

ARTICLE XX.

Of the Authcricity of the Church.

THE Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith; and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy Writ; yet, as it ought not to decree anything against the same, so besides the same ought it not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation.

De Ecclesiæ Authoritate.

HABET Ecclesia ritus sive cæremonias statuendi jus, et in fidei controversiis auctoritatem; quamvis Ecclesiæ non licet quicquam instituire, quod verbo Dei scripto aduersetur, nec unum scripturæ locum sic exponere potest, ut alteri contradicat. Quare licet Ecclesia sit divinorum librorum testis et conservatrix, atamen ut aduersus eos nihil decernere, ita præter illos nihil credendum de necessitate salutis debet obtrudere.

SECTION I.—HISTORY.

THE history of this Article is famous, owing to the dispute concerning the first clause of it: "The Church hath power to decree rites or ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith." The Article of 1552 (then the XXIst Article) had not the clause. Moreover, the first draught of the Articles in Elizabeth's reign (A. D. 1562) had it not. In this form the Articles were signed by both houses of convocation; and the original document so signed, is now in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Yet this document had never synodical authority, for it never received the ratification of the crown. Before the royal assent was given, some alterations were made: namely, the addition of this clause, and the omission of Article XXIX. The clause itself was taken from the Lutheran Confession of Wurtemberg, from which source Archbishop Parker derived most of the additions which were made in Queen Elizabeth's reign to the Articles drawn up by Crammer in the reign of Edward VI.¹ It is supposed that the Queen's wish induced the council to make this alteration. And when it had been made, the Latin edition of R. Wolfe was published in 1563, printed by the Queen's command, and with a declaration of her

¹ In the Wurtemberg confession are the words: "Credimus et confitemur quod . . . hæc ecclesia habeat jus iudicandi de omnibus doctrinis . . . quod

hæc ecclesia habeat jus interpretandæ Scripturæ." — Laurence, *Bamp. Lect.* p. 236

royal approval. This copy, therefore, is considered as possessed of full synodical authority. The fine *English* edition, printed by Jugge and Cawood in 1563, has not the clause,¹ and this is very probably the copy of the Articles submitted to Parliament, which passed an Act (13 Eliz. Cap. 12) giving the authority of statute law to what had already received the authority of the Queen and convocation.

After this, the printed copies varied, some omitting, but most retaining the clause. It does not appear that any English copy received the authority of convocation till 1571; and then, no doubt, the copy corresponded with one of those printed by Jugge and Cawood, with the date 1571. Dr. Cardwell gives an accurate reprint of one of these, containing the disputed clause.² Yet there were other editions, put forth by the same printers, with the same date 1571, some retaining, others omitting the clause. From that time the greater number of editions have the clause. Dr. Cardwell enumerates editions of 1563, 1571, as omitting it; and as retaining it, editions of 1563, 1571, 1581, 1586, 1593, 1612, 1624, 1628, and all subsequent editions.³ All subscriptions, therefore, and acts of Parliament, after this period, had reference to the Article with the first clause as forming part of it; and not to the form in which it was first passed by convocation, before the Queen's sanction was obtained.

Important as the question concerning this clause has been thought, it is truly observed that that portion of it concerning rites and ceremonies is fully expressed in Article XXXIV.; and that that portion which concerns controversies of faith is virtually contained in the latter part of this Article itself.

It is not necessary to spend much time in proving that the primitive Church claimed a certain authority, both in matters of ceremony and in controversies of faith. This is self-apparent from the fact, that, when any disputes arose, whether of doctrine or of discipline, synods and councils continually met to decide upon them, and declare the judgment of the Church. Where a judgment is pronounced, authority must be claimed. The first general council of Nice was assembled for the express purpose of giving the judgment of the Church, represented by the fathers of that council, on a most important point of doctrine, namely, the Deity of the Son

¹ Though it had not this clause, inserted at the Queen's desire, yet it omitted Art. xxix., expunged by the Queen's desire. The Articles were therefore, as so passed by Parliament, only thirty-eight in number. They are

given by Dr. Cardwell, *Synodalia*, I. p. 53.

² *Synodal*, I. p. 98.

³ See Cardwell's *Synodalia*, I. pp. 34, 53, 73, 90, &c.; and the authorities referred to by him.

of God, and on a matter of ceremony, namely, the time of keeping Easter. The Epistle of Constantine to the Churches, written as it were from the council, urges all Christians to receive the decrees of the bishops so assembled as the will of God.¹

The fathers certainly taught that the authority of the Church was to be obeyed and received with deep respect. Irenæus says, "Where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God . . . but the Spirit is truth."² Tertullian, "Every doctrine is to be judged as false which is opposed to the truth taught by the Churches, the Apostles, Christ, and God."³ St. Cyril says, "The Church is called Catholic, because it teaches universally, and without omission, all doctrines needful to be known."⁴ Passages to the same purport might be abundantly multiplied, if evidences of so well-known a fact could be required.

When controversies arose, whether about doctrine, or about rules and ceremonies and Church-ordinances, such as the keeping of Easter, the rebaptizing of heretics, or the enforcing of discipline on the lapsed, it could hardly be but that the Church should exercise some discretion, and pronounce some judgment. Most of the canons of the early councils will be found to be on matters of discipline; and as Scripture generally left them undecided, it was necessary for the representatives of the Church to use the best judgment they could upon them. To this end they strove, looking for the guidance of the Spirit, following Scripture where it gave them light, and on those points on which Scripture was silent, following that rule unanimously adopted at Nice, "Let the ancient customs prevail," τὰ ἀρχαία ἔθη κρατεῖτω.⁵

Yet, that the fathers held the authority of Scripture to be primary and paramount, and considered that the Church had no power to enact new articles of faith, nor to decree anything which was contrary to the Scriptures, has already been shown sufficiently, and the proof needs not to be repeated here.⁶ The power of the Church they held, not as an authority superior or equal to the Scriptures, but as declaratory of them when doubtful, and decretory on matters of discipline.

¹ Euseb. *De Vita Constantin.* III. 20.

² "Ubi enim ecclesia, ibi et Spiritus Dei; et ubi Spiritus Dei, illic ecclesia et omnis gratia. Spiritus autem veritas." — Lib. III. cap. 40.

³ Omnem vero doctrinam de mendacio præjudicandam quæ sapiat contra veritatem Ecclesiarum et Apostolorum et Christi et Dei." — *De Præscript. Hæret.* c. 21.

⁴ διὰ τὸ διδάσκειν καθολικῶς καὶ ἀνελλει-

πὺς ἅπαντα τὰ εἰς γνώσιν ἀνθρώπων ἐλθεῖν ὑφείλοντα δόγματα. — *Cateches.* xviii. 11. See Palmer, *On the Church*, II. pt. IV. ch. IV.

⁵ The principle of observing traditional ceremonies, where Scripture is silent, is laid down by Tertullian, *De Corona*, c. 3, 4, 5. See Palmer, II. pt. IV. ch. IV.

⁶ See above, p. 147, seq. Article vi. Sect. 1. III.

The reformers in general did not deny such authority to the Church, to interpret Scripture in case of disputes upon doctrine, nor to adopt or retain ceremonies of ancient custom or human institution, not contrary to the teaching of Scripture. Thus the Confession of Augsburg says, "We do not despise the consent of the Catholic Church . . . nor are we willing to patronize impious opinions, which the Church Catholic has condemned."¹ It declares that there are indifferent ceremonies, which ought to be observed for the good order of the Church.² But on the other hand, it pronounces that "the bishops have no power to decree anything contrary to the Gospel."³

Calvin, denying that the Church has any power to introduce new doctrines, yet gladly admits, that when a discussion concerning doctrine arises, no more fit mode of settling it can be devised than a meeting of bishops to discuss it. And he mentions with approbation the Councils of Nice, Constantinople, and Ephesus.⁴

The language of the English reformers is still plainer. The Preface to the Book of Common Prayer gives reasons why the Church abolished some and retained other ceremonies; and though it speaks of ceremonies as but small things in themselves, it yet declares that the wilful transgression "and breaking of a common rule and discipline is no small offence before God."

Cranmer appealed to a general council, protesting, "I intend to speak nothing against one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, or the authority thereof; the which authority I have in great reverence, and to whom my mind is in all things to obey:"⁵ and declaring, "I may err, but heretic I cannot be; forasmuch as I am ready in all things to follow the judgment of the most sacred word of God, and of the holy Catholic Church."⁶ He declares his agreement with Vincentius Lirinensis, who taught that "the Bible is perfect and sufficient of itself for the truth of the Catholic faith, and that the whole Church cannot make one article of faith; although it may be taken as a necessary witness of the same, with these three conditions, that the thing which we would establish thereby hath been believed in all places, ever, and of all men."⁷ In short, his judgment appears to have been clearly, that "every

¹ "Non enim aspernamur consensum catholicæ Ecclesiæ . . . nec patrocinari impiis aut seditiosis opinionibus volumus, quas ecclesia Catholica damnavit." — *Confess. August.* 1540. Art. 21; *Sylloge*, p. 189.

² Pars I. Art. xv. 1531; *Sylloge*, p. 127; 1540, p. 174.

³ *Sylloge*, p. 154.

⁴ *Instit.* iv. ix. 13.

⁵ Appeal at his Degradation, *Works*, iv. p. 121.

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 127.

⁷ *Answer to Smythe's Preface*, ii. p. 22.

exposition of Scripture in which the whole Church agreed." was to be received; but that the Church had no power to decree *Articles of faith* without the Scripture, though rites indifferent she might decree.¹

The origin of the dispute about the first clause in this Article was the repugnance of the Puritan divines to the use of the surplice and other Church ordinances. This feeling arose in the reign of Edward VI., and the controversies generated by it continued to rage fiercely in Elizabeth's. The Puritans contended, not only that the Church could not enact new articles of faith, but that no rites nor ceremonies were admissible but those for which there was plain warrant in the new Testament. It is probable that Elizabeth and her councillors wished to have a definite assertion of the power of the Church to legislate on such points; and therefore insisted on the distinct enunciation of the principle by the clause in question, notwithstanding that it was virtually included in other statements or formularies. The controversy reached its height in the reign of Charles I.; and one of the charges against Archbishop Laud was, that he had introduced this clause into the Articles, it not having been previously to be found there.² On the subject itself the great work of Hooker was composed; one main and principal object of that work being to prove the right which the Church Catholic and particular national Churches have to legislate on matters indifferent, and to enact such rites and ceremonies as are not repugnant to the teaching of Holy Writ.

SECTION II.—SCRIPTURAL PROOF.

THERE are contained in this Article three positive or affirmative, and two negative or restraining assertions.

I. The affirmative are:—

1. The Church is a witness and keeper of Holy Writ.
2. The Church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies.
3. The Church hath authority in controversies of faith.

¹ See especially iv. p. 229, quoted above, in p. 185, under Article vi. See also *Works*, III. pp. 509, 517; IV pp. 77, 126, 173, 223, 225, &c.

² That this charge is unfounded has already appeared.

II. The restraining assertions are : —

1. It is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything contrary to God's word written.
2. Besides the written word, she ought not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation.

I. 1. The Church is a witness and keeper of Holy Writ, forasmuch as that unto it, as unto the Jews of old, "are committed the oracles of God" (Rom. iii. 2). As the Jews had the Old Testament Scriptures "read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day" (Acts xv. 21); so the Christian Church has the Scriptures of both Testaments read continually in her assemblies. In no way can she more truly fulfil her office of "pillar and ground of the truth" than by preserving and maintaining those Scriptures in which the truth is to be found. The Scriptures are a sacred deposit left to the Church, to guard and to teach. The manner in which the ancient Churches collected and preserved the sacred writings, and handed them down to us, and the abundant evidence which we have that they have been received by us in their integrity, were considered at length under Art. VI.¹

We, the children of the Church, must, in the first instance at least, receive the word of God from her. She, by our parents and her ministers, puts the Bible into our hands, even before we could seek it for ourselves. To her care her Lord has intrusted it. She keeps it, and testifies to us that it is the word of God, and teaches us the truths contained in it. Her ministers are enjoined "to hold fast the form of sound words" (2 Tim. i. 13); "to preach the word instant in season and out of season" (2 Tim. iv. 2). And so she leads us, by preaching and catechizing, and other modes of instruction, to take the Bible in our hands, and read it for ourselves.

In these and many similar modes, the Church is a witness, as well as a keeper of Holy Writ. We can hardly conceive a state of things in which it could be otherwise. If the Church had not carefully guarded the Scriptures at first, they would have been scattered and lost, and spurious writings would have partially taken the place of the true. If she did not, by her teaching and her ministry, witness to us that the Scriptures were from above, and so lead us to read and reverence them, we should be obliged to wait till the full maturity of reason and manhood before we could learn what was the word of truth, and should then have patiently to go through for ourselves all the evidence which might

¹ See Art. VI. Sect. II.

be necessary to convince us that the Bible, and not the Koran or the Veda, was that which contained "the lively oracles of God."

2. The Church has power to decree rites and ceremonies.

In the term "rites and ceremonies" of course we do not include things of the same nature as Sacraments, or other ordinances of the Gospel. Two Sacraments were ordained of Christ, and the Church cannot make others like them. Ordination is from Christ's authority, and we learn from Scripture that it is to be performed by imposition of hands. The Church cannot alter this, either by dispensing with it, or putting something different in its room. By "rites and ceremonies," therefore, are meant things comparatively indifferent in themselves,—the adjuncts and accidents, not the essence and substance of holy things.

Certain rules are specially prescribed to us in Holy Scripture for regulating public worship, and for ministering the ordinances of God. But these rules are mostly general, and the carrying out of them must be regulated by some authority or other. The rules given are such as the following: "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. xiv. 26, 40). Yet how to arrange all things so that they should be done decently and in order, we are not always told. Occasionally, indeed, the Apostles gave something like specific directions; as, for instance, St. James's command not to allow the poor to sit in a low place, and the rich in a good place (James ii. 1, 10); St. Paul's directions about the seemingly administration of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 17–33); and again, St. Paul's command that men should be uncovered and women veiled (1 Cor. xi. 4–16), and that women should keep silence in the churches (1 Cor. xiv. 34). Yet, though in these few points there may be something like fixed rules laid down, the Church is generally left to arrange so that in her public worship all things should be done "decently, in order, and to edifying," without specific directions for every particular. Nay! St. Paul, when so strongly insisting on men being uncovered and women covered, concludes by arguing that, if any people are disposed to be contentious on this head, they ought to yield their own judgment to the customs of the Church. "If any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God" (1 Cor. xi. 16). Thus, therefore, the very principle laid down in Scripture seems to be that the Church should order and arrange the details of public worship, so as may be most calculated to honour God and edify the people; just as St. Paul left Titus at Crete "that he might set in order the things which were wanting" in the Church of that land

(Tit. i. 5). Indeed, unless by authority some rules for public worship were made, decency and order could never exist. Thus, whether prayer should be of set form or extempore — whether the minister should wear a peculiar dress — whether baptism should be by immersion or by pouring — whether at the Eucharist we should kneel or sit, and numerous other like questions, have all reference to rites and ceremonies. If the public authority of the Church could not enjoin anything concerning them, what utter confusion might exist in our assemblies! At one time prayer might be extempore, and at another from a prayer-book. One minister might wear a surplice, another an academic gown, a third his common walking-dress, and a fourth a cope, or some fantastic device of his own. One person might kneel, another stand, and another sit at receiving the Communion. Would any one coming in to such an assembly “report that God was in us of a truth?” And with the variety of opinion and feeling among Christians, much worse than this might easily occur, if the Church had no power to decree its rites and ceremonies. Yet we are taught concerning this very matter of decent solemnity, that “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints” (1 Cor. xiv. 33).

Thus then the injunctions of the Apostles, and the absolute necessity of the case, lead to the conclusion that the Church must have “power to decree rites and ceremonies.” And we may add, that all bodies of Christians, however opposed to ceremonial, have yet exercised the power of decreeing rites for their own bodies. However bare and free from ornament their public worship may be, yet in some way or other it is ordered and regulated, if it be public worship at all. Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are ministered with some degree of regularity; preaching and praying are arranged after some kind of order; and how simple soever that order may be, it is an order derived from the authority of their own body, and not expressly prescribed in Scripture. Scripture teaches all things essential for salvation; but all minutiae of ceremonial it neither teaches nor professes to teach. Such therefore must be left, in some degree, to the authority and wisdom of the Church.¹

3. The Church has, moreover, authority in controversies of faith.

This statement of the Article as necessarily follows from the nature of the case as the two already considered. It is only ne-

¹ See on this subject more especially Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* Bk. III.

cessary to keep in mind the qualifications which the latter part of the Article suggests.

Our Lord gave authority to His Church to bind and to loose, and to excommunicate those who would not hear the church. The Apostles enjoined that heretics, persons that teach false doctrine or deny the truth, should be shunned, excommunicated, and put out of the Church.¹ Now, if the Church has no power to determine what is true and what is false, such authority would be a dead letter, and the Apostles' injunctions would be vain. All heretics claim Scripture as on their side. If the Church is not allowed to exercise authority in controversies of faith, she could never reject heretics, unless indeed they went so far as to deny the truth of Scripture altogether. In order therefore to exercise that discipline and power of the Keys which Christ committed to her, the Church must have authority to decide on what is truth, and what is falsehood.

The Church is a society founded by God, for the very purpose of preserving, maintaining, and propagating the truth. If she had no power to discern truth from error, how would this be possible? Her ministers are enjoined to teach and to preach the truth of the Gospel; not simply to put the Bible into the hands of the people, and leave them to read it. Their commission is, "Go and teach all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). They are "by sound doctrine to convince the gainsayers" (Tit. i. 9). They are "to feed the Church of God" (Acts xx. 28): to give "the household of God their portion of meat in due season" (Luke xii. 42). The chief pastors of the Church are to "commit to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also," that truth which they have themselves received (2 Tim. ii. 2). And they are enjoined to "rebuke men sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (Tit. i. 13).

All this implies authority, — authority to declare truth, to maintain truth, to discern truth from error, to judge when controversies arise, whether one party is heretical or not, and to reject from communion such as are in grievous falsehood and error.

There are promises to the Church, and titles of the Church, which confirm these arguments. The Church is called "an holy temple in the Lord . . . a habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 21, 22). Individual Christians believe that they shall

¹ Matt. xviii. 17, 18. Acts xx. 30. 2 Thess. iii. 6. 1 Tim. i. 3; vi. 3. Tit. i. 11; iii. 10. See Art xix, Sect. 11. 5.

be guided into truth by the indwelling Spirit of God; how much more therefore that Church which is not only composed of the various individual Christians, who are partakers of the Spirit, but is also itself built up for God's Spirit to dwell in it? Our blessed Lord promises to His Church, that "the gates of hell shall never prevail against it" (Matt. xvi. 18); and that He will be with its pastors "always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. xxviii. 20). Such a promise implies the constant presence, assistance, and guidance of Him who is the Church's Head, and His assurance that the power of evil shall never be able to destroy the faith of the Church, or take away God's truth from it; for, if once the faith of the Church should fail, the Church itself must fail with it. Hence the Church, having always the presence and guidance of Christ, the indwelling of His Spirit, and the assurance that the gates of hell shall never prevail against her; we must conclude that the Church will be guarded against anything like universal or fundamental error. And so we may say, that she not only is authorized to give judgments in matters of faith, but also has a promise of direction in judging.

This further appears from the Church being called "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15). Bishop Burnet contends that this is a metaphor, and that we must not argue too much on metaphor. But, if we never try to understand the figures of Scripture, we must neglect a very large and most important portion of Scripture. Indeed, almost all that is taught us about God and the world of spirits is taught us in figurative language, because it is above our common comprehension, and therefore conveyed to us by parables and metaphors. And the figure here is a very obvious one. It may mean a little more, or a little less, but its general meaning is plain enough. And that meaning surely is, that God has appointed His Church in the world, that it may hold fast, support, and maintain the truth: and not only is it *ordained* for this end, but as all God's ordinances are surely fitted for their purpose, so the Church is *qualified* also to uphold the truth which is committed to it.

Therefore we conclude, that by God's appointment, and according to plain language of Scripture, "the Church hath authority in controversies of faith."

II. But the authority of the Church is not a supreme and independent authority. In matters of faith, it is the authority of a judge, not the authority of a legislator. Truth comes from God,

not from the Church. The written word of God is the record of God's truth; and no other record exists. He alone is the Legislator, and the Scriptures contain the code of laws which He has ordained. To maintain those laws and the truth connected with them, and, so far as possible, to enforce them, is the duty of the Church. But she has no authority either to alter or to add to them.

She may judge therefore, but it must be according to the laws which have been made for her. She has authority, but it is an authority limited by the Scriptures of truth.

