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FROM UNBELIEF TO BELIEF

APOLOGETIC LECTURES

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Ad Instructionem et Defensionem!

FROM
UNBELIEF
TO
BELIEF

A Series of Apologetic Lectures Dedicated to the
Knights of Columbus and to all
Friends of Truth

PHILADELPHIA

1916

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REV. H. JOSEPH KOENENBERG, C.M.

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PREFACE.

It is with great pleasure that I announce the publication of an Apologetic Lecture Course of vital religious topics as the result of familiar conversations with the Chaplain of Bishop Neuman Council, Philadelphia. The logical and harmonious connection between the single subjects, the thorough scientific and at the same time popular treatment of all fundamental questions of faith, will enlighten and strengthen you, Dear Brother Knights, in the same spirit with which Columbus, whose name we bear, was animated and guided when he first planted the Cross on our beloved land: the spirit of intellectual and practical Catholicism. Great, indeed, is the task which the Church expects our Organization to fulfill; greater is the need of defense and vigilance, but greatest of all must be our courage, our armament, our force in the battle against unbelief and indifference. We have, Dear Brother Knights, up to this day been faithful in our loyalty to our Mother, the Holy Church; we have defended heroically her divine rights and have shown to the World and to this Country of ours that true membership in the Church includes and preserves and guarantees true, faithful citizenship to the State, because he alone who is faithful to God will be faithful to men. Let us continue with the same zeal and youthful strength our noble work for God, His Church and our fellow-men. In order to facilitate these our duties, I wish to see in the hands of every Knight a copy of these lectures, which will enable him to give an account of his Faith and to defend it against all attacks as a valiant Knight of Columbus.

JAS. A. FLAHERTY,
Supreme Knight,

Philadelphia, Dec. 25th, 1915.

INTRODUCTION.

The scope of the present Apologetic Lecture Course is to show to Catholics as well as to all friends of truth the reasonableness of our religious belief. For this purpose it proceeds with logical sequence from one proven truth to the necessary acceptance of the other, showing thus the inseparable union between Faith and Reason. Avoiding all that could offend our opponents of "good faith and will," we are fully confident that our argumentation will appeal to the reasoning mind of all those who are desirous to seek truth as well as to those who, rejoicing in the possession of this highest intellectual good, find delight in communicating it to others. As far as possible we have tried to treat the questions in popular style, not omitting, however, to refute scientifically the most current sophistical objections. Although many books treating Apologetic Questions have been published, of ponderous length and vigorous defense, yet none of these show calmly in an up-to-date argument, appealing to the American Mind, in compact logical sequence, the necessary acceptance of our religious belief. But as we well know, that the embracing of Catholic Faith comprises a double element: the persuasion of intellect and the adherence of the heart to the truth, we hope that contributing by our humble essay to the first, God in His mercy will accomplish the latter in many hearts of our erring brethren of "good will" and will strengthen the faith in the humble ones, so that there be realized the purpose of the Incarnation of His Only

begotten Son, which He Himself announced by His angels on Christmas Day:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.”

REV. JOS. KOENENBERG, C. M.

St. Vincent's Seminary, Germantown, Philadelphia,

Christmas Eve, 1915.

I.

Is There a God?

In the nineteenth century an unbeliever wrote: "If there were a God in Heaven and if He wished men to believe in Him, He should have written His name upon the firmament." In what sort of writing and in what language God should have written upon the sky His signature and all that He wished to reveal to men, unfortunately this learned man did not state. The German would have demanded this in the German language, the Englishman in the English language, the Frenchman in French, the Chinaman in Chinese—in short, with equal right, each nation would have demanded that God's handwriting be in its own mother-tongue. If every wish were satisfied, the firmament would no doubt resemble the picture post-card we sometimes see written crosswise and lengthwise, then crosswise again to the despair and confusion of the recipient. Then the unbeliever would certainly have said that such a medley upon the firmament was unworthy of a God of infinite power and wisdom. For, as an Almighty and Omniscient God, He would have found a language for His communications to man which could be understood by all. Rightly the royal singer, David, has told us, and the great Haydn has put the prophetic words into beautiful music: "The Heavens tell the glory of God and the firmament proclaims the work of His hands."

In his book, "Proofs of the Existence of God," Rev. Fr. Hammerstein proves the existence of God from the following reasons:

1. From the existence of the human race.
2. From the existence of the animal world.
3. From the existence of the vegetable world.
4. From the existence of a world at all.
5. From innumerable efficiencies in the world.
6. From the instinct of animals.
7. From the correlations of many things.
8. From our conscience.
9. From the existence of a Universal Order.
10. From the universal belief of nations.

The prince of scholastic philosophy, St. Thomas Aquinas, brings up five proofs and concludes:

1. From movable things a first Mover.
2. From acting causes a First acting cause.
3. From not necessarily existing, *i.e.*, contingent beings a necessarily existing—that is, a self-existing Being.
4. From more or less perfect things, a most perfect Being.
5. From the order of the universe, a Ruler of the universe.

The leader of modern philosophy, E. Kant, rejects every metaphysical proof and holds forth the moral one from conscience, which is sufficient for the individual, but has no worth for others.

We stand firm in the belief—and the Church has made it a dogma of faith—that we *can* by mere *reason* prove the existence of God.

All proofs may be traced back to one which contains in itself all power of demonstration. Motion, life, order, design, right and conscience presuppose a subject, consequently, the existence of the things. Hence, our proof must rely upon the existence of things, com-

monly called the argument of causality. Philosophically, the proof is as follows :

The argument of the First Cause draws from the simple fact that some things exist the conclusion that there must be a First Cause, and then from the fact that intelligent beings, namely, men, exist, the further conclusion that this First Cause must be intelligent. It can thence proceed to the ultimate conclusion that such a First Cause must be One and Infinite in all respects.

THESIS.

Not all things are effects of causes, but there exists an unproduced First Cause, endowed with intelligence and free will—in other words, *a personal God*.

There is a universally admitted valid principle, absolutely demanded by our reason, that “whatever does not exist of absolute necessity cannot exist without a proportionate cause,” because that which does not exist of absolute necessity is of itself only contingent, depending for its existence on a condition outside itself; otherwise, existing unconditionally, it would be an absolutely necessary being. This principle of causality is not only violated if we admit a beginning of existence without cause, but also if we admit such a beginning without a proportionate cause, namely, without a cause which, considered in its totality, contains a perfection at least equal to that of the effect. But not all beings can be effects; there must be something which is a cause without being the effect of another cause, and this something must be self-existent and personal.

Everything, in so far as it is an effect, is indebted for its actual existence to some other being. But supposing there be no self-existent being, then the totality

of being must be an effect, no matter whether it be a finite or an infinite series of various kinds of being. Consequently, in that supposition, whatever falls under the concept of existing being, past or present, must be indebted to another being for its existence. But this is evidently absurd, for it cannot be true without the existence of something beyond the bounds of what falls under the notion of existing being. Therefore, the supposition that there is a self-existing being is demanded by reason.

Now, among the existing beings is the human soul, an immaterial, *i.e.*, spiritual and free being. But the First Cause of an immaterial and free being cannot be a material being and one constrained by an irresistible natural impulse to the production of its effects. Consequently, the First Cause of the human soul must be an immaterial free being, which implies that we must consider a self-existent spiritual and free being to be the First Cause of man, superior to him and to the material world or what amounts to the same, the existence of a personal God is evident.

Astronomers and geologists, palæontologists and historians, agree that man did not always exist. How, then, did the first man come into existence? We pass over the question as to the origin of his body, but whence came his spiritual, freely electing soul? A spiritual and free being cannot be the outcome of a mere organic development. Therefore, the First Cause of the human soul must be an agent itself spiritual and free. And if you suppose this agent to be not a self-existing but a created spirit, that created spirit must have a self-existing spirit for its First Cause. This follows evidently from the impossibility of any series of produced causes which is not dependent upon an

unproduced First Cause; an impossibility we have proved before. The conclusion is that the First Cause of the human race is a spirit, self-existent and freely choosing—in other words, *a personal God*.

Summing up this philosophical proof, we might say: All things which do not necessarily exist derive their existence from an external cause. Now, it is generally accepted that man at one time began to exist. He has, therefore, the cause of his existence not within himself, but externally. The reason or cause for man's existence cannot, however, be a created one; otherwise, we would have an infinite circle of created things, of which one stipulates or produces the other, and is, at the same time, brought into its own existence through the link of this chain—a self-contradiction. The first cause must, therefore, be an uncreated one; that is, it must have the reason for its existence within itself. Now, man has a spiritual soul, consequently the First Cause must be spiritual, gifted in an infinite measure with intelligence and free will—in other words, a personal one. This Cause we call God, the personal God. But could not the things of the world or, at least, the fundamental element from eternity be infinite? Whence do we know that the world does not exist from eternity by force of necessity?

We know it from this, that many things in the world pass away and change. Animals die, water evaporates, planets move and thus the whole world is subject to constant change. But what is changeable does not exist of necessity, otherwise it would remain as it is. Only God does not change and has not changed. Even the creation of the world did not necessitate in Him a passing from a state of rest to work, consequently, no

change. It needed only the will of God, existing from eternity, that at the given moment the world should result out of nothing.

That the world cannot from eternity be without God Cardinal Gotti explained beautifully by a similitude: "Let us suppose," said he, "a chain consisting of many links hanging in the air. As the last link always needs a higher one by which it is supported, so all the links, and thus the entire chain would fall without a support. It is impossible for the links to be without support, even though their number were infinite. In order to exist, the world needs a constant support, a Creator, a Preserver, and this is God."

Whence does life originate? Did it begin from a lifeless matter, or does it come from a vital being, called God?

Even the unbeliever, Virchow, declares: "No one has ever seen a primitive creation, the resulting of a living being from lifeless matter, and whoever has asserted that he had has been refuted not by theologians, but by naturalists."

In the year 1868, Huxley discovered a slimy substance at the bottom of the sea. In honor of the unbelieving Professor Haeckel, it was called "bathybius Haeckeli." Haeckel triumphed: "Now, we are able to trace the miracle of the appearances of life back to this substance. We have been able to point out the infinitely manifold and complicated physical and chemical properties of albumen as the real cause of the appearances of life."

It was a pity for the learned gentleman that the slimy substance turned out to be gypsum, which had

been precipitated into a jelly-like condition, consequently a body wholly and entirely of the inanimate world and not, by any chance, a bridge to the animate world.

The great and renowned experiments of the learned Pasteur in Paris have settled the question that living beings can originate only from a living being. Darwin, himself, says in his first fundamental work, "Origin of the Species": I assume that evidently all organic beings which have ever lived on earth are descended from a primary species, into which life was breathed by the Creator."

How deeply and firmly the knowledge of the existence of God is implanted in the human heart the atheists themselves prove by their eternal futile efforts to deny.

How often have men arisen with the bold statement that they had proven there is no God. For a time they were believed, but then the old unrest returned and again there came another with new "proofs"—again, many listened and swore by him that it was now a decided fact that there is no God. A short time, and then again the old unrest—the same anxious questioning whether, after all, there were a God. Why this? Why not be content thereon? Science has proved to us that the earth is not a solid disc, but a ball revolving around the sun. And the thing is settled. No one is further disturbed about it; nobody desires new proofs, as though the old ones were insufficient. Why should it be so different with the assertion that there is no God? Why? Simply because in each human heart there is the indelible handwriting of God's existence!

Though thousands should arise and proclaim and affirm that there is no God; though they should flood the earth with ponderous tomes and books of learned

length announcing that there is no God, their undertaking would be as vain as that of the mole that would throw open his little mound and call forth, "There is no sun," and yet the sun shines, powerful and undimmed from on high.

Many men, well educated in the sciences of their profession and in other lines too, but little versed in the art of religion, or perhaps blinded by false principles and prejudices, believe neither in God nor in religion. There cannot, however, be any convinced atheist, for the deeper, the real reason, is either lack of right thinking or a deceptive quieting of the accusing voice of conscience. Many of the greatest of the most important scholars are believers—some are even exemplary Catholics.

Among astronomers, we have the Catholic: Copernicus, Kepler, Tycho de Brahe, Newton, Herschel, Arago, Leverrier, Maedler, Lamont, De Vico, Sechi, Heis.

Among the physicists and chemists, we have the believers: Huygens, Bart, Euler, Volta, Ampere, Cauchy, Davy, Liebig, Faraday, Claudius, Maxwell, Thomson, Wuellner, Perntner, Reutgen.

Among geologists and palæontologists, there are the believers: Lyell, Quatrefages, Barranda, Pfaff, Fraas, Lapparent.

Among physiologists, zoologists and anthropologists, there are Linné, Von Haller, Cuvier, Agassiz, Von Muller, Abbe Conroy, Ludwig, Pasteur, Schwann, Ranke, Hirtl, etc.

Ampere, whom the learned Arago refers to as "one of the keenest and most profound intellects which nature has ever produced," turned away for a time from religious practices as a result of evil influences,

but later his greatest solace in the overwhelming sorrows of life he found in Catholicity. He founded a society whose members met once a week for the common study of Christianity. In the year 1808 he wrote: "God has wished to prove to me that everything is vanity, save loving God and serving Him alone." The day before his death, some one wished to read to him from the "Following of Christ." His answer was that he knew the book by heart. These were his last words. Ozanam states that his conversation with Ampere almost always led up to God as the Creator of nature. Then Ampere took his mighty forehead between his hands and cried out: "How great is God, Ozanam; how great is God!" He had, indeed, entered with heart and soul into the words of the psalmist: "The Heavens tell the glory of God and the firmament proclaim the work of His hands."

II.

Has Man a Soul?

A physician wished to prove to a priest that man has no soul and asked him:

"Have you ever seen a soul?"

"No."

"Have you ever heard one?"

"No."

"Tasted one?"

"No."

"Smelt one?"

"No."

"Have you ever touched a soul?"

"Yes, thanks be," answered the priest.

"Well, then," continued the physician, "here we have four senses to one, and from this I conclude that there is no soul."

Then the priest replied by questioning in his turn:

"Since you are a doctor of medicine, will you tell me whether or not you have ever seen a pain?"

"No."

"Or heard one?"

"No."

"Smelt one?"

"No."

"Tasted one?"

"No."

"Have you ever felt a pain?"

"Yes."

"Well," continued the priest, "here we have four senses to one proving that there is no pain, and, notwithstanding, you know there is pain."

All of us, thank God, believe in the existence of the soul; but just as there are many who deny the existence of God, so there are those who deny the existence of the soul. If, among our friends, there should be one who desired instruction, how should we prove to him the existence of the soul?

First of all, then, what do we mean by the soul? We call the soul the bearer or subject of our spiritual life, the seat of our memory, intellect and will. From the nature of these faculties, we assert that their principle or subject, *i.e.*, the soul, is a spiritual being, neither organic nor material.

Every form of existence consists either in itself or in another object. For instance, surface, color, pain cannot be or exist in themselves, nor can an infinite series of such exist without a bearer to whom they belong and in whom they reside. The seat of our spiritual life, of our physical acts, must be a self-existent being which we call SOUL.

The various conditions of consciousness necessarily presuppose a possessor. Things that are perceived naturally suppose something which perceives them.

Supposing even that they were the functions of the cerebral system, yet their origin must lie in a self-existent principle or being. Motion is inconceivable without something moved. Emotion presupposes a being which feels. Passions and desires must have a source, a subject from which they emanate. Now, if we analyze our recollections, for instance, we notice that each and every one of those memories indicates and refers to the similarity and identity of our present "I" of past experience; that is to say, each of us is the same thinking and acting personality that he was five, ten or twenty years ago. But this could not be possible

if the cerebral-material organism were the self-existent or substantial principle from which our spiritual actions proceed. The unity of consciousness consequently rests upon the unity of ourselves—upon that self-existent being we call SOUL.

This proof of the existence of the soul is strengthened by the simplicity and spirituality of the soul. Experience teaches us that we have various abstract concepts or ideas which cannot be pictured, touched or sensibly perceived—for instance, being, identity, truth and so on. Now, these concepts are in their nature, simple, indivisible acts. Being indivisible, they cannot proceed from a compound principle—for example, from the brain. Let us illustrate by an example: If the simple, indivisible concept, "Truth," for instance, were the product of the entire brain matter, then either the various parts of this concept would have to unite with various parts of the brain, or each part of the brain would have to be the bearer of the whole concept, or the whole idea or concept would have to belong to one part of the brain.

It is impossible that the various parts of this concept should unite with various parts of the brain, because the act by which the brain creates the concept, "Truth," is a simple one, and consequently, in accordance with its simple nature, cannot be composed of an aggregate of separate brain atoms.

The second hypothesis is equally impossible, because if each part of the brain were the bearer of the concept, we would necessarily have several simultaneous and similar concepts. But our own consciousness and experience contradict this. We know very well that we do not conceive these simple ideas in multiplicity,

as we see many reflections of ourselves in a mirror maze.

