighing the evidence, decided on the Canon, and settled it as we have it now, we cannot admit that the present Church receives the Scriptures, whether of the old

<sup>1</sup> Clem. Alex. ap. Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 14; Hieron. *In Galat.* cap. i.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius observes that Clement uses the very language of the Epistle. — *H. E.* iii. 38. It may be added, that the writer of St. Clement's Epistle seems to have been thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

<sup>3</sup> Lardner, ch. vi.

<sup>4</sup> See the lists above given.

<sup>5</sup> Ap. Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Forster, *On the Apostolical Authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews.*

<sup>7</sup> See the lists and authorities referred to above.

<sup>8</sup> Καὶ λόγος αὐτοῦ (Μελίτωνος) περὶ προφητείας, καὶ ὁ περὶ φιλονεξίας· καὶ ἡ κλείς· καὶ τὰ περὶ τοῦ διαβόλου καὶ τῆς Ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰωάννου. — Euseb. *H. E.* iv. 26.

Testament or the new, merely on the authority of the Church of the fourth century; inasmuch as the Church of the fourth century itself received them on the testimony of earlier ages, and the present Church receives it on the same. That testimony, even if Councils had been silent, would be of itself amply sufficient to prove that the new Testament Scriptures which we now possess are the genuine works of the Apostles and Evangelists.

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### SECTION III.—ON THE REAL VALUE OF TRADITION, AND THE READING OF THE APOCRYPHA.

I. **T**HE Church of England then holds, in conformity with the Church of old, that Scripture is absolutely perfect in relation to the end to which it tends, namely, the teaching us all things necessary to salvation. She denies the existence and rejects the authority of any parallel and equal tradition, of any doctrines necessary to salvation, handed down from generation to generation. But it is not true that the Church of England rejects the proper use of tradition, though she will not suffer it to be unduly exalted. She does not neglect the testimony of antiquity, and cut herself off from the Communion of the Saints of old.

It has been already remarked, that, besides the tradition which the Church of Rome holds necessary to be received, which is a tradition equal and parallel with the Scriptures, there are also traditions which are subservient to Scripture, and calculated to throw light upon it. Such tradition, when kept in its right place, the Church of England has ever used and respected.

Now this tradition is of two kinds, Hermeneutical Tradition, and Ecclesiastical Tradition. The former tends to explain and interpret the Scripture; the latter relates to discipline and ceremonial. With regard to the latter we find that the new Testament has nowhere given express rules for rites, ordinances, and discipline; although we evidently discover that rites, ordinances, and discipline did exist, even when the new Testament was written. For our guidance therefore in these matters, which are useful for edification, but not essential for salvation, we gladly follow the example of the Churches nearest to the Apostles' times, which we conceive to have been ordered by the Apostles themselves,

and to be the best witnesses of Apostolic order and Apostolic usages.

Scripture is, at least, not full on these matters; yet they are essential for the regulating and governing of a Church. We appeal therefore, to the purest and earliest models of antiquity. We cannot err in doing this, for in asserting the sufficiency of Scripture, we assert it for the end to which it was designed. As we do not assert it as fit to teach us arts and sciences, so neither do we assert it as designed entirely to regulate Church discipline and ceremony. And where it does not profess to be a perfect guide, we derogate not from its authority in seeking other help. On matters of faith it is complete and full; but not in all things besides.

