

Cath. Church
Apologues

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THE

TRUE PATH FOR THE TRUE CHURCHMAN

WANDERING IN

THE MAZES OF PROTESTANTISM,

EXEMPLIFIED IN

TWO LETTERS IN ANSWER TO THE ENQUIRY

WHY HAVE YOU BECOME A CATHOLIC?

INCLUDING

A REPLY TO REV. MESSRS. PALMER AND DODSWORTH:

BY

RICHARD WALDO SIBTHORP, B. D. OXFORD:

LATE PROTESTANT MINISTER, RYDE, ISLE OF WIGHT.

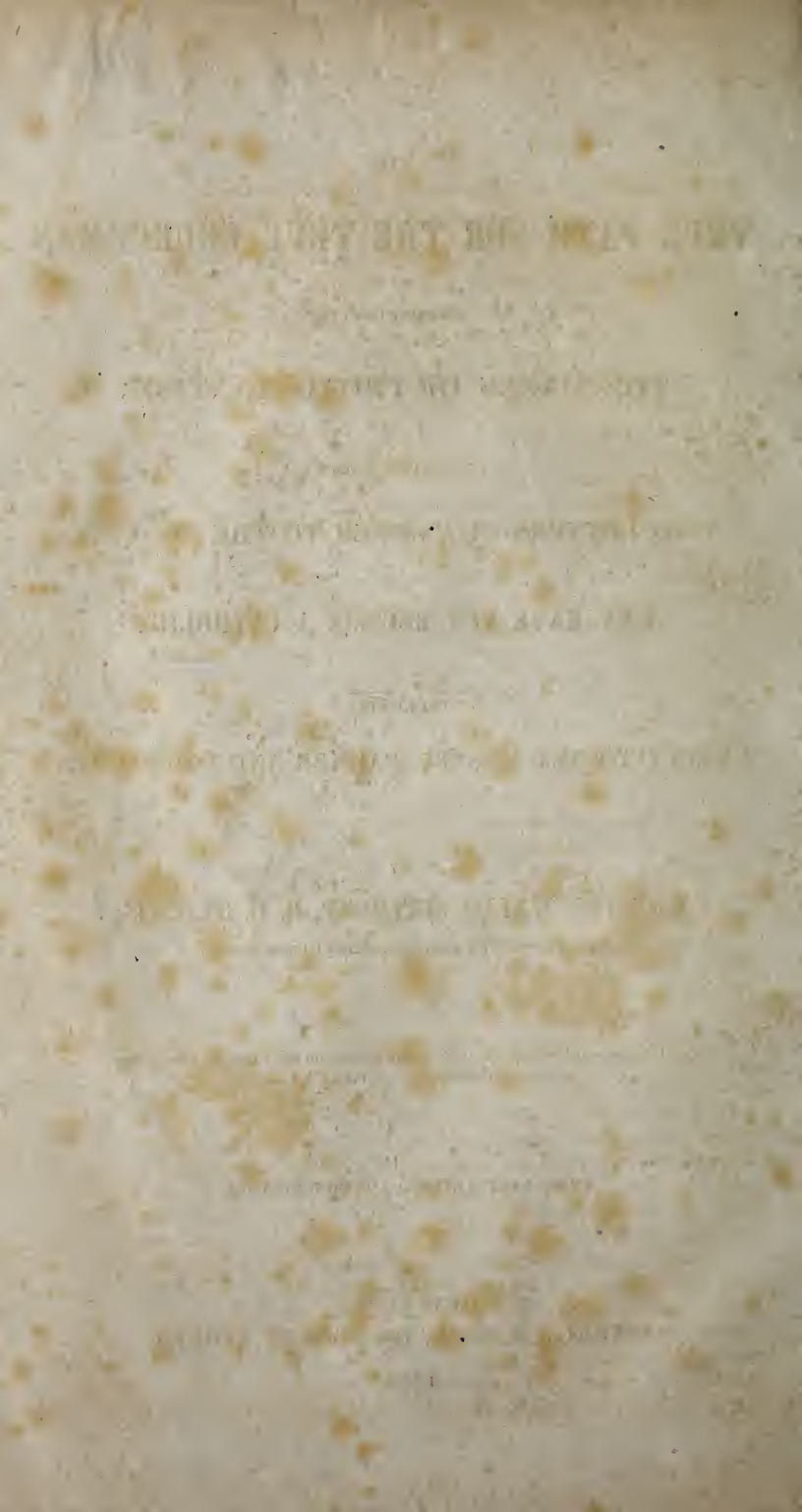
Quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est. Hoc est etenim vere
proprieque Catholicum.—S. Vincen. Lerinensis.

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1843.



SOME ANSWER,

&c., &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

YOU enquire of me the reasons of my secession from the Anglican to the Catholic Church. Your letter is one of so many that have been addressed to me, with a similar enquiry, that I am almost constrained to resort to the assistance of the press that I may reply to them all. It is by no means agreeable to one, whose life has for some years been a continuous discharge of unobtrusive ministerial duties, thus to keep himself under public observation, and to anticipate the controversial notices, the critical remarks, the severe judgment, which the publication of his sentiments may possibly call forth. But besides the pressing duty of replying to many earnest and candid enquirers, and the still more urgent one, of not permitting any of these, so far as in me lies, to conclude their questions unanswerable, and their objections to the step I have taken incapable of a reply; the conviction that there is a selfishness in the love of privacy which must be withstood, whenever the interests of the Saviour's Kingdom and the unity of the Church may be promoted by the opposite conduct, determine me to sacrifice my own feelings to what better judges than myself deem the call of duty, and to commit to print some of my reasons in answer to the question, "Why have you become a Catholic?"

I beg you to observe, that in this letter I give you only some of my reasons, though confessedly such as chiefly have weight with me. I give you them, also, rather in outline, than in full detail; as hints for reflections, which your own religious knowledge and acquaintance with the controversies of the present day, will supply, rather than elaborate arguments. I give you them in the integrity of my heart, as sentiments I hold; in devout prayer to God for His blessing, as truth profitable for all; and in unaffected good will towards those who differ from me, as matters peculiarly claiming to be treated of with courtesy, forbearance, and charity. Every enquirer, with scarcely an exception, has addressed me with a kindness of language and sentiment, as creditable to themselves, as considerate towards me. And far, then, be it from me, my dear friend, not to give utterance to the real sentiments of my own heart, or to allow myself, while avowing and delineating my separation from these my correspondents, and thereby my disapproval of their opinions, to show any want of real esteem for all, of cordial friendship for many, of unaltered affection for others among them. Besides, "the servant of the Lord must not wrangle" under any circumstances. I disavow, then, every harsh expression, if such escape me. If in self-defence I seem to condemn others, I pre-condemn myself if I do so in other language than the fair statement of my own views may require. If I fail to exhibit Christian courtesy and kindness, I humbly ask forgiveness of yourself, and all for whom this letter is penned; but especially I ask it of our common Lord and God. May

the spirit of truth and of charity ever guide the pens of those who profess to advocate the cause of both!

I judge that I shall best consult your wishes, and most satisfactorily answer the enquiries made of me, if, instead of a formal arrangement of arguments, or of reasons drawn up both *pro* and *con*, I give a kind of narrative of what has been passing in my own mind, and has issued in my being now a member of the Catholic Church, in communion with the See of Rome. You are aware that in early life I sought admission into that Church, and, but for the interference of the law, being then under age, should have joined her. Though upon the closest scrutiny of my own heart, I am not conscious of insincerity in my past profession of Protestant principles as a clergyman of the Established Church, yet I freely confess that the remembrance of devotional feelings I then had (almost the first, meet to be so called which I remember to have had) never entirely quitted me during subsequent years. I never forgot what had forcibly impressed me, leading to the effort I then made to join the Catholic Church, the apparent devotedness to religious duties, the supreme place which these seemed to have in their regard, the cheerfulness yet earnestness of piety, which marked some members of her communion, whom I then met with. I had found little of these things among my Protestant acquaintance—my misfortune, doubtless; but so it was. Conceiving that religion, if anything, should be the chief thing with every man; knowing it, on divine authority, declared to be, “the one thing needful;” when I seemed to find it so esteemed by Catholics, and knew it not to be so esteemed by most of my Protestant acquaintance, but holding quite a secondary and accidental place in their regard, I not unreasonably judged these latter wrong, and those right. I sought to connect myself with the former in the enjoyment of privileges they alone seemed to understand and value. My after acquaintance with both has shown me how much error there was in my estimation of them;—that all Catholics are not in earnest, nor all Protestants indifferent about their salvation: far otherwise. Still an impression, and, in the main, a correct one, remained on my mind, that there was among members of the Catholic Church, a dedication to the claims and duties of Christianity, an admission of the influence of their belief upon their ordinary life and devotions,—a sort of absorbing interest in their religion, which sustained in me a lingering affection towards them, while I openly condemned what I honestly believed to be the errors of their creed. I often mourned that truth seemed to have less power than error (for such I long judged the distinctive creeds of Protestants and Catholics) to make men devoted to their God; and I could not but affectionately regard those whose religion appeared to be not a cold profession of faith, but an influential principle of daily life,—a source of animating hope, warm charity, lively devotion, and zealous efforts to make others *partakers of the same benefit*. How far these sentiments and feelings cooperated to my present position, God alone could judge.

About five years since, in the course of my ministry at Ryde, I was led to review the Jewish Economy, or the Church under the Old Testament Dispensation. The subject came minutely under my notice while engaged in a series of lectures on the Levitical Law and institutions. You cannot require proof that these had a typical character. It is universally admitted, that they were typical of something better—“of good

things to come ;" from Israel, viewed as a nation, down to the smallest ornaments of the tabernacle, respecting which Jehovah had said, " See that thou make all things according to the pattern which was showed thee in the mount." Where, then, was to be found this something better, thus accurately prefigured, thus largely and minutely typified? Where the antitype of this typical dispensation? I naturally sought it in a careful comparison of the Christian Dispensation with these types: and I found one immediate answer to my enquiry, and full of holy and consolatory instruction. They had an accomplishment in Christ, as is largely shown by the Apostle to the Hebrews. He is the typified temple, high-priest, and victim; His blood and righteousness, mediation and intercession, ministry, character, and offices, were prefigured by what went before. He was the body of good things to come, of which they were the shadow. But it seemed not less evident to me, nor can seem, I think, to any attentive enquirer, that the types of the Mosaic economy had not their only accomplishment in the Blessed Saviour, or in Christ personally. He, it is clear, was not the typified Israel; nor the Mount Zion, nor the Holy City; nor solely the temple; neither did the shewbread, or incense, or seven-branched candlestick, or Levitical ministry, prefigure Him, or His work and office only. The types, like most of the prophecies and the psalms, have, then, a further application than to Christ, personally or officially. But to whom or what? To his mystical body, the Church under the New Testament. None of these interesting portions of Holy Scripture can be rightly understood without the apprehension of this truth. The frequent assertion that all the shadows of the old law were accomplished in Christ alone, and that it is unnecessary to look for the body or substance of them elsewhere, is hastily and ignorantly made; altogether untenable, and, indeed, as inconsistent with other allowed views of most who make it, as with the whole tenor of Scripture. If all the typical institutions of the old dispensation found their sole and entire accomplishment in Christ, why are any continued in the Christian Church correspondent with them? Why are there any sacraments, any separate ordained ministry, any sacrifice, any visible form of the Church, if Christ alone absorbed, so to speak, the fulfilment of all that was typical of these in Himself personally? The Church should be, as some sectarians hold it, purely spiritual, without distinct ministry, a Christian circumcision, or a Christian passover, holy days or ordinances, or visible constitution and government. Believers, as members of Christ, can then have nothing to do with these things, but have them all in Him, and need not look beyond. But, if the Anglican Church is to be heard, there is, under the New Testament, an ordained ministry, two sacraments, and a corporate character of the Church, singularly accordant with correspondent Levitical institutions. If the primitive Church is to be heard, such was indisputably her view of those institutions. And Christ himself undoubtedly gave his Church a government, a ministry, and at least two holy ordinances of a peculiar character; constituting her an holy kingdom, in the midst of the world, yet separated from it, by distinctive truths, laws, worship, and institutions; establishing her as his body on earth, in whom was still to be exhibited the substance of previous shadows; still to be accomplished the Levitical types. In other words, the Church under the Old Testament, was a close type of the Church under the New, and not of her Divine Head only.

With this guiding truth, I proceeded to consider and connect some of the principal points in which the correspondence must exist between the typifying and the typified Church. I found the former to be a compact, united body, really and visibly united in all its parts; combining a number of provincial and locally separate portions in one religious nation or people; combining them in a most strict, perfect, and evident unity of faith, of worship, of laws, of discipline, of religious ordinances, and even of minute ceremonies: no variety permitted, no departure from the oneness demanded being sanctioned in any individual. Such was the ancient Israel; and if typical of the Church, such should be the Israel of God under the New Testament. At the head of this body, nation, or Church, was one supreme dignitary, of priestly order, invested by God with singular prerogatives, ruling in perpetual succession over Israel, until the Lord should come: in his person, offices, and residence, a centre of unity to the whole nation, far and near,—a representative on earth of the Divine High Priest in heaven. There was a regularly organized and consecrated tribe, of two degrees—priests and Levites—separated by peculiar ordinances, and privileges, and duties, from the rest of Israel; having every office, every ceremony, every vestment, full of sacred significance; continually engaged in sacrifice, and instruction of the people. The principal sacred rite of the nation was sacrifice; in its frequency, perpetuity, character, and circumstances, directing the worshippers to have in view a Lamb of God, which should take away the sins of the world. There was a real, and not merely spiritual, figurative, or imaginary presence of God himself in his earthly temple; which was also illumined with a seven-fold light, perpetually fed by holy oil. Sculptured cherubim and poured angels seemed to share in the sacred rites, and mingle in the worship, at once participating with, and ministering to, the holy nation in their prayers and adorations. There was an impressive and magnificent ritual, every ceremony of which was symbolic and instructive,—adapted alike to the present infirmity of man, needing such sensible aid, and to the glory of the majesty of God, who vouchsafed to receive from his creatures such homage, as expressive of their sense of his glory and greatness. Certain seasons were distinguished by peculiar impressive rites, commemorative of divine mercies, or events in the formation of the nation. From the Dan to the Beersheba of that land which was this ancient Church's appointed heritage, there was not an Israelite that lived not in fealty and submission to the supremacy of the one high priest; or that might lawfully, or without the heaviest anger of God, recognize or use any other sacred ministry than that of the tribe of Levi, and the house of Aaron; or that might contemn the appointed sacrifices, or live in wilful neglect of the most trivial sacred ordinances. Wherever an Israelite journeyed in that land, he found one creed, one faith, one religious rite, one harmonious agreement, even in the minutest points of ceremonial worship. He was at home everywhere as to his religion, for the Church of the Old Testament was purely Catholic, as to the given extent of its possession! Such were some of the great typical features of the ancient Israel, of which I had to seek for a correspondence in the Christian Church. The Mosaic dispensation led me then to look for a Church characterized by visible oneness,—by the strictest required holiness,—by Catholicity, as to the land of its inheritance (this being, under the

Gospel, the whole earth),—by a supreme spiritual Rule, in a succession of individuals,—by unbroken pastoral descent from its first divinely selected office-bearers, the Apostles,—by continual daily sacrifice, directing the minds of the worshippers at once back to the great propitiatory offering of the Lamb of God, and upwards to the perpetual presentation of that propitiation before the Eternal Throne,—by a real, mysterious presence of Deity with her,—by a sevenfold channel of sacramental grace, illumined, and illuminating all within her sacred enclosure,—by angelic ministrations, and an intercourse intimate, though unseen, with those who see God,—by an impressive, magnificent, significant, ritual,—by such an uniformity of doctrine, discipline, worship, and ceremonial, that from the north to the south, from the east to the west, there should not be a Christian that differed from another, or should not find, wherever he journeyed over the wide earth, the same religion he left at home. And what these typical considerations warranted me to expect, the prayer of the Blessed Saviour doubly warranted: “that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” St. Paul declared at once the same character of the Church, and the fact of its existence: “One body and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.”