Finally, if the entire idea were the result of a single part of the whole brain matter, then this part must either be composite, that is, material; or simple, that is, immaterial. Now, the brain, as we know, is organic, and therefore composite. Therefore, the concept cannot be the product of a single part of the brain, but must result from a simple, that is, immaterial principle which we call SPIRIT or SOUL.

This immaterial spiritual being is independent of matter in its existence, and, to a certain extent, independent of matter in its actions, and it is just this independence which makes it a spiritual principle. The proof is very simple.

The human soul is the source of various spiritual activities. The subject or bearer of spiritual activities must be itself a spiritual being. That the subject of spiritual activities must be spiritual remains to be proved.

An effect can never go beyond or exceed the power or nature of its cause, nor can an act possess more perfection than its source. Consequently, when a spiritual activity can be shown to be independent of a material organ, the principle from which it originates must also be independent. Now, we all assert that we act of our own free will. If our willing and doing, however, were dependent on some organ and were nothing but an organic process and did not have its origin in a principle independent of matter, then the moral freedom of man's actions would be denied, and there would be no such thing as responsibility. - Man would be the slave of mere matter. But no sane person

would assert or admit such a degradation. Consequently, the soul must be the self-existent, simple and spiritual principle of our life.

In conclusion, let me advance another moral proof :

What strength of will, what control of matter does not the striving for perfection and sanctity evince? Think for a moment of the heroes and heroines of Christian charity, those angels of mercy who have given up their glowing youth and their bright prospects in order to be entirely at the service of the poor, sorrow-laden humanity; the clergyman who remains on the Leper Isle, with nothing to look forward to but a ghastly life amid those poor creatures who are in the throes of a living death; the Sister of Charity who bravely faces the danger of contagion and offers at the most loathsome of sick-beds the holocaust of her young life.

Who will say or even think that they are swayed and ruled by matter, and not rather that here is shown most clearly and emphatically the soul's splendid independence of and supreme dominion over matter? Let those who have never been obliged to overcome obstacles; who have avoided every stone on their path; who have swum with the stream; who have been ruled by their passion say that matter rules man. But the men and women who see the aristocracy of man not in weakness, wealth, pleasure and idleness, but in the brave unfolding of a strong will power, are rightly indignant at such a degradation of humanity. If there were only a single such iron-willed hero, he alone would shatter the whole system of materialism. This strength of will—what is it but a proof of the Spirit? Those who deny the spirituality of the human soul

give these convincing facts a wide berth, which is a proof that they fear them.

These eloquent facts prove that it is entirely unscientific, weak and superficial to say that the brain is the soul and that man has no spiritual soul. The brain is matter, indeed; but this matter is played upon as the instrument of a Master who is not dust but spirit; yea, the very breath of the Divine Spirit, as Holy Scripture so simply and beautifully expresses it: "And God breathed into man a spirit."

III.

Is the Human Soul Immortal?

To the Christian the proof of the existence of the human soul seems to forecast the theory of its immortality. Yet not to the Christian alone is it reserved to feel the degradation to which a conclusive denial of its immortality would subject man. Mendelssohn, a Jew, has said: "Reason is a deceptive dream inspired by Jupiter, and we but cattle of a finer growth doomed to pasture in the world and die, if the soul is not immortal. If the soul is mortal, then what matters it whether I have been the honor of creation or its shame; whether I have multiplied its blessed or its wretched; then the meanest man can shun the sovereignty of God; then a dagger can cut Creation's bond that links the human with the Divine. If our spirit is to die—the wisest and the best of human kind have fooled themselves and us; all men have cherished a deception and honored its false authors, and man, less favored than the unthinking brute, deprived—I shudder at the debasement—of the hope of future life, becomes the most wretched of earth's tenants, for he thinks of death and death as the end of all." Without immortality, races are but herds which, says Darwin, fight unceasingly for existence, prey upon the other and bury their sorrow for a moment of exultation, only to raise it up again.

It is truly a painful duty to shield from the misguided mind of man the teachings upon which his dignity and honor depend. But is a defense of the immortality of the soul really necessary? You can answer for yourselves after hearing Professor Vir-

chow: "No sane being believes in man's eternal destiny, when Darwin and other modern naturalists see in him but a highly developed ape; when Schopenhauer places him on a level with dogs and swine, and when materialism wishes to show that he is immortal only in his body, not, indeed, in his soul." This, then, is the whole significance of the human race according to a false modern philosophy. Do we, on the other hand, believe anything that is not established by reason and revelation? Is it not reasonable and revealed that, after its separation from the body, the soul continues to live as a conscious, thinking and perfected being? Here is the proof:

1. PROOF FROM THE NATURE OF THE SOUL.

The human soul must be immortal by its very nature if it cannot be destroyed either, first, by natural corruption; or, second, by accidental destruction; or, third, by loss of the vital principle.

It cannot be destroyed by corroding naturally, since it is not composed of parts subject to corruption. Neither can it be destroyed by accident, since it is intrinsically independent of the body, and so, not subject to destruction with the body. Nor can it be destroyed by the loss of the vital principle, since it has its origin of life not in the body, but in itself, and therefore exists externally by nature of its being endowed with what God endowed it and of which He will not deprive it. Therefore, the rational soul cannot by its very nature cease to be. Consequently it is immortal.

2. PROOF FROM THE FIRST.

God, the Creator of Nature, does not deprive creatures of their inherent qualities. But the human soul

is by its nature immortal and by the natural order of things possesses God's everlasting supporting influence. There is, however, no reason why God should deprive a creature created for His glory, whether it be in Heaven or in Hell, of His supporting influence. Consequently, the soul is immortal.

3. PROOF FROM THE INSATIATE DESIRE OF HAPPINESS.

Every one yearns for that summit where perfect, everlasting happiness causes him to say, "Oh, it is good to be here!" Yet neither among the lower nor the higher classes is this yearning satisfied. Ennui scourges the wealthy of the beau monde; need dissatisfies the poor. The beast lives content; man, though he possess all that is beautiful and agreeable in this world, still is not happy. With Cicero, he must say: "There is no happiness in that which you must fear to lose." The human will rests not in any finite creature.

Shall this highest of rational instincts never be allayed? If not, then the loftiest and best yearnings of the noblest and best work of this rational universe are doomed to be forever vain. If so, the soul will achieve its happiness in immortal bliss.

4. PROOF FROM MORALITY.

The strongest moral sanction is that based upon eternal reward and eternal punishment. The imperfect obedience of ethical laws is commensurate with the inadequacy of the threatened temporal rewards and chastisements. Only the fear of an unhappy hereafter can keep man entirely from evil, and the hope of a blessed one can establish him perma-

nently in good. The immortality of the soul makes morality reasonable.

5. PROOF FROM THE UNIVERSAL BELIEF OF NATIONS.

The races of all ages agree that the soul is immortal. Though the belief is vague, yet is it even found among the crudest peoples, that death does not end all. The Egyptians, the Jews, the Greeks, the Indians, the ancient pagan Teutons, all believed in existence after death. They had their Hades, their Elysium, their Valhalla, their home of the Blessed, their sacrifices for the dead. The development may be false; the fundamental idea is the same. Such a practical universality of belief must have its source in man's rational nature, and, if it be not true, is an error fundamentally affecting his moral conduct. This latter condition we cannot admit without bending towards scepticism. Consequently, we hold tenaciously that the immortality of the soul is verifiable.

6. PROOF FROM JUSTICE OF GOD.

The justice of God demands that the human soul be immortal. Justice must reward the good and punish the evil, if not here, then hereafter. No one will attempt to prove that the pleasures and goods of life are apportioned strictly according to moral righteousness. True, many murderers and thieves meet with retribution even in this life. Yet, how often do not the wicked rejoice and the faithful mourn; how often is good crushed to earth while evil flourishes? Thousands upon thousands of innocent people have died dishonored, marked with the brand of shame. Their persecutors and calumniators followed them in great

honor. Is this the end? Our consciousness will not permit us to believe so. Each and every one of us believes that he is answerable for his moral behavior not only to human justice, but to the Almighty Power that rules over all men. There the scales of justice will be balanced. Since justice is not to be found here, there must exist an hereafter where it will be found.

We have but reminded ourselves that we Christians stand on the firm ground of reality in our belief in the immortality of the soul; that truth and science bear witness for us. We would be blind to facts, did we fail to see the difference between men and animals. The universe would still be the great riddle, a Chinese puzzle, if the human soul is not immortal. There is truth in St. Augustine's: "Thou hast created us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are never at rest until they find their rest in Thee."

IV.

Is There a Divine Ruling or Providence and a Supernatural Order of the World?

Our theses have thus far established (a) the existence of God as a necessary Being, and His office of Creator; (b) the existence, spirituality and immortality of the human soul.

From this, reason imposes upon man, not as a counsel, but as a stringent duty, the acknowledgment in the moral order of supreme subjection, and in the physical order of supreme dependence. Man cannot without incurring guilt, positively reject the belief that "God is and is a Rewarder of good and an Avenger of evil," and that "In Him we live and move and have our being."

If, then, the soul will after death continue to exist, so also will its relation to God continue to exist—the relation, we mean, of creature with Creator. But its life will be a new life—a bodyless life, a fleshless existence: an existence above nature; a supernatural life. Again, the conditions of this supernatural life cannot logically be determined by purely natural means. A new relationship is postulated. God must, in His bounty, clothe certain natural acts with supernatural merit, in order that we ourselves may determine the joy or sorrow of our future state. This, our Creator and Preserver, has done by becoming our last and final end.

Consider the American Indian or the Chinese coolie, both in utter ignorance of Christianity. The one huddled in his wigwam dreaming of the Happy Hunt-

ing Grounds; the other dividing his time between work and rest. Shall these be damned? Their ignorance is blameless, their lives do not reproach them. A god they know, a Supreme Being, but vague is their conception of Him. They picture him not as the Jehovah of the old law, nor as the Triune God of the new. Yet, although the wonderful words of Christ's priests have never fallen upon their ears; although the beautiful plan of Redemption has never been unfolded to their eyes—their Creator and yours has not forgotten them. They may come to Him by paths as primitive as the life they lead. God offers them His grace, and gives to their natural acts a supernatural sanction. They, too, are led gently by the Divine Hand. If, with docility, they respond, after death their soul will enter into union with their Maker.

Here again, in the Catholic view of the "Divine Providence and Supernatural Order of the World," we have an elegant example of the harmony between Faith and Reason, which the following exposition will, I trust, serve only to intensify.

The purpose of Creation is not, in fact could not be, other than God's glory or the manifestation of His perfections. Even in the direction of human affairs, which are but faint copies of the Divine, we strive to lead each to its best end. After inquiring into the Original of this principle, we realize that God could not have created anything without a destiny; and to have ordered a work of His hands to any other destiny but Himself, would exhibit imperfection either in His Knowledge or in Power.

Need we add that this divine direction stops not at the first creative act when God drew out of the

nothingness that was, the things that were on the First Seven Days of the World? For the preservation of the World, the maintenance of created beings, is only a successive, a continued creation, the powers thereof being supplied from the Infinite Fund of God. We are accustomed to call the Divine activity that causes created things to display the Glory of God and His infinite perfections, *Divine Providence*.

As accurately as Creation conforms to the Divine Plan, so accurately does Divine Providence, considered in its effects, reveal a Divine Design. For the world is gradually progressing along the lines that the Mind of God willed and foresaw that it would progress, and each single creature fits into the Divine Scheme as threads fit into the design of the loom.

This is but natural if we remember that no right is so supreme as the right of Creation, and no vigilance so necessary as the eternal vigilance of God. Suspend the Divine interference and you annihilate the world.

The lower orders of creation comply out of necessity with the Divine Law. The heavens show forth the glory of the Lord; the spheres that spin in their allotted orbits are never early, nor ever late; the sea's surging waves heed the command "So far shalt thou come and no further"; the flowers that carpet the fields are not beyond the pale of God's all-seeing eyes; the beasts, the birds obey His voice. He called to the whirlwind, to the waters of the sea, to the planets of heaven, and they replied: "Lord, here we are!" He makes known His will to all creation. Shall man alone cry back: "I will not serve!" Man, who alone has power to disobey! Do you not now see the sanction of the Moral Law, and that the one great reason

why you should obey it, is found on the lips of the Crusaders of old: God wills it! Conformity to God's moral law is the fulfillment of Divine Providence.

The complex physical laws of nature; the moral law that reaches through the free will to the dominion of rational creatures; the inward tending after good; the insatiate longing for satisfying joys; the whispering of the voice of conscience—all supernatural religious knowledge, faculties and impulses have for their object a single common cause—the realization of the Divine Plan. They are the sign posts strewn along the highway of life that direct creation to its God.

We, mankind, are above all other creatures honored as instruments in the Divine Design. He who cannot but do well, and does so, does well. He who could do ill, yet does it not, does better. The former is the lot of lower orders; the latter is the portion of man. They obey of necessity, servilely: we obey from choice, freely.

Yet, while to conform ourselves to the Eternal Scheme freely is a privilege, it is none the less a duty. We *can* (or cannot) mould ourselves to the Divine Model, and again we *cannot*. This power, however, does not abolish our obligation—always and at all times “we must.” So the expression of the Omnipotent Will is Law.

That we should honor and glorify God by our service is one of the purposes of our existence. We have been created to know God, to love Him and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in Heaven. Immediately the rational mind conceives an objection; a disorder. Shall the

possession of so great a gift as the Vision of the All-beautiful God, a truly supernatural favor, hinge upon the performance of hum-drum daily actions, base and natural? But wait! The Almighty has thought before the feeble one. God has foreseen the objection—or rather He has caused its existence. According to His will, He has conditioned the possession of the supernatural, on the performance of the natural. His method has been by establishing the Supernatural Order in the World. What is purely natural truly could not of itself ever purchase what is purely supernatural; so He has set a supernatural value upon certain natural acts. He has, as it were, gilded the penny that it may buy even as the dollar. The acts are those of the moral order; the alchemy, the philosopher's stone is *grace*.

Here, then, is a wonderful feature of Divine Providence. God, whose gifts are totally His own, and the dispensation of which is wholly in His hands, has deigned to lift up man above his order, and has bestowed on him the truly supernatural power of meriting the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Divine Wisdom is revealed in the “modus agendi” of the Supernatural Order, for out of consideration for our lower nature God has deigned to use material means, natural channels through which pass the supernaturalizing flood of grace. Through the Sacraments and Prayer come the force that vivifies supernaturally our works that of themselves are supernaturally dead.

The purpose of creation is renewed in the supernatural order, and more, it is elevated. If God could be glorified by the natural order, how much more is this possible in the new order? And if God mani-

fested His love by creation, does He conceal it by lifting creation nearer to Himself? The supernatural order is based on the natural. The faculties are gifted with undue powers—they are endowed with virtue that reaches away and beyond their own intrinsic due. In order that man might clearly progress along the path towards his supernatural destiny, God spoke to man, He revealed Himself to Him.

In our modern times, too little thought is given to God's providence. Too deeply absorbed with earthly things, man forgets the inhabitants of the other world; he forgets that the God who shapes the destinies of nations, directs also the fate of the individual. "It is through me," he says in David, "that kings reign and legislators give laws." A prevalent erring concept of evil can readily be traced to a false philosophy of history, that excludes the dabbling of God. The only hope of light and consolation lies in the return to the Catholic views.

May these few lines help to revive in us St. Paul's words. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being."

Has God Revealed a Special Mode of Worship, or Is Religion an Invention?

That religion and God are mere human inventions, mere fictions of the mind of man, is a widely diffused notion among Socialists. Religion and God would disappear, they erroneously teach, if no one would bother with them, and it is lamentably true that many put this pernicious doctrine into practice. One of those Socialists, Liebknecht, has said: "Our party denies all authority in Heaven and on earth."

But can this be the truth? Is Religion a human invention? No! The true worship of God was known to the first man who dwelt on this earth. God, Himself, revealed to Adam a religion, a simple worship, a moral law, the principle of which he had implanted in the human heart, and therefore God is the Author of Religion, or of that relation, interiorly and exteriorly manifested, of dependence towards a Supreme Being.

In this primary religion, the head of the family was the priest; he transmitted to posterity the proper mode of worship and all revealed doctrines to be unto them an everlasting inheritance.

Diligent, indeed, must have been the endeavors of those rugged pioneers, for no race ever existed that did not have some form of religion. The learned O. Peschel finishes his ethnographic studies with the question: "Is there a nation anywhere on earth without some religious practice or concept?" No, this nation does not exist. And again, Max Muller (Ori-

gin and Development of Religion) says: "After making all possible investigations we are prepared to assert that no human being who is without some semblance of religion can be found."

How, then, did man come to have religion? We will first glance at some ridiculous opinions we occasionally overhear.

1. The cheapest explanation is that which endeavors to trace back the origin of Religion to the cunning of some priests or statesmen.

Of course, they forgot to explain precisely how it happened that all nations in all times and in all places could be so completely deceived. How could a mere fraud in such a vitally important matter, a fraud (if you will have it) which demanded sacrifices keenly repellent to man's pride and self-indulgence, how could this be perpetrated through all the fluctuations of time? What is the inventor's name? Why has it not come down to posterity?