Such is the nature of all judicial power. We say the judges of the land have authority to pronounce judgments; but they must pronounce their judgments according to the law. They have no power to alter it, no power to go beyond it. The only power which they have, is to enforce and administer; and, where it is obscure or doubtful, to do their best to interpret it.¹

This is exactly the limitation which we find that the Article truly assigns to the authority of the Church. She has power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith; but in thus doing:—

1. She must not ordain anything contrary to God's word written, nor explain one place of Scripture so as to contradict another.

2. Besides the written word, she ought not to enforce anything to be believed for necessity of salvation.

The first limitation is self-apparent, if we admit the word of God to be the word of God. For whatever authority be assigned to the Church, it would be fearful impiety to give it authority superior to God Himself. It is probable, that this limitation is more particularly intended to apply to the power of ordaining ceremonies, as the second applies to articles of faith. If so, it means that the Church may ordain ceremonies in themselves indifferent, but she may not ordain any which would be repugnant to the written word. Thus for example, it would mean that forms of prayer, clerical vestments, and the like, are within the province of the Church to decide upon; but image-worship, or the adoration of the host, being contrary to the commandments of God, are beyond her power to sanction or permit.

The second limitation applies to doctrine, and is almost a repetition of a portion of Article VI. already considered.² It denies to

¹ In the early councils; it was customary to place the Gospels on a throne or raised platform in the midst of the assembly, to indicate that in them were

contained the rules by which the decisions of the council must be framed.

² "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatso

the Church the power to initiate in matters of faith. She may not enforce upon her children new articles for which there is no authority in the Bible; but may interpret Scripture, and enforce the articles of faith to be deduced from thence.

Hence we may see that the Article determines that there is but one supreme primary authority, that is to say, the written tradition of the will of God, the holy Scriptures, His lively oracles. The authority of the Church is ministerial and declaratory, not absolute and supreme. And the decisions of the Church must always be guided by, and dependent on, the statements and injunctions of the written word of God.¹

ever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby is not to be required of any man, or be thought required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." — Art. vi.

¹ Neither the right nor the duty of *Private Judgment*, if properly understood, is interfered with by the statements of this Article. It is the duty of every Christian to search the Scriptures in order to learn God's will from them. Yet this neither supersedes the propriety of individuals paying deference to the judgment of the whole Church, nor does it preclude the Church from forming a judgment. It is the right and the wisdom of every citizen to acquaint himself with the laws of his country, and to endeavour to render them an intelligent obedience. Yet this does not take away from a competent authority or tribunal the right of pronouncing according to them. The following words of an eminent English divine seem to put the whole question in

its true light, and in the light in which our Church has constantly viewed it: "Far am I, by what I have now said, from endeavouring to weaken or undermine the rights of ecclesiastical authority. We do readily acknowledge that every Christian Church in the world has a right and authority to decide controversies in religion that do arise among its members, and consequently to declare the sense of Scripture concerning those controversies. And though we say that every private Christian hath a liberty left him of examining and judging for himself, and which cannot, which ought not to be taken from him; yet every member of a Church ought to submit to the Church's decisions and declarations so as not to oppose them, not to break the communion or the peace of the Church upon account of them, unless in such cases where obedience and compliance is apparently sinful and against God's laws." — Archbishop Sharp, *Works*, v. p. 63. Oxf. 1829.

[One great difficulty concerning the authority of the Church in matters of faith arises from the fact that many people seem to expect to hear the Church speaking with definite precise statements in answer to every doubt that may arise, or every question we may choose to put to her; or else they imagine that to be what is or ought to be claimed by the believers in an authoritative Church. But observe: —

1. The only Church that claims to possess that kind of authority has contradicted herself, repeatedly. (See Janus, "The Pope and the Council, cap. III. sect. 3.)

2. That kind of power was never promised to the Church. (St. Matt. xvi. 18, xxviii. 20.)

3. The promises referred to justify us in expecting a general indefectibility, not a special and particular infallibility.

4. This is all that is possible without a second Incarnation; for which, accordingly, Dr. Manning (*The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost*) against all facts, contends.

5. This authority, is not a vague thing of no practical consequence, but covers all the essentials of Doctrine and Discipline.

6. The voice of the Church is not gathered from a single utterance, but from general consent or from a single utterance ratified by general consent according to the rule of S. Vincent of Lerins. *Common. caps. 11. 111. — J. W.*]

ARTICLE XXI.

Of the Authority of General Councils.

De Authoritate Conciliorum generalium.

GENERAL Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of Princes. And when they be gathered together (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God), they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to Salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scriptures.

GENERALIA concilia sine jussu et voluntate Principum congregari non possunt; et ubi convenerint, quia ex hominibus constant, qui non omnes Spiritu et Verbo Dei reguntur, et errare possunt, et interdum errarunt etiam in his quæ ad Deum pertinent; ideoque quæ ab illis constituuntur, ut ad salutem necessaria, neque robor habent, neque auctoritatem, nisi ostendi possint e sacris literis esse desumpta.

[This Article is omitted in the American Revision, "because it is partly of a local and civil nature, and is provided for, as to the remaining parts of it, in other Articles." Not a very sufficient reason for an unfortunate omission.

As some persons have argued from the omission, in 1562 and 1571, of Articles XLI. and XLII. of 1552, that the Church of England intended to allow Millenarianism and Universalism, so others have urged, that, by omitting this Article, the American Church, if it did not assert, at least allowed the infallibility of a General Council. The one line of argument is worth as much as the other, both being worthless. — *J. W.*]

WE saw, in considering the last Article, that our Lord Jesus Christ had given a certain promise of guidance and indefectibility to His Church, by which we may conclude, that the whole Church shall never utterly fail or be absorbed in one gulf of error. We saw too, that the Church had a right to judge in controversies of faith, so as to expel from her communion those whom she determined to be fundamentally wrong.

If these premises be true, the voice and judgment of the Church universal must be of great value and importance, not as superseding but as interpreting Scripture. And this voice of the Church has been considered to be audible, in the general consent of Christians of all, and more especially of early times. Those doctrines which the Church of Christ at all times, everywhere, and universally, has received, have been esteemed the judgment of the Catholic Church. This is the universality, antiquity, and

agreement, the “semper, ubique et ab omnibus” of Vincentius Lirinensis.¹ It is true, no doctrine of the faith has been received so universally that it never has been spoken or written against. But a large number of doctrines (all, in fact, clearly enunciated in the Creeds) have been upheld by the vast majority of Christians from the beginning to the present day. There never was a time, not even the short-lived but fearful reign of Arianism, in which the Church in general did not hold all these doctrines; and those who dissented from them formed a comparatively small, if not always an insignificant, minority. And as regards these fundamental truths, there would never be any difficulty in following the rule which Vincentius gives in explanation of his own canon, namely, “If a small part of the Church holds a private error, we should adhere to the whole. If the whole be for the time infected by some novel opinion, we should cleave to antiquity. If in antiquity itself there be found partial error, we should then prefer universal decisions before private judgments.”² This rule will embrace all the Articles of the Creeds of the Church. But new errors may arise, and men’s minds may be sadly perplexed by them, and difficulties of various kinds may spring up, in which the voice of the Christian Church may never have plainly spoken; and the question may almost of necessity occur, Shall the abettors of such or such an opinion be esteemed heretics or not, be continued in, or rejected from, the communion of Christians? In such cases, which may be cases of great emergency, the only way in which the Church can speak is by a council of representatives.

Among the Jews, questions of importance and difficulty were referred to the Sanhedrim, a council of seventy-one elders, which sat at Jerusalem. In the Christian Church, the first example of such an assembly is what has by some been called the first general council, held by the Apostles and elders and brethren at Jerusalem, concerning the question of circumcising the Gentile converts (Acts xv.).

Afterwards we hear of no council for some considerable period. But during the third century several provincial synods sat, for the

¹ Vincentius Lirinensis. *Commonit.* c. 2.

² “Quid igitur faciet Christianus Catholicus, si se aliqua ecclesie particula ab universalis fidei communiione præciderit? Quid utique nisi ut pestifero corruptoque membro sanitatem universi corporis anteponat? Quid si novella aliqua contagio non jam portiunculam tantum, sed totam pariter ecclesiam commaculare conetur? Tunc etiam providebit, ut an-

tiquitati inhæreat, quæ prorsus jam non potest ab ulla novitatis fraude seduci. Quid si in ipsa vetustate, duorum aut trium hominum, vel certe civitatis unius aut etiam provincie alicujus error deprehendatur? Tunc omnino curabit ut paucorum temeritati vel inscitie si qua sunt universaliter antiquitus universalis Concilii decreta præponat,” &c. — *Commor.* c. 3.

determining of matters either of doctrine or discipline. Thus Victor held a council at Rome, A. D. 196, concerning the keeping of Easter; in which year other councils were held, in other places, on the same subject. St. Cyprian held several councils at Carthage, on the subject of the lapsed, and the rebaptizing of heretics (A. D. 253, 254, 255.) Councils were held at Antioch, A. D. 264, 265, to condemn and excommunicate Paul of Samosata. And many others for similar purposes were convened, in their respective provinces, during the third and early part of the fourth century. Yet hitherto they were but partial and provincial, not general councils of the whole Church. At last, during the disturbances which were created by the propagation of the Arian heresy, Constantine the Great, having been converted to Christianity, and giving the countenance of the imperial government to the hitherto persecuted Church of Christ, summoned a general council of all the bishops of Christendom, to pronounce the judgment of the Church Catholic concerning the Divinity of the Son of God. The council met A. D. 325. The number of bishops that assembled at this great synod is generally stated to have been 318, besides priests and deacons. The council decided by an immense majority for the doctrine of the *ὁμοούσιον*, drew up the Nicene Creed, and published twenty canons on matters of discipline.

1. This was the first general or œcumenical council. Following this were five others, also generally received as œcumenical. 2. The council of Constantinople, summoned by the Emperor Theodosius, A. D. 381, which condemned Macedonius, and added the latter part to the creed of Nice. 3. The council of Ephesus, called by the younger Theodosius, A. D. 431, which condemned Nestorius. 4. The council of Chalcedon, called by Marcianus, A. D. 451, which condemned Eutyches. 5. The second of Constantinople, summoned by the Emperor Justinian, A. D. 553, confirmatory of the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. 6. The third of Constantinople, convened by the Emperor Constantine Pogonatus, A. D. 680, which condemned the Monothelites.

These six are the only councils which have been acknowledged by the Universal Church. There are two or three others, called œcumenical by the Greek Church, and many called œcumenical by the Latin Church, which, however, have never received universal approval.¹ Even the fifth and sixth have not been quite so univer-

¹ The Greeks number eight general councils, adding to the above six the second council of Nice under Irene and her son Constantine, A. D. 787, and the fourth of Constantinople, A. D. 869, under the Emperor Basil.

sally esteemed as the first four. The fifth, though generally acknowledged in the East, was for a time doubted by several of the Western bishops. Gregory the Great said he revered the first four synods as he did the four Evangelists; evidently considering those four as far more important than those which followed them.¹ And the reformers, both foreign and Anglican, and probably the divines of the English Church in general, have more unhesitatingly received the first four, than the fifth and sixth councils; though it has been thought that the reason for this may be, that the fifth and sixth were considered as merely supplementary to the preceding two, and therefore as virtually included in them.

1. These few well-known and unquestioned facts are, of themselves sufficient to give us an insight into the nature, constitution, and authority of general councils. In the first three centuries no general council was ever held. The reason of this may be manifold. In the first century Apostles were yet alive, whose inspired authority could have been subject to no appeal. Indeed the meeting of Apostles and elders at Jerusalem may be called a council; but its force is derived, not merely from Christ's promise of guidance to His Church, but also from His assurance of inspiration to His apostles. Then, too, the Church was small; Jerusalem was the visible centre of unity; the Apostles gathered together there could readily, by common consent, meet and unite in expression of their decisions. But a century later, and the Church was spread from India in the east, to Gaul and Lusitania in the west; from Ethiopia southward, to the remotest northern Isles of Britain. There was singular difficulty in all its bishops meeting in one spot. A general gathering of all the spiritual heads of Christendom would have been, like enough, a signal for general persecution. There was no one power which could summon all together, and which all would be bound to obey.² And therefore it would have been morally, and perhaps physically impossible to gather a council from all portions of the Church. But when not only was the Roman empire subject to one man, but that one man became the patron and protector of the Church, his power enabled him to enjoin all bishops who were his subjects to meet him, or to send deputies to a general synod; and his safe-conduct assured against the violence, at least of heathen persecutors. Hence, by the very nature of the case, general coun-

¹ Gregor. *Epist. ad. Joann. Constantinop. Episc. Epistol. Lib. i. c. 24.*

² I must assume that the Bishop of Rome had not that supremacy which

the Pope has since claimed and exercised; though this is not the place to prove the assumption.

cils were at first never summoned, and when summoned, it was by "the commandment and will of princes."

Formidable heresies had risen before, but at first they were sufficiently met by the zeal and energy of catholic bishops; then local synods condemned and suppressed them. But the rise of Arianism required a more stringent remedy, and a more distinct declaration of the voice of the Church. The evils of Arianism were not confined to Arius and his followers. Macedonians, Nestorians, Eutychians, Monothelites, all sprang out of the same grievous controversies; and the six general synods were successively summoned for the end of pruning off these various offshoots of the one noxious plant.

So then general synods were the result of peculiar exigencies, and were summoned by the only power which could constrain general obedience, — obedience that is of meeting to deliberate, not, it is to be hoped, of deciding according to the imperial standard of truth. This constituted them, so far as they were so, general and œcumenical. When the Bishop of Rome had attained to the full height of his sacerdotal and imperial authority, claiming an universal dominion over the Church of Christ, by virtue of succession to the primacy of St. Peter, he began to exercise the power, for many centuries enjoyed only by the emperors, of calling together general councils of the Church, himself presiding in them. The question of presidency we may lay aside, as we have to deal only with the right to summon. Now, it is quite true that there was no inherent and inalienable right in the Roman emperor, nor in any other secular prince, to summon ecclesiastical synods. Therefore the bare fact of their being summoned by the emperor, gave them no special authority. But the imperial was the only power which could command general obedience. Hence, when the emperor summoned, all portions of Christendom obeyed; and so a council, as nearly as possible œcumenical, was gathered together. But when the Pope claimed the same authority, the result was not the same. The bishops of the Roman obedience felt bound to attend, when the chief pontiff summoned them; but the eastern prelates felt no such obligation, and the bishops belonging to the ancient patriarchates of Constantinople, Antioch, and Alexandria refused to attend to a command issuing from the Patriarch of Rome. The ground, therefore, on which this Article asserts that princes only have a right to summon general councils is that such only have power to compel attendance at them. Neither the Greek nor the reformed Churches admit the authority claimed by the Pope, and therefore

their bishops would not assemble at his command. There is no single individual governor, nor any ten or twelve ecclesiastical governors, who, if they agree together, could with authority summon a council. All bishops are *de jure* equal and independent, and might refuse to obey citations from other bishops; and their refusals would invalidate the authority of the council called.

At the time of the Reformation there was a great effort to call a free general council. Luther appealed to such. So did our own Cranmer. But it was to a real and free council. The pope summoned the Council of Trent; but the reformers refused to acknowledge his authority to call it, or to admit that, so called, it was a real council of the whole Church. Soon after the Church of England had thrown off the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, declarations to the above effect were made by English bishops and by convocation. The words of the latter are, "We think that neither the Bishop of Rome, nor any one prince of what estate, degree, or preëminence soever he be, may, by his own authority, call, indict, or summon any general council, without the express consent, assent, and agreement of the residue of Christian princes."¹ Their argument is, that when the Roman emperor had absolute and universal control, his commandment alone was sufficient to insure the attendance of bishops from all quarters of the world. But now there is no such supreme authority. The pope claims it; but it is an usurpation. The only conceivable mode of insuring universality now would be, that all Christian princes in all parts of Christendom should agree together to send bishops to represent their respective Churches; and such an agreement would correspond with the ancient mode of convoking councils, as nearly as in the present state of things is possible.² A supreme spiritual authority, such as is claimed by the pope, we do not acknowledge; but as all bishops are subject to their respective sovereigns, the joint will of all Christian princes might produce an œcumenical synod; but no other plan of proceeding seems likely to do so.

2. But when councils are gathered together, from whence do they derive their authority? There is no distinct promise of infal-

¹ "The judgment of Convocation concerning general Councils." It is signed by "Thomas Cromwell, Thomas Cantuariensis, Johannes London, with thirteen bishops; and of abbots, priors, archdeacons, deans, proctors, clerks, and other ministers, forty-nine." See Appendix to Cranmer's *Works*, iv. p. 258; also Burnet, *Reform.* i. App. B. iii. No. 5; Collier, *Eccl. Hist.* 11. App. 2037.

² See also "The Opinion of certain of the Bishops and clergy of this realm, subscribed with their hands touching the general Council," probably A. D. 1537. It is signed by Cranmer as archbishop, eight other bishops, the Abbot of Westminster, and three others.—Jenkyns's *Cranmer*, iv. p. 266.

libility to councils in Scripture. Nay! there is probably no distinct allusion to councils at all. To the bishops and rulers of the Church indeed there is a promise of Christ's guidance and presence, and Christians are enjoined to "obey" and "follow the faith" "of those who have the rule over them."¹ Hence the judgment of our own spiritual guides is much to be attended to; and when our spiritual rulers meet together and agree on matters either of doctrine or discipline, there is no question but that their decisions are worthy of all consideration and respect. Yet infallibility is certainly not promised to any one bishop or pastor, and though they are assured of Christ's presence and guidance, yet promises of this kind are all more or less conditional; and it is only to the universal Church that the assurance belongs, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Individual bishops, we know, may err. Hence assemblies of individual bishops may err; because, though they have the grace of ordination, yet all may not be pious men, "governed with the Spirit and word of God."²

If indeed all the chief pastors of the Church could meet together and all agree, we might perhaps be justified in considering their decision as the voice of the universal Church; and the promises of Christ to His Church are such as might lead us to believe that that Church could not universally be heretical, and therefore that its universal judgment must be sound. But no synod ever had, nor perhaps ever can have, such conditions as these. Those hitherto held have consisted of a minority of the bishops of the whole Church; and most important portions of the Church have been but very slenderly represented. Though, therefore, one bishop may be supposed to represent many others; yet even in political matters we often feel an assembly of deputies to speak but imperfectly the voice of a people, and in ecclesiastical and spiritual things this must be much more probable. We cannot say then, that the whole Church speaks by the voices of a minority of her bishops, even when they are quite agreed.

Again, it is not quite certain that our Lord's promises to His Church render it impossible that the major part of that Church should for a time be corrupted by error. God gave many and great promises to Israel; and yet at one time there were but seven thousand knees that had not bowed to Baal. The promises indeed assure us that the Church shall not become totally corrupt, nor

¹ Heb. xiii. 7, 17. Compare Acts xx. 28-31; Tit. i. 13; iii. 10, &c.

² See the sentiments of Bishop Ridley to this effect, corresponding to the word-

ing of the Article. — Ridley's *Works*, p. 130, Parker Society edition, Cambridge 1841.

continue so finally. But we have seen, that Vincentius himself supposes the possibility of the Church for a time being largely, and indeed in the greater part of it, led astray by some novelty of doctrine. Now a council composed of a minority of bishops of the Church might, in a corrupt age, consist of those very bishops who had embraced the novelties, from which the great body of the Church was not then exempt. What would then be the value of the decisions of such a council? We may perhaps reasonably hope, that the gracious and superintending Providence of Christ would never allow the Church, which is His Body, and of which He is the present and animating Head, to be so represented, or misrepresented. But there is nothing in the nature of councils to assure us against such an evil. Councils have hitherto always consisted of a minority. Even that minority has not always been unanimous; and it might be, that the same minority might represent the worse, instead of the sounder part of the Church, in a corrupt and ignorant age.

We hear enough of councils, even in the best ages, to know that the proceedings at them have not always been the wisest, or the most charitable; that some of those who attended them were not the most highly to be respected; and that other motives, besides zeal for the truth, have had too much influence in them. The words of Gregory Nazianzen are famous: "If I must write the truth," he says, "I am disposed to avoid every assembly of bishops; for of no synod have I seen a profitable end; rather an addition to, than a diminution of, evils; for the love of strife and the thirst for superiority are beyond the power of words to express."¹ Every reader of Church history must feel that there is too much truthfulness in this picture.

The question then arises, of what use are universal synods? and what authority are we to assign them? The answer is, that so far as they speak the language of the universal Church, and are accredited by the Church, so far they have the authority, which we saw under the last Article to be inherent in the Church, of deciding in controversies of faith. Now we can only know that they speak the language of the Church when their decrees meet with universal acceptance, and are admitted by the whole body of Christians to be certainly true. Every general council which has received this stamp to its decisions may be esteemed to speak the

¹ Ἐχω μὲν οὕτως. εἰ δὲ τίληθὲς γράφειν, ὥστε πάντα σύλλογον φεύγειν ἐπίσκοπων, ὅτι μηδεμίαις συνόδοις τέλος εἶδον χρηστόν· μηδὲ λύσειν κακῶν μᾶλλον ἐσχηκίας, ἢ προσθήκην.