Could I find this typified Church on earth? The truth of God assured me of its existence. But certainly no Protestant sect presented the slightest correspondency with it. My own, the Anglican, which promised fairest, totally failed to prove her claim, if indeed she made it, to be in the world what the Jewish Church was in the Holy Land. Facts were against her, declaring her very limited extent and insulated position unrecognized by the rest of Christendom. Her present constitution forbade her Catholicity. She had totally thrown off the recognition of that pastoral supremacy which from the sixth to the sixteenth century, she had admitted. Was the accomplishment of the glorious Levitical shadows to be found in a patchwork combination of a multitude of sects, as opposed in their interests as in their belief and worship? Could the typified holy—separated as to others, and as to themselves visibly united—nation, the one body of Christ, consist of a mixture of Prussian Lutherans, French Calvinists, and Swiss Socinians; of Independents, Baptists, Quakers, Shakers, of Irvingites, and Plymouth Brethren; of Methodists of the old and of the New Connexion; of New Jerusalemites, and Primitive Revivalists? Could such disorder be the designed fulfilment of a type of such holy order?—such disunion be the rightful substance of a shadow marked by an entire harmony of its parts, and perfect oneness of outline? Ingenuity could not trace a resemblance. But when I looked back to the primitive apostolic Church of the first six centuries, I found an exact correspondency with the type:—when I also looked back to the ancient Church of England, as first formed by St. Augustine, I found the most entire agreement, and an actual, visible, professed oneness, with that apostolic Church, as it had existed for six centuries: it was a provincial limb of that vast Catholic body which was then co-extensive with the knowledge of Christianity. When I viewed it at any subsequent period down to the commencement of the sixteenth century, I met with the same

unaltered character ; and though the Catholic body had been lopped of some of its limbs by the severing strokes of heresy or schism, it still flourished a vigorous, stately, wide-expanded tree, the same in every essential, almost in every minute particular, which it had been, when the English branch first grew from out its sustaining, fostering trunk. The Catholic Church in communion with the see of Rome, stood forth, in my view, the close and perfect antitype of the Church under the Old Testament. She had still a branch, unsheltered, yet growing—feeble, yet full of hidden life—despised, yet fruitful—in my native land ; and in joining myself to it, I felt that I should join myself to the Church of the whole earth,—the Church of twelve centuries in England, and of eighteen centuries in the world,—the Church of the shadowy dispensation that had comprehended the tribes of Israel, as they marched out of the land of Egypt under Moses and Aaron ;—that I should join myself, in short, to the true Israel of God. All that the ancient types led me to look for in the Christian Church, I found in her alone. She stood forth, on scriptural grounds, the sole authorized claimant of God's favour and heritage. Separation from her, at any period, of any portion of mankind, did not invalidate her claims, nor affect her true Catholicity and unity, any more than the falling of a decayed limb destroys the claim of the trunk, with its remaining branches, to be the tree.

You will easily perceive, my dear friend, that I might go very much farther into the particulars of the close agreement of the Catholic Church with its Old Testament type ; but I content myself with giving you some of the leading ideas, as they came before myself, and suggesting to you outlines, very imperfect indeed, yet, I trust, sufficient for you to fill up in your own reflections, from your own knowledge of Scripture and ecclesiastical history. But I have dwelt longer upon this topic of the Levitical types, because I have seldom found it more than hinted at in modern theological works ; and because it became, from the cause I have already mentioned, that which first influenced my mind, presenting to it what seemed cogent reasons for regarding the Catholic Church, in communion with the see of Rome, as claiming my avowed allegiance. The fact which these last words declare,—the communion of the whole Catholic Church, in recognition of one supreme see and its possessor,—as it was one of the chief points of her correspondence with the Jewish type, so it became a principal one of my present consideration. The necessity of a centre of unity, for the well-being of the Church, as it had often at previous times been on my mind, now forcibly recurred. The sanctions of God to the office and authority of the high-priesthood of the Jews, I knew to be very solemn. His own institution, I knew that he upheld with jealousy the office, while he punished with severity the sins of some who filled it. The nation, I remembered, had flourished or decayed, both in spiritual and temporal matters, much as it respected this divine appointment, or otherwise.

Every well established kingdom has its central government, acting both as its effective executive, and as that which combines together, regulates, and invigorates all the subordinate authorities, and otherwise scattered parts. It cannot subsist without it, any more than the body without a head. There is an analogy here between the natural works of the Creator and the rational institutions of men, which has its counterpart in the gracious

dispensations of the Saviour. It would be incredible that he should leave his kingdom in the world, without any fixed government, or that government without an essential to all governments—a supreme executive and centre of unity. He instituted this for the Jewish Church, and left it not to accident to set it up or throw it down. The United States of America, although full of wild notions of independence and equality, and of the self-governing rights of its different parts, admit the existence and power of one continuing, supreme, central government, essential to the conservation of the body politic. What would be a body without a head? and how often is the Church described as a body of which all the parts are harmoniously fitted in, for the efficient movement of the whole to its intended end! Previous then to the revelation of the Gospel, my belief in the wisdom of the Divine Author of Christianity would lead me to expect the institution and development of a centre of unity and government in the Church. The Mosaic type confirms the expectation. Be it observed that the fundamental principle of Protestantism, under every form, rejects it; setting at defiance the testimony of nature, reason, fact, antiquity, and Scripture,—I fear, because that combined testimony forbids the anarchy and self-will on which its results are based, and not solely, as is sometimes adduced, because the power of rule had been abused.

There is in the New Testament, a remarkable promise given to one of the twelve apostles,* which we must view in connection with an extraordinary exhortation afterwards addressed to him,† and a very peculiar position held by him:‡ all which also, from the striking accordance with the Jewish type which they give the Christian Church, warrant the inference that the Lord in his kingdom, his body, his family, his household, acts on the same principle and plan on which he has acted in nature, and guided man to act in ordinary arrangements of this life. It is not correct that what is allowed to have been once appropriated to St. Peter was afterwards made common to all the apostles. No other apostle shared his office in the formation of the Church. To no other apostle was such a solemn exhortation given, to feed the flock of God, as to him. And though the Lord did afterwards give the power of the keys to all the Apostles, that no more affected the previous distinction of the separate gift to him,§ than the Lord's calling all his apostles beloved, affects the claim of St. John to be pre-eminently "*the beloved disciple.*" Briefly, but sufficiently, is the establishment of a centre of unity for his Church declared by Christ, while it was left to the providence of God, (not to accident), to develope in time its design, growth, and prerogatives. The essential value of the rock to the building fitted into it, was to be shown as the building rose, and the added weight, and the rising height, and the lofty towers; and the power of the fierce winds, and the beating waves without, and the slow attacks of wasting time, developed, and so to speak, called into trial and proof, its solidity and use.

I think that, upon reflection, you will see that the case could not well have been otherwise, than as I have now hinted it. For the Saviour gave no intimation of the time of his absence, but left his Church in constant expectation of his return. What he left her, he expected to find her, so constituted and so united, whether he delayed his coming for twenty or two thousand years. Had this event occurred during St. Peter's lifetime, no farther development of a primacy and centre of unity in the Church

* Matt. xvi. 16-19. † John xxi. 15-17. ‡ Acts ii. iii. iv. x. xii. § Matt. xvi. 16.

had taken place ; no successor of the apostle had been needed. But as it was otherwise, when he,—to whom the special promise and charge had been given, died, another took his position, to occupy it, and continue the Church in her divinely arranged and existing constitution, if haply the Lord should come in his days. And thus another and another have successively filled the chair of St. Peter for eighteen hundred years, on the same warrant, with the same design, and in the same darkness as to the Lord's time of return : that warrant, Christ's words to St. Peter ;—that design the good rule and unity of his Church and kingdom ;—that darkness, the purpose of God ;* herein accomplishing the type of the continuous high-priesthood of the Jews ; and no more, than that type did, discrediting or displacing the heavenly high-priesthood and rule of Christ ; neither the one, nor other, entrenching on his prerogatives, or usurping his power. The development of this most wise and essential institution for the Church's well-being, was in the nature of the case gradual. The strength, properties, and usefulness of a plant, can only be developed as time permits its growth, and natural influences elicit its generic or specific characters : these, every added inch, and expanding leaf and swelling bud will lead the beholder to infer. Thus, it was not to be expected, that in the second and third centuries there would be found, even had there been fuller documents, that clear perception of the designed succession to St. Peter, which the ninth and tenth centuries present ; because its continuance was, in a great degree, contemporaneous with the development of the perpetuity of the design, and its use, power, and prerogatives, were tested by the circumstances of the Church. But there is a very clear and ample recognition of it in the early Fathers ;—the most decisive confirmation of the fact of the existence of the primacy of the chair of St. Peter, and of its universal estimation as the centre of unity to the kingdom of the Church. Nor can any one, I conceive, impartially review the history of the world, and not perceive the priceless value of the institution. Has it operated perfectly, and to unmingled good ? By no means. The corruption of man has greatly marred the wise design of God. But, nevertheless, it has operated most beneficially, as far as the Church, and the condition of society, and social order, and practical benevolence, and the best interests of mankind, are concerned. It has failed to hold together the whole Christian family in holy harmony and discipline, such as angels might admire, only because all the members of that family have not been what they were called of God to be. Still, like some pilot sent from heaven, it has guided the vessel of the Catholic Church over the agitated seas and heaving billows of eighteen hundred years of strife, and tumult, and warfare, and tribulations of every kind ; presenting her yet a goodly vessel, unwrecked, and cheerily pursuing her onward appointed course. It has maintained holy order and discipline among her motley crew, assimilating them, though gathered from every tribe under heaven, in duties, hopes, trials, and joys ; it has kept them one, whom nature had divided, but grace again had united. How fearfully different is the fate of those who are separated from the see of Rome ! Do they form an united band ? Is there communion, or even mutual intercourse among them ? Is there harmonious discipline, or holy order ? Surely they are rather like the floating remnants of some disastrous wreck, driven here and there on the restless waves of private opinion and indi-

vidual interpretation of Scripture. A few indeed, in some little bark, seem waiting to hail the vessel of the Church, as she steers more in sight, and to seek on board of her a security they scarcely dare reckon on at present; but the most part—some on boards, and some on broken fragments, and some in solitary effort, struggling for life—present a sad spectacle of the distress, danger, and ruin, which men bring on themselves by contempt of that order and rule, which God himself has sanctioned.

Many Protestants have owned the want of a centre of unity for the Church. Bishop Horsley is said to have remarked: "We want a patriarch of the west." But if of the west, why not of the whole Church? The reasons that demand the one, call for the other with manifold greater urgency. The succession to St. Peter, and to the promise and charge given to him, seem to me a precisely similar case with that of the apostolic succession or line of bishops. "*Lo, I am with you always*" (said Christ to the apostles,) "*even to the consummation of all things.*" They to whom these words were spoken died, and then others took their office to continue their charge, and hand down the promises made, and perpetuate the powers given to them; that the Church might be ever governed and managed as the Lord disposed it while on earth; so was it with the Supreme Bishop.

It need hardly be observed, that the permanency of the succession, and of the powers inherent in those who bear the office, whether of chief, or other bishop, cannot be affected by the misconduct of the individuals bearing it. The wickedness of the high-priests did not annul the institution of the office, which continued, notwithstanding many irregularities, to the end of the Jewish dispensation. Judas was not less an apostle, because he was a son of perdition: nor did his ministry less demand regard from those he was sent to, nor does it appear to have been less owned by God. In the possession, then, of this essential of the Church, as of every living body, and well-regulated kingdom, a centre of unity, the Catholic Church stands alone: and in this particular she appeared to me to have a well-founded right to be regarded as that which she claims to be, the one true Church. And it is the recognition of this claim, arising from due consideration of the principle which it involves, which must be a first step towards the restoration of unity, and to any effectual measures for remedying the disasters of the sixteenth century, and placing the Christian family once more in the position Christ left, and desires to find it. The severed limbs, if such they be, must reunite with the trunk, through recognition of, and union with, the head.

But there are other reflections upon the unity of the Church, and the reality, visibility, and permanency of that unity, which, as the more frequently I recur to them, the more sound and weighty they seem, so I now proceed to lay them before you. They are reflections shared by many in common with myself, though, for various reasons (some of which I shall advert to) they seldom issue in the same result, as has taken place in my case.

The Church is a positive institution of Christ for the diffusion and maintenance of his religion throughout the whole earth, until his coming again. That religion is harmonious and immutable truth. There is not one system or set of truths for one age or part of the world, and a different one for another. Nor will there be another revelation of saving truth. The Church, as the Lord instituted it, must be the most wise and suitable

appointment for the accomplishment of his gracious purposes towards mankind. There is not only all absence of proof that He either instituted or sanctioned different forms of government and modes of worship, and a variety of discipline, but everything to warrant the certainty of a contrary conclusion: every deviation, therefore, from that government or form of His Church which He gave it, and from that discipline and worship which He personally, or by His apostles, approved, is a most presumptuous innovation, and a daring disregard of the Divine will, and fraught with danger to the souls of men: for if saving truth be one, it is of consequence that all men be kept in an harmonious profession of it. Whatever has a clear and direct tendency to foster diversity of sentiment and of action, is hostile to the unity of the spirit. But it is evident that difference of worship, and Church discipline, as it is called, is destructive of the bond of peace, and consequently affects the unity of the spirit: it endangers harmonious profession of truth, and therefore affects truth itself, by affecting the institution designed to uphold and diffuse it. The universality and unity of the Church are, therefore, properly inseparable;—in other words, if the Church of Christ was designed to be universal for the diffusion and perpetuity of a system of saving truth, it was necessarily designed to be one: variety being opposed to the purpose of its universality, and so endangering its efficiency.

It is very generally maintained by Protestants, (except by some who take another ground, which I shall afterwards notice), that the only unity designed by Christ for his Church, is spiritual unity,—a unity in the reception of certain doctrines distinguished as *fundamental*, in holiness of life, and in certain interior consolations and privileges of true piety. It is affirmed that the family and household of Christ may properly consist of a number of different families, varying extremely in government, discipline, laws, institutions, and worship. A strange idea is this of an united people, and not very accordant with St. Paul's description of the mystical body of Christ, as given in various parts of his Epistles!

Now is there any intimation of such design laid down by Christ, respecting his Church, in either the Old or New Testament? Is it to be collected either from the types of the former, or the descriptions and history of the latter? There were, of course, different provincial and local churches, and must be while the family of man is locally divided, but all these churches were united in government, discipline, worship, and sacraments. Rome and Ephesus, Corinth and Philippi, Sardis and Philadelphia, were distinct Churches only as to their locality;—their members differing, indeed, in degree of piety and of consistency of profession, but the same in every point of doctrine, discipline, and worship. They had one and the same baptism, altar, apostolic rule, episcopacy, ordained ministry, and communion with St. Peter, while he lived, and his successors in Rome after his death. Ecclesiastical history annihilates altogether the supposition that in the primitive Church existed various differing denominations, some having sacraments, some none; some governed by bishops, some rejecting episcopacy; some having a form of worship, some abhorring it; some baptizing infants, and some refusing to baptize them. There is not a shadow of ground for such an idea: it is absolutely incompatible with the admission of the truth of ecclesiastical history. How comes it then, that so unscriptural; so preposterous, so untenable a position is maintained, as that the Church of Christ properly comprehends all

varying denominations of Christians, or individuals in them all? Seeing, too, that in its practical working, it is so subversive of unity, and prejudicial to the universality of the Church, to the spread of truth, and thereby to the accomplishment of the design of Redemption?

Is this position so stoutly maintained simply for the sake of consistency; and that Protestants may not seem to allow their own foundations to be overthrown? It is not well to be consistent to the endangering of the best interests of man. Or is it because that in most of these existing bodies of professed Christians, some are found giving much proof of the reality of their personal piety and of their individual participation of the grace of God? I admit the fact, but I deny what it is supposed to prove.

God is a Being of infinite mercy. He has a mind of love towards his creatures; but very specially and undeniably towards the fallen children of Adam. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem it. It is consistent with this fact, and not at all inconsistent with the maintenance of the supreme divine rights of the Church, and of her sole claim to the incorporation with her of all the members of Christ and heirs of eternal life, that there may be out of her, those who yet are not necessarily to be deemed excluded from the final and most inestimable blessing of salvation. There may be a unity of the spirit, where there is not the bond of visible communion. The Church has, so to speak, both a body and a soul; an outward and visible form, and an inward pervading spirit;—the former, God's constitution—the latter, his gift. The power and operation of the latter may extend beyond the sphere and limits of the former; so as to include within it more than the former may seem to do. Some then, or many, may belong to the soul of the Church, who are not of its body. When we see persons loving truth, and desirous of embracing it as far as it is known to them, eschewing evil, and doing good; persons pursuing after holiness, and aiming to live in the love of God and of their neighbours; devout, benevolent, given to all good works,—these we may consider as bound to the Church by unity of spirit, though not attached to her by the bond of visible union. They are pervaded by her soul, though not incorporated with her body. She claims them as her children, prays for their complete and outward union, and leaves them in the hands of that divine love, which has, she trusts, included them in its wide and infinite apprehension, to associate them fully with her in time, or, if not, in eternity. Their present errors being not persisted in against the clear perceptions of light or convictions of conscience, while she seeks, in obedience to the will of God, to give them that light, she forbids not the hope or belief, that they may receive it hereafter in the region of perfect light, love, and holiness. It is scripturally clear that God, however jealous of his own laws, has not cut off from his favour, those who, from causes of which He is the perfect judge, have followed a less excellent rule, as in the case of the polygamy of the patriarchs and David. Yet who will defend their conduct, or question the divine law? That, therefore, which influences many amiable persons to adopt this notion, of the Church being a large body made up of numerous discordant bodies, is not a sufficient or just ground for the opinion.

In truth, Protestants find themselves under a necessity of defending this notion in some way or other, or else abandoning the maintenance of

* Gen. ii. 24.—Matt. xix. 4-6.

their present separation from the Catholic Church, and admitting the duty of a return to it. The Church, say they, must be allowed to consist of all denominations, however varying externally, so long as they agree in fundamental truths, or else we must return whence we came, and whither we do not choose to return. You, my dear friend, must often have heard, in substance, this statement. Is it not singular, that no two of these denominations agree in fundamental truths? for they would not give you the same list of them. I doubt whether two ministers of any one of these bodies, are prepared to say they entirely agree as to what these fundamental truths are, or how many the term comprehends. That is a strange test of agreement, concerning which all are disagreed. Now, in the Catholic Church there is no disagreement whatever; every priest, from one end of the earth to the other,—every properly instructed member of the Church, in all the earth, concurs in the confession of the same faith. “There is one body and one spirit; one Lord, one faith, one baptism:” whereas, among Protestants, there is not only disagreement, but no agreement among themselves, as to those truths, of which themselves affirm it necessary to agree in belief, in order to constitute membership in the Church of God.