2. Others, for instance, H. Spencer, trace the origin of religion to the fear of the spirits of the dead—some tribes believed their chieftains were immortal, that they remained as ghosts and walked among the living, that they hovered around the tombs and were able to do harm or good in the darkness of the night.

Here one may well wonder who is the more childish, men who are afraid of ghosts or the God-denying infidel who makes such a statement. We may ask how it came about that men thought that the dead lived as spirits, doing good or evil? Why did not they worship slain animals? How can one explain by this fear the widespread belief in God, as Supreme Being, rewarding and punishing, which we find even among cannibals?

3. According to Ed. V. Hartmann, religion in its primitive form is nothing else but man's belief in a similar but far superior Being, who manifests His superiority not only in hostile persecution, but also in active benevolence.

The reverence with which the dog looks up at his master is, according to the philosopher, religion. Just as the dog looks up at his master with respect, so man views with respect, astonishment, fear and hope the forces and phenomena of nature, attributes to them divine attributes and thus religion is brought into existence. Therefore, our friend concludes: Fido's respect for his master is religion. If this is one's idea of religion, of course it is very easy to found a religion. But even here our philosopher did not succeed. Man as a creature endowed with reason is far superior to the dog. But are the forces of nature infinitely superior to man? Man is made of matter and spirit and is he not spiritually far superior to the material forces of nature? How could he adore these forces, if he were not persuaded that beyond these forces there is a far Superior Being, Who holds them in the hollow of His hand? How will Hartmann explain the universal belief in God's existence, the immortality of the soul, the reward in the world to come, these capital points of religion?

All these explanations are untenable and arbitrary inventions. The historians prove that the first men and most ancient nations originally believed in "our" God; later, however, nations degenerated and lost the purity of belief and worshipped various deities.

The various forms of superstition, it is true, originated from different sources, but religion itself, the belief in God, has been given to men by God, Him-

self. The All-wise Creator could not leave men on earth like ignorant children, giving them no chance to find their way to the house of their Heavenly Father. Our first parents had to be instructed in a sufficient knowledge of God and in the most important duties towards Him. It was easy for them, since they were not blinded by passion, to descend from the contemplation of the visible world and the moral law of their conscience up to God as their Creator and ultimate end. Therefore, monotheism (the belief in *one* God) is the primitive form of religion and not polytheism (the belief in many gods). This is undoubtedly proved by the ancient history of religion.

Holy Writ, the truth of which has been a thousand times proved, gives us a concept of the primitive religion. It tells us that Adam and Eve, after their fall, trembled before God. But fear of God is manifestation of religion. God's judgment over the serpent, over Adam and Eve, the promise of a Messiah, the holocaust of Cain and Abel, are all signs that the first men knew and practiced the true religion. Further: it is related how through Seth and Henoch, the true religion was transmitted to the posterity of Adam. There is also no doubt that Noah had preserved the right form of worship. But soon men rebelled against God, religion became a yoke they tried to shake off. The Bible speaks of Cain's rebellion and the iniquity of his posterity, which was so great that it repented God that he had made man. In His mercy He spared Noah and his family because they alone practiced true religion. The religion revealed to Adam, propagated by his posterity and preserved in its pure form by Noah was spread by Noah's sons over the whole world, But as before, so also

after the deluge, man neglected the true worship and fell into great immorality. God resisted human pride by the confusion of languages and thereby He effected the separation of nations. He then chose one nation, the Hebrews, and gave to them certain laws.

While other nations adored false deities and observed detestable religious practices, the Israelites preserved and developed more and more the true worship. But God made known His power by terrible miracles, not only to the Hebrews, but also to the Egyptians, Cananites, Syrians and Babylonians, that all might know Him as the Lord. In fact, the pagan nations more than once recognized the God of Israel as the only true God, although they could not make up their minds to worship Him alone.

We prove also easily from the writings of the Chaldeans, Persians, Chinese, Greeks and Romans that they recognized one Supreme God, although they did not worship Him in a pleasing way. The Persians, for instance, believed according to Mohsin Fani, in olden times in a Supreme God, Creator of the world, who governs the world by his providence, a God whom men must love and adore. In the course of time, the religion of the Persians was completely changed; not only did they adore the sun and fire, but also other deities—Jupiter, Venus and even the water. The Hebrews, too, fell many times into idolatry and embraced the vices and errors of their pagan neighbors. But God brought them back through punishments to rectitude and made known to them through His prophets how He would perfect religion in future time, when all mankind would be able to embrace it.

In the fullness of time, under the government of

the Emperor Augustus, the dominator of the then known world, the Son of God, Himself, announced the universal religion, founded the Kingdom of God on earth, the state of God as St. Augustine calls it, which, however, will find its ultimate perfection in Heaven. His plan was to assemble on earth one flock in one fold, indeed a divine plan, brought to realization by God's power and wisdom.

God chose for the propagation of the Gospel poor and unlearned fishermen, but the powerful and wise of the world could not resist. The world, after long resistance, bowed down under the yoke of Jesus Christ and acknowledged that the Gospel taught the only one and true worship, which was no other than that which was revealed to Adam, Moses and the prophets, with this difference only: that it was now more perfect and appropriate and useful to all men on earth. It seemed evident now that from now on an improvement of religion was no more to be expected and that, therefore, all later invented religious systems carry the stamp of untruth.

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days, hath spoken to us by His Son.” (Hebrews I. 1.)

Is Jesus Christ the Son of God?

During his exile on the island of St. Helena the emperor Napoleon I. was often delighted and consoled by religious discussions with his companions. One day the sublimity of their subject roused and animated the speakers. They were speaking of the Divinity of Christ. Napoleon defended the truth that Christ was divine. General Bertrand, his adversary and the only one to hold his ground, was speaking: "Sire," said he, "I cannot understand how so great a man as your Majesty can assume that the Supreme Being has ever shown himself in human shape, with body, face, mouth and eyes like man. That Jesus Christ's genius was the greatest and his mind the purest, I readily admit, and that he was the keenest and most original of legislators; He might be all this and yet remain a mere man, instructing disciples, inspiring faithful souls in the same way as did Orpheus, Confucius and Brahma. The Greek and Egyptian deities have been dethroned and their places usurped by the Jewish God. Jesus, a great man and the successor of great men, allowed himself to be adored, because his predecessors, Isis and Osiris, Jupiter and Juno and many others, had the presumption to exact adoration. No other magic charm has Jesus exercised over his contemporaries than were employed by those legendary deities and heroes. If he succeeded in inspiring the multitudes, in changing the whole world, I see herein only the power of genius, only the active force of a great soul, which moves the world by its genius, as so many conquerors,

Alexander, Caesar, Mohammed, and you yourself, sire, have done with the sword."

Napoleon replied: "Men I know and I tell you, Jesus is not a mere man. Shallow minds find a likeness between Christ and the founders of empires, the conquerors and deities of other religious systems. There is no such likeness. Between Christianity and every other religion lies a bridgeless chasm. The wise men of Greece, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Anaxagoras and Pericles accepted paganism never as absolute truth. These great men were amused rather with the histories of the gods as with charming fairy-land stories, but they never adored these deities. On the contrary, as soon as the apostles had delivered their gospel message, the greatest men believed its mysteries and its dogmas; they believed with a faith that was alive and active! What distinguishes those famous deities, those Greek or Roman legislators: Numa, Pompilius, Lycurgus, the priests in India and Memphis, a Confucius or a Mohammed or whatever their name may be from all other men? Nothing, absolutely nothing! They made chaos of moral doctrine. Has any one of them said anything new about our future destiny, our soul, the nature of God or the creation? Not one could tell us what is most important for us. Their doctrine of deities is so vague, so obscure, that it does not pierce the core of the religious question. With Christ everything is different. In Him everything is admirable. His mind surpasses my own. Between Him and me or any one else in the world no comparison is possible; the basis thereof is missing. Neither His way of thinking, nor the truths He announces find their explanation in mere

human nature. His birth, His life, His doctrine, which by itself resolves all difficulties, His gospel, His singular and mysterious being, His appearance, His power, His continued influence over all centuries and all empires, all stand before me like a great, deep, inscrutable mystery. Is it not clear that true religion cannot be confined to our country alone? Truth must embrace the universe. Such is Christianity, the teaching of Christ. It is the only religion not acknowledging nationality, the only one which establishes perfect unity and fraternity among men, the only one which as wholly spiritual points out to all the kingdom of their God and Creator as their true home. Christ is the Son of God because time disappears before Him; all His dogmas point to eternity. Therefore, the horizon of His fame reaches the infinite. Christ reigns in life and even beyond—over death. The past, the present and the future are in His hands. “Jesus Christ yesterday, to-day, and the same forever.”

Such was the judgment of the great thinker, Napoleon. Such indeed is the truth. Jesus was Man and God! In the proof for Christ’s divinity we distinguish a threefold element; first, as the basis of this truth Christ’s own words declaring His divinity; secondly, the confirmation of this truth by Christ’s miracles, especially by the miracle of His resurrection, and thirdly, the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies in the person of Christ. In the honor of Jesus Christ, in the name of the teaching Church, I establish my thesis and say: If Christ, asserting that He was the Son of God, was truly not the Son of God, then He was an impostor; but it is absurd to

believe that He was an impostor: Therefore, Christ was the Son of God.

The words "I am the Son of God" admit of a triple interpretation. If Christ was insincere, they may be false; if Christ was deluded, they are false; if Christ was neither insincere nor deluded, He meant to speak the truth and His words are true. If the very thoughts of Christ were revealed by His words, we must exclude the first hypothesis. St. Paul is our authority when we assert that Christ "*thought* it no robbery to make Himself equal to God." So His words and His thoughts agree, and all insincerity vanishes.

Consequently, neither did the Son of Mary admonish others who thought Him to be the Son of God, but time and again, in private gatherings and in public throngs, before friends and enemies, the expression leaps from the lips of the ardent believers, "Verily, Thou art the Son of God!" Who will dare to gaze upon the Divine Face that thrilled the hearts of lovers and won the friendship of the little children and say it was a mere mask? Who can behold the burning tears He shed upon the tomb of Lazarus and scoff: "Ah! a consummate Actor!" Who can study His life of heroic and holy deeds, immaculate of falsehood, teeming with the most affectionate protestations, and cry: "I grant He was truthful in all else, but in this my Friend has deceived me"? Is not a charge of insincerity here tantamount to such impious accusations? No! Christ did not lie. Even His enemies admit this; yet illogically they say: "He did not lie, only He meant not what He said." We, however, hold that Christ

did not lie, and so He meant just what He said. Our conclusion leaves us the choice of two alternatives: Was Christ deluded or did He know whereof He spoke?

Shall it be asserted that Christ was His own deceiver, imagining Himself to be what He was not? For my first answer I refer to the fact that He proved His divinity by frequent miracles, the supernatural character of which cannot for a moment be called in question: "If you will not believe me, believe my works!" and St. John says that Christ worked the works of God—Miracles! Shall we say, then, that God made use of His power to confirm the assertion of a deluded creature, of a man setting himself up as the consubstantial Son of God? Shall it be said that God left us nineteen hundred years long in the miserable state of idolatry, so that we adore on the altar what is not adorable? No, God cannot be the author of evil—the devil—not He—is the "Father of lie"—His miracles then are a proof of His divinity, are certain signs that He stood in the continual favor of God. Since He did always the things that pleased the Father, although the voice was silent throughout His life, the attitude was the same as when at His baptism the words came down from Heaven: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

After such testimony it were blasphemy to assert that Christ was deluded when He claimed for Himself the title of God.—If there be anything certain in the teaching of the Gospel, it is Christ's own declaration of His divinity. This was the culminating point of His doctrine, the fulcrum of His authority, the **reason of the faith** He imposed.

"I and the Father are one," He says in St. John (X. 30); "They are one in nature, because the Father is in Him and He in the Father (38) one in power, because whatsoever the Father does, the Son also does in like manner (V. 19); one in Their claims to our worship, because all must honor the Son as they honor the Father (V. 23); one in all other absolute perfections, because "whatsoever the Father hath, the Son likewise possesses."

This was so manifestly laid down in our Lord's teaching and so often and directly did He assert that He was God, the Son of God, equal to His Father, that His enemies took occasion from it to persecute, accuse and crucify Him. "Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God" (John X. 33). In order to have a greater evidence I point to the words in St. Matthew: "Whom do men say that the Son of Man is?" asked Jesus of His disciples. And they said: "Some say that Thou art John the Baptist and others Elias and others Jeremias or one of the prophets." That is, when people behold the austerity of Thy life, they liken Thee to John the Baptist; when they witness Thy zeal for God's glory, they imagine that Thou art another Elias; when they drink in the wisdom of Thy teaching, they believe that Thou art one of the prophets, sent into the world by God to renew the wonders of bygone generations. But the Master desired to know still more; to know what they themselves thought of Him and this because they were the chosen ones, possessed with fuller knowledge and therefore He asked them: "But whom do you say that I am?" And Simon Peter, answering, said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." Evidently there is no question here of a sonship by adoption, such as be-

longs to persons in the state of grace. John the Baptist, Elias, Jeremias and the other prophets were children of God by adoption, but Peter's confession is to be understood as acknowledging in our Lord a truly divine nature, consubstantial with His Father. Now if our Lord did not look upon Himself as God, He should have rebuked His disciple and protested against such a declaration. But he administers no reproof to him, on the contrary, Jesus declares Peter blessed on account of that very confession of faith; He asserts that it comes not from flesh and blood, but is inspired by His heavenly Father; He promises to reward it with the highest dignity: Peter is to be the foundation-stone of His Church. There can, then, be no doubt the disciple proclaimed the divinity of His Master, and the Master confirmed the statement of His disciple. Who art Thou, Lord? We end this question with the cry of the heathen centurion as, sore afraid, he stood in the noonday darkness beside the Cross: "Indeed this Man was the Son of God!"

VII

Are Miracles Possible?

The denial of God's existence has for its necessary consequence the denial of miracles, because every miracle loudly proclaims God as absolute master of His creation. In ancient times, says Schanz, Sceptics and Pantheists strenuously maintained that miracles were impossible. And since the rise of Deism, this denial has been the watchword of all forces drawn up in battle array against Christianity. It is the war-cry of Spinoza, Hume and the entire pantheistic and semi-pantheistic host. It is the paean of modern rationalists and pantheists, who regard the impossibility of miracles as self-evident. Neither mechanical nor idealistic Monism, nor shallow Deism, nor Dualism can give truce or quarter to miracles. For the Monist sees in all things a necessary evolution, either material or spiritual, of universal being, while the Deist banishes God, after creation, to an airy region beyond the universe. The one point in which all these systems agree is in denying, or setting aside, or scrupulously avoiding all reference to the supernatural. For, as science is bounded by nature, and as all but experience and sense-perceptions are beyond its ken, concern about the supernatural is considered beneath the dignity of a scientific man. And in truth, the theist's standpoint is the only one from which miracles can be proved possible. According to it miracles must necessarily be possible, because God's will and almighty power are infinite, and because without contradicting Himself, He can, in His infinite

wisdom, employ the creatures He has made for higher ends and purposes. Here the proof.

What is a miracle? St. Thomas answers:

A miracle is a sensible effect, produced by God, which transcends all the forces of nature.

Now, an event may transcend the forces of nature in three different ways. Firstly, it may involve an act which no power in nature can ever produce under any circumstances or conditions whatever; for instance, to bring back to life a cadaver in the state of corruption.

Secondly, it may involve an act which nature may indeed produce, but not under the same circumstances, as for instance, the flowering of a dry and dead branch in the depths of winter. Nature can produce blossoms and flowers on a branch, but not under such circumstances.

Thirdly, it may involve an act which nature may indeed produce but not in the same manner. If, for example, a man have his legs broken, nature may knit together the shattered bones and heal the wounds by a slow and gradual process. But a sudden and instantaneous and complete cure could not be ascribed to unassisted nature, but would partake of the character of a miracle.

Why are such events denied?

It can only be on one of two grounds. It must be either because God cannot transcend the forces of nature, or it must be because He will not. If we are believers in God's existence it can be only for one or another of these two reasons. Following Mgr. Vaughan's argument we might say that both objections are utterly groundless.

To assert that God, the Omnipotent Creator, is hampered and restricted in His operations by the very creatures to whom He has given existence, is such an extravagant statement that it is difficult to see how any reflecting mind can entertain it for one moment. Its best refutation is simply to recall facts which we all, as Christians, openly admit. As we are all fully aware: God exists independently of creatures, He existed when nothing else existed. Then (to speak in a human way) a moment came when He determined to exercise His Omnipotence, and to call other beings into existence. He founded the earth and stretched the heavens, and established laws to govern and control all that He created. These laws, which we find running through all nature, are His, just as much as the objects that they govern. He is absolutely Lord and Master, not only of the material universe which we can see, but of the forces and powers which we cannot see. Nothing can withstand His power or offer any opposition to His will.