Αἱ γὰρ φιλονεικίαι καὶ φιλαρχίαι· ἀλλ' ὅπως μὴδὲ φορτικὸν ὑπολάβῃς οὕτω γράφοντα· καὶ λόγου κρείττονες, κ. τ. λ. — *Erist.* 55, *Procorio.* Tom. i. p. 814, Colon. 1690.

language of the universal Church; and as in some cases the judgment of the universal Church could not otherwise have been elicited, therefore we must admit their importance and necessity. Now the first six, or at least the first four, general councils have received this sanction of universal consent to their decisions. Their decrees were sent round throughout the Christian world; they were received and approved of by all the different national Churches of Europe, Asia, and Africa; the errors condemned by them were then, and ever have been, counted heresies; and the creeds set forth by them have been acknowledged, revered, and constantly repeated in the Liturgy, by every orthodox Church from that time to this.¹

Thus then the true general synods have received an authority which they had not in themselves. "It is," as the Lutheran Confession expresses it, "the legitimate way of healing dissension in the Church to refer ecclesiastical controversies to synods."² But those synods have universal authority only when they receive catholic consent. When the Church at large has universally received their decrees, then are they truly general councils, and their authority equal to the authority of the Church itself.

Supposing then a synod to assemble, and to draw up articles of doctrine, or rules of discipline, even though it have been legally assembled by an authority qualified to convene it, and to insure attendance at it, still we hold it possible that it should err, not only in its mode of reasoning, or in matters indifferent, but "even in things pertaining to God." Hence, when its decrees came forth, especially if they concerned things "necessary to salvation," we should not esteem them to have strength nor authority "until they were compared with Holy Scripture, and could be declared to be taken out" of it. The council itself would be bound to decide on the grounds of Scripture, no power having the right to prescribe anything as "requisite or necessary to salvation, which is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby." The Church would be bound to examine the decisions of the council itself, on the grounds of Scripture, and would not be justified in receiving those decisions unless it found that they were "taken out of Holy Scripture." But when the Church had fully received, and stamped

¹ Not only episcopal churches have so admitted the decrees of the general councils, but that the reformers and reformed bodies of Christians in Germany, Switzerland, &c. have admitted them, may appear both from their confessions and the writings of their divines — e. g.

see *Confess. August. Art. xxi.*; *Sylloge*, p. 189; Calvin, *Institut.* iv. ix. 8, 13.

² "Hæc est usitata et legitima via in ecclesia dirimendi dissensiones, videlicet ad synodos referre controversias ecclesiasticas." — *Conf. August.* ubi supra.

with its approval the acts of the council, then would they assume the form of judgments of the Church concerning the doctrines of Scripture.¹ This was the case with the great Councils of Nice Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon. They put forth their decisions as their interpretations of the word of God. They enjoined nothing "as necessary to salvation," but what they "declared to have been taken out of Holy Scripture." All Christendom received their interpretations as sound and true: and, from that day to this, they have been admitted by the Catholic Church as true articles of faith. This has stamped them with an authority of Scriptural truth, and Catholic consent, of which the constitution of the Councils themselves could not give us full certainty and assurance.²

3. Concerning the assertion of the Article, that "some general councils have erred," Bishop Burnet justly observes that it "must be understood of councils that pass for such." The later councils summoned by the Pope, and acknowledged only by the Western Churches and those in obedience to Rome, were commonly called General Councils at the time of the Reformation, as they still are in the Roman Church, though never acknowledged by the Churches of the East.³

Of these, the fourth Council of Lateran, under Innocent III. A. D. 1215, asserted the doctrine of Transubstantiation.⁴ The Council of Constance, A. D. 1414, forbade the cup to the laity.⁵ The Council of Florence, A. D. 1439, decreed the doctrine of Purgatory.⁶ The Council of Trent added to the Nicene Creed a confession of belief in seven sacraments, Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, Image-worship, &c. &c.

The decrees of these councils, though called general, have never received the assent of the Eastern Churches, and cannot therefore be of universal authority. None of the above-mentioned doctrines,

¹ Calvin, as above referred to, says: "Sic priscas illas synodos, ut Nicænam, Constantinopolitanam, Ephesinam primam, Chalcedonensem, ac similes, quæ confutandis erroribus habitæ sunt, libenter amplectimur, reveremurque ut sacrosanctas, quantum attinet ad fidei dogmata: nihil enim continent quam puram et nativam Scripturæ interpretationem quam sancti patres, spirituali prudentia, ad frangendos religionis hostes, qui tunc emerant, accommodaverunt."—*Institut.* iv. ix. 8. Compare *Confess. Helvet.* Art. xi.; *Sylloge*, pp. 41, 42.

² On the subject of the authority of general synods, see Palmer, *On the Church*,

Part iv. ch. 8; whose view is the same as that taken in the text.

³ According to the Roman Church the First Council of Lateran summoned by Pope Calixtus II. A. D. 1123, was the 9th general Council. The other general councils allowed by the Latin Church are, Second Lateran, A. D. 1139. Third Lateran, 1179. Fourth Lateran, 1215. Lyons, 1245. Lyons, 1274. Vienne, 1311. Constance, 1414. Basle, 1431. Florence, 1439. Fifth Lateran, 1512. Trent, 1546.

⁴ Conc. Lateran, iv Can. i.

⁵ Sess. XIII.

⁶ Concil. Florent. *De Purgat.*

which they sanctioned, can be found in Scripture, but may all be proved to be contrary to Scripture. They are all denied in those Articles of our own Church which we have next to consider, and which we shall have to justify from Holy Writ. Hence, we can have no difficulty in concluding, that some (so-called) General Councils have erred, even in things pertaining to God.

[NOTE. The statement that General Councils may not be gathered "without the commandment and will of Princes," probably caused the omission of this Article in the American revision.

It should be remembered, however, that it is aimed against the Papal usurpation, and interference with the Civil power. The Pope—as in the famous dispute of Boniface VIII. and Philip le Bel—claimed the right of calling the clergy out of the several countries in which they lived, without the consent of the civil power, and the words above quoted were intended to meet this claim. So Bishop Burnet, Dr. Hey, Mr. Hardwicke, and even Mr. Newman in Tract XC. explain them.

The student should specially bear in mind (a) the proper work of a General Council, and (b) its proper authentication.

The first is, not to invent new Articles of faith, but to testify to, to set forth more carefully, and to guard antecedent truth. So that, while it is not an *infallible judge*, it may be a *faithful witness*. The second is found, not in the confirmation of the Pope or any other person, but in the acceptance of the Council by the entire Church. As to the rules laid down by some Romish writers, that a General Council must be called by the Pope, that he must preside, &c. they are all confuted by a simple reference to the four great General Councils. If those rules are sound, they were not General Councils; if they were General Councils, those rules are unfounded. — J. W.]

ARTICLE XXII.

Of Purgatory.

THE Romish doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worshipping and adoration, as well of images, as of reliques, and also invocation of saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God.

De Purgatorio.

DOCTRINA Romanensium de purgatorio, de indulgentiis, de veneratione, tum imaginum, tum reliquiarum, necnon de invocatione sanctorum, res est futilis, inaniter conficta, et nullis Scripturarum testimoniis innititur; immo verbo Dei contradicit.

SECTION I. — HISTORY.

THE three preceding Articles concerned the Church visible. This treats of the Church invisible.

The only difference between the wording of this Article and the XXIII^d of Edward VI. is, that whereas this has “The Romish doctrine,” that had “The doctrine of the school-authors.”

The Article is so comprehensive that many volumes might be written upon it. It will be necessary therefore to study brevity. It evidently treats of two principal points. I. Purgatory, and the pardons or indulgences connected with the doctrine concerning it. II. The Worship of images and relics, and the Invocation of Saints.

I. 1. Purgatory.

Under the III^d Article we saw that the Jews and the early Christians uniformly believed in an intermediate state between death and judgment. But their language and expectations, at least those of the earliest fathers, are inconsistent with a belief that any of the pious were in a state of suffering, or that the sufferings of the wicked were but for a time only.

Clemens Romanus says, that “Those who have finished their course in charity, according to the grace of Christ, possess the region of the godly, who shall be manifested in the visitation of the Kingdom of Christ.”¹ Justin Martyr says, “The souls of the godly remain in a certain better place, the unjust and wicked in a worse,

¹ Ἐχουσιν χώραν εὖσεβῶν. — Clem. *Ad Cor.* 1. 50.

awaiting the day of judgment.”¹ Irenæus argues from the parable of Dives and Lazarus, that “each sort of men receive, even before the judgment, their due place of abode.”² Tertullian speaks of Paradise “as a place of divine pleasantness, destined to receive the spirits of the just.”³ So Cyprian, “it is for him to fear death who is unwilling to go to Christ.”⁴ “Do not suppose death the same thing to the just and the unjust. The just are called to a refreshing, the unjust are hurried away to torment; speedily safety is given to the faithful, to the unfaithful punishment.”⁵ This, he shows, is not peculiar to martyrs or eminent saints. “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, did not suffer martyrdom, yet were honoured first among the patriarchs; and to their company every one is gathered, who is believing and righteous and praiseworthy.”⁶

We may, however, early trace a belief that, as death itself was a part of the curse, so every one was to look forward, not for the rest of the intermediate state, but for the joys of the resurrection; a delay of the resurrection, and a continuance of the death of the body, being esteemed in itself penal, and the result of sin. Indeed, St. Paul (2 Cor. v. 2, 4, 6) taught, that to be unclothed was an evil; though it would be better to be “absent from the body,” since thereby we might be “present with the Lord.” Hence, Irenæus speaks of the time between death and judgment as “a period of condemnation, resulting from man’s disobedience.”⁷ And Tertullian says, that “sin, though small in amount, may be to be punished by delay of the resurrection:”⁸ of which passage more hereafter.

This leads to the consideration of *Prayer for the Dead*. There can be no question that this custom very early prevailed among Christians. It is first mentioned by Tertullian, who speaks of the common practice of the Church to make oblations for the dead on

¹ τὰς μὲν τῶν εὐσεβῶν ψυχὰς ἐν κρείττονι ποτὶ χώρῳ μένειν, κ. τ. λ. — *Dial.* p. 223; *Conf. Quest. et Respons. ad Orthodox. Justinum Imputat.* qu. 5.

² “Dignam habitationem unamquamque gentem percipere etiam ante iudicium.” — *Lib.* 11. 63. Compare *Lib.* v. 31, quoted above, p. 97.

³ “Locum divinæ amœnitatis recipiendis sanctorum spiritibus destinatum.” — *Apol.* 1. 47.

⁴ “Ejus est mortem timere qui ad Christum nolit ire.” — *Cyp. De Mortalitate*, p. 157, Oxon. 1682.

⁵ “Non est quod putetis bonis et malis interitum esse communem. Ad refrigerium iusti vocantur, ad supplicium rapiuntur iniusti: datur velocis tutela fidentibus, perfidis pœna.” — *Ibid.* p. 161.

⁶ “Ad quorum convivium congregatur quisquis fidelis et justus et laudabilis invenitur.” — *Ibid.* p. 163.

The reasoning of the whole treatise *De Mortalitate* is of the same kind, and quite inconsistent with a belief that good men going out of this life have a penal state to undergo before attaining to rest and happiness.

⁷ “Ut quemadmodum caput resurrexit a mortuis, sic et reliquum corpus omnis hominis qui invenitur in vita, impleto tempore condemnationis ejus, quæ erat propter inobedientiam, resurgat.” — *Iren.* 111. 21.

⁸ “Modicum quoque de ictum mora resurrectionis illic luendum.” — *De Anima*, c. 58.

the anniversary of the day of their death, which they called their birthday; who says also, that widows prayed for the souls of their husbands that they might have refreshment and a part in the first resurrection.¹ The like is mentioned by Origen,² Cyprian,³ Cyril of Jerusalem,⁴ Gregory Nazianzen,⁵ Ambrose,⁶ Chrysostom,⁷ and others of the earliest fathers; and prayers and thanksgivings for the dead occur in all the ancient Liturgies, as in that to be found in the Apostolical Constitutions, in the Liturgies of St. James, St. Mark, St. Basil, St. Chrysostom, &c.

On this early practice, dating unquestionably from the second century, the school-authors and the Romanist divines ground one of their strongest arguments to prove that a belief in Purgatory was primitive and apostolic. For why, say they, were prayers offered for the dead, unless they could profit them? and how could they profit them, except by delivering from the pains of Purgatory, or shortening their duration?

Yet it is to be observed, that many of the very prayers alleged by the Roman Catholic controversialists do of themselves prove that those who composed them could not have believed the persons prayed for to be in purgatory. The prayers for the dead in the ancient Liturgies are offered for all the greatest saints, for the Virgin Mary, the Apostles and martyrs, whom even the Roman Church has never supposed to be in purgatory. Thus the Clementine Liturgy, found in the Apostolical Constitutions,⁸ has the words, "We offer to Thee (*i. e.* we pray) for all the saints who have pleased Thee from the beginning of the world; the patriarchs, prophets, righteous men, apostles, martyrs," &c. The Liturgy called St. Chrysostom's prays for all departed in the faith, patriarchs, prophets, apostles, &c.: and "especially for the holy, immaculate, blessed Theotokos, and ever-virgin Mary."⁹ This alone is sufficient to prove that prayer for the dead did not presuppose Purgatory, and was in no degree necessarily connected with it. Indeed, many of the ancients who speak of praying for the dead positively declare their firm belief that those for whom they prayed were in peace, rest, and blessedness, and therefore certainly not in fire and tor-

¹ "Oblationes pro defunctis, pro natalitiis annua die facimus." — *De Corona Milit.* c. 3. "Pro anima ejus orat, et refrigerium interim adpostulat ei, et in prima resurrectione consortium, et offert annuis diebus dormitionis ejus." — *De Monogamia*, c. 10.

² Lib. ix. In Rom. xii.

³ *Epist.* 34, Edit. Fell, 39, p. 77.

⁴ *Catech. Myst.* v. 6, 7.

⁵ *Orat. in Cæsar. juxta fin.*

⁶ *Epist.* II. 8, *Ad Faustinum.*

⁷ *Hom.* 41, in 1 *ad Corinth.*

⁸ *Constitut. Apostol.* Lib. VIII. cap. 12.

⁹ Ἐξαίρετως τῆς παναγίας, ἀχράντου, ὑπερυλογημένης δεσποίνης ἡμῶν Θεοτόκου καὶ ἀειπαρθένου Μαρίας. — Chrysost. *Liturgy. Græc.*

ment;¹ and it is not too much to affirm, that none of the ancient prayers had anything like an allusion to a Purgatory. Nay, even in the ancient Roman missals were the words, "Remember, O Lord, Thy servants which have gone before us with the sign of faith, and *sleep in the sleep of peace*; To them, O Lord, and to all *that are in rest in Christ*, we beseech Thee to grant a place of refreshment, of light and peace."²

It has been so common to admit the false premiss of the Romanist divines, (namely, that prayer for the dead presupposes a Purgatory,) that it is to many minds difficult to understand on what principles the early Christians used such prayers. One of those principles was, doubtless, that all things to us unknown are to us future. Present and future are but relative ideas. To God nothing is future; all things are present. But to man, that is future of which he is ignorant. As then we know not with absolute certainty the present condition or final doom of those who are departed; their present condition is relatively, and their final doom, absolutely, future to our minds. Hence, it was thought, we are justified in praying that it may be good, even though the events of their past life may have already decided it. Again, the Resurrection is yet to come, and therefore the full bliss of the departed is yet future. Hence the ancients prayed for a hastening of the Resurrection, much in the spirit of our own Burial Service, and of the petition in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy kingdom come."³ Thus St. Ambrose prayed for the Emperors Gratian and Valentinian, that God would "raise them up with a speedy resurrection."⁴ And the Liturgies constantly ask a speedy and a happy resurrection to those who have died in the Lord.⁵

Another portion of these prayers was Eucharistic or thanksgiving; whereby they gave God thanks both for the martyrs and for all that had died in the faith and fear of God;⁶ and these com-

¹ See this shown in very numerous instances by Archbishop Usher, *Answer to a Jesuit*, ch. VII., and by Bingham, *E. A. Bk.* xv. ch. III. § 16.

² "Memento etiam, Domine, famulorum famularumque tuarum, qui nos præcesserunt cum signo fidei, et dormiunt in somno pacis. Ipsi, Domine, et omnibus in Christo quiescentibus, locum refrigerii lucis et pacis ut indulgeas deprecamur."—*Bibl. Patr.* Gr. Lat. Tom. II. p. 129, quoted by Usher and Bingham, *as above*.

³ See Bp. Bull, Sermon III. *Works*, t. p. 71, Oxf. 1827.

⁴ "Te quæso, summe Deus, ut charis-

simos juvenes matura resurrectione suscites et resuscites."—Ambros. *De Obiit. Valentini*, in *ipso fine*; Usher, *as above*.

⁵ See numerous examples, quoted by Usher *as above*.

⁶ "The term of *εὐχαριστήριος εὐχὴ*, 'a thanksgiving prayer,' I borrow from the writer of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, (Dionys. *Eccles. Hierarch.* cap. VII.) who, in the description of the funeral observances used of old in the Church, informeth us, first, that the friends of the dead accounted him to be, as he was, blessed, because that, according to his wish, he had obtained a victorious end, and thereupon sent forth hymns of thanksgiving to

memorations of the departed were thought most important, as testifying a belief in the doctrine of "the Communion of Saints," and that the souls of those who are gone hence are still living, still fellow-heirs of the same glory, and fellow-citizens of the same kingdom with ourselves.¹

These were the chief reasons for prayers for the dead in public Liturgies. In the more private devotions, the solicitude which had existed for beloved objects whilst on earth was still expressed for their souls, when they had gone hence and were in the middle state of the dead. For, though they held that "what shall be to every one at the day of judgment is determined at the day of his death,"² yet they thought it not unreasonable to pray that even those who they hoped were safe might not lose that portion of blessedness which they supposed to be in store for them.³ There were also some private opinions,—as that the "more abundant damnation" of the damned might be lessened,⁴—that there was a first resurrection, at which some eminent saints rose before the rest, and to this they prayed that their friends might attain,⁵—that all men, even the best and holiest, had at the day of judgment a baptism of fire to go through, which should try their works, even though they should be saved in it: of which baptism more presently. Such private and particular opinions influenced the prayers of those who adopted them; but they were all unconnected with the doctrine of purgatory.⁶

The prayers for the dead, thus early prevalent, were in process of time, in the Roman Church, converted into prayers for souls in purgatory. At the beginning of the Reformation, it was first proposed to eradicate all traces of this doctrine from the Liturgies, but to retain such prayers for the dead as were accordant with primitive practice and belief. Accordingly, the first Liturgy of Edward VI. contained thanksgiving for all those saints "who now do rest in the sleep of peace," prayer for their "everlasting peace,"

the Author of that victory, desiring that they themselves might come unto the like end."—Usher, as above.

¹ Epiphanius. *Hæres.* LXXV. n. VII.

² "Quod enim in die iudicii futurum est omnibus, hoc in singulis die mortis impletur."—Hieronymus. *In Joel*, cap. 2; Usher, *Ibid.*

³ See this exemplified in the prayer of St. Augustine for his mother Monica. — *Confess.* Lib. IX. cap. 13, quoted by Bingham, *Lib. xv. ch. III. § 16.*

⁴ "Ut tolerabilior sit damnatio."—Aug. *Enchirid. ad Laurent.* cap. cx. Bingham, *Ibid.*

⁵ This was a Millenarian opinion, and was held by Tertullian. — *De Monogam.* cap. 10; *Cont. Marcion.* Lib. III. cap. 25; Bingham, *Ibid.*

⁶ The student should by all means read Usher's *Answer to a Jesuit*, ch. VII. *On Prayer for the Dead*; and Bingham, *Bk. xv. ch. III. §§ 15, 16.* See also Field, *Of the Church*, Bk. III. c. 9, 17; Jer. Taylor, *Dissursive from Popery*, pt. I. ch. I. § 14.; Bramhall, *Answer to M. De la Millaire*, I. p. 59, of the Anglo-Catholic Library; Bull's *Works*, I. Sermon III. &c.

and that "at the day of the general resurrection all they which be of the mystical body of the Son, might be set on His right hand." But the reformers afterwards, fearing from what had already occurred that such prayers might be abused or misconstrued, removed them from the Communion and Burial services. Yet still we retain a thanksgiving for saints departed, a prayer that we, with them, may be partakers of everlasting glory, and a request that God would "complete the number of His elect, and hasten His kingdom, that we, with all those who are departed out of this life in His faith and fear, may have our perfect consummation and bliss in His eternal and everlasting glory." Such commemorations of the dead sufficiently accord with the spirit of the primitive prayers, without in any degree laying us open to the danger that ill-taught or ill-thinking men might found upon them doctrines of deceit or dangerous delusions.

