

Thomas U. ... P. 250

I 255 to the out

250

LECTURES

ON

Very good
20

CATHOLICITY AND PROTESTANTISM.



LECTURE FOURTH:

THE DOCTRINES AND EVIDENCES

OF THE

HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

By T. L. NICHOLS, M. D.

New York:

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.

Price Ten Cents.

THE FOURTH LECTURE

OF the series, on CATHOLICITY AND PROTESTANTISM, appeals to the charity of the Catholic, and the candor of the non-Catholic reader. Doubtless it has its faults and imperfections. Should it, or any of the series, contain errors of fact or of doctrine, I beg to be informed, that I may have them corrected in future editions.

The series of Lectures, of which this is one, consists of the following :

- I. The History of the Holy Catholic Church.
- II. The History of Protestantism.
- III. The Popular Objections to Catholicity.
- IV. The Doctrines and Evidences of Catholicity.
- V. The Catholic Church the Church of the Bible.

They are mailed to subscribers, who order them for distribution, at the rate of 15 copies for \$1; 50 copies for \$3; 100 copies for \$5, whether of a single number, or the series; and, as they are stereotyped, any quantity of any or all of them can be furnished for distribution.

Up to the present time, six thousand copies of the series, or an aggregate of thirty thousand copies have been ordered by the venerable prelates and clergy, and zealous laity. I hope that this number may be greatly increased.

I have solicited contributions to enable me to send a copy of each lecture to three thousand American editors.

Although I wish the lectures to be judged by each reader, and to make their own success, I may, I trust, without impropriety, for the sake of those who have not seen the other lectures of the series, copy the following notices, such as I happen to have at hand, out of the whole number, for which I am indebted to a liberal Catholic press.

From the "METROPOLITAN RECORD," Official Organ of the MOST REV. JOHN HUGHES, D. D., Archbishop of New York.

LECTURES ON CATHOLICITY AND PROTESTANTISM. Lecture third: Popular objections to Catholicity. By T. L. Nichols.

This is, as the title imports, the third of the admirable series of lectures which are now in course of publication, and which we are pleased to learn have met with most decided success. The subjects of which they treat are presented in a most popular form, and all the strong points are brought out and sustained with vigor and ability. They exhibit much industry and research, and a judicious arrangement of facts, while the style is clear, simple, and forcible. The lecturer is thoroughly acquainted with the prevalent prejudices and slanders against the Catholic Church, and in his answers thereto has made a most discriminating use of the material which he has had at his disposal. The very low price at which these lectures are sold places them within the reach of all, and we trust they will have a still larger circulation, particularly among our Protestant fellow-citizens.

LECTURES

ON

CATHOLICITY AND PROTESTANTISM.

LECTURE FOURTH:

THE DOCTRINES AND EVIDENCES OF
THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

BY

T. L. NICHOLS, M. D.

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.
1859.

AEA 3823

JAMES B. KIRKER

Copyright of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York

Entered according to Act of Congress

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1859,
BY JAMES B. KIRKER,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the
Southern District of New York.

of the District Court of the United States

James B. Kirker

of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York

Decidified

THE DOCTRINES AND EVIDENCES
OF THE
HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.

WHILE Protestants and Infidels calumniate and persecute Catholics, they betray in their conversation, speeches, sermons, and writings, the most astonishing ignorance of Catholic Doctrines, and of the Evidences which not only retain millions of intelligent people in the Catholic faith, but which are producing the conversion of great numbers in all Protestant countries.

Catholics, who cannot comprehend this ignorance of otherwise well-informed people, of what is so familiar to them; or who cannot see how honest people can bitterly condemn what they know nothing about, and what they take no pains to know about, are liable to be wanting in charity to their calumniators and persecutors. They forget that Protestants, while condemning traditions, are the blind dupes and victims of traditions, in their opposition to the Catholic Faith. These traditions have come down to them from the

days of the terrible persecutions of Catholics under Queen Elizabeth and her successors, when the horrible cruelties inflicted upon the Catholic clergy and people of England and Ireland, were sought to be justified by the invention of even more outrageous, because longer lived, falsehoods. The bloody and barbarous executions, tortures, imprisonments, &c., under the Penal Code of England, were "light afflictions," in comparison with the base calumnies and strange misrepresentations which have kept alive the dread and hatred of the Catholic Church in the minds of millions for centuries. It was a less crime to torture, hang, draw, and quarter, or burn hundreds of Catholics, as was done under Elizabeth of England, than to invent one of those lies which have prevented whole nations from long ago returning to the faith of our ancestors.

As a general rule, the sins of Americans against Catholics are sins of ignorance; their greatest fault is in not seeking to know the truth; and it is the duty of Catholics to bear every wrong with patience, saying ever—"Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

In my third lecture I have clearly stated and briefly answered some of the POPULAR OBJECTIONS TO CATHOLICITY. ~~In this~~, I wish ^{here} to inform Protestants *what Catholics really believe; what are the Evidences of their belief that the Catholic Church is the true Church; in a word, of what it is to be a Catholic.*

In the fifth and concluding lecture of this series, I intend to show, by an appeal to the Holy Scriptures, that THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IS THE CHURCH OF THE BIBLE; proving, also, by the same means, that all other religious organizations, claiming to be churches—all Protestant sects—are *anti-scriptural*.

Reason and revelation assure us that there is but one True Religion. One God, one Humanity, one relation between man and his Creator. All men are involved in the same liability to error and sin—all need the same salvation; Christ came for all; one faith was once for all delivered to the Saints. The True Religion must be that which He has taught us; which is worthy of Him; and there can be but ONE. Of two or more contradictory doctrines, but one can be true. Man is, by the faculties of his mind and heart, adapted to a certain relation to God; there can be but one religion that so relates him.

But though reason shows that there must be one, and can be *but* one True Religion, experience teaches that unaided reason was not able to attain to it. Man was dependent on God himself, to teach him his relation and duty to his Creator. Hence the necessity of a Revelation. This Revelation must be in harmony with the nature of man, and such as his reason can approve, or he could not accept it. *There is no truth contrary to reason.* God does not contradict himself. He does not give man reason for his guide, and then make a revelation which that reason must

reject. God requires of man only a reasonable service.

When Divine Revelation teaches to man that there is One God, the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth, reason accepts with joy a fundamental truth. When revelation asserts the immortality of the human soul, reason finds its echo in her own thought. When revelation declares the primitive purity, and subsequent fall of man, his state of sin, and his need of salvation, reason finds in the nature and history of man a basis of faith in this revelation. When it is announced that God, out of his boundless love for the creatures he has made, has taken upon himself their sufferings, and the punishment of their sins, and has joined himself to humanity, that we might be saved; though this involves things beyond our comprehension, reason does not reject the higher mystery of Faith. As far as we understand, reason approves. We feel that our Faith does not go counter to reason, but only that she takes a higher flight in the same direction. We reject the *unnatural*, but the *supernatural* we can accept, because we have faculties fitted for its acceptance.

Having received this One Revelation of God to man—for though given at various times, and to, and through, many individuals, it is in perfect unity—we derive from it *One Faith*, the acceptance of which necessitates the rejection of every other. And this revelation declares its own unity. It is of God, *not*

gods. It teaches us the *WAY, not ways,* of salvation. It opens to us the one *FOLD, not folds,* of one great Shepherd. We have One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, *not many.* Christ tenderly gathered his children into One Church, *not churches;* praying the Father "That they all may be *one,* as thou, Father, in me, and I in thee; that they all may be *one* in us; *that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*" What is the great obstacle of the world's conversion to faith in Christ? Is it not the various and discordant beliefs and practices of professing Christians?

Christ is the Shepherd; His followers are the lambs and sheep of his flock; the Church is His fold, and there is but One Fold, as there is but One Shepherd. The Church of Christ is his spiritual kingdom, called in Scripture the Kingdom of Heaven. In every kingdom there must be unity of government and administration. "A kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." The Church is called an army, "fighting the good fight of faith." An army must be united under one chief. Christ did not teach two kinds of doctrine. How can they be his followers who teach twenty? He did not command his disciples to divide themselves into a variety of sects, to suit the various tastes and notions of mankind. Christ and his Apostles did not say—*Be at variance; hate one another; be perfect in division; follow after the things that make for strife; let there be divisions among you; beware of unity; Christ is divided; let there be*

schisms among you ; be of many minds ; live in strife ; One Lord, many faiths, and various baptisms ; I beseech you be of many minds in the Lord , be ye carried about with divers and strange doctrines ; do not obey them that have rule over you, nor submit yourselves.

There is no fact connected with Divine Revelation more evident in itself, and more conformable to reason, and all we can know and feel of the truth of religion, than that *the visible Church of Christ on the earth is one body, teaching and holding one doctrine ; with an organization of one united government, administering one form of sacraments, and receiving all believers into the one fold of Christ, and the one way of salvation.* Two such societies, differing from each other ; two doctrines, two heads, two kinds of worship and ordinances, involve contradictions and absurdities without end ; and we are compelled to say, of two or many faiths, either one is true and all others are false, or there is none that is true. Those who examine with care proportioned to the importance of the subject, come to the first conclusion ; but many, for the want of such care, arrive at the second. Sectarianism is both the direct and indirect source of infidelity. Some are infidels because sects afford them no assurance of faith, others because the variety of sects seems to prove that no faith is true.

If the Doctrines of the Holy Catholic Church—the Church of Christ and the Apostles—as it was first

established and has ever existed, one great, united, Divinely guided Society, for eighteen centuries; with one regular succession of holy teachers, under one appointed head, in the same city where it was established in the first century, presiding over the same venerable churches, over the catacombs where the martyrs of that one Church were buried—if these doctrines, as I present them to you, do not move your reverence, satisfy your desires, and find acceptance in your faith, it will be owing to the weakness, imperfectness, and obscurity with which they are presented to you, or some evil in yourselves.

WHAT DO CATHOLICS BELIEVE? WHAT IS IT TO BE A CATHOLIC?

You can buy a little catechism of the Catholic Faith for ^{a few} three cents. It is contained in the Nicene Creed; more briefly in the Apostles' Creed. It is even included, full and entire, in one sentence of this primitive symbol of the Christian Faith.

He who says, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church," accepts all that she teaches and does all that she requires.

A Catholic, making an Act of Faith, says: "O my God, I firmly believe all the sacred truths the Catholic Church believes and teaches, because Thou hast revealed them, who canst neither deceive nor be deceived."

Thus, one point of doctrine includes all others.

Protestants say: The Bible, and the Bible alone is the foundation of our Faith.

Catholics, who know that their faith existed, and was taught to, and by, the Church, before it was written in the Bible, or even in the Creed of the Apostles, say: Our Faith is founded on the Word of God. They believe that the true faith, as well as the Scriptures and their proper interpretation, was committed to the care of the Church, which is the pillar and ground of truth.

The voice of the Church, and its testimony concerning the faith, has been given through its general councils and its appointed Chief Pastor. Thus God lives in and speaks through His Church.