With regard to Hermeneutical Tradition, we view matters thus. Those early Christians who had the personal instruction of the Apostles and their immediate companions, are more likely to have known the truth of Christian doctrine than those of after-ages, when heresies had become prevalent, when men had learned to wrest Scripture to destruction, and sects and parties had warped and biassed men's minds, so that they could not see clearly the true sense of Holy Writ. Truth is one, but error is multiform; and we know that in process of time new doctrines constantly sprang up in the Church, and by degrees gained footing and took root. We believe therefore, that if we can learn what was the constant teaching of the primitive Christians, we shall be most likely to find the true sense of Scripture preserved in that teaching: and wherever we can trace the first rise of a doctrine, and so stamp it with novelty, the proof of its novelty will be the proof of its falsehood; for what could find no place among the earliest Churches of Christ can scarcely have come from the Apostles of Christ, or from a right interpretation of the Scriptures which they wrote. We do not, in thus judging, appeal to the authority of any individual father, not even if he be one of those who had seen the Apostles, and had received the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost. We know that they were fallible men, though we believe them to have been pious and wise men. But we look to their writings for evidence as to what were the doctrines prevalent in the Church during the earliest ages; and we believe that, if we can discover what the doctrines of those earliest ages were, we have a most important clue to guide us in our course through the Scriptures themselves, because we judge that the Church thus early must almost certainly have, in the main, preserved the integrity of the



faith, and could not, whilst the voice of Apostolic men was in their ears, have fallen away into error and heresy. We know, that, in those days, men had many advantages over ourselves for the interpreting of the new Testament. A knowledge of the language, the customs, the history of events, which illustrate the Scriptures, was of itself most important. Some of them must have had in their memories the personal teaching of the Apostles, for they were their immediate hearers and followers. Many of them lived within a comparatively short time from their departure. They took the utmost pains to preserve the purity of the Apostolic faith in the Church. The Church of their days had still the *charismata*, or miraculous gifts of the Spirit, visibly poured out upon it; and we may say that in every, or almost every manner, it was qualified, beyond any subsequent Church or age, to understand the Scriptures, and to exhibit the purity and integrity of the Christian faith.

The least, then, that can be said, is that the doctrine of the ancient Church is an useful check on any new interpretation of Scripture. Antiquity is a mark of truth, and novelty a mark of error in religion; and this rule has ever been found valuable in important controversies. The Socinians have striven to show that Justin Martyr invented the doctrine of the Trinity, deriving it from the writings of Plato. Catholic Christians, on the contrary, have proved, that from the earliest times that doctrine was held in the Church, that therefore it is traceable to the Apostles, and not to Plato, that it springs from a true, not from an erroneous interpretation of Scripture. A like form has the controversy with the Church of Rome assumed. Many of her peculiar doctrines have been proved to owe their origin to comparatively recent times; and so they have been shown to be unfit to stand the well-known test of Tertullian, that "what is first is true, what is later is adulterate."<sup>1</sup>

Thus then tradition may be useful in the interpretation of Scripture, though not as adding to its authority. We well know that Scripture is perfect in itself, for the end for which it was designed. But we know also, that no aid for its interpretation should be neglected.

That the Church of England takes this view of the right use of tradition, and of the value of the testimony of the primitive Church, will appear from the following documents.

The Convocation of 1571, which passed the XXXIX. Articles in

<sup>1</sup> Hæc enim ratio valet adversus omnes hæreses, id esse verum, quodcunque prius, id esse adulterum, quodcunque posterius. — Tertull. *Adv. Prax.* 2.

the form in which we have them now, passed also a code of Canons, in one of which is the following clause: "In the first place let preachers take heed that they deliver nothing from the pulpit, to be religiously held and believed by the people, but that which is agreeable to the old and new Testament, and such as the *Catholic fathers and ancient bishops have collected therefrom.*"<sup>1</sup>

In like manner, in the Preface to the Ordination Service we read, "It is evident to all men reading Holy Scripture, *and ancient authors*, that from the Apostles' time there have been three orders of Ministers in Christ's Church, Bishops, Priests, and Deacons."