We have seen then, that the doctrine of the ancients concerning the intermediate state was inconsistent with a belief in purgatory, and that their custom of praying for the dead had no connection with it. Yet we may trace the rise of the doctrine itself by successive steps from early times.

In the first two centuries there is a deep silence on the subject. At the end of the second, Tertullian considered that Paradise was a place of divine pleasantness appointed to receive the souls of the just.¹ But early in the third century, Tertullian had left the Church, and joined the Montanists; and there is a passage in one of his treatises, written after he became a Montanist, which deserves attention. In that treatise (*De Anima*) he indeed clearly speaks of all the righteous as detained *in inferis*, waiting in Abraham's bosom the comfort of the resurrection;² and says, that doubtless in the intermediate state (*penes inferos*) are punishments and rewards, as we may learn from the parable of Dives and Lazarus.³ This appears inconsistent with any purgatorial notion; yet some consider that he had an idea of the kind, because he explains twice in this treatise the words, "Thou shalt not come out thence till thou hast paid the very last farthing," to mean, that even "small offences are expiated by delay of resurrection."⁴ He

¹ *Apol.* i. 45, quoted above.

² Tertull. *De Anima*, 55.

³ *Ibid.* 58.

⁴ "Ne . . . judex te tradat angelo executionis, et ille te in carcerem mandet inferum, unde non dimittaris, nisi modico quoque delicto mora resurrectionis expenso." — *Ibid.* 35.

"In summa carcerem illum quem evangelium demonstrat inferos intelligimus, et novissimum quadrantem, modicum quoque delictum mora resurrectionis illic luendum interpretatur; nemo dubitabit animam aliquid pensare penes inferos salva resurrectionis plenitudine per carnem quoque." — *Ibid.* 58.

seems, however, to consider that they will be more fully punished at the judgment.¹ And even this interpretation of Scripture, which is evidently very different from the doctrine of purgatory, he says that he derived, not from the teaching of the Church, but from Montanus.²

Contemporary with Tertullian, though somewhat his junior, was Origen. If Tertullian derived a notion somewhat resembling purgatory from a heretic, Origen derived a notion also bearing some resemblance to it from a heathen. His views of the nature of the human soul were borrowed from Plato. He believed it to be immortal and preëxistent, always in a state of progress or decline, and ever receiving the place due to its attainments in holiness, or defection to wickedness. Hence, he did not believe the purest souls of the redeemed, or the holy angels themselves, incapable of sinning, nor the very devils out of all hope of recovery.³ In accordance with this theory, he was obliged to consider that all the pains of the damned were merely purgatorial, and that their sins would be expiated by fire.⁴ To this he applied those passages of Scripture which speak of "a fiery trial," and of the fire as to "try every man's work of what sort it is" (1 Cor. iii. 13-15). He held that at the day of judgment all men must pass through the fire, even the saints and prophets. As the Hebrews went through the Red Sea, so all must pass through the fire of the judgment. As the Egyptians sank in the sea, so wicked men shall sink in the lake of fire: but good men, washed in the blood of the Lamb, even they, like Israel, must pass through the flood of flame; but they shall go through it safe and uninjured.⁵ All must go to the fire. The Lord sits and purifies the sons of Judah. He who brings

¹ See the concluding words in the last-cited passage.

² "Hoc enim Paracletus (h. e. Montanus) frequentissime commendavit, si quis sermones ejus ex agnitione promissorum charismatum admisit."—*Ibid.*

There is a passage in Cyprian (*Epist. 55 ad Antonium*, p. 109, Oxf. 1682) from which it is supposed that he adopted this view of Tertullian, whom he called "his Master." Rigaltius has shown that the language thus used by Cyprian applies to the penitential discipline of the Church, not to a purgatorial fire after death. It is true, the wording of this passage looks like Tertullian's reasoning. But Cyprian's language is so constantly opposed to the notion of purgatory, that it is scarcely possible that he should have consistently held that doctrine. See the pas-

sages above quoted from his treatise *De Mortalitate*. So the following: "Quod interim morimur, ad immortalitatem morte transgredimur; nec potest vita æterna succedere, nisi hinc contigerit exire. Non est exitus iste, sed transitus: et temporalis itinere decurso, ad æterna transgressus."—*De Mortalitate*, 12, p. 164. "Amplectamur diem, qui assignat singulis domicilio suo, qui nos istinc ereptos, et laqueis sæcularibus exsolutos Paradiso restituit et regno."—*Ibid.* 14, p. 166.

³ *De Principiis*, Lib. 1. cap. 6, n. 3, Hieronym. *In Jonæ Proph.* c. 111.; Augustin. *De Civit. Dei*, Lib. XXI. c. 17, Tom. VII. 637. See *Laud against Fisher*, § 38.

⁴ Origen, *De Principiis*, Lib. II. cap. 10, n. 5; *Homil. in Levitic.* vii. n. 4.

⁵ *Homil.* 111. in *Ps.* xxxvii. num. 1

much gold with little lead, shall have the lead purged away, and the gold shall remain uncorrupted. The more lead there is, the more burning there will be. But if a man be all leaden, he shall sink down into the abyss, as lead sinks in the water.¹

This theory of Origen is so far from being the same with the Romanist's purgatory, that, first of all, he places it instead of hell; and secondly, so far from looking for it between death and the resurrection, he taught that it would take place after the resurrection, at the day of judgment. Yet to this speculation, the offspring of human reason and Platonic philosophy, we may trace the rise of the doctrine on which the Church of Rome has erected so much of her power, and which has been so fatally pregnant with superstition. The theories of Origen were interesting, his character and learning were captivating; and so his name and opinions had much weight with those who followed him. Accordingly, we find eminent writers both in the East and West embracing his speculations. Lactantius held all judgment to be deferred till the resurrection; then eternal fire should consume the wicked, but it should try even the just. Those who had many sins would be scorched by it, but the pure would come off scathless.² Gregory Nazianzen, with the same idea, speaking of various kinds of baptism, Moses's baptism, Christ's baptism, the martyr's baptism, the baptism of penitence, adds, "and perhaps in the next world men will be baptized with fire, which last baptism will be more grievous and of longer duration, which will devour the material part like hay, and consume the light substance of every kind of sin."³ Ambrose again, using almost the words of Origen, says, "that all must pass through the flames, even St. John and St. Peter."⁴ And elsewhere he adopts Origen's illustration of the Israelites and Egyptians passing through the Red Sea, comparing it with the passage of all men through the fire of judgment.⁵ Hilary too speaks of all, even the Virgin Mary, as to undergo the trial of fire at the day of judgment, in which souls must expiate their offences.⁶ Gregory Nyssen in like manner speaks of "a purgatorial fire after our departure hence," and of "the purging fire, which takes away the filth commingled with the soul."⁷

¹ *Homil. in Exod. vi. num. 4.*

² *Lactant. vii. 21.*

³ *τυχόν εκεί τῷ πυρὶ βαπτισθήσονται τῷ τελευταίῳ βαπτίσματι τῷ ἐπιπονωτέρῳ καὶ μακροτέρῳ, ὃ ἐσθίει τὸν χόρτον, τὴν ὕλην, καὶ δαπανᾷ πάσης κακίας κοφώματα.* — Greg. Nazianz. *Oratio xxxix. juxta finem.*

⁴ *Serm. XX. in Psal. 118.*

⁵ *In Psal. 36.*

⁶ "Cum ex omni otioso verbo rationem simus præstituri, diem judicii concupiscesimus, in quo subeunda sunt gravia illa expiandæ a peccatis animæ supplicia," &c. — Hilar. *In Ps. 118, lit. Gimet.*

⁷ *μετὰ τὴν ἐνθένδε μετανώσασαι, διὰ τῆς τοῦ καθαρῶσιον πυρὸς χωνείας.* — *Orat. De*

All these views spring from the same source, and tend to the same conclusion. They arise from Origen's interpretation of 1 Cor. iii. 13-15; and they imply a belief, not in a purgatory between death and resurrection, but in a fiery ordeal through which all must pass at the day of judgment, which will consume the wicked, but purify the just.

We come now to St. Augustine. His name is deservedly had in honour, and his opinions have borne peculiar weight. He too, like Origen and Ambrose, speaks of the fire of judgment, which is to try men's works.¹ But he goes further still. In commenting on the passage of St. Paul, so often referred to, (1 Cor. iii. 11-15,) he says, that if men have the true foundation, even Jesus Christ, though they may not be pure from all carnal affections and infirmities, these shall be purged away from them by the fire of tribulation, by the loss of things we love, by persecution, and in the end of the world by the afflictions which antichrist should bring; in short, by the troubles of this life. But then he adds; that some have supposed that after death some further purging by fire was awaiting them who were not fully purified here, and he says, "I will not argue against it; for perhaps it is true."² He does not set it forth as an article of faith. He does not speak of it as a doctrine of the Church. He does not propound it as an acknowledged truth. He does not lay it down as a settled opinion. He merely alleges it as a probable conjecture. He holds it to be uncertain, whether all tribulation is to be borne here, or some hereafter; or whether some hereafter instead of some here. But he thinks perhaps some such opinion is true. He says at least, it is not incredible.³ The very mode in which he sets forth his doubts and queries shows that no certain ground could be taken upon the subject, as deduced from undoubted language of Scripture, or primitive teaching of the Church. In fact, he acknowledges the

Mortuis, Tom. III. p. 634, Paris, 1638. τοῦ καθάρσιου πυρός τὸν ἐμμιχθέντα τῇ ψυχῇ ῥήπον ἀποκαθαρῶντος. — *Ibid.* p. 635. See *Laud against Fisher*, § 38.

¹ *De Civitate Dei*, xvi. 24, xx. 25, Tom. VII. pp. 437, 609.

² "Post istius sane corporis mortem, donec ad illum veniatur, qui post resurrectionem corporum futurus est damnationis ultimus dies, si hoc temporis intervallo spiritus defunctorum ejusmodi ignem dicuntur perpeti, quem non sentiant illi qui non habuerunt tales mores et amores in hujus corporis vita, ut eorum iigna, fenum, stipula consumatur; alii vero sentiant qui ejusmodi secum ædificia

portaverunt, sive ibi tantum, sive ideo hic ut non ibi, sæcularia, quamvis a damnatione venialia concremantem ignem transitorie tribulationis inveniunt, non redarguo, quia forsitan verum est." — *De Civitate Dei*, xxi. 26, Tom. VII. p. 649.

³ "Tale aliquid etiam post hanc vitam fieri, incredibile non est, et utrum ita sit queri potest, et aut inveniri aut latere, nonnullos fideles per ignem quandam purgatorium quanto magis minusve bona pereuntia dilexerunt, tanto tardius citiusque salvari." — *Enchiridion ad Laurent.* cap. 69, Tom. VI. p. 222. See also *De Fide et Operibus*, cap. 16, Tom. VI. p. 180.

great difficulty of the passage in St. Paul, simply speaks of the purgatorial view as having been suggested, and thinks it not impossible or improbable. In this form of it, it was in fact an evident novelty in the days of St. Augustine.¹

A century and a half later, Pope Gregory I. laid it down distinctly, that "there is a purgatorial fire before the judgment for lighter faults."² From this time a belief in purgatory rapidly gained ground in the Western Church. Visions and apparitions of the dead were appealed to, as witnesses for the existence of a state of purgation for those souls who were detained in prison waiting for the judgment.³ Thomas Aquinas and other schoolmen discussed the subject with their usual ingenuity, and more fully explained the situation of purgatory, its pains, and their intensity. But the Greek Church, divided from the Latin on other points, was never agreed with it on this.

In the year 1431 met the synod of Basle, which promised much reformation, and effected none. Thither a deputation had come from the Emperor of Constantinople; and by it a hope was excited that the breach between the two long-divided branches of the Church might now be healed. Eugenius IV. Bishop of Rome, who at first endeavoured in 1437 to translate the Council of Basle to Ferrara, now strove to remove it to Florence (A. D. 1439). Only four of the Bishops left Basle at his command, the rest continuing their sitting there till 1443, forming a council acknowledged as œcumenical by great part of Europe, though opposed to the pope. However, several Italian bishops met at Florence, and were joined by the Greek emperor and some bishops from the East. In this synod the Greek deputies were induced to acknowledge, that the Bishop of Rome was the primate and head of the Church, that the Holy Spirit proceedeth from the Father and the Son, and *that there is a purgatory*. These decrees were signed by about sixty-two Latin bishops, by John Palæologus the emperor, and by eighteen Eastern bishops. On their return to Constantinople the Greek prelates were received with the greatest indignation by those

¹ We must by no means imagine that the fathers uniformly interpreted this passage of the Corinthians either of a purgatorial fire at judgment, or before the judgment. For example, St. Chrysostom distinctly expounds it of a probatory, not a purgatory fire; and understands that those who suffer loss are those who are damned eternally, and that their "being saved yet so as by fire" means that they shall be preserved from annihila-

tion, not from suffering by the fire. — See *Hom. ix. in 1 Corinth.*

² "De quibusdam levibus culpis esse ante iudicium purgatorius ignis credendus est." — Gregor. *Dial. Lib. iv. cap. 39.* Also *In Psalm. iii. Pœnitent. in princip.* Usher, *Answer to a Jesuit*, ch. vi.; *Laud against Fisher*, § 38.

³ See Jer. Taylor, *Dissursive from Poetry*, pt. i. ch. i. § 4, Vol. x. p. 150, *Works* London, 1822.

whom they might be supposed to represent. The decrees of Florence were utterly and most summarily rejected in the East, the synod was altogether repudiated, and has never since been recognized. The patriarchs of Antioch, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, who were represented by deputies in the council, joined in the protest against it. To this day the Eastern Church has never acknowledged it, nor does it accept any of its decrees, whether concerning the Procession, the Pope, or Purgatory.¹

The Council of Trent, A. D. 1563, professing to be "taught by the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures, and tradition of the fathers," decreed, that there is a purgatory, and that souls there detained are aided by the sacrifice of the altar. It, however, forbade the people to be troubled with any of the more subtle questions on the subject.²

The divines of the Church of Rome have not been so careful as the council to avoid entering into minute discussion. Bellarmine has a whole book on the circumstances of purgatory. In this, he first discusses for whom purgatory is reserved. Then he argues that souls there detained can neither merit nor sin; then, that they are sure of salvation. Then he resolves the question, Where is purgatory? Next he discusses, whether souls pass straight from purgatory to Heaven, or whether there be a Paradise besides. He discusses how long purgatory lasts, of what nature is its punishment, whether its fire is corporeal, (which he solves in the affirmative,) whether demons torment the souls there, (which he leaves in doubt). And lastly, he teaches how prayers aid the souls in purgatory, and what kind of prayers they should be.³

2. Pardons or Indulgences.

These, in the sense intended by this Article and taught by the Church of Rome, sprang out of the doctrine of Purgatory.

In the Primitive Church, when Christians had lapsed in persecution, or otherwise incurred the censure of the Church, it was not uncommon for the bishops to relax the penances which had been enjoined on them, either when there was danger of death, or at the intercession of the martyrs or confessors in prison, or from some other worthy cause.⁴ Very early, the custom of martyrs interceding appears to have been abused; and the high esteem in which martyrdom was held, led to the precipitate reception of their prayers

¹ *Concil. Tom. XIII.*; Fleury, *LIV.*; Gibbon, *ch. LXVI. LXVII.*; Usher, *as above*; Palmer, *On the Church* pt. *IV. ch. XI. § 5.*

² *Sess. XXV. Decretum de Purgatorio.*

³ Bellarmine, *De Purgatorio, Lib. II.*

⁴ Tertullian *Ad Martyres, c. I.*; Cyprian *Ep. 15 ad Martyres*; Euseb. *H. E. v. 2.*

for offenders, to the interruption of the right discipline of the Church.¹

The Council of Ancyra, and, soon after, the Council of Nice, gave bishops express authority to restore offenders to communion, and to shorten the term of their penitential probation, on consideration of past good conduct or present tokens of true repentance.² This was reasonable enough. But all good is liable to abuse. In process of time, liberal almsgiving was accepted in lieu, or at least in mitigation of penance: the beginning of which custom is charged, though probably without justice, on our own Archbishop Theodore.³ Here was a loop-hole for all evil to creep in. The subsequent sale of indulgences easily rose out of the permission to substitute charity to the poor or to the Church for mortification and humiliation before God.

But the obtaining of such exemptions is a wholly different thing from the modern doctrine of the Roman Church concerning indulgences. Indulgences indeed now are said to be exemptions from the *temporal punishment of sins*. But in the term *temporal punishment* are included not only Church-censures, but the pains of purgatory; and it is held, that the Bishop of Rome has a store or treasure of the merits of Christ and of the saints, which, for sufficient reasons, he can dispense, either by himself or his agents, to mitigate or shorten the sufferings of penitents, whether in this world or the world to come; ⁴ this power not, of course, extending to the torments of hell, which are not among the *temporal* punishments of sin. Some of the Roman Catholic divines acknowledge that no mention of such indulgences is to be found in Scripture or in the fathers. Many of the schoolmen confess that their use began in the time of Pope Alexander III., at the end of the twelfth century. Indeed, before this time, it is hardly possible to discover any traces of them. The first jubilee, or year of general indulgence, is said to have been kept in the pontificate of Boniface VIII., 1300 years after Christ. And the famous bull, *Unigenitus*, was issued by Pope Clement VI. fifty years after the first jubilee,

¹ See Tertullian, *De Pudicit.* c. 22.

² Concil. Ancyran. Can. v.; Concil. Nicæn. 1. Can. xii.; Marshall's *Penitential Discipline*, ch. iii. § 2.

³ Theodore became Archbishop of Canterbury, A. D. 670. The custom of purchasing exemption of penance by almsgiving can be proved to be of greater antiquity than this. See Marshall, as above.

⁴ "Recte Clemens VI. Pont. in Constitutione, Extravagantis, quæ incipit

Unigenitus . . . declaravit, extare in Eccl. thesaurum spiritualem ex passionibus Christi et sanctorum conflatum." — Bellarmin. *De Indulgentiis*, Lib. 1. cap. 2.

"Restat igitur ut passiones sanctorum, si ullo modo dispensari debeant, extra sacramentum solum, idque per solutionem solius reatus pœnæ temporalis dispensari debeant." — *Ibid.* cap. 3.

See also cap. 10, where Indulgences are shown to apply either to penance in this life or purgatorial pains in the next.

A. D. 1350.¹ It was not without discussion and opposition that this custom grew and prevailed.² It reached its greatest height of corruption in the Pontificate of Leo X., when Tetzl, the agent of that pope, openly selling indulgences in Germany, roused the spirit of Luther, and so hastened the Reformation. This led to more formal discussion and consideration of the grounds of it. The Council of Trent decreed, that "the treasures of the Church should not be made use of for gain, but for godliness."³ It declared, that "the power of granting indulgences was given by Christ to His Church," that, according to ancient usage, "it is to be retained in the Church;" and it anathematizes those "who assert that indulgences are useless, or that the Church cannot grant them." Yet it enjoins moderation in their use, lest "by too great facility in granting them ecclesiastical discipline be enervated;" and forbids all abuses, whereby profit has been sought by them, and through which scandal has arisen from heretics.⁴

II. 1. "Worshipping and adoration as well of images as of relics."

We have strong testimony from the earliest times against anything like image-worship, or the use of images or pictures, for the exciting of devotion. Irenæus speaks of it as one of the errors of some of the Gnostics, that they had images and pictures, which they crowned and honoured, as the Gentiles do, professing that the form of Christ, as He was in the flesh, was made by Pilate.⁵ Clement of Alexandria repeatedly speaks of the impropriety of making an image of God, the best image of whom is man created after His likeness.⁶ Origen quotes Celsus as saying that Christians could not "bear temples, altars, and images;" and proceeds to justify the forbidding of statues and images, showing that Christians rejected them on a higher principle than the Scythians and nomad tribes of Libya.⁷ He contends, that it is folly to make images of God, whose best image are those virtues and graces which the Word forms within us, and by which we imitate Him,

¹ Jer. Taylor, *Dissuasive from Popery*, ch. i. § 8, Vol. x. p. 138; Bellarmin. *De Indulgentiis*, Lib. i. cap. 2.

² See Bp. Taylor, as above, who refers to Franciscus de Mayronis and Durandus as having disputed against it. See also Bellarmine, as above.

³ Sess. XXI. cap. IX.

⁴ Sess. XXV. *Decretum de Indulgentiis*.