So dependent are all creatures on God that nothing can endure for one brief moment unless He support it. For God to forget any creature would mean the end of that creature. It would at once cease to be. Did He relax His hold on any being whatsoever, that being would fall back into original nothingness as certainly and as promptly as a stone now held between my fingers would fall to earth were I to open my hand.

It stands to reason that He who made all things and who gave laws to rule all things, and whose assistance and support are needed to maintain them,

must possess full power to alter, or suspend, or modify what, at every moment, is so absolutely dependent upon Him. The difficulty in admitting miracles, if difficulty there be, cannot possibly come from any want of power on the part of God. We may then dismiss the first objection without further delay.

But is there any greater force in the second objection? Evidently not. It is objected that any change in the laws of nature, established by God, is impossible, because it would imply a change in the Unchangeable, and that it would indicate an alteration in the divine mind and purpose, and further, that the whole of nature is so intimately connected and bound together that an exception or a relaxation or a suspension in any law would mean a dislocation of the entire universe and tend to breed confusion. But such reasoning betrays an ignorance which is little creditable to the objector.

The Divine immutability is in no way compromised by a miracle, since a miracle argues no change in the decrees of God. St. Augustine expresses the whole doctrine with his usual accuracy and precision, in a single sentence: "Deus opera mutat, non consilium." God produces a change in external things, but there is no change in His own mind. Both the laws and the exceptions to those laws fall under the same divine Providence. He does not first establish a law and then suspend it when some special and unforeseen circumstance arises, but he establishes the law with its suspension. There is no future in God's knowledge, and nothing unforeseen. Every circumstance which to us is future, is seen by Him, as

actually present. His plans are laid from the beginning, with the full and present consciousness of every prayer that will ever be addressed to Him, and of every circumstance that would make a miracle useful or desirable. The interruption of a law, or the suspension of a decree, on account of exceptional circumstances, such as the need of manifesting His power, or the testifying to the truth of some doctrine, is all provided for and arranged from eternity, and denotes no shadow of mutability in the mind of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. To deny this argues confusion in the mind of the objector.

But some object to miracles because they think that any disturbance of the regular and orderly sequence of events tends to throw the whole mechanism of the universe out of gear. But is this true?

It is so far from being true that even we, ordinary sinful men and women, are constantly interrupting and interfering with the action of nature's laws in all parts of the world by the exercise of our free wills, but without any disastrous consequences following.

It may, of course, be urged that we suspend the action of a law only by the application of a higher law. Be it so. This creates no difficulty. For God's will is the supreme law, so surely His interference is not so much the abolition of law as the predominance of a higher over an inferior law. Consider how man himself can suspend or reverse the action of the laws of nature. Take the law of gravitation. It is wholly amenable to our will. An example will show. Here is a heavy stone resting on the ground. The

weight of gravity tends to keep it fastened to the earth. But I stretch down and, seizing hold of the stone, I lift it up over my head, a distance of six feet. What has happened? I have not indeed destroyed the attraction of gravity. No. But I have, in this particular case, and so far as the stone is concerned, rendered it inoperative. Have I, in consequence, thrown the whole machinery of the Universe out of gear? Evidently not. Now, that which I can do in a limited way God can do in an unlimited way.

Every day men perform action contrary to the natural law, thus modifying their effects. The physician checks, reverses and neutralizes the influence of many diseases which, generally speaking, would really bring death. The engineer, by controlling the forces of steam, bends to his will the greatest energies of material nature which obeys him with such docility that one can truly say man today acts like a God, so wonderful are his works. And if man, with his extremely circumscribed powers, can so modify and control and suspend the action of some of nature's laws, is it reasonable to deny to God and His chosen representatives the power of modifying and controlling and suspending the operations of all nature's laws, even the laws of death and disease? No!

The miracles of the past and present show that God's hand is not shortened, but that now, as always, He is the Master in His own creation and can do whatsoever He wills and each miracle contributes to the universal accord of nature.

Unus Omnipotens, Deus!

One Almighty God!

Can Miracles As Such Be Recognized?

Miracles lie far outside of that which natural forces alone can produce. For the particular act God sets aside the laws of nature; He accomplishes immediately by His Own power, what ordinarily He performs mediately through the forces of nature. So not nature but God is the efficient cause of miracles. The question arises, therefore: If at any time a man can say: this or that effect is impossible to merely natural forces, there God's almighty power is evident. In other words: Can miracles as such be recognized? Those who say that miracles as such cannot be recognized with certitude base their opinion on two grounds: first, man knows nature's forces only imperfectly, and therefore must fear that what he considers as a miracle be merely the effect of a natural force unknown till now. Secondly, man is not able to distinguish true miracles from the false miracles of the demon. In order to recognize with certitude a miracle as such and to distinguish it from apparently miraculous events, three facts have to be established, namely: The historical, the philosophical and the theological truth, *i. e.*, the reality of the miraculous event must be shown; it must transcend nature's forces, and thus be ascribed to God's intervention. If a number of men who have witnessed an event speak of it with the pure intention to tell the truth, neither adding nor omitting anything to those who have not been aware of the fact; these latter must believe it.

One would think this opinion would not find any opposition, and yet the fanatic denier of God, Vol-

taire, has said: "If before my eyes and in the presence of two thousand men a miracle would happen on the market place in Paris, I would rather mistrust those four thousand eyes than the natural order." Such are the extravagant proceedings of modern unbelievers. They say: "Natural laws do not change." "But two thousand men have seen the event." "Oh, that does not matter—the two thousand deceived themselves." These are the same men that speak so loudly about the courage of science, its rejection of any supposition, and here they are so stuck up with supposition that they deny the most evident facts simply because they do not like them. This cannot be called courage, but cowardice and fear.

Rightly says Hettinger (*Revealed Religion*, page 85): "Viewed in its external aspect, a miracle is a fact, perceptible to the senses like every other fact of experience, and is therefore capable of proof, according to the ordinary rules of evidence. Its extraordinary character in no way invalidates the trustworthiness of the witnesses testifying to its occurrence, but only demands a stricter and more careful scrutiny, and the evidence, if found credible, should be accepted as true. If every event of an exceptional character is therefore to be rejected as incredible, there would be an end to history, and a subversion of the moral order of the world, upon which all human authority rests."

In order to recognize with certainty the philosophical truth of a miracle, it is not absolutely necessary to know all the forces of nature and their effects. It is sufficient to know negatively the effectiveness of

nature's forces, that is, to point out what nature, under certain circumstances, absolutely cannot produce. When the blind man in the Gospel received his sight it required no extraordinary sagacity on the part of his parents and relations and friends who had known him and compassionated him on his infirmity for twenty years or more, to note what had taken place. It was clear to all that, before Our Lord touched him, he was blind. It was equally patent to all that afterward he had the complete use of his eyes. The born-blind suddenly received his sight. He who could not see now sees. If the testimony of men on a simple matter of fact such as that is not proof enough, then human evidence can never demonstrate anything, and the very courts of law had better be closed.

"Miracles," so Spinoza, Hume, Hobbes and others proclaim, "are a symbol of ignorance. Before we can recognize a miracle, they say, we must have an exact knowledge of all nature, laws and forces and be able to form an accurate estimate of God's immediate action. To comply with this last condition a special revelation is needed; and even were it at hand it might be non-suited by the plea of deception." But this condition is not strictly necessary to enable us to recognize a miracle, as it is already implied in the first. For an effect that baffles all the forces of nature must be produced by the highest cause. "May we, then, set down miracle narratives as due to a defective knowledge of nature's forces? Is a witness not acquainted with the whole range of medicine, disqualified from giving evidence of the raising of a dead man to life? Why demand in their case what is im-

possible, namely, an absolute knowledge of all nature's forces? The demand is preposterous, and the height of unreason. Here, as elsewhere, a knowledge of natural forces, and laws that come within the special department in which the miracle is enacted must suffice. But even here it is not necessary to gauge the limits of the law exactly, but only to define them negatively, that is, to show that the miracle cannot conceivably be explained within such limits. Only a very slight knowledge of optics is requisite to be able to assert that a man born blind cannot be healed. Nor, again, need one be an experienced physician to maintain that it is impossible for a dead man to raise himself to life again" (Schanz). With regard to the theological truth of a miracle we easily come to the conclusion that God's intervention in the course of nature was for a higher, supernatural purpose.

"God," says Boedder (Miracles, page 428), "never works miracles but for an end worthy of Himself. He works them in order to draw men nearer to Himself by extraordinary manifestations of His divine attributes, of His power, wisdom, benevolence, mercy, justice. His miracles are intended to be a solid comfort to men of good will and an earnest and terrifying warning to those who revolt against the voice of their conscience. They are, as it were, a divine speech, expressed not by Divine words, but by Divine deeds. Now, is it possible that God should thus address men without offering them sufficient means to ascertain that He has spoken? To suppose this would involve the denial either of God's power or of God's wisdom. The supposition, in fact, amounts to this: either that God cannot make Himself known as the Author of

these special works or that He does not care to do so. Take the first alternative, and you deny God's power; take the second, and you deny God's wisdom. In both cases you think of the Creator in a way altogether incompatible with His perfections.

The second objection that true miracles cannot be distinguished from false miracles of the demon is easily refuted. True miracles have always a real and complete effect; apparent miracles only the resemblance of an effect, and these vestiges are of brief duration. While we acknowledge in true miracles the purpose of God's glory, the love for the neighbor, the confirmation of truth, we see in false miracles vain glory, gain, attack of faith or something similar. If the one is preceded by the invocation of God or God's friends, the Saints, the preparation for the others has been entirely worldly or even of an immodest character. If advantage for body and soul is the result of one, so damage is the end of the other, because God loves men, but Satan is men's enemy from the beginning.

That miracles even in our days are possible and recognized as such, a striking example, taken from an interesting account given by Dr. G. Marsh may sufficiently prove.

Peter de Rudder, a laborer, aged forty-four, was employed by Viscount de Bus, who lived at Jabbeke, in Belgium, when, on February 16, 1867, he sustained a fracture of the left leg, in which both the bones, tibia and fibula, were broken below the knee joint. The limb was put in a starch bandage by Doctor Affanaer, of Oudenburg. Owing to the severe suffering of the patient, the surgeon removed the bandage, when he

found an ulcer communicating with the fractured bones, which were bathed in pus. Periostitis had set in. After many months of futile treatment, other advice was sought. Doctor Jacques and Doctor Verriot, of Bruges, were consulted, as also Doctor Van Hostenburghe, of Stachille. All agreed that the case was incurable and that only amputation remained. Then the Viscount sought the opinion of Professor Thiriat, of Brussels, who confirmed that of his confreres. De Rudder, however, refused to allow his leg to be severed, and remained in bed for a year. For years afterward he got about on crutches and presented a most pitiable sight to all who saw him. Eight years after the accident, April 5th, 1875, he obtained permission from the new Viscount, for the old one had died, to go to the Grotto of the Blessed Virgin, at Oostacker, a place of pilgrimage much venerated in Belgium. In January of that very year Doctor Affanaer had seen the wound and certified to its condition. Later still, a Doctor Verrier corroborated his verdict. Nine days before the pilgrimage some of the neighbors saw and examined the wound. On the very day itself on which he obtained leave to go to Oostacker, those who dressed the limb saw the broken ends of the bones, the interval between the upper and lower fragments, the open ulcers and the swollen condition of the leg. On the following day, April 6th, the evening before De Rudder sent out on his eventful journey to Oostacker, all those details were again seen by other witnesses. On his arrival at the Shrine, he was helped to his seat in front of the spot where a Statue of our Lady of Lourdes had been erected. There he drank of the water and in fervent prayer besought Jesus Christ, through the prayers of His Blessed Mother,

to restore to health his broken limb, that he might be able once more to work for the support of his wife and children. Suddenly he arose, leaving his crutches behind him, and walked to the Grotto, kneeling there in prayer. Then, springing to his feet, he burst forth in thanks to God, declaring that he was cured. Accompanied by his wife and a great crowd, he walked upright and unaided by his crutches to the castle of the Marchioness of Costabonne, using his once shattered leg as freely as the other. There he was examined. It was found that the swelling had disappeared, the bandages had fallen off, the wounds of the leg and foot were healed, the upper and lower ends of the two bones had been reunited and there was no longer the interval between them. The two legs were of identically the same length and of equal soundness and value.

For twenty-three years De Rudder lived and worked in the employment of the Viscount, and eventually died from pneumonia, at the age of seventy-five, on March 22, 1898. The cure was not only instantaneous, but permanent.

This miraculous fact alone shows that miracles are not only possible, but that they still take place and can easily be recognized as such, even in our incredulous age.

IX.

Did Christ Work Miracles, and Thus Prove His Divinity?

It was decreed that our divine Lord should become man, and this was decreed when man's fall, when the sin of our first parents became known to God. But Adam's fall was known, not only at the moment in which it actually occurred, but also from the very first—that is, from all eternity. With this knowledge before Him, God decreed not only to clothe His only begotten Son with human nature and send Him upon this earth, but He also ordained that mankind should have convincing evidence of His Son's divine personality. To this end it was decreed that Christ should command the considerate respect of His followers by the complete control He would exercise over the most rigid and stubborn laws of nature. With this end in view we see the Son of Man softly breathe a word or two and the troubled waves are calmed and the roaring tempest is stilled. We see Him take a few loaves, give thanks, and feed five thousand men, and with the crumbs they fill twelve baskets. We see Him change water into wine at the wedding of Cana of Galilee, and, most wonderful of all, we see His authoritative voice hearkened to by the ears of those who are in the deep sleep of death, and in whom the most tender and oft-repeated terms of endearment lovingly uttered by their sorrowing family could awaken no responsive echo. These and the other miracles worked by our Saviour do not imply any change in God. They were not performed in consequence of an afterthought,

but were decreed at the same time that God framed the laws to which they were destined to form such notable exceptions. Furthermore, they were ordained for a most wise and useful and beneficent purpose, namely, to convince men of the truth of Christ's mission. The miracles of Christ are the cause of much uneasiness to those who deny His divinity. With what diligence, subtlety and admirable perseverance do they endeavor to prove their denial of our Lord's miracles! The easiest way was to refuse to consider the Gospels as the reports of eye-witnesses. Therefore, it was alleged that the Gospels originated one hundred years later than the lifetime of the Evangelists. But, in spite of all these efforts, the Gospels came forth from the furnace of criticism tried and found true. Forced to admit the testimony in favor of the Gospels, the only thing left for the opponents of our Lord to do was to attack their contents. Let us, therefore, earnestly consider the following questions:

Has Christ performed miracles, and thus proven His divinity?

Were the miracles of Christ true and divine miracles? The New Testament leaves no room for doubt. Even the testimony and judgment of Christ's enemies cannot be rejected by any reasonable man. It was to the interest of the Jews and the Gentiles to deny our Lord's miracles, or, at least, to show that they were insufficient to prove His divinity. If they succeeded in this, they would not be obliged to accept Christianity. Did even the most learned among them deny the historical truth of Christ's miracles or try to explain them naturally? By no means. When the news spread that Christ had brought Iazarus back from the dead, the multitudes came to Bethania, not only to see our Lord, but also to

see Lazarus, the recipient of such a great favor of miraculous power. "The chief priests, therefore, and the Pharisees gathered a council, and said: 'What do we, for this man doth many miracles? If we let Him alone so, all will believe in Him.'" (John, XI, 47-48.)

Not one of them thought of going before the assembled multitude and denying Christ's miracles. And why? To stand up before the thousands who had flocked together, and to say to them: "What you have all seen never really took place," would have been as vain as to deny the existence of the noonday sun. How could it have been possible to persuade the hundreds who were themselves the happy objects of Christ's miraculous power that they had never been lame, or blind, or lepers, or that they were not yet cleansed or able to walk and to see? No one, not even His bitterest enemies, even dared to deny the miraculous deeds of Christ.

But did they try to explain Christ's miracles as natural phenomena? This line of conduct none dared to pursue, for the excellent reason that the offerer of such an explanation would have been noisily acclaimed as another Christ and clamorously compelled to perform similar wonderful miracles, under similar circumstances and with similar means. But all the members of the council were prudent enough not to undertake such a task. They did the only thing that could serve their interests. They devised to put Him to death. Some, indeed, were foolish enough to endeavor to take away the power of demonstration from Christ's miracles by ascribing them to Beelzebub, the prince of devils. But even in this blasphemy they testified to the truth that these works were beyond nature, and,

therefore, could be ascribed only to some more than human power. But if they admitted the influence of a divine power, they would be obliged to accept and follow our Lord. But, rather than do this, they said these wonders were done by the devil, thus giving occasion to our Lord's well-known and unanswerable vindication of the holiness of this power. But now let us see what the learned among the pagan philosophers, as, for instance, Celsus, Porphyrius, Jamblichus and Julian, the apostate, thought about Christ's miracles. Not one of these wise men attempted to deny the historical fact that these were miracles, or to assert that our Lord produced their wonderful effects by natural means. They contented themselves with attributing them to magic.