So Archbishop Cranmer, the great reformer of our Liturgy and compiler of our Articles, writes, "I also grant that every *exposition* of the Scripture, whereinsoever the old, holy, and true Church did agree, is necessary to be believed. But our controversy here" (that is with the Romanists) "is, whether anything ought to be believed of necessity without the Scripture."<sup>2</sup>

So his great coadjutor Bishop Ridley: "In that the Church of Christ is in doubt, I use herein the wise counsel of Vincentius Lirinensis, whom I am sure you will allow; who, giving precepts how the Catholic Church may be in all schisms and heresies known, writeth in this manner: 'When,' saith he, 'one part is corrupted with heresies, then prefer the whole world before that one part; but if the greatest part be affected, then prefer antiquity.'"<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Guest, who was appointed at the accession of Elizabeth, to restore the reformed prayer-book, after it had been disused in the reign of Mary, and who reduced it to nearly its present form, writes thus: "So that I may here well say with Tertullian, That is truth which is first; that is false which is after. That is truly first which is from the beginning. That is from the beginning which is from the Apostles. Tertullian, *Cont. Prax. Cont. Marc.*"<sup>4</sup>

Bishop Jewel, in his Apology, which is all but an authoritative document, says: "We are come as near as we possibly could to the Church of the Apostles, and of the old Catholic bishops and fathers; and have directed according to their customs and ordinances, not

<sup>1</sup> *Imprimis vero videbunt, ne quid unquam doceant pro concione, quod a populo religiose teneri et credi velint, nisi quod consentaneum sit doctrinæ Veteris aut Novi Testamenti, quodque ex illa ipsa doctrina Catholici patres, et veteres episcopi collegerint.* — Cardwell's *Synodalia*, i. p. 126.

<sup>2</sup> Cranmer, *On Unwritten Verities*; Jen-

kyn's *Cranmer's Remains*, iv. p. 229. See also p. 126, and iii. p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> Gloster Ridley's *Life of Ridley*, p. 618.

<sup>4</sup> Guest to Sir W. Cecil, concerning the *Service Book*, &c.; Strype's *Annals*, i. Appendix, No. xiv.; also Cardwell's *Hist. of Conferences*, p. 52.

only our doctrine, but also the Sacraments, and the form of common prayer.”<sup>1</sup>

These passages sufficiently prove that our reformers admitted and made use of the appeal to antiquity, in the interpretation of Scripture, and in the establishing of order and discipline. Their wisdom has been followed therein by all the great divines who have succeeded them. Joseph Mede, Hooker, Andrews, Hammond, Overall, Usher, Jeremy Taylor, Bull, Beveridge, Patrick, Waterland, Jebb, Van Mildert, Kaye, G. S. Faber, have been respectively cited as upholding the same principle, and acting upon it.<sup>2</sup>

In the words of Bishop Kaye, “On the subject of religion, there appears to be a peculiar propriety in appealing to the opinions of past ages. In human science we find a regular advance from less to greater degrees of knowledge. Truth is elicited by the labours of successive inquirers; each adds something to the stock of facts which have been previously accumulated; and as new discoveries are continually made, the crude notions of those who first engaged in the pursuit are discarded for more matured and more enlarged views. The most recent opinions are those which are most likely to be correct. But in the case of a Divine revelation, this tentative process can have no place. They to whom is committed the trust of communicating it to others, are thoroughly instructed in its nature and its objects, and possess a knowledge which no inquiries of subsequent ages can improve. What they deliver is the truth itself; which cannot be rendered more pure, though it may, and probably will, be adulterated in its transmission to succeeding generations. The greater the distance from the fountain-head, the greater the chance that the stream will be polluted. On these considerations is founded the persuasion which has generally prevailed, that in order to ascertain what was the doctrine taught by the Apostles, and what is the true interpretation of their writings, we ought to have recourse to the authority of those who lived nearest to their times.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Apolog. Enchiridion Theolog.* p. 184; where see the original more at length.

<sup>2</sup> The student may especially be referred to Bp. Beveridge, Preface to his *Codex Canonum*; Patrick's *Discourse about Tradition*, in the first volume of Gibson's *Preservative against Popery*; Dr. Waterland, *On the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, ch. vii.; Bp. Jebb's *Pastoral Instructions* — Chapter, *On the Peculiar Character of the Church of England*; Bp. Kaye's *Tertullian*, p. 229. See also Rev. G. S. Faber's *Primitive Doctrine of Justi-*

*fication*; and also *Primitive Doctrine of Election*. On Ecclesiastical Tradition, or tradition concerning rites and discipline, see Hooker, *E. P.* Bks. II. and III.; Bp. Marsh's *Comparative View*, ch. vii.