There is, however, another, a numerous and highly respectable class of persons, who admit the necessity of a complete and visible unity of the Church; anathematizing, indeed, that lax and purely Protestant notion of an harmonious body made up of discordant parts; of unity in the spirit, consisting with diversity of interests actively pursued, and with exclusiveness as to Church communion; of the bond of peace being held amid exclusion from each other’s altars, and loud condemnation of each other’s doctrines and worship; of ecclesiastical order without discipline, and of godly obedience without supreme government. This class is almost exclusively found within the Established Church of England. Their view, on which they (in great part) justify their continuance in their present position of separation from the Catholic Church in communion with the See of Rome, is, that the present Anglican Church is identically one and the same with that which St. Augustine planted in the sixth century, over which St. Thomas of Canterbury presided in the twelfth, and Warham at the commencement of the sixteenth; as properly, therefore, a part of the Catholic Church under the presidency of Archbishop Howley, as she ever was, or as the Church in Rome itself now is. This asserted unity is surely not of a very obvious kind, but liable to some serious, if not insuperable, difficulties. For to test its validity and soundness, let us bring together the above-named four distinguished individuals, and suppose them met in conference. Now will they concur in doctrine, discipline, or Church government? Are they in a visible or a real unity on any of these topics among themselves? Quite the reverse. There are three against one, and one against three. And they disagree so much, that those doctrines which the three former, St. Augustine, St. Thomas, and Archbishop Warham, teach as Divine truths, Archbishop Howley condemns and rejects; partly as blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits; entirely as unwarranted by Scripture. Can they worship at the same altar? Quite the reverse. If consistent with their avowed principles, they cannot even be present at the same worship, lest they sin against God and His Church. Am I then to believe that here is a real unity? Am I to be told, there is no occasion for you to be dissatisfied

with the Anglican, as not being a true portion of the Catholic Church, and a loving sister of the Roman Church, because she is identically the very same Church under Dr. Howley, as she was under Dr. Warham, or St. Thomas, or St. Augustine? I cannot believe what is so palpably untrue. And to test its truth a little farther, suppose myself, or any presbyter of the Anglican Church, coming before these four prelates, and submissively listening to receive Catholic verity from their concordant confession, as knowing that the truth of God cannot vary, and with a real attachment to Catholic unity? It is undoubted, that while three of them would enjoin me, on pain of heavy spiritual penalties, to offer up the sacrifice of the mass, the inculcation on my flock of the doctrines, for example, of purgatory, of invocation of the Blessed Virgin and of the saints,—the last-named, Dr. Howley, would as strongly forbid me to do the former, or to hold or teach either of the latter. While St. Augustine, St. Thomas, and Archbishop Warham, would require me to profess an hearty allegiance to the See of Rome, in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical, as Divinely constituted to rule and concentrate the Kingdom of Christ on earth, Archbishop Howley would threaten me with heavy penalties, if I held the Bishop of Rome to have any jurisdiction at all in England, or any supremacy beyond his own See. I state, no more than fact. And I ask again, am I then to be persuaded that there is a real unity between the Roman and the modern Anglican Church? Could I obey these differing prelates? or serve such opposite masters? Should I receive the right-hand of fellowship from all? Would not three of them reject me, if I knelt to receive the blessing of the fourth,—and the fourth, if I sought the blessing of the three? Can it be pretended that there is scriptural, visible unity, or any unity at all in this? Surely it is an unity, unheard of in the Church till the sixteenth century; tearing a man asunder if he attempts to embrace it. Can any person, then, seriously maintain that the Established Church of England is a proper part and parcel of the Catholic Church in communion with the see of Rome, and that her members need not move to join this Church, but may contentedly remain where they are? Far more consistent are they who, boldly denouncing the Roman Church as anti-Christian, separate from her in spirit and in profession, and account it their peculiar glory to keep as far aloof as possible from all connexion with, and assimilation to her.

I am aware that some of these learned and excellent persons who uphold the startling position that the Roman and the established Anglican are but branches of the same Church, maintain that the only difference is, that the latter rejects certain errors which the former has engrafted on herself: that she is the same Church purified. But I see not how this removes that objection to the visibility and perfection of the unity, which must strike every one as arising from the evident opposition of these two branches, in doctrine as well as discipline. Whether the debated points be truths or errors, the maintenance of them by the one, and the rejection of them by the other, is destructive not only of the effectiveness and the apparency,—but surely of the reality of their unity. There is not only no longer co-operation, but avowed opposition; and the unity is no longer such as the body of Christ requires to answer its designed end, as constituted for the diffusion and upholding of truth. It is no longer such an unity as all the chief figures used in the New Testament to set it forth suppose; for instance, that of a vine, an household, a

family, a temple, a bride. If the Catholic Church in England, from St. Augustine's days to the Reformation (allowing for practical corruptions and abuses, which, even in the apostolic age had begun to prevail in different local or provincial Churches) was a sound member of the mystical body of the Lord,—of his visible Church,—the modern Anglican establishment is an unsound one; and if the latter be sound in her present doctrinal tenets, and her rejection of the supremacy of the see of St. Peter, the Catholic Church is to be regarded as most unsound. She is most unsound, whether she be regarded at any time previous or subsequent to the sixteenth century; for she is the same now as then, in doctrine and discipline. The one or the other must change, to preserve the proper unity of the whole, according to our Lord's prayer, and the apostolic descriptions of the Church. But, in truth, while they meet not in union under and with the same Head, and the one absolutely disclaims connexion with what the other dogmatically upholds as the supreme government and centre of unity, by divine appointment, for the whole body of Christ,—can a real and proper unity be imagined to exist,—especially when there is also taken into consideration doctrinal differences; the one treating as fables, errors, and blasphemies, what the other inculcates on mankind as sound and sacred truths?

But here takes place a division of opinion among those who uphold the unity of the Roman Catholic Church and the modern Anglican Establishment. Till within the last ten or twelve years, very few were found among members of the latter who did not, in the strongest terms, repudiate those tenets of the Catholic Church respecting which so great a dissension arose in the sixteenth century. The Catholic Church in communion with the see of Rome was almost universally denounced as anti-christian in her doctrines. I enter here upon a part of my answer to your enquiry, on which I am obliged to enlarge a little, as it involves some points of the first importance in my coming to a practical decision, either to abide where I was, or to become a Catholic.

You will readily suppose that those tenets referred to, were matter of very frequent reflection with me. I had viewed them once as errors, though in different degrees, dangerous and opposite to the truth of the Gospel. I reluctantly and slowly came to a different conclusion. I knew and re-examined all the popular and chief objections against them. I gave them their full weight. I read, with as much impartiality as I could, the Catholic Church's vindication of her tenets, I examined the canons, and studied the Catechism of the Council of Trent; that most full, most admirable, and authoritative exposition of her creed. The result was, that though I found ample ground for the allegation of practical abuses, as existing both in past and present times; though I found arguments brought forward by various Catholic writers, and some of very high repute, that I deemed unsatisfactory; texts of Scripture alleged in proof of this or that doctrine, that could not, to my judgment, be brought to bear on it; still she had both Scripture and reason decisively on her side. Her own authorised statements were thoroughly satisfactory. When carefully examined into; impartially reflected on; viewed distinct from practical abuses, and essentially springing from them; separated, I need hardly say, from the ignorant calumnies, and railing accusations of many Protestant writers and speakers against the Catholic Church; they became, in the best conclusion I could arrive at, Catholic verities, and wholesome and blessed

truths. More than this, they became parts of a beautiful and complete system of truth, so admirably fitting into it, each in its proper place, leaving such a void, if rejected out of it, as declared that system, in spite of all which human corruption had done, and still did, to mar and deface it, the work of God; the revelation and provision of infinite wisdom and love for the happiness and holiness of his creatures. Examining the ablest works of Protestant controversialists, and comparing them with the Church's own authorised declarations of her doctrines, and the solid reasons in support of them which might be adduced, I was left with a sad impression of the misunderstandings and misrepresentations of the former. I know not a Protestant controversial writer (the authors of the *Oxford Tracts* alone excepted) whose works did not leave me more a Catholic than before; while I admit that there were some writings of Catholics, which, when I read them, threw me back upon Protestantism.

It is foreign to my purpose in this letter, to discuss these disputed tenets. I must content myself with assuring you, my dear friend, that I carefully examined them; I slowly received them; but I am convinced of the soundness of the Catholic doctrine concerning them all. I am satisfied that not one of them, nor all of them collectively, viewed even in connexion with the then existing abuses of them, were justifiable ground of that separation from the Church in communion with the see of Rome, which took place in the sixteenth century. And I conclude, that if not warrantable grounds for separation then, they afforded not warrantable grounds for continuing that separation now.

I was once pressed with this principle, that a person was bound to remain in that Church in which the providence of God had placed him, by his birth, baptism, and calling into the ministry. But I do not understand the words, "that Church in which," &c. nor how there can be properly more than one Church; and if the providence of God has not placed me within her, the express command of God requires me to give up all considerations and join her. The principle referred to assumes what is to be proved. Moreover, I profess myself unable to discover, after all the reflection I can give to it, how the same principle, if sound, does not oblige a Quaker, or a Baptist, or a Scotch Presbyterian, to remain what he is. Nay, is even a Socinian minister of the Church of Geneva at liberty to leave the position where the providence of God has placed him by his birth, baptism, and ministerial calling? The points disputed between the Catholic Church and the English Establishment are not of a neutral character, if such could be; nor matter of indifference, nor of small moment; neither party owns them such; but treats them, as they evidently are, viewed in themselves, as matters of vital importance, and essential to sound faith, to hold or to reject. I could not perceive therefore, how the same principle which would oblige me to remain a member of the English Establishment, did not also justify one continuing in the Churches of Geneva or of Scotland, among the Baptists or Quakers.

But another ground has within the last few years been taken by individuals, so devout, so learned, and in every respect so estimable, as to make the novelty of the position they assume yet more startling, from the unquestioned fact of their own Christian conscientiousness. It is this, that the *doctrines of the Catholic Church, generally considered as denied by Protestants, are not really denied by the Anglican Establishment, but that*

in principle, or tacitly, she admits them all; and that their apparent condemnation by her in her Thirty-nine Articles, is no condemnation, except of certain practical abuses of them which existed in the sixteenth century. It is, I say, maintained by many, and that publicly,—of whose integrity and piety, no more than of their learning and talents, can the least question be raised by all who have the privilege to know them,—that the Anglican Church is truly Catholic as it respects these doctrines, and that no one who subscribes the Thirty-nine Articles is called on to reject purgatory, transubstantiation, invocation of the B. Virgin Mary, and of the saints, the efficacy of the sacrifice of the mass, as defined by the Council of Trent, &c. In other words, he may be a Tridentine Catholic at heart, and an Anglican clergyman by profession. This is a startling position, and, as might be supposed, has startled the Established Church throughout her length and breadth, from Berwick-upon-Tweed to the Land's End. A sound has gone forth from Oxford, which has troubled alike the metropolitan at Lambeth, and the humble curate in the Welsh mountains. "It has penetrated the British senate; (peradventure it may not be unheard in another council chamber); it certainly has not been unheard in the Vatican. That the Anglican Established Church is, in her doctrines, essentially one with Rome, seems one of the surprising discoveries of this age of discovery. But such is the purport of the celebrated Tract No. 90. I am not going to discuss the truth or falsehood of the position maintained in that tract. I shall content myself with stating that if, after much careful examination of its arguments, and the authorities adduced in support of them, an individual finds himself incapable of assenting to them, and constrained either to reject the disputed doctrines, or to embrace them by joining the Catholic Church in communion with the see of Rome, it should justly cause no surprise. To specify upon one point, that of the Sacrifice of the Mass. Is it easy to bring oneself to believe, that the distinction between a low or private mass, as celebrated at any period of the Church, and the public approved worship of the Catholic Church, can be such, as to constitute the former a blasphemous fable, while the latter remains an holy and acceptable offering? Read carefully the Thirty-first Article: "The sacrifice of masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the priests did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits." Is it easily credible that this strong language was directed only against an abuse as to certain private masses? Have words any meaning? Are they to be considered as designed to communicate distinct ideas or not? What is the ground here alleged for the condemnation of the sacrifice of masses?—that "in them it was commonly said the priest did offer Christ," &c. Why, this is what ever was, and still is, commonly said; and said substantially in all authoritative teaching of the Catholic Church, of the sacrifice of the mass: of the mass in general; of every mass; not of private masses only. Every priest teaches and commonly says this now. And every instructed Catholic knows and believes it to be the proper doctrine of the mass, and therein it is a propitiatory application of the sacrifice of Christ for the benefit of the quick and the dead. Does the circumstance of privacy so alter the essential character of the rite, as to make what is sacred truth in one case, to become a blasphemous fable in the other? Compare the latter and the former parts of the Article together, and can anything be clearer than that it was the supposition (altogether erroneous indeed)

that the doctrine of the sacrifice of masses interfered with that of the one sacrifice of Christ upon Calvary, which induced the compilers or the Article to introduce this fierce condemnation of a Catholic verity. For the sacrifice of the mass, if it interfere at all, which assuredly when correctly understood, it does not, with the one sacrifice of Calvary, interferes as much in a public as in a private mass, in the case of one mass as of masses. Without uttering a harsh word upon the reasoning of Tract 90 in this case (and it is a fair specimen of its general reasoning), I will only say, that an individual may well be pardoned, if he cannot assent to its correctness. It need create no surprise, if, after careful reflection, he should come to the conclusion, that if Rome be right, the Anglican Church is thoroughly wrong; and that no compromise, as it respects the doctrine of the former rejected by the latter, can be allowed by one who would keep a clear conscience: that he must totally reject those Catholic verities as errors, or renounce his avowed connexion with the Anglican Church as now established. No one who calmly reflects can, I think, judge it improbable, that another should see no such *via media* as the Tract 90 suggests, for himself to tread with safety. If others take the opposite alternative from himself, he will pray God to accept their piety and pardon their error. If others take neither alternative, but consider the doctrines of the Catholic Church, as defined at the Council of Trent, reconcilable with open communion and ministerial connexion with the Established Church in England, he will admire their learning and piety, firmly believe their Christian integrity and conscientiousness, but he will not cease to be astonished at the decision of their judgment. It will probably be his judgment, that *if Rome be right, these persons do not go far enough; but if Rome be wrong, that they have gone much too far.*

But permit me to offer you, my dear friend, a farther reflection, in connexion with this subject. Suppose the case to be, as the respected individuals who approve of the tract referred to, maintain, and that the Thirty-nine Articles are directed against certain abuses of the Catholic doctrines, not against the doctrines themselves; still I think, it may well, be asked of them; "Is this the way in which Catholic revealed truth, the truth of Christ's holy religion, is to be held and set forth before the world, by his Church?" Truth is light: and given to the world to enlighten it: and to edify and benefit souls by shining forth from the candlestick of the Church. It is not to be put under a table, a bushel, or a veil. Can it be said that the Anglican Church so holds out the light of the truth (if these doctrines be true, which is the case supposed), as that all may see it, whereas it requires the greatest ingenuity to discover that they are not directly denied by her articles?—when probably, not one clergyman in ten thousand, who has subscribed these articles, ever supposed them to admit of such an interpretation? when even they who now find it in them, found it not till lately? when not a single living bishop of that Church recognizes the interpretation, nor will permit it to be publicly held from the pulpit?—can this be said to be the holding forth Catholic truth in the Church, as a light shines in a candlestick?—is this the way in which the Divine head of the Church would have her use the talent of saving truth, entrusted to her keeping, for the instruction and edification of souls? A man may not concur in the outcry against a previous tract, on Reserve in communicating Religious Truth, but may regard it as being greatly misunderstood, and cruelly misrepresented; but he may apprehend a wide difference be-

tween an holy prudence and a wise caution in unfolding truth to men for their growth in grace by right and gradual apprehensions of the spiritual nourishment, which it is to those who receive it, and such concealment of it, under the most opposite appearances, as is involved in the arguments of Tract 90. Surely this is a consideration that should have weight. I add, however, no more on this point: but trust I have said enough to justify an individual, and to free him from the charge of ignorance, extreme weakness, or mental aberration, who, regarding as true the doctrines of the Catholic Church rejected generally by Protestants, should consider it his duty openly to avow his belief of them by joining her communion. You may probably deny the premises, that these doctrines are true; but if you allow the premises, I think you will not wonder at the conclusion.

At the commencement of my letter, I alluded to a topic to which I must briefly revert;—the fervency as well as punctuality of devotion within the Catholic Church. It has been most justly remarked, by some who are not of her communion, that there is a deep devotional feeling, and an ardour of piety in the present day among many, and these an increasing number, which find not scope for their exercise, nor sufficient help for their development, in any form or section of Protestantism: and that the Catholic Church alone presents a fair field for their exercise.

It seems, indeed, the hope of some, that parts of the Catholic system may be so engrafted on the Anglican discipline, and connected with its worship, that this great desideratum may be supplied, without joining the communion of the Catholic Church. It remains to be seen whether the attempt will succeed;—whether it can be tried so as to allow of the possibility of success; or whether the Anglican discipline and worship are not too defective in various points, to ensure that obedience to rules, and that perseverance in religious duties, without which it certainly would be tried in vain. They who have essayed it can best say, whether they have found it to succeed in their own individual experience.