With the Holy Scriptures in our hands, we can, therefore, with full confidence stand before all universities, before all savants of the twentieth century, and ask them to choose the most natural appearing miracle contained in the biblical narration and to explain it to us naturally, observing these two conditions—first, not to omit anything from or to add anything to the biblical narration; secondly, to demonstrate their natural explanation of the selected miracle under the same circumstances as those in which the miracle was performed and with the same means that our Lord used. We can say with certainty that no one will succeed in the undertaking.

You might call a thousand times into the tomb of your beloved mother, "Mother, arise!" But in vain. The natural law, as you will know, would keep what it had claimed. No one maintains that the physician's skill is powerful at the brink of the grave, but it is precisely there that Christ's power over life and death

begins its most absolute and most wonderful exercise. The best proof of this is His own resurrection, which, above all, His enemies would have contested and disproved if they could. That they could not is demonstrated beyond all doubt by the conversion of the Apostle Paul, who, while he was a Pharisee, had every opportunity of examining the facts, and who gives the result of his examination in the following emphatic terms: "If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." (I Cor., XV, 14) But if, in spite of the proofs of our Lord's miracles and divinity, there are some who will deny and reject them, theirs is the task of explaining to us how it came to pass, that down through the centuries the whole world adored a crucified Jew as God and still continue to trust and confide in Him and is ready to live and to die for the religion of the Cross. If this had been true, and at the same time we were not in possession of the Scripture records of our Lord's miracles, the payment of the universal and continual homage of mankind to Him who ended His mortal life on the disgraceful gibbet on Calvary's Mount would itself be the greatest miracle of all.

Christ is God and, therefore, absolute Master of all the laws of nature and of life and of death. "This," says St. Gregory the Great, "is the testimony to Jesus Christ by Heaven and Earth and Hell itself; by the angels singing in the midnight sky over Bethlehem; by the star that led the wise men to His feet; by the voice of His Baptism; by the winds and the waves of the storm-tossed sea; by the earth, that gave up its dead at His word, and trembled beneath His Cross. It is the testimony of all the types and prophecies, of His teaching, of His miracles, of His Resurrection and

Ascension, of His divinely beautiful character. It is the testimony of those who hated Him unto death, and of the very devils themselves, as well as of those who in every age have loved Him and joyfully laid down their lives for Him. It is the testimony of His Church to the end of time, of all who have eyes to see and ears to hear." "Indeed, this man was the Son of God." (Marc., XXXIX, 15.)

In vain, therefore, are all attempts to deny that Christ worked miracles. We must do one of two things. Either deny the miracles of our Saviour, and this we have seen is unreasonable, or accept them and their consoling consequence—believe in His divine personality. Either believe in Him or submit our shoulders to the heavier and more galling burden of unbelief and infidelity. Let us thank God that for us there is no doubt nor indecision in choosing the side consistent with reason and truth.

X.

Has Christ Instituted the Church as a Visible Society and Made Peter its Head?

Before leaving this world Christ said to His disciples: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." Thus He completed the work of our Redemption. He had died on the cross to merit salvation for all; and in this commission to His disciples He assured to all nations and to all centuries, even until time should cease to be, the method and the means of applying the fruits of His Redemption. By His doctrine He would show men how to be saved; and by His Church, wherewith they might be saved.

From most ancient times the essential definitions mark, even for the unbeliever, both the exterior or visible form and constitution of the Church and at the same time her interior nature. The Church is defined as a visible community of those redeemed by Christ, who are united by confession of the same faith and by participation of the same Sacraments, and are subject to the direction of their legitimate and divinely constituted pastors, the bishops and the Pope.

It is strange that, in the face of such testimony, our adversaries should speak of the early Church as a community of faithful united in Christ by purely spiritual bonds.

In the very beginnings of history the Church appeals to our minds as a visible society. Her common doctrine was interior. But the expression of this belief in ritual and in worship was external. The wonderful practice of her beauteous theories, the mutual love of her members, excited the reluctant admiration of Jews and pagans, and, therefore, precisely she became the object of bitter hatred and pitiless persecution. So we read in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter II, verses 42-47:

“And they were persevering in the doctrine of the Apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayers; and, further: And continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they took their meat with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord increased daily together such as should be saved.”

Again and again St. Paul refers to the Church as a Divinely-human Body, the Head of which is Christ and its members the elect. She is Christ's mystical body; her various subjects, on account of the different gifts of grace and offices, give that exterior variety peculiar to organic life; interiorly she is filled and vivified with the Holy Ghost and united with Christ as her one Head. Her members are united to one another and to Christ, the Head, by the cords of Charity, the exercise of which is, consequently, an essential duty of a Christian. All this is not applicable to a mere interior, invisible Church.

When Christ speaks in His sermons of the Kingdom of God, He assuredly means not only an invisible kingdom on earth, *i. e.*, of the faithful, the good; but

He means also a kingdom that is earthly and visible, wherein are good and bad. The following parable reveals the mind of Christ: "The kingdom of heaven is likened to a man that sowed good seed in his field. But while men were asleep, his enemy came and over-sowed cockle among the wheat and went his way. And when the blade was sprung up and had brought forth fruit, then appeared also the cockle. And the servants said to him: Wilt thou that we go and gather it up? And he said: No, lest perhaps gathering up the cockle, you root up the wheat also together with it. Suffer both to grow until the harvest, and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers: Gather up first the cockle, and bind it into bundles to burn, but the wheat gather ye into my barn." (Matth. XXIII, 24-30.) The kingdom of which Christ here speaks can only be such as possesses both wheat and cockle, *i. e.*, as of a visible, earthly kingdom.

The prophetic descriptions of the Church in the Old Law (Isaiah II, 2; Dan. II, 44) contain the same thought, namely, that she shall be visible in her life and in her efficacy and recognizable as the Kingdom of God, which comprises all nations on earth, just as the Old Covenant, her prototype, was a visible society. As a visible society, indeed, has Christ instituted and organized the Church, selecting Apostles, conferring on them divine power of teaching and administering the treasures of grace; instituting the sacraments and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; organizing the episcopate and priesthood for their administration; ordaining the apostolic doctrine and the administration of the sacraments as means for the propagation of His Kingdom till the consummation of the world, and declaring

that he who does not hear the Church shall be excluded and considered like the heathen and the publican. The Apostles preached the same truth, exercising the powers given to them by Christ by directing and governing the Church as a community of the faithful; by adding new members and excluding the unworthy. (I Cor. V. 4; II Cor. II, 10.) They ordained co-operators and successors in their respective offices, they advised the faithful to be obedient to their ecclesiastical superiors, who were instituted by the Holy Ghost to direct the Church, and exhorted the flock to go to the priests for the reception of the Sacraments.

This visible Church, instituted by Christ, propagated by the apostles, took its victorious course visibly before the whole world. The apostles, who preached her doctrine, were visible. The men who became her members were visible. The administration of baptism, by which they were consecrated Christians, was visible. Visible were her bishops and priests, visible the places of worship, visible the Holy Sacrifice at which they assisted, visible her sacraments. Finally, this visible society needed a visible leader, to whom all might have approach and expose the general as well as the individual needs. We honor the head of the Church by the name papa, pope, *i. e.*, Father.

That Peter the apostle was elected as the head of the Church by Christ and that, therefore, the Papacy is of Divine Origin, Christ's own words prove to us. (St. Matth. XVI, 13-19.) And Jesus came into the quarters of Caesarea Phillipi: and he asked His disciples, saying, "Whom do men say that the Son of man is? But they said: Some say John the Baptist, and others say Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the

prophets. Jesus said to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answering, said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Therefore, the Church which Christ has built stands upon Peter—indestructible for all times and invincible. Every church which stands not on Peter cannot be the true Church of Christ. And further Christ said to Peter (St. Luke XXII, 32): "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren."

It is, therefore, Peter's task to confirm all others in faith, and it is all others' duty to be confirmed in faith through Peter. And again our Lord said to Peter (John XXI, 15-17): "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep." Our Lord had promised the spiritual supremacy to St. Peter (St. Matth. XVI, 19), and here He fulfills that promise by charging him with the superintendency of all his sheep, without exception, and, consequently, of his whole flock; that is, of his own Church, including bishops, priests and faithful. What follows herefrom? Whom Peter does not feed belongs neither to the lambs nor to the sheep of Christ.

The Doctors of the Church in ancient times testify in perfect unison that Peter possessed the Supremacy. And these were men in close touch with the Church's origin, living like saints and ready to make every sacrifice for God's cause; yea, more than once suffering

cruel persecution for their fidelity towards the successors of St. Peter.

St. Cyprian, bishop in Africa (258), writes in his book, "Ecclesiastical Unity": "To Peter the Primacy has been given that there be only one Church." This saint, who died as Martyr in so close touch with the apostolic time, did not want to have a national African Church.

Bishop Ambrose, of Milan (340-397), proclaims precisely the Supremacy of Peter, saying: "Peter has been preferred by Christ and left as His vicar on earth."

Add to these testimonies the declarations of the first general councils, as, for instance, that of Nice, A. D. 325, declaring by word and deed to stand on the ground of that same doctrine. They all consider the successor of Peter as the Head of the Universal Church. Peter himself has shown by conduct that he considered himself as the Head of the Whole Church, and this without receiving any remonstrances from the part of the other Apostles.

Holy Writ and Tradition show, therefore, distinctly that Christ has founded the Church as a visible society on earth and that He has instituted Peter as the visible head of the Church. Only that church can be the true one which has for head the successor of Peter, because: *Ubi Petrus, ibi Ecclesia*: Where Peter is, there is the Church of Christ!

XI.

Is the Roman Pontiff the Successor in Peter's Primacy?

If we concede that Christ was a Divine Lawgiver, who prescribes a fundamental unchangeable law for the practical government of men while in the present state of existence, we are then forced by the plainest and clearest principles, whereon all governments for men rest, to concede that His subjects were intended to be governed in unity, not in discord. And the moment we concede the character of Christ as the author of a "practical" system, we are also forced to concede that in the government He instituted there must exist that necessary element without which government itself cannot operate.

That the executive power must exist in every practical government is as clear as that the legislative and judicial powers are required. We can readily conceive of a government without the legislative, as without the executive and judicial powers. There cannot be a law at all unless intended to constitute a rule, unless intended to be practically administered; and this practical administration cannot be attained unless the executive and judicial powers both exist in the system. Without the practical application of the law, the system would be clearly idle and unworthy of any just legislator. That a Divine Lawgiver should organize a visible association of men and prescribe a positive code for its government, and yet have no executive and judicial powers in this institution to enforce the law, would be plainly to defeat the very purpose and end

of its system. With all proper regard for the opinions of others, I am constrained to say that, in my judgment, I cannot form the conception of a visible association of men governed by a positive unchangeable law without the existence of executive and judicial powers. Nor can I conceive of any practical and efficient system of government wherein the executive and judicial powers are not coextensive with the actual exercise of the power of legislation. In other words, where the executive and judicial powers do not have jurisdiction to enforce "practically" all the laws intended for a practical application, then for what purpose do they exist but to enforce the laws. If the position be true that the executive power exists in the system of Christ, the power must have been placed somewhere, either in the hands of an individual and his successors or in the hands of several. The Catholic theory holds that our Lord conferred this power upon a single individual and his successors.

"The idea of Peter's supremacy," says Cardinal Wiseman, "involves two distinct but closely allied prerogatives. The first is that the Holy See is the Centre of Unity; the second, that it is the fountain of authority. By the first is signified that all the faithful must be in union with it, through their successive pastors, who form an unbroken chain of connection, from the lowliest member of the flock to him who has been constituted its universal Shepherd. To violate this union and communion constitutes the grievous crime of schism and destroys an essential constitutive principle of Christ's religion.

"We likewise hold the Pope to be the source of authority, as all the subordinate rulers of the Church

are subject to him and receive, directly or indirectly, their jurisdiction from and by him. To him is given charge of confirming his brethren in the faith; his office is to watch over the correction of abuses and the maintenance of discipline throughout the Church; in cases of error springing up in any part, he must make the necessary investigations to discover and condemn it, and either hinging the infractory to submission or separate them, as withered branches from the vine. In cases of great and influential disorder in faith and practice, he convenes a general council of the pastors of the Church, presides over it in person or by his legates and sanctions by his approbation its canons or decrees."

Thus we take upon ourselves to prove that the Roman Pontiff is the real and true Successor in the Primacy of Peter. We hope to show that Christ the Lord Himself, by words and deeds recorded in the Gospel, vested Peter and his successors with Supreme and universal power over the whole Church.

Examine, I ask you, the scriptural proofs which bear upon this question. The very first moment Christ saw Simon, He said: "Thou shalt be called Cephas." The word Cephas is a Syro-Chaldaic term which signifies "rock." Our Lord did not give a surname to all the apostles. His practice was not general, but special; and special reasons must have existed to justify special acts. In the nature of things, there must exist some good reasons for a change of names. It seems clear, then, that Christ had some important object in view when He called Peter "Cephas." In the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew we have the explanation: "He saith to them, But whom say ye that I am? And

Simon Peter answered and said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said: Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in Heaven. And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock (Cephas-Peter) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed also in Heaven." To Peter as Peter, not merely as Simon, were twice addressed these significant words, "Feed my lambs." Peter, our Lord well knew, was a mere mortal, who would pass away within the short space of a few years. The flock were to remain. The office created for the flock, for the faithful. Thus clearly arises before us the reason why Jesus gave Simon the name of Peter. He was named and addressed upon this solemn occasion as Peter because he was always to live by reason of the charge, perpetual office and power called into existence by those same words and, consequently, they apply in all their pristine force and significance to each and all of Peter's rightful successors. We will attempt to make our position more stable and logical in the following pages.

In our days, when so much weight is allowed sound historical testimony, it is the earnest effort of every controversialist to substantiate his proofs by History. If the historical proof ever were strong, trustworthy and final, it is so in attesting the rectitude of our present thesis. Now, every document of sacred history mentions the Roman bishops as successors of St. Peter. Every document of profane history presupposes it in

its unbroken narration. Thus we find that in "Julius (337-352) the memory of Peter is honored, whereby the priests of the Lord refer to the head, that is, to the See of the Apostle Peter." Again, in "Siricius (389-99) the blessed Apostle Peter bears the burdens of all." The whole Church cries out: "Innocent (401-17) and Theodore are the Summit and crown of Prelates in the Honor of the most blessed Peter." Again, we see declared: "Such as is the authority of Peter, equal is the degree of power in Zosimus" (417-18). Again: "The most blessed Peter lives and exercises judgment in Celestine I" (422-432). Again: "Peter has spoken by Leo, by Agatho." Finally: "The Blessed Peter has ever held the principedom he received through the voice of the Lord, and holds it in Gelasius I" (492-96).

Such, indeed, is the strong array of testimony that authentic history holds up in proof of our assertion. What principally leads the historian in his attempt to discover its origin is the solid growth of this doctrine in the minds of men from the earliest commencement of Christianity. This is a doctrine that has not known the process of historical evolution!

That the whole Christian world believed that in Peter was vested a primatial power, that through Peter was created the noble office of Bishop of the Universal Church, we have already sufficiently shown. The words of Christ on that subject admit of no compromise, allow no distortion of meaning. As we intended to show by historical evidence, the succession, lawful and recognized, of any Bishop to that particular Episcopate which Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, occupied becomes by the very fact Peter's lawful Successor, by the very fact becomes invested in the power divinely conferred upon Peter himself.

If Peter, ennobled as he was by Jesus Christ Himself with a power primatial apostolic and ordinary, assumed the Roman Episcopate by divine command, did he not by that very fact establish that Episcopate Apostolic and primatial? Who else could have established it? Who else could have received such universal recognition? We know of no voice that raised the cry "impostor." In this way Peter made the greatest step in the establishment of a vast hierarchical System of which he of necessity was the president or governing head. The office was thus perpetually created. And Peter was no more than its first occupant, the first Bishop of Rome. Therefore, at the death of St. Peter, the Episcopate was left vacant, not only in the sense that no one occupied it, but in the sense that his death created the positive right and obligatory necessity that another lawful successor should be vested with the same ordinary "Petrine" power. Hence there is not, as some would have it, a double succession, one to the Roman Episcopate instituted by Peter and another to the Primacy instituted by Christ. Thus we see by the succession of Peter to the Episcopate of Rome there was created an office which included the powers given to Peter at that solemn moment recorded in the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew. Thus, in our position, it is evident that at the death of the first Primate, the Great St. Peter, the office of the Episcopate of Rome and of the Universal Church was only left vacant, and to it remained attached the whole power, primatial as well as Episcopal, over the city of Rome. In this way the Roman See is the Apostolic See, not only historically, as that of other Apostles, but is the primatial Apostolic See, and that for the simple reason that the

Princedom was an ordinary office of equally valid powers for his successors.