<sup>3</sup> Bp. Kaye's *Justin Martyr*, ch. i. p. 2. The bishop has satisfactorily shown, that the tradition appealed to by Tertullian in the second century was no other than the kind of tradition admitted by the English Church. See Bp. Kaye's *Tertullian*, p. 297, note.

“We allow,” says Bishop Patrick, “that tradition gives us a considerable assistance in such points as are not in so many letters and syllables contained in the Scriptures, but may be gathered from thence by good and manifest reasoning. Or, in plainer words, perhaps, whatsoever tradition justifies any doctrine that may be proved by the Scriptures, though not found in express terms there, we acknowledge to be of great use, and readily receive and follow it, as serving very much to establish us more firmly in that truth, when we see all Christians have adhered to it. This may be called a *confirming tradition*: of which we have an instance in Infant Baptism, which some ancient fathers call an Apostolical tradition.” Again: “We look on this tradition as nothing else but the *Scripture unfolded*: not a new thing, but the Scripture explained and made more evident. And thus some part of the Nicene Creed may be called a tradition; as it hath expressly delivered unto us the sense of the Church of God concerning that great article of our faith, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, *begotten of His Father before all worlds, and of the same substance with the Father*. But this tradition supposes the Scripture for its ground, and delivers nothing but what the fathers, assembled at Nice, believed to be contained there and fetched from thence.”<sup>1</sup>

So Dr. Waterland: “We allow no doctrine as necessary which stands only on fathers, or on tradition, oral or written. We admit none for such but what is contained in Scripture, and proved by Scripture, rightly interpreted. And we know of no way more safe in necessities, to preserve the right interpretation, than to take the ancients along with us. We think it a good method to secure our rule of faith against impostures of all kinds, whether of enthusiasm, or false criticism, or conceited reason, or oral tradition, or the assuming dictates of an infallible chair. If we thus preserve the true sense of Scripture, and upon that sense build our faith, we then build upon Scripture only; for the sense of Scripture is Scripture.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Patrick, *On Tradition*, as above.

<sup>2</sup> Waterland, *On the Importance of the Doctrine of the Trinity*, ch. VII. The note to this passage is as follows:—

“So the great Casaubon, speaking both of himself and for the Church of England, and, at the same time, for Melancthon and Calvin also: Opto cum Melancthone et Ecclesia Anglicana, per canalem antiquitatis deduci ad nos dogmata fidei, e fonte sacræ Scripturæ derivata. — Alioquin quis futurus est inno-

vandi finis? — Etsi omnis mea voluptas est et sola versari in lectione sacræ Scripturæ, nullam tamen inde me hausisse propriam sententiam, nullam habere, neque unquam σὺν Θεῷ εἰπεῖν, esse habiturum. Magni Calvini hæc olim fuit mens, cum scriberet præfationem suam in commentarium Epistolæ ad Romanos; non debere nos ἐν τοῖς Κυριωτάτοις, a consensu Ecclesiæ recedere.” A. D. 1611. Casaub. *Epist.* 744. *Dan. Heinsio*, p. 434. Edit. tertia Rotterdami.

It is indeed most necessary that we do not suffer our respect for antiquity to trench upon our supreme regard for the authority of Scripture. To Scripture we look, as the only source of all Divine knowledge. But when we have fully established this principle, we need not fear to make use of every light with which God has furnished us, for the right understanding of Scripture; whether it be a critical knowledge of ancient languages, or history, or antiquities, or the belief of the primitive Christians, and the doctrines which holy men of old deduced from those sacred writings, which were to them, as to us, the only fountain of light and truth.