I confess, while I utterly repudiate all idea of claiming any degree of pursuit of piety above others of my late brethren, that *I sought in vain to satisfy the longings of my soul, by any combination of Catholic forms with Protestant doctrines—of Catholic devotion in private with Anglican public worship.* It was like the sewing of new cloth upon an old garment, whereby the rent is made worse. There are those whom the infinite and rich grace of God has led to desire the knowledge of, and communion with Him, as their chief and only satisfying joy. They wish, but scarcely dare say, they aim to live to and for Him alone; He has presented Himself as the admirable and most excellent object of their affections; they seek to be holocausts to His glory, in his daily service; to keep their souls like altars, whereon the fire of devotion goes not out; their bodies like temples, from which the presence of the Spirit departs not; to be able to say with truth—“To us, to live is Christ, and to die gain.” Have such tried and found that the Catholic Church alone, in her daily and fervent devotions, her hourly offices, her symbolic rites, her inestimable practice of confession, with its attendant sacramental privileges, her soul-engrossing intercourse with the spirits of the just made perfect, her pious recognition of the less perfect departed faithful, [whose purification for bliss is still proceeding,] in her inseparable connection with the glorious company of the apostles, the noble army of martyrs, the admirable band of confessors, her wholesome and rich and well-connected

truths,—have they, I say, tried and found that this Church, alone presents what can satisfy their high, holy, and heavenly desires and aims? It cannot but be, that in this circumstance, they find also, besides other considerations, that which commends her to their regard, their adhesion, their dutiful and devoted allegiance. They find and admire in her the beauty of the spouse of Christ; they love and serve her, for her own sake, and for His, whose beloved bride she is. They find her equally, the school of heavenly wisdom, and godly simplicity; of Christian dignity and child-like humility. She presents, combined, the characters of the serpent and the dove. In her is conjoined true mortification and self-denial, with that satisfaction to which the prophet refers: “Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price.” The fruit of her devotions is the elevation of the soul to God, and the abasement which keeps it low in the dust of humiliation. Holiness unto the Lord is written on the bells of her houses. The beauty of holiness is the character of her worship. The peace of God, passing all understanding, is the fruit of communion with her, in all who faithfully walk according to her rule. As one of these (I speak as a fool,) I must say of her—of the Catholic Church: “Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions’ sakes, I will now say, Peace be unto thee. I wish thee good luck in the name of the Lord.”

I beg you not to suppose that I hastily condemn those who take a different view from my own on the matters of this letter, which I have written in self-justification, and as some answer to an enquiry now often made of me: “Why are you become a Catholic?” I trust I shall be pardoned, if, in vindicating myself, I find it difficult to forbear essaying to affect others with an apprehension of the good I sought, and hitherto have found.

The considerations which I have in this letter put before you, were the chief of those, which, some more, some less, some earlier, some later, influenced me to join the Catholic Church in communion with the See of Rome. The step was full fraught with trials:—trials, so fearful in prospect, that often did I shrink from them, as far beyond my strength to meet. I will not deny that they were great in reality and endurance; but I found One perfecting his strength in my weakness, and sustaining me through them. That word *sustaining* is a bold one; if I were not speaking of myself, I would use a stronger and truer one.*

A conflict of great principles is apparently coming on. I do not mean of Catholic and Protestant principles, simply as such. But between holy order on the one hand, and unholy license on the other. Christianity and infidelity are, in my judgment, mustering their forces for some great battle. The latter is developing itself under various forms, according to the country within, the government under, which it is found. In professedly Catholic countries it is showing itself in the destruction of religious institutions, desecration of sacred things, seizure of property dedicated to God, contempt of the profession of piety, political independence, &c. In this country it develops itself in various projects and schemes, semi-philosophical and semipolitical, but altogether antichristian, which are attracting within their vortex unstable, and worldly, and proud minds;

* Rom. viii. 37.

while the power of human intellect, and the discoveries of science, are indirectly brought to aid infidelity against Christianity, by self-sufficiency and self-importance, nay independence of God with which they possess men. A war against Christ, and therefore against his Church, his now vulnerable body—(there can be no war against the one that is not against the other)—is begun by infidel theorizers and political demagogues ; and it is more or less manifested as they have or have not opportunity and power. Christianity, on the other hand, is gathering her strength to withstand the battle against her. How? By repairing her time-honoured walls ; strengthening her ancient battlements and defences ; presenting her compact, insulated position, as the City of God in the midst of the earth. She is summoning her citizens out of all the world, the elect people of God, to all the duties and privileges to which she calls them ; she is resuming her original strength and consolidation, to meet the assaults of Infidelity, as she formerly met those of Paganism and then these of Heresy. The ark of God is repairing, against the pouring forth of the desolating flood. I speak of repairs, because marks of decay are visible ; effects of long neglect, laxity of discipline, sloth, timidity, and sin. She is calling upon all who are on the Lord's side, to secure themselves against the coming conflict, by taking refuge within her walls, while, as the Lord's soldiers, they aid her against His, her, and their enemies. " Abide ye not (she says) where ye now are, in unwalled villages and scattered places, whereunto ye went out in days of license, of anarchy, and error, in the days of God's displeasure against me, and visitation of human corruption. For therein is no refuge for you against the enemy ; and you are no aid to me." Especially to members of the Anglican Church she says, " You share, in common with myself, in this land (for you reach no further) the attacks of our common foe. This is for your honour. But think not you will escape where you are. The city of God is but one. You are too separate, while you are rejecting my supreme earthly Head, my long-established discipline, my catholic order to be a part of that city. Whatever may be your apparent unity, you are really separate. Your strength is thrown away in attempting to protect what is indefensible. But join me : aid in repairing my fences against the foe ; in reviving the courage of my true citizens, recovering ancient discipline, and reanimating decaying strength. Your return to me will be like health to the feeble, and strength to the faint ; like an infusion of young blood into an aged frame. You will be welcomed with gladness, and rejoiced over with singing, and the joy of earth will be re-echoed and sustained by that of heaven ; the devout thanksgivings of the sixteenth Gregory for the recovery of the strayed sheep of his flock, will be taken up by the first of his name, the Saint in heaven, for the renewal of that conversion of England, for which both he on earth so fervently prays, and He in heaven so continually intercedes."

The present, my dear friend, is a solemn time for the Church of Christ. It is the pause before the battle ; a time, as respects every well-disposed soldier of the Lord, of recollection, of watchfulness and prayer, review of his heart and life ; of his aims and purposes ; and of decision to do his duty (God enabling him) to his Saviour and his Church. " If I forget thee, O Jerusalem (he will say), let my right-hand forget her cunning. Yea, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Will you not concur in that prayer,—“ O remember not against us for-

mer iniquities; let thy tender mercies speedily prevent us; for we are brought very low. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for Thy name's sake. Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is their God?—So we thy people, and the sheep of thy pasture, will give Thee thanks for ever: we will show forth thy praise to all generations.”

I remain, my dear Friend,

Very faithfully yours,

RICHARD WALDO SIBTHORP.

HOLMEWOOD, ISLE OF WIGHT;

Feast of the Epiphany.

A FURTHER ANSWER,

&c., &c.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WHEN I addressed to you my former Letter, I anticipated, as a possible consequence of its publication, that it might elicit the controversial notices of some who differed from me, and who might deem it their duty to communicate to the world their own opposite sentiments. I intimated, that while I sought to answer your reasonable enquiry, "Why have you become a Catholic?" that I gave you only some of my reasons, though confessedly such as chiefly weighed with me; in outline also, rather than in full detail; as hints for your own reflections, rather than elaborate arguments: thus leaving it open, if yourself, by further friendly enquiry, or others by their candid objections, made it advisable, either to add other reasons, or to enforce and enlarge on those previously given.

It is as I had anticipated. Some of my arguments have been assailed, though with kindness and much courtesy; some of my statements been objected to, and opposite ones rather peremptorily laid down as undeniable; conclusions from these have been put forth as decisive against those I had come to; and especially I have been challenged to adduce my reasons for the conviction I avowed myself to have attained of the truth of those doctrines of the Catholic Church, which Protestants concur to deny.

If I have hesitated to resume my pen, it has not been because any thing written in the way of stricture on my former Letter has made me doubt the tenableness of the positions therein assumed. However it may be with others, far different is the result as to my own convictions, produced by what has appeared in reply to me. The truth and soundness of all the reasons I had advanced stand forth in clearer and bolder relief by the light brought to discredit them. Some hesitation I certainly have felt as to the necessity of answering arguments and objections that seemed so much to carry with them their own confutation. But I truly affirm, that I shrink from controversy; accustomed also for many past years to the oversight and instruction of a congregation, and now preparing for the reception of Holy Orders in the Catholic Church, I have been backward to enter upon any engagement that would interfere with preparation for her ministry. More pleasant, and probably more profitable, had it been for me, to have given exclusive attention to the contemplation of the solemn and high duty of serving according to my degree at the altar of God, and at this season of Lent especially, to have addicted myself to sacred study, meditation, and prayer. Yet I trust I have not erred in deciding now to vindicate what I had before advanced. Truth, though great, unhappily does not prevail at once, even with candid enquirers. Arguments, however futile, have often much force, where there is a previous disposedness to hesitation, and when many motives are working against admission of the opposite truth. Assertions, however unfounded, when per-

emptorily made by individuals in repute for learning, are apt to be taken for granted as solid reasons. The number of those who can apprehend the true point and soundness of an argument is comparatively small, and less still of those who want industry to test its soundness, and honesty of mind to allow the result its just weight in their own case. The opinions of the many are carried off by a few remarks that lie on the surface, and what is weighty overpowered by what is plausible. Moreover, the bias of the public mind in this country is still (though happily every year less so) in favour of that side of the great question between us; taken by my opponents. The force of education, of early prejudices, and worldly interest is with them. One of them has examined my "Answer" to your enquiry with a sort of assumption of easy victory, which, considering his reputation as a writer, will pass with many for decisive truth. I feel called upon then, satisfied as I am that the ground I have taken is good and defensible, to essay its defence. The cause I have ventured to advocate is a very sacred and high one: it is that of Christ's Holy Church, and of her proper Unity; of sound and deep devotion, of active and large charity, of the best interests of my country and of the human race. I am aware of the feebleness of my own advocacy. But circumstances at first called me to undertake it: and having once undertaken it, knowing it good, and perceiving it the more so by the endeavours made to prove it otherwise, I will, with God's help, resume it, and having affixed, so to speak, my consecrated colours to the Cross of my Lord, and praying Him to arise and maintain the right, who is the Giver of all victory, I shall set before you some confirmation of my former Answer to your enquiry, "Why have you become a Catholic?" And having done this, and, as I hope, without offending against the Apostle's admonition, *Let all your works be with charity*, I shall, unless circumstances force me to another course, turn away from controversy to the sweeter, better, and holier avocations of that ministry I shall have entered upon ere this Letter reaches you.

I. I shall advert, *first* to the argument in support of the Catholic Church from the Levitical types. It is principally objected to this, that it is contrary to the nature of a type, which must always be as different from its antitype as a shadow from the real body. It is distinctly asserted that "the types of the Old Testament were always of a different nature (that is, they differed as much as a shadow from the substance,) from the things which they prefigured."* I affirm this objection to be incorrect, as an argument; untrue in point of fact, being confuted by the Holy Scriptures; and contradicted by the testimony of the Holy Fathers, as adduced by the objector himself.

I deny the foundation of the objection to be sound. There is an evident mistake in it as to the true meaning of the word "shadow" when applied to types, and to the types of the Old Testament. By keeping too strictly in view the ordinary sense of the word "shadow," it is strained to a conclusion it will not sustain. A shadow and its substance, in the common usage of those terms, are necessarily in nature different from each other, because the one is essentially immaterial, and the other material. But it is otherwise when these words are used to express such things as the types and antitypes. The type and antitype may both be earthly, material, and substantial; and in every respect similar, except

* Palmer's Examination, &c., p. 11.

the greater excellency and dignity of the latter. One man may be a type of another man ; the afflictions of one man, of the similar circumstances of another man ; one nation, of another nation ; one material thing applied to a sacred use, of another, or even of the same material thing applied to a sacred use. Schleusner thus explains the word rendered "shadow,"* "Metaphorice notat omnem levem adumbrationem, symbolicam expressionem, imaginem levem ac obscuram alicujus rei, et opponitur, σωματι, corpori, seu rei hac imagine adumbratæ." To the same purport, Calmet observes : "A type is properly an example, pattern of, or general similitude to a person, event or thing to come, and hence differing from a representation, memorial, or commemoration of an event, &c., which is past." And this larger sense of the word "shadow" is taken by a great many theologians ; some of whom very correctly express the meaning of "shadow," by a *faint outline or sketch* : in truth the Jewish Church bore to the Evangelical the relation of a sketch to a finished portrait, as the latter bears to the Heavenly Church, that of the portrait to the living original. The term "shadow" is not used because in all its properties, it is applicable to a type, but in some only. A divinely designed *resemblance* there must always be between the type and antitype, and an *inferiority* of the one to the other in some important respects, but necessarily no difference in nature. A type is therefore a shadow, as an example, pattern, or similitude is a shadow of, represents, or resembles another person, office, &c., not as a shadow in nature differs from the body. A type is virtually a prediction of the antitype, contained in things not in words, and as numerous prophecies of the Old Testament have a twofold or even threefold application, so a type may properly have more than one antitype, herein again differing from a shadow, in the strictest sense.† The blood of one creature shed before God on earth, was the type of the blood of another creature, far more dignified, and to nobler ends, shed before God on earth. The sacrifice of the paschal lamb was a shadow of another more excellent sacrifice. The water of the flood prefigured, or was a type of the water of baptism. This has ever been the Church's view of the types and shadows of the Old Testament ; and thus in that beautiful hymn of the Church, composed by St. Thomas, we read :

In hac mensâ novi Regis,
Novum Pascha novæ legis,
Phase vetus terminat.
Vetustatem novitas,
Umbram fugat veritas,
Noctem lux eliminat.

The objection, I repeat it, is based upon an overstrained and mistaken interpretation of the word "shadow," and the conclusion drawn from it, is therefore faulty.

I affirm the objection to be not only unsupported, but contradicted by clear instances from Holy Scripture, of a very close agreement in nature of the type and antitype. Was not the man Isaac bearing the wood of his offering, a type of the man Christ Jesus bearing his cross ? Was there here such a difference in nature as between the shadow and the substance ? Was not Joseph in his affliction a type of the "MAN OF SOR-

* In Coloss. ii. 17 ; and Heb. xi. 1.—the passages cited in support of the objection.

† As a proof of the absurdity of straining or restraining the sense of a word, by too strict a regard to its literal or common meaning, I may adduce the reasoning of a Canterbury clergyman, who endeavouring to conclude, that because I have admitted the application of the types to Christ, they cannot have another application, asks, "Can the shadow of Westminster Abbey be that of St. Paul's ?" No. But one Church may be the model of two others, differing from it and each other only in materials, size, locality, and dignity.

rows?" Were not the cloud and the sea types of Christian baptism? And, without adducing any other instances in confutation, I need scarcely ask you now, what you think of the assertion, "the types of the Old Testament were always of a different nature from the things which they prefigured."

But the objection is at variance with the views of the types of the Old Testament, taken generally by the Holy Fathers. I need not go further in proof of this, than to the testimony from them adduced by the objector. "The Fathers," he says, "always speak of bishops, priests, and deacons as holding offices corresponding to those of Aaron, the priests, and Levites."* That is, they regarded the sacred priesthood and holy offices of the Old Testament Church, as prefiguring those of the New. True; but then there is a direct and manifest opposition between this opinion and the assertion that "the Jewish High Priest could not have typified any similar visible functionary in the Church of Christ, nor could the priests and Levites, with their offices, &c., have been types of any similar institutions in the Church." Why not? If Christian priests and deacons could correspond with Jewish priests and Levites, why might not the Christian Pontiff have had something for him to correspond with in office in the Jewish hierarchy? In the opinion of Tertullian, Optatus, St. Jerome, St. Leo, and many other among the Fathers, there was not such a difference in nature between type and antitype but that a priest and priesthood might typify a priest and priesthood; why might not then an High Priest as properly typify an High Priest? Observe, that I am now only called upon to combat the objection against my argument from the Levitical types, founded on the assertion that it is contrary to the nature of a type, which it is said must always be as different from the antitype as the shadow from the real body. I have, I think, proved the objection erroneous, and call upon you to wonder with me at this grave assertion of the objector: "Now, this being the case, and I cannot think that any reasonable mind can fail to see it immediately, Mr. Sibthorp's leading argument is at once disposed of"!!!

I proceed to consider two other objections made to disprove the general force of the argument drawn from the types of the Mosaic dispensation, in support of the Catholic Church against her adversaries.

First. It is said, that I "make a very untenable assumption in saying, that all from Israel viewed as a nation down to the smallest ornaments of the tabernacle, was typical. There is no warrant for such a belief in Scripture." I may be wrong in having used the word "all;" for I confess myself unprepared to point out the typical or figurative application of every ornament. But my inability to do this, or that of others who have directed their attention more particularly to this branch of Scriptural interpretation, is no proof of the error. Neither, if I or others have been guilty of extravagance in the interpretation of types, does such extravagance disprove in the slightest degree the design of God to instruct the Church by them in her evangelical blessings and institutions. The application of types, like that of prophecies, assuredly requires a very sound judgment, and great sobriety and caution. It may be, that the extreme minuteness with which all the parts, furniture, and ornaments of the tabernacle are laid down, had only a design to teach the Church the importance of order in all her services, or some other great general lesson.