It is by reason—by this reason alone—of succession of the Bishop of Rome to the plenitude of powers divinely conferred upon Peter as First Primate that the Primacy of the Roman Church over the Universal Church is recognized and spoken of by the Fathers. It seems to us that Peter, in receiving for himself the Episcopate of the particular Church of Rome, kept it, as it were, included in his divine Primacy over the Universal Church. It is by reason of this act, which received universal approbation, that the Roman Church itself is most truly said to hold Primacy over the Universal Church. It follows, then, that it is the union of the Roman Episcopate and the Primacy, and nothing else, that the Fathers teach when they speak of the Primacy of the Roman Church. It is by this consecutive line of reasoning that we show that he who succeeds Peter in the Roman Church which holds the Primacy, by that fact succeeds to the Primacy; and, on the other hand, no one can be lawful successor of Peter in the Primacy without at once thereby succeeding to the Roman Episcopate, which is already included in the Primacy.

To summarize our proofs is to present the argument in its strongest light. We deemed it within our province to prove, relying upon all the Christian antiquity and history, that there is a perpetual succession to the Primatial See of Rome, that venerable institution established by Christ Himself. The perpetual succession of which we speak has been always understood and explained in the Church to mean that the Roman See of Peter is one and the same with the Apostolic

Primal See over the Universal Church. Therefore, it can only be that the legitimate succession to the Roman Episcopate in the See of Peter is, indeed, succession to the same divinely instituted Primacy of the first Great Shepherd St. Peter, and this successor, as history proves, is found in every Roman Pontiff, the leader of the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church.

XII.

Is the Catholic Church the True Church of Christ?

If we could carry ourselves off to some far height and take from there a bird's-eye view of the earth, we should see its surface steeped with temples erected to the service of the Most High God. We should see the grand spired cathedrals of great cities, the more modest churches of towns, the simple, ivy-covered chapels of villages. The gorgeous Christian Science Temple of Boston would loom up and stand out prominently; the towering Anglican Westminster of London; the tapering Lutheran Cathedral of Augsburg; the massive Mosque of Mohammed of Constantinople; the world's eternal masterpiece of architecture, Catholic St. Peter's of Rome! Yet, in all these temples dedicated to religion, each different sect adores the same God in a different manner. Hence, it is fitting that we seek to learn today which of these forms of worship is right and proper, and we will endeavor to learn which of all these is the true Church founded by Jesus Christ.

If we open the Bible to the sixteenth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, we shall find Christ questioning His disciples concerning the identity of the Son of God. Some of them said He was "John the Baptist, other some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." But when Simon Peter answered, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," Jesus said to him: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matth. XVI, 14, 16, 18.) Peter is the

keystone of the arch under which all must pass who wish to enter upon the road that surely leads up to heaven. Peter is the base, the fundament, the foundation stone of the true Church of Christ. He is the one rock supporting the worldwide temple of true Christianity. The church that is not built upon Peter, the church that is not built upon this rock, is built upon the sands of heresy and doomed to fall beneath the storms of time. But the church which has its base in Peter, the church which is founded upon the rock, that church is the true church of Christ, and "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," for it is immortal. Truth can never die! That two and two make four was a truth in the days of Christ as well as in this twentieth century, and twenty centuries hence two and two will make four. Thus, if the Church which was built upon Peter was the true church in the days of Christ, it must be the true church today and true unto that far-off day when the trumpet-blast of the angels shall summon all men to judgment. But, inasmuch as Peter is found by his successors, the bishops of Rome, the Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church alone is and must be the one true church, the church founded by Jesus Christ. Now, the Catholic Church is the true Church of Christ if she possesses, to the exclusion of all other churches, the four distinctive marks requisite for this title. The true Church of Christ must be:

First—"One," because truth is one, has unity and singleness of purpose; and where there are contradictions and dissension, truth of its very nature is wanting.

Second—"Holy," because the true Church is the spouse of Christ, who is holiness itself; and, since an

all-holy God cannot by any possibility wed Himself to unholiness, the True Church must be holy.

Third—"Universal," because Jesus Christ died to save all men; and, inasmuch as He founded the true Church solely that by membership therein men might become partakers in His merits, the true Church must be open to all men, and hence universal.

Fourth—"Apostolic," because Christ founded the true Church on Peter and the other apostles, and any church which teaches any doctrine contrary to that handed down by the apostles, or has its origin other than in the apostles, whether in Luther, Calvin, Henry VIII, I care not, that church is not apostolic and, consequently, not true. But that the Catholic Church, and the Catholic Church alone, possesses these four distinguishing marks let me now proceed to prove to you.

The Catholic Church alone possesses oneness, unity. Look within the doors of any other church and you see confusion! Every other form of religion is torn with dissension. Dissolution and decay are fast gnawing away their foundations, and dissension is tumbling down their pillars of support. These are no idle musings or biased hopes; they are well-attested facts. The "Illustrated Church Annual," for instance, bears witness that today, in England alone, there are no fewer than 310 Protestant sects of different denominations. Cross over into Germany and you behold the staunch fabric of the Reformation torn asunder into twenty-six different federal evangelical churches. Only the consciousness of such facts forced from the Protestant Claudius Harms the soulful cry that "That about which we Protestants are still united I do not risk to write upon my finger nail." But now, look at

the Catholic Church! Study her from any angle you choose, and you find her a unit. Everything about her everywhere is one and the same. Push into the heart of Pagan Asia; penetrate the jungled depths of Negro-Africa; push your way into the frozen north, and everywhere you will find her one—one in her doctrine, one in her prayers; one in her sacraments, one in her worship and one in her supreme, infallible ruler, the Pope, the Vicar of Jesus Christ. This is oneness! This is unity, the like of which I defy you to show me in any one of the other numberless churches throughout the earth! Together with this unity, the Catholic Church alone possesses holiness. She is holy in all her works, holy in all her prayers, holy in her commandments, holy in the true test of holiness, self-denial, because she alone is a living fulfillment of the Lord's Counsel, "if thou wilt be perfect, go, sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and come, follow Me." (Matth. XIX, 21.) She is holy because nothing defiled in her children receives her permission, much less her approval. True, her children are not perfect; but it must be remembered that she is an organization of men, and where man is, there are his faults and frailties. Yet these are not to be imputed to her. These faults and frailties are in her, but not of her. She discountenances them; and, though she does not reject, she advises and even punishes her guilty, sinful children, in order that they may correct these faults and become holy members unto herself. And that I may the more convincingly prove my claim for holiness in the Catholic Church alone, let me briefly discuss one of the other prominent forms of religion which we see everywhere about us—Lutheranism.

Martin Luther was for years an Augustinian monk; but, like Lucifer, he fell by pride from his high place; and, like Lucifer, he dragged down into hell those innumerable souls who unwisely rallied to his stand—and of rebellion against the truth of God. Luther sought to reform the truth of God, with a result that in many essential points Lutheranism is not the truth of God. His doctrine stands at enmity with the gospels of Jesus Christ and Holy Writ inspired by God. In the second Book of Machabees, for instance, we read: "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sin." (Second Book of Mach. XII, 46.) Luther condemned prayer for the dead and tore this book out of the Bible! Again, we read in the three Synoptics that when, at the last supper, Christ changed bread into His own Body, He used the words, "This is My Body"; but Luther, that he might the more securely reject the sacrifice of the Mass, and this, as he himself confesses, at the instance of the devil, changed these words to the form, "This becomes My Body." In another place we find Christ, on the evening of His resurrection, conferring upon His apostles the power to forgive sins, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them" (John XX, 23); but Luther, in defiance of Christ, denies to the Church the power to forgive sins. Yet again, in the Epistles of St. James, we read, "Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." (James X, 14.) Luther calls this "An Epistle of straw," and does away with the sacrament of Extreme Unction. Finally, though Scripture declares Mary "full of grace," Luther degrades her to a common woman; though Christ

makes Peter the Rock of His Church, Luther brands Peter's successor, the Pope, as anti-Christ; though God Himself has commanded "Thou shalt not sin," Luther bids his flock "sin strongly provided you believe more strongly."

Can such doctrine be holiness? Can such principles be squared by the holy commandments of God and His Church? No! Because they are unholy, irreligious and hostile to the teaching of the only church that can be called holy—the Catholic Church.

Now, besides being one and holy, the Catholic Church alone is *universal*. Her Founder so appropriated her doctrines to the common sense of mankind and drew them up that they have been propagated successfully at all times, in all countries and among all peoples. As a result, the cross, the emblem of Catholicism, is raised today in every land, and before it all nations alike bend the knee. While Protestantism counts about 200,000,000 members, and these split up into forty larger and several hundred smaller sects, Catholicism stands an individual unit composed of 350,000,000 souls. Wherever desire of knowledge brought the student, wherever avarice conducted the merchant, wherever vainglory lured its devotees, there, everywhere, were found Catholic missionaries, led on only by their burning love for souls and guided by their ardent affection for the Church. Ride with the caravans across the trackless desert wastes of Sahara; visit the wretched prisons of Siberia's desolate salt steppes; penetrate into the inhospitable regions of Lapland; climb the rugged, volcanic clefts of Patagonia; take ship with the dauntless explorers of the ice-clad poles—and everywhere you will meet the Catholic missionary gladly spending and being spent for the love of Christ

and His Church! Truly is the Catholic Church universal! Truly is the Catholic Church catholic! She stands today a beacon light, warning the nations of the hell-formed rocks which menace their salvation and lighting up the channels that lead safely to the haven of eternal rest!

Finally, the Catholic Church alone is *apostolic*. She was founded on the apostles, and down through the storms of twenty heretical centuries she has preserved inviolatè her apostolic organizations. Her doctrine is apostolic; so are her sacraments and her constitutions. Apostolic is her primacy; it dates back in uninterrupted, legitimate succession to Peter, its first pope. This is a sharply contested claim; but some of those least in sympathy with the Church almost admit it. In corroboration of my statement, let me quote the eloquent testimony of Lord Macaulay. "The proudest royal houses," he says, "are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace back in an unbroken series from the Pope who crowned Napoleon in the nineteenth century to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin the august dynasty extends till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere antique, but full of life and youthful vigor." Lord Macaulay was a bigot, an unscrupulous champion of the English Church; hence he calls the twilight of fable what in reality is the apostolic age.

One, holy, universal and apostolic! All this is the Catholic Church, and for this reason is she alone the spouse of Christ. She is the bride of the Supreme King. And, since whom the King calls His bride the people call their queen, the Catholic Church reigns as a queen among all the nations of the world! It is to her that we sing the Psalmist's words: "Harken, O daughter, and see and incline thy ear and forget thy people and thy father's house. And the King shall greatly desire thy beauty: for He is the Lord, thy God, and Him shall they adore." (Ps. XLIV, 11-12.)

The Church of Christ is exalted to the highest seat of honor, wedded to the heavenly spouse, and her garments of gold tissue signify the pricelessness of her gifts and virtues. How glorious is her royalty, how exalted her government: Popes, bishops, priests, people! Like a kingly battle array, a mighty army! How majestically the banners of truth wave over her, unblemished by error! How regal is her divine worship, which she daily offers to her heavenly Bridegroom in the Holy Mass and Divine Office! How triumphant has been her march down through the centuries and across the globe! How much good has she not done? Every step of her progress has been accompanied with benefactions to the nations of the world. And today, after nearly two thousand years, the Church is still young and fair. Kingdoms and Empires have risen, flourished and decayed, but the Bride of Christ lives on, and her step is quick and sprightly after the course of ages and in a world where everything around her has crumbled into ruin. Truth shines upon her like the rising sun; the early love for her divine Bridegroom still glows ardently in her heart, and her nuptial veil remains undefiled by the crimes of centuries.

Millions have saluted her as the "city set on a hill"; they have rejoiced in her as the one protecting shield of mankind. But, alas! what have men of the present day done to her? They have given free vent to a hatred and spleen that has injured her! Yet let us not take these wrongs amiss. Her enemies—many of them, at least—are misinformed. They know no better. They drank in the hatred to her with their mother's milk, and their eyes have remained blinded in rage, so that they cannot see the truth. But we know what the Church is! We know her from our mother's knee, have grown up at her feet, and whatever others may do against her, we shall not cease to love and venerate her. We shall guard her honor, protect her rights and by our good lives vindicate her teaching. We shall love the Church unto the end; and this love shall be "the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day" which shall lead us, the chosen people of God, safely through the desert of this life. Life offers little that is elevated and enduring, but love of the Church is love worthy of the name; it is a joy, a happiness, a glory, a foretaste of our love of God when "we shall see Him face to face." As bitter as hell's hatred; as galling as the tepidity of many indifferent, ungrateful Catholics; as relentless as the World's enmity against her; to an equal degree, at least, let our love be true, pleasing and steadfast for her, the spouse of Christ on earth, the One, Holy, Universal, Apostolic, Catholic Church!

What is the Right Interpretation of the Dogma: "Outside the Church There is No Salvation"?

Very often Non-Catholics say that the Catholic Church condemns to hell all those who are outside her fold, believing herself to be the only Church in which man can work out his salvation, and that, therefore, she denies to any one outside of the Church any chance of saving his soul. That such a conclusion is unfounded, that the dogma: "Outside the Church there is no salvation," is true, if well understood, the following considerations will prove:

When the Catholic Church calls herself the only one which can lead man to Salvation, she does so because she alone is the true Church, because she alone possesses the whole truth, and because truth alone leads to God. No one would dare to assert that falsehood could lead to God. Every one, therefore, must acknowledge that truth alone can lead us to Him. But the Catholic Church alone is in possession of the truth, therefore, the Catholic Church alone leads mankind directly to God. Jesus Christ founded the Catholic Church as the only right and common way by which mankind would be led to salvation. Therefore we have the universal command laid upon all mankind to seek out this ordinary path of souls and to follow it faithfully. However, this duty is not imposed on an individual, if, in the sight of God, a physical or moral impossibility prevents that individual from fulfilling it. That this physical or moral impossibility sometimes exists, no reasonable man will refuse to admit. There-

fore, no one should ever say that Non-Catholics will be condemned.

Rev. Fr. A. Maurel, S. J., has published an excellent and praiseworthy book, entitled: "The Church and the Pope," in which, touching upon the question we are considering, he lays down principles which will help us to arrive at a right understanding of the meaning of the statement: "Outside the Church there is no salvation."

First Principle—Holy Baptism, if rightly administered, that is, as it was instituted by Christ, blots out original sin from the soul of the child and makes him, even though born of Protestant parents, a true member of Christ's Church, which considers all rightly baptized persons as her members.

Second Principle—Without consent there is no sin. If therefore an erring person neither has a knowledge of the error nor gives a free pertinacious consent to the error, such a one incurs no guilt before God.

Third Principle—The Church consists of a visible element and of an invisible element, just as man is composed of body and soul. The body of the Church is the visible part, which can be sensibly perceived, for instance, her exterior constitution and administration, the visible head of the Church, her bishops, priests and sacraments, etc. By the soul of the Church we understand all that the senses cannot perceive, *e.g.*, faith, the life of grace, the gifts of the Holy Ghost, in so far as these are not exteriorly manifested and visible. We have therefore three different kinds of membership in

the true Church of Christ; one by which a person belongs only to the body of the Church, and this membership includes all bad Catholics, or those who live in mortal sin and are dead members; the second kind of adherence is to be found in those who belong to the soul of the Church, *i.e.*, who adhere with invincible ignorance to some false sect but who are united with the invisible head, Christ, through purity of life by God's grace and love. The third class comprises those who belong both to the body and to the soul of the Church, and they are they who possess the true faith as well as the life of grace.

Fourth Principle—According to our Lord's words He will ask much of him, to whom He has given much, and less of him, to whom He has given less. From these principles the author draws the following conclusions:

(1) From the first principle, namely that all rightly baptized persons are members of the Church, it follows that as the rate of infant mortality is so very high, a great number will appear before God in their dazzling robes of baptismal innocence, and will be saved, and in this number we must reckon all those who are correctly baptized, no matter by whom or in what denomination. (2) From the second principle, namely, that without consent there is no sin, it follows that as Pope Pius IX. so beautifully expressed it, "all those who are ignorant of the true religion, and whose ignorance is not culpable, are, by that very fact, without guilt before God. But who would dare to define the extent of this invincible ignorance, considering the diversity of nationalities, countries, character and so many other circumstances! When we shall be loosed

from the chains of our body which tie us down to earth, and we shall see God as He really is, then we shall form a truer idea of the close and beautiful bonds which link together the mercy and justice of God." This conclusion has, of course, consolation only for those of other beliefs who either have no doubts about their religion, or, when in doubt, do all they can to dispel it, and to obtain clear knowledge. (3) Many conclusions may be drawn from the third and fourth principles, with regard to both Catholics and Non-Catholics. The most favored in obtaining salvation are the pious Catholics, who belong to the body and soul of the Church. They indeed, on account of their exterior adherence to the Church and its cult, can "draw with pleasure from the fountains of salvation," and thus unite interior holiness with the exterior confession of faith. This makes them Children of God and heirs of our Heavenly Father. In the next less favored position we find those who belong only to the soul of the Church, which includes all baptized persons of other denominations. They belong, perhaps, to the sect or schism for no other reason than that they were educated and trained that way, but, believe most firmly that they are on the right path. With this "good faith" they unite purity of morals, *i.e.*, they are free from mortal sins. These will be saved because original sin is forgiven them by Baptism, and their actual sins in our supposition are remitted by perfect contrition. Their condition is, of course, not so favorable as that of Catholics, because they lack many powerful means of preserving God's friendship, or of recovering it, if they have had the misfortune to lose it. In the third place we consider all those who have not received the sacrament of Baptism but who desire to do all

that God has commanded as necessary for salvation. They will be saved by Baptism of Desire, and consequently belong to the soul of the Church. In their number we find many Jews and Heathens. The last place is occupied by those who belong to the body of the Church. These are all Catholics whose faith is not reflected in their conduct. They commit grievous faults and lose their right of Heaven, unless they sincerely repent; while the heathen will come from the east and the west and sit at the table with the Patriarchs in Heaven. Therefore, as regards the convenience of gaining the Kingdom of Heaven, Catholic Christians are most happily situated, because they are in the full possession of faith and the powerful aids to salvation. Next come those of other religions who are in "good faith" and, last of all, those who are not Christians. But where guilt is concerned, to whom much was given, of him much shall be required, and Catholics who die in mortal sin shall be more severely punished than all other men.