⁵ Iren. *Adv. Hæc.* i. 24, *ad finem*. Comp. Epiphani. *Hæres.* XXVII. n. 6, who charges

the Carpocratians with worshipping images of Christ, together with those of the philosophers, as the Gentiles do. So Augustine (*Hæres.* VII.) accuses them, of worshipping images of our Lord, of St. Paul, Homer, and Plato.

⁶ *Strom.* Lib. v. 5, Tom. II. p. 662, Lib. VI. 18, Tom. II. p. 825, Lib. VII. 5, Tom. II. p. 845, &c.

⁷ *Cont. Cels.* Lib. VII. 62, *seq.*

the "First-born of every creature," in whom, of all things, is the highest and noblest image of the Father.¹ So Minucius Felix asks "What should I form as an image of God, when, if you think rightly, man is himself God's image?"² Exactly in like manner argues Lactantius: "That is not God's image which is made with man's fingers, with stone or brass: but man himself, who thinks and moves and acts;" and he says, "it is superfluous to make images of gods, as if they were absent, when we believe them to be present."³ Athanasius as plainly condemns the adoration of images, whether in their use the Supreme Being be to be worshipped, or only angels and inferior intelligences.⁴

The Romanist divines lay great stress on the early mention of the use of the sign of the cross and of emblematical figures. But, how far either of these are from resemblance to the later use of images, it is impossible that any one can be unmindful. Symbols of the faith were unquestionably very early adopted, perhaps from the very first; and have been retained, not only in the Anglican, but in the Lutheran and other reformed communions.

Tertullian speaks of the symbol, on a chalice, of the Good Shepherd carrying the lost sheep on his shoulders.⁵ This was not even a figure of our Saviour, but merely an emblem of Him; and this is the only instance ever mentioned by writers of the first three centuries. The sign of the cross, we learn from the same father, was constantly made by the first Christians on their foreheads, at their going out and coming in, at meals, at bathing, at lying down and rising up; and all this, he says, had been handed down by ancient custom and tradition.⁶ But though they thus used the sign of the Cross, to remind them of Him who was crucified, it was not to worship it. "We neither worship crosses, nor wish for them," says Minucius Felix;⁷ for the heathens had charged upon Christians that they paid respect to that instrument of punishment which they deserved.⁸ But the cross was esteemed emblematical of the doctrine of the Cross, and a badge to distinguish Christian from heathen men. If ever the early Christians were likely to have worshipped the cross, it was when the Empress Helena, mother to Constantine the Great, found, or thought she found the true cross on which our Lord was crucified. But how little was this the case, we learn from the words of St. Ambrose.

¹ *Cont. Cels. Lib. vii. 18.*

² *Minuc. Felic. Octavius, p. 313. Lugd. Batav. 1672.*

³ *Instit. ii. 2.*

⁴ *Orat. cont. Gentes. Tom. i. p. 22, Col. 1686.*

⁵ *De Pudicit. c. 7.*

⁶ *De Corona M. c. 8.*

⁷ *Octav. p. 284.*

⁸ *Ibid. p. 86; Tertull. Apol. c. 16.*

He tells us that Helena found the nails with which our Lord was crucified, and placed one in the crown worn by Constantine. "Wise Helena," he says, "who exalted the cross on the head of kings, that Christ's cross might be adored in kings."¹ But then he remarks that Helena worshipped that great King who was crucified, "not the wood on which He was crucified; that would be a heathenish error, a vanity of impious men; but she worshipped Him who hung upon the cross."² In vain therefore is the ancient use of the cross, or even the respect paid to the figure of it, alleged as a proof of the antiquity of image-worship. Indeed, it has not been the cross, but the Crucifix, the figure of the crucified Saviour, which has tempted to an idolatrous worship of it.

We have seen that it was charged against the Gnostics as an error, that they had an image of our Saviour, and paid it honour as the heathen do. Eusebius tells us that the people of Paneas had a statue, said to have been erected by the woman who was healed of an issue of blood, and supposed to be a likeness of our blessed Saviour. Eusebius remarks on it, that it is no great wonder if the heathen who were healed by our Saviour should have done such things as this, when pictures of St. Peter, and St. Paul, and of Christ Himself, were said to be preserved; all this being after the heathen manner of honouring deliverers.³ It is true, Sozomen tells us, that, when Julian had removed this statue, and the heathen had insulted it and broken it in pieces out of hatred to Christ, the Christians gathered up the fragments and laid them up in the Church.⁴ But it follows not, because the Christians of his day did not wish to see a statue which was esteemed a likeness of our Saviour treated with contempt, that they therefore intended to adore it. They did not set it up in the Church to worship, but simply brought in the fragments there, that they might not be insulted.

It is not improbable that, about the beginning of the fourth century, there was some inclination to bring pictures into churches; for at the Council of Eliberis in Spain, A. D. 305, one of the canons ordered, that "no picture should be in the church, lest that, which is worshipped or adored, be painted on the walls."⁵ At the latter

¹ "Sapiens Helena, quæ crucem in capite regum levavit, ut crux Christi in regibus adoretur." — Ambros. *De Obitu Theodosii, juxta finem.*

² "Habeat Helena quæ legat (h. e. titulum in cruce a Pilato inscriptum) unde crucem Domini recognoscat. Invenit ergo titulum, Regem adoravit, non lignum utique, quia hic gentilis est error,

et vanitas impiorum, sed adoravit Illum qui pendit in ligno," &c. — *Ibid.*

³ ὡς εἰκὸς τῶν παλαιῶν ἀπαραφυλάκτως οἷα σωτήριος ἐθνικῆ συνηθεία παρ' ἑαυτοῖς τοῦτον τιμᾶν εἰωθῶτων τὸν τρόπον. — *H. E.* VII. 18.

⁴ Sozomen. v. 21.

⁵ Concil. Eliber. can. 36: "Placuit picturas in ecclesia esse non debere, ne

end of the fourth century, we are told that Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, to keep the country-people quiet, when they met to celebrate the festival of the dedication of the church of St. Felix, ordered the church to be painted with portraits of martyrs and Scripture history, such as Esther, Job, Tobit, &c.¹

Nearly at the same time, or a little earlier, Epiphanius, going through Anablatha, a village in Palestine, "found there a veil hanging before the door of a church, whereon was painted an image of Christ, or some saint—he did not remember which. When he saw in the church of Christ an image of a man, contrary to the authority of Scripture, he rent it, and advised that it should be made a winding-sheet for some poor man."² Here we have the strong testimony of a bishop and eminent father of the Church, not only against image-worship, but even against the use of pictures in the house of God.

At the end of the fourth century again, St. Augustine says that he knew of many who were worshippers of tombs and pictures, and who practised other superstitious rites. But he says, the Church condemns all such, and strives to correct them as evil children.³ He himself declares, that it is impiety to erect a statue to God in the Church.⁴ He contends against the argument of the heathens, that they only used the image to remind them of the being they worshipped, saying that the visible image naturally arrested the attention more than the invisible deity; and hence the use of such an outward symbol of devotion is calculated to lead to a real worship of the idol itself, even of the gold and silver, the work of men's hands. And then he answers the objection, that Christians in the administration of the Sacraments had vessels made of gold and silver, the work of men's hands. "But," he asks, "have they a mouth, and speak not? have they eyes, and see not? or do we worship them, because in their use we worship God? That is the chief cause of the mad impiety, that a form like life has so much power on the feelings of the wretched beings as to make it-

quod colitur aut adoratur, in parietibus depingatur." — See Jer. Taylor, *Dissuasive*, pt. I. ch. I. § 8; Bingham, *E. A.* Bk. VIII. ch. VIII. § 6.

¹ Paulin. *Natal.* 9, *Felicis*; Bingham, Bk. VIII. ch. VIII. § 7.

² Epiphanius. *Epist. ad Johan. Hierosol.* translated by St. Jerome. *Ep.* 60: Belarmino (*De Imagin.* Lib. II. c. 9) argues that the passage is an interpolation. But it is in all the MSS., and its genuineness is admitted by Petavius (*De Incarnatione*

Lib. xv. c. 14, 4, 8). See Bingham, as above.

³ "Novi multos esse sepulcrorum et picturarum adoratores, &c. . . . quos et ipsa (Ecclesia) condemnat, et quotidie tanquam malos filios corrigere studet." — *De Moribus Ecclesie*, I. c. 34, §§ 74, 75, Tom. I. p. 713.

⁴ *De Fide et Symbolo*, c. VII. Tom. VI. p. 157; Comp. *De Consensu Evangelist.* I. 16, Tom. III. pt. II. p. 11.

self to be worshipped, instead of its being manifest that it is not living, and so ought to be contemned,"¹ &c.

From all this it is manifest, that in the fourth century, among ignorant Christians, a tendency to pay reverence to pictures or images was beginning to appear in some parts of the Church; the Church herself and her bishops and divines strongly opposing and earnestly protesting against it. Towards the close of this century, and afterwards, we hear of pictures (not statues) introduced into churches. Yet these pictures were not pictures of our Lord and His saints, but rather historical pictures of Scripture subjects, such as the sacrifice of Isaac, or of martyrdoms, or, as we saw from Paulinus, of Job and Esther, and other famous characters of old. About the same time, pictures of living kings and bishops were admitted into the church, and set up with those of martyrs and Scripture histories. But as with the dead, so neither with the living, was worship either probable or designed.² However, danger of this kind soon arose. By degrees not pictures only, but statues were brought in. And in the sixth century, we find that Serenus, Bishop of Marseilles, ordered all the images in the churches of his diocese to be defaced and broken; whereupon Gregory the Great writes to him, to say that he approved of his forbidding images to be worshipped, but that he blamed him for breaking them, as they were innocent of themselves, and useful for the instruction of the vulgar.³

In the eighth century arose the famous Iconoclastic controversy of Constantinople. Philippicus Bardanes, the emperor, with the consent of John, patriarch of Constantinople, began by pulling down pictures from the churches, and forbade them at Rome as well as in Greece. Constantius, Bishop of Rome, opposed him, and ordered pictures of the first six councils to be placed in the porch of St. Peter's. The controversy, thus kindled, raged during the reigns of several subsequent emperors, especially of Leo the Isaurian, and his son Constantine Copronymus, who were zealous Iconoclasts, and the Empress Irene, as zealous for the opposite party, who were called Iconoduli. In the reign of Constantine Copronymus, a council was summoned at Constantinople, A. D. 754, called by the Greeks the Seventh General Council, but rejected by the Latins, which condemned the worship and all use of images. In

¹ In *Psalm*. cxiii.; Serm. 11. §§ 4, 5, 6.

² See Bingham, *E. A.* Bk. viii. ch. viii. §§ 9, 11.

³ "Quia sanctorum imagines adorari

vetuisses, omnino laudavimus: fregisse vero reprehendimus," &c. — Gregor. Lib. IX. Ep. 9; Bingham, as above; Jer. Taylor, as above.

the reign of Irene, A. D. 784, the second Council of Nice was summoned by that empress, which reversed the decrees of the Council of Constantinople, and ordained that images should be set up, that salutation and respectful honour should be paid them, and incense should be offered; but not the worship of *Latria*, which is due to God alone.¹ The decrees of this synod were sent by Pope Adrian into France, to Charlemagne, to be confirmed by the bishops of his kingdom; Charlemagne having also received them direct from Greece. The Gallican bishops, having thus a copy of the decrees, composed a reply to them, not objecting to images, if used for historical remembrance and ornament to walls, but absolutely condemning any worship or adoration of them.² This work (the *Libri Carolini*) was published by the authority of Charlemagne and the consent of his bishops, A. D. 790.³ Charlemagne also consulted the British bishops, A. D. 792, who, abhorring the worship of images, authorized Albinus to convey to Charlemagne, in their name, a refutation of the decrees of the second Council of Nice. In 794, Charlemagne assembled a synod at Frankfort, composed of 300 bishops from France, Germany, and Italy, who formally rejected the Synod of Nice, and declared that it was not to be esteemed the seventh general council.⁴ It has been shown, indeed, that the Synod of Nice was not received in the Western Church for five centuries and a half; and it was very long before there was any real recognition of image-worship in the West, except in those Churches immediately influenced by Rome.⁵

In 869, the Emperor Basil assembled another council at Constantinople, attended by about one hundred Eastern bishops and the legates of Pope Adrian. This confirmed the worship of images, and is esteemed by Romanists as the eighth general council. Yet it is wholly rejected by the Eastern Church, and was evidently for a long time not acknowledged in the West.⁶ It was rejected by

¹ In the virth Session a profession of faith was read and signed by the legates and bishops, deciding that images of Christ, the Virgin, and the saints, should be exposed to view and honoured, but not worshipped with *Latria*; but that lights should be burned before them and incense offered to them, as the honour so bestowed upon the image is transferred to the original.

² "Dum nos nihil in imaginibus spernamus nisi adorationem . . . non ad adorandum, sed ad memoriam rerum gestarum et venustatem parietum habere permitimus. — *Lib. Carol.* Lib. 111. c. 16.

³ The Caroline books are still extant. The Preface may be seen in Mr. Harvey's learned and useful work, *Ecclesiae Anglicanae Vindex Catholicus*.

⁴ See Dupin, *Eccl. Hist.* Cent. VIII.; Mosheim, *Eccl. Hist.* Cent. VIII. pt. 2, ch. 3; Usher, *Answer to a Jesuit*, ch. x.; Bp. Bull, *Corruption of Church of Rome, Works*, 11. p. 275, &c.; Palmer, *On the Church*, part IV. ch. x. § 4.

⁵ Palmer, as above.

⁶ Palmer, *On the Church*, pt. IV. ch. x § 5.

the next Council of Constantinople, held A. D. 879, which itself also is rejected by the Western Church.

The Council of Trent, which is supposed to fix the doctrines of the Roman Church, enjoins that "Images of Christ, the Virgo Deipara, and the saints, shall be retained in churches, and due honour and veneration given to them, not because any divinity or virtue is believed to be in them, for which they are to be worshipped, nor because anything is to be sought from them, or faith reposed in them, as by the Gentiles, who placed their hope in images; but because the honour which is paid to them is referred to their prototypes; so that by means of the images, which we kiss and bow down before, we adore Christ and reverence the saints, whose likeness they bear."¹

2. The worshipping of relics is so much connected with the adoration of images and invocation of saints, that we may pass it over the more briefly.

No doubt, there was an early inclination to pay much respect to the remains of martyrs. We know from all antiquity, that the custom prevailed of meeting at their tombs and celebrating the days of their martyrdom. We find that the Smyrnæan Christians were disappointed at not being allowed the body of Polycarp, as many desired to be able to take it away. Yet they indignantly repudiated the notion that they could worship it.² The importance attached to the finding of the true cross by St. Helena is an example of a similar feeling. As the bones of Elisha restored a dead man to life, so the ancients early believed that miraculous powers were often conferred on the dead bodies of the martyrs. Such Gregory Nazianzen attributes to the ashes of St. Cyprian, and speaks of his body as a benefit to the community.³ A little later, Vigilantius, a Gaul by birth, but a presbyter of the church of Spain, declaimed against the veneration which men had in his time learned to pay to the tombs and relics of the martyrs. It is probable, that he charged his fellow Christians with practices of which they were not guilty; yet it is not unlikely, that in the more rude and ignorant neighbourhoods, that, which was at first but natural respect, was even then approaching to mischievous superstition. St. Jerome wrote fiercely against him, most distinctly and vehemently repelling the charge that Christians worshipped the relics of the saints. "Not only," he says, "do we not worship relics, but not the sun, the moon, angels nor archangels, cherubim nor seraphim, nor any

¹ Sess. xxv. *De Invocatione, &c. Sancto-
rum et Sacris Imaginibus.*

² *Martyr. Polycarpi*, c. 17.

³ *Orat. xviii.* Tom. i. pp. 284, 285.

name that is named in this world or in the world to come ; lest we should serve the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. We honour the relics of the martyrs, that we may worship Him whose martyrs they are. We honour the servants, that their honour may redound to their Lord's." ¹ His contemporary, St. Augustine, seems to have been more alive than St. Jerome to the growing evil. He graphically describes and complains of the custom, then beginning, of people wandering about and selling relics, or what they said to be relics, of those who had suffered martyrdom. ²

Still it has been proved, that, in the early ages, the Church never permitted anything like religious worship to be offered to the relics of the saints. ³ The respect paid to them sprang from that natural instinct of humanity, which prompts us to cherish the mortal remains, and all else that is left to us, of those we have loved and honoured whilst in life ; and the belief of the sacredness and future resurrection of the bodies of Christians, joined with the wish to protect them from the insults of their heathen persecutors, added intensity to this feeling. With the progress of image-worship and of the invocation of the saints, grew (and perhaps still more rapidly) the undue esteem of relics, to which sanctity seemed to belong : until at length the relics of saints were formally installed amongst the objects of worship, and set up with images for the veneration of the faithful. ⁴

3. The Invocation of Saints.

For this practice no early authority can be pleaded, but against it the strongest testimony of the primitive Christians exists. They assert continually, that we should worship none but God. Thus Justin Martyr : " It becomes Christians to worship God only." ⁵ Tertullian : " For the safety of the Emperor we invoke God, eternal, true, and living God . . . Nor can I pray to any other than to Him, from whom I am sure that I may obtain, because He alone can give it." ⁶ Origen : " To worship any one besides the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is the sin of impiety." ⁷ Lactantius

¹ Hieronym. *Epist.* 37, *ad Riparium*. Tom. iv. part II. p. 279.

² "Alii membra martyrum, si tamen martyrum, venditant."—*De Op. Monach.* c. 28, Tom. vi. p. 498.

³ See on this subject Bingham, *E. A. Bk.* xxiii. cap. iv. §§ 8, 9 ; also (referred to by him) Dallæus *De Objecto cultus Religiosi*, Lib. iv.

⁴ See *Concil. Trident.* Sess. xxv. ; Bellarmin. *De Reliquiis Sanctorum*, Lib. iv. &c.

⁵ τὸν Θεὸν μόνον δεῖ προσκυνεῖν. — *Apol.* 1. p. 63.

⁶ "Nos pro salute imperatorum Deum invocamus æternum, Deum verum, Deum vivum . . . Hæc ab alio orare non possum, quam a quo me scio consecutum, quoniam et ipse qui solus præstat." — *Apol.* c. 30.

⁷ "Adorare quem iam præter Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum impietatis est crimen." — *Comment. in Epist. ad Roman.* Lib. i. n. 16. Comp. *In Jesum*

complains of the extreme blindness of men (*i. e.* heathens), who could worship dead men.¹ And Athanasius argues from St. Paul's language (1 Thess. iii. 11), that the Son must be God, and not an angel or any other creature, since He is invoked in conjunction with His Father.²

In the circular Epistle of the Church of Smyrna, narrating the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, which took place about A. D. 147, it is said, that the Jews prevented the giving of the body to the Christians for burial, "lest forsaking Him who was crucified, they should begin to worship this Polycarp;" "not considering," writes the Church of Smyrna, "that neither is it possible for us to forsake Christ, who suffered for the salvation of all who are saved in the whole world, the spotless One for sinners, nor to worship any other."³

No doubt, the early Christians, believing in "the communion of saints," had a lively conviction that saints departed were still fellow-worshippers with the Church militant, and thought that those in Paradise still prayed for those on earth.⁴ But it does not therefore follow, that they considered that those who joined with us in prayer, ought to be themselves addressed in prayer. On the contrary, we have express evidence that those who believed the saints at rest to pray for the saints in trial, believed that they did so without being invoked. So Origen, "When men, purposing to themselves things which are excellent, pray to God, thousands of the sacred powers join with them in prayer, though not themselves called on or invoked."⁵ Nay! he is here specially arguing against Celsus, who would have had men invoke others of inferior power, after the God who is over all; and he contends that, as the shadow follows the body, so if we can move God by our prayers, we shall be sure to have all the angels and souls of the righteous on our side, and that therefore we must endeavour to please God alone.⁶ In the same book he repeatedly denies that it is permitted us to worship

Nave, Hom. vi. 3: "Non enim adorasset, nisi agnovisset Deum."

¹ "Homines autem ipsos ad tantam cæcitate esse deductos, ut vero ac vivo Deo mortuos præferant."—*Instit.* ii. c. 1.

² ἢν δὲ ἡ τοιαύτη δόσις δέικνυσι τὴν ἐνόητα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ οὐκ ἂν γούν εὐξαιτο τις λαβεῖν παρὰ τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τῶν Ἀγγέλων ἢ παρὰ τινος τῶν ἄλλων κτισμάτων, οὐδ' ἂν εἶποι τις, δὴ σοι ὁ Θεὸς καὶ Ἀγγελος.—*Contra Arian.* Orat. iv.

³ οὐδὲ ἑτερόν τινα σέβεσθαι.—*S. Polycarpi Martyrium*, c. 17; Coteler. Tom. ii. p. 200.