* Palmer, page 12, n. a.

Yet, let these facts be well considered : that God himself gave most precise directions to Moses respecting each of these things, descending so to speak into the minutæ of embroidery, pattern, colours, forms, and materials of nearly every article used in the Levitical worship,—that the delivery of his instructions on these matters, was with this solemn admonition :—“ *See that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee.*” To any profane imitation of some of these things, death, by immediate infliction of God, was threatened. Above all, we know nearly to certainty, that the typical character did apply to almost all the parts and furniture of the tabernacle, and that very many of these had their fulfilment not in Christ, or in Him personally alone, but in his mystical body, the Church ; as for instance, the veil and its rending. It is surely, then, no very great assumption, that the typical character extended throughout the whole of that wonderful appointment of Divine mercy and wisdom, the Levitical dispensation. Let any candid person say where the probability lies. Surely, if the typical character embraced so very many minute points, it would not exclude such leading ones, as the real and visible unity of the holy nation, and the important office of the high priest. It is a most unfounded, and, indeed, unscriptural assertion, that “ the unity of the Jewish people must have typified something of a different nature from its own : and could not typify the visible unity of the Church.”* Is not the Church called “ the Israel of God ?”—“ the commonwealth of Israel ?”—“ one fold under one Shepherd ?” Is the 122nd Psalm, in which the Church is spoken of as the tribes of the Lord, a prediction only of an invisible union ? Can it be denied that a visible unity was designed by Christ ; or that it did once exist ? or that some of the strongest exhortations and admonitions of the Apostles are directed against the breach of it ? If the New Testament inculcates, as certainly it does, a visible unity of the evangelical Israel, why is it impossible, that it could have been typified by a visible unity of the legal Israel ? Throughout the Epistles and the writings of the Fathers generally, the prefiguring of the Christian Church on earth by the ancient Israel, the connection of the one with the other, in that sense which the word shadow properly includes, is maintained. The most wild and loose dissenting notion of unity only in the spirit, has scarcely gone so far as this astonishing objection, and which, I must say, seems taken up chiefly to avoid the conclusion in support of the Catholic Church, if a visible unity be shown to be according to the Divine will. And if, as before observed, many of the types had an application not to Christ only but to his mystical body, if Divine gifts under the Law had a fulfilment in Divine gifts of a more excellent kind under the Gospel ; institutions in institutions of a more exalted value, and offices in offices of higher prerogatives and greater dignity ; then you will, I think, consider my assumption as not so clearly untenable, that “ all from Israel, viewed as a nation down to the smallest ornaments of the tabernacle, was typical.”

It is asserted, that “ the feast days of Israel could not prefigure the same things, (that is, festivals under the Gospel, or) in Christianity.”* Is this the fact ? Quite the reverse. One of the earliest institutions in the Christian Church, was the observance of the festival of Easter ; one of the earliest disputes related to the time of its observance : and we have the fullest testimony, that the connection of it and the Jewish Pasch with

* Palmer's Examin., p. 12.

each other, was regarded in the decision of the question. St. Cyril, of Alexandria,* says :—" This is the time of the first month of the Hebrews : in which is celebrated the paschal festival, formerly of the typical and figurative, now of the true." Further, " All those things," writes St. Leo the Great,† " which Moses by Divine institution ordained, concerning the immolation of the (paschal) lamb, were prophetic of Christ, and strictly announced the putting to death of Christ. When, therefore, shadows gave place to the substance, and figures ceased at the presence of the reality, the ancient observance is taken away by a new sacrament, host gives place to host, blood to blood, and the legal festival is at once changed and fulfilled." Again, the same writer, in his first Sermon,‡ says :—" For, as of old, at the time of the liberation of the Hebrews from Egypt, the law was given on Mount Zion, on the fiftieth day after the killing of the lamb, so after the passion of Christ, wherein the true Lamb of God was slain, on the fiftieth day after his resurrection, the Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles and faithful, that the attentive Christian may easily perceive how the commencements of the Old Testament sub-served those of the Gospel, and the second covenant was established by the same Holy Ghost who instituted the first : " and he begins this discourse a few lines before, thus :—" The hearts of all Catholics acknowledge that this day's solemnity, (that of Pentecost,) is to be venerated among our principal festivals." Is not my assumption respecting the Levitical types, supported, then, by good authority? Is not the opponent's assertion, that " the feast days of Israel could not prefigure the same things in Christianity," not only unsupported, but contradicted? By the admission of the primitive Church, and by the testimony of the Fathers, the festivals of the Jewish prefigured those of the Christian Church : a further proof, also, of the error of the assertion respecting the invariable difference in nature the type and antitype.

Secondly. As my position respecting the presence of God in the temple, the sevenfold light, and the sculptured and portrayed angels, as typical of the real presence of Christ with and in his Church, of the seven sacraments, and of the intercourse with angels and saints, has been met by a simple supposition of other meanings, I might forbear to insist on what is not attempted to be disproved. But I remark again, that as several types had more than one antitype, so may it be in the case of these. The sevenfold light may correctly be understood of the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and yet be not less applicable to the sacramental channels of his communication.§ The sculptured cherubim, and portrayed angels, may fitly refer to the ministration of angels round the throne of God, and yet not at all less fitly to their services to the Church Militant ; for *are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation?* And surely their presence amid and connection with the worshipping Church on earth in the type is more evidently appropriate to that

* *Catechesis xiv. de Christi Resur.*

† *Sermon vii. De pass. Domini.*

‡ *De Pentecost.*

§ And is not this the view which Ven. Bede takes of it? Mr. Palmer is correct when he quotes him as saying, in his explanation of the candelabrum, " The seven lights are the gifts of the Holy Spirit ; " yet Bede closes it with these words, " The pattern of the candelabrum, which he was to make, was shown to Moses in the Mount, because in the height of interior contemplation, he learnt clearly the manifold sacraments of Christ and of the Church (multifaria Christi et Ecclesiæ sacramenta,) which yet it was not his will should be set forth openly to the people whom he instructed, but rather typically signified through the figure and work of the candelabrum and its vessels, until the Lord himself, our Redeemer, should come in the flesh, who would unfold the interior sense of the same figure to his Church, the grace of the Holy Ghost being given to it." And he elsewhere distinctly speaks of the oil of the candelabrum, or lamp, as prefiguring the grace of the Holy Spirit.

presence of them in Christian assemblies, intimated by St. Paul* and that ministry to the help and succour of the people of the Lord, which constitutes one of their blessed employments, and is so beautifully expressed by Spenser in these lines :

O ! th' exceeding grace
 Of Highest God that loves His creatures so,
 And all his works with mercy doth embrace,
 That blessed Angels He sends to and fro,
 To serve to wicked man, to serve his wicked foe.
 How oft do they their silver bowers leave
 To come to succour us that succour want !
 How oft do they, with golden pinions cleave
 The fitting skies, like flying pursuivant,
 Against foul fiends to aid us militant !
 They for us fight, they watch and duly ward,
 And their bright squadrons round about us plant ;
 And all for love, and nothing for reward ;
 Oh, why should heav'nly God to men have such regard !
Fairy Queen.

It is not needful to add more in confirmation of my argument in support of the Catholic Church from the exact accomplishment of the Levitical types by her alone. Nothing solid has been brought to disprove what I stated:—that she exhibits the closest and clearest accomplishment of them in her discipline and government, in her sacraments and holy services, in her visible, exact, and continued unity. She stands forth, alone of all bodies of professed Christians, (to adopt a current phrase,) the best and only fair claimant to be any proper antitype of the Old Testament Israel. My positions, then, which I still maintain, are these : That the Levitical institution was typical throughout, (so largely and minutely as to warrant this expression,) not only of Christ in the flesh, nor now in heaven, nor of His Church triumphant, but of Christ in his mystical body, the Church militant, a position in which I am by no means singular, Protestant as well as Catholic commentators having held it :—That this is especially true, in respect of such leading types as the visible and complete unity of the people of God, in doctrine, discipline, and religious rites, and in their connection with one supreme spiritual head, and centre of unity :—That the Catholic Church, by which I mean the Church in communion with the See of Rome, exhibits the accomplishment of the type ; and no abuses of power, no temporary disputes and contentions among her obedient children, no struggles between two or more contending pontiffs, no differences of opinion on points on which Catholics may differ, such as may have been between Franciscans and Dominicans, any more affect the real and observable and continuous unity of the Church, than like things did the like unity of the Jewish Church : While the separation of Protestants, including the Anglican Established Church, since it relates to the above leading typified points, and affects doctrine, discipline, sacraments, and religious rites, and is a rejection of an earthly centre of unity,—is inconsistent with unity ; such as it was in the Jewish and the Primitive Church, and as it ought still to be according to the revelation of the will of God, made by Scripture, Tradition, and Providence.

II. I advert *secondly* to my argument in favour of the Catholic Church, drawn from her entire agreement in all points of doctrine and essential discipline as we find her at this day existing in England, with the Church as established in it by the blessing of God on the mission of St. Augustine. It is said that I have quietly assumed what constitutes a real question

* 1 Cor. xi. 10.

at issue between the Church in communion with Rome, and the present Established Church.* I have sought in vain for my opponents' proofs to the contrary of this assumption, and since it is on both sides admitted that the Church in England, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, was the same as she had been for some centuries preceding, and that the present Establishment is different in several great points of doctrine and discipline, it properly rested with them to show my assumption of the continuity of that sameness from the sixth century to be unwarranted. For when the existence of facts and customs from a very remote period is unquestionable, the claims and rights resulting therefrom are not to be disturbed without proof. Those then who deny my assumption, should prove the change of religion, affix the period of it, and the nature thereof, at least with sufficient accuracy to justify their denial. By waiving this, I will make use of such hints of their objections as they have furnished me with, reminding you that "if the Romish Church is the same now as in the sixth century, my reasoning is allowed to be most conclusive, and that *there are multitudes among the Anglican clergy who will spare no effort to effect a reconciliation and reunion of the Church† with the Church of Rome.*"‡ This intimation is cheering to a labour in itself most satisfactory, though well I know how new doubtings and questionings spring up, how little difficulties become great, and small evils are magnified into serious objections, when circumstances seem to be bringing us to the point of acting out our intentions, and taking a decisive but (to many) an inconvenient step.

I am told, that if I fix the sixth century as the time for a conference between St. Augustine and Archbishop Howley, I shall find the latter on the side of the former in communion with the occupant of St. Peter's chair, "to which he will then find no impediment!" This is a very strong assumption, and if it means, as alone it can, that the view in which St. Augustine and the English Church then regarded the Bishop of Rome was one in which Archbishop Howley would concur, or that the then Bishop of Rome claimed and exercised no other power in England than Archbishop Howley would willingly grant him, I much doubt its correctness. But let us to the proof. We have ample documents in the works of St. Gregory Bishop of Rome at the period referred to, from which a few extracts will suffice. Let us first observe what authority he claimed and exercised as to the Church in general. We find him thus writing respecting the Church and Bishops of Numidia.§ "We concede that the usage, which yet is acknowledged to usurp nothing against the Catholic faith, shall remain unaltered, whether it relates to the appointment of Primates or other Chapters; those excepted, who from among the Donatists have come to be bishops, whom we altogether prohibit being raised to the dignity of Primate." To Natalis, Bishop of Salona in Dalmatia,|| he complains of "the decision (*sententia*) of himself and his predecessors, concerning the Archdeacon Honoratus having been contemned, and adds, that if this had been done by any one of the four patriarchs, such contumacy could on no account have been overlooked; but since the bishop had returned to his duty in this particular, he would not further bear in mind the injury done to himself and his predecessors." To Virgilius, Bishop of Arles in France, he writes,¶ "We, according to the ancient custom of

* Dodsworth's Letter p. 10; &c. Palmer's Exam., p. 22, &c.

† Of England.

‡ Dodsworth, p. 11.

§ Lib. i. Ep. 77.

|| Lib. ii. Ep. 52.

¶ Lib. v. Ep. 53.

Divine authority, appoint your Fraternity our Vicar in the Churches under the dominion of our renowned son Childeric, reserving always the honour due according to ancient usage to the several metropolitans. We have also transmitted to you the Pallium, which your Fraternity may use within the Church during mass only." He proceeds to give him authority over other bishops, to assemble synods, to decide inquiries as to the sound faith of any, or on other points, and adds, "if the matter cannot thus be settled, having ascertained the truth, (or facts,) let it be referred to our judgment." I could multiply similar extracts, but the above will satisfy you as to what the Roman Pontiff of the sixth century claimed and exercised. The supreme authority of the Roman Bishop;—the previous exercise of it from time immemorial,—the foundation of it, possession of the Apostolic chair of St. Peter,—the extent of it over the whole Christian kingdom, pervade the letters of this great man. And now I ask, if Dr. Howley would concur with St. Augustin to regard the Pope in the light in which all bishops, metropolitans, and primates then regarded him? What would Dr. Howley say if the Pope sent him the Pallium? or if he was advised to ask the Pope's leave to exercise the privileges of his predecessors; or to be allowed to assemble a synod of twelve bishops at Lambeth, to sit in judgment on the Oxford Tracts and their writers, to hold (to use St. Gregory's words,) an *inquisitio de fide*? Peradventure it might be better for some of the Tracts and their writers, if permission from Rome was as needful now as it was in St. Gregory's days: or, if the matter being too knotty for decision at Lambeth, it had to be referred to the Apostolic See. I cannot forbear adding one more extract from St. Gregory's letter to John Bishop of Syracuse, relating to some minute points of discipline.* "Who can doubt the subjection of the Church of Constantinople to the Apostolic See? which our most religious emperor, and our brother the bishop of the same city constantly profess." If St. Gregory condemned the assumption of the title of Universal Bishop, he was not unwilling to exercise the authority.

It is a reasonable conclusion, that when this great man thus exercised his authority over Numidia, Greece, France, &c., in fact over the rest of Christendom, England alone, the object of his special care, would not be exempt. Let us come to the proof as to this. He sent St. Augustine on this mission,† appointed him abbot; decided a great number of questions respecting the discipline and rule of the Anglican Church, which we find St. Augustine referring to him; and the directions are given by St. Gregory, authoritatively, precisely in the same style as he uses in all his epistles; such expressions as "we permit," "we will," "we grant," occurring. We find the Pope granting him the use of the Pallium;‡ appointing him suffragans, especially permitting to the Bishop of London the distinction of the Pallium by virtue of the authority of the Apostolic See, (query, would Dr. Blomfield concur with St. Augustine in his respect for Rome, or with his predecessor Mellitus in acceptance of the Pallium?) The Pope further subjects to him, not only all the other bishops, but all the clergy of Britain.§ In fact, he exercised towards the infant Anglican Church the authority which the Roman Pontiff has since exercised over most part of Catholic Christendom, and exercised it, *because he occupied "the Apostolic See."* It is not correct that, in St. Augustine's time, bishops were elected and ordained without any refer-

* Lib. ix. Ep. 12.

† Tome ii. p. 829.

‡ Ibid. p. 1162.

§ Ibid.

ence to the Pope, and that all the important affairs of the Church were regulated by its own synods; for the Saint's letters are full of evidence to the contrary. Judge then, my dear friend, whether I was not justified as it respects union with, and submission to, the Roman See, in affirming the Catholic Church now in England to be identical with the Anglican Church of the sixth century: and on the other hand, whether the assertion is not wholly unjustified and gratuitous, that if that century be fixed as the time of the conference between St. Augustine and Archbishop Howley, the *latter would be found on the side of the former*. The venerable prelate, if he did any one of many acts of St. Augustine, with reference to Rome, might remain Dr. Howley, but he would cease to be Primate of all England. He might find no impediment to communion with St. Peter's chair, but he would be ejected for good from the throne of Canterbury.

It is not true that "the saints have," at any period of the Church, "been commonly worshipped with divine honours:*" still less the inference designed that the Church has sanctioned the rendering such honours; but if it be true, as admitted, that in the days of St. Augustine, "the saints were addressed as creatures,†" that affords another proof of the identity of the Catholic Church of the sixth century with that of our own time, and of the contrary case of the modern Anglican Establishment. The history of the Venerable Bede is an invaluable record of the identity of the Catholicity of the nineteenth century with that of his own period. The doctrine of the intercession of the saints, dependence on the efficacy of their prayers and merits, veneration for their relics, esteem for the monastic and conventual life, the custom of pilgrimages to the shrines of saints, and to the chair and tomb of St. Peter, the practice of religious processions, the use of holy water, the doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass, and its availableness both to the living and the dead, prayers for the repose of the souls of the deceased faithful, and consequently the true and essential doctrines of purgatory, private confession, penance, and absolution, were *all*, like recognition of the supremacy of the See of St. Peter, *parts of the doctrine and discipline* of the early Anglican Church. Need I say that none of them are maintained in the faith and practice of the modern Establishment? Confession, indeed, and absolution are in her Prayer Book, but are like the practice and value of fasting,—almost a dead letter. The very use of one of them has been lately made a ground of complaint against at least one clergyman. The form of absolution in the Service for the Visitation of the Sick was publicly condemned, by a celebrated clerical Lecturer, as a kind of unhappy excrescence on the Liturgy. And where are all the ancient usages connected with the points of doctrine and discipline above-mentioned,—memorials of past piety, serving to kindle, or at least sustain it, in days of increasing worldliness and degeneracy? knitting together past and present generations in an identity of habits, customs, and feelings, that seemed to survive the grave? They are gone: like the smoke that vanisheth away; or lingering only in the mournful mementoes of them which the sacred edifices of our land present. Yet, stay: I had forgotten: they exist still; but it is in a body of the people of England, permitted the privilege of Englishmen only within the last few years; though conscientious even to extreme suffering, for conscience' sake; loyal, even unto death, for a sovereign murdered

* Palmer's Examin., p. 27.