II. The Article, having declared the sufficiency of Scripture, and set forth the Canon of Scripture, then speaks of those other books which had been always held in high respect, but were not canonical, in the following terms:—

“The other books (as Hierome saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth not apply them to establish any doctrine.”<sup>1</sup>

The meaning of these words is, that the Church of God, in all ages, has been used to read the Apocrypha, for example and instruction, but not for doctrine. This is a simple statement of fact, and if nothing more were said elsewhere, it would need no further explanation. But, if we look to the Calendar of the Prayer-Book, which was drawn up by the compilers of the Articles, and receives, like the Articles, the assent of all the clergy of the Church, we find that, during a certain portion of the year, in the week-day services, the first lesson is appointed to be read from the Apocrypha. This is acting on the principle laid down in the Article; and this is one of those customs of the Church of England which has been most exposed to censure, from those who dissent from her, and from some even of her own children.

There may certainly appear some danger in ordering that to be read, as a lesson of the Church, which is not Canonical Scripture,

<sup>1</sup> Ἀπόκρυφα βιβλία or ἀπόκρυφοί βιβλοί, so called either because their authors were unknown; or because not laid up, like the Canonical books, in the ark; or because read in private only, not in public also; though it appears from the XLVIITH Canon of the Council of Carthage, that some apocryphal books were read publicly. Suicer, s. v. ἀπόκρυφοί. Tom. I. p. 458.

The passage of Hierome alluded to is

probably: “Sicut ergo Judith et Tobit et Maccabæorum libros legit quidem Ecclesia, sed inter canonicas Scripturas non recipit, sit et hæc duo volumina (h. e. libros Sapientiæ et Ecclesiastici) legat ad ædificationem plebis, non ad auctoritatem Ecclesiasticorum dogmatum confirmandam.” — Hieronym. *In Libros Salomonis, Chomatio et Heliodoro.* Tom. I. p. 938. Ed. Ben.

lest it should be mistaken for Scripture; and it is moreover urged against the custom, that the Apocrypha not only is not inspired, but also contains some idle legends, and some erroneous doctrines, and therefore ought not to be admitted to be read in the Church. It is even added, that the Church of Rome has derived some of her errors from, and supports some of her false teaching by, the authority of the Apocrypha.

It may be well, therefore, to state the grounds on which it is probable that our reformers thought fit to retain the Apocryphal lessons, that we may see what is the weight of the objections urged against our Church on the ground of their use.

First, it has been replied to the principal objections, that, if we would exclude all human compositions from the Church, we must exclude homilies, sermons, metrical psalms and hymns,—nay, prayers, whether written or extempore, except such as are taken out of Scripture itself,—that there is no danger that the Apocrypha should be mistaken for Scripture when it is expressly assigned a far lower place, both in the formularies and in the ordinary teaching of the Church,—that, if it be not free from faults, no more is any human composition, and that on this principle we must still rather exclude sermons, psalms, hymns, and even liturgies,—that it is not true that the Church of Rome has derived her errors from the Apocrypha, which does not support them, and by which she could not prove them; for she has derived them from misinterpreting Scripture, from oral tradition, and from her own assumed infallibility.<sup>1</sup>

So much is said in answer to the objections. Farther, in favour of reading the Apocryphal books, their nature and history are alleged. The origin of them has been already alluded to. They were written in the period of time which elapsed between the return from captivity and the birth of Christ. The historical

<sup>1</sup> The following is the answer of the Bishops to the exception of the Puritans at the Savoy Conference against the reading of the Apocrypha: "As they would have no Saints' days observed by the Church, so no Apocryphal chapter read in the Church; but upon such a reason as would exclude all sermons as well as Apocrypha; namely, because the Holy Scriptures contain in them all things necessary either in doctrine to be believed, or in duty to be practised. If so, why so many unnecessary sermons? Why any more but reading of Scriptures? If, notwithstanding their sufficiency, sermons be necessary, there is

no reason why the Apocryphal chapters should not be as useful,—most of them containing excellent discourses and rules of morality. It is heartily to be wished that all sermons were as good. If their fear be, that, by this means, those books may come to be of equal esteem with the Canon, they may be secured against that by the title which the Church hath put upon them, calling them Apocryphal; and it is the Church's testimony which teacheth us this difference, and to leave them out were to cross the practice of the Church in former ages."—Cardwell, *Hist. of Conferences*, ch. VII. p. 342.