The Symbol of the Apostles was expanded, and more clearly defined at the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, and this Niccan Creed is the one used in the formal profession of faith, usually recited in the Mass, or chief act of Catholic Worship.

The last General Council, held at Trent, in the sixteenth century, defines certain articles of faith, not expressly declared in the Symbol of Nice. Finally, ~~His Holiness, the present Pope Pius IX.~~ *has given* expression to the faith of the whole Church, in defining the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, *and of Infallibility in the head of the Church.*

It is to be understood that it is not, and never was, the office of Pope, or Council, or of the Church, to invent or make articles of faith. They can only declare them. The Catholic Faith is that which was

in 1854 & the Vatican Council in 1870, gave

given by Christ, taught by His Apostles, handed down by the Bishops, their successors, and defined and declared by the General Councils and the Pope or Chief Pastor.

Christ, ever living in the Church, which is His Body; the Holy Spirit which he promised should guide his disciples into All Truth; these make the voice of the Church the voice of God, and enable us to make the act of Faith, in which we say: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church"—"I firmly believe all the sacred truths the Catholic Church believes and teaches, because Thou hast revealed them." We hold this faith, relying on the promises of Christ, as surely and securely, as we do the first article of our Creed, which says: "I believe in God the Father Almighty."

After the Council of Trent, the last of the great series of General Councils of the Catholic Church, His Holiness, Pope Pius IV., prepared "A Profession of Catholic Faith," in accordance with the Canons and decrees of that Council; and as this is the profession which all persons admitted into the Church are required to make, I shall make use of it as the basis of this lecture. I will state the points of belief, one by one, with such explanations as seem necessary; after which, I will give more systematically than I have hitherto done, the Evidences of this Holy Faith, reserving, however, as I have already intimated, the Scripture proofs for the concluding lecture.

"THE NICENE CREED."

"I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages; God of God; Light of Light; true God of true God; Begotten, not made; consubstantial to the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, AND WAS MADE MAN. He was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried. And rose again on the third day, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and shall come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end. And in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who, together with the Father and the Son is glorified; who spake by the Prophets. And One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I expect the resurrection of the dead; and the life of the world to come. Amen."

"I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD." Matter and spirit, "all things, visible and invisible," and all their qualities, combinations, and aggregations, atoms and worlds, demonstrate a unity of Infinite Power, Infinite Wisdom,

Infinite Goodness—and this is God. Our Creator and Almighty Father has revealed himself to us through the Church he has established, by the holy men whom He has inspired, and in the written revelation of His word, as the Holy Trinity, One God in three Persons; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This is a Sublime Mystery, which we do not attempt to comprehend, but which we believe, because it is revealed to us. It is a dogma of Divine Revelation, given to us by the authority of the Holy Catholic Church. Those who reject the Church, and her authority and testimony, reject the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, and whatever else they may consider inconvenient, or absurd, or impossible. We, living in a universe full of sublime and incomprehensible mysteries, unable to comprehend even our own existence, exercise the blessed faculty of faith, and believe what we have *good evidence* that Almighty God has been pleased to reveal to us. Further on we shall investigate the nature of that evidence.

“AND IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST”—“WHO FOR US MEN, AND FOR OUR SALVATION, CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN, AND WAS INCARNATE BY THE HOLY GHOST OF THE VIRGIN MARY, AND WAS MADE MAN.”

Christ, truly God, equal with the Father, of the same substance, became truly man. We believe in the Glorious Mystery of His miraculous Incarnation. We honor her, most favored among women, who became truly Mother of God.

The Church, in her symbols of faith, and by the Holy Scriptures, and the living voice of her teaching body, the Bishops, who are the successors of the Apostles, and the clergy whom they ordain and authorize to teach, speaks to us of the holy life, the bitter sufferings, the shameful death, the glorious resurrection and ascension of our incarnate God and Saviour. Hundreds of millions in every age through eighteen centuries, have believed the facts, to which the Apostles gave their testimony to the world; to which the writings of the fathers, an unbroken tradition, the blood of the martyrs, and countless miracles in every age, are witnesses.

“AND SHALL COME AGAIN WITH GLORY TO JUDGE BOTH THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.”

Catholics believe in the general judgment of the last day; they also believe in a particular judgment, by which the place or condition of each individual soul is assigned to it at the time of its separation from the body.

And now comes that article of the Catholic Creed, which is, so to speak, the key-stone of the arch of Faith.

“AND ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH.”

Here is our perpetual, living, unfailling, and infallible witness. Take away the Church and we are

left to the dim light of nature alone, and our unaided reason. Take away the Church and we have no assurance of a divine revelation. Prove her *fallible*, and you cover every thing with doubt and despair. Prove that there is not one living, visible, infallible Church—"the body of Christ,"—"the pillar and ground of truth;" take away her existence, her testimony, her authority, and you have no proof of a Divine revelation, or of one item of the Christian faith, beyond what reason teaches us. It is for this reason that all who have left the Catholic Church are on the road to, or have arrived at Rationalism, Infidelity, or Atheism.

Accept the fact that there is such a Church, and you have in her the assurance of faith, and the promise of life everlasting.

So the great question—"Catholic or Infidel?"—rests here; and, to the intelligent and logical mind, there is no resting place between.

A Church which is ONE, and whose existence forbids the idea of any other.

A Church which is HOLY in her doctrines and requirements.

A Church which is CATHOLIC—spread over the earth, and in all times and everywhere the same.

A Church which is APOSTOLIC, whose bishops are the successors of the apostles, by an unbroken line of consecration, and who acknowledge as their spiritual head the successor of St. Peter, their appointed chief.

Catholics believe in this Church; they believe her testimony; they believe the doctrines she teaches; they endeavor to live up to her holy precepts of charity and virtue.

“ I EXPECT THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD, AND THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME.”

The Catholic Church teaches the resurrection of the body and individual immortality. The soul is immortal; it lives separated from the body; it shall be reunited to it. Many persons, who admit the separate existence and immortality of the soul, deny the possibility of a bodily resurrection. But our Saviour taught it; St. Paul explains it; the Church has always believed it. Catholics believe that the body as well as the soul is sanctified; that Christ, in putting on a human body, and in that body being raised from the dead, assured the glorious resurrection of the bodies of all his saints.

It is not believed that the gross matter, which changes from day to day, increasing or diminishing in quantity, has any part in this resurrection; but that the more internal, essential, substantial, or what St. Paul calls the spiritual body, is that which is raised; and that there is such a body, composed of atoms of matter, which have impressed upon them a certain relation to the soul, which can never be lost, is perfectly consistent with chemical science, and most certainly “ possible with God.”

The life of the world to come—the life of the blessed, is one whose unspeakable happiness consists in the enjoyment of the Beatific vision of God. “Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive.” Still there are degrees in the happiness of heaven, “as one star differeth from another in glory.”

So in the condition of those who reject God's grace and salvation, there must be wide degrees of misery, from the pain of loss to the deepest torments of the worm that never dies. We are assured that every one is rewarded according to his works; that some are beaten with few, and some with many stripes. What is the nature of the punishment, or what the character of the sufferings of those who die in a state of mortal sin, the Church does not inform us. Neither do we know the state of those souls who, for a season, are detained in a middle place of purgation or purification.

Next to the Nicene Creed in this Confession, as next in importance, and the basis of much that follows, we have this declaration:

“I MOST FIRMLY ADMIT AND EMBRACE APOSTOLICAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL TRADITIONS, AND ALL OTHER CONSTITUTIONS AND OBSERVANCES OF THE SAME CHURCH.”

This is but the assertion of the authority and infallibility of the Catholic Church. It is but saying,

I believe in the promises of Christ; I believe that he built his Church upon a rock, and that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." I believe that he sent to his Church the Holy Spirit of Truth, to abide with her forever. I believe that his apostles, filled with the power of the Holy Ghost, have taught all things whatsoever he commanded them, and that he will be with them and their successors, the appointed teachers of his Church, "all days, even to the consummation of the world." We do believe that the Holy Ghost, resting upon the apostles, did teach them all things, and brought to their minds all things whatsoever he had said to them. We believe that he said to the pastors of this Church, "Whatsoever you bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven." That he that heareth the Church, heareth Christ.

We believe that we should "obey our prelates and be subject to them, imitating their faith." We believe that we should "stand firm, and hold the traditions which we have learned," whether by word, or by the Epistles of the Apostles. Believing all this, relying with a firm faith upon the promises of Christ, of the presence and guidance of the Holy Ghost in his Church, we hold her, as of necessity and in fact, infallible; and humbly accept whatever she teaches, and in whatever form it may be given.

Protestants have made a great clamor about this belief in tradition. The traditions of the Church are

the unwritten word of God, which is as Divine as the written; nay, it may be more sacred and interior.

What! you can believe nothing but Scripture? When Christ first sent out his disciples to preach the gospel to the whole world, not a line of this Scripture on which you rely was written. There was neither gospel nor epistle: it was *all* tradition. And so it remained for a long period. And because not written or printed, you would not have believed it? But Jesus said of this oral teaching: "He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." What were all the unrecorded things which Jesus said to his disciples for the forty days between the resurrection and ascension to heaven, when he completed the organization of His Church? All but the few words recorded in the gospels they treasured up in their hearts, and handed down as precious traditions. St. John says, at the end of the last and fullest of the gospels, and the one which recorded most of these Divine lessons: "But there are many other things which Jesus did: which if they were written every one, the world itself I think would not be able to contain the books that should be written."

And was all this to be forgotten? Was all this *tradition* of no value? Jesus said: "The Holy Ghost shall teach you all things, and bring to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you." Here is our warrant for believing and cherishing all the treasures of the traditions and teachings of the

Church, for they all come from the words of Christ and the teachings of the Holy Ghost.

“I ALSO ADMIT THE SACRED SCRIPTURES, ACCORDING TO THE SENSE IN WHICH OUR HOLY MOTHER, THE CHURCH, HAS HELD, AND DOES HOLD THEM, TO WHOM IT BELONGS TO JUDGE OF THE TRUE SENSE AND INTERPRETATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES; NOR WILL I EVER TAKE AND INTERPRET THEM OTHERWISE THAN ACCORDING TO THE UNANIMOUS CONSENT OF THE FATHERS.

In this confession belief in tradition comes before belief in Scripture. And rightly; for the spoken word was before the written word; and it is faith in the former which gives us assurance of the latter. And Catholics believe the Scriptures, not according to what each individual reader, or Adam Clarke, or Martin Luther may fancy their meaning to be, but “according to the sense in which our Holy Mother, the Church, has held, and does hold them.” And why? Simply because ^{Christ} ~~we are~~ ^{we} commanded to hear the Church. Because the Church has given us the Scriptures, and is the only voucher for their genuineness and canonicity. Have you any other? Because the Scriptures were given by the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost is the perpetual guide of the Church, leading her into all truth. Let the Holy Spirit, then, be the interpreter of His own inspirations. He inspired men to write; He inspired the Church to re-

ceive, keep, and interpret, and knowing that "no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation," we will not run the risk of "wresting them, as the unlearned and unstable do, to their own perdition."