† Ibid.

by the spirit of Protestantism ; patient to extremity of endurance, under revilings and calumnies ; devout, upright, and charitable, they are rather indebted to latitudinarianism of principle in others, than to the just merit of their own virtues, for equality of rights with their fellow-countrymen. The religion and the religious discipline, the religious institutions and the pious practices of the Anglo-Saxons, are found proper and un mutilated in the Catholics of England alone ; for they remain, alone of England's people, identified with the Catholics of the days of Bede and of St. Augustine.

"There is nothing," I am told, "to prevent the Archbishop" (Howley) "from uniting in public worship with St. Augustine and Thomas à Becket.*" Good ; but let us examine the truth of it. The archbishop, I need not say, is a conscientious man ; and firmly holds the truth of the Thirty-nine Articles. One of these teaches that the sacrifice of the mass is, on account of the doctrine it involves, a *blasphemous fable*. Now, if it be proved that in the days of St. Augustine, (for I may leave Thomas à Becket out of the question,) *it was commonly said and believed, that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and dead, to have remission of pain or guilt*, then either Archbishop Howley attends as a sincere and devout worshipper, for that is what is meant by "uniting in public worship," at what he believes and protests to be a *blasphemous fable*, or the assumption of his presence is incorrect.

There is abundant testimony as to the view of the mass received in St. Augustine's days, and previously. I adduce two instances out of many now before me. The first is from St. Gregory.† "It is related, that not long before our own times a certain man had been carried captive by enemies to a great distance, and being long detained in bondage his wife considered him dead. *For whom, as now dead, she provided to have the sacrifice offered every week.*" After mentioning the miraculous result that followed, he adds in conclusion ; "Hence, therefore, dear brethren, by certain reflection, conclude how much the holy sacrifice offered by us is available to loose the bondage of the heart, if offered by another it had power to loose the chains of the body." Here the sacrifice, or rather sacrifices, of the mass, are spoken of as customarily offered for quick and dead, and for remission of pain and guilt, and in, or previous to, the sixth century. The second, also, from St. Gregory, is still more to the point.‡ He is mentioning the case of a certain monk, whose death had greatly afflicted his brethren. "When thirty days had passed since his decease, my mind (for St. Gregory was personally concerned,) began to sympathize with my deceased brother, and with extreme grief to reflect on his punishments, and to seek if there was any remedy of deliverance for him. Having called the prefect of the monastery, I said sorrowfully to him, Our deceased brother has been now a long time suffering in fire, (*frater ille, qui defunctus est, in igne cruciatur,*) we ought to show him our charity, and to help, as we can, to deliver him. Come, therefore, and let us fix thirty days from this very day, to offer for him successively the holy sacrifice, so that not a single day may be passed over in which the saving victim, (*salutaris hostia,*) shall not be immolated (*immoletur*) for his absolution." Need I add more to "show the incorrectness of the assertion," that "there was nothing to prevent Archbishop Howley from uniting in public worship with St. Augustine?" Indeed, one great purport of the Fourth Book of St. Gregory's Dialogues, is to support the

* Palmer's Examin., p. 24. † *In Evang. Lib. ii. Homil. xxxvii.* ‡ *Dialog. Lib.*

truth of a purgatory, and the efficacy of the mass to benefit and relieve those who are in it. I appeal then to every candid reader, whether the Catholic Church is not identical, as it respects purgatory, and the doctrine of the mass, and prayers for the dead, with the Christianity of the sixth century, and whether there is any foundation for the assumption of the conformity with her of the present Anglican Primate, or the special pleading of one of my opponents about the 31st Article.*

Respecting transubstantiation, I have been reminded that it was unknown in the sixth century.† If the *term* is meant, this is true; if the *definition*, it is partially correct; for both terms and definitions are consequences of heretical denials of true doctrine, but if the *belief* of the Catholic Church be meant, it is not true. I give you two or three extracts from earlier or contemporary writers. “The invisible Priest by his secret power converts the visible creatures into *the substance of his own body and blood*, by his word; saying, Take and eat, this is my body; and the sanctification being repeated, Take and drink, this is my blood.”‡ Again, the same Father: “When the creatures about to be blessed by heavenly words are placed on the holy altars, before they are consecrated by invocation of the holy Name, *the substance there is that of bread and wine*, but *after the words it is the body of Christ, and the blood of Christ.*” “This victim, (says St. Gregory,§) singularly preserves the soul from eternal death, which renews for us that death by the mystery of the Only Begotten, who rising from the dead dieth now no more, neither shall death any more have dominion over Him: but although being in Himself immutable and incorrupt, is immolated again for us in this mystery of the sacred oblation. For there his body is received, *his flesh is divided* for the salvation of the people, his *blood is shed* not over the hands of infidels, but in the mouths of the faithful. Let us hence conceive how great is this sacrifice for us, which ever immolates for our absolution the passion of the only begotten Son. For who of the faithful can entertain any doubt that the heavens are opened at the voice of the Priest, in the very hour of immolation, that the choir of angels are present in this mystery of Jesus Christ, that heaven and earth are associated, earthly and divine things commingled, and visible and invisible made one.” What a magnificent description of the great sacrifice of Catholic worship! What an affecting thought that the Church on earth never ceases presenting before God in her temples, on her altars, that same Victim, under the forms of bread and wine, which for the same purpose of propitiatory application, presents Himself in the heavenly temple before the throne of the eternal Father, “*as a lamb, standing as it were slain.*” I add one testimony more, from St. Cyril of Alexandria,|| “Wherefore have regard to the bread and wine of the eucharist, not as to naked and common elements; for they are the body and blood of Christ, according to our Lord’s own assertion; for if some should suggest the former to you, yet faith would confirm and certify you. *Judge not therefore the matter by the sense of taste*, but by faith, be sure, beyond all doubting, that you have vouchsafed to you the body and blood of Christ.”

As they who objected to my assertion of the identity of the Church of the sixth century with the Catholic Church of our day, have adduced no

* Dodsworth’s Letter, page 26, 2nd edit.

† Euseb. Emiss. Homil. Pasch.

|| Catechesis xxii. De Corporis et Sang. Dom.

† Palmer’s Exam., p. 27.

§ Dialog. Lib. iv.

proofs of their objection, I might, after the above sufficient references in justification of my assertion, pass on to another topic. I must adhere to my judgment, that if we would find Anglican Catholics, of the doctrines, and discipline, and observances of the days of England's conversion to Christianity by St. Augustine, we must go, not to the members of her modern Establishment, but to those who are in communion with the successor (and namesake) of St. Gregory in the Apostolic chair of St. Peter.

But an observation has been made in connection with this topic which requires some notice. It is asserted that there is such an agreement between the Catholic Church and Anglican Establishment, on very many important points, as to prove a real and substantial unity between them; that the differences there would be on some points between St. Augustine, St. Thomas, Primate Warham, and Archbishop Howley, is not destructive of the essential oneness of the Church. "Is this (it is asked, after the enumeration of several points of agreement,) nothing like unity?" Yes, I reply, it is something *like* unity, but it is *not* unity, not a proper Scriptural unity; it is not such unity as Christ prayed his Church might maintain,* nor such as St. Paul describes her as possessing: *There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith,* (as one, as the Lord is one,) *one baptism,* (one sacramental unity, as the Lord and the faith are one;) and the oneness is, *as there is one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in you all.* It is not possible to conceive words expressive of stricter, simpler, more perfect unity, visible and invisible, than this of the Church; in doctrine, (*one faith,*) sacraments, (*one baptism,*) visibility, (*one body,*) spirituality, (*one spirit.*) It does not prove that there can be no hypocrites in the Church, for *all are not Israel who are of Israel*; but it does prove, that such a visible disunion from the body, and such divisions as to faith professed, and sacraments observed, as would essentially and manifestly be inconsistent with its counterpart, *one God, one Lord, one Father above all, in all, over all,* and with such a oneness as Christ expressed in that prayer, *One, as we also are one,* is subversive of the proper unity with the Church of those unhappily so situated: and this is all that I have asserted. If agreement on many very important points proves what it is brought to prove, the proper and true unity of the Anglican Establishment with the Catholic Church, it would be hard to disprove many of the ancient heretical sects from being a part and parcel of that Church. For many of them agreed with the Church, on far more points of doctrine and discipline, and differed on fewer than the Anglican Church does. Yet none of them were allowed to be in the unity of the Church, but were regarded by her as separatists. To say that they disagreed on points more important than the Anglican Church does, is to beg the question at issue. Why should the Donatists, Nestorians, Arians, or Novatians, have been excluded from the unity of the Church, if the Anglican Protestants who reject more Articles of her faith than any one of these denominations, are to be included in it, because it can be demonstrated, that they maintain a real and absolute unity with the Church on a vast number of most important points of religion? The same thing could have been demonstrated quite as clearly respecting those early separatists. And with what consistency is the following assertion made: "We [Anglicans] readily admit, or rather most firmly maintain with the Church of England, that all sects and denominations, *even sup-*

* John xvii. 20-23.

posing them to hold what are called *fundamental doctrines*, are not included in the Church of Christ?" Why, this is monstrous! So the Presbyterians, and Independents, and Methodists, are shut out without pity from the Church, and handed over to the uncovenanted mercies of God, because, although agreeing, on points allowed by all to be essential, both with the Catholic Church and the English Establishment, they differ from the latter as to the Apostolic succession and the rite of confirmation!! This is indeed to deal out a very different measure to others, from what the Anglican Protestants claim for themselves.

Nor is this the only remark that may fitly be made on this extraordinary arrangement of the positions of Unity. The Presbyterian Kirk of Scotland differs from the Anglican Establishment, chiefly, as far as I am aware, in not admitting episcopal succession and ordination. For as to the rejection of a Liturgy, that will hardly be pleaded as a fundamental difference. Now is episcopacy, I would ask, a material or immaterial point; essential to be maintained, or of minor consequence? If the latter, then why, in the name of charity and common sense, shut out from the Church of Christ those who differ only from you on an immaterial point, on a matter of minor consequence? Be not so harsh and uncharitable! To talk of all error not being heresy, to apologize for "variations that interfere not with the substance and vitality of religion," to make a long pleading for "a man who changes his creed, and adopts widely different views and practices from those of his former life, (perhaps twice a year,) and yet notwithstanding may be a true believer throughout them all," to argue for a kind of chameleon property of the spouse of Christ, and yet to shut out from the pale of the Church and from salvation your northern neighbours, because they reject episcopacy! the Apostolic succession!! though they believe every article of the Apostles' Creed as firmly as you do, are as holy in practice as yourself, and give as clear proof of the fruits of the Spirit as you do! Surely this is uncharitableness! this is inconsistency! What say ye to this decision of your neighbours of the Anglican Establishment, ye Presbyterians? and ye who glory in the name of Orthodox Dissenters and Wesleyan Methodists, what think ye of these words: "We readily admit, or rather most firmly maintain, with the Church of England, that all sects or denominations, even supposing them to hold what are called fundamental doctrines, are not included in the Church of Christ?" Are ye not ready to say: "Judge not, that ye be not judged; for with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again?"

Or, on the other hand, is episcopacy a matter of essential and vital importance? Then in the name of consistency and fairness, let me ask, "Why blame you the Catholic Church for excluding you from the unity of the Church of Christ, who deny what she holds to be the supreme episcopate?" If episcopacy is of importance, surely the chief episcopacy may well be allowed to be held so by those who regard both equally of Divine appointment. And you are excluded, even though holding many of her important truths, fairly by your own judgment from that fold, out of which you so mercilessly shut out Dissenters of all denominations, even though holding what are called fundamental doctrines.

I proceed, in the third and next place, to notice some observations made with a view to overthrow my argument in favour of the Catholic Church, from the perpetuity and perfectness of her unity. It was never meant by those terms to exclude all existence of different opinions on any reli-

gious topic, or all breakings out of the corruptions of the heart on account of these differences : to affirm that all Catholics always and everywhere have thought, spoke, and acted alike on every conceivable point of theological discussion, or to assert a perfection of unity, inconsistent with the imperfection of all earthly institutions, in the present condition of man. The true and entire harmony of a family, household, or kingdom, excludes not *all* differences of opinion from their several members. It is obvious to common sense that there is a real distinction between such differences as consist with agreement in duty, substantial peace, and visible fellowship ; and such quarrels as destroy fellowship, and interfere with duty to their superior, and practical benevolence towards each other. It is one thing for fellow-servants to fall out, and another to contend so as to break up the discipline of the family. Parties and contentions and rivalries may exist among fellow-citizens, without a single act of rebellion or failure of duty to their government, or to each other. This has been the case at various times in the Catholic Church, and though to be deplored, is not subversive of her unity, for *each contending party and individual* has faithfully held *her whole doctrine*, submitted to *her entire discipline*, obeyed *all her laws*, observed *all her usages* ; they may have been defective in Christian love and grace, but sound in Catholic faith and duty. Rival Pontiffs have divided her communion, but only (and for a time,) as to their own individual claim to the chair of St. Peter ; but none questioned the claim of that chair to the obedience of all. Jesuits and Dominicans may have disputed on matters that are not of faith, but they agreed on every article of the Catholic Church's Creed. There may be advocates and opponents of any point of belief, but while each submit to the decision of the Church, her unity is not broken. The case of the Old Testament Church is in point. There were occasionally grievous dissensions in it ; contests for the high priesthood, and divisions of opinion on divers points, but none destructive of her proper unity. I am asked, " Are households, families, and kingdoms never divided, nor separated into different parties ? " I reply, as soon as a household is so divided as to destroy discipline, no master will permit its continuance in that state, nor of the offenders in the family. When a kingdom is broken up into absolute rebellion, so that there is open warfare and violation of its laws, no sovereign that is not deficient in power, wisdom, or sense of his duty, but will exclude the rebels. Surely I have insisted then with reason on the position of the different bodies separate from the Catholic Church, including the Anglican Establishment, as inconsistent with the proper and Scriptural unity of the one body, household, and kingdom of Christ. Whatever consists not with a due submission to that lawful authority to whom it appertains to govern and regulate the household, consists not with the proper unity of the household. I defy any proof to be adduced, that at any period there have been any differences among members or portions of the Catholic Church, that have not consisted with such submission to her rule. And Protestants are hard set to find any case to warrant their charge of want of unity in the Church, when they fix upon such matters as the disputes of Jesuits with Dominicans, and the contrariety of opinions that has existed between the Cisalpine and Ultra-montane parties, and " the contentions at this moment ! " What contentions ? and where ? I affirm that they exist only in the imagination of the writer. But no proof need be brought beyond their own admission with respect

to those who, since the sixteenth century, separated from the Catholic Church, that they refuse submission to her rule, reject many of her doctrines, and rebel against her constitutional authorities.

This leads me to notice the following extraordinary paragraph, which seems introduced to justify what is elsewhere not allowed, the difference of the existing Anglican Establishment from the Church of the sixth century. "The case of a Church is analogous to that of an individual Christian. Consisting of a great number of individuals, it is subject to the same variations in different ages, which an individual may experience in his own life time, and yet the continuity of its faith, the substantial identity of its religion, may be always preserved.*" The writer of this singular sentiment should have clearly defined what he meant by "variations." He says, indeed, a little further, "that difference of doctrines does not always prove difference of faith," which he illustrates by this assumption:—"If the Church did not lose her continuity by innovations, during the middle ages, neither did she lose it by removing those innovations:"—thus begging the whole question. But does not difference of doctrines prove difference of faith? If, by doctrines, he means matters purely of opinion, theological subtleties, or minute applications of unfulfilled prophecy, no one will differ from him. But if he means doctrines in the *usual* and *Scriptural* sense of the word, it is a statement that requires the clearest explanation, or is fraught with danger as well as error: the manifest error being the best preventive of the danger. May the Church, then, like an individual, hold at various times erroneous doctrines, and teach them, of course, for truth, and that universally? Does this consist with the promise of Christ, of his perpetual presence with her, in her rulers and teachers, "*Lo, I am with you always, even to the consummation of all things!*" or with the assurance of the guidance of the Spirit of truth: "*He shall guide you into all truth, and convince the world of sin, and righteousness, and judgment, abiding with you for ever;*" or with the golden rule of Vincentius? Does it not tend to shake the faith and peace of individuals, for what Anglican can be certain, if this position be true, that the Establishment is not at this time under one of those *variations*, which individuals often experience in their life time? And who shall decide that it is not? Shall the Fathers be referred to? They may have written under the influence of one of those epidemical variations. Shall it be left to every man's private judgment? This is to admit the fatal principle of all error, the supremacy of individual opinion. Shall the golden rule of Vincentius be applied to? But the whole Church may have rejected a true doctrine, and many true doctrines, and that frequently. The reasoning also on which it is built is not very satisfactory to a sound Catholic, viz:—that since an individual may err, the Church being composed of individuals, each of whom, of course, is in the predicament of the first, all may err, and so the Church may err. Undoubtedly; upon the supposition that every body in the Church may be holding erroneous doctrines. But not to say where is Christ's presence, where the Spirit of truth all the while, where is the truth of that promise to the Church, "*The gates of hell shall not prevail against her?*"—it is the faith and comfort of Catholics, built on God's word, that though individuals may err, her Heavenly Head will maintain a sufficient superiority of the faithful, to prevent the torch of truth in the hand of the Church that lights to heaven, being turned into a link of error.