This, then, is the explanation of the correct meaning of the dogma "Outside the Church there is no salvation." So mild and merciful, and yet so true! This mild judgment gives the Church the right to assert that she alone is truly tolerant. Should not this doctrine of the strictest of all religions be a consolation and encouragement to all Christians who are earnestly seeking salvation? Therefore never despair of any one's salvation, especially not at the death-bed. Lead him to make an act of perfect contrition for the love of God, and God will pardon him, and you will have shown him the way to Heaven.

XIV.

Is the Pope Infallible in Matters of Faith and Morals?

Dear Friends, should I ask you to come and stand with me beside the High-road of Time, and review in spirit the triumphal procession of History's heroes as they march down the centuries we should behold a majestic train. We should see an imposing file of notable men, whose leaders would be lost to view in the far away dimness of antiquity before we could get a glimpse, in the rear ranks of the moving spirits of our own era. We should see passing before us

“Patriarchs of the infant world,—with Kings
The powerful of the earth,—the wise, the good,
Fair forms, and hoary seers of ages past.”

all in one mighty parade, which shall move on forever towards the portals of eternity,—for these men are immortal! They have worked great deeds; they have been benefactors to mankind; and in acknowledgment History has ordained that they shall not die. Yet, all along that august line I could point out to you, men, who, in the very sphere of human activity which has rendered them famous, have made critical mistakes. I could show you scientists who have erred in science; Kings who have acted unkingly; generals who have blundered in battle; statesmen to whom diplomacy has proven a stumbling-block. I could point out Ptolemy, who gave motion to the fettered sun, and chained to its poles our swinging earth,—thereby deceiving the world for thirteen centuries. Further down the line I could indicate a King John who made puppets of his

people, until his people, outraged beyond measure, made a puppet of their king. And, as this procession nears its end, I could direct your attention to a world-conquering Napoleon, to whom a mistake at Waterloo cost a crown and a continental empire. All these I could show you and in return, defy you to single out one of the numerous heads bearing the tiara in that line, and say that he erred in his particular sphere of activity. I defy you to select for me one pope, from Peter to Benedict XV, who has blundered in his universal teaching of faith and morals. Point out to me the vicious John XII, the unscrupulous Alexander VI, or the unscientific Urban VIII, and I coolly respond that each of these, together with any and all the worst popes of the Middle-Ages, were as infallible as Jesus Christ Himself!

To prove the truth of this last sweeping statement is the burden of my present task.

If Christ has made the Church the depositary of Divine Truth, the practical acceptance of which ensures man's salvation, then, inasmuch as the Church is an organization composed of frail, peccable creatures, it follows that in justice He must have provided that the treasure of Divine Truth remain unalloyed with the bogus and counterfeit. If He commissioned Peter and his papal successors to confirm their brethren in faith, He should have protected them against error in that faith, and safeguarded them against deception. But that Christ really gave Peter such an appointment we learn in the Gospel of St. Luke, "Simon, behold satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted,

confirm thy brethren." (Luke XXII, 31, 32.) In the latter part of this text Christ gives Peter the commission to teach, in the former He grants immunity from error. Yet can we logically infer from these words that Christ made infallible Peter the fisherman? Was Peter, the unlettered son of Jona, to be henceforward unerring in his universal teaching? No! not Peter the fisherman, nor the rude son of Jona was hereby constituted infallible, but Peter the Pope the Vicar of Jesus Christ, Peter the Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic Church and all his Successors in the papacy. "Ignorance alone," says Reverend Hammerstein (Controvers. Catechism.), "can pretend that infallibility attributes to the Pope, who is a mere man, a divine quality. Infallibility does not consist in protecting the Pope from error when writing letters or books, or even when, as Head of the Church, he prescribes, for instance, certain legends for the recitation of the Divine Office, or decides the validity of a marriage. Infallibility is a prerogative by which the Pope is preserved from error only when defining a doctrine of faith or morals as a dogma to be believed and professed by the whole Church. It attributes to him a quality no more divine than that which was attributed to the Evangelists; for as Christ protected them from error in the composition of the Gospels which were to teach the world true Christianity, so does he protect the popes in their universal teaching of true Christianity." It is natural that this doctrine which preserves and protects the Catholic Church in her decrees of Faith, should be maliciously attacked by bigotry, bias, and prejudice. That we may better know our position in case of such opposition, let us briefly consider two or three of the more popular objections. The enemies of

this doctrine contend that it is opposed to reason. This is not true.

Reason tells us that any religion which demands unwavering belief in its truth must possess, or at least ascribe to itself this virtue of infallibility. A religion which mistrusts its own doctrine, by that very fact surrenders all claim to faith and confidence. But whence is this infallibility to come? Is each of the faithful to be personally enlightened by the Holy Ghost? Is the Holy Spirit to descend again like a dove upon the heads of the ignorant and make of them unerring apostles? Such a demand, besides asking the greatest of miracles, is altogether wrong! It is the duty of the faithful, not to decide doctrinal difficulties, but to submit them to their bishops who in turn consult with the Pope. Now, this very order of things is what renders papal infallibility strictly to accord with reason. Let us consider a case. Should an error spring up and gain credence in the heart of Asia, do you think it would be reasonable to summon all bishops from the ends of the earth to assemble at Rome and condemn the heresy? Does it seem rational to lay out all that expense, to put the Church to all that inconvenience of brawl, merely because of some local error? On the other hand, what more reasonable than that there should be a court open to appeal, and capable of deciding such difficulties? The papal palace is that court!—and that the pope of that palace is capable of deciding such matters let us leave to reason. Reason tells us that an all-wise and all-loving Christ would not allow his flock to be led astray into wrong paths by the ignorance of their supreme shepherd. It demands that they do not induce into error in such vital matters of

faith by the very vicar of Christ; and yet if the Pope be capable of erring in such matters, if his decisions and definitions be not infallible, the demands of reason are not granted, or rather they are opposed! From this we logically conclude that papal infallibility, far from outraging reason, is in strict conformity with it, and serves only to meet its demands.

A second objection which is frequently raised assumes the form that "the doctrine of papal infallibility is a new doctrine, because only in the year 1870 was it proclaimed an article of faith." That it was proclaimed an article of faith only in the year 1870 we can and do freely grant, but that for this reason it is a new doctrine we emphatically and absolutely deny. The doctrine of papal infallibility is as old as the Church itself. Way back in the second century we find St. Irenaeus, a disciple of Policarpus, the friend of the Apostle John, writing that "With this Church (the Roman Church) on account of its more powerful principality, every Church, that is, the faithful on all sides, must needs be in accord (in faith and communion)." Furthermore the Fathers all agree with St. Ambrose, who teaches that "where Peter is, there is the Church," and with St. Augustine, who declares that "He only possesses the true Catholic faith who has the Roman faith, that faith which the Pope at Rome teaches." There are many truths which have been believed at all times and by all Christians, but which, nevertheless, the Church has never expressly and solemnly defined as articles of faith. The fact is that the Church never defines a doctrine so long as its belief is not opposed, but when opposition threatens to unsettle belief, then the Church acts. Such is the case with the

doctrine of papal infallibility. So long as it was accepted and commonly believed, the Church felt no call to define it as a dogma; but when it was roundly called in question, and opposing doctrines were gaining credence, then the Church proclaimed that this doctrine must be believed and professed by all Christians as a dogma of faith. By this action, however, the Church no more departed from the old true doctrine of Christ, and added no more to it, than if she were this year to define as an article of faith the fact that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem.

You may now wish to ask why, if these principal objections can be so easily refuted, why the doctrine of papal infallibility has been so strenuously and universally opposed. The answer comes quickly. This doctrine is generally misunderstood! Its opponents fight something which does not exist, or something which has no connection whatsoever with the doctrine. They expose the private lives of some of the more unfortunate Popes, their private opinions, their morals, etc.; and fight these as if they were in some way related to the infallibility of those same Popes or of their successors. But in all this they strike wide of the mark. Their implements of assault may contain power and destructive force, but they are poorly gauged and faultily sighted. Morals or private opinions of Popes are not the matter of dispute, but only their public, universal teaching. If the Pope can be named who has falsely defined any article of faith as a dogma, then there is real ground for contention. But the name of no such Pope can be truthfully alleged. We hear a lot of the errors of Popes Liberius and Honorius, but in refutation of these accusations we have

but to appeal to history. Here we learn that, both before and after his exile, Liberius firmly and courageously defended and professed his faith; and if he really signed a half-Arian confession of faith which almost is very doubtful, we may attribute this act to his misinterpretation of the heresy therein contained; or to his personal weakness. By no means can we regard it as the act of a Pope proclaiming heresy an article of faith to be professed by the universal Church. Honorius, on the other hand, though basely deceived by hypocritical letters, never once consented to, or gave final decision concerning Monothelitic heresy. The stand he took was that of absolute silence. It is true that Council afterwards condemned him; not for any positive share in the heresy; but for that silence which they pronounced criminal. In fact, we see that this same council pronounced expressly upon the infallibility of the Pope. In conclusion of this short treatise, let me quote for you Mgr. G. Schroeder, pro tem. Professor of the Catholic University at Washington. In his lectures on the "Papacy" he says: "We need not learn first from you that Popes Stephen VI and John XXII privately maintained opinions which nowadays every theological manual rejects as false; we also know, as well as you do, that a Roman Congregation did not understand Galileo's system, and therefore expressly rejected it; we agree with you that political measures of certain popes were not suggested by the sagacity of a Richelieu or a Bismarck, and therefore complete failures; all this no one testifies better than Pastor in his 'History of the Popes.' Yet all these objections have nothing to do with the infallibility of the Pope, and cannot for a moment call into question one of his supernatural prerogatives. You have to

prove to us that there ever was a Pope, may his name be Pius IX or John XXII, who obliged the whole Church, to accept error as revealed truth, or who, as interpreter of Christ's law, as leader of souls, called vice a virtue, and virtue a vice. Yea, I go further and say, 'Prove to us that a Pope has ever canonized a Saint who has not lived and died like a Saint; or that he has proved the constitutions of a religious order which were contrary to true morals. Or, to show you an easier way to reject our belief—prove to us that there was ever a Pope, who even for the price of a Kingdom allowed Philip of France, or Henry VIII of England, or Henry IV of Germany to divorce their legitimate wife and marry another. If you bring us any such proof we may begin to agree with you. But such a proof will be found wanting in all eternity, for the prayer which Jesus Christ prayed over Peter is eternally ascending from Christ's lips to the throne of the Almighty in behalf of each reigning Pope: "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted, confirm thy brethren!"

XV.

Why is Mary so Highly Honored in the Catholic Church?

Why is Mary so highly honored in the Catholic Church? You have our answer:

Mary is the Mother of God.

“Virgin and Mother of Our Dear Redeemer!
All our hearts are touched and softened at her name,
Alike the bandit with the bloody hand,
The Priest, the Prince, the Scholar, and the Peasant,
The man of deeds, the visionary dreamer,
Pay homage to her as one ever present
So mindful, so merciful, so strong, so good,
So patient, peaceful, loyal, loving, pure,
This were enough to prove it higher and truer
Than all the creeds the world had known before.”

—*Longfellow.*

History, my dear friends, has indeed recorded many momentous events. Events which have had a vast effect on human affairs. Their true importance, however, is measured and felt only by the people connected with them. Let the passionate Arab, the worshipful Mohammedan tell you the story of the birth of their celebrated prophet; they will reveal to you traditions which astound you by their novelty; traditions which no human history has ever yet credited. They will tell you that his birth was accompanied by signs and portents announcing a child of wonder; that

his mother suffered none of the pangs of travail. Heaven and earth, they will assure you, were agitated at his advent; that Lake Sawa shrank back to its secret springs, leaving its borders dry; while the Tigris, bursting its bounds, overflowed the neighboring islands. Tired with this theme, the infidel will narrate how the palace of Khosru, the King of Persia, shook to its foundations, and how several of its towers were toppled to the earth; how in the same eventful night, the sacred fire of Zoroaster, which, guarded by the Magi, had burned for upwards of a thousand years, was suddenly extinguished, and all the idols in the world were hurled to earth. Filled with awe and wonder, you could not refrain, exclaiming: "lo! all this true?" The Mohammedan, astonished at your ignorance, would slowly reply: "Such are the marvelous accounts given by our Moslem writers of the infancy of our illustrious Prophet Mohammed."

The true importance of events, my dear friends, is measured and felt only by the people connected with them.

Let the Knights of Columbus tell you the sympathetic story of their noble Patron. They will open before you a character, the secrets of which, you will confess, you have never before appreciated; they will impress you with the true merits of a man who by his hardy genius, his inflexible constancy, and his heroic courage, brought the ends of the earth into communication with each other. You will see in the narrative of their hero's troubled life the real link which connects the history of the old world with that of the new. Indeed, the true importance of great events is

measured and felt only by the people connected with them.

The truth of this conclusion has always been impressed upon me when I undertake to relate the extraordinary events of an extraordinary life: I refer to the life of the Virgin Mother. When we attempt to show our proofs that Mary was the true Mother of Christ, some pity, some smile, some sneer at us in contempt. It is with a heavy heart, that we note the surprise of those not connected with us as we relate marvelous accounts indeed, but nevertheless true ones; accounts that rely not on human and prejudiced authorities, but on divine authority. Yes, they rely on an authority which has been sanctioned and defended by a Teacher who has taught from the chair of truth for almost two thousand years; a Teacher who has racked the best and busiest brains of these last twenty centuries. That Teacher, the Catholic Church, tells us that Mary is the Mother of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour; but the importance of this truth and the events relating to it are measured and felt only by the people connected with them. I would not have you construe this conclusion as an argument against our separated friends who refuse to associate the name of Mary with that of Jesus. It seems to me, nevertheless, a solid test that they have not considered well the doctrine of Redemption. We can prove for certain that Mary is the true Mother of God; it is equally certain that only Catholics connect her name with the name of Jesus Christ and the great work of our Redemption. Let me begin, then, with the description of an event momentous in the history of the Catholic Church. The scene, the Basilica of the Vatican. The time, December 8, 1854; the place, Rome.

The morning of this day was as bright and serene as if it were the opening day of Spring; and Rome, eager to manifest its boundless devotion to Mary was active from early dawn. Citizens of all classes, united with a mighty concourse of strangers, were directing their course to the Vatican. All openly proclaiming their dearest wish was to be present at the solemn ceremony, and to hear proclaimed by Christ's oracle upon earth what they as true children of Mary had always tenderly believed. They flocked there to see the sacred seal of sanction placed upon the dogma that Mary was, not only the Mother of God, but *Immaculate* Mother of God; they came to assist at the triumph of her whom the Fathers called a prodigy of innocence, purity and honor; and whom they themselves as representatives of the faithful invoked as "Queen of Heaven," "Queen of Angels and Men," as "full of grace," and, most of all, as their own true "Mother" in the hour of trial and suffering.

I dare not attempt to describe a festival that so many Saints have desired and predicted; that so many scholars have made the subject of their erudition; that so many ages have aspired to behold; that so many Pontiffs have wished to give to the Church. There, in that grand old Basilica, sits that vast assembly presided over by the august head of the Church, Pius IX. Two hundred Bishops have come from all corners of the Universe, from the far-off regions of China, the trackless deserts of Africa, from the most remote islands of the ocean to the court of the Vicar of Christ, and encircle him as by a brilliant crown; three hundred Prelates of all ranks, of all titles serve as his guard of honor. Far above him stands the ancient statue of the

first Pope; of him who received from Jesus Christ Himself the government of His Holy Church; of Peter, the Fisherman of Galilee, become the Sovereign Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ, the Head of the Universal Church; and that first Pope whose head wore the triple crown, whose shoulders bore the cape of gold and who held on his finger the fisherman's ring seemed to salute his 259th successor, Pius IX, the heir of his authority and his virtues.