"I PROFESS ALSO, THAT THERE ARE TRULY AND PROPERLY SEVEN SACRAMENTS OF THE NEW LAW, INSTITUTED BY JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, FOR THE SALVATION OF MANKIND, THOUGH NOT ALL NECESSARY FOR EVERY ONE, VIZ. : BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION, EUCHARIST, PENANCE, EXTREME UNCTION, HOLY ORDER, AND MATRIMONY; AND THAT THEY CONFER GRACE; AND THAT OF THESE, BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION, AND HOLY ORDER, CANNOT BE REITERATED WITHOUT SACRILEGE."

Here, also, believing in the one Holy Catholic Apostolic Church; believing that she was founded, and has been miraculously preserved, established, and guided by God, as a medium of the blessings of His grace, and the appointed and ever-inspired teacher of His holy will, we humbly and faithfully accept the Sacraments appointed for our initiation into the Church; for feeding and strengthening us in the spiritual life; for giving us courage and fortitude to fight as good soldiers; for curing us of relapses into sin; for providing us with authorized teachers and administrators of these holy Sacraments; for sanctifying, by the blessing of the Church, our tenderest and most important earthly relations, and for preparing us, in the solemn hour of death, to take our places in

the Church suffering, and finally in the Church triumphant in Heaven.

We believe in the Church. We give her our faith, our obedience, and our love; we accept with unspeakable gratitude all her holy Sacraments. Not one could be spared from the sacred number. It was fitting that those who have corrupted the doctrines of the Church should attempt to despoil her of her Sacraments. But they have only robbed themselves, and those, alas! whom they have led into error.

According to the faith of the Catholic Church, the Sacraments are sensible signs, instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ, having the power of conferring grace for our sanctification.

They are not idle forms, useless ceremonies, or mere memorials. Every Sacrament is a Miracle. In Baptism, the soul is miraculously washed from every stain of sin, and initiated into the family of God—made a member of the body of Christ, his Church. In Confirmation, the soul is miraculously strengthened and fortified, by receiving the graces of the Holy Spirit. In the Blessed Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, we miraculously receive the body of our Divine Lord, to nourish our souls to everlasting life. In the Sacrament of Penance, we receive, by a miraculous grace, the pardon and absolution of sins committed after baptism. In the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, by holy anointing, with the laying on of hands and prayers, we are miraculously strengthened for the

trying hour of death. In the Sacrament of Holy Orders, those who are called to be priests of the Church, are miraculously endowed with the powers and graces necessary to the exercise of their holy functions and solemn duties. In the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, those who are united with the blessing of the Church, in the bonds of a consecrated wedlock, are miraculously made one flesh, and endowed with the needed graces.

Does your faith stagger at the idea of all these miracles? The formation of this Church was a miracle. The mission of its Divine Founder was attested by wonderful miracles. Still greater miracles have attested the Divine Authority and Sanctity of the Apostles, Martyrs, Saints, and Missionaries of the Church in every age. The existence of the Church is miraculous. Its doctrines are supernatural, and supernatural are the graces of which it is the medium to every true believer. If there be a Church of Christ, it is not natural, but supernatural, and its functions are miraculous. The Holy Ghost is with the Church, the soul of this body; and its works are always miracles. If there are no miracles, then there is no church. If the Sacraments do not supernaturally and miraculously confer sanctifying graces, then they are no Sacraments. If our priests have no Divine Commission, and Supernatural Endowment, then are they no priests. You must believe in all this, or you must descend to simple naturalism, which so many are do-

ing, and believe in nothing—or become a prey to all vagaries, diabolisms, and fanaticisms.

Protestantism, after destroying faith in the church, and doing away with the apostolic succession of her holy orders, rejected five of the Sacraments in name, and six in fact; for the Protestant Communion, denying the real presence, and administering without orders, cannot properly be called a Sacrament. But the Seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church are necessary to her life. By Baptism her children are born in Jesus Christ; they are fortified in their faith by Confirmation; nourished by the Holy Eucharist; healed by Penance; their strength is renewed by Extreme Unction; Holy Orders perpetuate ministers of the Sacraments; and Matrimony perpetuates the faithful who are to receive them. Can one be spared from this sacred number of Divine gifts and blessings?

BAPTISM is the first and most important, or most indispensable of the Sacraments. We can better dispense with all the rest, for it effaces Original Sin, and actual sin committed previously; it remits the punishment due to sin; it makes us children of God and heirs of heaven; it makes us children of the Church, our Holy Mother, and gives us a right to all her goods; it imprints upon the soul an indelible character, which distinguishes us from all who are not Christians.

CONFIRMATION is that Sacrament, described in the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles: "Then

they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost." Most sects dispense with any pretence of this Sacrament, but the Catholic Church does not rob her children of any good gift. As a tender parent, when her children ask for bread, she does not give them a stone. Confirmation is "a Sacrament instituted by Christ to confer into our souls the Holy Ghost, and an increase of our baptismal grace, to resist with a manly strength, and to encounter, courageously, all our spiritual enemies, and to profess constantly the faith of Christ."

The Blessed Sacrament for which all other Sacraments were made—the Sacrament of the HOLY EUCHARIST—receives special mention in the Confession of Faith. In the Mass, or principal service of the Catholic Church, it is offered as a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice—a clean oblation—for the living and the dead. And our Holy Church teaches, according to the Scriptures, and the constant belief of the whole Church, that "IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST, THERE IS TRULY, REALLY, AND SUBSTANTIALLY PRESENT, THE BODY AND BLOOD, TOGETHER WITH THE SOUL AND DIVINITY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST; AND THAT THERE IS MADE A CONVERSION OF THE WHOLE SUBSTANCE OF THE BREAD INTO THE BODY, AND OF THE WHOLE SUBSTANCE OF THE WINE INTO THE BLOOD; WHICH CONVERSION THE CATHOLIC CHURCH CALLS TRANSUBSTANTIATION. I CONFESS ALSO, THAT UNDER EACH KIND CHRIST IS

WHOLE AND ENTIRE, AND A TRUE SACRAMENT IS RECEIVED."

Such is the declaration. What is its support? If you accept the authority of the Church, that alone is sufficient. If, rejecting that, you are inconsistent enough to receive the Scriptures, which themselves rest on no other basis, then read every passage in which the institution of this Sacrament is mentioned, and you have the proof required. "This is my body." "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." "My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed." "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, is guilty of the body and blood of Christ," &c. The Jews were scandalized; His disciples were offended; many turned back and walked no more with him; but Jesus, who had willed to give his spiritual and glorified body, and his whole Divine Human being for the salvation and sustentation of his Church, only asserted, more and more emphatically, the plain, literal verity, "THIS IS MY BODY." Protestants of modern date say he probably meant, This signifies or this represents my body. If so, why did not Christ or his apostles ever say so? Why did no one in his Church for so many centuries ever say so? No. As every Sacrament is a miracle, this is only the greatest, the most loving, and most sublime. God can give us of his own substance to nourish our souls if he choose to do so. It is the faith—the happy, undoubting, adoring faith of the

whole Catholic Church, that He every day, and in thousands of places, performs this miracle. The Church teaches, and every Catholic believes, that Christ, our glorious Lord and Saviour, at every consecration of the Elements in the Holy Mass, descends upon the Altar, takes the form of bread and wine, and thus gives His body to us, according to his word. Is this absurd, or impossible? No; it is only supernatural and Divine. The Creator of the Universe—the Lord of Life, can surely work a miracle like this. And by this miracle, we have in every Catholic Church, and on every altar, the Real Presence of our Blessed Lord. We bow before Him; we adore His Divine Majesty; we receive this Bread of Heaven; and it is this which constitutes the holy charm, and the infinite solemnity of Catholic worship; and it is the want of this that is felt in every Protestant service, and the place of which no eloquence, or fervor, or fanaticism can ever supply. It is the One Thing Needful. We have Christ on our altars; we receive Christ into our bosoms, and enjoy this ineffable mystery of redeeming love.

Infidelity and a ^{man} half-~~infidel~~ Protestantism, ask, how is this possible? Is God possible? Is the universe possible? Are all things, material and spiritual, possible? Is it possible for you to think, or imagine, or for God to create? It is folly to talk of impossibilities, when we are surrounded with a whole universe of marvels. The absurd alone is impossible. Is it

absurd that God, who could take upon Himself humanity, for our redemption, should nourish those He has redeemed with His own Divine substance? It is no more absurd or improbable, than that every plant should find its own nourishment in the air and sunshine, and the Infinite Providence of the Almighty.

A belief in the real presence of Christ in the blessed Sacrament of the Catholic Church, is the heart of our religion. Could this be taken away, there would be left but a cold, lifeless body. It is when we kneel before the altar, and feel that our God is there, that our faith is renewed, our love enkindled, our penitence deepened, our whole souls filled with the Divine Presence. We bow before our God in humble adoration; we see him under the sacramental veils; we receive him into our bosoms, and feel within us the circulation of a new and Divine life.

But for this communion with the Divine Creative Spirit, there must be a fitness in the creature. The soul that receives God in the blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist, must be free from the stains of mortal sin, and in a state of grace. This state is attained by Baptism; but as there is left still the freedom of the will and liability to sin, how shall the soul be purified and prepared for this communion? By another sacrament, instituted for that very purpose—the Sacrament of PENANCE.

Christ said to those to whom he committed the care of his Church to the end of the world,—“*Re-*

ceive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." And that they might be able to judge whose sins should be retained and whose forgiven, there was instituted the practice and obligation of confession. This is a terror to Protestants; it is often also a terror to bad Catholics. But to those who are truly sorry for their sins, who wish to avoid them, who pray that they may be forgiven, it is no terror, but a great blessing, to humbly confess every sin of one's life, and to receive the absolution which God has commissioned his priests to confer on the truly penitent.

The Jews were scandalized when Jesus said, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee." Immediately, by a manifestation of his almighty power, he showed them that he had the right to forgive sins. When he commissioned his disciples, he said, "As the Father sent me, even so send I you." The office of Christ is continued, through all ages, in the persons of his appointed ministers. They exercise his powers—they execute the authority delegated to them. In the place of Christ, acting for Christ, Christ acting with them and in them, they give absolution to the contrite soul, and fit her to receive the blessed Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

Sacramental confession, as a part of the Sacrament of PENANCE, has been practised from the beginning. Without it, and without the proper dispositions—

contrition for sin, and a pure purpose of amendment—there is no absolution. The words of the priest, could he be deceived, would have no value. God cleanses not that soul which will not be cleansed. The Catholic does not expect to be saved against his will, nor without the required dispositions; and there is not in the whole Catholic Church one humble, penitent soul, that does not thank God for the blessing of the Sacrament of Penance, by which the wounds and discases of the soul are healed, and she is restored to her baptismal purity. The two happy moments in the life of every Catholic, are,—when he rises from the confessional, with the blessing of the priest who has given him absolution; and when, so purified, he kneels before the altar and receives the body of his Divine Lord.