* Palmer's Exam. page 27.

But if by doctrines, the writer meant matters, confessedly, of opinion and non-essential, what does he gain by the statement, as to the real question at issue between us? Nothing. Till the point be decided, whether the doctrines of the Catholic Church rejected by the Anglican Establishment are indifferent things, it is no better than a truism, *that there may be differences on things indifferent to be agreed on.* The blame of the Anglican Establishment is, not that she differs in immaterial points, but that she has thrown out of her creed and her discipline, truths ever held as such, and usages ever regarded as sacred: and has become in faith and practice *essentially* different from what she was at the first period of her existence, in the sixth century.

I now pass, fourthly, to notice briefly the objection to the supremacy of St. Peter's successors on the ground of the promise made to him. I have already brought decisive proofs of this supremacy in the sixth century. I will only add a summary of a few points relative to this supremacy, set forth in one volume of the works of St. Gregory. *The Roman Pontiff is the Ministerial Head of the whole Church, and the centre of ecclesiastical unity.* The Head of the Faith,† Called Œcumenical in the Council of Chalcedon.‡ Has jurisdiction over all other Bishops.§ To have recourse to St. Peter, is the same as to have recourse to the Roman Pontiff.||*

St. Gregory speaks of the primacy of his see as a thing established, of long usage, and ever admitted, language inconsistent with the supposition of its being a new claim; multitudes could and would have convicted him of falsehood and usurpation had it been a novelty. And he ever connects the supremacy of Rome with St. Peter. I omit the testimony of St. Irenæus, St. Cyprian, St. Leo, and other earlier writers than St. Gregory; partly, for brevity; partly, because they are cited so frequently; partly, because I am not now proving the supremacy of the Roman see, but disproving the assertion, that St. Peter's prerogatives, whatever they were, conferred on him by Christ, were strictly personal, and ceased with himself.

The unquestionable fact stands thus: that from St. Irenæus down to St. Bernard, there is a continual recognition in the writings of the Fathers and others, of certain distinctions (no matter now what these were) which attached to the Roman see, because it was the see of St. Peter: and that certain privileges belonged exclusively to the Roman bishops, because they were St. Peter's successors. Judge then of the following assertion:—"There is not a shadow of presumption that the special privileges of St. Peter could have extended beyond himself, or been transmitted to any of his successors." If the writer of this sentence is correct, the Fathers are wrong: *for they again and again recognise* (as St. Gregory plainly does), *a special privilege of St. Peter transmitted to his successors the bishops of Rome.* Which then is right? the holy Fathers, or my opponent? for they are in direct opposition. But if the Fathers and the ancient Church are right, on what is there belief grounded? Certainly, on the Scriptures, as alleged in my first Letter:—confirmed by Apostolical tradition;—and manifested by a continual recognition in the Church. St. Gregory reasons thus almost in so many words: and the substance of their belief may be thus described: That a supremacy of authority, and a peculiarity of official power, connected with being the centre of unity, was vested in St. Peter's successors. Here then is what the Catholic

* Tom. iii. pp. 507 et infra. † Ibid p. 1244. ‡ p. 743, 746. § p. 668, et infra. || p. 763, &c.

Church holds respecting the Pope, but which the Anglican Establishment rejects, and differs so greatly hereupon from the Fathers, the Primitive Church, and the Anglican Church from her foundation in the sixth to the sixteenth century, as to trample under foot with scorn the authority they recognized, to revile with bitterness what they honoured, and to have persecuted unto cruel death, multitudes whose only offence it was, to concur in this matter with the Fathers, the Primitive Church, and their own ancestors. Certainly it is necessary to assume "the variations" of the Church, if the Catholicity of the Establishment is to be saved.

As to my observation, that "the promise to St. Peter, like that made to the Apostles, implied a perpetual succession to the office he was called to ;" surely, the objector to it forgets that *there was* a perpetuity annexed in the case of the one promise, as much as of the other. If Christ said to them "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," he said to St. Peter, in direct connection with, "Thou art the Rock, &c.," "The gates of Hell shall not prevail against it." "I place you, (as if he had said,) in a peculiar position with regard to my Church, and never shall the adversary prevail against what I now establish.*" The perpetuity of the Rock is essential to that of the Church built on it ; and Christ could not mean, the Church shall stand, but the Rock into which it is fitted shall be taken away. But had there not been this promise, that made to the Apostles, inclusive of St. Peter, would not have abrogated his previous distinctions. They stood before him, each in his proper office. They as Apostles, St. Peter as the distinguished one of them, on whom a special grace and office had been conferred ; to whom a special promise and charge had been given. He did not throw aside this investiture, while receiving with them the Divine Master's benediction. "Lo, I am with you always," conveyed to each a confirmation of all he had previously, or then called him to. How much, indeed, must I differ from my opponent's opinion as to the benefits that have resulted from the supremacy of Rome ! I cannot forget that England and the world owe their Christianity to it. Unmingled with evils, its development and continuancy have not been ; but one of the greatest evils the world has known, has been the contempt and rejection of the authority of the Roman see. Its highest prerogative, the settlement of disputes between nations, and salutary interference in checking the ambition, cruelty, and crime of those whom other earthly tribunals cannot reach, [although on some occasions exercised hastily—perhaps immoderately,] appears to me one of the wisest appointments of God, and to have been in the main really exerted for opposing an effectual barrier against tyranny, oppression, and vice, and for the prosperity and peace of the mass of the people, and the good of the Christian commonwealth. There cannot be a finer conception, or one more analogous to the figures of it under the Patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, or to the Divine government itself, or more consistent with the relation of God himself to his people, and with the great Scriptural descriptions of the Church, than that which presents

* This precise sentiment is frequently expressed, in the strongest language, by Pope St. Leo I., A.D. 440 ; and who preceded the conversion of England by St. Augustine, by nearly a century and a half. I have forbore to quote from him, to avoid prolixity, and because his testimony to the doctrine of the supremacy of the successors of St. Peter in the see of Rome, has never, I believe, been questioned. It may well excite astonishment, however, that any one acquainted with St. Leo's writings, should even hint at the probability of the Anglican Church under St. Augustine, or of the Catholic Church generally, at that later time regarding the supremacy of the Roman see in the same light in which Archbishop Howley must regard it, in consistency with the 37th Article. One can hardly suppose a person serious in asserting that the archbishop could find no difficulty in concurring with St. Augustine in regard to the chair of St. Peter.

the whole of Christendom as one family, over which presides a delegate, vicar, and representative of its Divine Head, with paternal sway extending his care over the remotest and humblest, but maintaining authority and control over the noblest; avenging the injuries of the lowest and providing for his wants, and at the same time checking the insolence of the most exalted in the household, even though it be his eldest son. The Church occupies her proper place, when, instead of being subjected to the caprices of earthly potentates, they are subjected to her holy rule; when she is seen and experienced to be that (as every created thing is subordinated to her benefit, and to the glory of God, by and through her,) by which the whole fabric of society is sustained, and kept in harmonious order and peace. Her predicted militant character was no intimation that man ought to oppose her, but that through their own corruption they would. If some arrogant or zealous pontiffs have lorded it to a very unjustifiable excess over some monarchs, Protestantism would make the Church herself—and here I except not the English Establishment—a base and servile drudge to the state. In fine, as the Jewish Church prefigured the Catholic, so this precedes a more exalted dispensation, the heavenly antitype, designed possibly by that declaration, “*Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them.*” Revel. xxi. 3.

V. I have been charged with “employing such soft and gentle terms, when dwelling on any doctrine peculiarly Romish, as almost to smother the commonly-received doctrines of Rome; with using language so different from hers, as to warrant the hope that I am only half a Romanist, and the prediction that I shall be compelled to speak more broadly and explicitly.” I am called upon to speak out, give an answer on certain points, and explain and vindicate my Catholicity.* I am ready to do so.

First, then, as to the sacrifice of the mass. I repeat that the Catholic doctrine is, that therein is a *propitiatory application* of the sacrifice of Christ, for the benefit of the quick and dead. The Catechism of Trent declares no other than this: “the sacrifice of the mass is not only a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or a mere commemoration of the sacrifice of the cross, but is truly a propitiatory sacrifice, whereby God is rendered appeased and propitious to us;” that is, we have by it, applied to us, the benefit of the sacrifice of the cross, the favour of God, and consequent blessings. “God (it is afterwards explained) is so well pleased with the odour of this victim, that, imparting to us the gifts of grace and penitence, he forgives our sins.” “The fruits of that bloody sacrifice flow to us through this unbloody one.” Can words more plainly say, that the unbloody sacrifice of the mass brings or applies to us, the blessed result of the sacrifice of Calvary? What is this but a propitiatory application? Delahogue, in his *Tract. de Sacram.*, in answer to the question respecting the value of the mass, says, “The infinite price which Christ paid on the cross, and whereby the whole world might be saved, is not applied to us (*applicatur*), but at a certain time, in a certain manner, and by certain and various instruments of grace.” In the *Summa* of St. Thomas, these differences of the sacrifice of the mass from that of Calvary are stated:—“3rdly, Christ was there offered bloodily, here unbloodily. 4thly, On the cross the price of our redemption was paid, here (in the mass) it is communicated to us.” Again he says: “This sacrifice of the altar is subordinate to that of the cross, inasmuch as it is com-

* Dodsworth’s Letter, p. 14, &c.

memorative of that, and *applicative of its virtue*" (illius virtutis applicativum). Surely, then, I have spoken as a *Catholic* of the propitiatory application of the sacrifice of Christ in the mass. Could I speak more correctly? The Canon of Trent says: "The fruits of which oblation, the bloody one, are most largely received through this unbloody one." Bellarmine, who is usually considered a tolerably sound Catholic, and more than *half a Romanist*, observes on those words of St. Paul, *We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Christ once for all*: "The case is this: by the one death of Christ we are sanctified; yea, we are perfected; having obtained not only remission of sins, but also the ornaments of justice and blessedness itself, and this for ever; that is, for every age and generation, so that we want not Christ to redeem us by his death, or that the same Christ should often die for us, or for others." "But, (he says, answering those who denied the mass to be propitiatory,) two things are required, in order to the remission of sins; that the satisfaction be just and adequate to the Divine justice; 2ndly, that there be a *particular application of it to men*. As it respects the first, the sacrifice of the cross has remitted all sins, past, present, and future; as to the second, (the particular application,) the remission of sins is not yet made; for there are as yet, and will be to the end of the world, those to whom the price of the ransom has to be applied, and their sins forgiven; and, therefore, there remains an offering for sin, namely, the sacrifice of the mass." Once more, Veron* says, "The sacrifice of the mass is very far from being propitiatory as the sacrifice of the cross; for this was meritorious of redemption or forgiveness of sins, and of all graces conferred on us; and in it the merit of Christ was consummated, and was, in this sense, propitiatory: but *that* Christ willed to be as an instrument, whereby the merit of his own passion might be applied to us, as it is applied through sacraments, through faith, and through good works, and is, in this sense, propitiatory, as faith also is propitiatory." I hope I stand acquitted both by Protestants and Catholics, of having "smoothed down the commonly received Romish doctrines."

Secondly. As to purgatory, which I have spoken of as "the Church's pious recognition of the less perfect departed faithful, whose purification for bliss is still proceeding;" "Is this doctrine of Rome?" I am asked. Yes it is, I reply. First, I observe, that the doctrine of purgatorial suffering is not a novelty in the Catholic Church, but as old as the days of St. Gregory, who uses the identical expression of the Catechism of Trent, "*Frater, qui defunctus est, in igne cruciatur.*"† How incorrect the allegation, that the doctrine of purgatory, even as set forth in the sixteenth century, is a modern innovation on the purer faith of the sixth century! But what is the real doctrine of the Church on this point? The decree of the Council of Trent, which is drawn up very carefully to prevent abuses, simply says: "There is a purgatory, and the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but especially by the sacrifice of the altar." Less could not well have been said; and this silence, this absence of definiteness, is itself an argument against the assumption, that the Church authoritatively requires a belief in the souls that are in purgatory being tortured *in flames*. In the 22nd Session, the sacrifice of the mass is spoken of as "offered for the dead in Christ, not as yet fully purified," (ad plenum purgatis.) I have spoken then, (if I may presume to say so,)

* Regula Fidei.

† Vide, supra.

as the Tridentine Fathers spake ; but the Catechism of Trent certainly has stronger words : “ There is a purgatorial fire, wherein the souls of the pious, being tormented or afflicted (*cruciatæ*) for a time, are expiated, in order that access, &c.” The question is, as to the sense in which the word *ignis* and *cruciatæ* may properly be understood. I know not where we can better apply for that sense than to the Church’s offices for the souls in purgatory ; since, as their authority is of the highest kind, so the ground for expecting light from them upon the question, the strongest. Now, I am not aware, that in the Missal, or Breviary, or in any office book of the Church, or of her services for the dead, there is a single word properly expressive of what may be called the grosser sense of purgatorial pain. On the contrary, the chief ideas conveyed by the terms used, are those of absence of rest, grief of soul, purification of the spirit. I think this argument should have much weight with candid minds, for, however ancient these services may be, the description of purgatory by words as strong as those of the Tridentine Catechism was as ancient as they, as I have shown ; and the Council, after careful review, sanctioned these services, so that they speak the language of the Tridentine Church, as it has been termed, and she speaks that of the primitive. In the Missæ pro Defunctis occur these prayers : “ Absolve, O Lord, the souls of all the faithful departed from every bond of sin, and thy grace succouring them, may they become meet to escape the judgment of thy anger, and to enjoy the blessedness of eternal light.” Again : “ Mercifully accept, O Lord, these offerings which we now present, for the soul of thy servant N., that being purified by heavenly remedies, he may rest in thy goodness.” “ Grant that whatsoever stains of earthly contagion have adhered to him, may be wiped out by thy merciful forgiveness.” I am open to correction, if wrong in stating, that no priest, nor Catholic, is called upon in any exercise of the functions of the ministry, or discharge of religious duties, to use one expression that necessarily implies any *torment of the souls in purgatory by fire, or anything beyond mental sufferings or the sorrows of the soul for the now perceived consequences of its past neglects.* Why then is one almost insulated strong expression to be continually dwelt upon, and the innumerable milder terms used respecting the state of the faithful departed, to be kept out of view ? The many in this case should unfold the sense of the one. Calvin, in his Institutes, speaking on the state of the dead, has this expression : “ Many torment (*torquentur*) themselves exceedingly with disputes about the place, &c.” Here is an instance of a very strong word, (and for which Facciolati gives as the first synonym, *cruciare*,) used to express mental anguish. Surely then I have not used smoother words than the Church herself warrants, in describing purgatory as “ the purification for bliss still proceeding of the less perfect departed faithful.” Her doctrine and teaching seem to me eminently excellent on this point ; where Scripture says little, she speaks cautiously ; but when what it does say, warrants just and reasonable inferences, she presents them, teaching alike for the benefit of departed believers, and the comfort of surviving ones, that the communion of love, and help, and mutual interest, has not ceased in death, but triumphs as one of the greatest privileges of the Christian family over that enemy.

Thirdly, as respects the invocation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the doctrine of the Church is essentially the same, as with respect to other saints : that she is a creature ; possesses no divine attribute more than any other

creature ; is as much the redeemed of her Son, and partaker of his salvation by grace, as any one of the Church triumphant. At the same time, considering that she was the individual chosen of God to carry God himself in her womb ; to be the vessel of mercy to mankind ; to have the relation to the Lord of Hosts, not figuratively, but really, of a mother to her child ; that the angel, in announcing to her the divine selection, addressed her in terms expressive of special veneration on his part, and honour on hers, *Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee* ;—that she herself, speaking by the spirit of prophecy, was instructed to declare, that *henceforth all generations should call her blessed* ;—that the relation between her and her Son has not ceased because he is exalted, and sits in our nature at the right hand of the Father ; the Church, I say, for these and other solid reasons, does in a special manner invoke her, and encourages the faithful to believe that one so near and dear to Christ, so singularly honoured of God, and, by his command, to be singularly honoured by all Christians, does not forbear in her Son's presence that office of love for his mystical Body yet in the tribulations of this life, which assuredly she did not omit while herself in the flesh. The Church does teach her children to believe that death has not extinguished stronger love, nor stopped that most excellent and blessed result of it, intercession for others in any saint, especially in her who was the mother of Divine Love itself. She does warrant us to conclude, that if the prayers of a righteous man on earth, encompassed with infirmity, and absent from the Lord, availed for others, and were no interference with the intercession of Christ, then the intercessions of his own mother, now in heaven, most perfect and most pure, in the very vision and presence of her Son, will be signally available, and interfere not with his great office of Advocate, of which she imbibes the spirit, and imitates the duty. Mediator in one sense, that of *atonement and his special offices*, applies to Christ alone ; but, in another sense, that of *intercession*, it is applicable to any one who pleads for others ; and in this sense only is the Blessed Virgin Mary called, and that truly indeed, a mediatrix.