books of the Apocrypha, therefore, supply a most important link in the history of the Jewish people. Without them we should be ignorant of the fulfilment of many of the old Testament prophecies, especially those in the book of Daniel; and should know nothing of several customs and circumstances alluded to in the new Testament, and essential to its understanding. The other books are mostly pious reflections, written by devout men, who were waiting for the consolation of Israel.

The Alexandrian Jews received them with the most profound respect. The fathers often appealed to them, and cited them; though it has been shown they mostly knew the difference between them and the writings of Moses and the Prophets. It appears that from very early times they were read in most Churches, at least in the West; as in very many were also read the Epistles of Clement and Barnabas, and the Shepherd of Hermas,<sup>1</sup> — not that they were esteemed Canonical, but as of high antiquity and value, and useful for instruction to the people.

In Rufinus we find a distinction between books Apocryphal and books Ecclesiastical.<sup>2</sup> Among the former he classed those which were wholly rejected; among the latter those which were read in Churches. His division therefore is threefold: Canonical, which embraces all those which we now receive into the Canon; Apocryphal, *i. e.* those which were altogether rejected; and Ecclesiastical, among which he reckons Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Judith, Maccabees, the Shepherd of Hermas, and the like. This distinction occurs elsewhere, though some of the fathers make only a twofold division, into Canonical and Apocryphal.<sup>3</sup> Now the Ecclesiastical books are what we at this time call the Apocrypha; and forming part both of the Latin and Greek versions of the old

<sup>1</sup> Dionysius, a bishop of Corinth in the second century, in a letter to the Church of Rome (ap. Euseb. *H. E.* 111. 16) says, "they read on the Lord's day Clement's Epistle to them in their assemblies;" and Eusebius (*Id.* iv. 23) declares it to have been "universally received, and read in most churches," both in his and former times. The same he says of the Shepherd of Hermas (*Id.* 111. 3), that "it was read in many churches;" which is confirmed by Athanasius (*Epist. Paschal.* xxxix.), and Rufinus (*Exposit. in Symb. Apost.* § 36), both concerning this and other books. — Jones, *On the Canon*, Part I. ch. x.

<sup>2</sup> "Sciendum tamen est, quod et alii libri sunt qui non Canonici, sed Ecclesiastici a majoribus appellati sunt; ut est

Sapientia Salomonis, et alia Sapientia quæ dicitur filii Sirach, qui liber apud Latinos hoc ipso generali vocabulo Ecclesiasticus appellatur, quo vocabulo non auctor libelli sed Scripturæ qualitas cognominata est. Eiusdem ordinis est libellus Tobie et Judith et Maccabæorum libri. In novo vero Testamento libellus, qui dicitur Pastoris sive Hermatis, qui appellatur duæ viæ, vel iudicium Petri; quæ omnia legi quidem in Ecclesiis voluerunt, non tamen proferri ad auctoritatem ex his fidei confirmandam. Ceteras vero Scripturas Apocryphas nominant, quas in Ecclesiis legi noluerunt." — Rufin. *In Symb. Apost.* § 38.

<sup>3</sup> *E. g.* Cyril. *Cateches.* iv. § 35, where he calls all Apocryphal which are not Canonical.

Testament, they continued to be read in most Churches, from the earliest ages to the time of the Reformation.

It was not peculiar to the English reformers to speak with respect of these books. The foreign reformers use similar language, citing them as a kind of secondary authority; and especially the Swiss and Belgic Confessions, which represent the opinions of the extreme Calvinist section of the Reformation, speak in terms of honour concerning them, the latter allowing them to be read in Churches.<sup>1</sup> It may be added, that the Eastern Churches, which agree with us in the Canon, yet retain the Apocryphal books in their Bibles, and use them as we do.