EXTREME UNCTION, or anointing the sick, with the laying on of hands and prayer, is a sacrament expressly appointed and commanded in the Holy Scriptures, (in St. James's Epistle,) and ever practised by the true Church from apostolic times. Very tender is the care of the Church for her dying children. She takes them in her arms, she carries them in her bosom through the dark valley of the shadow of death. Her fervent prayers and holy offices attend the parting soul to the confines of eternity; they bear her across the gulf; they never forsake her, until she enters the portals of eternal rest.

To receive this sacrament of the sick and dying,

the Church requires that the recipient shall be in a state of grace. He must have made confession and received absolution of any mortal sin, or he must have desired this sacrament. The sinner, at every step, however assisted by the grace of God, must still work out his own salvation. God neither saves nor damns men against their wills. In order to be saved, you must be willing to be saved; and in order to be damned, you must be willing—nay, so determined to be damned, that even the grace of God cannot save you, without a violation of your freedom. Granting the function of the priest, as standing in the place of Christ, with his forgiving, consoling, and strengthening power, who would reject so beautiful, and so needed a sacrament as that of Extreme Unction?

That the five preceding sacraments might be administered to the whole Church, through the whole period of her existence, it became necessary to institute the Sacrament of HOLY ORDERS, which gives power to those on whom it is conferred, to perform ecclesiastical functions, and the grace to exercise them in a holy manner. When Christ said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"—when he said, "As my Father sendeth me, even so send I you; he that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me;" when he said, "Do this in commemoration of me," he instituted the Sacrament of Holy Orders, by which the Church is supplied with an unbroken succession of

teachers and pastors. Holy orders give to the priest, the most awful and majestic of powers and functions that the world can know. They take hold of eternity; they are supernatural, miraculous, divine. By this sacrament, and the grace it imparts, a man is commissioned to perform acts, which he can do only by the Divine Power acting in and through him. The priest consecrates the body of our Lord; he baptizes us into the Church of Christ; he forgives our sins; he prays for us, instructs us, sanctifies us, and solaces us in our misfortunes, and smooths for us, with Divine consolations, the bed of death. Society owes every thing to the Sacrament of Holy Orders, for there can be no society without religion, no religion without priests, and no priest without the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

The last of the seven sacraments is that of MATRIMONY, by which the Church is perpetuated. What the world calls marriage is the natural union of the sexes, according to custom or civil law; but Christ gave to his Church an altogether supernatural and Sacramental Marriage, by which special grace is imparted to those who receive it, and in which children are blessed. Out of this Sacramental Marriage, established by Christ in his Church, I think no true marriage exists, or is possible. The morals of the world show the need and necessity of this sacrament. The Pagan and Mohammedan world has no marriage. The Protestant and Infidel world has, it is to be

feared, only its appearance. The marriages of non-Catholic states are limited partnerships, enforced by law, and subject to divorce for various causes. The Catholic Church is considered bigoted for not permitting divorce. But, if marriage be a sacrament, in which, in the true order, God joins two souls and bodies to be one, what human power can put them asunder? The Church admits of separation, but not of divorce. Her standard of purity is high above all worldly standards. Her most cherished state is that of a holy virginity, a perpetual chastity, in which body and spirit are alike given to the Lord. But she also sanctions and sanctifies, even with sacramental sanctity, the union of a pure, and loving, and indissoluble marriage.

These are the seven sacraments, full of blessings for humanity, of the Holy Catholic Church; and of which God has constituted her the medium, guardian, and administrator.

“I ALSO ADMIT THE CEREMONIES WHICH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ADMITS AND APPROVES OF, IN THE SOLEMN ADMINISTRATION OF ALL THE ABOVE SAID SACRAMENTS.”

The ceremonies of the Church are the visible body of their spirit; or you may consider them the robes, costumes, and appropriate adornments. Thus the Council of Trent has well said: “And, whereas, such is the nature of man, that without external helps

he cannot easily be raised to the meditation of Divine things; therefore has Holy Mother Church instituted certain rites. She has likewise employed ceremonies, such as mystic benedictions, lights, incense, vestments, and many other things of this kind, derived from an apostolical discipline and tradition, whereby both the majesty of so great a sacrifice [the Mass] might be recommended, and the minds of the faithful be excited, by those visible signs of religion and piety, to the contemplation of those most sublime things which are hidden in this sacrifice."

To those who are familiar with Catholic worship, I need say nothing in favor of its most beautiful, significant, and sublime ceremonial. There is not a vestment worn by Bishop or Priest which is not typical of the Passion and sufferings of Christ. There is not a ceremony at the altar which is not beautifully significant of some scene in that tremendous mystery, that Divine tragedy, in which God manifest in the flesh, gave Himself up, a sacrifice for a lost world. There is not the least ceremony of Catholic worship which any Catholic would willingly dispense with. It is a language which comes home to every heart, and is adapted to every comprehension. To the rude and unlearned, as well as to the refined and educated, it is alike necessary, alike beautiful, alike Divine. By these ceremonies, or sensible signs and representations, the attention is arrested and fixed, the mind is impressed, the heart is melted, the soul is elevated, the

whole being, with all its powers, is wrapped in adoration and love. Oh! the cold, dry, hard, barren worship of Protestantism! It is a tree without foliage, or flowers, or fruitage, or sign of life. It is a bare skeleton. A desert, in which the soul starves. God has mercifully adapted His religion to the faculties and wants of His people; and in the ceremonies of Catholic worship you will find all that the soul requires of the beautiful, the noble, the elevating, and inspiring. The proof of its Divine origin is, that while the humblest soul is fed, the most elevated is still exalted by its sublimity.

“ I RECEIVE AND EMBRACE ALL AND EVERY ONE OF THE THINGS WHICH HAVE BEEN DEFINED AND DECLARED IN THE HOLY COUNCIL OF TRENT, CONCERNING ORIGINAL SIN AND JUSTIFICATION.”

The Council of Trent declares, as the Doctrine of the Holy Catholic Church, held and taught universally from the beginning, that Adam, by his transgression, lost the holiness and justice wherein he had been constituted; and that he thereby incurred the wrath and indignation of God, and was made worse, body and soul, incurring death, and the power of the devil. That this fall injured also his posterity. That this sin, transfused into all by propagation, has no other remedy than that of the one Mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ, applied in the Sacrament of Baptism, in which, by the grace conferred by this Sacra-

ment, the guilt of original sin is remitted. Yet, after the baptism, there remains the tendency and liability to sin, and the need of other sacraments to purify and strengthen the soul, and fit it for heaven.

The doctrine of Justification teaches that man must, in his freedom, co-operate with, or correspond to the sanctifying grace of God; and while he is not able, of his free will, to sanctify himself without grace, neither will grace sanctify, without his free co-operation.

“Of Justification, the final cause is the glory of God and of Jesus Christ, and life everlasting; the Efficient Cause is a merciful God, who washes and sanctifies gratuitously; but the Meritorious Cause is our Lord Jesus Christ and His adorable sacrifice, and most Holy Passion; the instrumental cause is the Sacrament of Baptism, which is the sacrament of faith; while the alone formal cause is the Justice of God, with which we are endowed by him, according to each one's disposition and co-operation; whereby he receives faith, hope, and charity. For faith, unless hope and charity be added thereto, neither unites man perfectly with Christ, nor makes him a living member of His body.”—*Decrees and Canons of the Council of Trent.*

Here are no horrible doctrines, such as were broached by Luther, Calvin, and their fellow-reformers, of total depravity, the absolute sinfulness of all natural goodness, predestination to damnation, the

denial of reason and free will, justification by faith alone, without good works or charity, &c. The Catholic doctrine comes home to the needs of every human heart, and it is supported in every point by the teachings of the Scriptures, as you may see, if you will only take the trouble to read any catechism of the Catholic faith.

CATHOLICS BELIEVE THAT, IN THE HOLY SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST, "UNDER EACH KIND, CHRIST IS WHOLE AND ENTIRE, AND A TRUE SACRAMENT IS RECEIVED."

Upon this doctrine of the Real Presence, is founded the usual practice of the Catholic Church, of giving the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist under one species only, the cup being taken only by the officiating priest, who offers the Holy Sacrifice. Having given the reasons for this general practice of the Catholic Church in my third lecture, I need do no more here than to present the doctrine as above stated.

CATHOLICS "HOLD THAT THERE IS A PURGATORY, AND THAT THE SOULS THEREIN DETAINED ARE HELPED BY THE SUFFRAGES OF THE FAITHFUL."

Most Protestant sects teach that every soul, at death, goes at once to heaven or hell. The Catholic Church teaches that there is, even for penitent and believing souls, who have yet some stain of impurity or defilement of venial sin, a middle place or period

of preparation, purgation, or purification, before they can be fit to enter into the ineffable joys of the beatific vision of God. The most exemplary Christian may commit some venial sin, as of an "idle word;" all are liable to sudden death. Our Lord, in saying that the sin against the Holy Ghost "hath no forgiveness, neither in this world, nor in the world to come," very plainly recognized the common belief of the Jews and his disciples, that some sins *are* forgiven in the world to come. And as the Jews, as we are informed in 2 Maccabees, made prayers and offerings for the dead, so, from the establishment of the Christian Church, prayers and alms, or "the suffrages of the faithful," have been offered for the souls of the departed.

St Peter says that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison; not in heaven, surely not in a hell of hopeless misery; but in that place, often so called in Scripture, the abode of departed spirits, or the Purgatory which the Church teaches.

The Catholic Church, holding to "the Communion of Saints," teaches that "THE SAINTS REIGNING TOGETHER WITH CHRIST ARE TO BE HONORED AND INVOCATED; THAT THEY OFFER PRAYERS TO GOD FOR US, AND THAT THEIR RELICS OUGHT TO BE VENERATED."

Such is the consoling faith that binds the whole Church, militant, suffering, and triumphant, together in one holy bond of sympathy and brotherhood, so that all heaven rejoices over one repenting sinner; so

that the holiest saint who kneels before the eternal throne may pray to God for mercy to the poorest sinner here, or the most suffering soul in purgatory. How reasonable as well as joyful is this faith! How utterly unreasonable and dreadful is the belief that the saints in heaven no longer know, or love, or care, or pray for their earthly brethren! Christ represents the Rich Man in Hell as praying that means might be taken to instruct and save his brethren; shall we say, then, that the saints of God—men who spent their whole lives in efforts for the salvation of sinners, no longer care for them—no longer pray for them—no longer listen to their supplications? God forbid! Let us rather believe that they love us more than ever; more than ever desire our salvation; and are more than ever ready to respond to our desires when we say, Holy Saints of God, pray for us!