My Friends who would dare say that the College of Holy Apostles had not found itself again; who cannot recognize in these two hundred Bishops, in the almost countless number of clergy and faithful who filled the immense Basilica, the faithful type of the primitive Church? Was it not thus in Jerusalem the Apostles assembled together, under the presidency of Peter, and the Holy Ghost was in the midst of them? Was it not thus that at Ephesus, fourteen centuries ago, two hundred Bishops were gathered under the presidency of the Great St. Cyril of Alexandria, the legate of the Sovereign Pontiff? That venerable assembly also, my dear friends, had convened to honor the Mother of God. But the triumph which the august Mother of God gained from the chair of Truth in the nineteenth century must yield to the glorious victory of that far-off Council of the fifth century. The Council at Ephesus had not assembled to declare Mary Immaculate in her conception, but to defend her *divine maternity*. Pope Pius IX could preside himself over the assemblage of his brethren, the Cardinals, Prelates, Patriarchs of all the Earth; but not so with Pope St. Celestine. The Bishops of the Vatican Council had not to strike one of their brethren in the Episcopate;

in that noble assembly haughty Nestorius had no emulator. Not so, at the Council of Ephesus; Nestorius was there, an heresiarch; he had followers; aye! he had an emperor for his patron, and armed troops for his escort. Yet, history stands witness, that, in defense of Mary's honor, the early Fathers of Ephesus were no less united and unanimous than the Fathers of our own venerable assembly. For no sooner were the doctrines of Nestorius, denying that Mary was the Mother of God, read and examined than that solemn assembly of two hundred mitred men, robed in copes of gold, arose in indignation and in one voice thundered forth: "Anathema, to such impious teaching; anathema, to whomsoever holds such opinions; they are contrary to the sacred scriptures and to the traditions of the Fathers." Never had the honor of Mary been better defended! Never had the Queen of Heaven gained a more brilliant victory.

That the same views have continued to present themselves to the most intelligent minds of the succeeding centuries is open to your sincere investigation; their works, those vast monuments to their untiring industry, are accessible to you; you have but to read them yourselves. Ask the students of history what the views of the great Doctors, Irenaeus, Athanasius and Dionysius of Alexandria; what the proofs of the greatest scriptural scholar the world has ever known, St. Jerome? What, the convictions of the greatest trio of intellectual giants, the Church has ever produced? You know them; they are St. Bernard, Thomas Aquinas and Suarez. You and I know them as illustrious Doctors of Theology; your friend, the scholar, knows them as the fathers of science, for the white light of truth they

spread over their century—like the morning dawn it seemed to call a new creation into existence, and broke with all the charm of wonder upon the imaginative minds of their contemporaries. No thorough scientist, no profound theologian, my dear friends, can cast aside a dogma that has divine authority for its basis, and reasons dear to the heart of the mightiest of human geniuses for its supplement. The doctrines of the Fathers I have named for you are genuinely reflected in the writings of our modern scholars and apologists; among whom is your own great Cardinal Newman.

I have said, my dear friends, that the dogma of Mary's maternity has divine authority for its basis; the basis of divine authority are the Scriptures. I speak particularly of the New Testament. Such authority is absolute. Let me tell you then, when you prove that a dogma has the direct words of the Gospels for its authentic basis, your proof is absolute and unanswerable. In this century of higher criticism and mental evolution, when the archives of past ages are sought to solve the stressing problems of history, truth is indeed undergoing a terrible scrutiny. Theories that have relied upon doubtful manuscripts for their genuineness have rightly sunk under the weight of their false testimony. The reason has been because they were nothing more than theories, only hypotheses, resting on the false light of a groping century. But honest scrutiny and fair criticism transmute Truth into pure gold, as fire does the base metal. But, as you too well know, no manuscripts have undergone the telling test that the Gospel records have endured. Yet, my dear friends, they still stand. What is a still greater proof of their authenticity is that "they still

stand" despite the unfair principles of criticism adopted to misconstrue and distort them. Principles that are no more adopted to tell truth than to prove falsities. Why? Because the very motives which have influenced the searing scrutiny of some scholars, who call themselves Rationalists, furnish proof of their unfitness and inability. They take an historical fact and trace it to its source with the firm purpose of acting witness to its authenticity. Why do they change their principle when they receive into their unholy hands the Gospel records; why do they not take up those sacred manuscripts, filled up with the beliefs of millions of thinking men with the firm purpose likewise of proving their genuineness; why has not the sentence at least been delayed till after the examination; why has the tool of true science become the tool of prejudice in the hands of these, the greatest scientists of truth in our century? Shall we wonder then that the calm, cool, calculating scholar shrinks from the company of the Rationalists. That the fair scientist distrust the conclusions of his blind and prejudiced fellow-laborer. Oh! No, my dear friend, such a spirit of inquiry we need never fear; call it science if you will, but I call it fatalism; call it modern Philosophy if you will, but I call it a return to Paganism. No! that meddling spirit which in the garb of learned research goes prying about the traces of history, casting down its monuments, narrowing and mutilating its fairest trophies, you need never fear. Such pernicious erudition, while it defeats the most salutary purposes of history, that of furnishing examples of what great genius and laudable enterprise may accomplish, in devotion to such an unworthy cause defeats itself. These are the scholars who tell us our Gospels are

unauthentic; that they are the compilation of a powerful but human genius. Pity! that such untiring energy is not animated by more lofty motives; that hardy genius, in its mad attempt to suck dry the springs of Truth, bloats itself with the poisonous dregs of misconception and error.

No, my dear friends, the basis of my best proof, the Gospels, still stands, they are still authentic history. The Gospels prove that Jesus Christ was true God; they also prove that Mary conceived and bore, as her Son, the same Jesus Christ. It follows, directly then, that Mary was the true Mother of our God and Savior. The proof of Mary's divine Maternity could not be more absolute. Examine, I ask you, the conversation between Mary and the Angel-Messenger. Matthew (I, 20) simply tells us the fact that, "that which is conceived in Mary is of the Holy Ghost." St. Luke supplies us the details. The Angelical salutation you all do honor it; for it is dear to your Catholic hearts. "Then the Angel said to her: 'Fear not, Mary, for thou has found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus.'" And Mary said to the Angel: "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" And the Angel, answering, said to her: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee, and therefore also the Holy One which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." And Mary, rising up in those days, went into the hill country with haste into a city of Juda. And she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of

Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost and she cried out with a loud voice and said: "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." Mark now the words that follow! "And whence is this to me that the Mother of My God should come to me"? What words, I ask you, more plainly prove Mary's divine maternity? Look at the "Setting" of those passages I have narrated to you! In the same Gospel, aye in the same chapter, the Angel to assure Mary of the power of God, declares to her: "Behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren." You call Elizabeth the real and natural Mother of John the Baptist; I know of no scholar who has even questioned that Elizabeth was the natural mother of John the Baptist. Yet, my dear friends, not only are the very same passages from which historians (Josephus Flavius, Ant. XVIII, V. 2; cf. Eusebius, H. E. i. iii.) conclude that Elizabeth was the true mother of the historical character, John the Baptist—not only I say are these passages parallel with those relating Mary's divine maternity; not only are they both knitted in the same chapter, but what is the most significant fact of all is: that the very same verbs, root and stem which *express the motherhood of Elizabeth* are used to *express the motherhood of Mary!*

No scholar can be so illogical, so rationalistic as to assert the one, and deny the other. The Evangelist, my dear friends, has left us no alternative. His conclusions are beyond cavil. He has simply said that Mary was the Mother of Jesus just as Elizabeth was the Mother of John. That Joseph was the natural

Father of Jesus is heresy to Catholics and Protestants alike; yet the Jews themselves believed Mary to be his Mother; for they said to him: (Matt. XII, 47) "Behold thy mother and thy relations stand without, desiring to speak with thee?" St. Matthew tells us that the "Magi entering into the house found the child with Mary his Mother." More final proofs than these, I cannot offer you. Scholars have stripped numerous monuments and heaped up their discoveries in huge volumes, yet their proofs derive their force from the plain letters of the Gospels. You need to be no scholar to read and interpret the meaning of the passages I have arrayed for your inspection. They speak volumes in themselves.

Yes, my dear friends, this is the reason why we honor Mary. She is the Mother of God. This is the reason that outreasons our weak and silly minds; that vanquishes the frail objections that hollow human genius has built in the path of its acceptance.

Thus far, my dear friends, you have been the critics of my powers of reasoning; thus far you have been sifting evidence. Now you must show me that you are men of reason; that judgment rests safely in your hands. The reason which I am about to submit to you, you perhaps have never heard before. Its novelty! No, it is its truth that will startle you. Its effect will be your awakening to a deeper realization of what you, as an unfortunate child of Adam, owe to Mary. It is the unanswerable and only reason why Mary stands next to God in honor. It was because Mary stood next to Christ on the cross. What right had Mary there? This is my answer. You and I trace our redemption to the Sacrifice on Calvary's height; to that

first Good Friday the sun ever saw. Yet, do you not know that the very blood which you and I would gather as so many precious drops of grace was the very blood which Mary gave from her own body to form the human body of the Man-Saviour? The very blood, mark me, which redeemed you and me, flowed from the human form fashioned from the pure blood of Mary. Then, Mary is the instrumental cause of our redemption. Surely no thinking Christian needs more solid, more convincing, more powerful, more noble proofs of Mary's right to his honor and to his gratitude.

What wonder, then, that the Church has instituted numerous feasts in her honor. What wonder, then, that the Church attempts to pay the debt of gratitude to Mary in the name of all mankind. There is no deed that blemishes the escutcheon of a Great Power, that blackens a great name more than the crime of ingratitude. You, the Knights of Columbus, have an example of what I say in your illustrious Patron, Christopher Columbus. We are sure that King Ferdinand, after the death of Columbus, showed a sense of his appreciation by ordering a monument erected to the memory of him. On it were inscribed these words: "To Castile and Leon, Columbus gave a world." However great an honor a monument may be, it is but a poor reward for a sovereign to bestow; as to the motto inscribed upon it, it remains engraved in the memory of manhood more indelibly than in brass and marble; a record of the great debt of gratitude due to the discovery which the Monarch Ferdinand had so faithlessly neglected to discharge. Some recent Spanish writers have attempted to vindicate the conduct of Ferdinand

toward Columbus. But their attempts have been futile nor is their failure to be regretted. To screen such injustice from the reprobation of mankind in the otherwise eminent character of Ferdinand is to defeat the sacred purpose of History. No! The ingratitude must stand recorded in its full extent, and shall endure throughout all time. The dark shadow which it cast upon the renown of Ferdinand is a lesson to all Rulers teaching what is important to their own fame in the treatment of illustrious men. Nor would the Church escape the merited reprobation of mankind were she to forget the name of Mary. The monument which the Church was to erect to Mary was not to be built of brass or marble; she knew too well the cheapness of such a reward. No! That title was to be indelibly engraved upon the hearts of the faithful; a motto that would sink deeper as the sands of life sunk lower, it was, "Oh, Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!" This the title of the Immaculate Conception of Mary! For this doctrine I need give no apology. Such a dogma is the only logical consequence of Mary's divine motherhood. Nay, rather, I make it the only condition upon which she can retain her prerogative of divine Motherhood. Principles, my dear friend, are tested by their consequences, by their true extension. But the judicial and logical extension of the dogma of Mary's divine maternity results in the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception; they are reciprocal.

There is none of you who has not read the story of the fall of our first parents, when human nature received its first stroke of spiritual apoplexy and God in His mercy promised a Redeemer, saying: "I will put

enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." But Eve, my dear friends, by whom original sin was introduced, was created sinless. The nature of God's system of redemption demanded that Mary, the second Eve, should also be created sinless. To say it was otherwise, that Infinite Purity, in the Incarnation, was united to human flesh and that Infinite Purity was united with defilement and sinful humanity is absurd. Why? Such a union would violate God's Infinite Sanctity.

Furthermore, my dear friends, we think we can freely satisfy the craving reason of our Rationalistic friends, if they will but strip their minds of preconceived prejudices against the divine and revealed truth, and meet us in the fair field of honest statement and dispassionate argument. There is nothing unreasonable, we think, in rendering honor to Christ's Mother? We do not claim that Our Lord derived His Divine Nature but only His human nature from Mary? In the Christian theory, the soul of each human being is created by God from nothing, and is united to the body at conception; and yet is not the natural mother said to be the mother of the compound being, called man, although he derived but one element of his being from his parents? We, with all Trinitarians, thus firmly believe and philosophically prove that while Our Lord did not derive His divinity from His Mother, the two natures, human and divine, were united in Him before His birth. This is what we mean when we say that Mary is the Mother of God. St. John in the first chapter of his gospel has thus summarized the part of Mary in the Mystery of the Incarnation. He says "that the Word was God—that the Word was made

flesh and dwelt among us"—that Jesus Christ was the Word and that Mary was His Mother.

About the middle of the nineteenth century there was fought one of the most glorious battles on the field of intellectual controversy that modern history has as yet recorded, the religious struggle between Puseyism and Catholicity. The final issue, some Catholics and Protestant controversialists maintain, has not been entirely satisfactory. But if you will have my opinion, I would tell you that the final issue to Catholicism has *been* most satisfactory, but to Protestantism most disastrous. It has aroused the attention of the sober and reflective mind to the grievous evils of sectarianism and to the great importance of religious unity. Such have been the principal benefits of Puseyism. But ask the student of religious history, and he will tell you that it has been instrumental in conducting many ingenious and learned Protestants to the very portals, aye, to the inner sanctuary of the Catholic Temple, among them Cardinal Newman, the very column of the Anglican Church, who pays this tribute to the Catholic devotion to Mary, the Mother of our Saviour.

The notorious fact that Protestants have no love, no tender feeling of reverence to the Blessed Mother of Christ, furnishes one of the greatest proofs that Protestantism is not the true religion of Christ. Protestantism will not only not aid in fulfilling the prediction of the inspired Virgin that "all generations shall call me Blessed," but, what is worse, is in the habit of sneering at those who fulfill it. They have not a particle of that deep and filial love which the beloved Disciple of Jesus ever cherished toward Mary, who had

been given him, and in his person to all the cherished friends of Jesus as a tender and loving Mother. What *age*, what science has evolved a higher ideal of womanhood; of spotless virtue, of noble motherhood than that which the Catholic Church has and does still propose in the person of Mary? To glance at history is to see the truth more clearly. The first century dawns, and we behold the angry Ephesians assembled together in the public theatre to proclaim in denunciation of the doctrine of St. Paul, the virtues of their goddess Diana. For two full hours they cried: "Great is the Diana of the Ephesians." Yet three centuries later the same nation assembled to proclaim not the virtues of their goddess Diana, but of the faultless Mary, Mary, the Mother of God.

When the Northmen were converted to the Catholic Faith in the fifth and following centuries they learned, along with the other teachings of Christianity, that the Saviour whom they adored vouchsafed to be born of a woman, to call her Mother, and to be subject to her. The high honor thus divinely conferred on Mary was reflected from her upon her whole sex. The generous Northmen caught up at once this idea so just, so noble, so beautiful, and their enthusiasm in honor of the sex was aroused. The principles of Medieval Chivalry were developed, but the feeling outstripped the principle, and woman thus suddenly found herself raised as much above her level in society as she had hitherto been degraded below it. Yet the extravagant excesses of chivalric devotion to the sex were curbed by the holy principles of religion; and the result of these elements and causes is the station which woman now occupies in society. Thanks to Christianity, therefore, and to the high influence of Mary over the nobler

minds of men and women that woman has ceased to be the slave, and has been made the companion of man; from being the drudge of society, she has become its ornament and refiner.

Gladly, my dear friends, do we admit that the Middle Age was the "age of Mary." For at no other period in human history, including the present, did woman exert greater influence. They did more. They acted their own parts. Who has not heard of the famous Joan of Arc, who at the tender age of seventeen, led the disheartened troops of France to deeds of heroic valor, retrieving the fortunes of her country conquered by a foreign foe; driving the English from more than half of France and finishing her mission by crowning Charles VII King of France? Who has not heard of Queen Margaret of Sweden, who, in the thirteenth century, by her political powers, united all the jarring elements of Northern Scandinavia into one vast Kingdom? Our own century, we are sadly aware, has produced no such characters. Why, then, my dear friends, has not the science of our age, if truth be its object, if purity of ideal be its guide, lavished its praises upon Mary, centered its devotions about her shrine? Is it because the Catholic Church has proposed it? Ah! sad conclusion, but only too true. Is not that a pernicious science, a dangerous spirit which blinds and prejudices the minds of our greatest thinkers against a truth so obvious, so manifestly ennobling? Can such men, in fine, wonder when the Church doubts their conclusions in other sciences, and accepts them only after careful investigation and thorough scrutiny? As a Promoter of Truth for Truth's sake, she could not act otherwise.