One more argument ought not to be wholly omitted. The new Testament writers, even our Lord himself, appear often to cite from the Septuagint. We must not consider this as giving full authority to all the books of the Septuagint. Such authority we have already shown to belong only to the books of the Hebrew Canon. But it should appear, that such citations from the Septuagint would naturally commend to the Church the use of that volume as the Greek version of the Scriptures. Now that Greek version contains all the Apocryphal books. If, then, they were so mischievous, or so to be rejected, as some argue, it is scarcely to be accounted for, that neither our Lord nor any of His Apostles give any warning against them, whilst they quote, as of sacred authority, other portions of the volume which contains them.

These views, in the general, appear to have influenced our reformers to retain the Apocryphal books. They have removed them from the Sunday services, and forbidden them to be quoted as authority in matters of faith; but esteeming them as next in value to the sacred Scriptures, from the important information they contain, and from the respect which they have received from the earliest ages, they were unwilling to remove them from the place which they had so long occupied. The reformers were evidently not insensible to the evil of putting anything else on the same footing as the Canonical writings. But this danger, they justly esteemed, would be very small in the reformed Church. And experience has shown, that in this they were right in their

<sup>1</sup> *Sylloge Confessionum. Confess. Helvet.* Art. 1. p. 17. *Confess. Belgic.* Art. vi. p. 328. The latter runs thus: Differentiam porro constituimus inter libros istos sacros et eos quos Apocryphos vocant: utpote quod Apocryphi legi quidem in Ecclesia possint, et fas sit ex illis

atenus etiam sumere documenta, quatenus cum libris Canonicis consonant; at nequaquam ea est ipsorum auctoritas et firmitas, ut ex illorum testimonio ali-quod dogma de fide et religione Christiana certo constitui possit, &c.



judgment, for extreme respect for the Apocrypha has been a feeling in this country almost unknown. In this question, therefore, they appear to have adhered to the maxim which often guided them in matters of doubt, a maxim quoted with so much approbation by the famous Apologist of the English Church, and which originated in the fathers of the Council of Nice: *Ἡ ἀρχαία κρατεῖτω* — *Let ancient customs prevail.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Cur id a nobis hodie audiri non potest, quod olim in Concilio Niceno, a tot Episcopis et Catholicis Patribus, nullo refragante, pronunciatum est, *Ἡ ἀρχαία κρατεῖτω*." — Juelli *Apolog. Enchiridion Theologicum*, p. 158.

On the question of the reading of the Apocrypha in churches, see Hooker, *E. P.* v. 20. Concerning the ancient custom of reading Apocryphal books, see also Bingham, *Eccles. Ant.* Bk. XIV. ch. 111. §§ 14, 15, 16.

The following are the words of a pious

and judicious writer, closely attached to a school in the English Church not particularly inclined to pay respect to the Apocrypha: "Man is a creature of extremes. The middle path is generally the wise path; but there are few wise enough to find it. Because Papists have made too much of some things, Protestants have made too little of them. . . . The Papist puts the Apocrypha into his Canon; the Protestant will scarcely regard it as an ancient record," &c. — Cecil's *Remains*, p. 364. London, 1830.

[The *commission* to write the Scriptures is contained in the promises quoted on page 167, and the *divine authority* of the New Testament rests on the same promises. But these do not seem to have been made exclusively to the original Apostles, nor to have been fulfilled, as far as writing Holy Scripture is concerned, in all of them. For not all of them contributed to the New Testament, and much of what it contains was written neither by them nor under their guidance, as the Epistles of St. Paul. We are therefore obliged to add that the *testimony* upon which we receive certain books as inspired, is that of the early Church, which by a divinely-guided discrimination accepted what was, and rejected what was not, written by virtue and in fulfillment of those promises; and that discrimination was based upon evidence part of which is still accessible and can be appreciated by us. — *H. A. Y. — J. W.*]