That we should venerate the relics of those whom we loved and venerated on earth, or those who, long since departed, were worthy of such love and veneration, is so human and holy a thing, that no one can have the heart to deny it, who is not chilled in his feelings by some heretical creed. We all value relics. All nations preserve the relics of their heroes. Shall the Church of God alone forget, neglect, or desecrate the memorials of her holiest children. It never was so, and it never can be so. From the very beginning, the relics of the saints and martyrs of the Church were preserved with pious care, and held in a veneration.

tion, justified by countless miracles which God was pleased to work through the means of these relics.

The Church therefore sanctions, and sanctifies, that proper devotion or veneration, which her children pay to the relics of her departed saints; honoring God in this devotion.

She teaches also that "THE IMAGES," whether statues or paintings, or by whatever medium represented, "OF CHRIST, AND OF THE MOTHER OF GOD, EVER A VIRGIN, AND ALSO OF THE SAINTS, ARE TO BE HAD, AND RETAINED, AND THAT DUE HONOR AND VENERATION ARE TO BE GIVEN TO THEM." Not the adoration and worship due to God alone; not veneration of the mere material; but of the sacred and consecrated image, which conveys more vividly to the mind, the thought and love of our Lord, and of His Mother, whom the Angel Gabriel addressed in the same language as is used by every Catholic in the world.

I cannot understand the heresy and fanaticism of the Iconoclast, or image-breaker. It seems to me unreasonable to stupidity. When I think of Christ, or the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Holy Mother, and therefore Mother of God, I must form of them an image in my mind; and so of every saint, or other personage. And this image in my mind I worship, or venerate and honor, as the case may be. Suppose, now, with the inspiration of art, I produce this image of my mind in marble or ivory, on canvas or in an en-

graving; must I no longer hold it in honor and veneration? May I not, when my devotion grows weak, look at it, to recall to my mind the feeling that inspired it?

The Catholic also believes "THAT THE POWER OF INDULGENCES WAS LEFT BY CHRIST TO THE CHURCH, AND THAT THE USE OF THEM IS MOST WHOLESOME TO CHRISTIAN PEOPLE."

The power of Indulgences was given by our Lord, when He said: "As the Father hath sent me, so send I you;" "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven;" "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven." Here are plenary powers. Here is authority enough.

An Indulgence, as I have explained in my third lecture, is not a license to commit sin; it is not the forgiveness of a sin committed; it is not available but to those who seek it in a truly penitential spirit. It is only the remission of some part or all the penance or temporal punishment, belonging to some sin or sins, on condition of some other mode of penance, or good works. The Church is our Mother, tender and indulgent. Her Divine Spouse has given to her a rich treasury of graces. The merits of Christ are infinite; the prayers and alms, and all the good deeds of the saints are the patrimony of her children. Out of this rich treasury she exercises the power spoken of in the

Scriptures above quoted, and to those who are worthy, grants those indulgences which aid us on our heavenly journey, or shorten the period of our purification.

Strictly defined, an indulgence is "a release from the temporal punishment due to actual sins, already remitted as to the guilt." For example, the sin of David was forgiven; the temporal penalty, however, was that the child must die; a remission of that penalty would have been what Catholics mean by an indulgence.

Protestants have filled the world with clamors against indulgences, as encouraging immorality; and at the same time, in their favorite doctrine of justification by faith alone, they have proclaimed a plenary indulgence to all who are in their communion, doing universally, by wholesale and without condition, what they denounce.

ALL CATHOLICS "ACKNOWLEDGE THE HOLY CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC ROMAN CHURCH TO BE THE MOTHER AND MISTRESS OF ALL CHURCHES; AND PROMISE TRUE OBEDIENCE TO THE BISHOP OF ROME, THE SUCCESSOR OF ST. PETER, PRINCE OF THE APOSTLES, AND VICAR OF JESUS CHRIST ON EARTH."

In my lecture on the History of the Holy Catholic Church, I have proved the Primacy of St. Peter, and, consequently, of his successors. I have shown that if there exist such a Church as the prophets and apostles speak of, it is the one known over the whole

world as the Roman Catholic Church. The successor of St. Peter is the Visible Head of the Visible Church, and as such, standing to us in the place of Christ, we owe him a "true obedience"—that is, an obedience in all that appertains to the functions of his holy office.

In every true order there must be a centre or head; and in this, as every other. The Protestant says, Christ is the Head of His Church. It is true, but a visible earthly Church requires a visible earthly head. God was the Head, and Guide, and Director of the hosts of Israel in the desert; but there was none the less a human chief—first Moses, then Joshua. Every earthly body must have its earthly head. The dependent colonies of distant sovereigns have their viceroys, governors-general, &c. If the visible Church, when it consisted of but a few hundred persons, required a visible head and acknowledged chief in St. Peter, not less does that Church, spread over the world, require a centre and a head, such as she has at Rome, and in the Supreme Pontiff.

When God has commanded us to do any thing, he has provided the means by which we could obey him. He commanded His Church to keep the unity of the faith, and in order to do this, it was necessary that there should be a central, supreme head of the Church. Without a primacy, how was union possible? Who but a Pope could assemble, or preside over, or give authority to the decisions of a general council? Take away the papacy from the Catholic Church, and it

would be "lo here!" and "lo there!" Instead of one Father and Chief, there might be a chief in every state—a pope in every parish. Every prince would set himself up as head of the Church in his own dominions; and every legislature or city council would define articles of faith. Take from us the papacy, and we might fall into the Babel of discord and confusion seen in all Protestant countries. Therefore we, as Catholics, cling fast to the Papacy as the sheet anchor of unity. The Church militant, fighting the good fight of faith, looks ever to her Standard-bearer; and the whole Church of God, round the whole earth, looks with loving reverence to Rome, and from millions of Catholics go up unceasing prayers to heaven that God would bless him who now so worthily fills the Chair of St. Peter.

And relying with an undoubting faith in the promises of Christ, we believe in the infallibility of His Church, and therefore "RECEIVE AND PROFESS WHATEVER HAS BEEN DELIVERED, DEFINED, AND DECLARED BY HER GENERAL COUNCILS, AND ESPECIALLY BY THE LAST GREAT GENERAL COUNCIL, THE COUNCIL OF TRENT." This Council spoke the voice of the whole Church. It is not denied that there were abuses and laxity of discipline at this period which called for reformation. Every good Catholic deplored them. Read the history and the decrees and canons of the Council of Trent, and see how nobly, how sacredly, that work was entered upon by the assembled prelates of Christendom.

While Luther and his followers and rivals were spreading divisions, dissensions, civil wars, robberies, and sacrileges ; laying the foundations for ages of infidelity, vice, and crime ; ravaging, dividing, and destroying the Church, the Council of Trent labored with a noble zeal and a heavenly wisdom to reform abuses, heal divisions, and declare the purity of the Christian faith. I would ask no more of any intelligent Protestant, than that he would read a truthful history of the so-called Reformation, and then the history of the Council of Trent. The difference is that of "airs from heaven and blasts from hell." One is a deluge of destruction ; the other a rainbow of peace.

The last defined article of Catholic Faith is one which, though but recently authoritatively promulgated, has ever been most zealously and lovingly believed—that of THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN, MOTHER OF GOD. It is the doctrine and belief of the Catholic Church, that this Blessed Mother of our Lord was conceived without the stain of original sin. The SECOND EVE was not merely sanctified in the womb of her mother, like John the Baptist, but in the very beginning of her life, conceived pure and sinless, and made worthy of the highest dignity that God has ever conferred upon any creature. Hence, as sinless Mother of God, she takes the highest place, above all angels and archangels, next to her Divine Son, who sitteth at the right hand of God the Father. O how beautiful

how human, how Divine, is this faith! Mother of God—Virgin Mother—Mother Immaculate! Here, at last, is our ideal found. Here is sinless humanity, in its most beautiful form, and a sinless humanity joined to the Divinity in the most tender and holy of all relations.

And this Holy Mother of our God and Saviour is the Mother of His Church. She is our tender, pitying Mother. The only human being unstained with the taint of sin, she, more than any other, pities and loves the sinner. He who can scarcely dare to raise a prayer to God, throws himself at the feet of this human Mother, who, sinless herself, robed in immaculate purity, is the friend and helper of ever sinner who will seek her aid. Therefore around this Queen of Virgins, Queen of Saints, Queen of Angels, cluster the love and devotion of all Catholic hearts. We honor her, knowing that we cannot better please our Lord than by honoring the Mother He so honored. We love her, sure that Jesus would have all his children love the Mother He so loved. We pray to her that she will pray for us, assured that she will hear us, and that He will listen to her prayers. We salute her with the salutation of the Angel and of the Holy Ghost by the mouth of Elizabeth; and raising our eyes to her sweet heavenly majesty, we say, "~~SALVE REGINA! Mater Misericordiæ; Vita, dulcedo,~~ et spes nostra, Salve!"

"Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy"

“ Our life, our sweetness, and our hope, all hail !

“ To thee we cry, poor banished sons of Eve.

“ To thee we sigh, weeping and mourning in this vale of tears :

“ Therefore, O our advocate, turn on us those merciful eyes of thine, and after this, our exile, show us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

“ O merciful, O kind, O sweet Virgin Mary !

“ Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God,

“ That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.”

I have wished to give, with this brief statement of the Doctrines of the Holy Catholic Church, some idea of the most important Evidences, which have satisfied the minds of so many millions of men, in all ages, that this Catholic Church is the True Church; that her Doctrines are the True Doctrines; and that it is the duty of all men, as they hope for salvation, to give to her Faith and Obedience.

The candid and earnest inquirer after truth, when he makes the careful examination which a matter affecting his eternal welfare may surely claim; and when he has cleared his mind of the prejudices of education, finds existing a great catholic or universal society, spread over the earth, uniting hundreds of millions of all nations in the oneness of its faith and

worship. Tracing its history, we find that it has been the same Church for eighteen hundred years. He traces it, in form and substance, in body and in spirit, back to the days of the apostles, and to its Divine Founder. He sees it illustrated, in every age, by the devotion of martyrs, the sanctity of saints, and the labors of religious orders. He sees it founded, sustained, and at all times attested by miracles. He says, if there is a true religion, it can be none but this; if there be a God, this is his Church; if God has a Church, this is the only one which bears the marks of Divinity;—"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church."

The first evidence in favor of the Catholic Church is the fact that it exists, as demonstrated in its VISIBILITY. Protestants, who cannot trace any visible church they are willing to recognize as such farther back than ~~three~~^{four} centuries, are driven to deny that there was any visible church before that period, and talk about an invisible, spiritual society of the faithful, of whose existence there is no trace, and which, being invisible, is also incomprehensible. The Church is a human, organic society; and you might as well talk of an invisible state, or kingdom, or nation, as an invisible church. But the Holy Catholic Church has been visible for ~~eighteen~~^{nineteen} hundred years, from the day that St. Peter was called to be the first of apostles to the present time. It has been visible in its organization, and hierarchy, and teachings, and worship,

and works of spiritual and corporal charity. In the second century of the Church, if you went into any city of the civilized world, and inquired for the Catholic Church, it was pointed out to you as now; and no one ever thought of calling a conventicle of any sect a Catholic Church, any more than he would now designate as such a Presbyterian, or Methodist, or Quaker meeting-house.