⁴ *e. g.* Origen writes: "Ego sic arbitrator, quod omnes illi, qui dormierunt ante nos, patres pugnent nobiscum, et adjuvent nos orationibus suis. Ita namque etiam quendam de senioribus magistris audivi dicentem," &c.—*In Jesum Nave*, Hom. xvi. 5.

⁵ ὥστε τολμῶν ἡμῶς λέγειν, ὅτι ἀνθρώποι μετὰ προαυρέσεως προτιθεμένοι τὰ κρείττονα, εὐχομένοι τῷ Θεῷ, μῦραι ὄσαι ἄκλητοι συνειχονται δυνάμεις ἱερῶν.—*Cont. Celsum*, Lib. viii. c. 64.

⁶ *Cont. Cels.* Lib. viii. c. 64.

angels, who are ministering spirits, our duty being to worship God alone.¹ And whereas Celsus had said, that angels (*δαίμονες*) belonged to God, and should be revered, Origen says, “Far from us be the counsels of Celsus, that we should worship them. We must pray to God alone who is over all, and to the only-begotten Son, the first-born of every creature, and from Him must ask, that, when our prayers have reached Him, He, as High Priest, would offer them to His God and our God, to His Father, and the Father of all who live according to His word.”²

St. Athanasius observes, that St. Peter forbade Cornelius to worship him (Acts x. 26), and the angel forbade St. John, when he would have worshipped him (Rev. xxii. 9). “Wherefore,” he adds, “it belongs to God only to be worshipped, and of this the angels are not ignorant, who, though they excel in glory, are yet all of them creatures, and are not in the number of those to be adored, but of those who adore the Lord.”³

In like manner the Council of Laodicea, held probably about A. D. 364,⁴ forbids Christians to attend conventicles where angels were invoked, and pronounces anathema on all such as were guilty of this secret idolatry, inasmuch as they might be esteemed to have left the Lord Jesus, and given themselves to idolatry.⁵ Theodoret tells us, that the reason why this canon was passed at Laodicea was because in Phrygia and Pisidia men had learned to pray to angels; and even to his own day, he says, there were oratories of St. Michael among them.⁶

We hear of another early example of an heretical tendency to creature-worship, which seems almost providentially to have been permitted, in order that there might be an early testimony borne against it. Epiphanius tells us that, whereas some had treated the Virgin Mary with contempt, others were led to the other extreme of error, so that women offered cakes before her, and exalted her to the dignity of one to be worshipped.⁷ This, he says, was a doctrine invented by demons. “No doubt the body of Mary was holy; but she was not a God.” Again, “The Virgin was a vir-

¹ *Cont. Cels.* viii. num. 35, 57.

² *Ibid.* num. 26. See the like argument, *Cont. Cels.* v. num. 4.

³ Athanas. *Cont. Arian.* Orat. iii. Tom. i. p. 394.

⁴ The date is uncertain, some placing it as early as A. D. 314, others as late as A. D. 372.

⁵ *Concil. Laodic.* Can. xxxv.

⁶ *Ἐπιφάνιος* οὐ δεῖ χριστιανούς ἐγκαταλείπειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ ἀπίεσαι καὶ ἀγγέλους

δομάζειν καὶ συνάξεις ποιεῖν ἅπερ ἀπηγόρευται. εἰ τις οὖν εὐρεθῆ ταύτη τῇ κεκοιμημένῃ εἰδωλολατρεία σχολιάζων, ἔστω ἀνάθεμα, ὅτι ἐγκατέλιπε τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν, τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ εἰδωλολατρεῖα προσήλθεν.

⁷ Theodoret, *In Coloss.* ii. and iii.; Usher, *Answer to a Jesuit*, ch. ix.; Suicer, s. v. ἀγγελος.

⁸ *Hæres.* 79.

gin, and to be honoured; yet not given us to be worshipped, but herself worshipper of Him who was born of her after the flesh, and who came down from Heaven and from the bosom of His Father." He then continues, that "the words 'Woman, what have I to do with thee?' were spoken on purpose that we might know her to be a woman, and not esteem her as something of a more excellent nature, and because our Lord foresaw the heresies likely to arise." Again he says, "Neither Elias, though he never died, nor Thecla, nor any of the saints, is to be worshipped."¹ If the Apostles "will not allow the angels to be worshipped, how much less the daughter of Anna," *i. e.* the blessed Virgin. "Let Mary be honoured, but let the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be worshipped. Let no man worship Mary."² "Therefore though Mary be most excellent, holy, and honoured, yet is it not that she should be adored."³

Thus early did the worship of the Virgin show itself, and thus earnestly did the Christian fathers protest against it.⁴

Gregory Nazianzen flourished nearly at the same time with Epiphanius, towards the end of the fourth century. Archbishop Usher says, that his writings are the first in which we meet with anything like an address to the spirits of the dead.⁵ It is worth while to see how this is. First, then, let us premise, that he expressly declares all worship of a creature to be idolatry. He positively charges the Arians with idolatry, because they, not believing the Son of God to be fully equal and of one substance with the Father, yet offered prayers to Him.⁶ It is plain, therefore, that any address made by him to the departed could not be intended to be of the nature of that inferior worship, which the Arians offered to the Son, believing Him only the chief of the creatures of God. Yet it is clear that he believed, though not with certainty, that departed saints took an interest in all that passed among their friends and brethren on earth.⁷ He had even a pious persuasion that they still continued as much as ever to aid with their prayers those for whom they had been wont to pray on earth.⁸ And he ventures to think, if it be not too bold to say so, (*εἰ μὴ τολμηρὸν τοῦτο εἰπεῖν,*)

¹ οὔτε τις τῶν ἁγίων προσκυνεῖται.

² ἐν τῇ ἔστω Μαρία, ὁ δὲ Πατήρ, καὶ Υἱὸς καὶ ἅγιον Πνεῦμα προσκυνέσθω, τὴν Μορίαν μηδεὶς προσκυνεῖτω.

³ καὶ εἰ καλλίστη ἡ Μαρία καὶ ἅγια καὶ τετιμημένη, ἄλλ' οὐκ εἰς τὸ προσκυνεῖσθαι.

⁴ Bellarmine quotes a passage from Athanasius (*De Deipara Virgine, ad finem*) which would, if genuine, prove that St. Athanasius sanctions the worship of the

Virgin; but the tract is known to be spurious, and was evidently written after the rise of the Monothelite heresy.

⁵ Usher, *Answer to a Jesuit*, ch. ix.

⁶ Greg. Nazianz. *Orat.* xl. Tom. i. p. 669.

⁷ καὶ γὰρ πείδομαι τὰς τῶν ἁγίων ψυχὰς τῶν ἡμετέρων αἰσθάνεσθαι. — *Epist.* 201, p. 898.

⁸ *Orat.* xxiv. p. 425.

that the saints, being then nearer to God, and having put off the fetters of the flesh, have more avail with Him than when on earth.¹ In all this he does not appear to have gone further than some who preceded him; nor is there anything in such speculations beyond what might be consistent which the most Protestant abhorrence of saint-worship and Mariolatry. Let us then see how it influenced him in the addresses which he is supposed to have made to the departed. In his first oration against Julian, speaking rhetorically, he addresses the departed emperor Constantius, "Hear, O soul of the great Constantius, if thou hast any sense or perception of these things, thou and the Christian souls of emperors before thee."² So, in his funeral oration on his sister Gorgonia, he winds up thus: "If thou hast a care for the things done by us, and pious souls have this honour of God, that they perceive such things, receive this our oration, in the place of many funeral rites."³ Yet these addresses, so far from resembling the prayer in after-times offered to the saints, do in themselves effectually bear witness that no such prayers were ever at that time sent up to them. In oratorical language, in regular oratorical harangues, Gregory addresses himself to the souls of the departed. In one case he, as it were, calls on the soul of Constantius to witness; in the other he addresses his sister, and trusts that she may be satisfied with the funeral honours done to her. But in both instances he expresses doubt whether they can hear him, and in neither does he make anything like prayers to them.

All good things are liable to abuse; and the affectionate interest which the first Christians felt in the repose of the souls who had gone before them to Paradise, their belief that they still prayed with them and for them, no doubt, in course of time engendered an inclination to ask the departed to offer prayers for them, and so by degrees led to the Mariolatry and saint-worship of the Church of Rome. We have seen, however, the clearest proofs that nothing of the sort was permitted or endured in the first four centuries. Later than that, we have distinct evidence in the same direction from those great lights of the Church, St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine. The former protests against angel-worship as the most fearful abomination, and attributes its origin to the inventions of the devil.⁴ St. Augustine replies to a charge brought by the Man-

¹ *Orat.* xix. p. 288.

² Ἄκουε καὶ ἡ τοῦ μεγάλου Κωνσταντίου ψυχῇ, εἰ τις αἰσθησῆς, ὅσαι τε πρὸ αὐτοῦ βασιλέων φιλόχριστοι. — *Orat.* iii. p. 50.

³ εἰ δέ τις σοὶ καὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐστὶ

λόγος, καὶ τοῦτο ταῖς δόξαις ψυχαῖς ἐκ Θεοῦ γέρας, τῶν τοιοῦτων ἐπαισθάνεσθαι, δέχοιο καὶ τὸν ἡμέτερον λόγον, ἀντὶ πολλῶν καὶ πρὸ πολλῶν ἐνταφίων. — *Orat.* xi. p. 189.

⁴ ὁ διάβολος τὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων ἐπεισήγαγε,

ichees, that the Catholics worshipped the martyrs, saying that Christians celebrated the memories of martyrs to excite themselves to imitation, to associate themselves in their good deeds, to have the benefit of their prayers; but never so, as to offer up sacrifice (the sacrifice of worship) to martyrs, but to the God of martyrs. "The honour," he continues, "which we bestow on martyrs, is the honour of love and society, just as holy men of God are honoured in this life; but with that honour which the Greeks call *Latria*, and for which there is no one word in Latin, a service proper to God alone, we neither worship nor teach any one to worship any but God."¹

Unhappily, some even of this early time, whose names are deservedly had in honour, were not so wise. St. Jerome, the contemporary of St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine, gave too much encouragement to the superstitions which were taking root in his day. Vigilantius, whatever his errors may have been, seems wisely to have protested against the growing tendency to venerate the relics and bones of the martyrs, and even called those who did so, idolaters. St. Jerome repudiates indeed all idolatrous worship. "Not only do we not worship and adore the relics of martyrs, but neither sun nor moon, nor angels, nor archangels, cherubim nor seraphim, nor any name that is named, in this world or in the world to come, lest we should serve the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever." But he earnestly defends the sanctity of the martyrs' relics. Vigilantius had argued, that the souls of Apostles and martyrs were either in the bosom of Abraham, or in a place of rest and refreshment, or beneath the altar of God (Rev. vi. 9). But Jerome contends, that "they follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth (Rev. xiv. 4); and as the Lamb is everywhere present, so we may believe them to be; and as demons wander through the earth, can we argue that the souls of martyrs must be confined to one place?" On the contrary, he thinks that they may frequent the shrines where their relics are preserved, and where their memorials are celebrated. He expresses belief in miracles wrought at the tombs of martyrs, and that they pray for us after their decease. He defends the custom of lighting torches

Βασκαίων ἡμῶν τῆς τιμῆς. — *Homil. ix. in Coloss.* See also *Homil. v. vii. in Coloss.*; Bingham, *E. A.* XIII. iii. 3.

¹ "Colimus ergo martyres eo cultu dilectionis et societatis, quo et in hac vita coluntur sancti homines Dei, quorum cor ad talem pro evangelica veritate passionem paratum esse sentimus. At vero

illo cultu, quæ Græce *Latria* dicitur, Latine uno verbo dici non potest, cum sit quædam proprie Divinitati debita servitus, nec colimus, nec colendum docemus nisi unum Deum." — *Contr. Faustum*, Lib. XXI. c. 20, Tom. VIII. p. 347; Bingham, XIII. iii. 2.

before the martyrs' shrines, denying that it is idolatrous to do so.¹ Here, though such language is far different from what we read in after-ages, we yet clearly trace the rise and gradual progress of dangerous error.

The temptation to turn the mind from God to His creatures is nowhere more likely to assail us than in our devotions. The multitude, converted from heathenism, who had all along worshipped deified mortals, readily lapsed into the worship of martyrs. The noxious plant early took root, and though for a time the wise and pious pastors of the Church kept down its growth, still it gained strength and sprang up afresh; until in ages of darkness and ignorance it reached a height so great, that, at least among the rude and untaught masses, it overshadowed with its dark branches the green pastures of the Church of Christ.

It is unnecessary to trace its progress. It grew steadily on, though still checked occasionally. During the Iconoclastic controversy, one of the canons of the Council of Frankfort forbade not only image-worship, but the invocation of saints (A. D. 794); which, however, had been upheld by the opposite party at the second Council of Nice (A. D. 787).

Our Article especially condemns the "*Romish doctrine*" of invocation of saints, for which, of course, we must consult the decrees of the Council of Trent. That council simply enjoins, that the people be taught "that the saints reigning with Christ offer their prayers for men to God, and that it is good and useful to invoke them as suppliants; and for the sake of the obtaining of benefits from God through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is our only Redeemer and Saviour, to have recourse to their prayers." The calling this idolatry it declares to be impious.² The creed of the council has one article, "As also that the saints reigning with Christ are to be venerated and invoked, and that they offer up prayers for us to God, and that their relics are to be venerated."³

This is the mildest statement of the doctrine. Unhappily the practice has far exceeded it; and that too in the public and authorized prayers of the Romish Church. It would be an irksome task

¹ *Epist.* 37, *ad Riparium*, Tom. iv. pt. ii. p. 279.

² "Docentes eos, sanctos una cum Christo regnantes orationes suas pro hominibus offerre, bonum atque utile esse suppliciter eos invocare, et ob beneficia impetranda a Deo per Filium ejus Jesum Christum, Dominum Nostrum, qui solus noster Redemptor et Salvator est, ad

eorum orationes, opem auxiliumque confugere," &c. — Sess. xxv. *De Invocatione Sanctorum*, &c.

³ "Similiter et sanctos una cum Christo regnantes venerandos et invocandos esse, eosque orationes Deo pro nobis offerre, eorumque reliquias esse venerandas." — Bulla Pii IV. *Super Fortia Juramenti Professionis Fidei*.

to collect the many expressions of idolatrous worship with which the Blessed Virgin is approached; and they are too well known to make it necessary.

It is desirable to observe the distinctions which Romanist divines make between the worship due to God, and that paid to the Blessed Virgin and the saints. They lay it down, that there are three kinds of worship or adoration: first, *latria*, which belongs only to God; secondly, that honour and respect shown to good men; thirdly, an intermediate worship, called by them *dulia*, which belongs to glorified saints in general, and *hyperdulia*, which belongs to the human nature of Christ, and to the Blessed Virgin.¹

They determine, that the saints are to be invoked, not as primarily able to grant our prayers, but only to aid us with their intercessions; although they admit, that the forms of the prayers are as though we prayed directly to them; as for instance in the hymn: —

Maria mater gratiæ,
Mater misericordiæ,
Tu nos ab hoste protege,
Et hora mortis suscipe.

They say, moreover, that the saints pray for us through Christ, Christ prays immediately to the Father.²

It has seemed unnecessary to say anything of the views concerning the various subjects of this Article, as entertained by the different Protestant communions. All the reformed bodies of Europe have agreed in condemning the belief in purgatory, image-worship, and saint-worship. The Calvinistic bodies are more rigid than the Church of England and the Lutherans, in their rejection of all outward symbolism and emblems in their worship and places of worship. The Lutherans retain, not only the cross, but pictures and the Crucifix in their churches; but, of course, they exhibit nothing like adoration to them. The Church of England has retained the cross as the symbol of redemption, and has encouraged the architectural adornment of her churches, but she has generally rejected the Crucifix, and whatever may appear to involve the least danger of idolatrous worship.

¹ See Bellarmine, *De Sanct. Beatit. Lib. i. cap. 12.*

² *Ibid. c. 17.*

SECTION II.—SCRIPTURAL PROOF.

I. 1. Purgatory.

On this subject, and indeed on all the subjects of this Article, the burden of proof evidently lies with those who maintain the affirmative side of the question. If there be a purgatory, and if saints and images be objects of adoration, there should be some evidence to convince us that it is so.

The proofs from Scripture alleged in favour of purgatory are of two kinds:—

(1) Passages which speak of prayer for the dead.

(2) Passages which directly bear upon purgatory.

(1) The passages alleged in favour of prayer for the dead are:

2 Macc. xii. 42–45: where Judas is said to have “made a reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin.”

Tobit iv. 17: “Pour out thy bread,” *i. e.* give alms to obtain prayers from the poor, “at the burial of the just, but give nothing to the wicked.”

1 Sam. xxxi. 13: “They took their bones and buried them under a tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.” This fasting is supposed to have been for the souls of Saul and his son.

1 Cor. xv. 29: “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead?” that is, who fast and weep, being baptized in tears for the dead.

2 Tim. i. 16, 18: “The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus . . . The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.” Where it is contended that Onesiphorus must have been dead, for St. Paul, who prays for present and future blessings to other people, here evidently prays for the bereaved family of Onesiphorus, and for Onesiphorus himself, that he may be blessed at the day of judgment.

In answer to all this we may say, that the only clear passage in favour of prayer for the dead is from the apocryphal book of Maccabees, which, not having the authority of Scripture, is merely of the force of Jewish tradition. But how little Jewish traditions are to be regarded in proof of doctrine, our Lord’s condemnation of them is evidence enough. It certainly may be argued from this that the Jews sometimes used prayers for the dead, which no doubt was the case. But it would be very difficult to show that any sect among them believed in a purgatory. Of all the passages

from the canonical Scriptures, the last cited (from 2 Tim. i. 18) is the only one that has any appearance of really favouring prayer for the dead. No doubt, some Protestant commentators (*e. g.* Grotius) have believed that Onesiphorus was dead. But if it be so, St. Paul's words merely imply a pious hope that, when he shall stand before the judgment-seat "in that day," he may "obtain mercy of the Lord," and receive the reward of the righteous, and not the doom of the wicked. There is certainly nothing in such an aspiration which implies the notion that he was, at the time it was uttered, in purgatory, and that St. Paul's prayers might help to deliver him from it. On the contrary, if the words be used concerning one already dead, they will furnish a proof from Scripture, in addition to the many which have been brought from antiquity,¹ that prayer for the dead does not of necessity presuppose a belief in purgatory. The early Christians undoubtedly did often pray for saints, of whose rest and blessedness they had no manner of doubt. Hence it would be no proof of the doctrine of purgatory, even if fifty clear passages, instead of a single doubtful one, could be brought to show that the Apostles permitted prayer for the dead.

(2) The passages which are brought as directly bearing on purgatory, are Ps. xxxviii. 1: "O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath; neither chasten me in Thy hot displeasure." "Wrath" is said to mean eternal damnation; "hot displeasure," to mean purgatory.

Ps. lxvi. 12: "We went through fire" (*i. e.* purgatory) "and through water" (*i. e.* baptism); "but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place."

Isai. iv. 4: "When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have *purged* the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of *burning*." ²

Isai. ix. 18. Mic. vii. 8, 9.

Zech. ix. 11: "As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." This is interpreted of Christ's descent into hell, to deliver those who were detained in the *limbus patrum*.

Mal. iii. 3: "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them," &c.

¹ See Section I. i. 1.

² Bellarmine cites Augustine (*De Civit. Dei*, Lib. xx. c. 25) as interpreting this of purgatory. Augustine, however, does

not interpret it of purgatory, but of that trial by fire which Origen, and others after him, supposed was to take place at the judgment-day.

Matt. xii. 32: "It shall not be forgiven him neither in this world, *neither in the world to come*;" i. e. evidently in purgatory, for in hell there is no forgiveness.

Matt. v. 22: Our Lord speaks of three kinds of punishments, the judgment, the council, and hell. The latter belongs to the world to come; therefore the two former must. Hence there must be some punishments in the next world besides hell.

Matt. v. 25, 26: "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." The last words show that the *prison* must be purgatory, a temporal, not an eternal punishment. Otherwise, how would anything be said about coming out of it?

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

Luke xvi. 9, xxiii. 42, are also quoted; but it is difficult to see how they can be made to bear on the question. Also Acts ii. 24, where our Lord is said to have "loosed the pains of death," i. e. to have delivered the souls from *limbus*. And Phil. ii. 10, Rev. v. 3, which speak of beings "in Heaven and earth and *under the earth*." Where, "under the earth," it is contended, must mean purgatory.