The Council of Trent is almost altogether silent respecting the invocation of the Blessed Virgin. The Tridentine Catechism says nothing beyond what the following words express : “ The Church of God doth rightly implore the intercession of the holy mother of God.” Be it granted that some have carried their devotion in this matter to an excess, and used expressions unadvised, and taken by themselves unjustifiable, and in their zeal for a privilege (a zeal heightened by the denial and unmerited reproach of it) have said and written what had far better have been omitted ; a true Catholic will judge, as piety and sound sense dictate to him, of such expressions, by the true doctrine of the Church, as laid down in her authoritative and catechetical instructions, and not of the doctrine by those expressions ; for not individual opinion, but the Church, is his guide in all matters of faith.

Some passages have been adduced as instances of “ the fearful practice of the Romish Church, of addressing to creatures language, which we dare not address to any but God.”* I assume their correctness as quotations, for I have not been able to find them, but I must avow I do not perceive their impropriety. I have only space to notice the first. Suppose a number of afflicted and needy people, widows, orphans, beggars,

* Dodsworth's Letter, p. 17.

&c., who had a kind and sympathizing friend in the house of one on whose help they were dependent, and who was their advocate with him on their behalf (for the fact of intercession of course is assumed in the present case), surely they might fitly address her in these words. "Thou art the sure hope of the miserable, truly the mother of the parentless: thou art the relief of the oppressed, the medicine of the weak." I protest that I find not an expression here that is necessarily improper. Why is it wrong to say of a benevolent creature on earth, *Thou art all things to all*, when St. Paul says of himself, *I am made all things to all men?*" and when holy Job says, *I delivered the poor and fatherless, I comforted the widow, I was an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame, I was father to the poor?* (Ch. xxix.) There is poetical license in these words, but not at all inconsistent with truth, sobriety, or Scripture.

It is the unhappy consequence of the position of those who are separated from the Catholic Church, that they are led to view everything in a spirit of objection. Like persons going against a stream, the smallest twig or substance that floats on its surface, though but accidentally there, meets them objectively, strikes, annoys, and frets them, and makes them quarrel with the quality of the stream itself, as if turbid and unclean; whereas he who goes with it, carried on in the strength of its clear deep waters, though he sees these offensive things, even more plainly, because he looks at them more calmly than the other, perceives how little they really have to do with the true character of those waters, the value of which to himself he is proving and, while they float off on either side, he passes onward in peace. In other words, it is by looking quietly and steadily at the solid truth of the Catholic Church, that corruptions and abuses which have attached to the profession of her, the crimes of some of her rulers and advocates, the sins of her members, become what they really are, ground of humiliation in her, but not of separation from her; of increasing effort to maintain her in sanctity, but not of division and violation of her unity.

When I am asked, then, by an opponent, though a very kind one and an early friend, why I became a Romanist? I reply; because I have perceived that I could be a Catholic: that is, that I could be a member of the Catholic Church, in communion with the see of Rome, and not be a Romanist, in the sense in which he uses that term. When I am asked how I have discovered those tenets and practices which I thought once to be corrupt, to be no corruptions, I reply; because I went to the proper source of information respecting them, the Church's own authoritative instruction, and not to the opinions of this or that of her members, nor the objection of this or the other of her adversaries. Cleared of the false disguises with which controversial opponents had dressed them out, and from some defilements, which true but not always right-judging friends had mingled them, what had once seemed errors, became wholesome and blessed truths, and I embraced them and returned into her fold. I applied to the fountain head, and finding the water as salutary and refreshing, as it was deep and clear, I drank, was healed, now give God humble and hearty thanks, and invite others to imitate my example, and share my blessing.

And now, *sixthly*, I must advert to what I said in my former letter, respecting a celebrated Tract. One of my opponents has, (unintentionally I am sure,) misrepresented my words.* You will observe, that though in

* Palmer's Examin., p. 31.

one sentence I used the word Rome, the tenor of what I said, as well as the precise expressions I used, show clearly that I never meant to intimate that the principle of Tract 90 was to reconcile the Thirty-nine Articles with *Romanism*, but with *the Tridentine doctrine*. For aware of the distinction attempted to be made between these things, I was careful to state the true interpretation of the design of that Tract, viz., to show that *no one who subscribes the Thirty-nine Articles is called to reject the doctrines of the Catholic Church "AS DEFINED BY THE COUNCIL OF TRENT."* The plainest language I used, was this, "He may be a Tridentine Catholic at heart, and an Anglican clergyman by profession."

I find not the slightest reason to alter this judgment. One of my opponents declines to give any opinion of the Tract, but the other condemns mine in very strong terms.* Yet, what has he brought forward to prove it erroneous? Really nothing. The protestations against Rome which preface the Tract cannot be allowed to weigh against the distinct language in favour of Tridentine Catholicity which follows. There is an endeavour throughout it, to establish the assumption that there is a Roman doctrine distinct from the Tridentine. Suppose this granted, my assertion, which was that the Tract sought to reconcile the Thirty-nine Articles with the latter, is not affected by any protestation against, or condemnation of the former. Besides, if there is a real inconsistency in the Tract, of the one part with the other, I am not chargeable with misstatement, because I declare its plain meaning in this other part. Observe such passages as these: on the 22nd Article, the Tract says, "The Homily, and therefore the Article does not speak of the Tridentine purgatory." So respecting the invocation of saints, "The Article gains a witness and concurrence from the Council of Trent." And the main purport of the reasoning upon this Article is directly to show that it condemned the Romish, but might be held in accordance with the Tridentine doctrine. It is quite the same, upon the 25th and 28th Articles. In the 31st the Tract says, "Nothing can show more clearly than the passage, (from the Article itself,) that the Articles are not written against the creed of the Roman Church, but against actual existing errors in it." And further on: "It is conceived that the Article before us neither speaks against the mass in itself, nor against its being an offering for the quick and the dead for the remission of sin." Need I add any comment to prove what I had asserted, that the tendency of the Tract is to show that a person may subscribe at once the Thirty-nine Articles and the Tridentine Creed.

As it respects the 31st Article, I shall content myself with stating the following facts: the doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning the sacrifice of the mass, is that which the Article condemns; namely, that therein Christ is offered for the quick and the dead, to have remission of sins. It condemns this doctrine because it misapprehended it, as derogating from, and interfering with the one offering of Christ on the Cross. This doctrine is the same as to every mass; whether it be public or solitary; said once or fifty times in a day: there is not, and never was any other thing said in or respecting the mass or masses, than that which the Article finds fault with, as a blasphemous fable, whether it stands out more prominently in one mass than in another, or not. In every mass there is a propitiatory application of Christ both to the quick and the dead. And this, and no more than this, said commonly every priest in the sacri-

* Dodsworth's Letter, p. 19, &c.

fice or sacrifices of masses, and says every priest now. No one surely would "torture the Article into a condemnation of the Christian sacrifice offered in the Holy Eucharist," according to the doctrine of the Established Church, which is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, and nothing more, but it does require "some ingenuity," as is ingenuously confessed, "to show that it does not condemn the doctrine of the sacrifice of the mass even as defined by the Council of Trent."* Let me rather say it requires the greatest ingenuity to torture the Article, into anything less than a condemnation of the Catholic doctrine of the mass; and which is by no means "a matter of little importance;" being the very essence of the whole question in dispute between my opponent and myself as to this point. For, if the Article condemns the Tridentine doctrine of the mass, then all reasoning to show that a person may subscribe it, and yet hold the Tridentine Creed must be more subtile than sound. I repeat what I have said before again and again, that the writers of this and other Tracts, are as truly conscientious as they are deeply learned men. I have the highest regard for them personally. I venerate their piety; I admire their zeal and devotion to the cause of what they consider truth and unity. No man can know them, and not value them. But I cannot conceal that I judge them thoroughly erroneous in the endeavour to reconcile the Thirty-nine Articles, and the creed of the Catholic Church as laid down at the Council of Trent. I felt, that I could not, in answering your enquiry, but advert to that Tract, for I had to show why I had quitted the Anglican Establishment, not as she has been and is still commonly understood to be, a mere section of Protestantism, (whether correctly or not, I stop not now to enquire,) but as some of her eminent members are endeavouring to represent her, as the Anglo-Catholic Church, which I cannot concede her to be. My wish and endeavours were, in defending myself, not to wound others. It was perhaps an effort that required more skill in controversial language than I possessed. But while I willingly apologise, if I have said aught to grieve any one of those excellent men, I am too thoroughly convinced of the correctness of my statements respecting the tendency of Tract 90, not to repeat it. Yes, I repeat, it is a wonderful discovery that the doctrines of the Catholic Church are not really denied by the Anglican Establishment. The Metropolitan of Lambeth, if not startled by the sound of it, is certainly roused to take it into his immediate consideration; and that it has not been unheard in another council chamber than that of St. Stephen, may be concluded, if common opinion is correct, by a recent appointment to the episcopal bench; both which circumstances may well awaken all curates, and not Welsh only, as being not at all unlikely to produce a move among many of them.

The Thirty-nine Articles may not be designed as a text to preach from, but they are a compendium of doctrines, to be held by the Members of the Establishment, and therefore, surely to be insisted upon by her teachers. But, be this so or not, since the doctrines more particularly in question were points disputed between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Establishment, the latter was called upon by her duty to God and her members to hold out a clear light respecting them. She was bound to utter no uncertain sound, where so much doubt existed as to what was, or what was not truth. To state the truth and condemn the error in terms so ambiguous and obscure, that it requires the utmost ingenuity to

* Dodsworth's Letter, p. 28.

discover what is the truth stated and the error condemned is, I repeat, inconsistent with the Church's duty as the guide of enquirers, and *the pillar and ground of truth*.

Lastly. To some remarks that have been made of a personal nature, I might fitly forbear a reply. But respecting one, I briefly remark that the distance of my residence from my church was, in my opinion, and I think I may say, would be in that of my most esteemed late diocesan, "a reasonable hindrance" to the having daily afternoon service. You, my dear friend, know enough of me to decide, whether I was disposed to shun any extent of public duty, that might have been required of me. Respecting another, I must notice a great misunderstanding of what I said respecting my trials in joining the Catholic Church. I am supposed to refer to persecution, whereas I said not a word to warrant such inference. For is it nothing to be sensible of the deep affliction of those we love, though borne almost in silence, and never breaking out into upbraiding? To a mind of any feeling, sorrow is made doubly grievous, when accompanied with tenderness and affection towards him who has unavoidably caused it. Is it nothing to be henceforth separated from earliest friends? And yet there is no persecution on their part. To exchange the warm greeting, for a cold recognition, if even that; and to feel that there is no more the communion that once, and for many years, was between us? that, too probably, we meet not again as brethren or intimates, on this side the grave? And yet there is no persecution on their part. But, oh! there is trial on mine; for surely I am not void of affectionate and kind emotions. Is it nothing to quit for ever my beloved and venerable college, where every spot and stone and tree is fraught with memory's pleasures, and where all tells of Catholic devotion and Catholic munificence; to be, because a Catholic, the only one that must bid it farewell, though the only one among her members prepared to obey all the statutes and injunctions of her founder, and the only one whom he would own to be, and recognize as, a Catholic? And yet there is no persecution; but an expressed kindness, that does honour to those who are but obeying the laws of the realm. There is one within that college, to whom I might more especially allude, but that I should only increase a trouble on my account I would rather allay; but though there is no persecution on his part, for that is impossible even to suppose of him, whose natural warmth of kindness many years have not chilled, yet there is disapprobation of the step I have taken. And is that no trial, where sanctity, learning, and goodness concur with many benefits received for many years to enforce his claims to my deference? But I forbear. *Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof*. I am cheered by a precious promise of the holy word of God: *They that wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run and not be weary: they shall walk and not faint*. May I endure as ever seeing Him that is invisible, and who knows, for He searches the heart, my motives and my aims; and measuring out my trials by drops, makes my cup overflow with mercies.

I hasten to conclude. And this I do, not by advising those to whom these pages may come, to avoid reading the most able and most devotional works of Catholic writers, or to shun enquiry into her doctrines, and refuse to hear what she will say in her own plea. Still less can I

join in the recommendation to those who are seeking the ministry of the Establishment, to enter into it, and solemnly subscribe, in the sight of God, to a condemnation of the Catholic Church, and many of her doctrines and practices, while in actual ignorance of what those doctrines and practices are : to pledge themselves to defend that as truth, and oppose that as error, into which they have made either no inquiry, or a partial one. Is it fair, is it honest, is it wise, is it becoming to subscribe to Articles of Religion, in order that you may teach and impress them on others, which have not been proved sound on examination of what can be said for and against them ? to become a guide to others before you are satisfied from investigation and reflection that you yourself are in the right way ?

No : I advise such especially, and all to acquaint yourselves with *the Canons and the Catechism of the Council of Trent*, not by reading selected passages, but the whole of those admirable expositions of Catholic faith discipline and piety. I urge you to study the *Church's Office Books*, her *Missal, Breviary, Ritual, and Pontifical*. They are easily obtained, and will show you her spirit towards God and his people. I recommend you to acquaint yourselves with the spiritual and devotional works of her saints and confessors : such as the *Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola*, (that much-misunderstood and calumniated servant of Christ,) the writings of *St. Francis of Sales*, of *Louis of Granada*, of *Alphonso Rodrigues*, of *St. Teresa*, and others too numerous to name. These writings will give you an insight into the force of that great allegation, that Rome is Antichrist ; into that question, whether God is in the midst of her or not ? And, peradventure, if you find reason to conclude with me, that the spiritual and devotional writings of Protestants come not near those of the Catholic Church, in the knowledge and love of God, in insight into the human heart and its mazes, in unfolding the infinite treasures of Divine grace, as laid open to those who truly and rightly seek them ; in wise guidance to the man of God, how he may be *perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*, you may go on to consider the Catholic Church in her proper effects and beneficial influences on the household of her Lord, and on the whole family of the human race.

This is a vast subject, into which I may not allow myself to enter. But this I will say, as capable of entire confirmation : the Catholic Church is the friend of the human race. With one hand she points to heaven, and with the other strews largely the charities of God on the earth. None can attend on her steps and not perceive it to be her daily office, to remind the children of men of the vanity of this life, of judgment, of eternity, of the evil of vice and the beauty of piety, of God and his works and laws, and above all, of the inestimable price paid on the Cross for human redemption. Her special lesson to the great and rich is, poverty of spirit as to themselves, humility as to God, beneficence to their fellow-creatures,—to the poor and mean she opens out the riches that are of faith, and the nobility of the sons of God. The patroness of the fine arts, they wither where she comes not. The nurse of science, she leads it forward, while she restrains its natural tendency to go alone, and forget God. The spouse of Christ, she seems alone to understand how to keep his earthly dwelling in discipline and due order ; and how to deck the chamber of his presence with the adorning meet for his Majesty. Her feasts, her festivals, her sublime and holy services gladden the most op-

pressed, while her vigils and fasts subdue the proudest heart. While her large and liberal almsdeeds approve her the friend of the poor, not in name only, but in deed, her advice in the privacy of the confessional assures her to be the wise and holy guide of every character and in every class of life. Her religious houses afford to aged piety a retreat from the world, and a lodging at the very gate of heaven ere they are called to enter; to mature zeal, and early singleness of dedication to God to female virtue, shrinking from the contagion of a frivolous and vicious age, they give scope for the most ardent love of God to be exercised, in union with every charity that the wants and woes of man require at the hand of the gentle and the good.

Oh, land of our fathers, torn with political strife, yet lifted up into proud confidence of thy own strength; impatient of any restraints, yet ready to interfere with all other nations; burdened with an excessive, unemployed, dissatisfied population, where ignorance almost heathenish pervades the rural districts, and infidelity, disloyalty, and vice lurk in the crowded cities and manufacturing towns: what shall preserve thee safe and unseathed in these times of change and trouble,—of distress of nations with perplexity; what restore thy beauty among the people of the earth, and give peace, plenty, cheerfulness, and contentment to thy own people? That Church, still upheld amid thee, it may be for thy final, as it was given thee for thy earliest blessing. Thy best laws, thy free constitution, thy splendid though restricted monarchy, thy noblest fame for deeds of arms, thy most splendid edifices, thy most hospitable usages, thy thickly-strewed churches,—all, all, thou owest to her. What shall restrain the bold license of anarchy mingled with infidelity, that threatens, like a flood, to lay thee waste, and thy children within thee? What shall stay the decay of thy strength, which to many seems advancing, or if in the divine appointment it comes, enable thee to sustain the humiliation and the trial? What shall remove from thy labouring population the thickening gloom of discontent? or shut up the haunts of drunkenness and low vice, and open instead thereof, all day long, the houses of God? What shall rear again the Cross and the Crucified through thy length and breadth, triumphant over revilers? What and who but she, who first raised them upon thy soil; through whom God of old time smiled on thee; she whose devotions made hill and valley vocal with His praise, and with whose well being He has connected all his choicest favours? Let England become again a portion of the Lord's own heritage, be knit again in sincere godliness into the Catholic family, and He will bless us! *He will exchange for us the garment of praise for the spirit of grief; when they shall build the places that have been waste from of old, and shall raise up ancient ruins, and shall repair the desolate cities that were destroyed for generation and generation.*

I remain, my dear Friend,

Yours, very faithfully,

RICHARD WALDO SIBTHORP.

Faint, illegible text covering the majority of the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side. The text is too light to transcribe accurately.

In witness whereof

Attest my hand and seal

This 10th day of June 1864

John B. [illegible]