The ANTIQUITY of the Catholic Church is another evidence of its Divine authority. It exists; it is a living fact. That is much. That it has existed without cessation or interruption, from the birth of Christianity, is more. Possession is held to be nine points in law. Original, immemorial, and continuous possession, shuts out all other claims. Now there is no other church than the Catholic which is, and always has been, recognized as the Catholic Church. This is a fact of history which cannot be denied. Admitted that there is a Church, the one visible Church, founded by Christ and the apostles, where is that Church, if not where the whole world has recognized it? What other sect, ancient and long since dead, or modern and of yesterday, will you point out as having any such claim, in comparison with this Church of the Ages?

Another evidence that there is a True Church, and that this Church is the one known everywhere as the Catholic Church, is its UNITY or ONENESS. As God is one, as truth is one, there can be but one true

Church of God. As there is but one true faith, and one Divine plan of salvation, so there can be but one organization or society as the medium of this work. "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism." Therefore, the Catholic Church has miraculously preserved the purity of the faith in her perfect unity through all the ages of her history. She has been "of one mind;" she has preserved "the faith once delivered to the saints." All sects, ^{which} have separated from her, have been rent by divisions, and convulsed with continual changes. They have divided and subdivided in their progress toward dissolution. The Reformers of the sixteenth century quarrelled with ^{one} ~~each~~ other as violently as with the Church from which they separated. Luther and Calvin mutually devoted each other to the eternal flames. The Lutherans, says Laing, have such a contempt for Calvin, that they call their dogs by his name, and hate Calvinists more than Catholics. The Lutherans changed their confession of faith continually. The Prayer Book of the Church of England, which is the only repository of its doctrine, was amended four times, and changed in the most important particulars. Continual change, or what men call progress, generally from bad to worse, is the characteristic of Protestantism. But the Catholic Church never changes, and has never changed, in doctrine. What it taught in the days of the apostles and the first martyrs of Christ, it teaches to-day. Its faith is the same; its liturgy is the same in all essen-

tial particulars. Read the Catholic theologian or ascetic writer of to-day, or one of fifteen centuries ago, and it makes no difference. The progress of the Catholic Church is not change in doctrine, for God's truth is unchangeable. There is not a dogma of the Catholic Church, which is held this day, which cannot be proved from the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers, to have been held from the beginning, even when it has not from the beginning been defined authoritatively as an article of faith. Here is a unity, a oneness, and unchangingness, which commands our involuntary reverence. It is "sure and steadfast." The command given in the beginning, was to teach all nations all things whatsoever He had commanded. The unity of the Church, in form and doctrine, was necessary to the performance of its sacred mission. It was secured by the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit. A church that changes its doctrines cannot be the true Church. One which from the beginning has never changed, has surely one mark of truth.

Judge of the authenticity or genuineness of the Church as you would of a human society. If you found four-fifths of all the Mahommedans united in one belief, which they had held without change from Mahomet, while the rest were divided among a hundred sects, all quarrelling among themselves, all varying in their own doctrine, and taking the names of their respective leaders, and none of them older than two or three centuries, could you, as impartial ob-

servers, have any difficulty in deciding which were the genuine Mahommedans? So, while sectarians are blinded by their own errors, infidels have no difficulty in seeing—and those who are honest acknowledge—that if there is any true Church, it is unquestionably the Roman Catholic. *Catholic or Infidel* must be the choice of every intelligent inquirer. There is no resting place between. When an intelligent Catholic loses his faith, he does not stop short of infidelity. When an intelligent infidel is converted to Christianity, he does not find rest short of the bosom of the one true Church.

The PROVIDENTIAL CARE of the Church, displayed in its rise and continuance, in spite of all dangers and opposing influences, is a wonderful evidence of its truth. It began in a stable. Its Founder, was, to all human appearance, a poor man, without education or any worldly advantage. His followers were as poor, and illiterate, and disreputable as himself. After a brief career he was ignominiously put to death as a malefactor. His doctrines were repugnant to human pride, ambition, and all selfish passions, and such as brought no worldly advantage, but only ridicule, contempt, and persecution. The whole power of a great empire was exerted for three centuries to crush, root out, and exterminate these doctrines and the society which held and promulgated them. Whoever accepted them, or became a member of this society, lost social reputation, gave up every

worldly advantage, renounced every thing which it is natural for men to prize and value, and incurred the danger and often the certainty of the most horrible death. When, in spite of these obstacles, this society and this faith had spread over the world, and gained the mastery of its greatest empire, it was again doomed to meet the shocks, for three centuries more, of overwhelming barbarism. When it had subdued the barbarians, it was assailed with schisms and heresies, wars and persecutions.

Well, in the face of all this, with all these obstacles, this society, this Catholic Church, has triumphed—triumphed through three centuries of pagan persecution; triumphed over centuries of barbarous invasions; triumphed over schism and heresy, persecution without and corruption within, and now, at the end of ^{nineteen} ~~eighteen~~ centuries, is more united, more devoted, more prosperous and glorious, more humble and zealous than ever; teaching the same doctrines, doing the same work, persecuted with the same ferocity—in spirit if not in act—yet triumphing by the same power.

Is not that Power Almighty? Is not that Church of God? Has not his benign Providence watched over her, and his Holy Spirit guided her? Truly, this Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the Son of the living God; and truly did he say of his Church that the gates of hell should not prevail against her. Thousands of miracles attest the Divine origin and

authority of the Catholic Church—but the Church herself is the greatest of all miracles.

The SANCTITY of the Catholic Church is an attestation of its Divinity, and one of the characteristics which distinguish it from all other pretended Churches or religious organizations. It is not that there are not good men and women, in the natural order of goodness, out of the Church. It is not that there are not truly devoted and pious men in their way attached to various denominations. There are good pagans, honest infidels, devout Mahommedans. But it is that the Holy Catholic Church, to justify her name, and fulfil the promises of Christ, has a peculiar and altogether supernatural sanctity.

It is the sanctity of a consecrated virginity; denying the flesh and the lusts thereof.

It is the sanctity of an entire renunciation of the world, leaving all and following Jesus, in the thousands and millions of hermits, anchorites of the desert, and men and women, who, under holy vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, have given their whole lives to works of penitence, prayer, and holy charity.

It is the sanctity of an extraordinary and supernatural devotion of the whole soul and body to God, as exemplified in the lives of the hundreds of saints who have walked with Christ, performed His miracles, and died in the odor of this sanctity, which the true Church can alone exhibit.

It is in the sanctity of a sacred priesthood, set

apart and consecrated to the service of God, and living lives of perfect chastity, and entire devotion to the work of their ministry.

No Protestant sect exhibits any such characteristics. Where is their giving up all and following Christ? Where is their renunciation of the world? In what do they take up the cross and follow Jesus? Where are their penitential fasts and holy exercises? In what sect is the advice and example of St. Paul followed with respect to a consecrated virginity? Where is a ministry set apart in holy chastity to the pure service of God? Where else are there great religious orders of men and women, utterly devoted to the work of Christ, in prayer, and fasting, and works of mercy? Where are the Protestant Sisters of Charity, Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of the Good Shepherd, and other charitable orders, not giving a few dollars now and then, but their whole lives to caring for the sick, comforting the afflicted, visiting the prisoners, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and preaching the gospel to the poor? If you would see the sanctity of a true Church, seek for it among the secular clergy, the religious orders, and thousands of scarcely less devoted lay members of the Catholic Church.

And this sanctity is the mark which Christ Himself has set upon His Church. Not that every professed or even practical Catholic attains to this extraordinary sanctity—far from it—but that it is one of

the distinguishing characteristics of the Catholic Church.

Compare churches, clergy, worship, charities, pious observances. But how shall we compare what Protestants never had, and make no pretensions to? The Church of England professes to be the true Catholic Church, and her churches bear the names of Catholic saints; but she has never ventured to canonize a saint of her own in the three centuries of her existence. All the best books of devotion, even among Protestants, are Catholic works—like the “Following of Christ,” of Thomas à Kempis; the “Spiritual Combat,” of Scupoli, and the writings of Fenelon and St. Francis of Sales. Protestant sects have no sacred poverty, no consecrated charity, no holy chastity. It is in the Catholic Church that you must look for this following of the precepts and example of Christ; for churches always open; for continual service of God, and perpetual adoration of the Holy Sacrament, and hundreds of pious and devout exercises of which Protestants are in entire ignorance.

I shall mention but briefly the evidence given to the Truth of the Catholic Church in MIRACULOUS ATTESTATIONS. Protestant Christians believe in the miracles of Christ and his apostles. Some admit that they were continued to the second, third, fourth, or fifth centuries, compelled by the testimony of unimpeached and ever multiplying witnesses. The spread of Christianity, without miracles, would be a greater

miracle than any recorded of its apostles. But all Protestants, almost without exception, contend that at some period of the past miracles came to an end. They *know* that *they* do not have them; and they will not allow that they are continued in a Church which they believe to be full of error, if not anti-Christian and idolatrous.

But when did miracles cease, and why? Jesus said: "The works that I do, ye shall do also, and ye shall do greater works than these. Lo, I am with you always. As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." The apostles worked miracles; they continued to their successors, and no one can fix the time when they ceased. Nay, there is greater and more indubitable evidence of miracles worked during the last three centuries of Christianity than during the first three. They have been more carefully examined and more systematically recorded; and to this very day the Church of Rome is in every country the scene of miraculous attestation. God has never left his Church without this testimony. The promises of Christ have been fulfilled, and are and will be. There has been no period, probably of even one year's duration, in which miracles have not been worked by the prayers of Catholic priests and the intercession of Catholic saints. They are of frequent occurrence in our country, and can be testified to by hundreds of unimpeachable witnesses.

The INFALLIBILITY of the Church, as the teacher

of truth, and appointed guardian and interpreter of the Holy Scriptures, is the consequence of her Divine origin, and is in accordance with the promises of Christ. No sect claims infallibility. Every sect asserts the fallibility of every other, and is compelled to admit its own. The Catholic Church alone claims to be the one, only, and Infallible Church of God. You may not admit the claim as proof, but you will not certainly award infallibility, or the certainty of being right, to those who do not claim it. A fallible Church does not fulfil the purpose of a Church, since it may lead you into error. Only one Church claims to be infallible. If there be any true Church, this must be the one.

As the ORDER of the Universe proves it the work of Infinite Wisdom, not less does the Order of the Catholic Church prove its Divine Origin and Providential sustentation. I have shown the unity, or oneness, of the Church as an existing and historical fact; and given that oneness as an evidence of its Divinity, from the unity and universality of Divine Truth.