These are all that are alleged by Bellarmine as proofs from Scripture that there is a purgatory between death and judgment. He adds, however, arguments from the fathers, whose sentiments have been already considered, and many from visions of the saints, which it will be unnecessary to consider.¹ His principal argument from reason is, that, although sins are forgiven to all true penitents for the merits of Christ, yet it is as regards their eternal, not their temporal punishment; for we know that many devout penitents have to suffer the temporal punishments of their sins, though the eternal be remitted. Thus natural death, which is the result of sin, the temporal wages of sin, befalls all men, those who are saved

¹ Bellarmine, *De Purgatorio*, Lib. i. c. 3-8, &c.

from, as well as those who fall into, death eternal. So David had his sin forgiven him, but still his child died. Eternally he was saved, but temporally punished. Now it often happens that persons have not suffered all the temporal punishment due to their sins in this life ; and therefore we must needs suppose, there is some state of punishment awaiting them in the next.¹

It appears at first sight, to a person unused to believe in purgatory, almost impossible that such a doctrine could be grounded on such arguments. If indeed the doctrine were proved and established on separate grounds, then perhaps some of the passages quoted above might be fairly alleged in illustration of it, or as bearing a second and mystical interpretation, which might have reference to it. But what is fair in illustration may be utterly insufficient for demonstration.

It is not too much to assert, that only one of the texts from Scripture cited by Bellarmine can be alleged in direct proof. If he rightly interpret 1 Cor. iii. 12-15, that may be considered as a direct and cogent argument ; and then some of the other passages might be brought to illustrate and confirm it. But if that were put out of the question, we may venture to say even Roman Catholic controversialists would find the Scriptural ground untenable. The passages in St. Matthew (v. 26, xii. 32, "Thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing," and, "It shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come") may indeed be supposed to speak of temporal punishments in the next world. But if they prove anything, they prove more than the Roman Catholic Church would wish, namely, that the pains of *hell* are not eternal ; for it is evidently *hell* which is the punishment of unrepented and unpardoned sin. Those who go to purgatory, are, on the showing of its own advocates, those who have received forgiveness of their sins, but need the purgation of suffering, either here or hereafter, to fit them for Heaven. The truth is, that the words of our Lord indicate merely, first, that as a great debtor is imprisoned till he has paid the last farthing, so a man who is not delivered here from the burden of his sins must remain in punishment for ever, as his debt is too heavy ever to be paid off ; and next, that he who sins against the Holy Ghost has *never* forgiveness ; and it is added, "neither in this world, neither in the world to come," to impress more forcibly both the fearfulness and the eternity of his condemnation.

To recur, then, to 1 Cor. iii. 12-15 ; Bellarmine himself quotes

¹ Bellarmine, *De Purgatorio*, Lib. i. cap. 11.

St. Augustine¹ as saying that it is one of those hard passages of St. Paul, which St. Peter speaks of as wrested by unstable men to their destruction, and which St. Augustine wishes to be interpreted by wiser men than himself. If so, it is hardly prudent or modest to build such a doctrine as purgatory upon it. Bellarmine himself recounts many different interpretations of the different figures in the passage, as given by different fathers and divines. That all the fathers did not interpret it of purgatory is most certain; for St. Chrysostom has already been quoted as interpreting it of eternal damnation. But more than that, those fathers whose interpretation seems most suitable to the Romanist belief, do not understand the passage of purgatory, but of a purgatorial or probatory fire, not between death and judgment, but at the very day of judgment itself, when all works shall be brought up and be had in remembrance before the Lord. This has already been shown in the preceding section. And indeed it is not possible justly to give an interpretation of the passage nearer to the Romish interpretation than this. The expression "the day" is understood by all who interpret it of the next life to mean "the day of judgment." "The day" cannot certainly be well understood of the hidden and unrevealed state of the dead in the intermediate and disembodied state. If, therefore, the passage refers to the next world at all, it must mean that at the day of judgment all works shall be revealed, and tried, as it were, in the fire. Those who have built on the right foundation shall be saved; though, if their superstructure be of an inferior quality (whatever be meant by the superstructure), it shall be lost. This might indeed be made to suit the doctrine of Origen, but is utterly inapplicable to the doctrine of purgatory.

But even Origen's doctrine it will not well suit, if the context be fully considered. St. Paul had been speaking of himself and Apollos, as labourers together in the work of evangelizing the world and building the Church (vv. 5-9). The Church he declares to be God's building (ver. 9), even a temple for the indwelling of the Spirit (ver. 16). Now he says, the only possible foundation which can be laid is that which has been laid already, even Jesus Christ, (ver. 11). But the builders (*i. e.* ministers of Christ), in building the Church on this foundation, may make the superstructure of various materials, some building of safe and precious materials, gold, silver, and precious stones; others of less valuable or less durable, wood, hay, and stubble. What then must be the meaning of this? Clearly, either that in building up the

¹ *De Fide et Operibus*, c. 15.

Church, they may upon the foundation, Christ, build sounder or less sound doctrines, — or, (which seems a still more correct interpretation of the figures,) that they may build up soundly instructed and confirmed believers, or, by negligence and ignorance, may train less orthodox and steadfast Christians. There is evidently nothing about the good or bad works of Christian men built on the foundation of a sound faith. It is the good or bad workmanship of Christian pastors in building up the Church of Christ. To proceed then : when the Christian minister and master-builder has thus finished his work, the day will prove whether it be good or bad. If his building be stable, it will endure, and he will be blessed in his labours and “receive a reward” (comp. 1 Cor. ix. 17). But if his superstructure be destroyed ; if those, whom he has built up in the faith prove ill instructed and unstable, he will himself suffer loss, he will lose those disciples, who would have been “his crown of rejoicing in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming” (1 Thess. ii. 19) ; and even he himself will escape, as it were, out of the fire.¹ It may be that the fiery trial means “the day” of judgment : for then all men’s works shall be manifested ; and the building of the Christian pastor or Apostle shall be then proved good or evil, by the characters and works of those whom he has converted and taught. But, as whatever doth make manifest is called “the day,” therefore many think, and that with much ground of reason, that “the day” here spoken of was that day of trial and persecution which was awaiting the Church. That day was indeed likely to prove the faithfulness of the converts, and therefore the soundness of the pastor’s building. St. Paul often speaks of unsound teachers ; and if they had built up unstably, the day of persecution was likely to reveal it, to show the hollowness of their disciples, and to cause them loss. And such a trial would be “so as by fire.” Elsewhere the term “fiery trial” is applied to persecution and affliction. St. Peter speaks specially of the trial of faith by affliction, as being like that of gold in the furnace, the very same metaphor with that used here by St. Paul (1 Pet. i. 7) ; and, again with the same meaning, tells the Christians that they should not “think it strange concerning the fiery trial which was to try them,” but to rejoice, as it would the more fit them to partake of Christ’s glory.

But whether we interpret *the day* and the *fiery trial* of persecution here or of judgment hereafter, there is no room in either for

¹ ὡς διὰ πυρός. The expression is “so an escape from great danger. See Gro-
as by fire ;” a proverbial expression for tius and Rosenmüller, *in loc.*

purgatory. Purgatory is not a time of trial on earth, nor is it at the time of standing before the Judgment-seat of Heaven. Therefore it is not the fiery trial of St. Paul, nor is it *the day*, which shall try of what nature is the superstructure erected by the master-builders on the one foundation of the Christian Church.

If then the texts alleged in favour of purgatory fail to establish it, we may go on to say that there are many which are directly opposed to it. It was promised to the penitent thief, "To-day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43). St. Paul felt assured, that it was better "to depart, and to be with Christ" (Phil. i. 23), "to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord" (2 Cor. v. 8); having no apprehension of a purgatorial fire, in the middle state; apparently laying it down as a principle concerning pious men, that whilst "at home in the body they are absent from the Lord;" and that they may be confidently willing to leave the body, that they may be with the Lord (see 2 Cor. v. 6-9). Not one word about purgatory is ever urged upon Christians, to quicken them to a closer walk with God. All the other "terrors of the Lord" are put forth in their strongest light "to persuade men;" but this, which would be naturally so powerful, and which has been made so much of in after-times, is never brought forward by the Apostles. Nay! St. John declares that he had an express revelation concerning the present happiness of those that sleep in Jesus, namely, that they were blessed and at rest. "I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours" (Rev. xiv. 13). When we couple such express declarations as these with the exhortations not to grieve for the dead in Christ, the general assurances concerning the blessedness of the death of the righteous, and concerning the cleansing from all sin by the blood of Christ, and then contrast them with the very slender Scriptural ground on which purgatory rests, it will be scarcely possible to doubt, that that doctrine was the growth of after-years, and sprang from the root of worldly philosophy, not of heavenly wisdom. Compare Luke xxi. 28; John v. 24; Eph. iv. 30; 1 Thess. iv. 13, &c.; 2 Thess. i. 7; 2 Tim. iv. 8; 1 John i. 7; iii. 14.

2. Pardons or Indulgences.

The doctrine of pardons, and the custom of granting indulgences, rest on two grounds, namely, 1, purgatory, 2, works of supererogation. Indulgences, as granted by the Church of Rome, signify a remission of the temporal punishment of sins in purgatory; and the

power to grant them is supposed to be derived from the supe. abundant merits of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and the saints. It is argued by Romanist divines that (1) A double value exists in men's good deeds, first of merit, secondly of satisfaction : '(2) A good deed, as it is meritorious, cannot be applied to another ; but, as it is satisfactory or expiatory, it can : (3) There exists in the Church an infinite store of the merits of Christ, which never can be exhausted : (4.) And, in addition to this, the sufferings of the Virgin Mary (herself immaculate) and of the other saints, having been more than enough for their own sins, avail for the sins of others. Now, in the Church is deposited all this treasure of satisfactions, and it can be applied to deliver the souls of others from the temporal punishment of sins, the pains of purgatory.¹ That such a power exists in the pope is argued from the command to St. Peter, "to feed the sheep of Christ," and the promise to him of the keys of the kingdom, of authority to bind and to loose. That the good deeds of one man are transferable to another, is thought to be proved by the article of the Creed, "I believe in the communion of saints," and by the words of St. Paul, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you" (2 Cor. xii. 15) ; "I endure all things for the elect's sake" (2 Tim. ii. 10) ; "I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the Church" ² (Col. i. 24).

Both the doctrine of purgatory and that concerning works of supererogation have already been considered ; and we have seen that they have no foundation in Scripture. Hence the practice of granting indulgences, which rests on them, must necessarily be condemned. The Romanist divines admit that indulgences free not from natural pains, or from civil punishments.³ They never profess that they can deliver from eternal death. Hence, if there be no purgatory, there can be no room for indulgences.

If there be, as they state, an infinite store of Christ's merits committed to the Church, one would think it needless to add the sufferings of the Virgin Mary and of the saints. As to the claim, to dispense the benefits of these sufferings, founded on the promise of the keys to St. Peter, I hope to consider more at length the whole question of binding and loosing, of retaining and remitting sins, and of the pope's succession to St. Peter, under future Articles. Suffice it here that we remember, 1, that there is no

¹ Bellarmine, *De Indulgentiis*, Lib. i. passage, Col. i. 24, was considered under cap. II. 2, 3, 7.

² *Ibid.* Lib. i. c. 3. The last-cited

Art. XIV. p. 351, note.

³ Bellarmine. *Ibid.* Lib. i. c. 7.

foundation for the figment of purgatory in Scripture, and that its gradual rise is clearly traceable; 2, that none of the saints, not even the Blessed Virgin, were free from sin, nor able to atone for their own sins; 3, that works of supererogation are impossible; 4, that therefore indulgences, partly derived from superabundant works of satisfaction performed by the saints, and having for their object the freeing of souls from purgatory, must be unwarranted and useless.

II. 1. The Worshipping and Adoration of Images.

We can readily believe that the champions of image-worship would find a difficulty in discovering Scriptural authority for their practice. But it rather surprises us to learn that their whole stock of argument is derived from the *old Testament*; in which no sin is so much condemned as the worship, nay, even the making of idols. The distinction between idols and images, it seems hard to understand. That images may lawfully be placed in temples, is argued from the fact that Moses was commanded to make the Cherubim of gold, and place them on each side of the mercy-seat, (Ex. xxv. 18); and that Solomon carved all the walls of the temple "round about with carved figures of Cherubim" (2 Kings vi. 29), and "he made a molten sea — and it stood upon twelve oxen — and on the borders were lions, oxen, and Cherubim" (1 Kings vii. 23, 25, 29).¹ That the second commandment² does not forbid making images, but only making them with the object of worshipping them, is also contended; and thus far we have no reason to complain. There may be a superstitious dread, as well as a superstitious use, of outward emblems. No doubt, much as the Jew was bidden to hold idolatry in abhorrence, he was not only permitted, but commanded to place emblematical figures in the house of the Lord. It is further said, that the brazen serpent which Moses set up by God's ordinance in the wilderness (Num. xxi. 8, 9) was an example of the use of images for religious purposes. This was a

¹ See Bellarmine, *De Ecclesia Triumphante*, Lib. II. cap. IX.; *Controvers.* Tom. II. p. 771.

² The second commandment is joined with the first, according to the reckoning of the Church of Rome. This is not to be esteemed a Romish novelty. It will be found so united in the Masoretic Bibles; the Masoretic Jews dividing the tenth commandment (according to our reckoning) into two. What the Roman Church deals unfairly in is, that she teaches the commandments popularly

only in epitome; and that so, having joined the first and second together, she virtually omits the second, recounting them in her catechisms, &c. thus. 1 Thou shalt have none other gods but me. 2 Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain. 3 Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day, &c. By this method her children, and other less instructed members, are often ignorant of the existence in the Decalogue of a prohibition against idolatry.

figure of the Lord Jesus, the expected Messiah ; and the wounded Israelites were taught to look up to it for healing and deliverance. But beyond this it is said, that the Jews actually did adore the Ark of the Covenant, and that in so doing they must have adored the Cherubim which were upon it. And this most strangely is inferred from the words, “ Exalt ye the LORD your God, and worship at His footstool ; for He is holy ” (Ps. xcix. 5) ; where the Vulgate reads, *Adorate scabellum ejus, quoniam sanctus est* ; or, as some quote it, *quoniam sanctum est*.¹

With every desire to feel candid towards those who are opposed to us, it is difficult to know how to treat such arguments as these. We willingly concede, that the iconoclastic spirit of the Puritans was fuller of zeal than of judgment ; for if the figures of Cherubim were commanded in the temple, figures of angels and saints and storied windows in our cathedrals could scarcely be impious and idolatrous. But when we are told that the existence of such symbols near the mercy-seat involved a necessity that the Jew should worship them, we scarcely know whither such reasoning may carry us. If the Cherubim in the temple were worshipped, why were the golden calves of Jeroboam so foully idolatrous ? It is mostly considered, that Jeroboam borrowed these very figures from the carvings of the sanctuary. How could that be holy in Jerusalem, which was vile in Dan and Bethel ? Nay ! the sin of Jeroboam was specially, that he made the calves to be *worshipped* ; whereas in the temple they were not for worship, but for symbolism. As for the brazen serpent, it was no doubt, like the Cherubim, a proof that such symbols are allowable ; and was also the instrument (like the rod of Moses) by which God worked wonderful miracles. But when it tempted the people to worship it, Hezekiah broke it in pieces (2 Kings xviii. 4), as thinking it better to destroy so venerable a memorial of God’s mercies, than to leave it as an incentive to sin.

The argument from Ps. xcix. 5, is the only one which Bellarmine (in many learned chapters on the subject) alleges in direct proof from Scripture that images are not only lawful, but adorable. Even if the Vulgate rendering (*adoratè scabellum*) were correct, it would be a forlorn hope, with which to attack such a fortress as the second commandment. But the Hebrew (הִשְׁתַּחֲוּי לְיְהוָה) is far more correctly rendered by the English version, “ Bow down before His footstool.” Though to *fall down before* God may be to worship Him, yet to *fall down before his footstool* is not necessarily

¹ See Bellarmine, *De Ecclesia Triumph.* Lib. I. c. XIII. Lib. II. c. XII. Tom. II. pp 708, 781.

to worship His footstool. Hence the word may at times be properly translated, “*to worship* ;” but here such a translation is altogether out of place.

In short, if the Roman Church had never approached nearer to idolatry than the Jews when they worshipped in the courts of the temple, within which were symbolical figures of oxen and cherubim, than the high priest, when once a year he approached the very ark of the covenant and sprinkled the blood before the mercy-seat, or than the people in the wilderness, when they looked upon the brazen serpent and recovered, there would have been no controversy and no councils on the subject of image-worship. But when we know, that the common people are taught to bow down before statues and pictures of our blessed Saviour, of His Virgin Mother, and of His saints and angels ; though we are told that they make prayers, not to the images, but to those of which they are images, yet we ask, wherein does such worship differ from idolatry ? No heathen people believed the image to be their God. They prayed not to the image, but to the god whom the image was meant to represent.¹ Nay ! the golden calves of Jeroboam were doubtless meant merely as symbols of the power of Jehovah ; and the people, in bowing down before them, thought they worshipped the gods “*which brought them up out of the land of Egypt*” (1 Kings xii. 28). But it is the very essence of idolatry, not to worship God in spirit and in truth, but to worship Him through the medium of an image or representation. It is against this that the second commandment is directed : “*Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven or earth, or under the earth — Thou shalt not bow down to it, nor worship it.*” And it is not uncharitable to assert, that the ignorant people in ignorant ages have as much worshipped the figure of the Virgin and the image of our Lord upon the cross, as ever ignorant heathens worshipped the statues of Baal or Jupiter, or as the Israelites worshipped the golden calf in the wilderness. It must even be added, painful as it is to dwell on such a subject, that divines of eminence in the Church of Rome have taught unchecked, that to the very images of Christ was due the same supreme worship which is due to Christ Himself, — even that *latria*, with which none but the Holy Trinity and the Incarnate Word must be approached.²

¹ See this exactly stated, *Arnob. adv. Gentes*, Lib. vi.

² See this proved by numerous passages from distinguished Romanists by Archbishop Usher, *Answer to a Jesuit*, chap. x. Dublin, 1624, p. 449. “*Constans*

est theologorum sententia” (says Azorius the Jesuit) “*imaginem eodem honore et cultu honorari et coli, quo colitur id cuius est imago.*” — *Jo. Azor. Institut Moral.* Tom. i. Lib. ix. cap. 9.

Bellarmino himself, who takes a middle course, states the above as one out of three current opinions in the Church, and as held by Thomas Aquinas, Caietan, Bonaventura, and many others of high name; ¹ and though he himself considers the worship of *latria* only improperly and *per accidens* due to an image, yet he says that “*the images of Christ and the saints are to be venerated, not only by accident or improperly, but also by themselves properly, so that themselves terminate the veneration, as in themselves considered, and not only as they take the place of their Exemplar.*” ² If this be not to break one, and that not the least of God’s commandments, and to teach men so, it must indeed be hard to know how God’s commandments can be broken, and how kept. Even enlightened heathenism seldom went so far as to believe the worship to be due *properly* to the idol itself, and not merely to its original and prototype.

It is unnecessary to recite the Scriptures which speak against idolatry and image-worship; they are so patent and obvious. See for example, Exod. xx. 2–5; xxxii. 1–20. Levit. xix. 4; xxvi. 1. Deut. iv. 15–18, 23, 25; xvi. 21, 22; xxvii. 15; xxix. 17. 2 Kings xviii. 4; xxiii. 4. Ps. cxv. 4. Isai. ii. 8, 9; xl. 18, 19, 25; xlii.; xlv.; xlv. 5–7. Acts xvii. 25, 29. Rom. i. 21, 23, 25. 1 Cor. viii. 4; x. 7; xii. 2. 1 John v. 21. Rev. ix. 20.

2. Worshipping and Adoration of Relics.

The arguments brought from Scripture to defend relic worship are — that miracles were wrought by the bones of Elisha (2 Kings xiii. 21), by the hem of Christ’s garment (Matt. ix. 20–22), by “the shadow of Peter passing by” (Acts v. 15), by handkerchiefs and aprons brought from the body of St. Paul (Acts xix. 12), — that the rod of Aaron and the pot of manna were preserved in the temple, — that it is said (in Isai. xi. 10), “In Him (Christ) shall the Gentiles trust, and His sepulchre shall be glorious;” *In Eum gentes sperabunt, et erit sepulchrum Ejus gloriosum.* ³

¹ *De Eccles. Triumph.* Lib. II. c. xx.; *Controvers.* Tom. II. p. 801. Thomas Aquinas says: “*Sic sequitur quod eadem reverentia exhibetur imagini Christi et ipsi Christo. Cum ergo Christus adoratur adoratione latriæ consequens est quod ejus imago sit adoratione latriæ adoranda.*” — *Summa*, pt. III. quæst. 25, Artic. 3. See Usher, as above.