The Church Militant is like a great army under her Supreme Head, her chiefs, generals, and captains; divided into regiments and companies, scattered over the whole world, but all working together, with a perfect unity of faith and purpose, and a perfect harmony of means and operation. So far does the Catholic Church transcend all human institutions,

in the nature of its work, in the motives of its workers, in their zeal and devotion, and in the order and harmony of its organization, that this order alone is enough to prove it a Divine Institution—Divine, and therefore Authoritative—Authoritative, and therefore Infallible—Infallible, and therefore entitled to the Faith and Obedience of every human soul.

This living, organic body, the Catholic Church, has, in her sublime and supernatural Order, One visible Head, in communion with, and obedience to whom, are united, the Cardinal Princes, who form his Council, and from whose number Popes are usually elected; Archbishops, who preside over provinces; Bishops, who govern sees; the Priests and lower orders of the Clergy, who act as pastors under their authority. Legates and Vicars Apostolic represent the Pope in Councils, or places where he cannot be personally present. Schools, Universities, and Seminaries educate her youth, and prepare her Clergy for their holy functions.

As the world was full of poverty, disease, and suffering, she instituted Religious Orders of Charity for every human want. There are orders of men and women, who have devoted their whole lives to the care of the sick, to aid the unfortunate, to the visitation of criminals in prison, to pray with the dying, to redeem captives from slavery, to nurse lepers, and the most wretched and abandoned of mankind. There are more than a hundred of such religious orders in

the Catholic Church, devoted to works of piety and charity, and some of these orders have had tens and hundreds of thousands of members. There were the Knights Hospitallers, who bound themselves by religious vows to protect pilgrims, defend the Church against the attacks of the infidel, and give succor to the distressed. Another order was devoted to the redemption of captives taken and held as slaves by the Moors or Saracens; and these were ready to incur every danger, and even give themselves up to slavery, to redeem a captive. You have heard of the monks of Mount St. Bernard, living upon a lofty pass of the Alps, where the cold, and a rare atmosphere, shortens their lives, that they may rescue and comfort chance travellers, who might else perish in the snows. There are orders for the care of foundlings and orphans; orders to relieve poverty; orders to nurse the sick in plagues and epidemics. Where has the world ever seen such devotion, such heroism, such an abandonment of all that is merely human, for these superhuman and godlike works, as in the Catholic Church?

Another evidence of the Truth, Divinity, and Infallibility of the Catholic Church, is the REASONABLENESS OF ITS DOCTRINES, AND THEIR ADAPTATION TO ALL THE CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS OF HUMANITY. The Catholic Church recognizes the reason of man as the gift of God, and, in its own order, Divine and Infallible; and it proposes no doctrine which is contrary to reason. God cannot contradict himself, nor

do absurdities; and to require a reasonable being to believe, or do any thing unreasonable, would be self-contradictory, and absurd. When, therefore, sectaries, in search of novelty of doctrine, and wishing to found religions for their own glorification, proposed articles of belief which were contrary to human reason, and involved absurdities, they were obliged to deny and denounce reason herself.

“Luther,” says D’Aubigné, “is the key of the Reformation,” and Luther says of reason, “its activity is always evil and godless.” “The Christian Revelation,” he says, “rejects all human reason;” and he calls the Catholic Schools, “the Schools of the Devil,” because they hold up reason as something good, useful, and necessary to the knowledge of Christian truth. “The man of faith,” he says, “throttles reason, and says to it, ‘Reason, you are a blind, silly fool.’” “Reason should be destroyed in all Christians, otherwise, faith has no place in them, for reason fights against faith.”

Catholicity asserts the dignity of human reason.

It denies the pernicious doctrine of total depravity.

It asserts the freedom of the human will.

On all these points, it is in direct conflict with Luther, Melancthon, Zuingle, Calvin, and all the leaders of the so-called Reformation.

It teaches us that man, though fallen from his first state of supernatural holiness, and made liable to

great depths of degradation, has still the power of choosing the good, and refusing the evil, and by corresponding to the grace which God bestows freely on all, to secure his salvation by faith in Christ, and by those good works which are necessary to justification.

“Original sin,” the Catholic Church teaches, “did not *efface* the image of God, stamped upon the soul. Reason and free will remained, their essence unimpaired, uncorrupted, uninjured. It did not despoil man of any of his merely natural faculties, capacities, or powers.” — See *Father Hecker's Aspirations of Nature.*”

The Catholic Church does not teach that any man will be damned for original sin, but only for his own free acts, and voluntary resistance of the grace of God.

The Catholic Church holds that “Reason can, with certitude, demonstrate the Existence of God, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Liberty of Man.”

The Catholic Church bases her claim to your faith and obedience on the reasonableness of her doctrines. She teaches that “the exercise of reason precedes faith, and with the aid of revelation and grace, leads to faith.”

It is Protestantism that denies reason: Catholicity asserts it. The Catholic Church does not ask a blind, but a reasonable obedience. She does not accept a conversion of excitement and fanaticism; but requires an intelligent acquaintance with, and

acceptance of her doctrines and authority. Go to any priest, and ask to be received into the Church, and you will be first examined, to ascertain if you understand what she teaches. In every Protestant community it is not the ignorant who become converts to the Catholic Church, but the most intelligent; and among the converts of the last ten years, in Germany, England, and the United States, are many of the most learned, talented, and estimable men of our times; men of science, metaphysicians, profound scholars, brilliant writers; men who have made the whole circle of modern ideas, and tested the ultimations of modern progress.

“The struggle between faith and reason,” says one of these converts (Dr. Brownson), after ten years’ experience, “is something wholly foreign to the Catholic mind.” That struggle belongs to Protestantism, which is a struggle against reason; or, infidelity, which is a struggle against faith.

To place these assertions beyond doubt, I quote the highest authority in the following passage from the encyclical letter of His Holiness Pope Pius IX., of 1846.

“It is certain that there is nothing more foolish, nothing more impious, and that nothing more contrary to reason can be imagined or thought of, than the opinion which supposes that the Christian faith gainsays Reason. Although Faith is above Reason, nevertheless, no discord, no opposition, can ever be

found betwixt them, since both Faith and Reason spring from one and the same unchangeable and eternal fountain of truth, the Almighty and Eternal God; and therefore, they afford mutual help to each other; so that right Reason demonstrates, upholds, and defends Faith; and Faith, on the other hand, emancipates Reason from all errors, wonderfully enlightens, confirms, and perfects Reason with the knowledge of Divine Things."

One of the highest evidences of the truth and divine authority of the Catholic Religion, is its wonderful adaptation to human nature, and all its wants and aspirations.

Were it to fail in this, it would not be of God, nor entitled to your reverence. It offers to man all to which his soul aspires; in one word, it offers him God. Not the "Almighty Fiend" of Protestantism, but "Our Father who art in Heaven"—a God our intelligence accepts; a God our reason approves; a God worthy of our highest adoration, and our deepest love.

Protestants make two objections to the Catholic faith which virtually destroy each other. One party says: "The Catholic religion is a logical system; it addresses itself to the intellect; but it is destitute of life, feeling, piety."

The other party says: "The religion of Rome is full of sentiment. It gratifies the heart and the imagination, but to the philosopher it is full of absurd-

These are the opinions of those who have seen but one side of this all-comprehending faith. They have only to give it a full investigation to find that it satisfies in an eminent and supernatural degree every faculty of the human soul. It satisfies the intellect, reason, imagination, reverence, hope, love, benevolence, faith, devotion. To the troubled it brings repose; to the mourner, consolation; to the weary, rest; to the active, good works; to the aspiring, sanctity. The mind and heart of man can ask nothing which is not contained in the broad possibilities of the Catholic faith. You want certainty? Here it is, firm as the promises of God. You want direction? Here are those who are trained and inspired to be masters of the spiritual life. You seek examples of courage, fortitude, heroism, devotion, and sanctity? Find them in the lives of the saints. You wish for the purity of a religious life? The Catholic orders welcome you. You would leave all to follow Jesus? Here are thousands more to sustain you by their sympathy and prayers, and keep you company. You would choose that better part of the contemplative and loving life of Mary? You find orders of entire seclusion from the world and perpetual adoration of the Beloved One. You would engage with Martha in corporal works of mercy? Here are the Sisters of Charity, the Sisters of the Poor, and all the noble orders of Catholic Religious, ready to receive you. Or would you mingle in the struggle of the worldly life?

Here is a religion that offers you its supernatural gifts and graces to sustain you in the perilous contest.

The Catholic Church brings you faith in a God all goodness; faith in a Saviour such as you need; faith in a Holy Spirit for your comfort and support. It joins you to a living order—an organism of which you form a vital part, and which satisfies your desire for the largest unity, and the holiest sympathy, since the Catholic holds, among other items of his glorious faith, “the Communion of Saints.” As a member of the One Body of Christ, he is joined in the most intimate and sympathetic union to the whole Catholic Church, its body and its soul; the Church militant on earth, the Church suffering in purgatory, the Church triumphant in heaven. Every Catholic is his brother; and while he lives in holy charity with all on earth, he prays for the souls of the dead, not yet free from all stains of sin, and he seeks the prayers of those who already reign with Christ, and who participate “in the joy in heaven over one sinner that doeth penance.” The communion of the saints joins him to all faithful souls. He is no more a lonely wanderer on the earth. Every prayer he breathes may help some soul. Every good work adds to that great treasury of spiritual blessings.

THE ATTESTATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES in evidence of the Catholic Faith, I have reserved as the subject of a special lecture; but it would not be proper wholly to omit it here. The prophecies of the

Old Testament, and the precepts and requirements of the New, find their fulfilment only in the Catholic Church. Were it possible to strike her out of existence—could we imagine the world to have existed during the past eighteen hundred years with no Church—nothing but the varying and multitudinous sects of extinct or dying heresies, the prophecies and the prayers and promises of Christ would have no answer or fulfilment. Without the Catholic Church much of the Scriptures would be meaningless, as it indeed is to Protestants. Many of the parables of our Lord picture the Catholic Church, but have no significance without her.

The Church and the Scriptures are in harmony. We prove, as we interpret, the Scriptures by the Church, while they are also her perpetual and inspired witness. Nor is this reasoning in a circle; for we prove the Church independently of the Scriptures. It is easy to conceive of the Church existing, as it did in fact, without the Scriptures; but Scriptures without the Church would have no use or meaning. Committed to the Church and preserved by her, they are a witness to her truth.

THE SUCCESS OF CATHOLIC MISSIONS is a brilliant evidence of the verity of the Catholic Faith. A Catholic Missionary lands on a savage island of the Pacific Ocean, among a population of cannibals. A few years pass, and you find a whole people converted to the Catholic faith, and practising its morals and

devotions. A St. Francis Xavier goes to the East Indies and converts whole nations. These wonderful phenomena have been witnessed in every age of the Catholic Church—there, and only there. A St. Patrick converted Ireland. A St. Austin converted England. A St. Boniface, Germany. Every nation ever converted to Christianity has been converted by missionaries of the Catholic Church.