² “*Imagines Christi et sanctorum venerandæ sunt, non solum per accidens, vel improprie, sed etiam per se proprie, ita ut ipsæ terminent venerationem ut in se considerantur, et non solum ut vicem gerunt exemplaris.*” — *Ibid.* c. 21, p.

802. He goes on to show, that it should neither be said nor denied (especially in public discourses), that images should be worshipped with *latria* (c. xxii.). The images of Christ *improperly* and *by accident* receive *latriæ* (c. xxxiii.). He concludes by saying: “*Cultus, qui per se, proprie debetur imaginibus, est cultus quidem imperfectus, qui analogico et reductive pertinet ad speciem ejus cultus, qui debetur exemplari.*” — c. xxv. p. 809.

³ Bellarmin. *De Eccles. Triumph.* Lib. II. cap. III.; *Cont. Gen.* Tom. II. p. 746.

The last argument is derived solely from the Latin translation. The Hebrew, the Greek, the Chaldee, and other versions, have "His rest," or "His place of habitation shall be glorious." (מְנוּחָתוֹ ἀνάπαυσις). Even if it meant the sepulchre, which it does not, it would not follow that because it was glorious or honourable, therefore it should be adored. There can be no question, that God has been pleased to give such honour to His saints, that in one instance the dead body of a prophet was the means of restoring life to the departed, that in another, handkerchiefs brought from an Apostle were made instruments of miraculous cure. But we have no instance in Scripture of the garments or the bones of the saints being preserved for such purposes. All evidence from Holy Writ goes in the opposite direction. The Almighty buried the body of Moses, so that no man should know where it lay, Deut. xxxiv. 6; which seems purposely to have been done, that no superstitious reverence should be paid to it. The bones of Elisha, by which so wonderful a miracle was wrought, were not preserved for any purpose of worship or superstition. The body of the holy martyr St. Stephen was by devout men "carried to his burial, and great lamentation was made over him;" but no relics of him are spoken of, nor of St. James, who followed him in martyrdom. Their bones were evidently, like those of their predecessors the prophets, left alone, and no man moved them (2 Kings xxiii. 18). The pot of manna and the rod of Aaron were preserved as memorials of God's mercy; but no one can imagine any worship paid to them. And the only relic to which we learn that worship was paid, namely, the brazen serpent, was on that very account broken in pieces by Hezekiah; and he is commended for breaking it (2 Kings xviii. 4), though of all relics it must have been the noblest and most glorious, reminding the people of their deliverance from Egypt, and giving them assurance of a still more glorious deliverance, to which all their hopes should point. But the very first principle of Scripture truth is, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. iv. 10). And though by degrees a superstitious esteem for the relics of martyrs crept into the Church, yet we have clear evidence that for some time no undue honour was paid to them, and that when it was, the pious and learned, instead of fostering, strove to check the course of the error. The contemporaries of St. Polycarp indignantly denied that they wished for his body for any superstitious purposes, or that they could worship any but Christ.¹ And St. Augustine reproveth the

¹ See especially *Martyr. Polycarp.* c. 17, referred to above.

superstitious sale of relics, which, by his day, had grown into an abuse.¹ Yet the Roman Church has authoritatively condemned such as deny that the bodies of martyrs or the relics of the saints are to be venerated.² And some of her divines have even sanctioned the paying of the supreme worship of *latria* to the relics of the cross, the nails, the lance, and the garments of the crucified Redeemer.³

3. Invocation of Saints.

The divines of the Church of Rome defend this practice as follows : —

(1) Saints, not going to purgatory, go straight to Heaven, where they enjoy the presence of God.

(2) Being then in the presence of God, they behold, in the face of God, the concerns of the Church on earth.

(3) It is good to ask our friends on earth to pray for us ; how much rather those who, being nearer God, have more avail with Him.

(4) The Scripture contains examples of saint-worship.

(1) The first position is sought to be established from Scripture, thus, —

The thief on the cross went straight to Paradise, *i. e.* to Heaven ! (Luke xxiii. 43). “ We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens ” (2 Cor. v. 1, comp. ver. 4). “ When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive ” (Eph. iv. 8). “ Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ ” (Phil. i. 23). “ The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing ” (Heb. ix. 8). “ Ye are come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to the general assembly of the first-born who are written in heaven . . . and to the spirits of just men made perfect ” (Heb. xii. 22, 23). “ Lord Jesus, receive my spirit ” (Acts vii. 59). White robes are given to the martyrs who cry from under the altar, *i. e.* the glory of the body after the resurrection (Rev. vi. 11). “ These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple ” (Rev. vii. 14, 15).

¹ Augustin. Tom. vi. p. 498.

² Concil. Trident. Sess. xxv. *De Invocatione, Veneratione, et Reliquiis Sanctorum.*

³ “ Reliquiæ crucis, clavorum, lanceæ,

vestium Christi, et imago crucifixi sunt latria veneranda.” — Joh. de Turrec. *In Festo Invent. Crucis*, q. 3 ; Beveridge, on Artic. xxii.

It is admitted that in the old Testament the saints, being as yet in the *limbus patrum*, and therefore not in Heaven, could not be prayed to ;¹ but since Christ's descent into Hell and resurrection from the dead, all who die in Him, if not needing to go to purgatory, go straight to glory, and therefore, reigning with Christ, may be invocated.

It must be remembered, that these arguments for the immediate glorification of the saints run side by side with arguments for a purgatory. The latter is an absolutely necessary supplement to the former : without it, the Roman Catholic divines could not get rid of the force of the arguments in favour of an intermediate state. The two must therefore succeed or fail together. Now, it is unnecessary to repeat the arguments already brought forward against purgatory, or those (under Article III.) in proof that souls go, not straight to Heaven after death, but to an intermediate state of bliss or woe, awaiting the resurrection of the dead. All we need consider now is this. Do the above texts of Scripture contravene that position ? The first proves, that the thief went with our Saviour where He went from the Cross ; that is, not to Heaven, but to Hades, to the place of souls departed, which, in the case of the redeemed, is called Paradise. Our Lord went not to Heaven till he rose from the grave.² The second proves that, when this body is dissolved, we may yet hope, at the general Resurrection, for a glorified body. But the context proves clearly, that, between death and judgment, the souls of the saints remain without the body, in bliss, but yet longing for the resurrection. (See 2 Cor. v. 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10). The passage from Ephes. iv. only proves that Christ conquered death. That from Phil. i. shows that the disembodied spirit in Paradise is admitted to some presence with its Saviour ; as does that from Acts vii. Heb. ix. 8, merely teaches that Christ is the way to Heaven, a way not *manifested* under the old Law. Heb. xii. speaks of the Church as composed of the first-born, whose names are in God's book, and as having fellowship with the angels, and with departed saints, who have finished their course. The first passage from the Apocalypse (vi. 11), if taken in its context (see Rev. vi. 9), is a strong proof that even martyrs are in a state of expectant, not of perfect bliss ; and if the white robes really mean the glorified body at the resurrection, then

¹ "Notandum est ante Christi adventum qui moriebantur non intrabant in cœlum, nec Deum videbant, nec cognoscere poterant ordinarie preces supplicantium. Ideo non fuit consuetum in V.

Testamento ut diceretur, Sancte Abraham, ora pro me : sed solum orabant homines ejus temporis Deum." — Belarmine, *De Eccl'es. Triumph.* i. 19

² See above, pp. 88, 95, &c.

must we believe yet more clearly than ever, that the very martyrs remain "under the altar" until the time of the resurrection of the just. The second passage (from Rev. vii. 14, 15) is probably a prophetic vision of the bliss of the saints, *after the general judgment*, and therefore plainly *nihil ad rem*.

It is said by the Romanists that a few *heretics* have denied the immediate beatification of the saints, *Tertullian*, *Vigilantius*, the Greeks at Florence, *Luther*, *Calvin*; ¹ and it is inferred that all the orthodox fathers have maintained it.² *Tertullian* is here a heretic, though, when he seems to favour purgatory, he is a Catholic divine. But the truth is, even their own divines have allowed, that a very large number of the greatest names of antiquity believed that the saints did not enjoy the vision of God till after the general judgment. *Franciscus Pegna* mentions, as of that persuasion, *Irenæus*, *Justin M.*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Romanus*, *Origen*, *Ambrose*, *Chrysostom*, *Augustine*, *Lactantius*, *Victorinus*, *Prudentius*, *Theodoret*, *Aretas*, *Œcumenius*, *Theophylact*, and *Euthymius*.³ And our own great Bishop *Bull* pronounces it to have been the doctrine of the whole Catholic Church for many ages, "that the souls of the faithful, in the state of separation, though they are in a happy condition in Paradise, yet are not in the third Heaven, nor do enjoy the beatific vision till the Resurrection . . . Nay, this was a doctrine so generally received in the time of *Justin Martyr*, that is, in the first succession of the Apostles, that we learn from the same *Justin* that there were none but some profligate heretics that believed the souls of the faithful, before the Resurrection, to be received into Heaven. (*Dialog. cum Tryphone*, pp. 306, 307. Paris, 1636)."⁴

Yet this immediate beatification of the saints is the very foundation of saint-worship. That can be but a slender foundation for so vast a superstructure, which the first fathers and the greatest writers of antiquity (even our enemies being the judges) could not find in the word of God, and did not believe to be true. Conceding the utmost that we can, we must yet maintain that the evidence from Scripture is far more against, than in favour of, this foundation, and that the first and greatest of the fathers utterly rejected it.

(2) If the first position cannot be established, of course the sec-

¹ See *Bellarmino*, *De Ecclesia Triumphante*, l. 1; *Controv. Gener.* Tom. II. p. 674.

² The testimonies in favour of it from the fathers are cited, *Bellarmino*, *ubi supra*, Lib. I. c. 4, 5.

³ *Fr. Pegna*, in part. II. *Directorii*

Inquisitor. comment. 21, apud *Usher Answer to a Jesuit*, chap. IX.; who quotes also *Thomas Stapleton* to the same purport.

⁴ *Bull*, *Vindication of the Church of England*, § XII.

ond must fall ; though even if the first were granted, it does by no means seem to follow that the second would stand. For even if saints departed always behold the face of God, it does not certainly follow that thereby they have the omniscience of God. That they continue to take an interest in their fellow-worshippers, children of the same Father, members of the same body with themselves, we may reasonably believe ; but that they know all the prayers which each one on earth utters, even the secret silent prayer of the heart, we cannot at least be certain — or rather we should think most improbable.

(3) It is said that saints on earth pray for each other, and exhort one another to pray for them, (Heb. xiii. 18, James v. 16) ; why not then ask the saints in light to pray for us, who, nearer the throne of God, have more interest with Him ?

Yet, who does not see the difference between joining our prayers with our brethren on earth, so through the one Mediator drawing nigh to God in common supplication for mercies and mutual intercession for each other, and the invoking saints above, with all the circumstances of religious worship, to go to God for us, and so to save us from going to Him for ourselves ? If, indeed, we could be quite certain, that our departed friends could hear us, when we spoke to them, there might possibly be no more evil in asking them to continue their prayers for us, than there could be in asking those prayers from them whilst on earth, — no evil, that is, except the danger that this custom might go further and so grow worse. This, no doubt, was all that the interpellation of the martyrs was in the early ages ; and if it had stopped here, it would have never been censured. But who will say that Romish saint-worship is no more ?

In the Church of Rome, when it is determined who are to be saints, they are publicly canonized, *i. e.* they are enrolled in the Catalogue of Saints ; it is decreed, that they shall be formally held to be saints, and called so ; they are invoked in the public prayers of the Church : churches and altars to their memory are dedicated to God ; the sacrifices of the Eucharist and of public prayers are publicly offered before God to their honour ; their festivals are celebrated : their images are painted with a glory round their heads : their relics are preserved and venerated.¹ They are completely invoked as mediators between God and man ; so that those who fear to go to God direct, are encouraged to approach Him through the saints, as being not so high and holy as to inspire fear and

¹ Bellarmine, *De Ecclesia Triumph.* i. 7.

dread.¹ Herein the very office of Christ is invaded, “the ONE Mediator between God and man” (1 Tim. ii. 5); a High Priest, who can “be touched with the feeling of our infirmities,” and through whom we may “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. iv. 15, 16). Nay, more than this, direct prayer is made to the saints for protection and deliverance; and even in prayer to God Himself, He is reminded of the protection and patronage of the saints.² And we know, that, not only among the vulgar, but with the authority of the most learned, and those canonized saints, prayers have been put up to the Blessed Virgin, to use a mother’s authority, and command her Son to have mercy upon sinners.³ What support can all this derive from the injunctions to us in Scripture to pray for one another, and the assurances that “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”?

(4) Next it is alleged, that Scripture contains positive examples of the worship of saints and angels.

Bellarmino cites the following:—

Ps. xcix. 5: “Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at His footstool; for He is holy,” (*Adorate scabellum pedis ejus, quoniam sanctum est*): a passage which has been already considered. Gen. xviii. 2, xix. 1, Abraham and Lot bow down to the angels. Numb. xxii. 31, Balaam, when he saw the angel, “fell flat on his face.” 1 Sam. xxviii. 14, “And Saul perceived that it was Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and bowed himself.” 1 Kings xviii. 7, “And as Obadiah was in the way, behold Elijah met him, and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my Lord Elijah?” 2 Kings ii. 15, “When the sons of the prophets saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest upon Elisha: and they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the

¹ One reason alleged in favour of saint-worship is “Propter Dei reverentiam: ut peccator, qui Deum offendit. quia non audet in propria persona adire, occurrat ad sanctos, eorum patrocinia implorando.”—Alexand. de Hales, *Summa*, pt. iv. quæst. 26, memb. 3, artic. 5. Vide Usher, *ubi supra*.

² “Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that Thy faithful, who rejoice under the name and protection of the most blessed Virgin Mary, may, by her pious intercession, be delivered from all evils here on earth, and be brought to the eternal joys of Heaven. Through.”—“Coll. for the Feast of the name of B. V. Mary;” “Missal for the Laity,”

published by authority of Thomas Bishop of Cambysopolis, and Nicholas Bishop of Melipotamus, Sept. 25, 1845.

³ “Imperatrix et Domina nostra benignissima. jure matris impera tuo dilectissimo Filio Domino nostro Jesu Christo, ut mentes nostras ab amore terrestrium ad cælestia desideria erigere dignetur.”—Bonaventura, *Corona B. Mariæ Virginis*, Oper. Tom. vi.

“Inclina vultum Dei super nos: coge illum peccatoribus misereri.”—*Id.* in *Psalterio B. Mariæ Virginis*, Ibid.

See Archbishop Usher, as above, who gives many passages at length from Bernardin de Bustis, Jacob de Valentia, Gabriel Biel, &c., to the like effect.

ground before him." Josh. v. 14, 15; when Joshua knew that he was in the presence of the Captain of the Lord's host, "he fell on his face to the earth, and did worship." The angel did not forbid him to worship him, but said, "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot, for the place whereon thou standest is holy." Dan. ii. 46, "The king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and worshipped Daniel; and commanded that they should offer an oblation and sweet odour to him."¹

Now, in the first place, it is certainly not a little strange, that, whereas the divines of the Church of Rome tell us that no prayers were offered to the old Testament saints, because they were in the *limbus patrum*, and not in Heaven;² yet, in their Scriptural proof of saint-worship, they bring all their arguments from the old Testament only. There must be something rotten here. And we need not go far to see what the ground of their preference for such a line of argument is. The Eastern form of salutation to princes, honoured guests, and elders, was, and still is, a profound prostration of the body, which is easily construed into an act of religious worship. Now Abraham and Lot evidently (from the context and from Heb. xiii. 2) did not know that the angels who appeared to them were angels. They thought them strangers on a journey, and exercised Eastern hospitality to them. They perceived that they were strangers of distinction, and exhibited Eastern tokens of respect. Thus, "being not forgetful to entertain strangers, they entertained angels unawares."

The same may be said of all the above instances, except perhaps the last two. Falling down at the feet was the common mode of respectful salutation, and that especially when favours were to be asked. Thus Abigail fell at the feet of David (1 Sam. xxv. 24); Esther fell at the feet of Ahasuerus (Esth. viii. 3); the servant is represented as falling at the feet of his master (Matt. xviii. 29). This was no sign of religious worship. Even Balaam, though he fell down before the angel, by no means appears to have worshipped him. He fell down from fear, and in token of respect. The case of Joshua, when he met the Captain of the Lord's host, may be different. It is well known to have been the belief of many of the fathers, and of many eminent divines after them, that the Captain of the Lord's host was the second Person of the Holy Trinity, the eternal Son of God.³ And it is certainly as fair to

¹ Bellarmin. *De Eccles. Triumph.* i. 13;
Cont. Gen. Tom. II. p. 708.

³ See Justin M. *Dialogus*, p. 284; *Euseb. H. E.* i. 2.

² See Bellarmin. *Ibid.* i. 19, as quoted above.

infer from the worship paid to him, that he was God, as to infer from it, that worship ought to be paid to any beside God.

We are reduced then to one single instance, and that the instance of an idolatrous king, who soon afterwards bade every one worship a golden image. He indeed appears, in a rapture of astonishment, to have fallen down to worship the prophet Daniel — not a glorified saint reigning with Christ — but one of those old fathers, who had to abide after death in the *limbus*, until our Lord's descent to Hades should rescue them.

But is there no instance in the new Testament? The new Testament is ever the best interpreter of the old. Are there no examples of the worship of saints or angels there? The Roman Catholic divines have not adduced any; but their opponents cannot deny that there are some cases of such worship recorded, and those too of a worship which cannot be explained to mean merely bowing down in token of respect to a superior.

One example is that of Cornelius: "as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet and worshipped him" (*προσεκύνησεν*). This is very like the case of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel; but with this advantage over it, that Cornelius was no idolater, and St. Peter was not a prophet of the old Testament, for whom the schoolmen tell us a *limbus* was in store, but the chief of the Apostles, to whom the keys of the kingdom were committed, from whom the Roman Pontiff inherits his right to forgive and retain sins, and who (on their showing) at death was sure of passing straight to the highest kingdom of glory, thenceforth to reign with Christ, and to receive the prayers of the faithful. How then does St. Peter, whose authority none will question, treat the worship of Cornelius? "Peter took him up, saying, Stand up: I myself also am a man" (Acts x. 25, 26).

We may remember another case somewhat similar, though not quite identical, when "the Apostles Barnabas and Paul rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out and saying, Sirs, why do ye these things? we also are men of like passions with you" (Acts xiv. 14, 15). But perhaps we shall be told that it was *lutria* not *dulia*, that the men of Lycaonia meant to pay to them.

However, we are not confined to saint-worship in the new Testament; we can discover manifest traces of angel-worship too. Twice, one whose example we may rarely refuse to follow, the blessed Apostle St. John, fell down to worship the angel, who showed him the mysteries of the Apocalypse. The same word (*προσκυνῆσαι*) is used here as was used of Cornelius and St. Peter,

and as is used (in the LXX.) of Nebuchadnezzar and Daniel (*προσεκύνησε*, Dan. ii. 46). And what does the angel of God say to the Apostle? "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren, that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God" (Rev. xix. 10). And again, "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellow-servant . . . worship God" (Rev. xxii. 9).

These are cases as plain as any in the old Testament can be. It is not very likely that St. John would have offered the supreme worship of *latria* to the angel. Therefore, no doubt, all kind of worship was forbidden him. And if only *latria* be forbidden, but *dulia* be a pious or necessary custom, it is certainly remarkable that neither the angel explained to St. John, nor St. Peter to Cornelius, nor St. Paul to the people of Lycaonia, the very important distinction between *latria* and *dulia*, the great sin of offering the former, and the great piety of offering the latter, to created but glorified intelligences; especially as the ambiguous word *worship* (*προσκυνῆσαι*) includes them both. Moreover, as God's revelations became successively clearer, and there is a gradual *development* of Divine truth, it is truly unaccountable that so large a germ of saint and angel-worship as the Roman Catholics discover in the old Testament, should have developed into nothing more manifest than what we thus find in the new. St. Paul, we know, earnestly warns his converts against "the worshipping of angels,"—and the word he uses (*θρήσκεια*) appears to comprehend all kinds of worship (Col. ii. 18). St. Paul was not a writer who neglected accurate distinctions, and we may fairly say, he was as profound a reasoner and as deep a theologian as any human being, even under Divine revelation, was ever privileged to become. But there is no question raised by him about *dulia* or *hyperdulia*. It is simply "Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels" (Col. ii. 18). It is a fearful thing to think, that this voluntary humility, and unauthorized worship of inferior beings, may beguile of their reward those who should worship God only.

One more instance is too pregnant to be omitted. Once, and but once, in the history of the Bible, do we hear that an angel claimed worship for himself. And he claimed it of Him whose example in worship, as in everything else, we are bound to follow. An angel of exceeding power once said to Jesus, "All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. iv. 9, 10).