On the other hand, the efforts of Protestant missionaries always have been, and are, and will be, failures. Where they have had every possible advantage for a long series of years, as with the British and American missionaries in India, they have miserably failed. ~~The Mormons have converted more Protestants to Mormonism in twenty years, than all the Protestant missionaries have ever converted of~~ ~~heathens to Christianity in three centuries!~~ Far from making conquests and converts, Protestantism has not been able to hold its own in any country where it was established by the so-called Reformation. It has almost died out of France; it has lost ground in Germany, Austria, Poland, Hungary, Holland, Denmark, England, and even in Sweden, though upheld by penal laws. In all these countries Catholicity is stronger now than it was a century ago; in all of them Protestantism has lost ground, both by its natural process of disintegration and decline into infidelity, and by the numerous conversions to the Catholic Church.

THE FREQUENT CONVERSIONS OF MEN OF EMINENT ABILITIES, LEARNING, AND EXCELLENCE OF CHARACTER is a striking testimony to the power of truth in the Catholic Church. Our papers published, a little while ago, a list of more than a hundred graduates of one English University, that of Oxford, who had, within a few years, become converts to the Catholic faith. A large proportion of them were clergymen of the Established Church, and among them were men of remarkable talent, profound learning, high character and social position, and holding some of the best preferments, and having a fair prospect of the highest positions in the Anglican Establishment. What are we to think when large numbers of such men sacrifice all worldly advantages, to embrace a faith which England has persecuted for centuries?

Another evidence, and the last I shall give in this brief and imperfect outline, is THE CONSOLATION OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH IN THE HOUR OF DEATH. We hear sometimes of religions which are good to live by, but not good to die by. This is a fallacy; yet it is true that men may profess a religion from worldly motives or indifference, which they are compelled to abandon when worldly considerations have lost their value, and men waken from their dreams as they approach eternal realities.

How often do we see the hardened criminal becoming a Catholic in prison, and dying on the gallows with the faith and fervor of a saint!

France is sometimes falsely called an infidel country ; but it was the testimony of the chaplains of the Army of Italy, in the late war with Austria, that not one soldier died in the hospitals without receiving the sacraments of the Church. Many of them may have neglected, some may have derided, their religion in health ; but when wounded, or sick, and dying, they appealed, and not in vain, to that religion for aid, and in its blessed ministrations found comfort and peace.

It is a common thing in this country, and wherever there is a mixed population of Catholics and Protestants, for those who have been all their lives attached to some Protestant sect, to send for a priest, and ask to be received into the Catholic Church in their last sickness. There have been hundreds of such cases. There is scarcely a priest of any experience who has not witnessed such conversions. But I believe that during the three centuries of modern Protestantism, not one instance was ever known of a practical Catholic abandoning his faith, and professing another, at the hour of death !

And whatever influences may, in rare instances, induce persons, who have been educated Catholics, to profess some form of Protestantism, it will be found that a large portion of them, where they have the opportunity, recant their errors, and return to their former faith.

THE ASSURANCE OF FAITH which the Catholic Church gives to her children is a testimony to her

Divine character, intimately related to those I have last mentioned. The more a Catholic studies and reflects, the more firm and solid is his faith. Protestantism is a state of inquiry, questioning, perplexity, doubt, change. In it is no rest, no "peace in believing." It is a perpetual conflict of opinions. You are surrounded by those who are as honest and intelligent as yourself, who differ from you and from each other. Adopting the principle of individual interpretation, each understands his Bible differently from his neighbor. And there is no one to set them right. Their minister is a man like themselves, and as liable to err as they are. Protestant commentators differ in endless confusion. Each so-called Church declares itself fallible, and changes and divides perpetually. The Protestant doubts, and his doubts distress him. He inquires, and his inquiries perplex him. How many souls have in this way been plunged into utter infidelity, or insanity and despair!

As the doctrines of Protestantism are unsettled and perpetually changing, the social morals, which rest upon doctrines, also change, from the most rigid and absurd Puritanism, to the most revolting licentiousness. The shameful communism of the Perfectionists, and the polygamy of the Mormons, in our day, like the shocking immoralities of some sects of the sixteenth century, are the legitimate outgrowths of Protestant principles.

But the Catholic, relying on the promises of Christ,

knows that he has a sure foundation. His Church is founded on a Rock, and the gates of hell can never prevail against her. Christ has promised to be with her all days; she is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth. She is one, holy, infallible. In her he finds the assurance of faith, and a hope which is like an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast.

Such are some of the evidences of the Catholic Faith. The more thoroughly they are examined, the more will every earnest inquirer after truth be satisfied that it is to be found here and here alone, in the Church which Christ has founded—**ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, AND APOSTOLIC.**

NOTE.—The reader is referred to the Decrees and Canons, and the Catechism, of the Council of Trent, and all authoritative Expositions of the Catholic Faith. "The Catholic Christian Instructed," "Poor Man's Catechism," and "Catechism of Perseverance," are good compends. On the Evidences there are whole libraries. Read the Lectures of Cardinal Wiseman, of Bishop Spalding, Father Hecker's admirable "Questions of the Soul," and "Aspirations of Nature," especially the latter, which I would warmly recommend, as I have freely quoted.

From "THE GUARDIAN," *Official Organ of the* RT. REV. J. M. SPALDING, D. D., *Bishop of Louisville.*

DR. NICHOLS' LECTURES.

We have received the two first of this popular course of six lectures published by the distinguished convert and lecturer, Dr. T. L. Nichols. The first is a succinct and rapid history of the Catholic Church, the second of Protestantism. The lectures are just what is needed at the present time; they contain much matter in a brief compass. Though compendious, they are highly interesting.

The statements are, in general, remarkably accurate; and they are wrought out into a very entertaining and instructive narrative. All Catholics should procure the series, besides ordering several additional copies for the perusal of their Protestant neighbors and friends. We believe that the work is well calculated to accomplish much good.

From the "CATHOLIC HERALD AND VISITOR," *Official Organ of the* RT. REV. BISHOP of Philadelphia.

We have already favorably noticed the first lecture of this series, and find this, the second, equally as excellent. We again urge our readers to place before their Protestant friends such admirable expositions of our Faith as these lectures contain, and assist, as far as possible, in their circulation.

From the New Orleans "CATHOLIC STANDARD," *published with the approbation of the* MOST REV. ARCHBISHOP of New Orleans, *and his Suffragan Bishops.*

We cordially commend this laudable enterprise to our readers. It should be *liberally* patronized. The style of these lectures,—dispassionate, clear, and forcible,—and their able treatment of the subjects which they discuss, render them deserving of a wide circulation, particularly among non-Catholics, even if they should have no other effect than to remove prejudice, and present the Church, its history, morals, and doctrine, in their true light before the American people. We feel quite confident, however, that the perusal of them by non-Catholics would have a still more powerful influence, and be the means, under God, of inducing many to pursue the inquiry they provoke, and consider, as fairly and impartially, as is possible for Protestants, the relative claims of the various dissenting Christian denominations, and the Catholic Church, upon their confidence and belief. No one who has a true faith in the Church can doubt that such an investigation would, in numerous instances, if not in every case, result in conversion.

Similarly gratifying notices have appeared in the Baltimore "CATHOLIC MIRROR," the Boston "PILOT," the Charleston "CATHOLIC MISCELLANY," the Buffalo "CATHOLIC SENTINEL," and probably in every Catholic newspaper in the United States.

As there is but one more number to be published to complete the series, I trust that those who have hitherto delayed, will now send in their orders.

T. L. NICHOLS, M. D.,
NEW YORK CITY.

Catholic Books and Newspapers.

QUESTIONS OF A SOUL. By REV. I. T. HECKER.....	\$0 75
ASPIRATIONS OF NATURE. " ".....	0 75
DECREES AND CANONS OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT..	2 50
CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.....	1 00
THE DOCTRINAL CATECHISM.....	25 to 50 cts.
THE POOR MAN'S CATECHISM.....	19 to 28 cts.
THE CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR.....	31 to 50 cts.
CATECHISM OF PERSEVERANCE. Abridged.....	38 cts.
MANUAL OF INSTRUCTIONS. By REV. G. H. DOANE.....	62 cts.
THE PAPIST MISREPRESENTED AND TRULY REP- RESENTED.....	9 to 18 cts.
THE GROUNDS OF THE CATHOLIC DOCTRINE.....	9 to 18 cts.
MANUAL OF CONTROVERSY.....	63 cts.
THE TRIALS OF A MIND. By L. SILLIMAN IVES, LL.D., late Protestant Episcopal Bishop of North Carolina.....	50 cts.
LECTURES ON THE EVIDENCES OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. By Rt. Rev. Bishop SPALDING, of Louisville.....	\$1 25

I will send, post-paid, these books and all others found in the catalogues of Catholic publishers, or they will be mailed by any Catholic bookseller.

CATHOLIC PERIODICALS.

The following Catholic Papers will also be found full of matter of interest to those who wish to know what is transpiring in the Catholic Church in all parts of the world.

Metropolitan Record; organ of the Most Rev. Archbishop Hughes. E. Dunigan & Brother (James B. Kirker), Publishers. \$2 50

The New York Tablet; by Messrs. Sadlier. \$2 50 a year.

Freeman's Journal; J. A. McMasters. \$2 50 a year.

Brownson's Quarterly Review; E. Dunigan & Bro. \$3

The above are published in New York City.

The Pilot; one of the oldest, largest, and best Catholic papers in the country, published by P. Donahoe, Boston, Mass., at \$2 50 a year, in advance; \$1 for four months.

The Catholic Standard; an excellent Catholic paper, published at New Orleans. \$3 00 per annum.

The Catholic Telegraph; an able Weekly paper, and organ of the Most Rev. Archbishop of Cincinnati. \$2 a year. J. P. Walsh, Catholic Publisher, Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Guardian; published under the auspices of the Right Rev. Bishop Spalding, Louisville, Ky. \$2 a year, by Webb & Levering.

The Catholic; the organ of the Rt. Rev. Bishop O'Connor, by Jacob Porter, Pittsburg, Pa. \$1 a year.

The Catholic Miscellany; established by the late Bishop England, Charleston, S. C. \$3 a year.

The Catholic Mirror; organ of the Most Rev. Archbishop Kenrick, Baltimore, Md. \$2 a year.

The Catholic Herald; published with the approbation of the Right Rev. Bishop of Philadelphia, Pa. \$2 50 a year.

The Buffalo Catholic Sentinel; published with the approbation of Rt. Rev. Bishop Timon, by Michael Hagan, Buffalo, N. Y. \$2

The Western Banner; by B. D. Killian, St. Louis, Mo. \$2 50 a year.

The Catholic Institute Magazine, Monthly; Newburg, N. Y. \$1 a year.